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The University of Southern Mississippi

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE MUSIC-LEARNING CULTURE IN A
COMPETITIVE HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES

by

Jeremy Scott Kellett

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

May 2016

ABSTRACT

STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON THE MUSIC-LEARNING CULTURE IN A COMPETITIVE HIGH SCHOOL MUSIC PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES

by Jeremy Scott Kellett

May 2016

According to Todd Snead (2010), “Interactions between the musical lives of adolescents’ and school music-learning culture may be enhanced by acknowledging students’ musical engagement outside of school, accepting their personal musical knowledge and tastes, and allowing them to help develop music-learning models based on their personal relationships with music” (abstract, para. 4). Further understanding of the music-learning culture within high school programs may aid researchers in better determining the factors that persuade or alienate student populations from in-school musicking (Small, 1998).

The purpose of this case study was to determine possible factors that may have contributed to student perceptions of the music-learning culture within a musically competitive high school setting and how these factors affected participation in music learning. Participants were drawn from a suburban high school in the Southeastern United States. After collecting questionnaires (N=352), students were divided into five musicking groups based on how they chose to participate in music—Primary, Secondary, Hybrid, Outside, and Non-Musicking. The questionnaire addressed participants’ musical lives inside and outside of the school setting. A second questionnaire was then distributed to the school music teachers using open-ended questions in order to provide further

insight into the music-learning culture and to determine commonalities and discrepancies between student and teacher perceptions of the music-learning culture.

Results of this study indicated that the competitive nature of the music-learning culture was responsible for exciting a portion of the student population while causing others to feel apathetic and/or excluded. This alienation seemed to either motivate students to find musical experiences outside of the school environment or caused some to give up on their musical aspirations altogether. Although some participants indicated that they felt disaffected with the music programs within their school, they did not fault the music directors, whose perceptions of the music-learning culture differed from those of students. The competitive nature of the music program and course offerings were found to be the largest factors in both persuading and dissuading music participation.

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IN A COMPETITIVE HIGH SCHOOL
MUSIC PROGRAM IN THE UNITED STATES

by

Jeremy Scott Kellett

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School
and the School of Music
at The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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DEDICATION

All ambitious efforts require self-motivation and determination as well as a great deal of support and guidance from those we hold most dear to our hearts. I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my beautiful wife, Dr. Meghan Sheehy, without whom I could not have received this degree. Her unbelievable encouragement and love for me were invaluable to the completion of this work.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	ii
DEDICATION.....	iv
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	v
LIST OF TABLES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Introduction to the Problem	
Rationale	
Theoretical Framework	
The State of Music Education in Public Schools in the United States	
Audience	
Research Questions	
Research Hypotheses	
Definition of Terms	
Chapter Summary	
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	19
Introduction	
Music Preferences among Students	
Teacher Training	
Views of School Administrators	
Defining Musical Abilities among Students	
Participation in School Music	
Choosing to Not Participate in Musicking	
Non-Traditional and Informal Music Curricula	
Competition in Music Education	
Most Influential Studies Guiding this Research	
Chapter Summary	
III. METHODOLOGY.....	58
Introduction	
Questionnaire	
Setting	
Student Participants	
Teacher Participants	

	Research Questions	
	Research Hypotheses	
	Procedures	
	Delimitations	
	Limitations	
IV.	DATA ANALYSIS.....	73
	Introduction	
	Data Reporting	
	Likert-Scale Questions	
	Open-Response Questions	
V.	DISCUSSION.....	99
	Introduction	
	Results Related to Likert-Scale Questions	
	Results as Related to Research Questions and Hypotheses	
	Recommendations for Future Research	
	Research Summary	
	Conclusion	
	APPENDIXES.....	134
	REFERENCES.....	166

