

AN EXPLORATION OF ENROLLMENT AND RETENTION TRENDS OF BEGINNING  
BAND AND ORCHESTRA STUDENTS IN THE FIRST YEAR OF INSTRUCTION

By

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to explore student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in first-year beginning band and orchestra classrooms. A secondary purpose of this study was to investigate if different instrumental ensembles or various school settings demonstrated unique student attitudes regarding enrollment and retention rates in beginning band or orchestra classes. Enrollment and retention rates of participating ensembles were reported to supplement qualitative results. Seven categories of themes influencing enrollment and retention in beginning band and orchestra classes emerged through a constant comparative, grounded theory approach of analysis: (a) family, (b) fun, (c) music, (d) musical history, (e) opportunities, (f) social, and (g) teacher. Results indicated that students enrolled in their first year of beginning band or orchestra because of the encouragement or influence of a parent or trusted adult. All students that elected to continue their enrollment in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction did under perceived support from their parents and/or instrumental music teacher. Ensemble- and location-specific results were found, but were interpreted as circumstantial. Further research is necessary to explore the unique enrollment trends of these groupings. Results were discussed in terms of their value to band and orchestra teachers, their relationship to existing literature, limitations, and suggestions for further research.

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## Chapter 1

### Introduction

Adolescent children today experience music far differently than children even a decade ago. Thanks to increased availability of musical technology, the experience of music is richer and more convenient than ever before. Through the click of a button and a minimal monthly fee, parents can provide their families with musical streaming services that not only provide unlimited access to the nation's biggest Billboard hits, but also historic tracks, international genres, and live recordings of everything in between. The opportunity for a wholly customizable musical experience is available to the modern child 24-hours a day. Yet, when a child enters their first public school band or orchestra class, the class is largely unreflective of his or her musical experiences off school grounds.

Kratus (2007) published an article in the *Music Educators Journal* expressing concern over the contrasting musical experiences of the young child. He said:

Music is the soundtrack of their lives, and the relationship between adolescents and their music is potent and deeply personal. Rather than develop curricula that complements the ways people actually experience music in their lives, teachers typically base their curricula on their own goals and the way they were taught. (Kratus, 2007, pp. 45)

He continued to state that while instrumental classrooms were still largely centered around folk songs and classical music, more than one-third of the nation's hundred largest radio markets had no classical music stations (p. 45). If such a large number of the country's communities had no public access to classical music through their radios, how genuinely relevant could band or orchestra be to their lives? The author then went on to suggest that music teachers must begin taking cues other from academic educators by crafting lessons that not only appeal to their

childhood interests, but prepare them for their future lives as adults. In conclusion, Kratus boldly suggested that music educators take an honest look at their classrooms, and evaluate whether their ensembles truly reflect the function of music outside school walls.

One could dispute Kratus' arguments from a number of angles, whether it be by addressing the timeless value of historic musical works or the concerning limited scope such an approach would provide students. Yet, some of Kratus' concerns are still worth considering today. Students have the capabilities to consume even more music than in 2007, but most are still not listening to classical or folk music genres. If students experience a dichotomy of musical experiences between their school instrument and their Spotify account, the question begs to be asked: why are students participating in school beginning band and orchestra programs at all?

Recent attention has been paid to the recruitment of young students to beginning band and orchestra classes. The popular "Be Part of the Band" series and its counterpart "Be Part of the Orchestra" (Lang, 2017) features free online videos and purchasable DVD's to attract the tech-saturated child to the instrumental classroom. Advertisements for the program can be in publications by the National Association for Music Education and at various music education events hosted by Music for All and other music advocacy organizations (Pisano, 2015). A quick scroll through Lang's website yields videos of playing demonstrations by enthusiastic students alluding to the "coolness" of each instrument. The product claims that 92% of band directors who have used the program have seen positive impacts, with 80% of directors noticing significant improvement in their enrollment levels (Pisano, 2015). Considering the advertised effectiveness of these flashy online videos, one may agree that the practice of beginning instrumental recruitment is changing. The modern child, one actively involved in many other

activities and who spends free time immersed in technology, may be best persuaded to join music classes through innovative and relevant means.

When students first join band or orchestra, they are often backed by the support of their parents and siblings. Family involvement has been shown to have great influence on a child's initial decision to participate in instrumental music. Throughout his career as a researcher, Zdzinski has developed an understanding of the role a family plays on the musical life of a child. His early research demonstrated a relationship between parent involvement and student musical achievement (Zdzinski, 1996). He also identified the multifaceted role of parent support through the eyes of the child (Zdzinski, 2013). In that study, students perceived support of their music education in the home through factors such as parent attitudes towards music, support of school music programs, and music participation in the home. More recently, his work has suggested that family history may play a role in musical achievement of a child (Zdzinski et. al, 2014). What this means for beginning musicians, however, is that their involvement in music likely has more to do with the values of their family than their own principles. For the instrumental music teacher, this implies that a connection with families is undeniably important for the existence and resilience of school instrumental music programs.

Yet, the work of the instrumental music teacher is not complete following initial enrollment of students. For the band and orchestra director, the battle to retain students begins immediately after recruitment and enrollment. Preventing attrition has been a popular topic in music journals and periodicals since the 1970s. Several articles exist to address how to persuade a student to re-enroll in band or orchestra after he or she has already decided to quit (Cannava, 1986; Hagner, 1985). In modern research, proactive approaches have addressed attrition before students quit. Prevention of such attrition has been predicted at great length by Allen (1981),

Brakel (1997), Cook (2013), Frakes (1984), Gibson (2016), Hallam (1998), Hurley (1995), Mawbey (1973), McCarthy (1980), Morehouse (1987), Pruitt (1966), and Wolfe (1969). The list of variables influencing attrition is long, ranging from financial to societal. Yet, there is a commonality between them: they are often local, far more dependent on the situational environment of a student than cognitive development or large-scale theory. That so many studies have explored attrition in music classes certainly marks a concern in this area by band and orchestra teachers. The multitude of results, though, seems to show that replication yields results too specific to apply to wider populations.

An effort to explore positive attitudes towards involvement in school instrumental music programs may be more helpful in discerning why students continue to enroll. Much work has attempted to predict enrollment and retention in instrumental music classes. Demographic variables predicting student enrollment and retention in music classes have been analyzed at length by Klinedinst (1991), Mawbey (1973), McCarthy (1980), Pruitt (1966), and Young (1971). Understanding the demographics of a population is indeed helpful in appreciating the attitudes of a population, but demographics can never define a population entirely. Demographic information fails to include factors such as student upbringing, teacher attitudes, or quality of instruction. While such a large body of work exists to examine the role demographics play in the music classroom, there are other factors at play as well.

For example, Gordon (1968) suggests that by the start of middle school band or orchestra, musical achievement is predictable based on measurable, pre-existing levels of musical aptitude. This aptitude begins to develop in infancy and is fully developed around the third-grade year (Gordon, 1968). The application of Gordon's aptitude theory means that students' potential can be measured by an instrumental music teacher to assess the needs of individuals in a class. The

teacher can then choose to give greater attention to those with the highest musical potential, as they have the probability of being most successful.

Even before Gordon's time, measuring of musical aptitude occurred in American public schools. In fact, the idea that some students were poised to succeed in music at a higher level was acknowledged considerably throughout the Twentieth Century. Bollinger (1979) Hindsley (1940), Jones (1949), and Otto (1971) suggested the use of music aptitude tests to identify students with potential for musical achievement. They also suggested that students who do not perform well on these tests might not be fit for music participation at all. While the use of aptitude measurements may be harmless in intent, implications could be far more dangerous to public school music classes. In practice, the sensibility of an instrumental music teacher putting forth the majority of his or her efforts towards a subset of an entire class seems counterintuitive. Here, retention is a best-fit reality instead of a practice where all are welcomed and encouraged in the developing ensemble.

More recent attitudes concerning retention have developed beyond the theories of measured aptitude. Twenty-first century research has pointed to a new variable influencing student persistence in academics: motivation. Dweck's (2006, 2012) research on mindset as a psychological trait has become a cultural and educational phenomenon. Her approach to achievement motivation stems from the idea of a growth mindset that develops even into an adult life. What this means for band and orchestra directors is that student motivation to persevere through beginning band and orchestra challenges can be fostered in the classroom and is less tied to aptitude than previously thought. In this theory, dependence on aptitude can actually hinder academic and professional performance. A fascinating study by Cimpian et al. (2007) validated the claims of Dweck by demonstrating the terrific impact specific types of teacher feedback have

on the perseverance of a child. The suggestions of Gordon and Dweck seem at odds when attempting to predict reasons for student achievement and retention in instrumental music classes. If a teacher chooses to align with Dweck, though, the teacher assumes significantly more responsibility and influence in retaining students in his or her ensemble.

The secondary ensemble has been analyzed at length to describe the high school instrumental music experience and predict retention or attrition. By the time students graduate high school, their ensembles have become part of their identity within a school and social structure (Adderley et al., 2003, Cutietta & McAllister, 1997). Because of the developed nature of the secondary ensemble, it is easier to identify and understand reasons why students choose to stay in their respective music classes. Less is known, though, about the motives influencing enrollment and retention decisions in the beginning ensemble. Further research is needed to understand the motives influencing our youngest students in band and orchestra classes.

Many studies have chosen to analyze pre-identified variables influencing band and orchestra enrollment and retention, or to structure analysis within a hypothesized coding schemata (Brown, 1996; Kinney, 2010; Pitts & McPherson, 2000; Stofko, 2003; and Wolfe, 1969). These selected variables and codes reflect either the interests of the researcher or theories of existing literature. In addition, most variables influencing band and orchestra enrollment and retention have undergone testing through quantifiable methods to create a conceptual model of enrollment and retention trends in beginning band and orchestra. These methods, though practical in many situations, have not provided a complete idea of what the adolescent child perceives as the beginning instrumental music experience. Band and orchestra, as defined by researchers, has received plenty of attention. Band and orchestra, as defined by beginning band



and orchestra students, has not. An explorative, qualitative approach could yield unique results that directly reflect the genuine interests and perceptions of the beginning instrumentalist.

Attempting to understanding the student perspectives developed in the first year of instrumental instruction can lead to stronger leadership by band and orchestra directors, fostering stronger instrumental music programs. The perspectives of the adolescent child are critical in understanding how to approach beginning band and orchestra teaching. A serious commitment to understanding the attitudes of these young musicians is necessary to best serve them. The student voices contributing to this study will provide accounts of musical experiences in beginning band and orchestra, and will be used to explore the role student attitudes and other influencing factors play in the enrollment decisions of the adolescent musician.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to explore student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in first-year beginning band and orchestra classrooms. A secondary purpose of this study was to investigate if different instrumental ensembles or various school settings demonstrated unique student attitudes regarding enrollment and retention rates in beginning band or orchestra classes. Enrollment and retention rates of participating ensembles were reported to supplement and support qualitative results. Given the purposes of this study, the following five questions guided data collection and subsequent analysis:

#### **Research Questions:**

- 1) Why do students choose to enroll in their respective beginning band and orchestra classes?
- 2) Why do students choose to continue enrolling in respective band and orchestra classes after the first year of instruction?

- 3) Do student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in instrumental music classes differ between the band and orchestra ensemble?
- 4) Do student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in instrumental music classes differ between rural, suburban, and urban settings?
- 5) What are the enrollment counts and retention rates of respective beginning band and orchestra classes across rural, suburban, and urban school settings?
- 6) Do beginning band and orchestra retention rates differ between the band and orchestra ensemble?
- 7) Do beginning band and orchestra retention rates differ between rural, suburban, and urban school settings?

## **Chapter 2**

### **Review of Literature**

This review of literature will analyze the climate of public school band and orchestra classes, paying particular attention to the influences and attitudes shaping enrollment and retention trends. An overview of school music course offerings in the United States will show how historical trends continue to influence modern practice. Following this description of the evolution of public school instrumental ensembles, theories behind factors influencing student enrollment and retention in band and orchestra will be explored. To conclude, enrollment trends will then be compared between secondary ensembles and the elementary and middle school band and orchestra classroom.

### **Public School Music Class Scheduling**

#### **Historical Trends**

The incorporation of music into the public school daily schedule has experienced varied levels of success throughout the history of education in the United States. Vocal music classes were initially introduced within American public schools by Lowell Mason in the 1830s. Instrumental music, in contrast, was slower to find its place in the school setting. The founding of the New York Philharmonic in 1842 was an influential endeavor, increasing the nation's awareness of, and interest in, orchestral studies (Humphrey, 1989). Yet, progress remained slow to develop the orchestral ensemble as a recognized academic course within public schools. Even in schools with orchestras, strings teachers struggled with group teaching because their training had been in traditional private lesson pedagogy (Turner, 2001). According to Humphrey (1989), this may explain why orchestral classrooms prior to World War II consisted mostly of the upper-class student: students whose primary mode of musical instruction was private lessons outside

the school day. This historical progression of the grade school orchestral program demonstrated problematic scheduling circumstances that continued to echo through generations after the second World War. Even today, orchestra courses have struggled to develop thriving ensembles in many communities, even in schools where band classes flourish. Doerksen and Delzell (1998) stated that only 18% of public schools offered orchestra classes, while 98.8% of districts were offering band. Of those existing orchestra programs in the United States, Gillespie and Hamann (1998) found that that 56% of those schools were suburban, 30% were urban, and only 14% were rural.

The progression of the concert band in the public school setting has undergone its own evolution. From its beginning, the school concert band may have been better equipped for success in the large-group setting. According to Humphrey (1989), the concert band began appearing as an academic course after World War I when military concert band masters returned from war and accepted post-service roles as public school band directors. These directors continued the tradition of teaching band in the large-group setting. This gave band directors a pedagogical advantage over orchestra directors, resulting in a divergence of popularity among school band and orchestra ensembles. Economically, the rise of the middle-class created a population eager to join band (Humphrey, 1989). In these band classes, traditional students did not take private lessons, so the majority of learning occurred within the school day. Touring groups such as Sousa's band, the emergence of jazz, and the rise of the marching band also continued to feed into the excitement of the school band (Humphrey, 1989).

### **Current Trends**

Modern instrumental music courses demonstrate their own scheduling trends and tendencies, and influence their school communities in unique ways. The use of pullout lessons

has been one attempt at providing quality instrumental music instruction to students during the school day. The pullout lesson became prevalent after amendments to the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* in 1997 because it encouraged specialized instruction for students of both high and low achievement abilities (Hash, 2004). Band and orchestra programs grasped an opportunity to use lesson time as supplementary instruction for all levels of students, but academic communities began to worry that this scheduling model was negatively impacting student success in other courses because of missed instructional time. Modern research has refuted such claims (Hash, 2004). Still, the impacts have continued to be a point of discussion in education communities. Currently, there is no standardized structure for the way instrumental music is presented in public schools. So, the way a student encounters beginning band and orchestra in his or her learning environment is dependent on the student's school district.

Data sourced from the twenty-first century has provided a picture of the status of modern band and orchestra classes in public schools. Most recently in 2012, The National Center for Educational Statistics provided a glimpse into music class offerings in public schools. In their report, poverty concentration was an indicator of whether any type of music class offerings at local schools. The report showed that at both the elementary and secondary levels, communities with poverty concentration above 51% experienced significantly fewer opportunities for enrollment in local school music classes. The findings also suggested that a negative correlation occurred between poverty concentration and the number of music course offerings, especially in secondary schools. Schools with higher wealth concentrations had more music class options available to them at a consistent level throughout the grade school experience.

Similar results have been reported in unique ways. Researchers have found relationships between wealth concentration and cultural subgroups, linking white populations to low-poverty

communities, and minority populations to high-poverty communities. This may explain Stewart's (1991) findings that high-minority populations tend to have fewer music classes offered to them in school than predominantly white communities. It could be hypothesized that the availability of instrumental music may exist even less because of the cost required to maintain those courses by local districts. In conclusion, this discussion of music class offerings in various school settings shows that the availability of instrumental music classes is not uniform in every community.

Poverty concentration is not the only variable influencing public school music class offerings. Governmental programs and initiatives have an impact on every part of a school, including its music classes. Two separate studies by Abril and Gualt (2006, 2008) looked at the impact of *No Child Left Behind* on music programs through the perspective of grade school principals. While the surveyed administrators expressed positive views of their music classes, they felt music was negatively impacted by the federal program. Reasons such as overall funding and an increased emphasis on academic assessment achievement were cited. The 2008 study, specifically, noted that while 98% of responding schools reported music course offerings in their schools, only 34% of those schools required students to take a music class at some point in secondary school. Elpus (2014, p. 215) found that *No Child Left Behind* "had no effect on overall music enrollment rates but exacerbated the preexisting underrepresentation in music courses of Hispanic students, English language learners, and students with Individualized Education Plans." The effects of *Common Core* on current music offerings can only be estimated at this point, but will surely be analyzed at length in the coming years.

## **Factors and Attitudes Influencing Enrollment and Retention**

The access students have to instrumental music classes at school only partially explains the significance these classes play in the lives of children. The following section explores the children that enroll in these classes, and the factors that motivated them to join band or orchestra. Following a description of enrollment trends, factors and attitudes reflecting student decisions to stay in band and orchestra classes are explored.

### **Student Demographics**

According to Elpus and Abril (2011), the typical high school band or orchestra ensemble in today's public schools is far different from the cross-section of the average American student body. They state that many student groups are often missing from these music classrooms:

Certain groups of students, including those who are male, English language learners, Hispanic, children of parents holding a high school diploma or less, and in the lowest SES quartile, were significantly underrepresented in music programs across the United States. In contrast, while students were significantly overrepresented among music students, as were students from higher SES backgrounds, native English speakers, students in the highest standardized test score quartiles, children of parents holding advanced postsecondary degrees, and students with GPAs ranging from 3.01 to 4.0.

(Elpus and Abril, 2011, p.128)

These conditions have not gone unnoticed. Socioeconomic status is one the most widely-researched predictors of enrollment, retention, and achievement in instrumental music. These factors tend to refer to poverty concentration within a school community, but are also linked to other conditions, as demonstrated in the report by Elpus and Abril. In conclusion, poverty concentration is often only part of picture, and understanding poverty and wealth's links to other

factors provides a clearer understanding of socioeconomic roles influencing attitudes of instrumental music.

Recruitment is an important practice for the beginning band and strings teacher, and is largely reflective of the local community's attitudes towards instrumental music. Nieman and Veak (1997) looked at beginning instrumental recruitment through the lens of a traditional three-tier structure of socioeconomic status. Their findings suggested that while beginning band and orchestra recruitment was effective in middle- and upper-class populations, lower-class populations were largely uninfluenced by recruitment efforts. The same study also implied that families may have more impact on a student's decision to join beginning instrumental music than any activity happening at school. Further study as to whether recruitment of families, rather than children, would have greater impact on beginning instrumental music programs could be of value to the field.

Demographic factors have also been influential in the retention of students in instrumental music. Student retention has been predicted by socioeconomic status in the studies of Kinney (2010), Klinedinst (1991), Mawbey (1973), McCarthy (1980), Pruitt (1966), and Young (1971). More specifically, Kinney (2010) found that urban settings, students from two-parent or two-guardian households were significantly more likely continue in middle school band. Teacher perception of student achievement in music in the ninth-grade classroom has also been linked alongside socioeconomic factors to predict retention levels in band (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998). As seen here, there are several demographic influences at play in the enrollment and retention process, but socioeconomic status tends to surface as a frequent predictor of retention in modern literature.



## Family Influences

Research from the past 50 years have shown the influence of family on a students' decision to join school instrumental music ensembles. Wolfe (1969) found that "parent influence or desire" was a common reason provided by beginning instrumental music students for joining a class, though musical curiosity was also present. Hurley (1995) later found reasons for students' initial enrollment in beginning strings classes to be largely attributed to the influence of persons close to them, such as parents, siblings, and friends. Nieman and Veak (1997) further substantiated claims about the role of the family in band and orchestra enrollment. Family has consistently shown to be of influence in the early days of a students' instrumental ensemble experience.

The role of the family continues to play a role in beginning band and orchestra retention, as well. As stated earlier, the work of Zdzinski (1992) has not only explored these roles, but helped define the significance of these family influences through the creation of a *Parental Involvement Measure* (PIM). The measure indicated the ways in which the musical environment of the home influences a student's musical experience at school. Zdzinski (1996, 2013) has shown that the musical environment created by parents influences students' musical experiences at school, and sometimes even the students' musical achievement. Even in the earliest years of a child's development, a musical upbringing has shown to account for 20% of variance in musical achievement scores in second grade students (Brand, 1986). In terms of monetary support, parents' decisions to enroll their student in private lessons has also shown to significantly contribute to student retention rates in multiple cases (Stewart, 1991; Turner, 2001). In conclusion, the musical values of a student's family play a role in not only developing music appreciation, but music achievement as well.

## **Grade Start**

Another popular field of discussion in instrumental music is the topic of grade start as a predictor of student retention in band and orchestra. A logical explanation to this interest could be explained by the fact that instrumental performance requires high-functioning motor skills for success in addition to physical growth substantial enough to handle a large instrument properly. Starting an instrumental music class too early could translate into a frustrating experience for the developing child. Starting too late has its own implications, especially when the growing social, academic, and extracurricular demands of the middle school student are considered. The work of Allen (1981), Delzell & Doerksen (1998), Doerksen & Delzell (2000), Hartley (1996b), Hartley & Porter (2009), and Wolfe (1969) have all explored the implications of different starting grades of band and orchestra classes in an attempt to define an optimal beginning year. Interestingly, their results have been largely mixed. In general, later starts were recommended from this body of research, though no specific year was agreed upon. Other studies by Allen (1981) and Hartley (1996a) may explain these inconsistent outcomes. Their results suggest that higher retention has far more to do with teacher and building consistency between grade levels than starting grade.

## **The Teacher and Music**

A variety of settings has been analyzed to better understand the role of the music teacher on enrollment and retention motives. In the urban setting, the key to retaining band students is to create culturally relevant ensembles and encourage student ownership in the ensemble process (Albert, 2006). At the middle school level, the teacher seems to play a significant role. A 2000 study by Pitts et. al indicated that support by the teacher and parents is the most important factor influencing beginning band and orchestra retention in the first three years of instruction. This attention to the individual student appears in other research as well. Morehouse (1987) found the

highest retention rates were in schools where the teacher perceived as “strict” on a teacher attitude inventory. The definition of “strict” should is not necessarily linked with the perception that a “strict” teacher is cold or impersonal. Instead, Morehouse suggests that the “well-disciplined classroom provides a more comfortable learning environment for all students (Morehouse, 1987, p.153).”

An appreciation for music is another seemingly obvious trait of those who enroll and persist in instrumental music courses. With high school, Hamersky (1992) found that love of music, enjoyment of instrument, and participation in an ensemble were motivating factors for continued enrollment in high school band. The work of Mitchum (2007) substantiated such claims. These students, though, develop their appreciation for music over the course of years. The beginning instrumentalist’s perspective of musical value is likely quite different from the high school student. Further attention to the development of music appreciation throughout grade school could be of interest to band and orchestra directors.

### **Aptitude**

Aptitude has also been studied for its potential influence in the instrumental music classroom. The roles and limitations of musical aptitude have proven to be contentious in discussion among music educators since the mid-twentieth century. Musical aptitude has been defined as “...a product of environmental influences and inherited potential (Gordon, 1965, p. 12),” and has essentially been adopted as a construct similar to talent. Musical aptitude is different from musical intelligence. Unlike intelligence, musical aptitude is mostly outside the efforts of a child and is totally developed by the time a fifth or sixth grader enrolls in their first year of beginning band or orchestra. In basic terms, music aptitude measures potential, while music intelligence measures knowledge and understanding.

This musical potential, or aptitude, has been critically examined for its role in retention of instrumental music students. Studies by Klinedinst (1989, 1991), Mawbey (1973), McCarthy (1980), Pruitt (1966), and Young (1971) have explored the possibility of musical aptitude as a predictor of success and retention in music classes and suggested benefits to teachers measuring student aptitude as means to analyze a class. According to Gordon (1986), the musical aptitude of a child is fully developed around age nine, and past that age, little can be done to grow the musical ability of a child. Implications for band and orchestra directors mean that, based on Gordon's findings, students enter late-elementary and early-middle school instrumental classrooms with varying predictors of potential. The teacher's job then becomes to foster the growth of the students with the musical aptitude to succeed and provide the best experience possible for those who will not thrive at the levels of their high-potential counterparts. Gordon's ideas put a large group of the student population at a predetermined disadvantage in the music classroom, where only a few can fully succeed in musical academics. Careful considerations of the academic work of Gordon may lead teachers to encounter serious conflicts within their own educational philosophy. If analyzed through the student perspective, this understanding of aptitude impacts the way a student perceives his or her own potential, and may influence his or her decision to continue in instrumental music classes. Whether aptitude plays a major role in the experience and success of a music student or not, the discussion and beliefs behind the meaning of that aptitude may be just as powerful.

### **Development of Student Motivation**

Recent lines of research have explored the idea of motivation as an evolving construct of the individual self. Developing theory has suggested the idea that while some people have more conceptualized levels of motivation than others at any given time, those levels can fluctuate

through training and support. Dweck's (2006, 2012) work has become popular among current educators because of her suggestions that growth is limitless through the creation of a healthy mindset. Her theory of unlimited potential is dependent on the belief and effort associated with goals instead of inherent talent or limited aptitude. In a similar vein, Urdan and Schoenfelder (2005) explored ways in which schools and classrooms could influence student motivation. They described three motivational perspectives: achievement goal theory, self-determination theory, and social-cognitive theory impacting the grade school student's attitudes towards learning in the classroom that teachers can identify and encourage within specific students. Cimpian et al. (2007) studied linguistic cues affecting student motivation and noticed that teacher encouragement based on observed effort rather than inherent values, or talent, motivated students towards higher levels of achievement. Authors of these recent studies not only demonstrated the flexibility of motivation in the developing child, but also provided insight into the personal reasons influencing students' decisions. Asmus (1986, 1994), also supported achievement motivation theories. He found that students view musical success as effort-based, concluding that students do not join band and orchestra, or persist in music, without a sustained level of motivation. From this perspective of unlimited student potential, it become the responsibility of the teacher to foster a growth mindset in students and encourage continued progress in instrumental music.

### **A Comparison of Secondary and Elementary Trends**

#### **The High School Instrumental Ensemble**

Band and orchestra classes are unique environments for teenagers within the school setting. The meaning of being involved in band or orchestra has been shown to go beyond the musical experience, though. The secondary instrumental classroom is often seen as a place where

a student's true self is accepted, appreciated, and fostered. In high school, Hamersky (1992) found that love of musical instrument, and participation in an ensemble were motivating factors for continued enrollment in high school band. The work of Mitchum (2007) substantiated such claims. In these situations, band and orchestra classrooms become far more than ensemble rooms; they are a home away from home.

The progression of instrumental classes in public schools may lend itself to well to becoming a special environment for students. Cutietta & McAllister (1997) found that some instrumental sections in school ensembles become increasingly homogenous in personality as the ensemble matures. This fascinating result suggests that remaining members of a high school ensemble might show a closer personality resemblance to each other than compared to their nonmusical peers. In the same study, those that did not match the majority profile often dropped out of instrumental music, regardless of instrument played. The implications of this study were that students in high school ensembles might find comfort in their band or orchestra classes because they are surrounded by friends that comfortably mirror their own perspectives.

Adderley, Kennedy, & Berz (2003) used a qualitative approach to develop greater understanding of the special role the band, choir, and orchestra ensemble plays in the life of the high school teenager. Interviewed students cited musical, academic, psychological, and social benefits to being involved in high school music. These factors played into their retention in these ensembles as well. At the high school level, these qualitative data have been useful in gathering and analyzing the student perspective of their chosen music classes. The student perspective is particularly important in the discussion of music enrollment and retention, and should not be ignored. The current body of research in the area of instrumental enrollment and retention could greatly benefit from a replication of the approach by Adderley et. al (2003) within the beginning

instrumental classroom. This approach would allow for student attitudes towards involvement in beginning band and orchestra to define the climate of those classes instead of researcher assumptions.

### **The Elementary and Middle School Instrumental Ensemble**

The climate of a beginning band or orchestra is one unique from secondary school counterparts. Students are involved in a beginning ensembles for a relatively short period of time before they are faced with enrollment decisions for the following school year. At that point, they likely have only had time to develop a basic level of performance ability on their new instrument. The findings described by Cutietta and McAllister (1997) for the high school setting could not possibly apply to the first-year instrumental classroom. Considering the short-lived existence of the beginning ensemble and the limited musical achievement the ensemble is bound to experience, the motivations behind enrollment and retention in beginning band and orchestra can seem mysterious.

A student's initial enrollment in band or orchestra can be associated with a variety of factors. As discussed earlier in this essay, recruitment and demographics may influence a child's decision to join elementary and middle school band or orchestra. Vasil (2013) found that fourth graders mentioned family, environment, social factors, and family finances as reasons for joining instrumental music. Stofko's (2002) data also suggest that family and environmental factors influence initial enrollment more than internal motivation. In conclusion, there does not seem to be some inherent calling for an adolescent to join beginning band or strings. The decision is largely external.

Something shifts, though, during the first year of instruction, and instrumental students begin to take on small emotional meanings to their involvement in their ensemble. By seventh

and eighth grade, students see band as “fun,” and nonmusical peers see band kids as smart, successful and strong (Gouzouasis, et al., 2008). While family influences likely still impact the young student, the child develops his or her own perceptions of the role their instrumental ensembles play in their lives and proceeds to make a choice about his or her future.

In a case study, Scheib (2006) followed one female eighth-grade trombone player throughout her middle school band experience. This student, Lindy, cited competition with other band members, skill-development for the sake of achievement, and the following of rules to be the most important parts of being involved in middle school band. Lindy’s values in band were likely different from those her band director hoped to establish. Still, Lindy enrolled in band, came to love it, and shared with the researcher her plan to continue her band participation in high school.

Lindy’s reasons for enrolling in band are important because they indicate the potential for misunderstanding between children and adults. Yet, Lindy is only one student. Further research that reaches a larger number of students in diverse populations would provide valuable insight into students’ attitudes regarding why beginning band or orchestra is a positive experience, or how it could become one. Motivations of the middle school child may be interpreted as fickle, but the voices of these young students could be the most important in understanding the instrumental classroom environment. In order for school band and orchestra programs to reach their full potential, a greater effort must be made to understand the perspectives of the students choosing to sign up for these ensembles.



## Chapter 3

### Method

This study was based on a constructivist approach reflecting the researcher's belief that multiple perspectives of knowledge exist for any phenomenon being studied. The idea presented by Merriam (1998) that knowledge is a conceptual idea between a "knower" and "known" guided the epistemological stance of this study. In accordance with Merriam (1998), the design of this study reflected the researcher's goals to develop another interpretation of beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention through others' views. These interpretations were then filtered through the researcher's own thorough analysis to provide a rich, detailed account of student attitudes towards beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention alongside the actual enrollment data of the ensembles in which those students participated.

In an effort to explore all potential variables influencing beginning band and orchestra retention rates, the researcher selected an analytical approach through qualitative inquiry.

Qualitative research, by definition,

“involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, pp. 3-4).”

Qualitative inquiry allowed the investigator to identify variables influencing instrumental music retention by observing and defining emerging themes in the data explaining enrollment and retention decisions. No themes or variables were assumed at the start of the study. The researcher felt that the unassuming position of qualitative inquiry best approached this exploration of the phenomenon to allow new, modern themes to be discovered.

The researcher was interested in exploring three sources of data in this study: student feedback regarding beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention, researcher observations of study participants, and respective enrollment and retention rates of participating ensembles. The researcher believed that all levels of data would inform the others, creating an opportunity for triangulation of data. The desire to analyze these three forms of qualitative data led the researcher to select a case study design for this investigation. Case study design is particularly suitable for the investigation of a process (Merriam, 2008). The selection of a case study design allowed the investigator to observe and explore the phenomenon of the beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention phenomenon through verbal account by the student as well as through researcher observation. The method also allowed integration of descriptive statistics to accompany and potentially clarify qualitative data.

Prompted by the analytical work of Yazan (2015), the researcher analyzed three major perspectives of case study design, and found that her own perspectives of epistemology and the particular case study design necessary for the scope of this project most closely resembled the methods of Merriam (1998) and, to a lesser extent, Stake (1995). Prominent in their writings, a case study's defining characteristic is the delimitation of the case to be studied. In this study, the case was the beginning band and orchestra student. Since the researcher chose to analyze one specific case throughout the duration of this study, the design followed a single-case study design (Merriam, 1998). This design has been referred to as an "instrumental" case study design by Creswell and Poth (2017) and Merriam (1998). Within the current study, the chosen design was referred to by the researcher as a "single-case study" to allow the term "instrumental" to retain an exclusively musical meaning.

The researcher completed a literature review prior to data collection, as per the design described by Merriam (1998). This served a bookend purpose to this study: the framework aided in establishing the research design, while also serving as a validating measure when compared to final analysis of the study.

Data collection within the single case study design utilized several tools. The researcher elected to utilize focus group interviews to collect the main body of data for this research because focus groups were appropriate for evaluating attitudes of enrollment and retention in beginning band or orchestra (Krueger & Casey, 2014). Focus groups allowed the researcher to inquire about attitudes regarding participation in beginning band or orchestra class, while also allowing flexibility within the focus group interview for continued questioning of topics unique to that specific setting. According to Morgan (1997), this flexibility of the focus group method was a strength of the study because it allowed the researcher, who was particularly new to the field, to place priority on discovering emerging themes and potentially generating new theory.

The design of focus group protocol began prior to a pilot study. The researcher began by crafting a guide of all interview questions and consulted a professional qualitative researcher whose extensive experience conducting focus groups provided insight in the interview design stage. The professional qualitative researcher suggested edits and additions, and the creation of the first Pilot Study Focus Group Protocol document reflected the goals of the researcher, and the feedback of the professional qualitative researcher (Appendix A). This protocol document featured questions grouped into specific questioning categories that progressed logically and meaningfully. The general structure of questioning allowed participants the opportunity to introduce themselves, state positive and negative feelings regarding their association with

beginning band or orchestra, and then discuss potential factors influencing these attitudes in broader conversation.

### **Pilot Study**

A pilot study occurred prior to the data collection phase of this study. The purpose of the pilot study was to rehearse the focus group interview alongside the same professional qualitative researcher and to test the clarity of focus group questions to maintain that they prompted appropriate responses. The purpose of the pilot study did not include the collection of data for analysis within the actual study.

The pilot study took place at a middle school in the Midwest region of the United States. The band director granted written permission to interview students via email (Appendix B). All students involved in the pilot study were brass players in the sixth-grade band class. Students utilized in the pilot study focus group were all first-year band students. Student recruitment followed a specific protocol during a five-minute meeting one week prior to the pilot study (Appendix C). During that meeting, students received information regarding the purpose of the pilot study, as well as the date, time, and estimated length of the pilot study. Students also had the opportunity to ask questions during that meeting. The researcher distributed Parent/guardian consent forms to each student at the completion of this recruitment meeting (Appendix D).

On the day of the pilot study interview, the researcher chose a group of eight random participants from the completed and returned parent/guardian permission forms. Student participants provided verbal assent for participation immediately prior to the interview. The focus group session reflected the planned protocol and questioning of the actual study, with planned time for questioning and feedback by participants at the culmination of the interview.

The entire pilot study took approximately 40 minutes. The pilot study was audio recorded for reflection purposes of the researcher.

After consultation with the accompanying professional qualitative researcher following the pilot study focus group, the researcher made slight adjustments to question verbiage within focus group protocol document. The updated version of the protocol document became the final version of the Focus Group Protocol utilized in future interviews (Appendix E). It was also determined that a maximum of six pilot study participants would suffice for future interviews, as the eight students interviewed in the pilot group had more feedback for the 40 minute interview session than time would allow.

### **Participants**

According to Merriam (1998), purposive sampling should be utilized when the researcher wants to “discover, understand, and gain insight, and therefore must select a sample from which the most can be learned (p. 61).” Selected criteria of participant groups allowed for the investigator to interview students and gain rich, relevant information regarding the issue of central importance: beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention. Therefore, it was in the best interest of the researcher to place a number of criteria on the selection of students involved in the interview.

The case for this study was the beginning band and beginning orchestra student in the public school setting. Students from school instrumental ensembles were selected based on the following qualifications: (a) the offering of first-year band or orchestra class, and (b) enrollment options for second-year band or orchestra at either the same building or a different middle school or junior high. One band program and one orchestra program each were selected from rural, suburban, and urban settings, totaling six schools. All participating schools were located in the

Midwest region of the United States. The researcher selected the ensembles on a basis of location convenience. These six chosen schools did not include the pilot study school because data from the pilot study were not gathered for the purpose of analysis. Permission to conduct the focus group sessions at selected schools was obtained through informed, written consent of the band or orchestra teacher (Appendix G). All communication with teachers occurred through email. Within the context of each school setting, the researcher studied the beginning instrumental music student. The researcher chose student participants based on three parameters: (a) enrollment in first-year band or orchestra, (b) the return of the parent/guardian consent form (Appendix D) and, (c) verbal assent for participation.