LIST OF TABLES

Table

1.	Demographic Characteristics of the School.....	74
2.	Demographic Characteristics of the Participants.....	75
3.	Gender Characteristics of the Participants.....	76
4.	Type of Musicking by Participants.....	77
5.	Overlap of Musicking by Participants.....	78
6.	Previous School Experience with Music Classes.....	79
7.	Elementary Experience with Music Classes.....	79
8.	Middle School Music Participation.....	80
9.	Elementary, Middle, and High School Experience Rating.....	81
10.	Why Students Chose to Participation in Middle School Music.....	82
11.	Why Students Chose Not to Participation in Middle School Music.....	82
12.	Why Students Chose to Participation in High School Music.....	83
13.	Why Students Chose Not to Participation in High School Music.....	84
14.	Importance of Music.....	85
15.	Hours of Listening.....	86
16.	Genre Preference.....	87
17.	Additional Genres Listed by Participants as Favorite Music Genres.....	88
18.	Family History of Musicking.....	89
19.	Preference for “Other” Music Classes Not Offered at the Participants’ School..	90
20.	Mean and Standard Deviation for Likert-Scale Question 14.....	91
21.	I am satisfied with the music classes my school offers.....	92

22.	I would like to see more music classes offered at my school.....	92
23.	Our music classes are only designed for the musically talented/gifted.....	92
24.	Everyone should have the opportunity to make music in school.....	92
25.	Music classes are only designed for certain types of students.....	93
26.	Music should be offered in every school.....	93
27.	Music should be required for every student.....	93
28.	I enjoy the music performed by my school’s music ensembles.....	93
29.	Students who participate in music classes at my school seem satisfied.....	94
30.	The music ensembles at my school perform a wide variety of music.....	94
31.	The music ensembles at my school hold many performances each year.....	94
32.	It is too expensive to participate in the music classes offered at my school.....	94
33.	What types of things do you enjoy about the music program at your school?.....	96
34.	If you could change anything about the music program at your school, what would it be?.....	97

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Problem

Adolescents between the ages of fifteen and eighteen increase their interest and consumption of music listening activities between 1.5 to 2.5 hours a day on average (Henriksen, & Foehr, 2004; North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Roberts,; Snead, 2010; Zillman & Gan, 1997). They also make clear differentiations between their favorite contemporary popular music such as rap, rock, and pop, and the music they typically study while attending school such as classical, jazz, and other “art” music (Snead, 2010). With an increased interest in music related activities during the teenage years, it may be important to provide an increased number of music class offerings in secondary public and private school systems that would appeal to the needs of adolescent students.

Studies have found that there is correlation between involvement in high school music programs and student development in social ties, academic achievements, personal value systems, and stronger connections with the school in which they attend (Broh, 2002; Brown and Evans 2002; Faber, 2010). Motivators for involvement may range from persuasion of family or friends to a personal enjoyment of music (Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, 2003; Siebenaler, 2006). Some research suggests that continued participation by student musicians may be motivated in part by praise from their peers, which leads to positive self-identification with performances (Adderley et al., 2003; Snead; 2010). Research with high school students has shown that some participants place value on musicking as a source of confidence and a chance to demonstrate learned skills with a group of their peers (Pitts, 2005). Furthermore, students whom have shown higher levels

of self-esteem while musicking in general may possibly be more likely to choose to participate in musicking within their school environment. This has been shown to be more typical of females than of males (Austin, 1990). The positive social interactions that music ensemble membership offers have been documented as one of the most influential factors regarding participation (Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, 2003). However, despite the positive effects of in-school musicking, more students choose not to participate in music classes than those who actually participate (Snead, 2010).

According to Snyder, Dillow, and Hoffman (2008), only 21.5% of high school *sophomores* were involved in musicking at the school level in 2002. This number has not increased since 1992 (Snead, 2010). We can assume that the majority, if not all of these sophomores participated in both their freshman and sophomore years. Elpus (2014) reports that approximately 34% of all high school students enroll in at least one music course during high school. This age does not account for attrition after the freshman year and does not account for students that may maintain their enrollment for all four years of high school. Additionally, it is possible that students who enroll in a general music class may not be identified as musicians because of the format and non-music making nature of many of these courses.

There are numerous potential reasons for the low percentage of students involved in public school music making, including lack of funding, poor advertisement from the music educators, or that music courses may not be required for every student. It is also possible that students are somehow dissuaded from participation due to various factors of the music-learning culture present at their particular school. As music educators continue to look at student interest as related to attrition (Austin, 1988; Brakel, 1997; Correnblum

& Marshall, 1998; Glover, 2015; Hartley, 1991; Hartley, 1996; Heffner, 2007; Kinney, 2010; Sandene, 1994;), it is important that we consider all possible influences that contribute to non-participation.

Additional factors for non-participation could include negative teacher-student interactions, student and community perceptions of the music program, and negative viewpoints of participation in a highly competitive program (Adnett & Davier, 2005; Chung, 2008; Cooke, Kausang, McIntyre and Rinc, 2013; Schmitt, 2005; Sheridan & Williams, 2011; Statar, 2015; Wang & Yang, 2003). Some school music programs place musical competition as an important part of the curricular goals. Various aspects associated with this type of environment could be a deterrent to some students who wish to participate in school musicking through the multiple opportunities that exists, but not within a competitive context.

The World Values Survey (2013) indicates that Americans value competition more than any other industrialized nation. Francesco Dunia writes about the United State's view and interactions with competition, and particularly winning, as “. . . an American obsession” (Dunia, 2010). David and Roger Johnson, in *Cooperation and Competition: Theory and Research*, provide a meta-analysis of over 740 studies that consider positive and negative outcomes of competition. The studies are partially organized into specific areas of research foci: social interdependence, productivity, achievement, psychological health, and self-esteem. This analysis indicates that a competition's value is largely determined by the environment in which it is created and by those who direct competitors and competitions (Dunia, 2010). According to the National Survey of Children's Health (2005), 59% of students between the ages of ten

and seventeen were competing in some form of organized in- or out-of-school sports. Research suggests that students are becoming increasingly competitive and that growing pressures of competitions impact varieties of families in the United States (Friedman, 2013). Students who choose to participate in competitive activities inside and outside of school are often influenced by specific, measurable factors. According to Levey Friedman, there are three basic explanations as to why children enjoy competitive participation. These reasons are: “(1) one of their parents was involved earlier in life; (2) a sibling or other family member was also involved in the competitive endeavor; and (3) the student’s peers or others in the surrounding community participate competitively” (Friedman, 2013, p. 86).

This competitive culture in the United States could possibly be reflected in the rise in participation in some of our country’s larger competitive arenas for high school music programs. According to the information sections of their official websites, Music for All/Bands of America (BOA) and Winter Guard International (WGI) report having seen marked increase in school participation since each was founded (1976 and 1977, respectively). WGI added an indoor winds component to its competitive offerings in 2015, and has already seen a 200% enrollment increase of high schools across the nation (www.WGI.org, 2016). “Music competitions and festivals sponsored by state music education associations, as well as independent contests and festivals sponsored by individual schools and booster organizations, are not seeing any decrease in participation” (West, 2013, p.87). With all of this focus on competition in our society, and within our schools, how are music programs, students, music teachers, schools, and school communities affected? According to Opsal (2013), local, state, regional, and

national competitions and music festivals at the high school level may either positively or negatively impact student perceptions of music-learning and music-participation cultures.

Specifically [*sic*], an ensemble could triple their playing abilities or learn fifty new concepts since the last performance but still receive a low rating or ranking in comparison to another ensemble that had the resources to start at that level. From that point, motivation falters. After the initial loss, motivation increases for a while to overcome the low mark, but when the students see no benefit to this hard striving, no positive result of their work, they give up. (p. 6)

Whether a music program is non-competitive, competitive, comprehensive, or singularly focused, all types of school music-learning cultures are largely a result of the environments created by the teachers, administrators, students, and communities. These cultures are based on the practices, goals, and values of the music program, created by the philosophies and behaviors of the music educators and reflected by students. The music-learning culture may play an important role in determining student perceptions of the music programs present at their school and may result in varying percentages of participation.

Though extremely valuable, much of the research on secondary music programs as a whole focuses more on curriculum issues and teacher and/or student behaviors and less on the actual music-learning cultures created within the music programs; the adolescent perspective on music learning and participation both inside and outside of the classroom is rarely studied (Snead, 2010). “Research suggests that while most adolescents enjoy music, they may not enjoy it as a subject in school” (Snead, 2010, p. 4).