Band and orchestra classes at participating schools also reflected several scheduling models, as reflected in Table 1 on page 29. Depending on the location of the school, first year instrumental study began at different grade levels. Beginning band and orchestra classes began in fifth or sixth grade depending on the structure of instrumental music classes within respective school districts. In some schools, first and second year instrumental music occurred in the same building, while in others, first and second year instrumental music occurred at separate elementary and middle schools, respectively. Some instrumental classes were part of the regular-school day that occurred during a routine rotation of courses. In other settings, band and orchestra classes were additional courses students elected to take during simultaneously occurring academic instruction or recess. All band and orchestra classes lasted between 30 and 46 minutes.

Table 1

*Scheduling Models of Participating Schools*

	<u>Rural</u>		<u>Suburban</u>		<u>Urban</u>	
	Band	Orchestra	Band	Orchestra	Band	Orchestra
Grade Start	5	6	6	6	5	5
Building Change (Y/N)	N	N	N	N	Y	Y
Academic (AC) or Extracurricular (EC)	AC	AC	AC	AC	EC	EC
Class Length (in minutes)	40	46	43	43	45	30

**Materials**

The University of Kansas Institutional Review Board approved all relevant formed to working with human participants prior to any contact with participants (Appendix G). Focus groups occurred in classrooms or free spaces during regularly-scheduled band and orchestra class time. In the variety of rooms provided, the researcher attempted to create an equitable space for participants where chaired seating was uniform or all participants sat on the floor. In ideal situations, participants sat around a table with the researcher during the interview, though, in most cases, students and researcher sat in chairs in a circle facing each other with no table in between. The researcher requested focus group participants bring no materials to the focus group interview. In four of the six schools interviewed, fidget spinner toys owned by students were either asked by the researcher to be put away during the interview or were removed by the researcher until the end of the focus group session. All students received two pieces of candy for their participation in pilot or focus group interviews.

The researcher carried a file folder and a pencil for field notes to each focus group. On either side of the inside of the envelope, the researcher taped the Focus Group Protocol document

(Appendix E) and a field note template (Appendix H). The researcher recorded all focus groups using a handheld Olympus VN-5200PC Digital Voice Recorder and a Sony HDR-CX405 video camera on a tripod. Video and audio files were transferred to an encrypted Samsung 32GB USB 3.0 flash drive (MUF-32BB/AM) and a Dropbox file owned by the researcher. After each focus group session, the researcher transcribed video recordings onto a MacBook Pro laptop computer using Microsoft Excel. The researcher later transferred those transcriptions into Microsoft Word. Transcript data were initially organized using ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis software on the same MacBook Pro. Following creation of field notes of each interview transcript, the researcher printed and analyzed interview transcripts and codes by hand.

### **Procedure**

Data collection for this study occurred through multiple means. The utilization of focus groups allowed the researcher to collect information regarding student attitudes towards beginning band and orchestra and to observe and document behaviors not reported in an interview transcription. The protocol for these focus groups utilized multiple steps, including three instances of contact between researcher and participant: one full-class recruitment presentation and two focus group meetings.

To begin recruitment for this study, the researcher contacted beginning band and orchestra teachers via email to secure participating ensembles. Ensembles from rural, suburban, and urban settings comprised the populations of the focus group participants. Band and orchestra teachers provided consent via email for access to their groups. If additional consent was necessary from school administration, the teacher sought permission from the appropriate administrator and put the researcher into contact with the administrator to obtain consent.



Following the recruitment of individual school ensembles, recruitment of students within the selected band and orchestra classes occurred. The researcher followed the pre-determined focus group recruitment protocol (Appendix E). The researcher attended one class of each participating ensemble to present a short explanation of the study and advertise focus group sessions to occur at a later date. These recruitment sessions occurred over a five-minute period during normal band or orchestra time and allowed enough time for the researcher to answer student and teacher questions at the end of the presentation. The researcher distributed parent/guardian consent forms to each student (Appendix D). The researcher did not have access to contact information of potential participants during this recruitment time, only the cooperating teacher. While some cooperating band or orchestra teachers independently reminded students to complete and return consent forms, the researcher informed the teachers that they were not required to do so.

On the day of the focus group session, the researcher attended the beginning of band or orchestra class of the cooperating ensemble and collected all completed consent forms from students. Among those completed consent forms, the researcher selected participants for the focus group interview. If more than six students returned consent forms, the researcher laid out all forms upside down in a line so names were not visible and randomly picked six utilizing a random number count. Focus group sessions occurred during the normally-scheduled band or orchestra time in a separate room in the school. The cooperating band or orchestra teacher secured the room in advance for the focus group session. Depending on the ensemble, the researcher interviewed two to six students per school. When the student participants entered the interview room, they sat in chairs facing each other and the researcher. In ideal situations, the researcher had early-access to the room to set up recording equipment before the arrival of

student participants. In some cases, the setup of recording equipment occurred after the students entered the room. The researcher took the first few minutes to explain the study, detail ground rules of talking during the interview, indicate the utilization of audio and video recording devices for transcription and analysis, and offer the students the opportunity to refuse participation. After the researcher answered any student questions, the students offered verbal assent for their participation in the study. The researcher then turned on audio and video recorders, beginning the interview.

The focus group interview followed the pre-determined interview protocol finalized after the pilot study (Appendix E). Interviewing most closely related the process described by Merriam (1998) because of the level of detail in describing practical interactions and questions within the focus group interview. The focus group interview featured semi-structured questions to guide the discussion, which allowed for probing by the researcher if the context was appropriate. In accordance with Merriam (1998), probing occurred in interviews when the participants stated something significant or unique regarding a topic and the investigator wanted to learn more. The researcher ensured that all students participated in the response process. All focus group sessions occurred over a span of 22-35 minutes, with interviews including larger numbers of students generally taking more time to complete. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher turned off the audio and video recorders. The researcher then accompanied the students back to their band or orchestra classroom prior to the end of class time. Once the students were back with their instrumental teacher, the researcher recorded additional field notes of important observations beyond the context of the recordings. These field notes constituted the second form of data present in this study. These field notes documented behavioral observations, including inter-student interactions and body language. The researcher uploaded the audio and

video files of the interview onto the MacBook Pro laptop, Samsung flash drive, and personal Dropbox folder. Once the audio and video files were downloaded to these secure devices and spaces, they were ready to be transcribed. The researcher typed field notes into the field note template in Microsoft Words and saved the notes to a personal USB drive and Dropbox folder (Appendix H).

The researcher utilized a MacBook Pro laptop computer to transcribe video files. A reduced speed play function in iMovie ensured accurate interpretation by the researcher. Transcriptions were saved to Microsoft Excel. To avoid confusion during analysis, the researcher refrained from assigning participant pseudonyms until data analysis for the study was complete. Following complete transcription of each initial interview, the researcher wrote a summary paragraph of the transcript for use in the follow-up interview. The intention of the paragraph was not to draw conclusions from each focus group interview, rather to report what quotes in general terms for validation purposes.

Following the completion of the transcription, the researcher organized a follow-up confirmatory meeting with each focus group. These meetings occurred anywhere from one day to three weeks following the initial interview. This follow-up meeting also occurred during the corresponding ensemble's beginning band or orchestra class. The researcher again utilized a separate, private room for this meeting. The researcher met with all students that were part of the original focus group. A specific protocol outlined the follow-up focus group interview (Appendix I).

An introduction by the researcher explained the function of the confirmatory meeting, indicated the utilization of audio and video recording devices for the meeting, and allowed students to refuse participation. All original participants agreed to participate in the final

interview of the study. Following aural assent by participants, the researcher turned on video and audio recording devices and read a summary of findings from the first focus group interview.

The researcher read the summary paragraph from a laptop computer. One situation in which the room was noisy, students read along on the researcher's computer while the researcher read the paragraph aloud. The subjects had the opportunity to confirm or deny the findings in the executive summary and offer any additional commentary on relevant subjects. In all confirmation interviews, the students answered two additional questions to evaluate inter-subject reliability between focus group sessions. In two schools, class enrollment for the following school year occurred in the days between the two focus group interviews. In these settings, the researcher asked about updated enrollment plans and corresponding attitudes of each student. The confirmation process established validation and credibility of the findings. The students addressed perceived gaps in understanding of the researcher to provide a more accurate picture of their attitudes towards being involved in beginning band or orchestra. This confirmatory meeting took anywhere from four to twelve minutes, depending on response lengths of participants. Following the end of the interview, the researcher turned off all recording equipment and returned the students to their instrumental music class. All audio and video files of the follow-up interview were uploaded to the researcher's laptop, video files were transcribed, and field notes were recorded using the same procedures as the initial interview.

The third form of data collected was enrollment and retention counts from participating ensembles. The researcher recorded the total number of students enrolled in the beginning band or orchestra ensemble at the time of the study. The ensemble teacher provided this information. In addition, the researcher also collected anticipated enrollment for the 2017-2018 school year. This data collection occurred through email correspondence. Some teachers did not have access

to school counselor records to provide true enrollment data. In these cases, teachers provided estimates of their future enrollment numbers based on their own communications with their students. Received enrollment numbers were recorded in a Microsoft Excel file on the researcher's laptop. The researcher saved the information to the Samsung flash drive. The intention of this data collection was to determine whether the focus groups were accurate representations of their instrumental ensembles.

### **Data Analysis**

According to Merriam (1998), "data analysis is one of the few facets, perhaps the only facet, of doing qualitative research in which there is a right and a wrong way (p. 162)." To ensure that the researcher was adequately prepared to analyze large amounts of collected data, a structured plan of analysis was in place before any contact was made with research participants. The constant comparative method of data analysis, developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) aided the researcher in developing a grounded theory of results from the study. The researcher aimed to explore emergent themes in data rather than verify or develop existing theory, so a grounded theory approach was appropriate. The constant comparative paradigm is present in Merriam's (1998) detailed and highly-structured analytical process, and was adhered to within this study. The steps associated with Merriam's method are described in this section.

### **Data Management and Preparation**

Following each focus group session, the organization of data occurred. This organization, though seemingly administrative, was the first step of analysis in the chosen analytical design. Reid (1992) suggested that data should go through three levels of organization: preparation, identification, and manipulation. Within this study, data preparation described the process of transcribing each interview into Microsoft Excel and eventually Microsoft Word, typing field

notes in Microsoft Word, and entering collected enrollment data into Microsoft Excel. Data identification included the organization of data into logically meaningful and easily locatable places on the researcher's USB flash drive and personal Dropbox folder. Data manipulation involved rearrangement or sorting of the entire data set for organizational purposes. Yin (1994) refers to this entire set of data as the case study data base. Once the data files were organized within these three contexts in a fashion that was practical for the researcher, files were uploaded to ATLAS.ti qualitative data analysis software on the researcher's laptop. The researcher then labeled transcripts according to questions asked in the focus group interviews. The purpose of this labeling was to have the ability to later compare responses for specific interview questions, which reflected the research questions, between unique interview settings.

### **Category Construction**

The method of category conceptualization utilized in this study was within the pre-described constant comparative method (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Within this study, these categories meant to capture themes and patterns across various participants, ensembles, and school settings. The first step of category construction was the reading of the first document. In this study, the researcher analyzed documents in the respective order in which the focus group interviews took place. Therefore, the first document analyzed was the first focus group initial interview transcript, followed by its respective follow-up interview transcript and field notes. As the researcher read through each document, "notes, comments, observations, and queries (Merriam, 1998, p. 181)" were recorded within the margins of ATLAS.ti. These initial notes were important because they described the most prominent, or potentially obvious, aspects of the data on the first instance of analysis. The researcher repeated this entire process for every interview transcript and field note document.

A few days following initial memo creation from interview transcripts, the researcher returned to the transcript belonging to the first focus group and began the process of coding and categorizing statements. Notes and memos were categorized using single words or short phrases taken directly from interview transcripts. This practice instigated the coding process. Codes were a direct reflection of the interview transcripts, as relevant to the grounded theory analytical approach of Glaser and Strauss (1967). Eventually, the researcher grouped codes into categories reworded to more accurately describe the statements within each group. A separate audit trail document (Appendix J) documented a running list of categories and codes. This document not only tracked the frequency of assigned codes, but also which participant provided the statement belonging to that category. This document, proposed by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and encouraged by Creswell and Poth, (2017) worked as an ongoing journal during the data analysis process. Categories underwent significant editing throughout analysis, but a few guiding properties by Merriam (1998) were always retained: (a) categories reflected the purpose of the research, and also reflected answers to the research questions, (b) categories were exhaustive so all data would eventually fit into a meaningful category, (c) categories were mutually exclusive so all data belonged to one categorical classification only, (d) category names were sensitive to the data they described, and (e) categories were conceptually congruent.

Once the researcher created categories to describe the first focus group transcript, analysis of the corresponding follow-up interview transcript from the same focus group occurred. The confirmation interview transcript was scanned in the exact same way as its corresponding transcript, with the researcher creating a respective list of codes and descriptive categories. The two lists of categories from the two unique documents were then compared and merged into the single audit trail document (Appendix J). The researcher continued to label codes and categories

with identifying information of the participants. The researcher then organized categories to reflect the following purposes: (a) categories and codes to interpret direct statements regarding initial enrollment in beginning band or orchestra, and (b) categories and codes to interpret direct statements regarding retention in band or orchestra the following school year and any positive associations of being involved in instrumental music. This master list not only existed in the audit trail document, but provided a framework for analysis and classification of future documents within this project. The researcher analyzed field notes using the same comparative method as described. The constant creation and comparison of categories reflects Glaser and Strauss's (1967) constant comparative design. Since factors of attrition were not within the purposes of the study, the researcher did not record statements of negative associations in the audit trail document. In addition, students who stated no intention to continue participation in instrumental music the following school year were not included in analysis of the second research question.

### **Quantitative Data Analysis**

The researcher documented enrollment counts of the current school year and projected enrollment counts for the following school year in Microsoft Excel. Enrollment counts of participating ensembles were provided by teachers, while focus group enrollment counts were a result of findings from interview transcript analysis. The researcher calculated retention rates by comparing the total number of students currently in the ensemble or focus group to respective projected enrollment counts. Retention rates were compared between band and orchestra ensembles and between school settings.



## **Validity and Reliability**

A trustworthy study is one that can be useful in future application. For this study to be useful, the researcher established trustworthiness by establishing validity and reliability. Efforts towards establishing both validity and reliability were present throughout all stages of design, as they play a prominent role in qualitative research. The researcher analyzed an array of methods available to establish such validity and reliability, and selected methods that best served the purposes of the study.

Triangulation was one process by which the researcher established internal validity of the. Two of Denzin's (1978) four modes of triangulation were utilized: multiple and different sources and multiple and different methods. The researcher established internal validity using multiple data sources. Data included transcribed student statements from focus groups, field notes by the researcher, and quantified enrollment counts from the ensemble teacher. Contextual validation was established by comparing evidence of multiple study participants and through analysis of multiple forms of evidence by a single source to locate any characteristic patterns of distortion (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher also employed triangulation of methods. This form of validation compared evidence from the three data collection modes: focus group interview, researcher observation, and the collection of enrollment data from ensemble teacher.

Member checks provided an additional form of internal validity. The follow-up interview with each focus group provided an opportunity for the researcher to present a preliminary summary for the participants to confirm, deny, or generally respond to. Any denied findings were reviewed for changes reflecting the goal of truthful analysis. Confirmed findings provided an additional form of internal validity.

Also established in the follow-up interview was researcher reliability. Since the researcher worked alone, purposeful checks within study design were necessary. The second interview with each group allowed participants the opportunity to make sure they, themselves, had properly explained their attitudes towards beginning band and orchestra. Student were allowed time to provide additional information they felt was pertinent or overlooked during the first interview. The second interview served two purposes: establish raw data reliability and check researcher validity.

Finally, the audit trail document provided transparency of analysis throughout the study (Appendix J). This audit trail, suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Creswell and Poth (2017) outlined the research process, the evaluation of codes, and explained discerned categories and emerging themes. The benefits of this journal were two-fold: the audit trail provided transparency towards the project while also providing a source of reliability. This audit trail could be valuable toward future studies in similar lines of research.

## Chapter 4

### Results

The purpose of this study was to explore student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in first-year beginning band and orchestra classrooms. A secondary purpose of this study was to investigate whether unique instrumental ensembles or various school settings demonstrated unique student attitudes regarding enrollment and retention rates in beginning band or orchestra classes. Reported enrollment and retention rates of participating ensembles supplemented and supported qualitative results.

A total of seven categories emerged during qualitative data analysis that grouped student responses into categories reflecting the research purposes and questions. The categories were: (a) family, (b) fun, (c) music, (d) musical history, (e) opportunities, (f) social, and (g) teacher. The category of “family” reflected positive statements of a family’s values of music, participation in music, or support in music. The category of “fun” described positive, non-musical statements about involvement in instrumental music, including non-musical field trips, special events, and activities involved in band or orchestra. This category also included generic, though enthusiastic, comments about being involved in instrumental music such as “Orchestra is fun.” The “musical” category included statements regarding musical sound, music education, and musical challenges. The “music history” category included statements about involvement in private lessons or prior experience with an instrument. This category also included a summer recruitment program in the suburban setting that gave students significant musical training prior to enrollment in beginning band or orchestra. The “opportunities” category reflected statements about unique experiences in instrumental music, or future plans utilizing instrumental music. The “social” category demarked any comments about people at school, including friends, and their interpretation of, or

involvement in, band or orchestra. Finally, the “teacher” category included any positive statements regarding qualities of the music teacher. In one instance, the category was used to describe a non-musical teacher that influenced a student’s attitude of instrumental music.

The researcher realized that although the coding of data provided a significant amount of information regarding enrollment and retention rates and attitudes in beginning band and orchestra, it would not provide the whole picture. The researcher created visual models to reflect the role each category played, or did not play, in answering each research question (Figures 4.1 – 4.10). These visual models aided in explaining emerging themes derived using the constant comparative method. In some situations, students cited multiple reasons for enrolling or continuing their enrollment in band or orchestra classes, so cited categories exceeded the total number of students. At the completion of qualitative data analysis, all identifying information was changed throughout the research report, including interview transcripts, to ensure the anonymity of each person and school involved in the study.

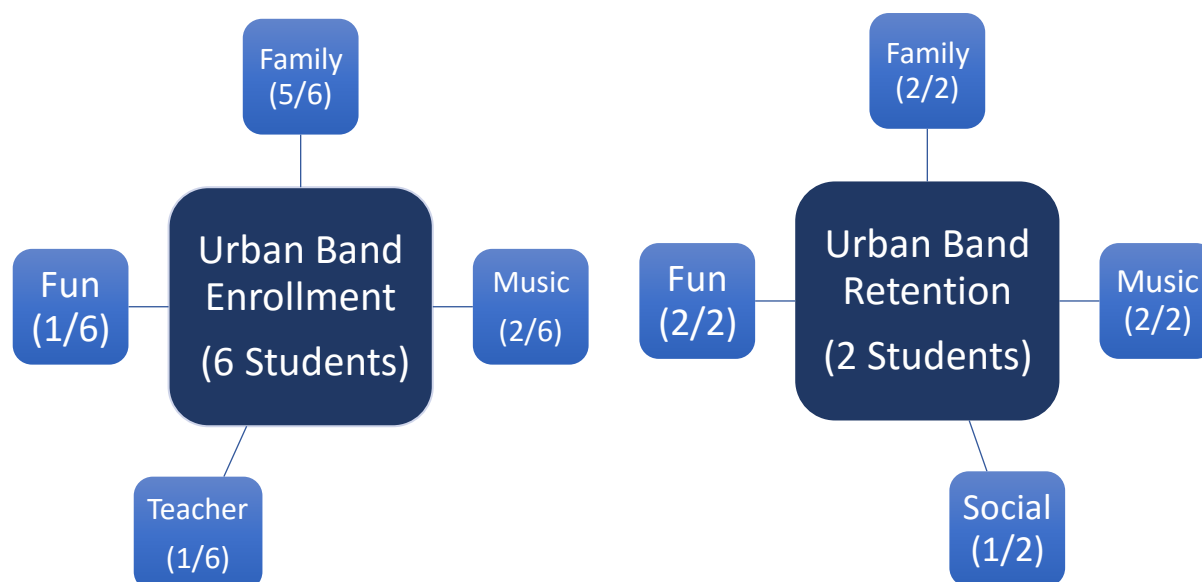
### **Research Questions 1 and 2**

Focus group transcripts involving one band and one orchestra ensemble from each setting were analyzed in terms of student attitudes towards enrollment and retention. These attitudes provided answers to the first two research questions. The first research question inquired why students chose to enroll in respective beginning band and orchestra ensembles. The second research question inquired why students chose to continue enrolling in their respective band and orchestra ensembles after the first year of instruction. The following section answers the first two research questions in the order of which those focus group interviews took place.

## Urban Band

Band class at the urban school setting took place directly after recess in the cafeteria. Students not enrolled in band went to either simultaneously occurring general music class or PE. A total of 30 students were enrolled in the beginning band. Band class split into two rotating rehearsal groups: a woodwind class and a brass class with percussion split between the two. Interviewed students were from the woodwind class. Enrollment in classes for the following school year took place between the initial focus group interview and the follow up interview. Many students returned parent consent forms to participate in the focus group interviews, so students were randomly selected to participate. Of the six students in the interview, five were girls and one was a boy. Three students were clarinet players, two were flute players, and one was a saxophone player.

Figure 4.1 Categorical Results of the Urban Band



Student-reported reasons for enrolling in the initial year of beginning band centered largely around the family. Of the six students interviewed, five students had family members that had played an instrument in the past. These family members included parents, grandparents, or siblings. These same five students also reported that these family musicians influenced their decision to enroll in the first year of band. The one student that did not have a history of family musicians was encouraged by a non-musical teacher at her school to join band. Two students also reported joining beginning band because they were attracted to the specific sound of their chosen instrument.

Of the six students that participated in the focus group interview, two stated that they planned to return to band class the following school year. Kathryn would have the same band teacher the following year at her new middle school, and Maria was enrolling in a local private school where she would have a new band director. Both returning students reported that they looked forward to band field trips or competitions in middle school band. While both girls stated their intention to continue band in sixth grade, neither felt sure that they would continue playing in band beyond that. Both girls stated that they had other activities they enjoyed, particularly sports, that made the decision to stay in band difficult.

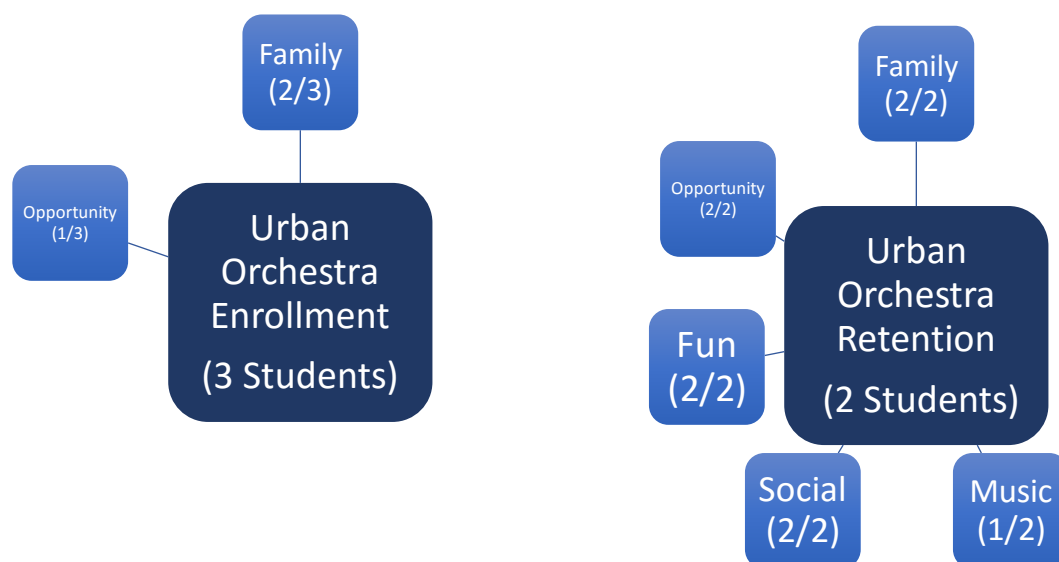
The role of the family continued to play a role for these two students as they made their decisions to enroll the following year. Both students cited support from their families throughout the initial interview as playing a role in their musical life. Kathryn said that she and her older siblings sometimes played concerts for their parents in the home using music from her fifth-grade band book. Maria, an alto sax player, cited multiple generations of saxophonists in her family, and shared that they thought she played well and encouraged her to continue in band. Her cousin encouraged her to join band at her new private school because of the individual attention

she would get on her instrument, and the resulting quality of the ensemble due to the great teachers.

### Urban Orchestra

Orchestra class in the urban setting took place in the middle of the afternoon during simultaneously occurring recess time. There were a total of 12 students in the beginning orchestra. Orchestra class met daily with rotating sections of the class. Enrollment in classes for the following school year took place between the initial focus group interview and the follow up interview. Three students returned completed consent forms, and all three were interviewed. Of the three students in the interview, two were girls and one was a boy. Two students were violin players, and one was a cello player.

Figure 4.2 Categorical Results of the Urban Orchestra



Two students noted that an adult influenced their decision to sign up for their first year of orchestra. Noah's mother told him that he was enrolling in beginning orchestra whether he wanted to or not. Summer was inspired by her father who instilled in her values of

accomplishing new goals and taking a different path from her older family members. Elisa later revealed that her grandmother was a former orchestra player, though she never mentioned her grandmother as a guiding influence to initially enroll. Instead, Elisa reported that joining beginning orchestra was an opportunity to try something new.

Two of the three interviewed students elected to continue in orchestra class the following school year. Noah and Elisa were excited to continue in orchestra because they felt it was a good place to make friends. Noah stated that he was usually shy at school and rarely talked, but orchestra was a place for him to fit in at school because “Orchestra is mostly meant for bringing people together. So, like, if you mostly have no friends, you can join an orchestra club, and mostly, everybody there is nice and all that.” He also shared, multiple times, that he feared his big brother, and playing in orchestra helped calm him down after hostile interactions with his sibling. Elisa was new the school earlier that school year and made friends in orchestra class. Both felt supported by adults at home to continue pursuing orchestra. Both students stated that orchestra was a fun class to participate in, and that they hoped to continue playing their instruments in college. Elisa stated that she was considering pursuing a career as an orchestra teacher to follow in her grandmother’s footsteps.

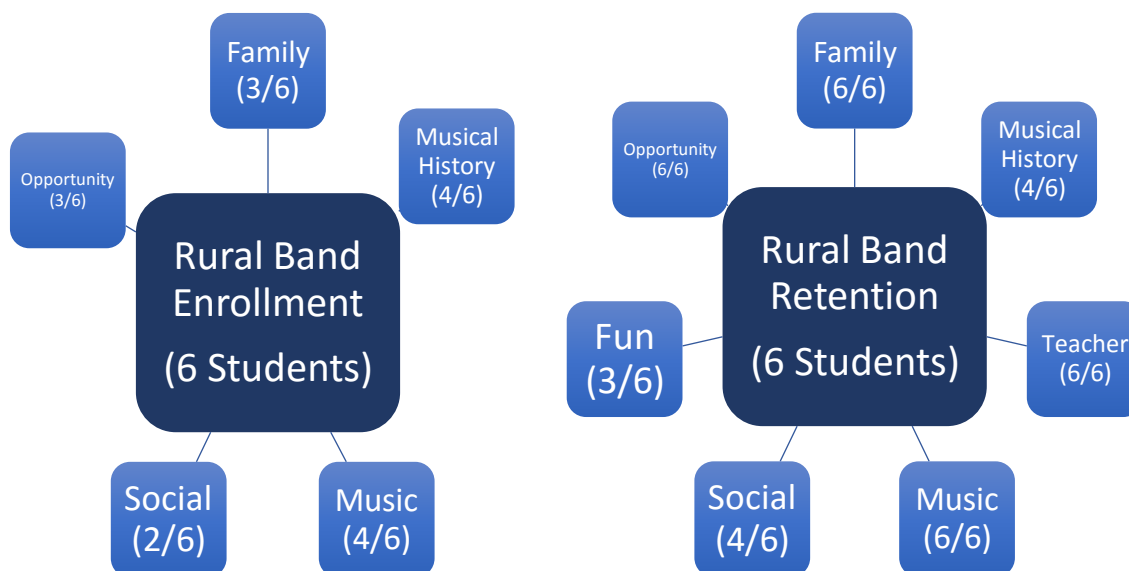
### **Rural Band**

Band class in the rural setting took place in the designated band room for the elementary, middle, and high school in the district. Students had the same band director fifth- through twelfth-grade. Students not involved in band attended a study hall. The school district did not offer an orchestra class. A total of 22 students were enrolled in the beginning band at the school. Band class met daily for a 40-minute class period. All six students with completed consent forms were interviewed. Of the six students in the interview, four were boys, and two were girls. Two



students were clarinet players, two were trombone players, one was a trumpet player, and one was a percussionist.

Figure 4.3 Categorical Results of the Rural Band



Student-reported reasons for joining beginning band centered largely around the family. All six students had family members that played an instrument at some point in their lives, and three of the six students explained that those family members inspired them to join band. Five students had family members that played the same instrument as them. Five total students stated that they had other instruments in their home before enrolling in band class. Four students had older siblings that had been, or were currently involved in band at the grade school level, or in college marching bands. In addition to these family influences, three students stated that they joined band for the opportunity to try something new, and two were excited to be part of a group.

All six students were enthusiastic to report their intentions to enroll in band again in sixth-grade. Each cited their teacher, Mr. Singer (pseudonym), as a leading influence in their decision to stay in band the following school year. The students found him funny, engaging, and supportive. Alexandra said that “he (was) fun for kids.... Mr. Singer makes (band) more

interesting every single day.” They believed he was a good teacher, and two directly stated that he was their favorite teacher. New musical challenges encountered in class also appealed to most students. The students discussed how they appreciated their band director for approaching these new skills in a humorous and engaging way that made them comfortable in the learning environment. Once again, all six students reported support from family members, specifically adults, that motivated them to continue in band the following year. Of the six students, five stated that they saw band in their future. Four wanted to pursue band at the college level, with two citing marching bands they wanted to be involved in. One student was hoping for scholarship support for her musical participation in college, another was hoping to pursue a degree at a local university’s School of Music. Other less-frequently cited reasons for continuing band included, but were not limited to, performances, fun literature, friends in band, playing music with others, and new instruments available for students to learn as they progressed in the band program. In conclusion, a quote by Alexandra encapsulated the multifaceted experience of the rural band students:

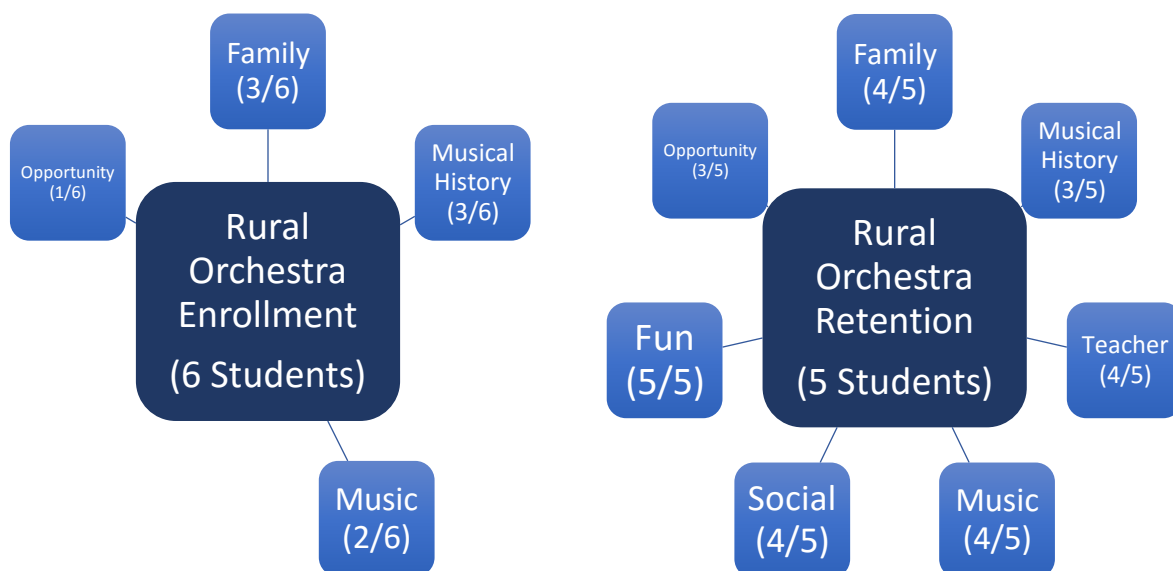
I get to hang out with my friends, like I already said. And Mr. Singer is really funny, he's a nice person and stuff like that. And we really get to learn interesting songs, and you just to get to hear yourself get better and better and better and watch everyone else be like, kinda proud of you and work with you.

### **Rural Orchestra**

Orchestra class in the rural setting took place in the designated orchestra room. The school district also offered band and choir electives. A total of 17 students took beginning orchestra at the middle school. Orchestra class met daily for a 46-minute class period. Many students returned parent/guardian consent forms to participate in the focus group interviews, so

the researcher utilized the previously stated random-selection method to select participants. Of the six students in the focus group, four were boys, and two were girls. Two students were bass players, two were violin players, one was a cello player, and one was a viola player.

Figure 4.4 Categorical Results of the Rural Orchestra



Students initially joined beginning orchestra for several reasons. Two students had family members that had played in orchestra, influencing their decision. Landon was the first of his family to play an instrument, and was proud of this accomplishment. Three students had taken music lessons prior to starting sixth-grade orchestra. Two students played piano, and one played guitar and bass. Riley was inspired to play a unique instrument after she “watched a high school concert, an orchestra concert and realized there were only two violas.”

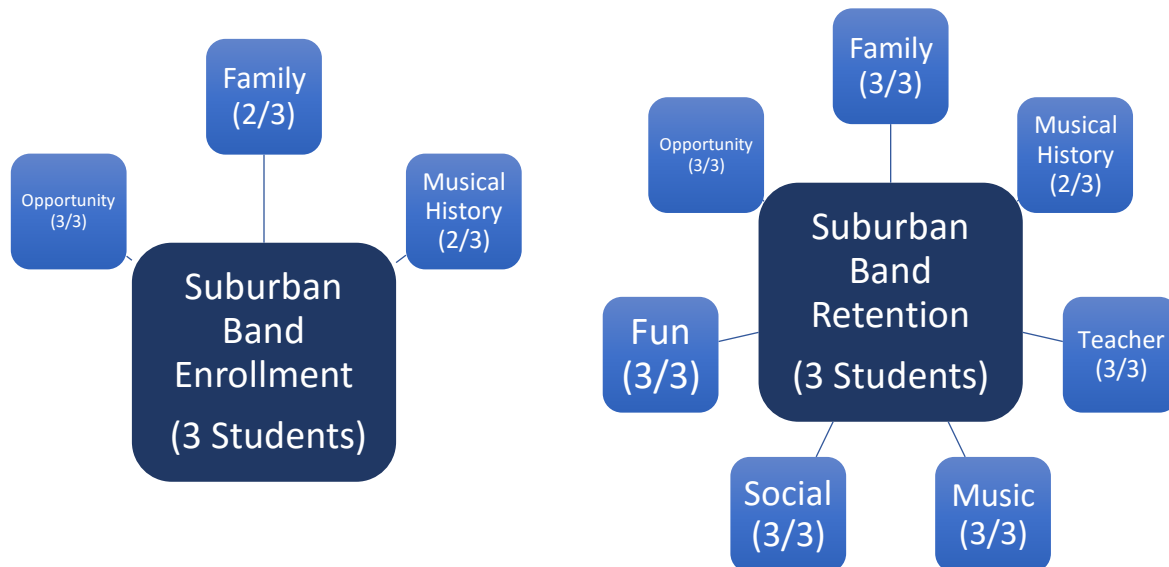
Of the six students interviewed, five stated that they planned to enroll in orchestra class again the following school year. All but one student mentioned the role their families played in the support of their music education. Most students reported that their teacher was funny and good at his job, influencing their decision to return to class. Students also stated that their friends were in orchestra, so it was natural to want to continue the following school year.

Students had performed at their first contest a few weeks prior and were excited to talk about that experience. Rachel thought contest was “kinda cool” because she had never been “rated on how [she] played in orchestra.” Landon also provided input on his contest experience, saying, “Dude. I was kinda nervous because, I mean, it's only one guy but, he knows all this stuff. So, it's like having multiple people in front of you. I liked it, but I was like, really nervous.” For these students, the musical challenges and fun performances involved in orchestra made the class fun. Three separate students mentioned the possibility of receiving college scholarships for playing an instrument when they graduated high school. Riley even stated that she planned to major in music at a local university to learn how to teach music lessons and pursue a career in youth music ministry.