Because few research publications discuss the state of student perceptions of music programs in public schools, it could be valuable to the field of music education if researchers could identify possible changes students desire within their own music programs. An increased understanding could influence the development of student-centered curricula and the music-learning cultures in which these courses exist. Through these assessments and course designs we may be more successful with increasing music involvement within the public schools in the United States.

Rationale

In order to achieve a better understanding of the musical needs of students and their reactions to a particular music-learning culture, this case study examines the different music learning and music making culture within a competitive high school music program. This culture includes five specific settings:

1. Primary Musicking- classes included in this category include band, orchestra, and choir.
2. Specialty Musicking - classes in this category include jazz band, guitar class, piano class, general music, and music technology classes.
3. Hybrid Musicking - Students who participate in one of the classes from the first two categories as well as an area of music making outside of the school setting. This can include, but is not limited to, church music, garage bands, out-of-school instrument lessons, or at home music making on an instrument other than the instrument the student performs on in school.
4. Outside Musicking- Students who only participate in music learning or music making outside of the school setting

5. Non-musicking - Students who choose not to participate in personal music making or learning.

Despite any one student's particular interest and participation choices for musicking, the music education profession has long been concerned with how to address providing musical experiences for *all* students. Karl Wilson Gehrken, as an early member of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), coined the phrase, "Music for Every Child—Every Child for Music" (1922). The phrase would later become MENC's slogan. Reimer states, "Because music is a basic expression of human culture, every student should have access to a balanced, comprehensive, and sequential program of study in music" (Reimer, 2000, p. 61). If every child deserves music, why is it that some schools across the United States neglect to offer music courses and why do schools that do offer music courses only offer curricula that appeal to a minority percentage of students? A look into the needs and interests of students may provide insight into possible solutions for increasing student participation in school musicking.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework was selected to help guide this research. According to Gates (1991), there are three main *categories* of music participation. Each category holds a type of musician, the function of music to that particular musician, and the possible rewards received by that musician as a result of how they use music. Within in the three main categories, Gates claims there are six *types* of music participation: professional, apprentice, amateurs, hobbyists, recreationalists, and dabblers. Each type was selected by Gates to fit into his purposed three categories of music participation. The first category is made up of professionals and apprentices. These musicians use their musical skills for

career or monetary purposes. Subsequent musical rewards are based on situations, social connections, and audience interactions. The second category consists of amateurs and hobbyists whose rewards are of personal gain, and at times, audience feedback through the function of serious leisure. The final category contains what Gates refers to as “dabblers” and recreationalists. This group uses music for the function of “play” and only seeks personal gain as a reward. Gates’ theory was constructed from Stebbins (1979) who showed that amateur athletes, archeologists, and actors are each members of a system that include professionals in each of their fields as well as the activity’s public or patrons who are invested in each field (Gates, 1991). Gates further proposes that although many music educators use the anecdotal idea that music could be “beneficial to the quality of an individual’s life” to recruit new students, research in the area of student perception and a better understanding of where different music-learning cultures place musical value may increase music participation in the United States. A study of the outcomes of music participation in *any* setting may prove more valuable in motivating student participation in music. Based in part on Gates’ categorizations of “musickers”, the identification of different types of musicking categories/settings helped to guide this research to better discover how students perceive themselves in the music-learning environment in which they choose to be involved, in or outside of school (Gates, 1991).

The State of Music Education in Public Schools in the United States

There are many varying opinions regarding music education’s success over the past century, and more specifically, since groups of curious and concerned educators and musicians began to closely scrutinize curricula and philosophy (The Julliard Repertory Project, 1964; The Tanglewood Symposium, 1967; The Yale Seminar, 1963; etc.). When

seeking more recent perspectives and reflections of informative past Music education researcher, Suzanne Shull, asked some intriguing questions regarding the state of music education in the United States in her contributions within *Performing with Understanding: The Challenge of the National Standards for Music Education* (2000, Reimer, Ed.). She asks several key questions (Reimer, 2000, p. 72):