### **Suburban Band**

Band class at the suburban middle school took place in the designated band classroom. Band class occurred as a regularly-scheduled rotation in the normal school day, and students attended class daily. Orchestra and choir courses were also available at the school. Sixth-grade band classes split into brass and woodwind classes. Focus groups were comprised of students in the brass class. A total of 58 students took part in the sixth-grade band at the middle school. Three students returned signed consent forms and all three we interviewed. Of the three students in the interview, two were boys, and one was a girl. Two students were trumpet players, and one student was a trombone player.

Figure 4.5 Categorical Results of the Suburban Band



All three students reported that they originally joined band class to try something new. The three students had previously been involved in sports and reported that beginning band was exciting because it was a unique opportunity. Logan had no history of family musicians, but after attending a summer music camp where he got to try different instruments, was excited to play the trumpet in sixth-grade:

I think that this, uh, I did the Apprentice music program, so I really like band, the brass thing. And so we just, we didn't even press down any of the notes, we just blew and I just really liked it. And I was just like, this is going to be easy!

Brooke and Cole had musicians in their family, specifically family members that played the same instrument as them. Brooke came from a “long line of people that played the trumpet,” and Cole decided to join band because his “Grandpa played the trombone.” In conversation, they both stated that their parents encouraged them to select the same instruments as those in their family.

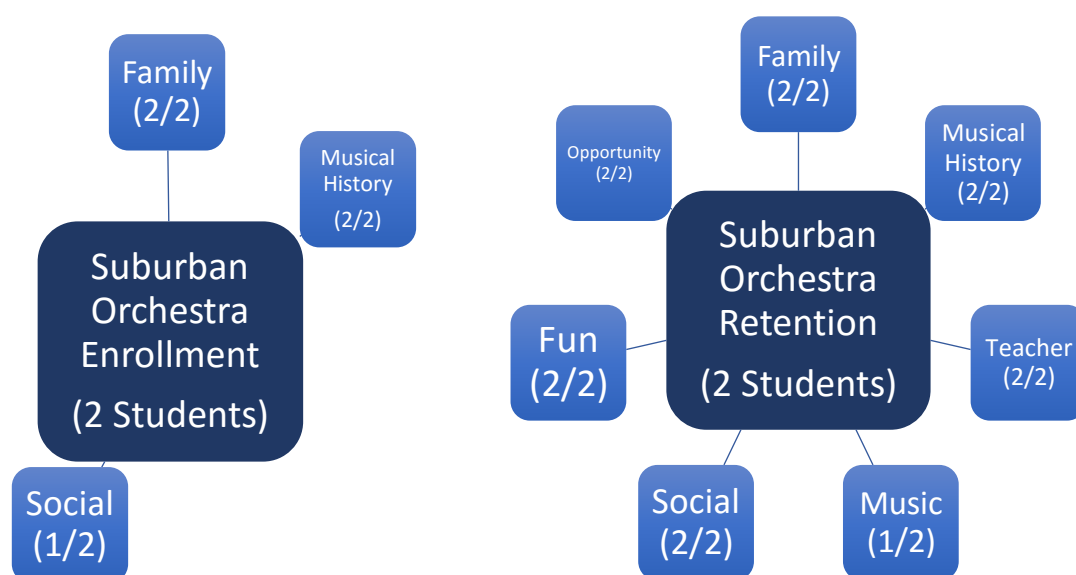
The three students all reported a desire to continue their band studies the following school year. They also provided largely uniform reasoning for their choices to continue. All three found that their lead band teacher made class a supportive and comfortable experience. They found her helpful and nice. Within the middle school the students attended, band was seen as “cool,” and many of the students’ friends were also involved in the group. The students enjoyed attending class because they got to learn new techniques and play their instruments with a group.

Brooke and Cole both saw themselves participating in band beyond grade school. Cole was excited to someday join the marching band at a local university, and Brooke was considering a career involving music. While Logan did not express interest in playing in band at the college level, he was excited to talk about the competitive eighth grade band at his school. Brooke was excited to rehearse with woodwind players in seventh-grade and hear new musical sounds. Cole and Logan both expressed excitement about new instrument possibilities, where they both were potentially receiving new instruments from their parents in seventh-grade.

### **Suburban Orchestra**

Orchestra class in the suburban setting took place in the designated orchestra room. The school also offered band and choir courses. After additional class visits were scheduled to recruit students to participate in the first focus group, only two students returned signed consent forms. Both were interviewed, and both were girls. One student played the viola, and one played the bass.

Figure 4.6 Categorical Results of the Suburban Orchestra



Both students reported that family members had participated in school music in the past. Sara's aunt and mother both played violin growing up, but when it came time for Sara to enroll, she gravitated towards the viola. Zoey's older siblings had all played in band growing up but Zoey wanted to be different from her siblings. She considered signing up for band, but after walking into orchestra class on the first day and finding friends there, stuck with her original plan to play the bass. Throughout the interview, both students stated that they enjoyed having their friends with them in orchestra class.

Both students had decided to enroll in orchestra again in seventh-grade. Both found that their teacher was an influence on their decision to stay. They found her supportive and helpful in their learning experience. They also stated that they disliked days when they had substitutes because their regular teacher was so good at her job. The adults in their lives also contributed to

their reasons for staying: both cited support at home from family members, and felt that their parents were proud of them being in orchestra.

Both found orchestra to be a fun class to attend. There were differences, though, in why each girl found orchestra to be fun. Sara cited both musical and nonmusical aspects of orchestra in her reason for continued participation:

I like learning, like, how to play something, or do something I haven't done yet.

And it kinda gets pretty interesting when you're playing with other people. And we get to learn our mistakes more and we get along with other people and make friends.

Sara saw herself participating in orchestra at the high school because she felt inspired after hearing one of their performances.

Zoey's positive experience in orchestra largely centered around nonmusical aspects. She enjoyed spending time with her friends in class, and was happy to report that they were also playing in the orchestra next year. She enjoyed the fun activities of orchestra like class parties and movie days. She also enjoyed skipping other academic classes on concert days when the whole orchestra would rehearse together in the auditorium.

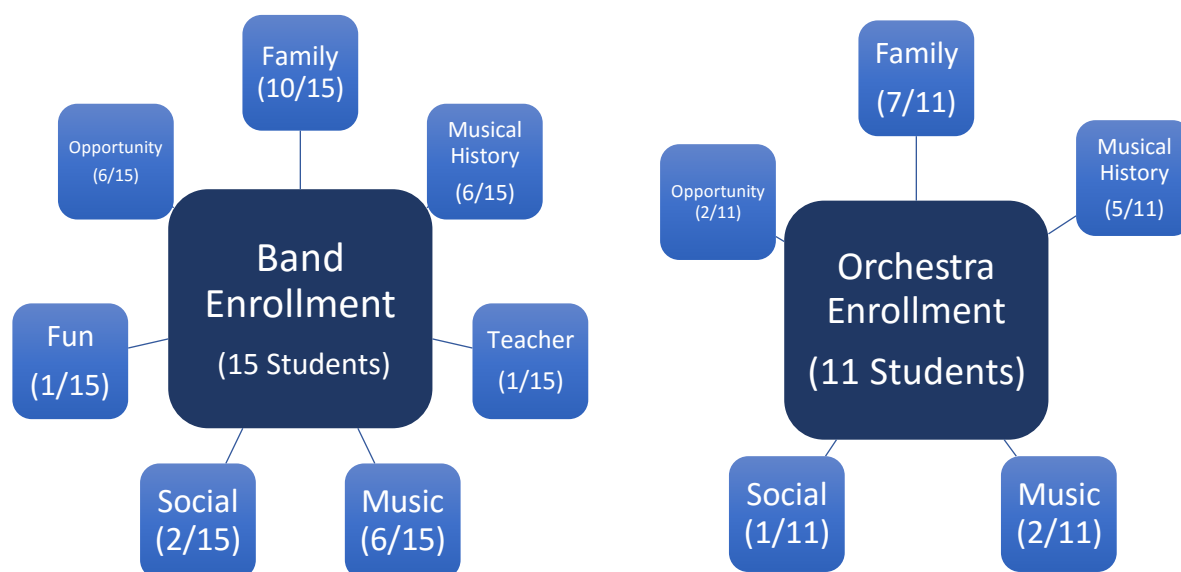
### **Research Question 3**

#### **Ensemble Comparison**

Of the total students interviewed, 15 participated in band, and 11 played in the orchestra. A comparison analysis of category frequencies between band and orchestral identified potential themes and unique reasons for enrollment in the first year of band or orchestra or retention after the first year of instruction.



Figure 4.7. Categorical Comparison of Ensemble Enrollment

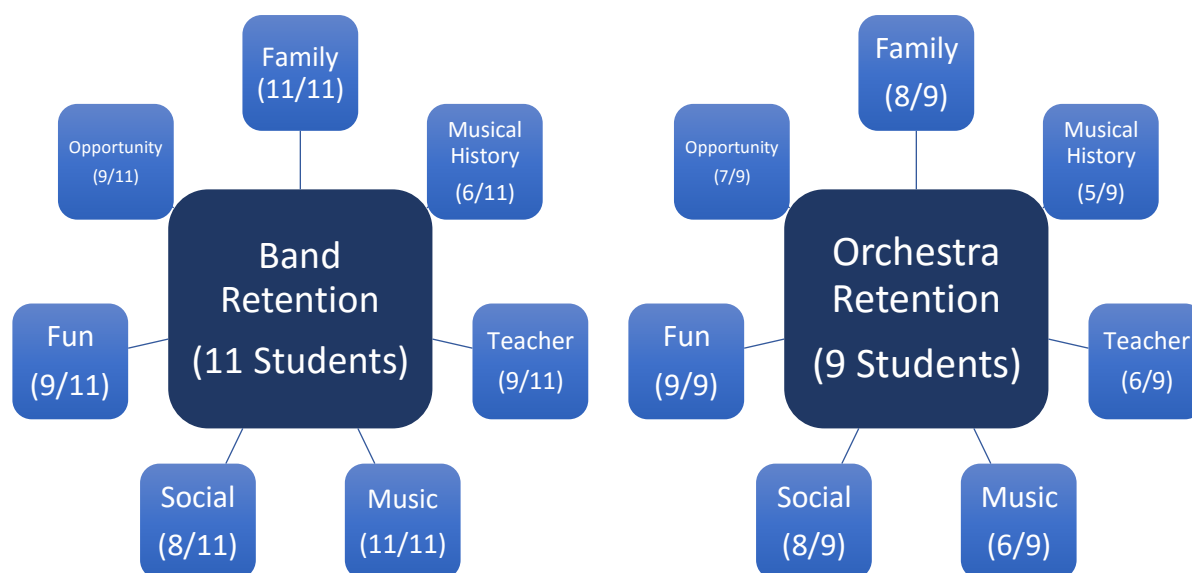


In both ensembles, most students joined instrumental music under perceived family support. Adults played a significant role in both the band and orchestra ensemble in influencing students to sign up for instrumental music. More students in the band ensemble seemed to perceive new opportunities for joining beginning band. This is likely due to the contribution of all three suburban band students stating that they joined band to try an activity that wasn't sports-related. Both ensemble groups contained students inspired to join instrumental music because they liked the sound their chosen instrument made. The band students, though, stated in multiple settings that they preferred the sound of band instruments over string instruments. No orchestra students had anything negative to say about the band ensemble or its instruments.

Once again, the role of the family was prominent in students' decisions to continue in instrumental music after the first year of instruction. All returning band students noted family support in some capacity, as did nearly all orchestra students. The role of the teacher played a

slightly more impactful role in the band classroom than the orchestra classroom, though this may have been circumstantial to the urban orchestra program. Regardless, no student that planned to enroll in either ensemble the following school year did so without the perceived influence of some adult in their life.

Figure 4.8 Categorical Comparison of Ensemble Retention



While students in both band and orchestra saw themselves participating in instrumental music long-term, the unique ways in which students saw their future involving instrumental music was different between the two groups. More students in the band stated intention to continue playing their instruments in college. Specifically, those bands students cited particular ensembles they wanted to participate in during their college experience. Students from both ensembles mentioned the possibility of securing scholarships in college for their participation in instrumental music.

#### **Research Question 4**

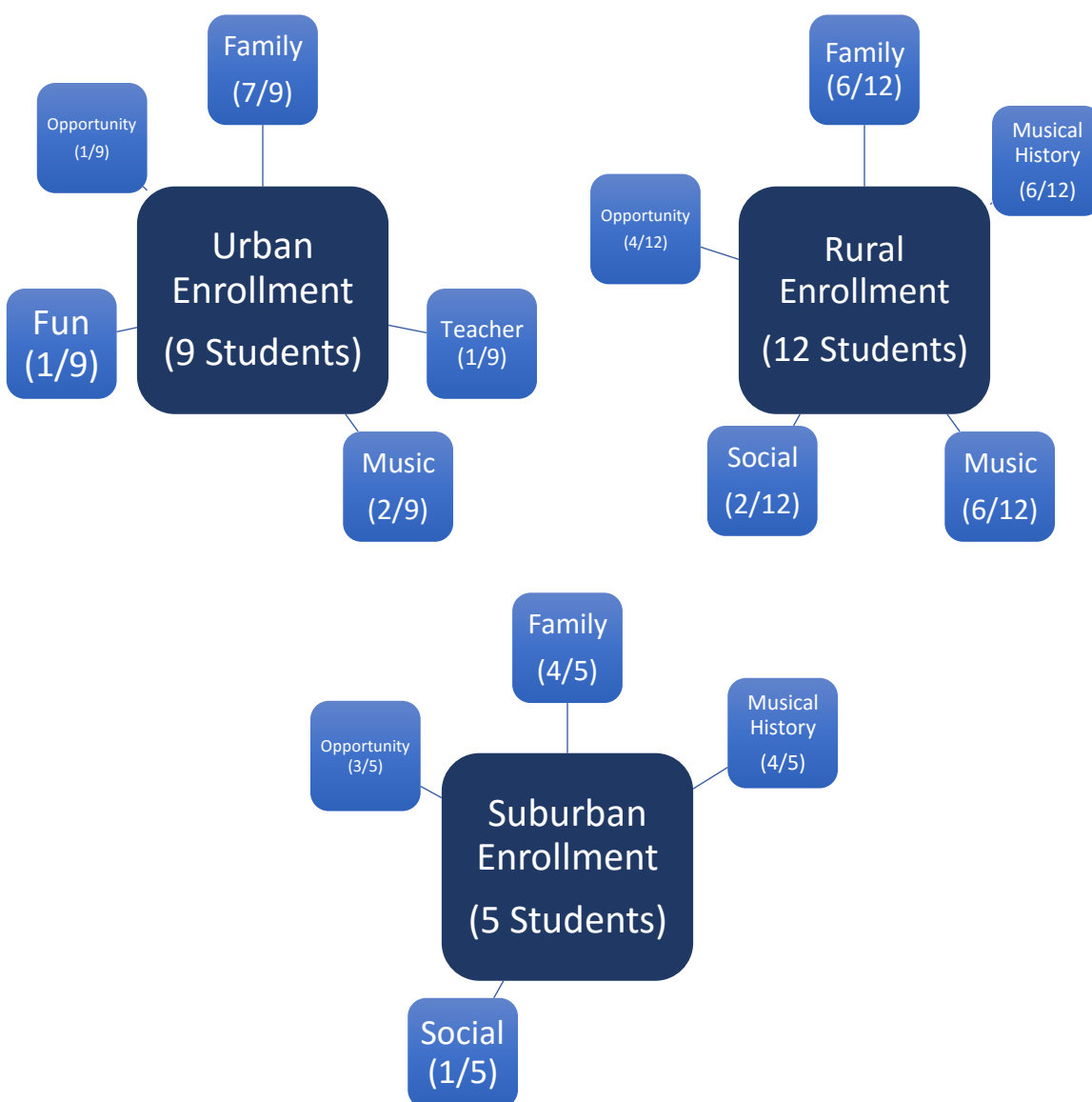
Of the 26 total students interviewed, nine went to school in an urban setting, 12 in a rural setting, and five in a suburban setting. The urban setting was unique in that no students reported music lessons or any involvement in music at home prior to enrolling in the first year of band or orchestra. Unique to the urban setting, no students reported any instruments at home beyond their own band and orchestra instruments or the instruments their siblings played in school band or orchestra. The urban setting also demonstrated the smallest percentage of family members with a background involving instrumental music. Eight of the nine total students in the urban setting directly reported that an adult encouraged them to join their beginning ensemble. Friends were also not a factor of initial enrollment in the urban setting, as no social connections initially drew students to join instrumental music classes.

The rural school setting included students from a wide range of backgrounds. The two schools interviewed were located in separate school districts. Half of the students in the rural setting had musical experiences such as private lessons, or access to instruments in the home prior to joining beginning band or orchestra. Enthusiasm for the specific sound of a student's chosen instrument was a prominent musical factor in decisions to join instrumental music.

The students interviewed in the suburban setting were located at two separate schools in the same suburban school district. Beginning band and orchestra began in sixth-grade in this district. That district offered a summer program where fourth- and fifth-graders could go and play each band and orchestra instrument to help in their decision when choosing a sixth-grade instrument. Of the five students interviewed, three attended the summer sessions and thought they were a helpful and positive experience. Three of the total students in this setting stated that they joined the initial year of instrumental music to try something other than sports, which they

had been heavily involved in growing up. All but one student had a history of instrumental music players in their family, and all five students felt their families were supportive of their decision to join band or orchestra.

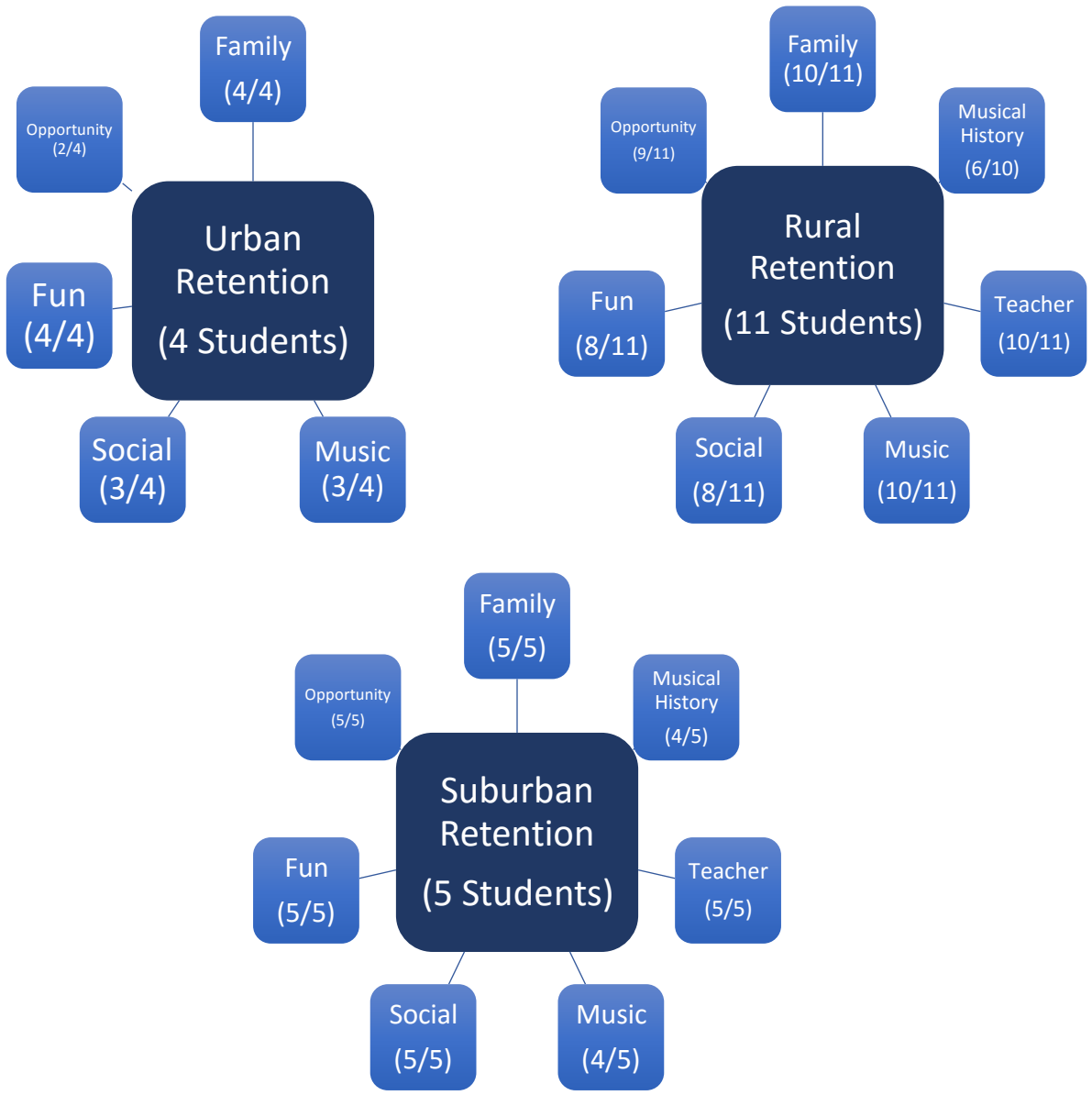
Figure 4.9 Categorical Comparison of School Setting Enrollment



The urban setting demonstrated similar internal purposes for retention in instrumental music classes after the first year, but unique reasons when comparing between school settings. All four returning urban students perceived parent music support at home. Unique to the urban

setting, no students stated that their band or orchestra teacher influenced them to continue enrollment. Few reasons were provided to support students' decisions to stay, but those that were provided were social or non-musical. Orchestra students claimed social reasons, while band students looked forward to trips and competitions.

Figure 4.10 Categorical Comparison of School Setting Retention



The rural setting demonstrated a high sample retention rate with 11 of the original 12 interviewed students returning for a second year of instrumental music. Returning students felt that the teacher had a positive influence on their classroom experience and their decision to continue in instrumental music the following school year. Rural parents were also seen as influential in their child's involvement in band or orchestra, with nine students reporting feeling supported at home. Seven of the returning eleven students planned to participate in instrumental music beyond the following school year, and six of those students saw themselves involved in college instrumental ensembles. Overall, students thought band was fun and cool.

The suburban setting featured a 100% retention rate, though the sample was small. Five students were initially interviewed, and all five musicians stated their intent to return to their respective band or orchestra classes the following school year. All students shared that their parents were supportive of their involvement in instrumental music. In addition to every student stating that their band or orchestra director was influential in their decision to re-enroll, each student had unique, kind things to say about their band director.

The suburban students also demonstrated a comprehensive list of factors influencing retention. All but one student provided musical reasoning for continuing, including the desire to learn new techniques and accomplish new music challenges. In addition, all students shared that their friends were also in their instrumental music classes, and those friends would be joining them in class next year. In conclusion, every student believed band was fun or cool, and was excited to participate the following year.

### Research Questions 5, 6, and 7

The researcher collected enrollment data for both the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years from each ensemble's teacher (Table 2). If the director did not know or could not access the true enrollment information from school counselors, he or she provided a best estimate. Projected retention rates were calculated from this enrollment information. One ensemble, the suburban orchestra, did not provide enrollment data. The mean class size of participating ensembles was 27.8 students, where reported class sizes ranged from 12 to 58 students, and total participants equaled 139. The mean teacher-reported retention rate was 87.64%, where reported rates ranged from 41.67% to 100%. Focus group retention rates were also calculated. Focus group retention rates ranged from 33.33% to 100%, with a mean rate of 76.67%.

Table 2

#### *Enrollment Totals and Projected Retention Rates of Participating Schools and Focus Groups*

	<u>Urban</u>		<u>Rural</u>		<u>Suburban</u>	
	Band	Orchestra	Band	Orchestra	Band	Orchestra
Class Enrollment Total	30	12	22	17	58	unknown
Teacher-Projected Retention Total	30	5	22	17	56	unknown
Teacher-Projected Retention Rate	100%	41.67%	100%	100%	96.55%	unknown
Focus Group Size	6	3	6	6	3	2
Focus Group Retention Total	2	2	6	5	3	2
Focus Group Retention Rate	33.33%	66.67%	100%	83.33%	100%	100%

## **Chapter 5**

### **Discussion**

The purpose of this study was to explore student attitudes towards enrollment and retention in first-year beginning band and orchestra classrooms and investigate if unique instrumental ensembles or various school settings demonstrated unique student attitudes regarding enrollment and retention rates in beginning band or orchestra classes. Previous research examined hypothesized variables influencing enrollment, retention, and attrition in all grade level ranges. Variables influencing attrition were often locally-based, and were not terribly helpful for the band and orchestra director attempting to identify useful, proactive approaches to maintaining enrollment in their programs. Limitations of quantitative approaches relied on theories of prior research to identify variables that may, or may not, still be relevant to the quickly-evolving school environment modern adolescents experience. Case study research design contributed fascinating perspective to the experience of the student in the secondary ensemble in Scheib's 2006 study, but did not extend to the beginning instrumental classroom. This study aimed to address this gap in knowledge by providing a descriptive explanation of beginning band and orchestra enrollment and retention through the eyes of the adolescent musician.

Students in beginning band and orchestra ensembles across various school settings were interviewed in focus groups where discussions of purposes driving participation in instrumental music classes were discussed. The researcher collected a large body of interview data alongside enrollment data for the current and following school year. Interpretations of these data sources would best be explained through the lens of each research question.



### **Attitudes Towards Enrollment and Retention**

The first research question sought an explanation for why students chose to enroll in beginning band and orchestra classes in the first place. Consistent with the findings of Hurley (1995), Stofko (2002), and Vasil (2013), the most prominent influence driving the decision to initially enroll in instrumental music was the family. Over half the interviewed students reported family influences in their decision to join beginning band or orchestra. As conversations in focus groups progressed, all but one student mentioned support from family members as a positive aspect of involvement in instrumental music education. Considering that instrumental music is a course that involves a financial commitment from a parent or guardian, it seems logical that adults emerged as playing a prominent role within family environments. These adults showed their support of their student in several ways: some outwardly encouraged their student to join instrumental music, some listened to their playing at home and praised their progress, and others served as role models of successful instrumental musicians in the past. It comes as no surprise, then, that adults in the family continued to play an influential role when it came time for the student to decide whether to continue enrolling in instrumental music the following school year.

Another theme in the initial decision to join instrumental music emerged in codes within the family category of the analysis. Of all students that participated in the focus group interviews, over 75% stated that their various family members had played instruments in the past. These family members were not only parents, but siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Students were largely aware of the role instrumental music played in the lives and histories of their family members. A surprising number of students not only wanted to pursue to the same instrument as a family members, but felt encouraged by their parent to select that

instrument in beginning band or orchestra. Students who chose to play these family instruments were often proud of their continued legacy.

Naturally, though, not all students had family members previously involved in instrumental music. A few students proudly reported that they were the first of their family to pursue an instrument. For some students, being the first in his or her family to pursue instrumental music was a demonstration of ambition and exceptionality. For other students, though, intentions were modest in that he or she simply wanted to try something new. All students that joined band or orchestra without the influence of a family musician, though, mentioned either motivation to become part of a group or participate in an activity with their friends as positive aspects of being involved in these ensembles. Still, the role the parents of these select students was still significant in that nearly all students perceived support from the adults in their family for being involved in beginning band or orchestra.

A final discovery within the scope of the first research question indicated that the new band or orchestra teacher in a child's beginning instrumental ensemble played little to no role in decisions to join. A single student mentioned her orchestra teacher as a reason for joining beginning orchestra, and that was only because the teacher was a friend of her older brother. One may ponder the effectiveness of beginning band and orchestra recruitment. Considering recruitment activities were typically not discussed in focus groups without prompting by the researcher, the magnitude of recruitment effectiveness is questioned. Once again, the most prevalent theme influencing the decision to join both beginning instrumental courses was the family, and specifically, the adults in a child's family. Those adults were most often the students' parents. Teachers may benefit from focusing recruitment energies on the *recruitment of families* to a program rather than the recruitment of children alone.

The purpose of the second research question was to define why students chose to continue enrolling in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction. While not stated explicitly, the researcher wanted to know if any repeated influences of retention emerged, as past research attempts to define wide-scale influences of attrition resulted in findings with vague implications.

The decision to stay in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction was more nuanced than the decision to initially join. More emergent categories from the researcher's analysis appeared when answering the question as to why students continued their enrollment in band or orchestra than why they initially enrolled. In the most general sense, as the student progressed through their first year of instrumental music, they began to interpret their musical environment in an increasingly individual way. As the students developed more complex musical intelligence and attitudes, the complexity of the ensemble increased as well.

The role of the trusted adult still played the most prominent role in a student's decision to stay in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction. No student that indicated intentions to continue enrollment in band or orchestra the following school year did so without the perceived influence of some adult in his or her life. This may be the most significant finding of this study: *the adults in a child's life greatly impact the possibility that he or she will experience instrumental music in a positive way.*

Over the course of the year, though, a new influential adult developed a place in the hearts of students: the instrumental music teacher. Of the students enrolling in a second year of band, over 80% of the students reported their band director as having an influence on their decision to stay in band the following year. In orchestra, over 75% of students cited their orchestra director as influential in their decision to re-enroll in orchestra. These results suggest

that while family still played an important role in providing support for the student, the ability of the instrumental music teacher to connect with his or her students largely determined the stability of the ensemble after the first year.

More specifically, continuity with a band or orchestra teacher demonstrated significantly higher retention rates within the focus groups than students who changed schools and/or received a new band or orchestra teacher after their beginning year. These findings resembled the conclusions of Allen (1981) and Hartley (1996), suggesting that connection to a teacher or building seems to motivate children to continue enrolling in instrumental music class. At the building level, students who were changing schools after the first year of instrumental music were anxious about trying new classes and clubs and were less apt to stay in band at their new school. Most of those students, though, were also going to have a new instrumental music teacher at their new school. Once again, the role of the influential adult emerged when making enrollment decisions.

The role of the band or orchestra teacher was multifaceted. Students in both band and orchestra valued teachers that were kind and supportive. Some students identified prior, non-instrumental music learning environments that were hostile and unpredictable. Students appreciated their band and orchestra teacher when they were comfortable enough to make mistakes without threat of ridicule or anger from the teacher. Band and orchestra students also valued a sense of humor, though was not necessary for a connection to the teacher. In some ensembles, the connection did not even need to be entirely respectful. Students of the ensembles stated that they believed their instrumental teacher was weird, nerdy, immature, and often distracted. These traits were endearing to the students, though. The same students also reported that the teacher was hard working, good at his job, funny, and engaging.

Musical factors also appeared with greater frequency when explaining purposes for retention in band and orchestra. The various ways of which music was present in the lives of the students seemed to play a role in predicting enrollment outcomes. While these findings were not as conclusive as the role of the parent or adult, they could be of interest to those wishing to further explore reasons for instrumental retention in the future. Three unique ways in which students experienced music in their homes home emerged, suggesting interesting influences of instrumental music retention.

In a finding consistent with the research of Zdzinski et. al (2014), all students that had previously taken private music lessons, along with any student that told stories of playing instruments together with their siblings in the home, enrolled in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction. Both the experience of musical support through lessons and experiencing music together in the home have been shown by Zdzinski et. al (2014) to positively impact the musical experience of a child at school. For a school instrumental teacher, encouraging families to incorporate their youngest children in music making at home could yield more resilient school instrumental ensembles in the future.

Of the entire group of students that had musical family members, 80% of those students enrolled in a second year of instrumental music. Whether this retention statistic was a reflective of family support, musical awareness, or something else entirely was impossible to determine from interview transcripts in this study, but could be of interest in future research. For a school band or orchestra director, this finding does not provide much practical meaning beyond the possibility of recruiting siblings of instrumental music students to school bands and orchestra.

Finally, almost half of students reporting having instruments in their home besides their school band instrument enrolled for a second year of band or orchestra. This unique instance of

music exposure in the home may not be significant enough in this study to draw a statistical conclusion, but could certainly be of interest in future study of instrumental music retention. Nevertheless, all three findings related to environment suggested families encouraging involvement of music in the home could help foster stronger school band and orchestra programs.

### **Attitudes Between Ensembles**

The third and fourth research questions sought to compare attitudes regarding enrollment and retention between band and orchestra ensembles, and also between rural, suburban, and urban school settings. In general, there were few differences between the band and orchestra ensemble that may have been due to more than circumstance. Yet, some interesting themes did emerge.

When comparing factors influencing enrollment in band or orchestra, both groups were similarly influenced by family. Within the orchestra focus groups, there was a higher percentage of students from families with no past instrumental music experiences. This could be reflective of the smaller number of orchestra classes available to American students in comparison to band class offerings (Elpus, 2014; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Abril & Gault, 2006). This did not seem to have any impact on retention in the group, though.

Retention factors revealed more unique themes between ensembles. When considering future participation in instrumental music ensembles, band students had more clearly-defined aspirations than their orchestral counterparts. This is likely because three students expressed wanting to be involved in specific college marching bands, an opportunity not available to those playing orchestral instruments. This information could be of use to college band directors. To the students in this study, college marching bands were arguably viewed as a brand rather than a

band. The students never stated desires to be in college marching bands because of the quality of that ensemble, but rather, because of the symbolic role those bands play for the university. It is also surprising that some of the students, being quite young and new in the instrumental music community, were already identifying with specific collegiate performing groups. Future college marching band branding and recruitment could look quite different if both the age of the targeted population and the symbolic nature of these ensembles are considered.

New instrument possibilities emerged as a unique factor in band students' intention to pursue instrumental music for a second year. Four band students stated that they were excited to explore new instruments by either switching to something either new or upgrading to a better model of their current instrument. There are a larger number of instrument possibilities in band than in orchestra. As students stay involved in band programs, more instruments become available to them. Band, by nature, fosters an exciting environment of change and evolution in middle school band that is different than the nature of the orchestra classroom. While it might be easier for a band director to offer in his or her own programs, orchestra and band teachers could increase retention by offering additional opportunities for instrument learning throughout a student's tenure in a program.

### **Attitudes Between School Settings**

While the rural and suburban settings were relative mirrors of each others' enrollment and retention motivations, the urban setting in this study demonstrated its own, unique set of traits. The instrumental music teacher emerged as a strong, positive factor in rural and suburban students' decisions to stay in band and orchestra, but the teacher in the urban setting did not seem to play as much of an influential role. No urban students cited their band or orchestra teacher as their motivation for staying in instrumental music the following school year. The circumstances

of the specific schools, though, may have lent themselves to these results. In one school, the teacher was moving out of state and would not be the students' instructor the following year. In the other school, one of the two students planning to re-enroll was transferring to a private school where she would have a new teacher.

In contrast, the teacher largely influenced the rural setting. In both rural school locations, one teacher instructed band or orchestra ensembles from the first year of instruction through the senior year of high school. Students at both schools felt their teachers were helpful, funny, and good at their jobs. Within the context of these two schools, a personal connection between student and teacher enhanced their first year of instrumental music experience, influencing students to continue in future instrumental music courses. The strength or unraveling of these ensembles due to teacher continuity supports the findings of Allen (1981) and Hartley (1996). For school districts looking to increase enrollment retention in instrumental music classes, finding structural ways to establish teacher continuity for students could be effective.

The suburban setting demonstrated the greatest mix of purposes for enrolling in a second year of band or orchestra. Most students cited multiple reasons for why they were choosing to continue with band or orchestra. Those reasons included musical, nonmusical, social, and teacher-influenced motivations. A limitation of the suburban setting, though, its small sample size. Only five total students interviewed in the suburban setting and responses were largely uniform between participants. A larger sample size in future research may be more fruitful in exploring enrollment and retention in this specific setting.

It is difficult to say whether any findings within specific school settings were representative of a larger population or were simply circumstantial. Environmental factors influencing enrollment and retention were not strongly supported by prior studies, nor did they



emerge as prominent in categorical analysis of the present study. Implications for the lack of findings in this context may suggest that school settings do not experience unique trends in enrollment and retention, and that relationships between students, parents, and teachers may be the true influencer.

### **Enrollment Counts and Retention Rates**

The fifth, sixth, and seventh questions concerned quantitative data defining enrollment counts and projected retention rates. The fourth research question asked for defined enrollment counts and retention rates from each individual school. The researcher collected enrollment data from band and orchestra teachers and from focus groups. Retention rates were calculated by the researcher. All findings recorded by the researcher can be found in Table 2 on page 61. The fifth research question sought to compare enrollment and retention rates between the two ensembles and the three school settings.

A discussion regarding the accuracy of these results is necessary before further analysis. Some teachers provided enrollment and retention data that seemed somewhat informed by information from school counselors and/or relationships with students. Other sources of enrollment and retention data resulted in retention rates far different than rates reported in focus groups and, as a result, seemed unreliable by the researcher. In addition, one teacher never returned emails regarding enrollment and retention data, leaving a gap in the data set. All answers to the final two research questions should be made with consideration to the error that these teacher-reported enrollment counts and retention rates introduced.

Teacher reported retention rates in the band ensemble were higher than teacher-reported orchestra enrollment rates. Here, it should be considered that one of the band teachers reported a projected 100% retention rate while only two of six students in that ensemble's focus group

stated intention to continue enrollment in band the following school year. The retention rate across the various school settings were reflective of numerous variables. The lowest focus group-reported retention rates were in the urban setting. The highest retention rates were in the suburban setting. While students in the rural and suburban setting knew they would have their same instructor for instrumental music the following year, most students in the urban setting did not know their teacher for the following year. This is another example of teacher and building continuity that played a role in students' decision to continue enrolling in instrumental music.

### **Conclusion**

Trusted adults played a vital role in influencing children to enroll and persist in instrumental music courses. Parents and families emerged as the leading influence of students' decisions to enroll in the first year of band or orchestra. Continued family support fueled students interest beyond their initial enrollment in instrumental music and provided encouragement to pursue instrumental music after the first year of instruction. The beginning band or orchestra teacher that made personal connections with his or her students during the first year of instrumental music demonstrated the highest retention rates. Additional musical factors, social factors, and even some nonmusical factors presented themselves as moderate influences on the young student's decision to stay in band or orchestra after the first year of instruction. While some ensemble-specific and school setting-specific trends emerged, they were not believed to be representative of wider populations.

### **Reflections**

One surprising event occurred during the follow-up interviews of the focus group sessions. When the researcher assumed that when she returned to each focus group to read the summary paragraph, the students would agree with the content, answer any remaining questions,

and return to their instrumental music class. A surprising finding occurred twice when the summary paragraph included a statement that portrayed the students' teacher in a negative light. While all students agreed that the paragraphs were truly reflective of what the students said in the initial interviews, students were uncomfortable, and sometimes mildly upset when confronted with negative, though accurate, statements about their teacher. In these two circumstances, the reading of the paragraph prefaced tense conversation about the students' instrumental music teacher. Both times, students expressed that they thought the negative statements about their teacher were unfair, but then continued to reinforce those same negative associations about their instructor from the first interview.

These interactions between the researcher and the interviewed students revealed a complex relationship between the teacher and his or her students. It was determined that the true context of these relationships, particularly when students do not see the teacher in a totally positive way, could be more complicated than a summary paragraph could describe.

### **Limitations**

As expected when studying human participants, situations introducing error and other limitations were present in the study. In a perfect study, each focus group would have contained six students. This was not the reality of this study. Larger focus groups often provided more variation in responses from students, though a greater understanding of individual participants was possible in the smaller focus groups.

Current literature suggests that focus groups should occur in sets no smaller than four people (Morgan, 1997). In this study, two focus groups occurred with a total of three students, and one occurred with only two students. The researcher elected to proceed with interviews regardless of these small sample sizes in effort to complete interviews in a timely manner. In the

suburban setting, the total number of focus group participants was particularly small. It is likely that some of the attitudes portrayed in that school setting were not representative of attitudes in larger samples.

Another possible limitation in this study included the type of student that would choose to participate in a focus group. It is possible that a student who disliked band or orchestra would not be as willing to participate in a focus group interview about their ensemble experience as a student who enjoyed band or orchestra. Another possibility could suggest that a certain type of student returns permission slips, limiting the variation of potential responses. Finally, it is also possible that participants involved in this study's focus groups were more likely to say positive things about their instrumental ensembles than the typical student.

Finally, information from band and orchestra directors concerning anticipated retention numbers seemed reliable in some situations, but not in others. Four of the six urban band focus group participants declared no intention of continuing band the following school year, but the teacher confidently stated that each student was enrolling in band again the following fall. Also, teacher-reported enrollment counts and retention projections were never received from the teacher of the participating suburban orchestra. In conclusion, data collected directly from teachers was not deemed reliable enough for analysis. This limited the scope of accurate understanding of retention rates in certain situations, though the attitudes of students still provided a glimpse into local enrollment trends.

### **Summary, Implications and Future Research**

The implications of these findings for grade school band and orchestra directors involve largely nonmusical factors. The findings suggest that successful programs are consistently built on two pillars: initial enrollment supported by family, and continued enrollment influenced by

both the support of an engaged instrumental music teacher and continued family support. The role of the encouraging adult emerged as the most influential factor in a child's decision to participate in instrumental music. This finding could be helpful in designing strategies for retaining students in school instrumental programs.

Regarding recruitment, a modern practice of recruiting families to a band or orchestra program may be more beneficial than recruitment processes that focus on the student. Since students are heavily influenced by their parents when signing up for band or orchestra, it may be more important that a parent hold positive associations regarding instrumental music than any potential student.

During that first year of instruction, this study suggests that the instrumental music teacher should make a concerted effort to foster personal relationships with students by engaging them, challenging them, demonstrating kindness and support, and maybe even exposing a sense of humor. For teachers who instruct ensembles over consecutive years, making connections with students in beginning ensembles as quickly as possible may lead to more resilient groups throughout rounds of enrollment. For feeder programs involving multiple teachers, early exposure to future band and orchestra directors may be beneficial.

Further research could be fruitful through exploration of several avenues. The purpose of this study was not to analyze hypothesized variables influencing enrollment and retention, but rather, to discover naturally-emerging variables influencing the process. A replication of this study in a new setting outside the current geographical location might provide insight into whether the hypothesized influence of families and trusted adults are truly the leading influences of enrollment and retention in the beginning instrumental classroom, and whether the instrumental music teacher truly plays such a prominent role in student retention.

Since categories emerged in this study as factors of beginning band enrollment and retention, those variables could be tested for statistical significance using quantitative methods in the future. These categories could also be tested at different age levels to examine significance across different age-group populations, though much research already exists to explain enrollment and retention in secondary ensembles. This study did not explore the influence of musical achievement on enrollment and retention, nor did it explore student perceptions of their own musical competency on their decisions to continue enrollment. Whether this was because it simply never came up in focus group discussion, or whether it was because of the focus group protocol design will likely never be known. A replication of this study could easily incorporate these variables for exploration.

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## Appendix A

### Pilot Study Focus Group Protocol

#### Before the Interview

- We are researchers from the University of Kansas
- We are here today to talk about being in band at your school for about 30 minutes.
- We don't work for your school, so your answers will not impact you once you leave this room. We are here to learn from you.

#### Ground Rules

- Allow others to speak without interruption, but feel free to respond to your classmates when they finish talking.
- Everyone should try and talk. We are respectful of each other today and nothing will get back to the teachers or other classmates. If you decide mid-way that you don't want to participate, you are allowed to leave and go back to band class.
- We are video and audio recording this, but it won't be shared with anyone besides us. Your real names will not be used in any part of this project.
- Does anyone have any questions? Are each of you ok with staying and talking?

#### Interview Questions

##### *Opening/Intro Questions*

- To get started, tell us your name and the instrument you play.
- What prompted you to join band?

##### *Key Questions*

- What do you like about band?
- What are the positive elements about being in band?
- What are some of the negative elements about being in band?
- Are you enrolling in band next year...why?
- Why might a person decide not to enroll in band next year?
- What would you say to a person who decides not to take band next year?
- If there was a new student at your school and they wanted to know the best and worst parts about being in band so they could decide whether or not to join, what would you tell them?

##### *Influence Questions (if time)*

- I am curious what important people in your life feel about you being in band/orchestra. What do your family and friends think about you being in band/orchestra?
- Do your band directors have any role in your decisions to be in band?

##### *Ending Question*

- In summary, ..... is there anything else we should talk about?
- What questions do you feel we should ask about being in band in interviews at future schools?
- Were there any questions that seemed unclear or that you didn't know how to respond to?

## Appendix B

## Pilot Study Teacher Recruitment Email

Dear Mr. Morrison,

Good Afternoon! My name is Emily Glaser and I am a master's student in music education at The University of Kansas. Prior to my time at KU, I taught both middle and high school band in the Blue Valley School District. I was given your name by my advisor, Dr. Christopher Johnson. I am currently working on my thesis and am hoping to spend some time with one of your ensembles to develop a better understanding of beginning band.

My master's thesis work explores the student perspective of the beginning band and orchestra experience, with particular attention to enrollment motivations. My curiosity stems from personal experience in the classroom: I found that I was able to easily predict enrollment trends in my experienced ensembles, but my beginning groups were comprised of unique, unpredictable personalities. I am looking to conduct focus group interviews with first-year band and orchestra students in rural, suburban, and urban environments to get a comprehensive picture of the students' experience in that critical first year on their instrument. I am asking for access to a few of your students to gain perspective of their own experiences in their first year of band for the pilot study portion of this project. I sincerely hope you will consider helping me with this project.

The pilot focus group session would include an audio-recorded group interview of approximately 6-8 first year band students during your normal band class time. All that is required of you is that you have a secondary space available during your class time for the pilot interview to take place. The students would need no materials for this interview, and we can even sit on the floor. The interview will take about 30 minutes, or however long your class time allows. I will be interviewing the students alongside a professional researcher to practice focus group session protocol. Since this is a pilot focus group, there would be time at the end for a discussion of the interview format and suggestions for future focus group sessions. These interviews would be recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysis, though no student-, school-, or teacher-identifying information would be used in the project. Since the identity of all those involved will be protected, there is minimal risk for anyone involved in the study.

Even though this is a pilot group session, I will need parent consent for students to participate in the study. To make this easier on you, I am able to attend one of your classes prior to the focus group interviews to briefly explain the project to your entire class and distribute consent forms. This presentation would take no more than 5 minutes. I will collect signed consent forms on the day of the pilot interview. This means that you are not responsible for the collection of any forms. I have attached the parent and guardian consent form to this email for your review.

Below is a brief review of the time I am requesting from your class:

- Meeting One: Brief summary of project and distribution of consent forms (5 minutes)
- Meeting Two: Pilot focus group session with 6-8 students (30 minutes)

While I cannot offer you any monetary compensation for participation, I would be happy to provide you with an executive summary of the findings at the end of the study this summer. I realize the time I am requesting takes away from your instruction time, especially at a busy time in the year, but I hope this analysis will provide valuable and practical insight into the beginning band and orchestra experience through the eyes of the young student. If you are willing to help, I would be so grateful.

Thank you for your consideration. If you are willing to offer your time, or if you have any questions, please let me know. I look forward to your response.

Emily Glaser  
Principal Investigator  
The University of Kansas  
School of Music  
562 Murphy Hall  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045



## Focus Group Recruitment Protocol

### Introduction

The purpose of this document is to explain recruitment protocol for the Instrumental Music Retention Focus Group Study by Emily Glaser. The participants of this study include band and orchestra students from northeast Kansas public schools. Ages of the students will range from 10-12 years old.

### Recruitment Protocol

The researcher will attend a band or orchestra class of each participating ensemble. The researcher will share a brief overview of the study and invite students to participate in focus groups taking place in the coming weeks.

The following items will be discussed during this informational session:

- The purpose of the research study: To explore student motivations for enrollment in beginning band and strings classes.
- A brief overview of the function and procedure of focus groups.
- Qualification information: Any student currently enrolled in band or orchestra that plans to enroll in band or orchestra the following school year.
- Logistical information: All focus groups will take place during simultaneously occurring band or orchestra classes. Focus groups will take place for a period of 20-30 minutes.
- There are no anticipated benefits to participating except the potential fun of talking about band or orchestra with the researcher.
- There is little risk associated with participation in this study due to the nature of the focus group subject.
- Parent/Guardian consent is required for participation in the study.

Parent/Guardian consent forms will be sent home with students that day and will be collected at a communicated date prior to the focus group sessions. These consent documents contain all information covered in the information sessions, as well as contact information of the researcher.

The researcher believes that this informational session will suffice in recruiting participants for the study. It is anticipated that due to the nature of the research topic, the student participants may find the focus groups to be a fun and enjoyable experience. At this time, no additional flyers, posters, or memos planned to be distributed.

## Appendix D

### **Instrumental Music Retention Focus Groups Parent-Guardian Informed Consent**

#### INTRODUCTION

The Department of Music Education and Music Therapy at the University of Kansas supports the practice of protection for human subjects participating in research. The following information is provided for you to decide whether you wish your child to participate in the present study. You may refuse to sign this form and not allow your child to participate in this study. You should be aware that even if you agree to allow your child to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time. If you do withdraw your child from this study, it will not affect your relationship with this unit, the services it may provide to you, or the University of Kansas.

#### PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this project is to identify student reasoning for retention in instrumental music programs after the first year of study. The researcher seeks to compare similarities and differences suggested between band and orchestra programs and across different school demographics. Qualitative data will be collected for the analysis of this study.

#### PROCEDURES

Students within the instrumental music program at your child's school will be selected for the opportunity to do a focus group with the researcher. During the time of the focus group, a small group of students will be asked basic questions about their experience in instrumental music at their school. The focus groups will occur during the school day during band or orchestra class time. The focus group sessions will be recorded. After the focus group session, the audio recording will be transcribed by the researcher where all names of participants will be changed. During the data collection phase, all research documents, including recordings, will be kept in password-protected electronic files. After the transcription process is complete, all audio files will be permanently deleted. It is extremely unlikely that anything will be said in a focus group that could put any person at risk. The recordings will not be shared with the students' teachers or principal. Still, if the child ever feels the least bit uncomfortable for any reason, they are welcome to leave the focus group and return to their simultaneously occurring band or orchestra class. Recording is required for any student wishing to take part in the study. The focus group will be scheduled for no more than 30 minutes. Please be advised that although the researcher will take every precaution to maintain confidentiality of the data, the nature of focus groups prevents the researcher from guaranteeing confidentiality. The researcher would like to remind participants to respect the privacy of fellow participants and not repeat what is said in the focus group to others.

## RISKS

This project should not place any burdens, inconveniences, pain, discomforts, or risks on any person who participates.

## BENEFITS

There are no direct benefits that anyone participating in this project will likely experience. However, the data from the project should provide a picture of variables contributing to retention in elementary and middle school band and orchestra programs.

## PAYMENT TO PARTICIPANTS

No compensation for participation in any part of this study will be received by any participant.

## PARTICIPANT CONFIDENTIALITY

No student names will be documented or shared beyond the researcher's encrypted flash drive. No names will be associated directly with any specific results, or be associated in any publication or presentations with the information collected. Names of persons referred to in the study will be changed to protect the identity of the participant. Your child's information will be deleted from all files once all of your child's data are associated within one file. Your child's identifiable information will not be shared unless (a) it is required by law or university policy, or (b) you give written permission. But, it will not, and cannot be shared for but a moment, as it cannot be tracked back to any specific individual once it has been combined, as all identifying traces will have been removed.

By signing this form you give permission for the use and disclosure of your child's information, excluding your child's name, for purposes of this study at any time in the future.

## REFUSAL TO SIGN CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You are not required to sign this Consent and Authorization form and you may refuse to do so without affecting your right to any services you are receiving or may receive from the University of Kansas or to participate in any programs or events of the University of Kansas. However, if you refuse to sign, your child cannot participate in this study.

### CANCELLING THIS CONSENT AND AUTHORIZATION

You may withdraw your consent to allow participation of your child in this study at any time. You may cancel your permission to collect further information about your child, in writing, at any time, by sending your written consent cancellation to: Emily Glaser, The University of Kansas, 448 Murphy Hall, Lawrence, KS 66045.

If you cancel permission to use your child's information, the researcher will stop collecting additional information about your child. However, the researcher may use and disclose information that was gathered before they received your cancellation, as described above.

### QUESTIONS ABOUT PARTICIPATION

Questions about procedures should be directed to the researcher listed at the end of this consent form.

### PARTICIPANT CERTIFICATION:

I have read this Consent and Authorization form. I have had the opportunity to ask, and I have received answers to, any questions I had regarding the study. I understand that if I have any additional questions about my child's rights as a research participant, I may call (785) 864-7429, write to the Human Subjects Committee Lawrence Campus (HSCL), University of Kansas, 2385 Irving Hill Road, Lawrence, Kansas 66045-7568, or email [irb@ku.edu](mailto:irb@ku.edu).

I agree to allow my child to take part in this study as a research participant. By my signature I affirm that I am at least 18 years old and that I have received a copy of this Consent and Authorization form.

Type/Print Participant's Name	Date
Parent/Guardian Signature	

*[If signed by a personal representative, a description of such representative's authority to act for the individual must also be provided, e.g. parent/guardian.]*

### Researcher Contact Information

Emily Glaser  
Principal Investigator  
The University of Kansas  
448 Murphy Hall  
University of Kansas  
Lawrence, KS 66045  
[eglaser@ku.edu](mailto:eglaser@ku.edu)

Christopher Johnson, Ph.D.  
Faculty Supervisor  
Director, Music Research Institute.  
The University of Kansas  
School of Music  
410 Murphy Hall  
Lawrence, KS 66045

## Appendix E Focus Group Protocol

### Before the Interview

- My name is Emily and I am a researcher from the University of Kansas.
- I am here to talk to you today about beginning band/orchestra for about 30 minutes. My beginning band instrument was the clarinet, but I also know how to play all the instruments in the band and orchestra. Unfortunately, it's been a long time since I've been in beginning band, so I need some help from you.
- I don't work for your school, so your answers will not impact you once you leave this room. I am here to learn from.

### Ground Rules

- Allow others to speak without interruption, but feel free to respond to your classmates when they finish talking.
- Everyone should try and talk. We are respectful of each other today and nothing will get back to the teachers or other classmates. If you decide mid-way that you don't want to participate, you are allowed to leave and go back to band/orchestra class.
- I am video and audio recording this, but it won't be shared with anyone. Your real names will not be used in any part of this project.

Does anyone have any questions? Are each of you ok with staying and talking?

**[start recording devices now]**

### Interview Questions

#### *Opening/Intro Questions*

- To get started, tell me your name and the instrument you play.
- What prompted you to join band?

#### *Key Questions*

- What do you like about band?
- What are the positive elements about being in band?
- What are some of the negative elements about being in band?
- Are you enrolling in band next year...why?
- What would you say to a person who decides not to take band next year?
- If there was a new student at your school and they wanted to know the best and worst parts about being in band/orchestra so they could decide whether to join your class next year. What would you say to them?

*(continued on next page)*

*Influence Questions (if time or not already answered)*

- I am curious what important people in your life feel about you being in band/orchestra. What do your family and friends think about you being in band/orchestra?
- Do your band directors have any role in your decisions to be in band?
- Do you see yourself being involved in band or orchestra beyond next year? What does the big picture look like?

*Ending Question*

- In summary, ..... is there anything else we should talk about?
- The purpose of my project is to explore reasons why students join band/orchestra and stay or quit after the first year. What questions do you feel we should ask about being in band/orchestra in interviews at future schools?

Ending Question

- In summary, ..... is there anything else we should talk about?

## Appendix F Focus Group Teacher Recruitment Email

Hello (Teacher Name),

My name is Emily Glaser and I am a master's student in music education at The University of Kansas. I was formerly a middle school and high school band director in the Blue Valley School District, most recently at Blue Valley Southwest High School. At KU, I am focusing my thesis research on the beginning instrumental music experience, with particular attention to enrollment motivations. I am writing in hope that I may utilize one of your sixth grade ensembles to learn more about this experience.

I am looking to conduct focus group interviews with first-year band and orchestra students in rural, suburban, and urban environments to get a comprehensive picture of the first year of instruction. I am asking for access to a few of your students in your (class name) for their perspectives on beginning (band/orchestra).

Focus group sessions would include an audio and video recorded group interview of approximately 6-8 first year (band/orchestra) students during your normal band class time. All that is required of you is that you have a secondary space available during your class time for the interviews to take place. The students would need no materials for this interview, and we can even sit on the floor. The interview will take about 30 minutes, or however long your class time allows. The same students from the initial interview would also participate in a follow-up session approximately a few days following the first session to confirm the findings from the interview transcript. This follow-up session would also occur during class time and take no more than 15 minutes. These interviews would be recorded and transcribed for the purpose of analysis, though no student-, school-, or teacher-identifying information would be used in the project. Since the identity of all those involved will be protected, there is minimal risk for anyone involved in the study.

As you may have realized, parent or guardian consent will be required for any student willing to participate. To make this easier on you, I am able to attend one of your classes prior to the focus group interviews to briefly explain the project to your entire class and distribute consent forms. This presentation would take no more than 5 minutes. I will collect signed consent forms on the day of the interview. This means that you are not responsible for the collection of any forms. I have attached the parent and guardian consent form to this email for you by you and/or your school principal.

Below is a brief review of the time I am requesting from your class (all of which could be completed in one week's time):

- Meeting One: Brief summary of project and distribution of consent forms (5 minutes)
- Meeting Two: Focus group session with 6-8 students (30 minutes)
- Meeting Three: Follow-up confirmatory session with initial focus group (15 minutes)

While I cannot offer you any monetary compensation for participation, I would be happy to provide you with an executive summary of the findings at the completion of the study this summer. I realize the time I am requesting takes away from your instruction time, especially at a busy time in the year. If you are willing to help, I would be so grateful.

Thank you for your consideration! I look forward to your response.

Emily Glaser

Principal Investigator  
The University of Kansas  
448 Murphy Hall  
Lawrence, Kansas 66045  
eglaser@ku.edu

## Institutional Review Approval of Protocol – The University of Kansas

**APPROVAL OF PROTOCOL**

February 23, 2017

Emily Glaser  
eglaser@ku.edu

Dear Emily Glaser:

On 2/23/2017, the IRB reviewed the following submission:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title of Study:	Instrumental Music Retention Focus Groups
Investigator:	Emily Glaser
IRB ID:	STUDY00140596
Funding:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• Glaser Parental Consent Form - February 22 2017, • Glaser IRB Protocol - February 2017, • Student Recruitment February 22, 2017, • Glaser Focus Group Questions - February 2017.pdf

The IRB approved the study from 2/23/2017 to 2/22/2018.

1. Before 2/22/2018 submit a Continuing Review request and required attachments to request continuing approval or closure.
2. Any significant change to the protocol requires a modification approval prior to altering the project.
3. Notify HSCL about any new investigators not named in original application. Note that new investigators must take the online tutorial at [https://rgs.drupal.ku.edu/human\\_subjects\\_compliance\\_training](https://rgs.drupal.ku.edu/human_subjects_compliance_training).
4. Any injury to a subject because of the research procedure must be reported immediately.
5. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents for at least three years past completion of the research activity.

If continuing review approval is not granted before the expiration date of 2/22/2018 approval of this protocol expires on that date.

Please note university data security and handling requirements for your project:  
<https://documents.ku.edu/policies/IT/DataClassificationandHandlingProceduresGuide.htm>

You must use the final, watermarked version of the consent form, available under the "Documents" tab in eCompliance.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Dyson Elms, MPA  
IRB Administrator, KU Lawrence Campus



## Appendix H Field Note Template

Identifying Information

Key Question Notes

Influence and Future Question Notes (if time or not already answered)

Ending Question

Observations

## Appendix I Follow-Up Focus Group Protocol

### Before the Interview

- We are here again today to continue our discussion of beginning band or beginning orchestra. This interview should last anywhere from 5 to 15 minutes, and should be significantly shorter than our last interview.
- Once again, we do not talk about what was said in this interview once we leave this room.

### Ground Rules

- The same conversational rules apply as last time. Only one person speaks at a time, and everyone should try to talk.
- I am recording this, but it won't be shared with besides me. Your names will not be recorded.
- Does anyone have any questions? Are each of you ok with staying and talking?

[Turn on audio and video recorders]

Explain that a summary paragraph of the last interview will be read aloud, clearly and slowly. Students should listen and analyze whether the statements in the paragraph are a correct interpretation of what was said, or not. At the end of the interview, feedback will be requested to ensure the researcher understands student perspectives on their attitudes towards beginning band or orchestra.

[Researcher reads summary paragraph]

### Follow Up Questions:

- Were there any statements that showed I misunderstood what you told me? If so, what needs to be corrected?
- What is your decision about enrollment in band or orchestra next year? (Only asked when enrollment occurred after the initial focus group interview).
- If you had to quit band/orchestra today, what would you miss about being in band/orchestra class?
- If you had to quit band/orchestra today, what would you *not* miss about being in band/orchestra class?
- Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

[Interview Ends. Researcher turns off audio and video recorder.]

## Appendix J

### Audit Trail Document

The audit trail document is a Microsoft Excel file too large to transfer to word processing document. Electronic access to the audit trail is available by contacting the researcher and will be shared during the defense of this research.

## Appendix K

Urban Band Transcript  
First Interview – April 21, 2017

- Emily Ok! Let's get started. First thing, remember that, I'm going to ask for your name, but I'm never going to use your name at any point in my project. I'm gonna change your name: it's called a pseudonym. But I want you to tell me your name and what instrument you play right now just so I can call you by your name in this interview. So, go ahead.
- Peyton Peyton, I'm the clarinet.
- Emily Peyton plays the clarinet.
- Mindy (Mumbles, then giggles. Group laughs) Mindy, and I play the flute.
- Emily Mindy plays the flute.
- Kathryn Kathryn and I play the flute.
- Maria I'm Maria and I play the saxophone.
- Jackson Jackson and I play the clarinet.
- Bianca Bianca and I play the clarinet.
- Emily Will you please repeat your three names? I'm a slow writer
- Peyton Peyton
- Mindy Mindy
- Emily Peyton, Mindy...
- Kathryn Kathryn
- Emily ...and Kathryn. All right. Cool. The first thing I wanna know about you, besides your name and what instrument you play, is what prompted you to join band? Why did you decide you wanted to be in band?
- Jackson Oh!
- Maria That's easy.
- Jackson I think I have one for this.
- Emily (Looking at Jackson) Go for it.

- Jackson Um. Well, in my family, it's like, all the girls in my family play the clarinet. Even my grandma and my great grandma. And there's, there's no dudes that play the clarinet. So I kinda just said, "I'm gonna play the clarinet."
- Emily All right. Cool. (Writes notes) Yeah?
- Maria Um, well, my great grandfather, my dad, and my stepdad, and my grandpa they all played the saxophone. And I thought the saxophone was just a really cool instrument, so I decided to play it.
- Emily All right. Nice. (Points to Bianca)
- Bianca I played the clarinet because Ms. Hopper, she told me that I should play it, and when I tried it out, I really liked it.
- Emily Ok, who's Ms. Hopper?
- Peyton & Bianca She's one of the fourth grade teachers.
- Emily Fourth grade teacher. Oh that's cool!
- Peyton She was our teacher last year (pointing at Kathryn).
- Jackson Was she really mean?
- Kathryn No! She was nice. Nice to everybody.
- Emily (Laughs in response) Ok, yes? (Points to Peyton)
- Peyton I wanted to play the clarinet because most my family plays the clarinet, and I tried it out, we got to try out, um, instruments at the beginning of the year and I liked the way it sounds.
- Emily Ok, great. (points to Kathryn) Go ahead.
- Kathryn Um, I decided to join band because my grandma played in a band and I just thought it would be fun.
- Emily Great. (Everyone looks at Mindy. She giggles and everyone laughs)
- Kathryn (Tapping Mindy on the knee) Go!
- Mindy Well nobody really played the flute in my family. Like, only my two brothers played, um, trumpet. But I thought the flute was, um, really nice because of how high it went.
- Group General mumble of agreement.

- Emily            You like the high sounds?
- Kathryn        Clarinets get the low notes, and we get, like, the super high sounds.
- Jackson        Yeah, they're so beautiful.
- Maria           You guys always get like so many melodies you're like calm...
- Bianca         We have some...
- Kathryn        No, but when they mix, it's like, so cool.
- Jackson        Yeah, the high notes that one of the professional music players, well, clarinet players came, they played really high notes, I was like "wow". Cause we barely know how to play high notes.
- Peyton         (looking at EG) Do you still know how to play the clarinet?
- Jackson        It was like "Eeeeeee!" (imitating the high pitch of the professional clarinet players) I was like "wow..." (Puts hands on his face, eyes gets big, rocks back and forth. Group laughs)
- Peyton         Do you still know how to play the clarinet?
- Emily           Alright, so, this one: remember that you're allowed to respond to each other, but like, try to, we'll do one at a time. What are some of the positive things about being in band? Or what do you like about band? Yes?
- Peyton         Um, that you, that she helps like if we to learn new notes and if we don't get it right she helps us get it as you go and then you get different awards for how many times you practice.
- Emily           Ok, so you get awards at some point. Like, at different points throughout the year?
- Peyton         Um, it's like 10, 20, 30, 40, and 50. 50 is the highest, and 10 is the lowest. How many hours you practice.
- Emily           Oh.
- Kathryn        Those two already have their awards (points to Peyton and Mindy).
- Emily           So you get awards for how much practice time you put in outside of the classroom? Ok. And that's throughout the year. Ok. Do you find that pretty motivating?

Jackson Yeah, cause we get to play, different, like everything we want.

Kathryn Yeah, we get to like, play pages that we've never played before.

Jackson Pages we've never played before.

Kathryn Whatever we want.

Emily Ok, ok. Do you think that those are helpful, or do you think that some people like them and some people don't? (Hesitation from the group follows. (Some indiscernible talking occurs.)

Peyton People like them. (more indiscernible comments from group) I knew that some people wanted to join band just because of the awards, yeah, just cause some people just wanted to join band cause of the awards.

Emily The awards, ok...

Maria Yeah but we just wanted to join band because it was really fun and cool.

Jackson I just like to play the clarinet.

Kathryn It was hard, it was hard too.

Maria In the beginning you would just like take the first part of the instrument.

Kathryn Yeah, and like... (Make motion of playing with headjoint)

Maria Yeah, we would just like, mess with that. Like you guys...

Emily Ok. Thanks. Yes

Kathryn I like band because, like, Ms. Mason wants us to improve and she helps us a lot.

Emily Ms. Mason?

Kathryn Yeah. And I like all the people in it.

Emily Ok. So, um, the people, would you say they're, like, your friends? Or..

Kathryn Yeah they're my friends.

Emily Ok.

Bianca I like band because I get to try new things and make beautiful sounds.

Emily OK! You like the beautiful sounds, trying new things. K, yeah?

- Maria I like band, because like, Ms. Mason is not mean, but she's strict, but when she's strict, like, its for a good reason because she helping us and making sure like we're understanding and getting the right notes
- Jackson Yeah, she can be, she can be...
- Peyton She can be...
- Jackson ...kinda strict
- Group General mumble of agreement from group
- Kathryn But she wants us to get better
- Jackson but she's really a good teacher
- Group yeah (general agreement)
- Maria That's why she teaches at three schools .
- Emily Three schools? Wow, that's a lot..
- Peyton Yeah, River Heights, Meadows, and Topeka High.
- Bianca Yeah but the orchestra teacher...
- Peyton & Bianca ...she teaches at seven
- Jackson Eight. Wait it's seven?
- Bianca Yeah it's seven
- Maria I thought it was nine
- Jackson I thought it was eight
- Emily Ok, so I am going to take this, and I am going to turn this over. What are some of the negative parts about being in band, if there are any? (The group sounds with "oohs!" from multiple students as hands go up.) Oh, I got hands! (Points to Mindy.)
- Mindy Um. Nevermind. I like band. (The group laughs)
- Emily Ok, ok. Ok, (points to Jackson) go ahead.
- Jackson Well, sometimes I don't like coming to band cause like sometimes like at recess I would have fun with my friends and they'll be like, "oh it's its time for band" and I'll be like "ugh" cause I want to stay with my friends and stuff.



- Emily Ok so you are in band and you are missing recess for all of your band classes
- Group rush of responses explaining schedule. End result - students go to band after recess and do not miss any recess time
- Emily Ahhhh, you're missing gym?
- Peyton Gym and music.
- Mindy Just music.
- Jackson Well some just gym
- Kathryn No just music
- Maria It's basically just music
- Jackson Well we're basically missing everything - gym and music cause - I know we're basically missing all of them because we are schedule for (indiscernible).
- Kathryn Band is our music class
- Jackson Yeah, band is our music class
- Emily Got it, Ok, ok. So time away from some other people, well, some of your friends
- Group Yeah..
- Kathryn Um, like, a negative part is like when you're having really fun with all your friends and then when you come in here, like, you can't hang out with them cause, like, shes, like, you're not allowed to talk to them in the middle of rehearsal.
- Jackson Yeah.
- Emily K. Yes?
- Maria Um, is that when, because I like gym a lot because we do a lot of fun activities..
- Emily uh huh?
- Maria ...and then sometimes, like, I would rather go to gym than, PE, um not PE (stumbles speech), I mean band sometimes, because then I could just run around and everything

Emily           Ok. So for band you have to kinda just come and sit, and stay in your chair. And you can't talk. And sometimes that's good. But sometimes you would like to go run around and let out some energy?

Kathryn        Yeah, cause all we really get to do is ask questions and play our instrument

Jackson        Yeah, and gym, cause, now gym is starting to get boring a little bit cause like were like, no, it's not that, it's like, we're doing tinkling and stuff.

Kathryn        I like tinkling!

Maria          Yeah.

Jackson        I really think for gym you should mainly be doing sports, athletes.

Peyton         Yeah.

Jackson        ...running around,

Kathryn        Yeah, and then band, they say calm down...(makes motion with hands)

Peyton         In gym, you get to, like, pick partners who you want to be with, and we like to do that, but in band when we, like, come and like try to talk to our friends like or be, like, she'll be like...

Jackson        She'll get on you..

Peyton         Yeah, like, she'll get mad at you just cause like you're trying to say hi to your friends

Emily          Ok, ok. Those are very fair responses.

Jackson        Is the camera on right now?

Emily          The camera is on.

Jackson        Oh god. ( The group begins to giggle while Mindy waves at the camera.)

Kathryn        I'm right in front of it

Emily          No worries, no worries. Remember, I'm the only one who is ever going to see this

Group          Everyone waves and starts making funny faces

Peyton         Hi! Hi, Emily!

- Emily Ok, next question, and remember, this stays here. Are you going to in band next year, and why? We're just going to go around in a circle for this one. You want me to start here? Or you want me to start here? (Said while turning back and forth between Peyton and Bianca.
- Jackson Rock paper scissors! Rock paper scissors!
- Emily Ok, I'm going to pick you! (turns to Peyton)
- Jackson Ok!
- Peyton Ok, um, I don't know yet. I'm still thinking about. I want to do band, but, like, I don't know yet. I would rather, like, do PE and music or something. It's kind of both, half and half, but I haven't decided yet.
- Emily Ok, so if you had to give me like, could you give me a pro and a con?
- Peyton Um, PE and music because you get to pick different people and get more active. Band, maybe, not so much because you don't get to like, you have to focus on your main instrument, you don't get to do stuff other than your instrument.
- Mindy I would rather do band so I can get better at the flute and become a professional flute player.
- Emily Oh you want to be a professional flute player, wow.
- Kathryn Um, I really want to be in band next year, but I don't know cause like, I really like PE, but, it's just hard to choose.
- Emily Ok.
- Maria I think I might go to band cause, like, when you're in middle school I'm going to assume my cousin said when he played the saxophone and um he said that the private schools they get a lot of help and that they're really good with it so I might wanna play the saxophone still and do that, but I dont know cause i like gym and PE, and, like, I wanna join clubs and stuff when I go to my new middle school.
- Jackson Um, I might, like, I might wanna go to, like, well, I haven't decided yet. But I've really been thinking about not playing in band next year cause, I do wanna just hang out with my friends and stuff.
- Peyton Yeah.