- Why, when performing music programs became threatened by increased requirements for graduation and scheduling headaches, did our profession not take heed and seek additional avenues for reaching students across the entire student body spectrum?
- Why, when middle schools were being established, did the profession not aggressively offer retraining to performance teachers so that they would be more comfortable and effective in teaching an entire student body?
- Why did we ever assume that students who did not choose to be in band, orchestra, or chorus would not wish to have an alternative means of participating in music making experiences, such as experimenting with electronic composition or playing bass guitar?
- Why have we scheduled so many performances that our chorus, band, and orchestra students don't have time to come to a more comprehensive understanding of the music they are learning?
- Why have so few in our profession considered the possibilities of reaching beyond the student body and the school day to educate the community?

Although not easily answered, these questions accurately represent some of the recurrent concerns the United States public school systems face in regards to music

education, and in large part, motivated the initial inspiration for this study. Though some of Shull's questions have been researched, there seems to be embedded aspects of each question that have yet to be answered satisfactorily.

Regarding what curricula should be offered at all school levels, it should be considered that varied music class offerings could allow for multiple expressive outlets and subsequently be an important component to the growth of *all* children. As such, research has shown that music can “provide adolescents with a medium through which to construct, negotiate, and modify aspects of their personal and group identities, offering them a range of strategies for knowing themselves and connecting with others” (Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007, p. 221). The Yale Seminar in 1963, held to address the current state and future trajectory of music education in the United States, concluded that most school programs were too limited in the types of music they provided and too restrictive in the student learning objectives upon which the curricula was built. According to research presented in recent years, music education may have moved little to none beyond these recommendations made by the Yale Seminar attendees. According to (Gumm, 2004):

The limited proportion of students who enroll in school music has been a concern in music education. Arguably, the most valuable contribution of the present study was to point out that students with active and concrete learning styles tended toward choral music participation, and that the learning needs and interests of students with reflective and abstract learning styles were not being met in these Primary choral music classrooms. To fulfill the current trend toward balanced standards in music

education, and to accomplish the profession's music-for-all vision, the profession must institute a better match between the teaching behaviors and styles it promotes and the standards it sets out to achieve. (p. 20)

Students in music classes are often aware of their classroom surroundings and may serve as accurate witnesses to what types of learning occur in their particular classes, and what types of music offerings and learning environments are most desirable. Students are daily participants in the music class and therefore may provide an insightful grasp of the tone of the classroom and tend not to err on the side of negatively critical observations as novice external observers have been shown to do (Duke, 1987; Henniger, 2002; Morrison, 2003).

Most students may view school music to be limited to band, orchestra, and choir classes with the occasional inclusion of a jazz band ensemble or guitar class. If the field of music education is truly concerned with ensuring that all students have access to a quality music education, a variety of music courses should be available to meet the musical needs of all students. Some of the offerings may range from general music to steel drum bands, mariachi groups or the inclusion of guitar and electronic music courses, as well as courses that survey rock and jazz history. School music teaching that further resembles musicking in the adult world may additionally be one to better reach a larger population of students (Davis, 2009).

Though there are many reasons that school music curricula beyond band and choir are rare, before we can carefully consider adding additional music courses, we must look closely at the musical lives of school-aged students. If fostering and furthering students' musical interests, meeting them "where they are", which music and music-making

opportunities would be most attractive and most affecting? What music learning opportunities would meet the needs of most students, of students with limited previous music education, with limited financial resources? What overall school music education cultures foster larger and more enthusiastic populations of participants in high schools in the United States?

Audience

This research is intended to aid musicians, music educators, music education researchers and scholars, and administrators in better understanding why music is important to students and to demonstrate how varied that importance may be from one student to another. It is meant to help identify factors that may influence musicking both inside and outside of the music classroom among high school-aged students, especially within a musically competitive high school setting.

Research Questions

In order to investigate factors that may contribute to or prevent student participation in public school music learning in a competitive culture, and to provide perspective on the musical lives adolescents' lead, the following research questions were constructed:

R₁ – What are some possible cultural and sociological aspects of the music classes in a suburban school in the Southern United States with a highly competitive music program that persuades or dissuades music participation?

R₂ – Of students who do not participate in in-school music classes or ensembles, how many participate in out of school musical activities and what are those activities?