- Jackson But, if like most of the kids, most of my friends go to band, and its only like a couple of people in gym and music, I might have to just go with the band. But I might not, ya know? I'm really just... (puts hands on face in expression of being overwhelmed.)
- Peyton Cause you get to join, like, clubs and stuff
- Jackson And everything, I don't, yeah...
- Kathryn The hard part is, like, we have this field trip where we go to the middle school we're assigned to...
- Jackson Yeah
- Kathryn ...and we have to fill out the sheet there, to choose, and it's next week, Monday and Tuesday.
- Group Yeah
- Emily Ok, so you haven't enrolled yet?
- Group (Mix of "yes" and "yeah" responses)
- Emily Ok, that's what I'm hearing. Looks at Bianca, K.
- Group Yeah
- Bianca Um, I don't know yet, I'm still thinking about it cause sometimes band takes away some other things that I would like to do
- Group yeah (general agreement)
- Bianca Yeah cause we be doing ti stuff, like, what is it called, PE, like one day we were playing basketball, but then the next day I had musical and I never got to play basketball in PE and I was like...
- Peyton Sometimes we miss out on other activities in gym.
- Kathryn Yeah, like, it's a good thing they changed our band and PE schedule cause now we know when we have something important and we have to bring certain kinds of shoes.
- Jackson Well one day, um I didn't bring my instrument.
- Peyton Oh, and she gets on you for that. (responding to Jackson)

- Jackson            Yeah but I did it on purpose. Cause I was, I really...
- Maria                Wait, you did what on purpose?
- Jackson            I didn't bring my instrument in purpose cause I was really bored, and was just like, "I don't know if I can today."
- Peyton              Sometimes it just gets boring in band.
- Maria                Cause we have to listen and explain stuff.
- Jackson            And I didn't want to go to band.
- Peyton              Yeah we have to listen to her talk and stuff.
- Emily                Ok, so I'm getting some positives and negatives and I'm seeing both sides, so thanks for your feedback. Um, so what, what would you say to a person outside of this room who decides that they are not to take band next year?
- Kathryn            Well I would probably say that if you like it now, like, I wouldn't change your mind. But if you really don't like it, then just don't do.
- Emily                Ok. Yes?
- Maria                I would say like its your decision, because if you don't want to do it, you don't have to do it, but like . But I would suggest it cause its really fun, but like, sometimes you have to sit there for a while and listen for like one, like three or two minutes but its like really fun and you get to like do, like do different things with other people like certain parts in the song.
- Emily                Ok, ok. One more.
- Bianca              I would say that you should try it out first and see how you like it.
- Emily                Ok .
- Jackson            Beause I like it but sometimes I just don't want to go and do that.
- Peyton              Sometimes it just gets a little boring.
- Jackson            Yeah.
- Kathryn            Yeah, like, whenever we, like, have a five minute breaks between songs, all we wanna do is talk.

- Peyton Like all we do is pray (pauses and realizes her mistake)...or play (Group laughs at how Peyton said “pray” instead of “play”)
- Peyton Listen to her describe songs.
- Mindy I would rather stand instead of sit (General group talking begins to occur about marching band)
- Maria I know right, like the marching people do.
- Kathryn And then we would have like more experience doing that.
- Maria Yeah cause and once we get to middle school, like doesn't River Heights go around to meadows, so you guys would get used to standing up.
- Jackson You going to River Heights?
- Kathryn Yeah
- Jackson Let's go! (Reaches out to high five Kathryn while group laughs)
- Emily So, let's say somebody moves into your school who's never lived in Topeka and they have decided that they might want to join band next year. And they ask you, “What do you think about me joining band and being in band with you next year?” What would you say to them?
- Maria Um, I would say that it really doesn't matter to me because it's your choice if you want to be in band or not cause you won't really bother me no matter if I like you or not.
- Kathryn I would probably say, well, I would be like, I would help you with stuff cause your new. And I would try to help them as much as I can so that way Mrs. Mason doesn't really get mad at them.
- Emily Ok, yes?
- Mindy Um. I would say that you should try it at least, and encourage them to play in band
- Emily Ok so try it and see if you like it? K.
- Peyton I would tell them to like try it, and if you don't like it then don't do it anymore. But, I would also really explain the pros and cons of it.
- Emily Ok, so you would give them both sides.
- Jackson Um that's how I am. I was new to the whole state.

Group            Yeah.

Kathryn        This was his first year here.

Maria            Yeah, cause we've all been here.

Emily            Ok. St. Louis ok. So you've experienced this.

Jackson        Well I haven't experienced band, but I have experienced the clarinet.

Bianca          What did you play before?

Jackson        Nothing. (Group laughs)

Kathryn        I liked it how, like, how you started band and orchestra from third grade. Like that was an old.

Jackson        Wait you could start from third to fifth?

Peyton         You used to be able to start from third.

Emily            Ok, but now it just starts in fifth? Ok. While I'm double checking my camera to make sure it is still on and functioning the way its supposed to, I am going to ask another question. I am curious what the people in your life feel about you being in band. The people that are close to you and you have relationships with. What do some of those people think about you being in band? Um, (looking around room), lets go..yes (points to Bianca)

Bianca          Um, they think, they think that I would do good, and they think that I play good and things like that. They think that I should still be in it.

Emily            Ok, so who are the people that you're talking about?

Bianca          My dad, my mom, and my sisters.

Emily            Ok, so your family is pretty supportive?

Bianca          Yeah

Emily            Ok. Yes?

Peyton         Um (laughs) they think that they like, the sound, like, I'll play for them sometimes, like over the weekends they like, how like, I play and they think I should do it next year.

Emily            Mhm. Ok, so your family thinks you should stay?

Peyton            Yeah.

Emily             K. Mm, yes. Go ahead (laughs)

Mindy            Mm. My mom and dad think I play good and they want me to play band next year.

Emily             Ok.

Mindy            I was like, I really want to play next year, so that's what I'm gonna do. (Group laughs)

Emily             Yes?

Maria             Um, my family, my mom, my sister, and my grandparents, and everybody, they're really supportive and they want me to continue, so like, cause like they want me to be a professional someday and, like, have concerts and everything.

Emily             Ok, so your family would like to see you continue playing your instrument.

Maria             Yes.

Emily             Ok, yes?

Kathryn          My family is always really supportive. Like, they always ask me to play for them.

Emily             Ok.

Kathryn          And like, for holidays, me and my sister, my sister plays the, um, violin, and my brothers can play the clarinet, and like we'd all play song that we like.

Jackson          Yeah like *Jingle Bells*

Kathryn          Yeah (laughing)

Emily             Oh, *Jingle Bells* is a good one. I like *Jingle Bells*. Um, ok, so are there any people in your life that you have a relationship with, or that you see on a day to day basis, that don't really have positive feelings towards being in band? And what's that like? Yeah.

Mindy            My sister.

Emily             Your sister?

Mindy            Yeah, she goes here.

Peyton            That's because she's a year younger than her.



Mindy Yeah. She's like, "You shouldn't play next year, you suck at it." (An outburst of laughing from the group follows.)

Mindy And I'm like "No I don't. I'm better than you!"

Emily Do you take it, do you take her seriously? (Mindy nods yes) You do take her seriously? Aw.

Peyton Mindy, you shouldn't. (looking at Mindy)

Jackson Yeah, that's not nice.

Peyton Yeah cause she's younger than you. Don't ever take advice from someone younger than you.

Mindy And she's like, I tell her she should play the flute, and she says, "Nuh-uh, I'm playing the trumpet!"

Emily She's playing the trumpet?

Kathryn I was gonna play the trumpet.

Maria I was gonna play the saxophone or the trumpet.

Emily Ok, yes?

Jackson Yeah my um little brother, well my little brothers..

Peyton Brothers...

Jackson Well when, when my, when my, my second littlest brother said "Jackson you shouldn't play the clarinet. You suck!" And then, and then my little brother, my little brothers that's like three years old is like "Jackson, you suck at the clarinet." And I'm like "Kaif how do you know how to play the clarinet?" And he's like, "I don't know, you just suck." And I was like "what?" (General talking about how little sibling don't know anything about band begins to occur.)

Kathryn It's funny how they say that and they never even hear you play.

Peyton I would like to see them try to play.

Jackson Yeah they be like "You suck." (More general talking begins to occur)

Emily So your siblings give you a hard time.

- Jackson Yeah but my, my um, my first littlest brother. He knows how to blow, so I'll just move my fingers around.
- Emily Ok. Ok?
- Maria when my bigger sister Brooke , she lives with us, she, when I would practice sometimes, she would be like girl you need to stop ruining my watching tv, my bed is shaking and everything (Group begins to laugh). And then I was like sorry I just want to be good at this, and she was like well you suck so you better stop. And then, like, maybe I won't stop.
- Emily Ok, so siblings?
- Mindy Yeah Jackson, they always try to take my flute away, and they realize, they try to blow through it.
- Peyton Jackson her brother. (clarifying)
- Emily So what about at school, or your friends. Um. What do they think about being in band?
- Bianca They like it.
- Kathryn My friends like it.
- Jackson My friends like it.
- Mindy She thinks they suck. (pointing at Kathryn) No I'm just kidding! (Kathryn playfully pushes Mindy on the shoulder)
- Jackson I know who thinks I suck. Ok, so these are the one person that hates me. She thinks I suck really bad. Her name is...Peyton (points at Peyton)
- Peyton What? No! (group erupts in laughter)
- Emily I think you're, you're pulling our leg on that one. You're pulling our leg on that one. Ok, so, what about, did, um, did, like, any of your teachers or your band director have any influence on your decision to join band or stay in band?
- Peyton No. They don't really decide.
- Jackson Well, the teachers don't...
- Kathryn They don't care.
- Group Yeah. (general agreement)

- Maria            On our concert, when we have it in May, they'll probably be like, be like "You did a good job."
- Group            Yeah.
- Mindy            Then they'll say nothing.
- Kathryn          Didn't you say the orchestra teacher, like my sister was in orchestra and she was like you should be in orchestra, but I was like, that's not what I want to do, and she really wanted me to.
- Bianca            I don't really like orchestra
- Maria            General agreement. Group starts to mimic playing the violin.
- Jackson          It's too elegant. Yeah, it's too elegant.
- Maria            And if you miss a note, the teacher gets really mad.
- Kathryn          No, I'm like, crazy, and the people in orchestra are just like (begins to mimic non-crazy actions).
- Jackson          They said the violin, if you play some of the notes wrong, they said it makes your fingers bleed.
- Peyton           Like, they'll tell us that we did a a good job, and honestly like, they'll clap for us when we're at our concert, but they probably really don't care.
- Emily            Ok, so you're all going to have a different band director next year?
- Group            Mix of "Yes" and "No."
- Emily            So some of you would have Ms. Mason?
- Peyton           At River Heights.
- Kathryn          Her and him will have Ms. Mason?
- Jackson          Where are you going?
- Mindy            Oxford.
- Bianca            She's going to Oxford.
- Mindy            Yeah.
- Emily            Alright, so does, does the band teacher, does the band teacher have any, any... (Repeating while conversation continues to occur in group. Group realizes

Emily is waiting for talking to stop, makes eye contact with Emily and starts giggling. )

- Jackson Sorry.
- Emily It's ok! Does the band teacher have influence on your decision to stay or not?
- Jackson No.
- Peyton We haven't really talked about that.
- Kathryn She would want us to.
- Kathryn To stay...
- Peyton To stay...
- Kathryn She would want us to continue it, cause she thinks we're really good. Like, we go faster than the brass.
- Group Yeah
- Peyton She's always like, bragging about us to the brass. She's like you guys
- Kathryn Yeah I walk with my friend who is a percussion who is in brass, and she, and so she's always like, "Ms. Mason keeps on bragging about you guys. She's making us feel bad." But Ms. Mason, like, she had a conversation about it with us, and she was like, well, the brass instruments learned their instruments way, like learned how to play their instruments way faster than us, so it's like, we're switching.
- Emily Yeah, it is different. It does switch throughout the year.
- Peyton The same person she's talking about at lunch, Mckall, "Ms. Mason is always bragging about you guys. Is she ever bragging about us?" And I'm like, "No." (Peyton smiles and the group begins to giggle.) Sorry, but no.
- Jackson That's the ones with the flute. I thought that since the brass was going, like the trumpet and trombone, they have to blow in the tube and they have to change their air, I thought it would be easier for the flute to just blow, like, faster air and stuff.
- Kathryn No, it's even harder for us. Cause we have to like (mimics playing). We have to go like that.
- Peyton It's hard for us.
- Jackson Yeah it is hard for us.

- Kathryn            Yeah but we can't see our fingers.
- Peyton            We can't see the bottom of our keys.
- Jackson           Yes you can if you (mimics raising the bell of the clarinet)
- Peyton            Yeah but you can't see the side ones. You can't see the side ones.
- Jackson           Yeah.
- Kathryn           Sometimes our arms are over here and it's hard to not look at the keys
- Maria            (Mumbling) It's hurts my neck like...(mimics playing the saxophone)
- Jackson           Ms. Mason say, she always say look like the saxophones look like this. Yeah, I don't know how they do this and play like. (Group giggles and starts to mimic playing the saxophone.) No cause she always be like... (mimics teacher modeling the saxophone).
- Maria            We don't do that...
- Emily            Ok, let's wrap this up.
- Jackson           Oh! (whining)
- Emily            Oh, I still have another questions. Ok, so the whole purpose of this project, we're almost done actually...(Emily's heel slips on the floor and the students jump in surprise saying "Oh!" and giggling.) No! My heels. High heels are dangerous, and these aren't even that high! Oh my goodness, get it together, Emily...
- Group            You scared me!
- Emily            Oh, I'm so sorry. Here's my question: My project - I told you it's about beginning band. And what I'm really looking at: I'm looking into the reasons why students join band, and then why they decide to stay in band or why they decide to quit. So, I'm interviewing lots of different schools. If you know that that's what I'm trying to get information on, are there any questions that you feel I didn't ask, and that I should ask future schools. Is there anything we didn't talk about?
- Maria            You kinda like asked all the questions.
- Emily            It's kinda a lot of questions to think about (points at Jackson)
- Jackson           Do you like your music teacher?

- Kathryn            Yeah, like, do you like how we work?
- Maria              Yeah, like how we run things?
- Emily               Ok, ok so do you like your music teacher. Do you like how things are run?
- Jackson            I don't.
- Emily               So you don't really like how things are run?
- Jackson            No.
- Kathryn            She just like puts it up on the board and says go head
- Peyton              I don't like that. You should describe it like
- Jackson            I think you should like, like, like, to gym on one day, and then band afterwards.
- Emily               Ok so, compare..
- Jackson            And then music, um, cause then..
- Kathryn            Cause we have no music time and we had a music programs, and we had no clue what our songs were, so we had to have books
- Jackson            We only had, like, one day.
- Kathryn            Yeah, we only had about one day to learn our music.
- Maria               That's why band doesn't have music.
- Emily               So what I'm getting is that the structure of the schedule at school can sometimes be frustrating.
- Group               Yeah.
- Kathryn            Especially at the very beginning.
- Emily               Ok especially at the very beginning, ok, so just at different points in the year it's more stressful than at other points. Ok, are there any other things that I should include? Mindy.
- Mindy               Um. How do you like the flute? Or like the instrument? (laughs)
- Emily               You're instrument? Yeah, sure.

Peyton            You should ask them, like, if it's like do you think that's the right fit for you?  
Or do you wanna try a different instrument?

Jackson            Oh yeah, that's a good one.

Kathryn            Ms. Mason would not want us to switch because we learned notes on the last  
one, and the we'd have to learn all the notes on the...

Jackson            Yeah that's how Jaden, this kid called Jaden, he played the flute then, but then

Kathryn            He said that it was too hard for him so he switched to percussion

Jackson            Yeah, like in the middle of band, in the middle of the session.

Peyton            Is your camera still rolling?

Emily              It should be. Ok. Is there anything else you wanna talk about?

Peyton            Can we just stay in here?

Mindy              I love band! Puts hands up in the air

Jackson            Bianca you've been quiet as a mouse all day

Bianca              I was talking..

Jackson            Yeah, you were talking, but not that much.

Kathryn            Not as much as me or you or you...

Jackson            ...or me.

Emily              Ok .

Jackson            ...yeah Kathryn.

Kathryn            (Throws her hands in the air ) My life is talking!

Emily              Then my only last question would be, do you see yourself being in band at all,  
in any capacity, beyond this school year? (Group erupts in talking) Woah,  
woah, woah. Let's go around for this one. Let's start right here. (Turns to  
Bianca.)

Bianca              Um, I don't know yet.

Emily              Ok.

Bianca              I have other things I like to do.

- Emily Ok. Yeah?
- Jackson Yeah, I might not go, cause, like, in high school, there might be way better things to do.
- Emily K. More to do in high school? K.
- Maria I think I might or might not im not sure yet cause I have other thing. I have like softball and it's hard to find time to practice like for my instrument and everything
- Emily Ok.
- Kathryn Um,for me, it would be hard, especially in, like, when I'm in high school, cause I want to play all the sports, and it's just hard to choose.
- Emily Ok.
- Mindy I wanna play in the band all the way through college.
- Emily Ok.
- Peyton Um I don't think so, because like, before you even came, before lunch time, I was gonna tell my nana, because like, I think that I wanna like, during middle school and high school, they'll be like "You get to hang out with your friends more and there'll be like clubs you can go in and join, and you're missing out on music and PE," so I don't think i really want to do it next year. I just really wanted to try it this year.
- Emily Ok.
- Jackson Yeah.
- Peyton I've been thinking about this a lot.
- Jackson I just wanna play basketball. To me, ball is life, so. I play basketball for two, two hours every day. I have to, or I get punished. I punish myself if I don't. I just go down the street and play basketball.
- Emily Alright. Well, I just want to say thank you so much for letting me: 1) Take you out of band class today...
- Group (Starts to laugh and clap) Oh you are welcome!



- Emily Thank you for allowing me to ask you lots of questions in this closet, and thank you for being so honest in your response. I know its sometimes kinda scary to be honest.
- Kathryn If Ms. Mason was in here, we'd all be super scared.
- Jackson She'd be like, what'd you say? (Group begins to giggle)
- Emily I just want you to remember that, let's bring it in team, that what we said here today stays here. Sounds good? Ok, can I get a nod of agreement from everybody? Thanks guys. Alright. I am turning this recorder off.
- Group Bye! (Students wave at the camera.)

## Appendix L

Urban Band Transcript  
Follow Up – May 12, 2017

Emily Ok, Alright, would you like to do this one quietly?

Mindy No, I like speaking loud! (group laughs)

Emily Alright. Here, you can read. Come here. I'll turn this around. You can read this quietly with me and follow along.

*Overall, the students' attitudes towards being involved in orchestra were, oh, that should be band, were positive. Enrollment for middle school band had not yet occurred when we spoke, and some students were conflicted as to whether-or-not they were going to continue with band. Students mentioned that their families, specifically adults, were supportive of their involvement in band. All students said their band teacher made class a fun experience, and that while she was strict, she was a good teacher. Some students did wish the class moved at a faster pace. The most prominent complaint about being involved in band was missed PE time and other scheduling conflicts. These scheduling conflicts made the decision to enroll in middle school band a difficult decision.*

So that's kind of what I got from you. Would you say that it's true? Or, lets start with: is there anything in there that isn't true?

Kathryn No

Maria No

Peyton Like, it's true, but, yeah I guess it's true.

Emily Ok, well what do you think, what do you think is not true?

Peyton No, it is true. It's just. It's true. Yeah. (Group laughs) I didn't wanna put it in a bad way, but, it's true. We don't. Yeah, it's true.

Jackson We don't...

Emily Ok. Ok, so what we're going to do: Now that you've all enrolled, I do want to ask what your decision was, what you're doing next year. And we can keep it kinda quiet cause I know she's right over there. So, why don't you go ahead.

Peyton I'm not doing it next year.

Emily Have you. Ok, you're not?

Peyton Yeah.

Emily Ok. Mindy?

Mindy (Mindy shakes her head no.) I'm doing choir.

Emily So you're not? (Shakes head no again)

Kathryn I think I am.

Emily You are? (Confirming. Kathryns shakes her head yes.) Ok. Bianca.

Bianca No (whispers)

Emily You're not. Ok. Jackson.

Jackson I'm not.

Emily Ok. Maria.

Maria Uh, yeah.

Emily You're enrolled in the class?

Maria Well not enrolled, but yeah

Emily You're planning on being in it?

Maria Mhm.

Emily Ok, what I would like to know, is if you are quitting, what will you miss? And if you aren't quitting, pretend you are. What would you miss?

Jackson My instrument.

Maria Yeah

Peyton We get. I just think there's more activities to do in the middle school instead of band. There's like choir, and PE and music.

Kathryn Well next year at River Heights, you get to go to Schlitterbahn (a water park).

Emily Ok. Kathryn, what were you saying?

Peyton She just said, like, trips. You get to go on trips and stuff. (Kathryn gives Peyton an annoyed look)

Maria I don't really have a reason not to be in band cause I know that when I go to my other school I get to go to competitions.

Emily Ok. K. Anything?

Bianca Peyton.

Peyton I already said something.

Bianca What did you say?

Peyton I said, "My instrument."  
Ok. Is there anything you would not miss?

Kathryn Ms. Mason. (Then covers her mouth. Group begins to laugh quietly.)

Peyton Yes.

Jackson Me too.

Peyton Yeah. Me too.

Mindy Me too.

Peyton Me too. I just don't. Yeah.

Maria Me too.

Jackson Now it's Bianca...(Bianca shakes her head no and laughs) You know you want to! Say it! (Trying to get Bianca to say she won't miss the current teacher.)

Emily Ok. No, you do not need to say anything. Ok, is there anything else you want me to know?

Peyton Are you like..(indiscernible) not a good answer?

Emily No, no, no. There, there are no wrong answers.

Bianca Oh, I know, I know what I'll miss. I'll miss my band people that I play with and my teacher.

Jackson Wait, who do you play your instrument with? Like, who you miss?

Bianca Everybody.

Jackson Oh! Ok.

Peyton Everybody. Even you, Jackson.

Maria I know why you asked that question.

Jackson I knew it.

Emily Ok, is there anything else?

Maria Um, nothing at the top of my head right now.

Peyton Nothing I can think of.

Emily Ok, well thank you for letting me talk to you.

## Appendix M

Urban Orchestra Transcript  
First Interview – April 21, 2017

Emily           Ok, let's get started. First thing: I'm not going to use your name at any part of this. I'm going to change your name for my report. It's gonna have a pseudonym, so you're gonna have a fake name. But, I am going to ask you for your name right now so I can at least call you by your name when we're chatting, talking today. So, will you please start and just tell me your name and what instrument you play.

Noah           Noah.

Emily           Noah.

Noah           I play the violin.

Emily           Noah plays the violin. Alright.

Summer        Summer and I play the violin.

Emily           Summer?

Emily           Mhm (nods)

Emily           Alright. K?

Elisa           Elisa and I play the cello.

Emily           Ok. So we have two violin players and a cello player. Awesome. Ok, thanks. Like I said, my name's Emily. I play the clarinet. Um. My first question for you is, what prompted you to join orchestra in the first place? (Noah raises hand) Yes?

Noah           Um, well, actually, my mom did. I told her that there was an orchestra thing going on...

Emily           Uh huh

Noah           ...and she mostly said "You're going to join."

Emily           Ok, so your mom told you, you were going to join

Noah           Yeah and it turned out to be very fun.

Emily           Ok

- Elisa I just wanted to try something new and I liked it a lot.
- Emily K, you just wanted to try orchestra and you liked it a lot?
- Elisa Mhm.
- Emily Ok, great.
- Summer Ok, um in my family they don't like do a lot of stuff like this, so I just decided to change it up a little bit.
- Emily Ok, so this is unique to your family that you're involved in orchestra?
- Summer Mhm.
- Emily Ok. Do you want to talk more about that?
- Summer (pause). Um, well, like my cousin, um, Brianna, she only does like dance and stuff like that, and my other cousin she plays softball, and like, I just decided to try something different between that. So I decided to join orchestra.
- Emily Ok, great.
- Noah It's a similar story to mine. Nobody in my family, um, ever played, uh, an instrument.
- Emily Mhm
- Noah And mostly, I wanted to be the first one to.
- Emily Ok, so you're the first person to play an instrument in your family.
- Noah Yeah
- Emily Ok. Alright. Cool. Let's go on to the next question. Um, what do you like about orchestra?
- Noah Everything.
- Elisa Everything.
- Emily Everything? Ok. Ok, go ahead.
- Summer Cause what I like about it is playing the new techniques and how you do this cause like last I week I think we went onto a field trip in Kansas City, and when I get older I wanna learn how to do that, because they learn very different techniques how to do it and they're really great.

- Emily Ok, so can you tell me more about this field trip? Did you go to the Kauffman Center?
- Summer Yeah.
- Emily Ok!
- Summer And then we, we, us, we played our recorders. Part of the time, I watched the violins and probably their strings, and I also watched other ones to see if I liked other ones.
- Emily Ok. And you really enjoyed that experience.
- Elisa & Mhmm (nod)
- Summer
- Emily Ok, so but you all went there for recorder. So it was for just general music class?
- Noah Yeah
- Emily Alright. Nice. K. Is there anything else you like about orchestra? Thank you for that response, that was great.
- Summer Um, well..
- Emily And this can be everybody.
- Summer Well, I liked, well like, I also like about where like um like how we learn how to play faster and slower and then, like, louder and, like, not as louds so then, like, we can cause, when I grow up, I wanna play in orchestra or I wanna be a lawyer. But anyways, I wanna learn different techniques so I can show my family I can change something up a little bit.
- Emily Ok, that's really. That's a great answer. Ok, um. What are some of the positive elements about being in orchestra?
- Noah Um, you can mostly, like, meet a lot of new friends. Or-, Orchestra is meant, mostly meant for bringing people together. So like, if you mostly have no friends, you can join an orchestra club, and mostly, everybody there is nice and all that.
- Summer Um, well, because, well, what was your question again?



- Emily Um, what are some of the positive elements about being in orchestra? But before you answer, also I'm going to ask, since I'm trying to get these recorded, if you could speak just a little bit louder. I would really...
- Summer Ok.
- Emily Thanks
- Summer Alright. Um. Well, because I was pretty sure my cousin decided to do it.
- Emily Oh, ok. Is your cousin younger than you?
- Summer Well, it's because, her and my aunt came and watched me. My aunt wanted her to do it, and my cousin had the opportunity to do it.
- Emily Ok. Any positive aspects of being in orchestra? (turning to Elisa)
- Elisa The opportunities you can get once you get once you grow up. There's a lot of opportunities you can do.
- Emily Ok, um, when you grow up, does that mean when you're beyond this school? Or like, when you're an adult? Or high school?
- Summer Well, to me, I think like, you can accomplish things, where you can be writing your own music and becoming the most famous, um, orchestra thing people...
- Emily Ok.
- Summer ...or something like that.
- Emily Ok, great. Thank you. Um, what are some of the negative parts of being in orchestra?
- Noah Nothing.
- Emily Or are there any negative parts of being in orchestra.
- Noah No. (Elisa shakes her head no)
- Summer Maybe sometimes I don't really like doing cause sometimes I'll be in class and I don't want to do it. It depends on what we're doing in class.
- Emily Ok.
- Summer Sometimes I'll just not like want to do it.
- Emily Is, does orchestra class, take place during regular class time?

- Noah            During recess.
- Emily            During recess.
- Summer        Yeah. And when. Well it's not, basically when they take it away, its not when we're learning, it's just like when we're doing stations. Like some people are doing typing, some people are learning about articles, and some people are working with (indiscernible).
- Emily            Ok. Ok. How do you feel about orchestra, is there anything negative?
- Elisa            Elisa shakes her head no.
- Emily            No. It's all pretty good? Ok Um. My next question, and I realize you might not know this yet, so just do the best you can. And remember, your teachers are never going to know what your answers are. Are you going to be in orchestra next year, and why?
- Noah            Yes, because um, it's very fun to play mostly. Because my brother gets me angry a lot on the days that we play, that we do orchestra, so mostly it hellps me calm down.
- Emily            Ok. So you feel like orchestra is a stress reliever for you?
- Noah            Yeah.
- Emily            Is that just in the classroom, or is that elsewhere, too?
- Noah            Um, just the class, cause we just play in one class or we, um, perform.
- Emily            Ok. What about you, Elisa?
- Elisa            Yeah, cause it's really fun and...
- Emily            Can you speak up a little bit? (Elisa begins to giggle) So you said yes, cause it's really fun...(long pause with no response). K.
- Summer        Um. I think yeah, I'll, I'll be, I'll do it next year cause try to do, my dad always do different things to accomplish new goals, and then if I do this, I'll be able to accomplish a bigger goal as I get older.
- Emily            Ok, so you're trying to accomplish new goals cause that's what your dad tells you to do?
- Summer        Yeah.

- Emily And accomplish goals as you get older. Great. Ok. Um. What would you say to a person who decides they aren't going to do orchestra next year?
- Noah Um. I wouldn't because it, it's their opinion if they want to do it. And if somebody has a different opinion than me, um, it's mostly, um them. Mostly, it's what other people think, and mostly it's their opinion, not ours.
- Emily Ok. So you would, you would just let it go?
- Noah Yeah.
- Emily Ok.
- Summer Hm. Well, I would kinda feel sad because this year, we had a chance to not join it. And one of my bestest friends decided not to join it and they're like, really close to me. And sometimes I'll feel sad, but like Noah said, it is your opinion. But my friend also said that she also, like, she wasn't understanding as good as like the other (indiscernible), so she basically decided not to do it.
- Emily Ok, so did she started in orchestra and decide not to do it anymore?
- Summer Yeah.
- Emily Ok. Do you have any friends that maybe aren't doing orchestra next year, Elisa?
- Elisa I don't know.
- Emily Don't know? How would you feel if one of your good friends in orchestra decided not to be in the class next year?
- Elisa Um, I wouldn't care cause it's not my opinion what they do. And I can just make new friends in orchestra.
- Emily Ok. Do you feel like, do all three of you, this is a question for all of you. Do you feel like you can make friends in orchestra?
- Noah Yeah.
- Elisa Yeah.
- Emily Ok. Have you made friends in orchestra?
- Elisa Yeah.
- Noah Uh, kinda. I'm kinda the quiet person in the class.

- Emily Ok. (pause) Ok. Um, so let's say a new person comes to this school and they've never lived in Topeka before and they move here. And they are deciding whether or not they want to join orchestra, your orchestra class next year. What would you tell them? Should they join, should they not join?
- Noah Well mostly like the other one: it's their opinion for what they choose.
- Emily Ok.
- Summer Um, I would tell them that maybe they should try something new. To join, because it's a great opportunity to change something up a little bit.
- Emily Ok.
- Elisa I'd tell them yes, they should try and see if they like it. Cause it is really fun and it's fun to try something new.
- Emily It's fun to try something new. Yeah, ok. So, what about the people in your life, the people you have relationships with, the people you are close to, the people you talk to everyday. What do they feel about you being in orchestra?
- Summer Well like my family, they're proud of me of course. I'm trying something new, trying to accomplish my goals. Trying to lead up to do something different. Then like, my friends, they're, they're, they're proud of me too because, cause some of my friends are in um, are in, what's it called, like, clarinet and stuff like that.
- Elisa Band?
- Summer Yeah band. And I'm proud of them for like, doing that.
- Emily Ok, so you're, you're happy for your friends that are in band too? Not just your friends in orchestra.
- Noah Ok, well, I barely have any friends cause I barely talk in school. And mostly my family is happy for me being in strings.
- Emily Ok. Well I appreciate you talking a lot right here.
- Elisa Um. My family's proud of me. I'm doing it because it's trying something new. And when my grandma was a little kid, she did it too. And now she's a professional orchestra player. She wants me to be like that too.
- Emily Your grandma's a professional orchestra player.

Elisa I don't think she does it anymore, but she used to.

Emily Ok

Noah She could teach you.

Emily I bet she has a lot of insight. K. So are there any people that are close to you, these people that you interact with on a daily basis, that don't feel so positive about you being in the orchestra?

Noah Yeah, my brother doesn't care.

Emily Your brother doesn't care?

Noah No, he's, he's like "Eh, who cares."

Emily Ok, is your brother older or younger than you?

Noah Older and he plays football.

Emily Ok.

Noah And he's way stronger than me.

Emily He's way stronger than you? (laughs) Nothin'? (turning to Summer) Ok. Um. What about your teachers and your orchestra director? Did they have any influence on your decision to join orchestra or your decision to stay in it next year? Since you all said you're staying?

Summer No, I don't think so.

Noah No, not really.

Emily Will Ms. Uddin be your teacher next year?

Summer No, I don't think so.

Noah I think so, cause I think she only does for elementary schools. You could ask her that question.

Emily I should ask her that question. Ok. Um. So was there anything in the very beginning of orchestra. Did she come present orchestra to you?

Elisa We got to hear their orchestra. I just got here from a new school.

Emily Oh wow. Where'd you come from?

Elisa Lincoln.

- Emily Ok, so is this different? (Elisa nods) A little different? (continues to nod)
- Summer Um. Don't remember.
- Emily Ok. Don't remember? Um. Do you see yourself being involved in orchestra beyond this year? And obviously next year cause you've already told me that, but, like, in the future. Do you see orchestra being involved in your life in any way?
- Noah Sometimes cause um, after college, I'm going to go and join the army and stuff like that.
- Emily And you know that there are, um, lots of musicians in the army. You can be a musician in the army and get paid to play your instrument.
- Noah Really?
- Emily Really. If you go online, you can search like "army band" online, like on YouTube and listen to some phenomenal videos.
- Yeah, I see in the future, I want to be an orchestra, like, teacher, so yeah I see it.
- Emily Ok, definitely if you want to be an orchestra teacher.
- Summer Well, I think yeah, cause in the future I'm planning to be like a basketball player and a lawyer, but then on the side, I think I could do this and become like better and like, accomplish my goals.
- Emily Ok. Um, I'm gonna go back. You said you want to be an orchestra teacher. Did you decide this past year that you wanted to be an orchestra teacher?
- Elisa Yeah.
- Emily Yeah? About when? Do you remember?
- Elisa No.
- Emily No? Ok. So, um. A little more information on the project I'm doing: I am interviewing lots of different kids at different schools, and we're talking about band and orchestra. And I'm looking for reasons why students join band or orchestra, and why they decide to stay, or why they decide to quit after the first year. So, if you were me, and you were going around to different schools and talking to different kids, are there any other questions you think I should ask?
- Noah Um yeah.

- Emily            Yeah?
- Noah            Um. Why did you want to, what, why or when do you think you are going to stop or keep going?
- Emily            Ok. .I think, yeah, like, what's your plan? Like, how long do you think you're going to be in orchestra? Do you know your answer to your own question?
- Noah            Yeah.
- Emily            Yeah? What is it?
- Noah            Um mostly to, um, college. Then, I'm gonna stop for a while.
- Emily            Ok.
- Summer          Um. I think the question should be like, are you going to make a difference and inspire other people to do this and become...
- Emily            Ok. I've seen this as a theme in your answers. I think you take that responsibility very seriously. K. Is there anything else about orchestra that you think I should know, since I'm not in your class everyday?
- Noah            Um, it mostly inspires people to stop being shy.
- Emily            So you think that orchestra is a good place for people to go to learn how to be around other people and just be themselves.
- Noah            Mhmm. Cause you're around a lot of people, cause if you were playing in an orchestra, it wouldn't just be like two people.
- Emily            That's true. Ok. Anything else?
- Elisa            No.
- Emily            Ok well thank you for letting me talk to you today, and thank you for being so open and honest with your answers. It was nice to get to you for like, 20 minutes. (Group, including Emily, laugh) I am going to turn off all these recorders, and then I will get your sugar compensation.

## Appendix N

Urban Orchestra Transcript  
Follow Up – April 26, 2017

Emily Alright, so this is our second interview. This is called our confirmation interview. And how this one's gonna work, once again, you can call me Emily just like we did last time. I am going to read you a thing called the executive summary. The executive summary is kind of a paragraph I have put together that explains what you have said in our last interview. I am going to read it to you and I'll read it slowly. When I get done reading, I want you to tell me if there's anything in there that is 1. Wasn't totally true or didn't tell the whole story. So if you're like, "Yeah, but there's more to it than that..." I want you to tell me more. Or, if there's something that maybe you forgot to tell me, something you thought of over the weekend and you're like, "I think you should know this too...", this is the opportunity for you to tell me that. I also have two more questions for you. Sound good? (students nod) Alright so here is the executive summary of what happened last time:

*Overall, the students attitudes towards being involved in orchestra were positive. Students joined to try something new and decisions to continue in sixth grade orchestra stemmed from enjoyment of music, motivation to achieve new goals, and to maintain friendships within their group. All students cited support from family members as motivation at home for continued enrollment. The students' orchestra teacher, though seen as supportive, was not an influencing factor on their decision to enroll in the future. All students thought orchestra was an activity that they could potentially be involved in past sixth grade. Negative associations for being involved in fifth grade orchestra mostly had to do with the school schedule where students had to miss recess or stations time to be involved in orchestra. These factors, though negative, were not bad enough to lead the decision, lead the students, to decide to quit orchestra.*

So, let's put that away for right now. (referring to Noah throwing a paper football in the air.) So, was there anything in there that you're like, "eh," that was kinda true, kinda not true?

Noah Everything I told was, everything was the truth.

Emily Alright, so that was alright. Elisa, what do you think?



- Elisa It was good.
- Emily It was good? Was there anything in there that maybe you wanted to talk more about?
- Elisa No, I think you covered all of it.
- Emily Covered all of it? Summer.
- Summer Um, me, I think about like doing it more in orchestra, I don't think I'm gonna do it. Because, when we went to Oxford the other day, yesterday, me and my dad went cause there was like a parents night to see like our sixth graders coming in, and like my dad wanted me to do AVID and PE so that means I can't do orchestra.
- Emily Ok, so you talked more about it with your dad after. Cause, you guys went to the middle schools on Monday and Tuesday, right?
- Group Yeah
- Emily And so you wanna do AVID and PE?
- Summer Yeah, but that means that I can't do orchestra. But, PE is my decision, but my dad wants me to do AVID.
- Emily Ok, so as of right now, you're leaning towards
- Elisa I'm doing...
- Emily Hold up (towards Elisa interrupting). I do want to hear what you have to say, but I just want to make sure I'm clear here. So you decided that, you think, as of right now, you're going to do AVID and not do orchestra.
- Summer Um, cause what my dad's decision is, what he thought about it, he thought he wanted me to do it, so he told me I have to do it, but then on the other hand, I also want to do my PE class.
- Emily Ok. Alright, thanks for telling me, cause I know that changed since the last time we talked.
- Elisa I'm doing AVID with my orchestra, but I'm not doing PE. You're allowed to do you're orchestra and your PE, why do AVID? Cause AVID is just another class.
- Emily Ok, so for you, you wont be doing PE.
- Elisa I'll be doing performing arts.
- Emily Got it. Ok, and, Noah. After joining, you're going to Oxford next year, right?

Noah            Yeah

Emily           Any change in decision after your meetings this week?

Noah           Nope

Emily           Nope. All good? (Noah nods)

Emily           K

Noah           But there is one thing I'm scared about.

Emily           What are you scared about?

Noah           Going into the seventh and eighth grade hall cause I think

Elisa           Yeah..

Noah           Cause I think that orchestra is more in the..

Elisa           It's in the seventh and eighth grade halls.

Noah           But I think, um, that if you're in the orchestra, you can go over there cause it's whenever your class is now

Emily           I think that makes sense, and honestly, I bet that all of those kids are going to be so concerned with what they're doing that they're going to leave you alone.

Noah           But next year, my brother is going to be in seventh grade.

Emily           Ok, go ahead. (Referring to people in hallways asking if they can walk by)

Group           Sorry!

Emily           You are fine. Ok, question number one. If you were to... (pause while more people walk by). ...if you were to quit orchestra, what would you miss?

Elisa           Everything.

Noah           Everything.

Elisa           Yeah.

Summer        I don't really know.

Emily           Ok.

Summer        I don't really like doing it. Like sometimes, when I don't bring my violin, because it's either at my mom's, or it's at my grandma's I feel like, uh um, that

there's really missing out cause sometimes it not really what I thought of as before.

Emily Ok, so you, your mind changed over the course of the year.

Summer Mhm.

Emily Ok, cool. Thanks. If you were to quit orchestra, what would you not miss about being in orchestra?

Elisa I wouldn't miss carrying the big heavy cello.

Emily (laughing) Ok.

Noah Um, I would not, I would miss everything about class.

Emily You would miss everything. So Elisa, for you, carrying the cello, even though its big and heavy and awkward, it's not bad enough that it would make you want to quit?

Elisa Yeah, (shakes her head) not that bad.

Emily Is there anything else you wanna talk about? This is it.

Elisa Um yeah.

Emily Yeah?

Noah I think running into my brother would be pretty scary because he's like, really focuses, and me running into him, I would probably run straight into the, um, orchestra room if I see him.

Emily Ok, so you're a little worried about seeing your brother in the hallways (pause) next year?

Noah Yeah because um, he plays, he um, he, um, is a wrestler in a boxing match.

Emily Ok

Noah And sometimes when we like, fight, I'm just scared to run into him.

Emily Cause he's pretty strong.

Noah Cause if I were to run into him, he would push me, and he wouldn't care.

Emily I'm sorry to hear that. Ok, anything else? No? (Elisa shakes her head no). Summer? Ok. Well, thank you so much for letting me get to know you the past two days. Um, I really appreciate your help with this project. And, um, over the

summer, I won't be able to finish this project until the end of June, but I am going to send an overall summary of the project to Ms. Uddin that talks about all the different schools that I'm talking to and compares them, so she won't know like, this person in your class said, like nothing even remotely close to that. But just if you're curious what kids in orchestras at different schools think, you can ask her cause she will have that information. Ok, that's it! I brought candy again. (Group laughs) Alright, let me turn off the recording devices.

## Appendix O

Rural Band Transcript  
First Interview – May 11, 2017

- Emily Ok! So, how this project's going to work: I'm going to ask some questions and I'm going to ask you to answer them as best you can. They're all opinion-based, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. Anything we say here stays here. So we're not going to run outside and tell everybody like "oh! so-and-so said this!" That's not fair. So what is said here, stays here. There are a few other ground rules: only one person talks at a time. I am going to be typing this whole interview out, that's why I have the videos. I am going to be listening to the videos and typing out what everyone says. So it's much easier if one person talks at a time. If you want to respond to what another person says, that's totally cool. Just wait until they finish their thought. Please don't have any side conversations: so, like, if I'm talking to somebody over here, don't have a conversation over there cause then I have to try to figure out what you said and write it out in that transcript and that's not cool, right?
- Group (laughing) Yeah.
- Emily Ok, so, let's get started. Also, I need you, this is a pretty small room so it should be fine, but I need you to speak up so I'll be able to hear your voice on the video camera. Sound good?
- Group Yeah/yes
- Emily Ok! Um, you will not be traceable in this project. So if you say something like "I hate band. It's the worst thing in the world ever." I'm going to change your name in this project. Noone's every going to know you said this. So in the paper, your real name might be Charlie, but I might change your name to Sam.
- Sean Awesome!
- Emily So, but, before I change your name, I want to know your real live, actual name so I can call you by your real live name in this interview. So I'm going to ask you to go around and tell me your name and what instrument you play. And let's just start right here.
- Ethan I'm Ethan, I, I play the trombone.
- Emily K. Ethan plays the trombone. Did I say that right?
- Ethan Uh, yes. E-T-H-A-N just to be sure.

Emily E-T-H-A-N. Great.

Hailey My name's Hailey, and I am a percussionist.

Emily K

Sean I'm Sean, I play the trumpet.

Brandonn I'm Brandonn with two n's and I play clarinet.

Sean The boy.

Brandonn (nodding) The boy.

Jack I am Jackson, or you can call me Jack. And I play the clarinet too.

Alexandra Um, my name is Alexandra Delaney, I play trombone.

Sean Spell your name out, your last name.

Alexandra Oh..

Emily Oh I don't need to know that

Alexandra Ok

Emily It's all good. Ok, so next question - and we can answer this in any order you want, just make sure we're not talking over each other. I wanna know why you joined band in the first place. Yeah?

Alexandra Um, I really wanted to be like kind of, of a huge group. Just everyone playing instruments together, um, making some music and making people happy when they watch us. Um, kinda hanging out with my friends when we're playing our instruments. And my brother also played trombone, and I remember when he brought it home, it was so interesting. So it was just a new experience.

Emily Ok, so how old's your brother?

Alexandra He is, um, he's a seventh grader. He's 13.

Emily So he's a year older than you.

Alexandra Yeah

Emily Oh wait, two years older than you.

Alexandra Yeah, two (confirming).

Emily K. Yes?

- Ethan I, I decided to play, play band cause I wanted to try a new experience, and I thought the creativity possibilities in it, and I, and I just like being around people.
- Emily Ok. Yes?
- Sean Me?
- Emily Yeah
- Sean Um, one I joined band because told me how to play an instrument, and um, and um, at my church we do this band, like, songs and stuff before we actually like start, and I want to be part of that. And, um, uh, and I also don't wanna do study hall.
- Emily (laughs) Ok. (Group giggles) Is the alternate to this class study hall? Like, are the kids who aren't in band right now in study hall?
- Group Yes
- Sean And they have to do work.
- Jack Those poor children.
- Emily Ok, and you said there was a, there's a musical group that plays at your church? Are you in that group now?
- Sean No, not yet.
- Emily Not yet? But maybe later? (Sean nods). Ok, yeah?
- Brandonn I joined band cause my dad plays the trumpet and he showed me, like, how to play it. And then, so, before band started, we got to test out all the instruments from the sixth grade players. And I wanted to play trumpet before I came to band
- Emily Mhm
- Brandonn But I heard the clarinet first, and then I wanted to play that.
- Emily Ok
- Brandonn It just sounded cool.
- Emily Ok, yep.
- Jack Siblings and parents. Basically, my whole entire family has played band. And mean brother, and college sister

Emily           Ok

Jack           ...out in South Dakota, um quit band.

Emily           Ok

Jack           And my sister plays clarinet. The one that's still in band.

Emily           Ok

Jack           And, I don't know I just was kinda interested, just like Alexandra said.

Emily           Ok, so it was kinda natural for you to join cause your siblings were in it?

Jack           Yeah

Emily           K. Yeah?

Hailey          Um, I played piano before band..

Emily           Yes..

Hailey          ...and so I wanted to play something kinda piano-based, so I'm a percussionist.

Emily           Ok

Jack           We have a piano at home

Emily           Great

Sean           I do too.

Emily           Awesome!

Jack           I , I broke, I broke like ten keys.

Emily           Oh! Oh man.

Brandonn       We have an organ.

Alexandra      What?

Jack           I just went like this (mimics throwing arms down on piano)

Emily           Ok, so, what are some of the good things about being in band. Yeah?

Alexandra      I kinda get to hang out with my friends, like I already said. And Mr. Singer is really funny, he's a nice person and stuff like that. And we really get to learn interesting songs, and you just to get to hear yourself get better and better and better and watch everyone else be like, kinda proud of you and work with you.

Emily           Ok, yeah?



- Jack Uh, get other people to experience what you've experienced, learned, having new, uh, subjects to do besides study hall. Take, uh, yeah, basically that's it.
- Brandonn Used to, well some of my favorite songs are in here, like "When the Saints Go Marching In". I always wanted to play that. And with all the different instruments playing different parts, it just sounds really, really cool.
- Emily So you like the parts coming together?
- Brandonn Mhm.
- Hailey Like, um, it's just learning a new something, like learning a new hobby or something.
- Ethan Sounds of music have always, have always, have always interested me, and, and when I joined band and finally understood it, it just like, exploded with creativity possibilities.
- Emily So for you, it's very much the musical experiences. (Ethan nods) Ok.
- Jack I don't remember who, uh, said it, like, a long time ago, but without music, life would be dull.
- Alexandra Albert Einstein
- Emily Ok. Einstein
- Ethan Alexandra thinks so.
- Jack Me in the future.
- Joshue Alexandra in the, the girl, girl version.
- Jack True.
- Emily Ok, I'm going to turn this around and ask the opposite question. What are some of the negative aspects of being in band? If there are any
- Sean Um, I'm not gonna name names, people...
- Emily People..
- Sean ...are um, like, um, like, getting, um, not listening and stuff. And Mr. Singerl gets a little, like, mad and stuff.
- Emily Ok, so when...
- Alexandra (whispers) Disrespectful.
- Emily ...yeah, makes sense. Let's go ahead, Brandonn?

Brandonn Um sometimes when Mr. Singer like, stops us at the end of the song, people just keep playing and think it is funny.

Emily Ok

Brandonn And it's really not funny.

Jack Class clowns.

Emily So things like, breaking the rules, being disrespectful?

Jack Mhm. Being embarrassed for songs you play when you first started band. That your band teacher wants you to do to the audience.

Emily So you don't like playing some of the easier band stuff?

Jack (whispering) Hint-hint. It's the concert

Emily Ok. So you don't like the concert?

Jack One song.

Emily One song?

Ethan We just took our mouthpieces and went "Honk! Honk!"

Emily Ok

Ethan And clarinets they sound like a dying duck. (Group breaks out in laughter)

Jack It's just like "eeeeeeeee"

Alexandra Terrible. So high pitched.

Emily Ok, um yeah go ahead.

Alexandra What I'm not trying to be rude or disrespectful to anyone, but I wish we had kind of like a c-group, a b-group, and an a-group, cause I feel like some of the kids are kind of like holding us back.

Emily Yeah

Alexandra And some of us that are more advanced aren't really getting to learn as much as we should while the other ones

Jack Like the new kids.

Alexandra Yeah that aren't quite, or um, people who really aren't used to it still, um, like, um, they could get to learn stuff more. And for the more advanced kids, they could, um, play harder songs.

Emily Ok, so you would want some competitive groups. Or not so much competitive...

Alexandra But more like different...

Emily ...tiered level groups

Alexandra Yeah, cause I feel like sometimes it's really hard when you have the whole entire band at different levels.

Emily Ok, yeah. It's definitely like a team sport. Ok, go ahead.

Ethan I, one negative thing about band to me is that, when I go home and I have to, also have lots of other home, I have to practice my trombone. And when I finally get it all done, sometimes I don't even get it all done, I don't have any time to myself.

Emily Ok

Ethan Cause I now have, cause for no, cause now I just have an early bedtime, which is 8:30.

Emily Mhm. K. So practicing for you can be a negative thing sometimes. Yes?

Jack Him or me?

Emily Eh, Jack.

Jack K. Uh, people that play and think it's funny, but I'm not going to name names, but the name is Bobby Richards

Sean Really?!

Jack What?

Sean You said you're not going to mention any names (Hailey laughs) and you just did.

Emily That's ok. So what were you saying?

Sean That's ready not very productive.

Emily And we'll just not say names in the future? You're allowed to finish your thought... (long pause of silence and Jack looking downward)

Ethan It's lost to the deep, dark holes of your mind?

Jack Exactly.

Emily Ok, Brandonn?

- Brandonn I'm kinda with Alexandra, I think, like, when my dad played there was like a number one person and it's all chairs. And then, so like the people that need help can get help, while the people are like, like the first ten, don't, like, don't want to sit through them and kinda of listen to that.
- Emily Ok. So you would like a little more competition in the group. Yeah, Alexandra?
- Alexandra Well, when some of us can't tell when it's a flat cause we don't read the key signatures.
- Emily Mhm.
- Alexandra So he has to narrow it down and that takes around ten minutes, and that takes almost all of our band time because one person, but he can't tell which instrument it is playing it wrong, so he has to go through all the instruments and figure out which person it is and help them out.
- Emily Mhmm.
- Sean And waste more time.
- Emily Mhm. That is the band director life.
- Sean He gets to the wrong person at the very last area.
- Emily Ok, ok. So, remember that everything we say here stays here. And this is a questions I am gonna want an answer from everybody unless you feel uncomfortable. But I do wanna know if you're planning on being in band next year in sixth grade, and if you are or not, either way, I want to know why you're choosing, why you made that decision. Let's just start right here.
- Ethan I want to be in band, band next year because it's fun and he's funny. I want to see what next jokes he has. And I want to explore different types of trombones.
- Emily Ok, so you're looking maybe to get one of the trigger trombones? Do you know what I'm taking about?
- Ethan It's one of those that (motions of back of trombone)
- Emily Yeah...Ok
- Hailey Yeah cause um I wanna do band still. Um, like, if, cause the harder it gets, the more interesting it is.
- Emily Ok. So you like the challenge of being in band.
- Hailey Mhm.

Emily K. Yeah?

Sean Uh. Uh, next year it's gonna be easier, but not songs, but like, it's gonna, we're gonna know how to play.

Emily Yes

Sean Um, and like, it's gonna be much more fun songs.

Emily Mhm.

Sean At the concert, they played Watermelon Man, which is, like, a really good song.

Emily Ok, so you are planning on being in band next year.

Sean Yeah.

Emily Ok.

Brandonn I want to be in band next year, cause I wanna play different instruments like the saxophone or something.

Emily Uh huh.

Brandonn And um, I wanna experience harder songs.

Emily Ok

Jack Yeah, cause I just like it.

Emily What, Jack?

Jack Cause I just like band.

Emily Oh! You just like band? Is there a specific reason.

Jack No.

Emily No, you just like the overall experience?

Jack Yeah

Emily K, but you are doing band next year?

Jack (nods) Yeah.

Emily K. Alexandra

Alexandra I really wanna play it again and through high school and everything because, um, also it helps out with the college scholarships.

- Emily It can, yes.
- Alexandra So, I think that would help out a lot.
- Emily Mhm.
- Alexandra And it's just a different experience. And, it's just fun.
- Emily Ok. How many of you think that maybe you'll be involved in band in some capacity even beyond sixth grade? (Everyone raises their hands)
- Yeah? What are some of these things you think you might be involved in? Anybody? (referring to the people that have their hands raised) Anybody?
- Brandonn Uh, I wanna, um, I was thinkin' like, cause I go to work with my mom at KU sometimes,...
- Emily Mhm
- Brandonn ...and when she's doing Junior Day or something...
- Emily Yeah
- Brandonn ...I go around to the tables and kinda look at everything, and the School of Music looks the most interesting out of all of them.
- Emily Ok. Anybody?
- Ethan Uh, I, I think I'll be in it, be in it after, after sixth grade because, because sometimes my, my mommy and daddy don't get paid a lot, so, so maybe I can find a place that takes me, young musicians.
- Emily Mhm, ok.
- Ethan I don't know
- Emily Mhm, ok. Alexandra.
- Alexandra Um, I'm gonna stay in it longer, uh, cause just like I said, it helps out with the college experience. I would like to learn to play the instrument my whole life and continue just getting better and better and better until it's just,
- Jack ...it's ended. (Alexandra giggles). Until you finally grow up, have kids, get married, blah blah blah. Such is life.
- Emily K. Such is life.
- Ethan (inaudible joke)
- Jack (hits himself on the head after Ethan's comment)

Emily            Alright, did you want to say something, Jack?

Jack             STSU band camp is eh...

Emily            Wait, what?

Brandonn        What?

Jack             South Dakota

Emily            Oh! South Dakota. Ok.

Jack             S-D

Emily            S-D...(repeating)

Jack             South Dakota

Emily            Uh huh.

Sean             S-D

Jack             S-D-S-U, South Dakota State University

Emily            uh huh.

Jack             ...has, it's band is, eh (hand motion signaling "so-so" quality)

Emily            Ok. Is that where you wanna go to school

Jack             Yeah. Just like my sister.

Emily            Just like your sister, very cool.

Jack             And play band like my other sister.

Emily            Ok. Yeah?

Sean             Me?

Emily            Sure.

Sean             I, uh, wanted to go to KU for college. And um, they, at basketball games, the stuff and band plays the KU fight song.

Emily            They do.

Brandonn        Yeah!

Sean.            And that's one of my favorite fight songs.

Emily            They do. Mh. Yeah, Alexandra.

- Alexandra Mr. Singer says that the hardest, the first year, um, band is, the hardest year of band is the first year, he says that's the only thing he could think of that the first year is the hardest. I've figured out something else for that: there's also prison. Prison, the first year for prison is also the hardest.
- Brandonn Um, ok Alexandra, Alexandra...stop.
- Emily I would assume so. Alright, and last one, did you wanna say something, Ethan?
- Ethan I was just... (Demonstrates that he was stretching his arm).
- Emily Ok (laughs)
- Group (Erupts in indiscernible conversation about Alexandra's prison comment)
- Emily Alright, let's reel it back in. What would you say to a person who is in your class and doesn't want to be in band next year?
- Ethan I would say you are missing out on a huge, wonderful experience.
- Emily K, you are pro-band. (Ethan nods) K, yeah?
- Hailey I would say you're missing out on a lot of opportunities cause there are field trips just for band students. And if you are really good at your instrument, like Alexandra said, um, you can get a scholarship, and that's good.
- Sean Pretty much the same thing, you know, I was gonna say stuff about field trips and stuff, and like, count on somebody I know for sure does not wanna be in band. Um. And, um, I, um, and I told em that I know, know that will be, like, more fun to play an instrument with, with people, friends and stuff
- Emily Ok
- Brandonn Um, I keep telling a person I ride with on the bus, Anna Lyons, and I keep telling her she would be a really good flute player. Like, she would be by her friends and they could help her, and I just think that she would be good.
- Emily Ok, is she younger or is she in your grade?
- Brandonn & Alexandra She's in our grade
- Alexandra She's, she would be a really good flute player
- Hailey Yeah she would
- Alexandra She's a great student
- Emily Alright Yep?



Jack Uh, you just kicked off an opportunity for a job.

Sean Kicked the bucket. (Pretends to kick a bucket)

Emily Oh yeah, there are some job opportunities. K, Alexandra?

Alexandra You just lost out on a whole another experience, and you're not going to get that experience back.

Emily Ok.

Sean If you quit, you're out.

Emily That's true.

Alexandra You're not gonna just be able to quit. Like, if you wanna play basketball one year, but not another year, you can do that. But with band, you are missing out on all this other things that you won't know what to do the next. You can't..

Sean You can't turn back.

Emily (Confirming) When you're done, you're done.

Alexandra You can't just go back and forth.

Brandonn Yeah, um, my cousin, she moved schools to here. And she, like, this band was way ahead of the school she was going to.

Emily Uh huh

Brandonn And, she, she had to, it was hard for her to catch up.

Emily Ok

Brandonn Mhm.

Emily Ok. So, I'm curious what the people in your life feel about you being in band. This could be your friends, could be your family, could be anybody you see on a regular basis. What's their impression of you being in band? Brandonn.

Brandonn My dad, he played the trumpet, like I said earlier. And, he just said he wished he would have played clarinet cause it plays more soft and not as annoying.

Emily Ok (laughs)

Brandonn Sorry, Josh. (Group laughs quietly)

Emily Jack.

Jack Since, the, since my sister in college, uh, played trombone.

- Emily K
- Jack Uh, brother played trumpet. Sister in, of course me, played clarinet. Uh, mom played trumpet, too. Dad played saxophone. Grandpa, I think also played saxophone. And then, my mom, my grandma (puts head in hands and mumbles something) plays flute. Played. (Corrects himself)
- Emily K. So are they pretty supportive of you being in band?
- Jack Eh. (long pause) Yeah...
- Emily Yeah?
- Jack Sometimes.
- Emily Ok
- Jack They come to concerts.
- Emily Ok, but just, you have a lot of family history in band.
- Jack (Nods) A lot.
- Emily K. Ethan.
- Ethan Uh, I, my, my dad, he's used to, if, if I remember correctly, he used to low, low brass in..
- Emily ok..
- Ethan In, in band in Michigan.
- Emily Oh, ok.
- Ethan He, he, and he just like, kinda supported me to choose, to choose to do band.
- Emily Ok.
- Hailey Um, well my sister is also a percussionist. And, um, well, sometimes if I play something wrong, she helps me with it. And my parents are both supportive, and my dad is really, he plays a lot of instruments. So they're pretty supportive.
- Emily Ok. Alexandra.
- Alexandra My parents are very supportive. My grandmother actually, I never knew this about her, but she played the trombone too.
- Emily Oh.

- Alexandra And no one in our family is musically talented. So that was kinda like, I didn't she like played an instrument. But my brother on the other hand is half-supportive since he like..
- Emily (Interruption by band director to report time remaining in class period). Ok, thank you (to band director)
- Alexandra Um, but since he's like just himself
- Emily Mhm
- Alexandra He's kinda like "you're really bad, but you're gonna be better than me." So kinda harsh, but still nice at the same time.
- Emily So, supportive. Alright, yeah?
- Sean Um, not really supportive of me, but um, like, uh, my mom, she's supportive of my sister who plays the flute, cause she used to play the flute. My dad, he never was in band. But her brother plays trumpet. He, he's the one who, like, inspired me with trumpet and stuff. And um, he's my role model. He taught me how to play Galactic Episode. He can play anything.
- Emily Ok. K.
- Trent Speaking of brother being jerks to you. Every single time I played a wrong note on the clarinet, my brother will peak his head into my room and say "you suck" and peak back.
- Emily Sounds like a very brotherly thing to do.
- Alexandra That's what my brother does. They're so harsh.
- Trent Eventually, I'm just gonna punch him.
- Emily (laughs) k.
- Trent Brotherly love...oh so little.
- Emily So, what about, um, what about, what about your band director. Do you feel like Mr. Singer...
- Brandonn Yes.
- Hailey He's awesome.
- Alexandra Best teacher I've ever had.
- Hailey He's like, my favorite teacher.

Ethan Funny.

Jack Don't say that (turning to Alexandra)

Alexandra Speaks towards the group and not towards the camera (indiscernible...) (turnings towards camera) Band is just so much better.

Emily Ok, so you feel like he's a big reason why band is a positive experience.

Alexandra Yes.

Emily Or you feel like he's a reason.

Alexandra Yes. If I had a different band director, I wouldn't like it as much as I do now.

Brandonn No, I wouldn't.

Jack He, he's good when no one annoys...

Alexandra ...him

Jack the C-R-A-P out of him

Emily Ok. Sounds like a typical teacher

Sean C-R-P, what does that mean?

Jack C-R-A-P...

Sean Oh, I see

Emily K, go ahead Hailey

Hailey Um, like, at my old school, the band teacher there, he was like a horrible teacher, and he wasn't patient at all. And I came here, and then this is a really awesome teacher.

Emily Ok. Yeah?

Sean Um, my fourth grade, um, recorder teacher (pause) was terrible.

Emily Ok

Sean Like, she, she had us put in front of us, and every single note we did wrong, she just like, screamed at us. And like, and um, she like, she um, did, like, she did it in a weird way, like, weird way like, I, like, didn't know. And on the concert she said that we're going, that we can choose what the concert going to be like. There's only three people that actually did it when we had a whole bunch of idea.

Emily Mhm.

Sean And, like, she did everything her way, which was a bad way.

Emily Ok

Josua And when I came here, I felt way more comfortable.

Emily Ok, so this is a much better experience.

Sean Mhm. (nodding)

Emily Ok, and then Alexandra and then we're gonna move on.

Alexandra Oh wait, are you gonna...

Emily Yeah you can go

Alexandra Ok, um. It's just like, I could, he's fun for kids. It's like, I can see other teachers not being funny and making the kids feel a little more bored and making them wanna leave band cause they're just bored from it. Mr. Singer makes it more interesting every single day.

Sean Ok. And yeah, then we're moving on.

Brandonn Yeah like, um, every time, like, someone's like not ready or plays the wrong note, he doesn't yell at us, but he gives, like, a little example of how we can do it better. Like, when we do warm-ups, he does do-re-mi and sometimes he does note names.

Emily Mhm.

Brandonn And like, when people aren't ready, like, he explains sometimes he explains a little kindergartener, it takes your brain a little to process it. But it shouldn't now, cause like

Sean Like we do it over and over again

Jack Like the Homer Simpson joke..

Brandonn Yeah!

Alexandra Oh yeah, the Homer Simpson joke. That was funny.

Group Group erupts talking about the Homer Simpson joke

Jack Yeah, that, like the daughter has a science project and it says "Is my brother dumber than a hamster?" Not my hamster, cause she opened the cage door. There's a cupcake with a zapper on it. And he went "Oh cupcake!" ZZZP

"Ahh!", "Oh cupcake!" ZZZP "Ahh!", "Oh cupcake!" ZZZP "Ahh!", . . . And he did it 20 times. That is exactly from his words.

- Brandonn      Yeah, that's what they keep lowering their horns down and then they keep struggling to get it up.
- Alexandra      Oh my gosh! And then he made us think of the cutest little image every: a little tiny hamster playing a little tiny trombone. (Group erupts in agreement and some begin pretending to be a hamster playing the trombone). That was so adorable when we all imagined that.
- Jack              Especially me. I could have meant that!
- Emily             Alright, so in conclusion, I'm getting that we really like Mr. Singer.
- Group            Yeah
- Josua            He's funny..
- Alexandra      He deserved that award when he got that award for one of the best band teachers or something. He deserved that, definitely.
- Group            Yeah
- Hailey           He deserved like three of them..
- Sean             And a trip to Hawaii!
- Jack             Idea: we should make our own reward for him. Award...
- Alexandra      Yeah
- Emily            You should, you definitely should..
- Brandonn      He like, he has..
- Emily            So we can't do it right now, unfortunately, cause we are running out of time. So I do have one final question before we wrap it up. I am going to different schools and talking to lots of different kids and I just want to hear about the beginning band and beginning orchestra experience. Is there anything that we didn't talk about today, but you think is important, that you should I should include in these other interviews? Yeah?
- Alexandra      Don't let the other kids push you around. I'm not gonna say names, but another kid um..
- Jack             What other another kid..?

- Alexandra He asked me if I liked Mr. Singer, and I said yes. And he was just saying how bad Mr. Singer was. When we had the other student teacher, he was talking bad about him too. And I just wanna say, don't let other kids make you quit band cause they say they don't like it.
- Emily Ok, ok yeah?
- Ethan It might, it might be hard at first. But always remind yourself the caterpillar always becomes a butterfly.
- Emily Oh, that's very nice. Ok, so how, we're gonna wrap this up. And I do have your sugar compensation
- Emily Um, well what's gonna happen is I'm coming back again one more time next week...
- Trent Yay!
- Emily ...and we're going to have a shorter version of this where I'm basically going to give you a recap of everything we talked about today. And you'll be able to say, "Yeah we said that.," or "No, we didn't say that at all." And then if you think of anything else over the weekend and you're like "Uh, I really wish I would have told Emily about this part of band!," keep that in your head cause I'll be back here next week and we'll just do a shorter, a quicker version of this.
- Trent Can't make any promise. I forget everything
- Ethan Same with me...
- Trent Even about my hamster
- Ethan I already forgot my..
- Emily Well I'll be back next week and I'll bring my sugar again. Alright, I'm turning off everything..
- Group Goodbye! (waving at camera)

## Appendix P

Rural Band Transcript  
Follow Up Interview – May 15, 2017

Emily            Alright, so, how this one's going to work: I am going to read you a paragraph. It is called the executive summary. This summary what I wrote after I wrote out our whole interview, I transcribed it. And then, I wrote a summary paragraph of what I believe you told me. The purpose of this interview is I am going to read that paragraph to you and I am going to ask you to tell me, at the end, whether I was correct in my understanding of what you said, and also if there is anything in there that was incorrect or only partially true. Maybe there's some missing information and you want me to know that? Sound good?

Josh             Yep!

Emily            Alright, here is the paragraph from your interview:

*Overall, the students' attitudes towards being involved in band were positive. Students originally joined band for a wide range of reasons. Some wanted to try something new, some had musical family members that influenced their decisions, one wanted to be part of a church music group,...*

(Josh, knowing the statement is about him, leans over his chair to wave at the camera and begins to fall out of his chair and an additional chair he has put his feet on. Laughing from Josh and the entire group begins to occur)

*...and one already played piano. All students stated that they intended to stay in band in sixth grade providing reasoning such as new musical challenges and experiences, the benefits of being in band when seeking college scholarships, and the support of their band director.*

Brandonn        Yep.

Emily            Deep breath (Referring to giggling girls, causing the entire group to begin laughing). Alright. Let's maybe, like, move this chair.

Josh             Alright, yeah, that's a good idea.

Ethan            The demon chair. (Jack grabs the extra chair from Josh)

Emily            Uh, no, no, no. I'll take it.



Ethan Uh uh (speaking to Jack), not your baby. Not your baby.

Emily Alright, there's, there's still more.

Group Ok, ok.

Emily Make sure you're listening (continues reading summary).

*All students demonstrated deep respect and enthusiasm for their band and stated that band would not be the same without their current teacher. Some students cited parental support at home for motivation to stay in band, and this support was seen as less genuine from some siblings. Negative aspects of band were additional practice time outside the school day, disrespectful band members, and the slower pacing of the class. Some students wished that there were ability-based groups they could be a part of, or at least competitive seating within their band. The band teacher was seen as one of the leading, if not the leading, reason for staying in band.*

That's it.

Josh Yeah. (General agreement from the group)

Ethan Yeah, that's, it seems like it, you covered pretty much everything.

Josh That was, like, almost 100%

Alexandra Like, I have nothing else to say. That was really well-written.

Hailey Yeah, that was really good.

Emily K. Is there anything that you thought of over the weekend that you would like to share?

Alexandra Uh, over the weekend, I was like, sick, sinus headaches.

Josh Oh, my mom had a crazy one.

Ethan Bad allergies, still fighting them now, or they might not be.

Jack Mother's Day was horrible.

Emily Ok, let's stay on the topic of band and only talk one at a time. So I do have two more questions for you. The first question is: If you were to quit band, what would you miss?

Alexandra Miss?

- Emily Let's start right here, Jack?
- Jack Life.
- Emily I want you to be more specific.
- Jack The talents that you could learn in band that you don't normally learn in real life.
- Emily Ok, thank you.
- Jack Life lessons. (Other students start a side conversation)
- Emily Ok, thank you. Please do not talk while the other people are talking.
- Alexandra Wait, what do you mean, like. Which miss do you mean? As in, what would you still like about band? Or what are you missing out on?
- Emily That's a great question, it can be either. So, if, if you were forced to quit band today, what would you really miss about being in the group? Ok (pointing to Ethan)
- Ethan My friends and the music. I like to play songs that are really fast (begins to sing a song).
- Emily Ok, thank you. Brandonn.
- Brandonn Being able to play saxophone next year.
- Emily K, Hailey.
- Hailey Um, missing playing a musical instrument and interacting with other kids in the classroom.
- Alexandra Everything. Pretty much everything. I would miss the chairs, the music stands
- Brandonn The chairs?
- Alexandra Yes, the chairs are beautiful (group begins to laugh).
- Emily Alright. And Sean.
- Sean Um, I think I would miss, like, all, like, um, like, all the fun activites and really great music. And concerts that help you get in front of a huge crowd.
- Emily K. Thank you.
- Sean You're welcome.
- Hailey I would miss our, um, instructor, instructor (repeats). Um, I would miss him a lot.
- Sean A lot.

- Emily            Alright, and Alexandra.
- Alexandra       I would have miss all of the fun I would be having with my friends and all the fun, and doing junior high and high school graduation songs and all that stuff. Performing...
- Emily            Ok, thank you for your answers. There's one more question. If you were forced to quit band today, what would you not miss about being involved? Let's go in reverse over.
- Josh             Mm, I don't really know (mumbles in hesitation). What would we not miss?
- Emily            Yeah.
- Josh             Oh. Bad students.
- Emily            Thank you.
- Josh             Like, slow. Like, normal fifth grade bands, well, what Mr. Singerl says, normal fifth grade bands are, like, way in front of us but we're behind cause we're so slow.
- Emily            Ok, so you would not miss the people in the class who work a little slower.
- Josh             Yes.
- Emily            Ok. Alexandra.
- Alexandra       I wouldn't miss the students that make it horrible each day. Like, we're trying to play a song and then he tells us to stop and they continue going (begins singing to mimic students playing on after a cutoff) and like, it just gives me even more of a headache.
- Emily            Ok, so you would not miss the disrespectful students.
- Alexandra       No.
- Emily            Ok, Hailey.
- Hailey           Yeah, I'm with Alexandra. Especially not with, especially I wouldn't miss the getting in trouble when kids are being disrespectful.
- Alexandra       Yeah, Mr. Singer gets grouchy.
- Hailey           Yeah
- Emily            K, Brandonn.

Brandonn Um, bad students and easy songs. I like challenging new songs better. A lot better.

Josh A lot better. They sound more good.

Brandonn More..

Emily Ok, Ethan.

Ethan Um, I wouldn't, I would, I would definitely not miss the few, the people who, who just don't show any disrespect (it is assumed that the word "respect" was intended here). It's like a mountain. And (pause) and, I would not miss any of the suuuuper dooooper sloooow soooongs (extends each word).

Emily Ok, so for you, Ethan, it's disrespectful people and slow songs.

Ethan Yes.

Emily You would not miss those at all?

Ethan Yeah, it's just like, a snail could play this faster!

Emily Ok, thank you.

Alexandra There's supposed to be slow ones. That's the beautiful part of ..(indiscernible)

Ethan I know, I know, it just depends on the context.

Emily And..(looking at Jack)

Jack Uh, not missing free time.

Emily I'm gonna ask you to repeat that.

Jack Not missing free time.

Josh I like missing free time.

Ethan What?

Hailey Study hall.

Jack Do I need to put it in a more easier way...

Emily Yeah. I have a. I want you to.

Jack Not, not missing free time. Period.

Emily Well ok. Do you mean free time at home or free time at study hall, or both?

Jack Study hall.

Emily Study hall. So free time at school. Got it.

Jack That's the only way I can play games with my friends cause my friend's is broken. Just broken.

Emily Is there anything else you want me to know about band? Alexandra.

Alexandra From my own words, it's awesome.

Emily K. Sean.

Sean From my own words, it's more awesomer (group begins to giggle).

Brandonn "Awesomer" is not a word.

Sean I just made a new word then. It's in the dictionary now.

Emily Ok, well then I, if we have concluded our discussion about band, I am going to turn off the recorders. Are you ready for me to turn of the recorders?

Group Yeah

Jack Turn it off, turn it off!

Group 4 - 3 - 2 - 1 - 0! Bye!

\

## Appendix Q

Rural Orchestra Transcript  
First Interview – May 10, 2017

- Emily Ok, let's get started. Before we get talking about real live orchestra stuff, there are a few ground rules of this interview. So one, I'll be asking you questions, and then I'm going to ask at the very start that you answer those questions one at a time. The big rules of this interview are, don't talk while other people are talking, which is pretty self-explanatory. If you get really excited and you want to respond to what somebody is saying, that's totally cool, just don't interrupt them. Let them finish their thought, and then you can respond. Sound good? Ok, uh.
- Adrian Does our orchestra class watch this?
- Emily No one's ever going to see this video.
- Landon I wanna see it.
- Emily Like we said earlier...
- Devin We can't see it?
- Emily I will be the only person that will ever see it.
- Jonathan Can we see it?
- Emily Nope, I will be the only person that every see's it. (Adrian drops fidget spinner on table, making Jonathan laugh) Why don't, do you have a pocket? I want you to put that in your pocket or I'll hold it for you for now. K. Alright, so the first thing I wanna know, is we're gonna start right here (pointing to Devin)...
- Devin Wait, what?!
- Emily And I just want you to tell me your name and what instrument you play.
- Devin Devin, violin.
- Emily Devin plays the violin? (Devin nods) K.
- Landon I'm Landon Frost and I play the bass.
- Emily Samuel?
- Landon Landon. (Jonathan barrels over in laughter.)
- Emily Landon! Totally not Samuel.

Landon Not Samuel

Emily Plays the bass...Ok.

Adrian Um, I'm Adrian and I play the bass.

Emily Adrian plays the bass. Ok..

Rachel I'm Rachel Harding and I play the cello.

Emily Rachel?

Rachel Mhm.

Emily Alright. Cello..

Riley Riley Humphrey, I play the viola

Emily Alright, what's your name?

Riley Riley Humphrey

Emily Riley Humphrey, alright, and what did you say you play?

Riley The viola.

Emily The viola, excellent.

Jonathan Um, Jonathan Rogers and I play the violin. (looks at Adrian and begins laughing)

Emily Awesome. So, I now, the other think I'm gonna ask. The reason I am recording you is because I am going to be typing out this entire interview later. So when you make comments to other people that I can't hear I just have to include that in my conversations. Make sure we're talking to each other, otherwise it's like, totally impossible to do. You understand what I'm trying to say? K. So this is just a conversation between us. Yes?

Jonathan Um, does that need to be in the middle? (referring to the voice recorder).

Emily No, it does not.

Jonathan Ok... (looks at Adrian and bursts out laughing again)

Emily Ok, thank you for giving me your names. ...

Devin That's gonna bother me (centering the table)

Emily ...Remember, there, I, in this report, if I every like use a quote from you, I will never use your actual name. I will give you a pseudonym: it's like a fake name. So like, if anybody were to every, like, read my report, they would never know

you were the person who said this. This includes your parents, this includes your teachers, this includes your principal. I will be only one that ever know, knows, knew what you said. K, so now that we know our instruments. I am Emily, I go to KU. My first instrument was the clarinet, I started learning it in fifth grade. And now I know how to play all the instruments...

- Landon Cool.
- Emily ...including the string instruments. And I did teach orchestra for a few years. Ok, so the first thing I'm going to ask you is what prompted you to join orchestra? Would you like to answer first?
- Devin Jonathan (pointing to Jonathan, indicating that he should go first)
- Jonathan No, you.
- Emily I want, just raise your hand if you want to go first. Rachel.
- Rachel I saw an assembly in fifth grade..
- Emily K
- Rachel Uh, I really liked how the cello sounded, and I really wanted to join the orchestra.
- Emily Ok, so you saw an assembly, you liked the way the cello sounded, and that made you wanna join the orchestra?
- Rachel Yeah
- Emily Nice. K, yeah?
- Riley Uh, I watched a high school concert, a orchestra concert and I realized there were only um two violas. And I thought it might be cool to play the viola.
- Emily Alright
- Devin And now there are only two violas in this orchestra. (Adrian and Jonathan begin to giggle)
- Emily There are only, there's so there's two violas in this orchestra, too?
- Riley There's three violas.
- Emily Three (stutters) violas. Ok..
- Riley Because Han..
- Devin Oh yeah, that guy! (Adrian and Jonathan look at each other and laugh again)



Emily           Ok, let's move on. Next?

Landon         Ok (slaps hand down on table). Um, the reason I wanted to play the bass was because multiple family members of mine always wanted to play an instrument...

                  Ok.

Emily           ...but they've never actually took the time and to learn how to play, so I wanted

Landon         to be the first to do that.

Emily           Ok, so you're the first person in your family to plan an instrument?

Landon         Yes.

Emily           Ok, very cool. Yeah?

Jonathan       Um, my grandpa, he like, he never had an education.

Emily           Mhm.

Jonathan       And he wanted to play like, he wanted to play violin really bad, but he couldn't because he didn't have an education. And then his dad played like the saxophone and the violin. So I just like, play that. And now I also play.

Emily           Ok, so you have some family stuff too..

Jonathan       Yeah.

Emily           That motivated you to play. K

Adrian         Because um, because um, I play, I know how to play the guitar and the bass guitar...

Emily           Uh huh.

Adrian         ...and I wanted to know how to play more instruments.

Emily           Ah, that's cool

Devin          I didn't know you play the guitar (Adrian nods)

Emily           So you play guitar. Are you in a band?

Adrian         No (Jonathan bursts into giggles again)

Emily           No, ok. Alright, so, what are some of the things you like about orchestra? Yeah?

Riley          The people in it, including my teacher (trailing off at the end)

Emily           The people. Can you say that again.

Riley           The people in it, including my teacher.

Emily           The people in it, including the teacher. So you like your friends in the group?  
And Mr. Emery? (Riley nods). K.

Jonathan       Playing some, like, really fun songs. And then learning the skills and getting  
better at it.

Emily           Ok, so what, what, what's a fun song? And why is it fun?

Jonathan       Um probably, um, Minute

Rachel          It's Minute

Jonathan       Minute, Minuette, or something like that.

Emily           uh huh

Devin           It's Minute!

Adrian          No it's not! (responding to Devin)

Landon          Shut up (whispers generally to Adrian and Devin)

Jonathan       And, and Dance of the Dragons cause that's my favorite

Emily           Ok. Why, why do you like those pieces?

Jonathan       Um, they're, they have like, um, certain things you have to do with your violin.  
And your bow, like, um, and you'll like, move it really fast with your hands. And  
then you have to go like up, up, and yeah. Um. And yeah.

Emily           Great. Were, did you want to say something about that?

Devin           Oh, I was gonna say that um Gavin, he could play the little way you have to  
move your bow..

Jonathan       A tremolo.

Devin           Whatever it's called. (waving Jonathan off) where you have to move your bow  
really fast and, a fast tremolo.

Emily           Ok. Yeah?

Devin           I'm not gonna remember that. (whispering to Jonathan)

Landon          Um. It's, it's really fun to play the bass. Um. I kinda like how deep it sounds and  
all that. It's also really nice to be part of a group.

Jonathan       Yeah.

Emily            Being part of the group, and the sound of your instrument?

Landon         Mhm.

Emily            And so you like those low sounds?

Landon         Yeah, it's cool.

Emily            Ok.

Landon         Yeah. Um, I wanted to play the saxophone before that. But that sounds cool, too.

Emily            So you wanted to play the saxophone before you joined orchestra?

Landon         Yes.

Emily            And have you ever played saxophone?

Landon         No.

Emily            No. Do you anticipate that you'll ever play the saxophone.

Landon         It's possible.

Emily            Ok. Interesting. Adrian, Rachel, anything?

Rachel          Um, um, uh, um, I really like all of the, like all the, pretty much everything about orchestra. And, I really like concerts and the contests that we go to and stuff. So yeah.

Emily            So you like performing?

Rachel          Mhm.

Emily            And is contest competitive?

Rachel          Kind of.

Adrian          You get, like, a, a judge judges you. Like a one through something. And we got a one. And one's the best.

Emily            Oh, congratulations.

Riley            You're not necessarily judged against anybody.

Devin           We were judged by Santa.

Jonathan        Yeah, he looked like Santa.

Adrian          Yeah that was funny.

Emily            Alright. What were you saying?

Riley            You aren't necessarily competing. It's just seeing how high you rank.

Emily            Ok. So you're not competing against other groups, but it's just getting a rating from a judge. How did you feel about that experience, getting a rating from a judge?

Rachel           I thought it was kinda like cool cause I've never really, like been rated on how I played in orchestra before.

Emily            Mhm.

Rachel           By somebody, like, a judge. So yeah.

Emily            K. So you like the competition aspect of it.

Landon           Dude. I was kinda nervous because, I mean, it's only one guy but, he knows all this stuff. So it's like having multiple people in front of you. I liked it, but I was like, really nervous.

Devin            You did have multiple people in front of you.

Landon           I know. But that was the only guy I was really paying attention to.

Emily            K.

Devin            Imagine everyone's naked.

Emily            Ok, make sure if you're going to say something, you need to be able to hear it.

Landon           Yeah, Devin.

Devin            Ok.

Emily            Ok. Alright, well, let's move onto the next question. (Adrian makes a surprised face). Oh! Would you like to answer? Go for it! Please tell me, what do you like about being in orchestra?

Adrian           I like how everyone has, um, different parts. And the bass can vibrate the ground. And it's cool.

Emily            K, so you like the different parts. Everyone is doing different things?

Adrian           Mhm.

Emily            And you like how they come together? (Adrian nods) K. Devin

Devin            I like how it's always challenging.

Emily            It's always challenging?

Jonathan Really challenging.

Devin Very challenging.

Emily K. Ok, so this is gonna sound like a kinda similar question. What are some of the positive elements of being in orchestra?

Jonathan Wait the what?

Emily The positive elements of being in orchestra.

Jonathan What's that mean?

Emily So what are some of the good things about being in orchestra. Yes?

Devin Um, you, you, you, you (pause) I forgot what I was gonna say.

Emily That's ok. Anybody else?

Landon Um..

Emily Adrian

Adrian It's a good way to end the day.

Emily Ok, so you like having...cause this is your last class period of the day, right?

Adrian Mhm. And it's fun.

Emily So you have a fun class at the end of the day? (Adrian nods) How would you feel if it was swapped and you had orchestra first hour? Do you think it would change the experience?

Adrian Mhm. It would suck.

Emily It would suck?! (laughing)

Landon Absolutely.

Devin We, we would suck because... (Coday mimics falling asleep while playing. Landon pretends to play the bass sleepily. Emily laughs)

Devin Landon, it looks like you're dead.

Emily Riley?

Riley Oh, I was gonna say that since Mr. Emerys like laid back most of the time, some of the time,

Jonathan All of the time... (group laughs)

Riley Uh, we get to um, sometime pack up early and sometimes we get to, like, play games and watch stuff (trails off..)

Landon ...on Apple TV.

Emily Ok. So you don't always just do orchestra in orchestra class. You get to..

Riley He, he makes sure we still have fun, but (trails off)

Emily Ok. Will you say that last part a little louder?

Rachel He makes sure that we still have fun, but still learning something.

Emily Ok .Still have fun, still learning something.

Landon That's always nice.

Emily Nice. K. Yes?

Jonathan Um, kinda like when, oh, oh yeah, well. Well, Mr. Emery, he, he is like, really nice, like, as Riley said. But um, like, if you play your instrument when he's trying to tuning, he get's like, really mad and then we don't get to pack up early. But like, I don't really get the question, but oh well.

Emily Alright. No.

Jonathan I don't know..

Adrian What's a good thing about being in orchestra?

Jonathan I don't know..

Landon It's the same question, just, different stuff

Jonathan (shrugs) I don't know. It's worth it.

Emily Ok. Great. Yeah?

Devin Um, acting more mature than your teacher.

Emily Acting more mature than your teacher?

Landon It's always (trails off)

Devin Me, Adrian and I think Rachel, too, and Gavin were playing Apples to Apples. We were talking about, um, "whatchyoucallit", president things...

Rachel politics..

Devin Politics. And, and then, well, and well, we were talking about politics and everything. Mr. Emery was over on his phone playing power rangers.

Jonathan Yeah..

Emily Teachers gotta have fun too.

Landon Yeah, you gotta play sometimes.

Devin You're not a teacher (flips Landon's hair)

Emily I'm gonna flip this. Hey (attempting to get Devin's attention), I'm gonna flip this on the other side. What are some of the negative aspects of being in orchestra? Let's start with Riley.

Riley Um. A lot of the times, I won't name names, a certain few people like to play or talk and get Mr. Emery (distracted) so we don't get our stuff done.

Emily Ok. K. So some people are a little disruptive? (Riley nods)

Adrian He's with us right now.

Emily Um, ok. Let's hear form Jonathan.

Jonathan Um, he get's a little cranky sometimes.

Emily Mr. Emery gets a little cranky sometimes?

Jonathan Yeah, not a little, a lot.

Devin And Gavin

Emily Why do you think..

Devin If you get, like, if you mess around, he get's really cranky

Jonathan Really cranky.

Emily Ok.

Devin Really cranky.

Jonathan Like detention, like Devin. Cause he likes to mess around.

Emily Ok.

Devin I've only had one detention from Mr. Emery.

Emily Alright, Devin.

Devin Um. Yeah. What was I gonna say? Sorry. When I. Oh yeah. That, they have, this, uh, it's irritating because, they, ok. Our last concert was on Saturday at 10:48 am. Why not 10:50? (Jonathan and Adrian burst out in giggles) Or 10:45? And it's Saturday. Why do we have to wake up that early?

Emily I'm not sure.

Devin And it's Saturday. Why do we have to wake up that early?

Emily I'm not sure. So you don't, so Devin what you're telling me is you don't like performances on Saturdays? You'd rather have them on a school day.

Devin No it's the time that's bothering me.

Emily Oh.

Devin It's not 10:50, it's not 10:45, it's 10:48.

Landon And it's the weekend, so.

Emily Ok. Alright, Adrian?

Adrian Orchestra's fun so it's (completely indiscernible).

Emily Can you say that louder?

Devin I have no idea what he's saying.

Adrian Orchestra is fun, so it's a fun thing to do on the weekend. But um, the bad thing is whenever Mr. Emery is sick, it's hard for the orchestra to tune. It's hard for us to tune when he's sick.

Emily K. Mhm. Ok, Rachel.

Rachel Um, sometimes when you're relying on others to like, play something right, they don't. And then it just like, get's everybody else off track.

Emily So it's very much like a team sport.

Rachel Yeah.

Emily And if your teammates don't pull their weight, then it gets frustrating?

Rachel Mhm.

Emily K. Riley?



- Riley I also don't like how many times we, he has to go to the high school. Cause then we have a substitute, and usually, if it's not Mr. Emery, they're not good substitutes.
- Devin We either watch a, we either watch a crappy movie or we don't do anything at all.
- Emily Ok, yeah it's hard to find an orchestra substitute. So your teacher, you're saying he's spread pretty thin. He work in the high school and the middle school in this district, right?
- Riley Mhm.
- Emily Any sometimes he can't be here cause of that? (Riley nods) That does stink. Ok, last one. Landon?
- Landon Sometimes, like, somebody don't have enough time to practice. At the end you gotta rush it and work all the time instead of stretching it out.
- Emily Ok.
- Devin Who puts an outlet on the ceiling?
- Emily Alright, probably not relevant to what we're doing right now. So, this one, I'm gonna ask you to go around and I'm gonna ask you one-by-one, and I do want an answer from everybody. Remember that what we say here stays here, so we're not gonna go back to orchestra, and we're not gonna talk about what we say here. It's just gonna be between us. I want to know if you're planning on being in orchestra next year, in seventh grade, and why?
- Devin Mhm. (long pause follows)
- Emily Is that a tough question?
- Jonathan No! It's him.
- Emily Ok, Devin, let's start with you.
- Jonathan Oh yay!
- Devin Hi. Yes, and because I want to. And if I, and if I make it to high school, I get my, um, is it my great-great grandpa or my great-grandpa? My great-grandpa's violin.
- Emily Ok, so..

Devin           The, the thing's almost 100 years old.

Emily           Wow, so you're motivated by receiving a special instrument if you go to high school and play. (Devin responds with a so-so head bob)

Devin           I have my sister's violin right now. It's purple.

Emily           Oh, ok very cool. Alright Landon let's..

Devin           He doesn't like it (pointing down the table)

Emily           Landon, let's hear about you.

Landon          Yeah at least, at least until high school. Because I want to play other instruments too, and not just the bass.

Emily           Ok, so other instrument in the orchestra?

Landon          I had, uh like, I just, I can play some other instruments the violin, not the violin, but the piano.. (Devin rocks back and forth in chair making a squeaky noise. Emily reaches out and steadies the chair with her hand to get Devin to stop).

Devin           Hi

Landon          Like, the piano or the saxophone.

Emily           Ok

Landon          Or something like that. Trumpet...

Emily           Ok, so if you wanted to play the saxophone or the trumpet, would you have to drop out of orchestra and be in band instead? Or could you do both?

Landon          I think I, I think I probably, wait, what is this que, like is it like, is it asking, are you asking me if I can do both at once?

Emily           Yeah.

Landon          Ok. I, um, I, I would probably have to drop out.

Emily           Ok. I am just curious what the schedule's like.

Devin           You're treating this like an exact job interview.

Emily           And that's ok. He can answer however he wants.

Jonathan      It's preschool

Emily          Alright. So you're planning on doing it next year.

Landon        Yes.

Emily         Ok. Great. Adrian?

Adrian        Wait, um. Yeah.

Emily         You are going to be in orchestra next year?

Adrian        Yeah.

Emily         K. Why?

Adrian        Cause it's really fun.

Emily         Why is it fun?

Adrian        Cause I can talk to my friends.

Emily         So your friends are in orchestra?

Adrian        Yeah.

Emily         Rachel?

Devin         What am I doing? (Adrian and Jonathan start giggling at Devin)

Jonathan     You're making fun..

Devin         You guys are looking at me.

Landon        Guys, stop.

Emily         Alright, Rachel.

Rachel        Yeah, I'm definitely going to do orchestra next year.

Emily         K.

Rachel        Cause, uh, it's like such a good experience and like, I might, um, look forward to other stringed instrument, but I'm probably gonna stick with the cello.

Emily         Ok.

Rachel        Yeah.

Emily         Why do you think it's a really good experience?

Rachel Um, like, you get to, like, it would be fun to continue, and um, uh, kinda of, I'm kinda hard, or, bad at thinking things on the spot.

Emily That's ok.

Rachel Yeah, it's fun, I guess.

Emily Ok, good.

Riley Uh, this is gonna sound weird but yes. Cause I've already colleges I'm gonna go to.

Emily Oh! Ok, so what colleges do you wanna go to?

Riley Um, I wanna go to Ozark, but then swap and then go to Missouri the next year and major in probably, Missouri Southern for viola.

Emily Ok, for the viola?

Riley Yeah, for a music major.

Emily Ok, so you already know you want to be a musician...

Riley Yeah.

Emily ...as an adult

Riley Yeah I either want to be like a either a children's minister, I wanna be like a children's minister. I can do like, lessons for kids.

Emily Ok.

Riley Like, music lessons.

Emily Ok.

Riley Cause I can already play the piano. So maybe learn like one or two more instruments and do lessons.

Emily Ok. So music is going to be part of your life for a while. (Riley nods) Alright.

Jonathan Do I have to say mine?

Emily Uh, if you are very uncomfortable, you do not have to.

Jonathan Yeah.

Emily Ok. You don't wanna say?

Jonathan Mhm (shakes head no).

Emily Ok, that's fine. Alright. Um, then, let's talk about this: let's say somebody new comes to your school and this poor child, just arrived at your school, there are like, two weeks left, and they have to now meet friends. And, they wanna know from you whether or not they should join orchestra next year with you in seventh grade. What would you tell them? Riley?

Riley Well, um, I don't know what the rules are, but, uh, last year he said that you would join uh, in sixth grade. But if he said yes, I would definitely tell him or her that they should.

Emily Ok, let's go under the assumption that they are allowed to join. Mr. Emery has said it's cool. Alright, yeah?

Jonathan Um, I already have a friends that joined. Like, he wants to join, but he doesn't know cause in sixth grade his name is, uh, Austin. And he want to be, uh, he wants to do uh, violin, cause he was in band last year, like, at his old school.

Emily Uh huh.

Jonathan So, um, we're gonna have to talk to Mr. Emery.

Emily Ok.

Jonathan I think he should join, but it's up to Mr. Emery.

Emily Ok, why would you tell him he should join?

Jonathan Um, well it's really fun and, um, you'll learn, like, new things.

Emily Ok.

Jonathan And then, have another friend.

Emily Ok, another friend in the class. K, Devin?

Devin I'd say no.

Emily Don't join?

Devin Um, Mr. Emery said if we um, didn't do this, if we didn't do it this yaer and we did it in seventh grade, it will take a really, really long time to catch up to where we are now.

Emily Ok, let's say that this person's already played violin for a year at a different school. (Devin shrugs). Don't know?

Devin Um, I only have like, two friends. I don't , I don't know what to say.

Emily Ok, that's fine. Uh, yeah?

Landon Um, I, I'd say it depends on what they wanted to play.

Emily Ok.

Landon Cause I've been to band and orchestra..

Devin Yeah?

Landon Yes. And they're both really cool. So, depending on what they wanted to play, they're both very, very fun.

Emily Ok. So you would suggest they do band or orchestra?

Landon Yes.

Emily Do one of them.

Landon Mhm.

Emily Do either of them.

Landon Either of them.

Emily K. Rachel.

Rachel Um, I would say yes, if they like music and instruments because, um, ah! Ok.

Emily It's ok.

Rachel Um, I think, I don't know what to say.

Emily That's ok. So what I'm getting is you would say yes.

Rachel Yeah.

Emily Try it out.

Rachel Yeah.

Emily K, Adrian?

Adrian I would say yeah, but I, I would want them to play in orchestra class and play the viola.

Emily Ok, so yes, but be specific and play the viola. Alright, yes, Riley?

- Riley I actually know this, because this morning, we got a new student and I was supposed to show her around and she asked about orchestra class.
- Emily Ah! So it's like deja-vu.
- Riley Uh, the, she, I can't remember her name. It starts with an N..
- Devin Uh, Na, Na, Na, Na, Naia. Yeah, Nada. I'm in her math class.
- Emily Ok, great. Ok, I'm curious what the people in your life feel about you being in orchestra. So these are the people that you see every day. The people you have a relationship with. What do the people in your life feel about you being enrolled in orchestra class? Riley.
- Riley Most of them support me, but some, most of them think I'm crazy for playing instrument.
- Emily Ok, so who supports you and who thinks you're crazy?
- Riley Uh, the people I live with right now. Well like, my siblings that I see most of the time, they, they never think it's a good idea. Mostly because they uh, mostly they know the common orchestra instruments like viola, cello, and bass.
- Emily Mhm.
- Riley So we don't get the recognition we need.
- Emily Ok.
- Devin You said viola, cello, bass.
- Riley I mean violin.
- Emily I got what you meant. Ok, Rachel?
- Rachel Um, sorry. Well, what's the questions again?
- Emily How, what do the people in your life feel about you being in orchestra?
- Rachel Um, my mom is really happy that I'm, like, learning how to play an instrument cause when she was little she was in band. But, well, er, she always wanted to be in, like, band, but she um, well, uh, couldn't afford the, well my grandma, yeah, she couldn't afford the money. So...
- Emily Ok.

- Rachel ...couldn't afford the instrument. So yeah. My sister, she, I don't think she really cares that much.
- Emily Ok.
- Rachel But I know she's like, "Yeah that's cool."
- Emily Ok.
- Rachel And yeah. And I know my dad, he's really proud too cause he plays instruments.
- Emily Oh.
- Rachel And I'm not really sure what my stepdad thinks, so.
- Emily Ok.
- Rachel Yeah, that's kind of it.
- Emily Landon.
- Landon Um, my mom is really, really happy that I'm playing the bass or any instrument for that matter because she says that if I keep going, keep, um, playing this, instr-instrument, I could be able to get a scholarship.
- Emily That could be true, yes.
- Landon And (pause) I don't really see my dad, so I don't know what he thinks.
- Emily K.
- Landon But my sister thinks it's cool cause I can come home and teach them how to play stuff.
- Emily Mhm. K. Does your orchestra teacher have any role in your decision to be in orchestra?
- Jonathan Wait, what was the question?
- Emily Does Mr. Emery play in role in you deciding to be in orchestra? Rachel.
- Rachel A little bit. I mean, I really like him as a teacher, and I told a lot of those things. Yeah, but, mostly it's because I play piano and I like to play cello, so yeah.
- Emily Ok. Riley?
- Riley K. Um, definitely, cause my oldest siblings grew up with him in the high school and they said, or recommended him. And so when he became the orchestra teacher, I though he was a pretty good one.



- Emily Ok. Jonathan, what were you gonna say?
- Jonathan Um, I would say no because, um, I, like, I didn't know Mr. Emery before whenever I joined orchestra. And I don't know, kind of, but he teaches us everyday, and he gets a little bit of the credit from me.
- Emily Ok. Yeah?
- Landon Um, I, I would say a little bit because um, it's fun being in the orchestra because he is almost the weirdest person ever.
- Emily (laughs) Ok.
- Landon Like, he could, he could be joking laughing around one minute, and the like, like the Incredible Hulk the next. It's, it's crazy.
- Emily Ok, a good crazy? Or kind of a crazy, crazy?
- Landon Uh, sometimes. See, it's bad and it's good at the same thing.
- Riley Going along with Landon's comment, a lot of times he'll be sitting there and either talking about video games, or Marvel movies
- Devin or Star Wars
- Riley ...or like, if a 12 year old, a 28 year old talking like a 12 year old
- Devin He's 28?
- Riley Yeah, he's 28.
- Jonathan Yeah.
- Devin He's 28 and he has the mind of a 2 year old sometimes.
- Jonathan Yeah, like, we're playing and, we're playing like our instruments, and he plays this weird song like, out of Star Wars and it's like... (Devin begins to sing the Star Wars theme song)...(responding to Devin) No! Not that, its like into the bushes of love.
- Group Oh yeah! Laughing.
- Devin It's so funny.
- Jonathan And I was like what is this?! And he's like, the blood had me going, like, yeah
- Devin the Bushes of Love

Jonathan      Yeah. He was like, the blood had me going and stuff.

Landon        It's bad lip reading. (Devin and Jonathan begin singing the song together)

Riley          It's bad lip reading.

Emily          Ok, so, before we head out, I do have one more question. Like I said, I was going around to different schools, or I am going around to different schools and talking to people about being in beginning orchestra. Are there any questions you think I should ask other schools that I didn't ask here that might give me more information?

Adrian        You're going to other schools?

Emily         Uh huh.

Landon        Like any specific, like, a certain school?

Emily         Um, no just in general. Like, or, is there anything today that you think we should have talked about, but we didn't talk about.

Landon        No.

Jonathan     Oh!

Emily         Yeah?

Jonathan     Do they like the group? Like, do they like the instrument that they're playing, or the music?

Emily         Ok, so you've brought up music more than one. So you think that the music is important.

Jonathan     Yeah.

Emily         Ok. And you think that, so music and the specific instrument they're playing is important.

Jonathan     Yeah.

                  What about everybody else? Does the instrument make a big deal?

Landon        Yeah cause if you don't like the instrument you playing, you're not going to play that good.

Emily         Seem logical. Ok, so how this is gonna work, I'm about to turn off these video cameras cause we're done for the day. Thank you so much for letting me talk to you.

Devin           Wait you're coming back again?

Emily           I'm coming back one more time. So I'm coming back next week to talk to you guys again. What I'll do is I'll just read you a summary of what we talked about today. And then you'll just say "Yes, that is what we said." or "No, that's not what we said." And then if you think of anything, like, over the weekend that you wanna talk about, we can talk about it then, too.

Landon         Ok.

Jonathan       So it's gonna be all of us again?

Emily           Same group. And you get paid with Jolly Ranchers again.

Jonathan       Awesome.

Emily           Yes.

Landon         Again? So how many jolly ranchers are we getting?

Emily           Sorry what?

Riley           There was more than one video camera?

Emily           There was this one, and that one.

Riley           Oh, what?!

Emily           I'm not even sure. Ok, I'm gonna turn off the recorders.

## Appendix R

Rural Orchestra Transcript  
Follow Up Interview – May 17, 2017

- Emily Ok. Here is your summary paragraph:
- Adrian Wait, what's my nickname?
- Emily I haven't made it up yet.
- Adrian Can I be Tyla?
- Emily I am reading your summary paragraph
- Adrian Oh
- Emily If you're willing to participate, I'm going to ask that you sit and listen, otherwise I'm going to ask you to leave.
- Adrian I am listening.
- Emily Ok.

*Overall, the students' attitudes towards being involved in orchestra were positive. Students originally joined orchestra to try new instruments and because they liked the sounds of particular string instruments. Some students had family members that were past musicians that influenced their decisions to be part of the orchestra. Most students stated that they planned to stay in orchestra in the next year because they liked playing their instrument, were potentially going to continue orchestra in high school or college, or because their friends were in the group. Not all members of the group stated intent to return to orchestra, but all had positive things to say about their experience. Negative aspects of being involved in orchestra were disruptive or disrespectful students, and the occasional weekend performance. The orchestra teacher, though enjoyed by the students for being nice, was sometimes seen as distracted or off-topic during class.*

That's the paragraph.

- Landon Uh, ok.
- Devin Wait, that was it?
- Emily So go ahead and raise your hand and tell me if there's anything..

- Adrian That's it?!
- Emily Any comments you have. Rachel.
- Rachel Everybody else may seem like, uh, Mr. Emery is cranky all the time, but I don't really see it that way. He's just a little bit strict sometimes to get some students to talk talking.
- Emily Ok, thank you for that clarification.
- Landon I mean, he does get off topic, but um, I don't know. It doesn't sound good to me when you say "off topic." It sounds like he's, um,
- Rachel Like that all the time?
- Landon No, not like that all the time. Like, um, not a very good teacher.
- Emily K.
- Landon That's what it sounds like to me.
- Emily Ok, so maybe I got the wrong impression from what you were saying.
- Landon Yeah, um, I don't know how to put it into words, but he's, I don't, I don't know, but he's not, he's not, like, he doesn't slack off.
- Emily Got it. K. Jonathan.
- Jonathan Um, after the, um, orchestra concert when he was singing, I think that made him a little bit more weirder than I thought he was. Um, I think, like, he's really nice. But I just think he's really weird.
- Emily Ok, because he sang at the concert last night, right? He showed me the video before class.
- Landon It was so funny.
- Adrian Did you wanna die? (multiple people start talking at the same time)
- Emily One person at a time. Devin.
- Devin You also left out the part where he's sometimes immature. Sometimes. And, and, Jonathan cannot speak right. More weirder is not a word.
- Emily Uh, that's really not important right now. So what you're trying to tell me is... (stops to address side conversation between Jonathan and Adrian) Gentlemen, one person talking at a time.
- Adrian Ok

- Emily So what you're trying to tell me is he's immature sometimes, but he's still a good teacher. (Devin nods) K. Riley.
- Riley Um, whenever you said that he get's off topic, kinda going with them, um, he usually gets off-topic because we get off-topic first, and then he get's us back on track.
- Emily Ok, this is good. I think this gives me a more complete picture of your teacher. Was there anything else?
- Landon Um
- Emily Yes.
- Landon He is a huge nerd.
- Group Yeah
- Devin He's a giant nerd.
- Emily Ok.
- Devin We were talking about politics, and he was playing power rangers.
- Emily Ok, my first question for you is: if you were to quit orchestra, what would you miss? Adrian.
- Adrian Life.
- Emily Life. Can you be more specific please?
- Adrian Like, you would miss learning about it.
- Emily You would miss learning about orchestra?
- Adrian Yeah (grabs plastic bag full of items.)
- Emily Would you mind putting that on the floor or just putting that out of..(Adrian throws the bag to the floor). Thank you (Jonathan begins giggling. Alright, Riley.
- Riley Um, probably everything.
- Emily Ok, is there anything specifically?
- Riley Um, definitely the experiences of orchestra.
- Emily K. Rachel.

Rachel Um, I would really miss, like, um, playing, like, knowing how to, like, play an instrument. I mean, it's still kind of no afterwards, but slowly, it's like the information that I've learned. So, yeah.

Landon The music and the satisfaction knowing that I can, I can play that with a bunch of people. That I can play this very, very well.

Devin The fun.

Emily The fun? K.

Devin It's fun. And annoying him and him (pointing to Jonathan and Adrian).

Adrian And you would miss the chance of getting a scholarship.

Emily K, thanks. If you were to quit orchestra today, what is something you would not miss? Devin.

Devin People that are more annoying than me.

Adrian Noone.

Emily Ok. (Group begins to laugh.)

Devin Jonathan.

Adrian Nuh uh.

Emily Landon.

Landon That I would not miss. I wanna say Devin, but I can't do that. (Devin laughs). Not miss. (pause). When Mr. Emery gets really really mad, like, we're the cause of that.

Devin I'd miss that.

Emily Rachel.

Rachel Um, I definitely wouldn't miss everybody interrupting every like 10 seconds. So like, yeah.

Jonathan I wouldn't miss, um, messing up on a string at the concert. And, I have a question: can I have a question, I like really have..

Emily Can you wait, like, two minutes?

Jonathan Yeah.

Emily K.

Riley I would, would, not miss, well, nothing? (the group begins to laugh)

Emily So you like everything.

Riley Yeah, pretty much.

Emily Ok, I think I understand what you mean. And Adrian

Adrian I wanna say first that, um, I wouldn't miss Devin (bursts out laughing). I wouldn't miss Devin.

Emily Ok...

Adrian I wouldn't. He's super annoying.

Devin Thank you.

Adrian He's annoying. He does it on purpose.

Emily Let's be nice to each other when we're in the room. Thank you.

Adrian He does it on purpose.

Emily Alright, and actually, you kind of answered my third question earlier in conversation, so we are done. Is there anything else you would like to talk about? Or anything you thought about over the weekend.

Landon Well, what was the third question?

Emily It was about Mr. Emery, but we talked about Mr. Emery and I got all the answers I need. Cause I felt like maybe I was getting an incomplete picture of what you guys thought of him. So I wanted to make sure I addressed it again.

Devin I have a question.

Emily Yes.

Devin Where do you get those? (pointing to the voice recorder)

Emily Um, it is a friend's of mine. A friend owns it.

Adrian What is that? Is that a voice recorder?

Emily It's a voice recorder.

Adrian That's what you ghost talk on, right?

Landon Depending on what job you have.

Emily K. Any other things about orchestra you wanna talk about?



- Landon Like, can we say like questions? Like, I have a question I think you should ask other kids.
- Emily Yeah.
- Landon Like, what's your favorite type of music? And did that influence your choice of instrument?
- Emily Ok.
- Jonathan Can I go to the bathroom now?
- Emily Alright. We, we can be done. I am turning off the recorder. Jonathan you are excused.
- Jonathan Should I just go to the one in here, or the one down the hall?
- Emily It's up to you, sir.

## Appendix S

Suburban Band Transcript  
First Interview – May 11, 2017

- Emily Ok, so for this interview, when I write my transcription, I'm not gonna write your actual names. I am going to make a fake name for you. So when I write the 200 page report on this, 192so one will every know like, oooh Charlie said this about his band director or something. So. But, before I change your names, I would like to know your real, live name in this interview so I can call you by your name today. So I am just going to ask you to tell me your name and what instrument you play.
- Cole I'm Cole and I play the trombone.
- Emily K.
- Brooke I'm Brooke and I am play the trumpet.
- Emily K.
- Logan I'm Logan and I play the trumpet.
- Emily K, so Cole, trombone, Brooke trumpet, and..
- Logan Logan, trumpet
- Emily Logan, trumpet. I had a student named Logan who played the trumpet at my own school.
- Logan It's a good name.
- Emily It is. (in response to Logan) Ok! Next, what prompted you to join band in the first place? You can answer in any order.
- Brooke Um, I just wanted to try something new.
- Emily Ok.
- Brooke Cause I usually just play sports and stuff and I wanted to try playing an instrument for once.
- Cole Kinda the same except I also had felt like I could use something to get my brother out of bed in the morning.
- Emily Ok. (laughs)

- Cole            So if I, if we're getting up and he's tryin to sleep in, I just go up there and play a high note and wake him up.
- Emily            Ok.
- Logan            I think that this, uh, I did the Apprentice music program, so I really like band, the brass thing. And so we just, we didn't even press down any of the notes, we just blew and I just really liked it. And I was just like, this is going to be easy!
- Emily            Ok.
- Logan            Yeah, that, that wasn't the case.
- Brooke            Until you got to like, the really high notes.
- Logan            Yeah, until I got to the really high notes. Those are hard.
- Emily            Ok.
- Cole            But still really fun.
- Emily            Yeah! Can you talk more about the Apprentice program?
- Cole            Uhh it just like where fourth and fifth graders, they go they go and just try out band and then just uh two, week thing, it's uhh for only like, one, one, one hour and thirty minutes. So like, all you do is just, uh, play things. So for two days, you, uh, play, you play like, one, uhh woodwinds, brass, they don't have percussion, percussion, but they do, do cello and bass, and violin and viola.
- Emily            Ok, and...
- Cole            And I did not like the violin and viola cause like, how do they with their chin rests? (mimics holding violin/viola on shoulder with neck) (Brooke mimics playing the violin)
- Emily            Mhmm. Yeah, you have to hold it up on your shoulder. So, and that's during the summer right, the Apprentice program?
- Group            Yeah.
- Emily            K.
- Brooke            Two weeks out of the summer.
- Emily            Two weeks out of the summer. (confirming with Brooke ) And if you decide to do the Apprentice program then you decide you do NOT want to take band or orchestra after, you can do that right?
- Brooke            Yeah.

Logan It's just, uh, to show you what it us.

Emily K.

Brooke Just to try out instruments.

Logan And then you can see what instruments you like so you have a better understanding of your pick, when you pick during the school year.

Emily Ok, were a lot of people, did a lot of people do the Apprentice program?

Logan Yeah.

Brooke Yeah.

Cole I didn't.

Emily You didn't do it? (referring to Cole) But you two did?

Cole I just didn't have time during the summer with baseball...

Logan (turning to Brooke ) Which year did you do it?

Brooke Uh, I just, I just did it fifth grade.

Logan Oh.

Emily Ok, great, great. So, what do you think some of, or what do you like about band now that you're in it and you've done it for a year?

Brooke That I know that I have other friends who play the same instrument as me, and I can talk to other friends that don't play the same instrument as me.

Emily K, so for you it's friends in the group?

Brooke Yeah, knowing that like if we have to practice something, I can get together with some friends and practice.

Emily Ok.

Logan Uh just, you know, the instrument is fun to play.

Cole It's just really fun to play my instrument, especially since it's kinda hard with the slide moving really quick with the quarter notes and eighth notes.

Emily Mhm.

Logan Also, like, it makes you feel pretty cool to play, like, a brass instrument. Cause you're like, yeah I'm playing this.

- Brooke And you get like some nicknames. Like, the orchestra people are the orcha-dorks, and we're the band geeks.
- Emily (laughs)
- Logan Or, they, didn't know that..
- Brooke Yeah, we're the band geeks.
- Logan Orcha-dorks and band geeks?
- Brooke Yep. (group giggles)
- Logan Sorta like how we're called sixties sometimes.
- Brooke Yeah, sixth graders are..
- Logan What's the nickname for the seventh graders?
- Brooke I don't know
- Emily We always called them sevie
- Logan Oh sevie, yes sevie! The sevie, and the eighth graders are just...?
- Brooke Eighth graders are...?
- Emily In charge?
- Logan Yeah.
- Brooke Yeah. (Emily laughs)
- Emily Ok, so you said, we've talked about friends, and we've talked about playing our instruments. Let's talk about our instruments. What are some things you like about playing your specific instrument?
- Brooke Um, that I can like play, most of the, any type of scale, like starting on, going to the highest note or going to the lowest note. And like, every week we learn a new note. Like, endless notes to the instrument.
- Cole What I like about my instrument is that there are ups and downs of it and you can play really low notes, and I like it cause it sounds like a fart. (Emily laughs)
- Emily Ok, so you like the low notes.
- Cole Mhm (smiles proudly)
- Logan I just, I don't know. I just, I just like it.
- Emily You just like it?

- Logan            Yeah
- Emily            Ok! Great. What would you say some of the positive elements of being in band are?
- Brooke           Um,
- Cole             That you get to hang out with your friends and like, play songs.
- Emily            K.
- Logan            Probably the opportunities so when you're later in life in seventh grade you can take that, and then in eighth grade and you can go into the, the Mustang Band. And then if you keep taking that, when you get into college, you are more likely to get into a band from there.
- Brooke           Become, like a, band director...
- Logan            Band director, or just band player
- Brooke           Of have like, move on to other instruments...
- Cole             Marching band...
- Emily            Do you see band being part of your life past this year?
- Brooke           Yeah.
- Logan            Yeah, I can see that.
- Cole             Mhmm . (nods)
- Emily            K. How far do you see band going in your life?
- Brooke           Um, I want to do it through college. And maybe become something that involves music. I don't know about a band director, but like, doing something with like music involved.
- Emily            Ok.
- Cole             Probably through college until I graduate, and become part of the marching band at KU.
- Emily            Oh you wanna get in the marching band?
- Cole             Mhm.
- Emily            It's a lot of fun.

- Logan I think maybe, I might, I might do it until middle school, maybe do it until middle school, maybe do it til 10th or 9th grade, I don't really know.
- Emily Ok.
- Logan I mean, I see it as a long term thing, but I don't see it too long. I don't, I don't really know what I want to do with my life.
- Emily Ok, that is totally fair. You're, like, in sixth grade. You don't need to know what you're doing with your life. Ok, so, I'm going to flip this over. What are some of the negative aspects about being in band?
- Brooke Um, my mom played the trumpet. And she says that every day I have to bring the trumpet home and like play 30 minutes, and it's kinda hard because I have, like, other stuff I do.
- Emily Mhm.
- Brooke I don't have much time.
- Emily So you're saying practicing and balancing everything else you have going on in your life.
- Cole It's kinda the same thing, cause last week I had a baseball tournament so it was like hard to play cause I was gone 2 of the 3 days of the weekend. And my parents are always on me like "bring your trombone home, bring your trombone.." and my mom's like "no, don't bring your trombone home because it's too much of a hassle" and I'm like make up your mind. (Emily laughs)
- Logan I would say the same.
- Emily K. Practing?
- Logan Mhm.
- Emily K. Um, what are some of the other things you're involved in besides band?
- Brooke I was. Um, today are tryouts for the cheerleading team here and I wanted to try that. And I also play softball and volleyball in the summer.
- Logan Uh, I do soccer, um, chess, um yeah.
- Cole Occasionally I'll do football, but I normally do baseball during the summer
- Emily Ok
- Cole So it's kinda, really hard to play because I've also got this jazz thing coming up this summer. So...

- Logan Oh you're doing the jazz band one?
- Brooke Yeah.
- Logan Are you guys doing?
- Brooke Yeah I'm doing it.
- Logan Yeah I was, I was wondering which one I wanted to do.
- Cole Yeah I 'm doing the, but then my mom tried to signed me up trying to get me to volunteer for this BGC thing that my brother's going to. So it's gonna be like a pain cause I don't know, I don't really want to do this, but my friends and I wanted to do this (the jazz camp) a few months ago, so it's like, do we still want to do it or not?
- Emily Ok, so is this kind of like a Apprentice thing, but for older kids? What is it?
- Brooke Um, the jazz thing?
- Emily Yeah
- Brooke Uh, it's for sixth and seventh graders where during the summer you get together and, uh, play, like, music. It's, like, basically jazz band and you just get together and play some music. You don't really have to do much with the instrument.
- Emily That sounds fun.
- Brooke Yeah.
- Emily And you're all considering maybe doing something like that this summer/?
- Group Yeah/Mhm
- Emily Great, great. Ok, this one I'm going to ask you one by one. And, remember that all of our answers stay here, we're not gonna like, run back into the band, and like "blahh" and tell everybody what we talked about here. I do wanna know if you're planning on being in band next year, and why you made that choice.
- Brooke Ok, I do wanna go back to band next year because next year, we're supposed to be more with the woodwinds and I want to hear more of the instruments instead of the instruments I hear every day.
- Emily K.
- Cole Kinda the same thing, I wanted to get, like, have more challenges for my instrument. Especially if I'm gonna get my own because it's gonna be really cool cause I can like, take it to my house and always have it there
- Emily Mhmm



- Cole           And it would be just cool, there would be more challenges, and I can hear more instruments.
- Emily           So are you planning on doing band next year?
- Cole           (nods)
- Emily           Yes? And you're thinking you might get your own instrument?
- Cole           Yeah
- Emily           That's exciting. So are you renting right now? Or are you using a school instrument?
- Cole           I'm using a school instrument.
- Logan           I'm gonna do it next year. My mom's gonna rent an instrument for me so I can practice during the summer. I think I just wanna do it next year cause we can just play, I don't know, more notes, more stuff, more, it's just like sixth grade band except better.
- Emily           Mhm.
- Logan           And bigger.
- Emily           Sounds like you're up for the challenge. (Logan nods)
- Brooke           Yeah
- Emily           K. What would you say to someone who decides not to do band next year whose in your class?
- Logan           I think it's a mistake. Major. If they don't wanna do it, and they're not fit for it, or they like, don't feel for it? Yeah, but...
- Cole           Like I feel like I know there's gonna be a couple kids that won't do it next year cause alls they do in this one is sit around and do absolutely nothing.
- Logan           Yeah some kids do that
- Cole           Like a couple days of the week they play
- Emily           Hmm..
- Brooke           Like, one of my friends, they don't wanna do, they play a bass clarinet, and they don't wanna do band next year, but they just signed up for it cause maybe there may be new things they might like. And then if they don't like it, she's gonna drop out.

- Logan And now, uh, during the winter, you have the choice to switch from band to something else like, uh, woodwinds, no, you could switch from band to, like you could drop out of it and change and I know a few people did do that. Not because they switched schools, but I know a few people just drop out and switch.
- Brooke Into like, other classes?
- Logan Yeah, I don't know what classes, but..
- Brooke Like the computer ones?
- Logan Uh, yeah..
- Brooke Like (indiscernible)
- Logan Yeah
- Emily Do you think there are classes offered at the school that make it tempting to want to drop out of band so you can take those?
- Cole (nods)
- Brooke Um, kind of. Like, there's a lot of essential classes that, like, I want to do. My friend doesn't play band or orchestra, he's more like, the what's it called...
- Brooke (mumbles something indiscernible)
- Cole Yeah, the intro to tech. And they have like the woodshop place thingy they do.
- Emily Uh huh.
- Cole So he make's me jealous cause I wish I was there, cause I like carving the wood, doing something with wood, creating things.
- Emily K.
- Logan Are you saying from like sixth grade, we wish we could do? Or seventh grade?
- Emily Uh, yeah, sixth grade to seventh grade.
- Logan Um, there's nothing really I'm interested in because I don't really like orchestra. The other one is, I don't wanna...
- Emily Ok
- Logan Yeah, orchestra's ok. It's just that the cello and bass and stuff that stands up is a lot of a pain the butt to carry home and I have to walk home. And the other violin and violia probably would be hard to play cause it would probably hurt my neck.

- Brooke You have to like, have muscles built up in your arms to hold the violin.
- Cole It's bad enough the trombone sits right here, so it just like hurts my, this part of ok here.
- Brooke (demonstrates playing the trumpet)
- Logan It's really light, so you can just like carry it around. (referring to the trumpet while talking to Brooke )
- Brooke Yeah
- Cole So like, I, I can't imagine the violin or viola having something stabbing right here
- Logan I know. It hurts.
- Cole I see the little pegs on the end of it looking like it sticks into your neck
- Emily Ok. This is, this was not one of my planned questions, but just listening to you talk: do you feel like there's anything you're giving up to be in band?
- Brooke Um, no not really. It's just like, it's just like free time after school and I like, practice, it's just like time I can sit around and talk to my friends.
- Emily Ok.
- Brooke Like, I have friends during school, too.
- Emily Ok.
- Logan I think, uh, if I were being in seventh grade and you were to ask me this question I feel I would be giving up some of the classes I could take, I would want to take band next year so I could do choir also, art, and another class of my choice. But I'm giving up those to do band.
- Emily Ok, so it's worth it to not do those things so you can just be in band.
- Logan Mhm.
- Emily K.
- Cole I just feel like I'm not giving up anything.
- Emily Uh huh?
- Cole The only thing I could be giving up is spending time with my family when I have to practice over the weekends. But we barely do anything but sleep in on the weekends.

- Emily Ok. I'm curious what the people in your life feel about you being in band. So these are the people you see everyday, you have a relationship with. This could be your friends or your family. Um, how do they feel about you being in band? And I'm also going to ask that we speak up a little bit when they're playing just to make sure I can actually hear you on my trusty video camera.
- Brooke Um, like I said earlier, my mom played the trumpet and I'm a long long line of people that played the trumpet so they really want me to be first chair cause mostly everyone was first chair in my family.
- Emily Ok.
- Cole Kinda the same thing cause my grandpa played trombone, and my uncle played trombone, so I feel, I'm like the third generation. And like, my mom's like, this is going to be, probably going to be a really fun instrument to play.
- Emily Mhm
- Cole My brother didn't care cause he was like. Oh. I said I was going to play the tuba, and he was like, "No, no no, no, no, no, no!" And I was like, "Fine."
- Emily (laughs) Is your brother younger than you?
- Cole Yeah, he's gonna turn 9 on the 16th.
- Emily Ok.
- Logan Uh, my, I don't have any like, musical family history thingy-ma-bobber. But uh like, my mom, like, really wants me to stick with band. That's why I wanted to continue to take it cause she's like "take it!"
- Emily So your mom's supportive?
- Logan Yeah.
- Emily Cool. Do you have people in your life that aren't supportive of you being in band?
- Brooke Mm, no, not really
- Cole My brother.
- Emily Your brother?
- Cole Everyone else is very supportive.
- Emily K.
- Brooke Sometimes my brother too, cause he doesn't like me playing the loud instrument.

- Emily Mhm.
- Cole I have to practice in my garage. Didn't you say you have to practice in your room?
- Brooke Yeah, I have to close the door.
- Logan I have to practice down in my basement just because like my mom doesn't want to hear me.
- Cole Well I share a room with my brother, and I don't have a basement, so, so like, I have to go outside cause its too hard
- Logan I just have to like, go down into the basement all the way in the back corner, and then, and it's hard because I don't have a stand so then I'm like trying to improvise using. I'm like, using the chair instead of sitting.
- Cole You should ask Mrs. Nixon cause she has stands to use.
- Brooke Yeah, my trumpet came with a stand, but...(indiscernible...)
- Emily Ok. What about the social scene? What's it like to be in band here at the middle school? What do your friends think?
- Cole They think it's pretty fun. Some of them don't really like it cause they think it's too hard. And it's like, ok, well, why did you choose band if you knew that it would be hard?
- Emily Mhm. So those are the people that are in the class with you. (Cole nods) K
- Brooke Mostly all my friends play instruments so they, uh, they all like playing instruments I guess (laughs)
- Emily Mhm.
- Cole Yeah, pretty much the same.
- Emily Ok, great. Ok, let's, what about your band directors? Do they have, do they play any role in your decision to join band, or stay in band next year?
- Brooke Um, yeah. Like, they always like convince to stay in band and like, if you practice harder, then you'll, like, get really good at it and you'll want to stay in it.
- Cole Yeah. Ms. Nixon is always like, "If you still play next year, you'll have more fun." So I probably will want to continue to play.
- Brooke And also, like both of them play almost all the instruments, and they always help us when we're stuck.

- Logan And another factor I feel like is big, they're nice. So, if you're I feel like, if they're mean, but they're also, they're not too strict, but they help you learn, I feel like that could be a good teacher. But if they're not nice at all, and they don't teach you anything, then you probably wouldn't take it. But if they're nice and help you learn stuff, I feel like, uh, you would want to take it more. And Ms. Nixon is that.
- Emily Ok. So she's supportive, and kind, but stern?
- Logan Yeah.
- Emily K. Ok, so I'm going around and I'm talking to lots of different kids at different schools about beginning band and orchestra. And, I'm just trying to get big-picture, what do you think about it, and really my big thing is, I wanna know why you decided to stay, why kids are staying between the first and second year. If you know that's now my main goal, (clears throat) excuse me, are there any questions that I didn't ask that you think I should ask at future schools?
- Brooke Um.. (long pause) Um, what motivated you to get into band or, like, try out an instrument?
- Logan Uh, I'm just asking. If you had to switch instruments, which instruments would you switch to?
- Emily Ok. Are they playing *Jaws* in there? (referring to the band playing in the band room)
- Group Yeah
- Emily (laughs) Ok, What's the ... (loud sound from band room, followed by laughing from the group) Oh my goodness, that's awesome.
- Brooke We haven't played that in a while
- Cole Yeah, I was just like, dang it! It shook the drums, too. (Pointing to drums in storage in interview room)
- Emily If you wouldn't mind, I would love for you to answer your own questions. So, it's what motivated you?
- Brooke Um, well, I just really wanted to try something new and have new challenges in my life.
- Emily Mhm
- Brooke And so

- Cole           It's like, I was, on the weekends I was doing nothing except sports and running around and annoying my brothers so I felt like, if I did that I could bring it home with me and do something else with it, and have more challenges.
- Brooke        And like, I'm from a musical family, there's like, a bunch of instruments in our house. And we just like put together songs that we use.
- Emily         Mhm.
- Logan         Um, probably just like, to try something new.
- Emily         Ok.
- Brooke        And with his question, he said that if you could change to another instrument..
- Emily         Uh huh
- Brooke        ..I really wanted to try the clarinet, but I couldn't make any noise out of it.
- Emily         Ok.
- Brooke        ...but if they allowed me to change, I would probably change to the clarinet.
- Emily         K.
- Logan         Uh, I would probably switch, I would want to switch to the French horn, I really like that. But, uh, I just feel like, uh, I feel like the range of it is really high, so I might just wanna switch to something cause on the trumpet, I can't hit those high notes, so I might switch to something lower like the baritone.
- Emily         Ok
- Logan         It seems like a fun instrument.
- Cole         If I changed my instrument, I would go with something smaller cause it would be easier to take home. Like the piccolo or flute...
- Emily         Mhm
- Cole         ...cause I could just put that in my backpack. Maybe even the clarinet. I would say the percussion, but my friend that plays the percussion, he said he had to buy his instrument and it was like \$200 to \$300 dollars and I was like, "Yeah, I just stick with my instrument now."
- Logan         I don't, I mean, percussion looks cool, but it, you just play one instrument, and then you play another. You don't really have the bass set strong, it just doesn't look...I mean it looks fun, yes, I mean, I don't know, it doesn't look the most enjoyable.
- Emily         Ok, ok. Is there anything else that we should talk about? Anything we didn't cover?

- Logan            Band is fun.
- Brooke           Yeah, it's really fun.
- Cole             I'd say for next year's sixth graders, they should continue play in band. I feel that they would really like, especially some of the fifth graders I know from parents to their kids, and get together. So, I feel like they would enjoy it.
- Emily            Great. Well thank you for being so great and honest and talkative, I really appreciate it. Especially early in the morning, I'm know you just want to go back to bed. So what we'll do is I'll turn everything off, and then I'll be back again next week and the three, four of us I guess, will talk again. And what I'm going to do is I'm just going to give you a conclusion of what I believe you told me. I'll just read you a statement. And you'll just tell me yep, that's what we said, or no that's not what we said. If there's anything you think about over the weekend and you're like "Oh, I really wish I would have told Emily this.." you'll just tell me then.
- Logan            Gotchya.
- Emily            And that one will be a lot shorter. K, so you're ready for me to turn everything off?
- Group            Yeah.



## Appendix T

Suburban Band Transcript  
Follow Up – May 15, 2017

Emily So this one, how it's gonna work is, over the weekend I transcribed this interview, so I wrote out everything we all said. And, I came up with a paragraph called the "executive summary" and that is just a paragraph explaining my interpretation of what you said. How it's gonna work is I am going to read that paragraph to you and at the end I want you to tell me if there, if the statements are true, if there is anything in there that is not true, so maybe I misinterpreted what you said, or if something is missing or if something changed since the last time I've seen you.

Brooke Ok.

Cole Ok.

Emily K. Ready (students nod).

Emily And I'm working from my computer this time, so it will be a little different. Oh my gosh, it keeps wanting me to join the internet. I don't wanna join the internet. Ok! Here's your paragraph:

*Overall, the students attitudes towards being involved in band were positive. Students originally joined band to try something new. The summer music program Apprentice was cited as being a helpful learning experience, leading to decisions to join band. Decisions to stay in band in seventh grade stemmed from wanting to work with other instruments in the band and encounter more musical challenges. All students cited supportive family members, particularly adults that were, that made band a positive experience. The students' band teachers, specifically the lead band director, was seen as kind and helpful, making her band classroom a positive one to be a part of. Suggested negative aspects of being in band were practice time at home, carrying extra, sometimes large and awkward sized instruments home, and missing out on other classes at the middle school. None of these negative details influenced the students so much to quit band after sixth grade. In conclusion, band class was seen as a fun part of the day.*

Logan I didn't hear anything that wasn't true.

Emily So that kinda summed it up?

Brooke Yeah.

Cole Mhm.

Logan Yeah.

Emily Was there anything missing in there?

Logan Not really.

Emily Ok, did anything change over the weekend? Or is there anything else you want to add?

Cole It wasn't such a pain in the butt because, um, I didn't take my instrument home, so...

Brooke I actually forgot to take my instrument home (starts to giggle)

Cole My mom said "Nope, you're not bringing your trombone home cause you've got a project to work on."

Emily Yeah

Cole So, it was easier this weekend.

Emily Ok. I have two more questions for you. These shouldn't take very long. But, the first one is: If you were to quit band, what would you miss about band?

Cole My band teacher.

Brooke Probably, just being with other instruments, because, like, I would be in a different class and I couldn't hear what those instruments sound like next year in rehearsal.

Logan Probably just, yeah, friends maybe.

Emily Ok. If you were to quit band next year, what would you not miss?

Brooke Not. I wouldn't miss having to take it home, like, every single night.

Cole Yeah, kinda the same thing. And I wouldn't miss peoples' attitudes. Like, some people are so rude in class sometimes.

Logan Yeah, some are really annoying.

Emily Ok. Is there anything else you wanna talk about?

Logan I think we're good.

Emily Think we're ok?

Brooke      Yeah .

Emily      Ok, then we are done. I am going to turn everything off.

## Appendix U

Suburban Orchestra Transcript  
First Interview – May 17, 2017

- Emily Ready to start?
- Group Yeah.
- Emily K. First thing: I want you to tell me your name and what instrument you play.
- Sara Uhh. My name is..wait, should I say like, my last name, too?
- Emily You can just say your first name.
- Sara Uh, my name is Sara and I play the viola.
- Emily Sara plays the viola.
- Zoey My name is Zoey and I play the bass.
- Emily Zoey plays the bass. Excellent. Thank you. Next question: why did you join orchestra in the first place?
- Sara Um, well my aunt played the violin and my mom kind of wanted, well, she played the violin but then she like, quit, like, after, like, some time earlier because she couldn't like fit it in. But, I kinda liked the viola and it's kinda easier for me to play.
- Emily Ok, great.
- Zoey Well, like, everyone in my family was a band player. And I don't really wanna follow in those steps. So I just choose orchestra, and I also did well with the bass, so...
- Emily Great. So it sounds like you both had people in your family that played musical instruments, and so maybe it was natural that you would want to play an instrument too?
- Sara Mhm.
- Zoey Possibly.
- Emily Maybe? Ok. What do you think some of the, er, let me restate that. What do you like about orchestra?
- Zoey Playing together. And when we, like, learning new notes and meeting new people.

- Sara I like learning, like, how to play something, or do something I haven't done yet. And it kinda gets pretty interesting when you're playing with other people. And we get to learn our mistakes more and we get along with other people and make friends.
- Zoey And also we getta do awesome stuff. Like, I think it was like, two weeks ago? We were doing a song and we played it as fast as we could (laughing)
- Emily Oh fun.
- Zoey It was awful
- Emily (laughs). So, do you think that the people in orchestra class are friends with each other?
- Sara Yeah.
- Zoey Like a big family.
- Emily Do you think that makes a difference in your experience?
- Zoey Umm..
- Sara Yeah cause we work together and we, and it sounds more better.
- Zoey Yeah, kind of.
- Emily Ok, ok. Let me just double check the video's working. We are good. Ok. What are some of the positive elements of being in orchestra?
- Sara Umm (long pause), we get to, (long pause) we get to try out, like, new notes, and we get to play concerts as well. And we also have like, this big audience.
- Zoey And we get to get skip class on, like, on performance day.
- Emily You get to skip classes on performance day?
- Zoey Yeah.
- Emily Why?
- Zoey Cause we practice with all the orchestra.
- Emily Oh, ok.
- Sara We combine classes. Like our last concert, we went into the auditorium to practice.
- Zoey Two hours (laughs)

Emily           That sounds fun.

Zoey            It was (laughs again)

Emily           Ok. Let me ask you the opposite question. What are some of the negative parts of being in orchestra, if there are any.

Zoey            Definitely carrying that bass.

Emily           Carrying the bass? (Zoey laughs) Do you have to walk home?

Zoey            I..sometimes. But I get two basses. I get the basses at home and the bass here, so.

Emily           That's helpful.

Zoey            Yeah.

Emily           That would be very tough to carry the bass home very day.

Zoey            It would.

Emily           Like, some would say impossible. And miserable. K.

Sara            I just don't like waiting for tuning.

Zoey            Yeah. (Agreeing with Sara)

Sara            Cause I wanna play. And (pause) yeah. I just don't like waiting.

Emily           Ok.

Zoey            But the question of the day kinda takes up that time with the tuning.

Sara            Cause we have like, a question of the day. And each of us answers.

Zoey            Mhm.

Emily           Can you walk me through this question of the day and tuning? How does this work?

Zoey            Um, she turns on the tuner, and then, she just, like, "What's your favorite animal?" and then all of us would answer.

Sara            And then she'll just go around and tune our instruments while we just answer.

Emily           Ok, ok. So you don't tune your instruments yet?

Zoey            No.

Sara            Yeah, not until seventh grade.

Emily           Got it. That will be exciting.

- Zoey Yeah, but seventh grade we won't have question of the day.
- Emily Ok, so, how long does tuning usually take?
- Sara Umm..
- Zoey About five minutes. Depends on if we're like, going slow or fast.
- Emily Are there any other negative parts of orchestra?
- Sara Um...
- Zoey Learning new notes and how to, like, do new shifts. It's tough cause we, like you're used to the old way, but then you learn a new way.
- Emily Ok.
- Sara Or if, like, some people are going really fast or like, not really paying attention to what the whole entire class is doing, or not paying attention to the teacher, it can get, it can take time from our work time and playing. Uh, it's not really fun if people are just not cooper-, cooperative with working with us.
- Emily Sure. Alright. Are you planning on being in orchestra next year?
- Zoey Yes.
- Emily And why or why not?
- Zoey Yes.
- Sara Uh, yes because I wanna learn more about my instrument and how to play more the, like, there might be something new about my instrument that I haven't learned yet.
- Emily I bet there are.
- Zoey Yeah.
- Emily So for you, you like the musical challenges?
- Sara Yeah.
- Emily K. Zoey, why are you doing orchestra again next year?
- Zoey Uh, because, like, most of my friends, like, kinda made me do it. Like, this year. But I turned out really liking it, so I'll probably keep doing it. And I wanna make some of my friends mad cause we have, like, this rivalry. People think band is better than orchestra, and then we think orchestra is better than band.
- Emily Yes.

- Sara I think when you try something new, you want to try to keep doing it.
- Zoey (Mumbles something indiscernible)
- Emily And the what?
- Zoey You want it to be fun.
- Emily Ok, ok. What would you say to one of your classmates that isn't planning on doing orchestra next year?
- Sara Umm..
- Zoey You should do it. It's awesome.
- Sara Um, (long pause) you should do it. There's a lot of fun activities. Um, fun classmates and really cool instruments that you can play. And, we also get to have parties, too.
- Zoey Yeah, like if everyone practices for like an entire week on Friday, we get like, donuts or something.
- Emily That's fun.
- Zoey Yeah
- Emily Ok. So let's say somebody new moves into your school, and they are deciding whether or not they want to join your orchestra class next year. And let's just assume that they've already been in orchestra for a year, so it would be allowed. What would you say to them while they're trying to make their decision?
- Zoey I had a lot of fun with it, so I think you would, too. Cause if someone's not happy with their instrument, they can change instruments. Cause, like, if I didn't want to play the bass, I could go to the violin.
- Emily Ok.
- Sara Well, they should, they should make their own decisions, but, I would like, kinda help them choose orchestra because it's, it's fun, and you get to actually learn how to play a string instrument. Cause like, when I showed some of my friends how to play the viola, they, like, play open notes.
- Zoey That's me (laughing).
- Sara Yeah cause um, I showed some of my friends in this club called BGC, Boys and Girls Club, at this teen center, and they really like playing the string instruments. Like, if you give an instrument to them, they can like probably fidget with it and just mess around with it.



- Emily Ok. Great, thanks. Uh, I'm curious what the people in your life feel about you being in orchestra. These people could be your family, they could be your friends. People that you interact with on a daily basis, how do they feel about you being in orchestra?
- Zoey Um, definitely some of my friends are mad at me cause I have to practice, so I don't getta do fun stuff with them.
- Emily K.
- Sara Uh, my mom is kinda proud of me for trying something new and choosing orchestra to play. So, yeah.
- Zoey I annoy my family cause I play while they're sleeping.
- Emily You play when your family's sleeping?
- Zoey Yeah, well I don't know they're sleeping. I thought that everyone was up, so I just play it. But I end up waking up everyone.
- Emily How do your parents feel about you being in orchestra?
- Zoey Other than that, pretty proud.
- Emily Ok. What about siblings? Do you guys have siblings?
- Sara I don't have any siblings.
- Zoey Yes.
- Emily K.
- Zoey Um, one of my brothers, uh, played the baritone in band.
- Emily K.
- Zoey So, and then, another one of my brothers: he didn't play an instrument, but he has a lot of friends that play in orchestra.
- Emily Ok.
- Zoey So, I think it's kinda cool to have to two people who know instruments.
- Emily What's the social scene like at Northwest? How do people at school think about, or what do people at this school think about kids in orchestra?
- Sara Um, it's the kinda thing where band is better than orchestra, or orchestra is better than band. We kinda had like a huge conversation about that one time in class.
- Emily Oh?

- Zoey Yeah.
- Emily How did that conversation go?
- Sara Um, I don't really remember. I was only like part of it.
- Zoey Yeah. (laughing)
- Sara But I kinda heard of it
- Emily Ok.
- Sara I don't really remember most of it.
- Emily Ok. Um, does your orchestra teacher have any part in your role to continue in orchestra next year?
- Zoey Yes.
- Sara Um. She's like (long pause) um
- Zoey I don't think she'll be retiring anytime soon..
- Emily I think she's pretty young.
- Zoey Yeah.
- Sara She's very, like, kind to us and very helpful. And like, she helps us move our fingers when we play our instruments.
- Zoey She kinda like, pressures us. But it's in a good way.
- Sara So it's like, she, she's trying to help us reach the goal to actually play our instruments and to fix our problems if we have any.
- Emily Mhm. Let's say that you were getting a new orchestra teacher year. This is hypothetical. (Laughing) As far as I know, you will have the same orchestra teacher next year. But let's say that somebody new is coming in. How would you feel about orchestra?
- Zoey Hm. It depends on how they are, cause like, we had a sub once who was, like, a musical teacher, but he had no idea what we were doing. So it depends on the sub, cause if we had people like that, we wouldn't sound the best but if we had people like Ms. Dale, we could.
- Sara Yeah cause like the sub, um, they're like, asking us a lot of questions and sometimes we didn't even, like, we couldn't even like, answer. And they told us long stories, and it kinda wasted our time.

- Emily           The doesn't sound fun.
- Sara            Yeah.
- Emily           Ok, big picture: do you see orchestra being a part of your life at all past seventh grade?
- Sara            Like, what do you mean?
- Emily           Like, do you.. You both said you wanted to be in orchestra in seventh grade.
- Sara            Yeah.
- Emily           Do you see yourself continuing, continuing to take orchestra one you graduate from seventh grade? So maybe in eighth grade, high school, college...
- Sara            Yeah, cause I've seen like, the high schoolers in LHS, and they play, like, really good.
- Zoey            Like, I wanna stick with it until I don't like it anymore. Like, it might be in college, it might be in orchestra.
- Sara            Like, even when your arms hurt, Like, sometimes our arms hurt so badly, we can't even, like, play anymore.
- Zoey            Cause we have to do like, eighth notes and sixteenth notes.
- Emily           Totally. Ok, um, is there anything else that we should talk about?
- Sara            Um, I don't think so.
- Emily           Ok. So the purpose of my project is I'm going around to lots of different schools and I'm talking to beginning band and orchestra kids. And the big things I wanna know are, why do kids join beginning band and orchestra in the first place? What's their first year experience like? And then, why do they continue after the first year? So if you know I'm looking into why students stay in orchestra or band, are there any questions that you think I should ask other schools that I didn't ask you?
- Zoey            Why did you choose orchestra or band?
- Emily            K.
- Sara            Or, are there like any fun activities that you do? Anything fun happening? Or (pause)
- Emily            You mean within the class?

- Sara Yeah.
- Emily K. So why, I'm gonna ask you those questions now. Why did you choose orchestra?
- Sara Um, it looked kinda fun and cause I have like, this piano at home, and I like playing with it. So I thought if I play another instrument, it would be like fun if I play those two together or I wanted to see a difference between them.
- Zoey I've always liked string instruments and like, we have like three classes. We have orchestra, we have band, and we have tech. And..
- Sara Don't be have choir?
- Zoey No, that's an elective. Um, and like, they started me off with orchestra with my schedule. And I thought about changing it cause like most of my friends were in band so I kinda wanted to be with my friends, but then I like, came to orchestra and then I saw all of these people that I already knew that I didn't know were doing orchestra. So I just stuck with it.
- Emily OK. Ok, So your question was what are some of the fun activities you do?
- Sara We have parties. Uh, we also watch movies too.
- Zoey We're having a party on Friday cause it's kinda the last day of normal classes.
- Emily Yeah.
- Sara Um, we used to, um, play on our iPads on that one website. It's called musictheory.org?
- Emily Mhm. Musictheory.net
- Sara dot net?
- Emily I think. Ok, this is my own question: Did either of you do the Apprentice program during the summer?
- Sara Uh, I didn't. In the summer, I go to Wichita. That's where my family's at.
- Emily Oh, ok. But you did do the Apprentice program. (Turning to Zoey) Did you do strings? (Zoey nods) Did that help you with your decision at all?
- Zoey Yeah cause like, the Apprentice program, it like, teaches you all the basics about the instrument. So when we learned it, I was kinda ahead of the class. So.
- Emily Ok.
- Sara But then Ms. Dale said to forget about it.

Zoey            Yeah. (Both girls laugh) Cause like, I think she said they like, taught us wrong or something? I don't know.

Emily            Ok.

Zoey            She just said "forget about it" and we had to restart.

Emily            Ok, but you felt like it gave you a head start this year?

Zoey            Yeah.

Emily            Great. Is there anything else you wanna talk about?

Sara            Not really.

Zoey            Yeah.

Emily            Alright, then we are done. Let me turn off the video camera.

## Appendix V

Suburban Orchestra Transcript  
Follow Up Interview – May 18, 2017

Emily Ok, here is your summary paragraph:

*Overall, the students attitudes towards being involved in orchestra were positive. Students originally joined orchestra to learn to play a new instrument and try sometime new or unique. Both students had family members that were past musicians that may have had an influence on their decision to join. Both students stated that they planned to stay in orchestra the following year, citing reasons such as new musical challenges and friends in the group. Orchestra was seen as a positive activity because of the fun activities during class, class parties, full orchestra rehearsals on concert day, and the sense that the orchestra was a family. Negative aspects of being in orchestra were long tuning procedures, disruptive classmates and instruments that were difficult to carry. These negative aspects of orchestra were outweighed by the positives. The orchestra teacher was seen as a positive influence on the group because she was kind and helpful during rehearsal.*

(Zoey nods and smiles) What do you think?

Zoey Um, nothing missing.

Sara Yeah it sounds, like, mostly true.

Emily Ok, mostly true? Was there anything in there where maybe that was only part of the picture and you want to further explain?

Sara Um, not really.

Emily Ok, then I have two more questions for you that I'm gonna ask you to answer. And I don't think it's going to take very long. The first question for you is: If you were forced to quit orchestra today, what would you miss about it?

Zoey I don't like this question. (Begins to laugh.)

Emily It's all hypothetical! (laughs)

Sara Umm, I'm probably going to miss playing my instrument. I could get another one, but it won't be like, it won't be fun to playing without everybody in the group.

Emily Ok

Zoey Um..

Emily You don't know?

Zoey Yeah. Um. (pause) Mostly, like, not being able to hang out with other people, cause I think like half the class in there, I only have that class with them.

Emily Ok, so you would miss your friends in the class.

Zoey Yeah.

Emily K. And, last question. If you were to quit orchestra today, what would you not miss? (Zoey laughs)

Sara Um. I'm probably not gonna miss, um, probably being, like, really crowded all the time. Like, it's squished cause like everyone's, like, poking me with all their bows. (Emily laughs). Yeah, I feel like I'm poking them too.

Emily Ok, so the cramped classroom.

Zoey Not messing up. Like, not missing up and having to redo it.

Emily Ok, great. Is there anything else you wanna talk about? (Tess shakes head no)

Sara No. (shakes head)

Emily Then we are done! Let me turn off the camera.