R₃ – What percentage of students participating in in-school music programs practice or perform by themselves or with others on an instrument or in ensembles that differ from those in which they participate in school? How is this percentage represented within each of the five established musicking settings?

R₄ – What are the similarities or differences among student perception in regards to the overall school music-learning culture and how do these differ from the perceptions of the music directors at their school?

R₅ – What percentage of students are involved in both Primary and Specialty musicking classes?

R₆ – What percentages of students are possibly influenced by family members to participate in musicking?

R₇ – What are the possible reasons students continue or discontinue participation in musicking in high school?

Research Hypotheses

H₁ – The music-learning culture represented within the school setting may persuade or dissuade student participation in musicking. Factors that may influence or hinder the desire to participate in school musicking include the enjoyment of previous experiences with musicking such as at the middle school level, the competitive nature of the school programs, peer pressure, parental or sibling influence, and social reasons. The competitive nature of the programs may be the largest reason for students' decision for participation. Furthermore, most musicking and non-musicking students will indicate a desire an increase in the types of music course offerings at their school. The nonexistence

of specific music classes may hinder desires to participate in musicking within the school environment.

H₂ – A low percentage of students will represent the Outside musicking only category. These students may be involved in private lessons, church music ensembles, or garage bands.

H₃ – Students who participate in in-school musicking may display/use/share their talents outside of the school setting in areas such as church, community, or home settings. This includes students involved in ensembles such as church bands and/or choirs or students who take private music lessons outside of the school setting. Some of these students will perform outside of the school setting on instruments that differ from those they play in school. Students may perform on a variety of instruments outside of the school setting such as the guitar, bass guitar, drums, and piano. A large percentage of the students involved in school musicking may show interest or may practice musicking outside of the school setting.

H₄ – Student and teacher perceptions of the school musicking culture may differ greatly from one another due to the reasons students choose to or not to participate in the school music programs and the philosophies and/or behaviors of the music directors as well as outside influences such as prior exposures and family perceptions.

H₅ – A majority of the students involved in Specialty musicking within the school setting will currently be or were once part of a Primary music ensemble.

H₆ – The majority of all students involved in school musicking have been influenced by at least one family member.

H₇ – Students choose to continue or discontinue participation in musicking for a variety of reasons. Such reasons may include parental pressure, peer pressure, a desire for continued development of musical skills, music-learning culture specific reasons, the appeal of competition, an interest or lack of interest in the music selected to be performed, or non-musical factors such as social interactions.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are included to better inform readers regarding the content of this research. Although some of these terms may hold different meanings elsewhere, for the purposes of this research, the following definitions are proposed:

1. *Competition* – events where music ensembles such as bands or choirs are *ranked* by a panel of judges, competing for first, second, third, etc. placement.
2. *Competitive Music Program* – a music program that involves itself in competitive endeavors at least once each school year. Schools may contain multiple ensembles that attend competitions each year but usually do not exceed a few competitions per ensemble per school year.
3. *Culture* – a set of values, conventions, goals, or social practices that characterize and are associated with a particular field, organization, activity, or institution. (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016).
4. *Disconnect/Disconnection* – a disparate relationship between K-12 music educators and their administrators and/or between music educators and their students.
5. *Emerging Music Classes/Ensembles* – these are music classes that include everything outside of usual music class offerings such as band, orchestra, choir,

and general music. Emerging music classes include jazz band, guitar class, and piano class. This term is synonymous with Specialty Music classes/ensembles.

6. *Festivals* – performance events where music ensembles are *rated* by a panel of judges, with all ensembles eligible for the same rating (typically, a numeric/descriptor rating is assigned: 1= superior, 2 = excellent, 3 = good, 4 = fair, 5 = poor).
7. *Highly-Competitive Music Program* – a music program that regularly involves itself in competitive endeavors more than a few times each school year. Often these schools attend musical competitions with multiple ensembles at the state, regional, and sometimes, national level. Individual ensembles may compete as many as five or more times a year.
8. *Hybrid Musicking* – a category of music participation that includes students who are involved in both Primary (concert band, orchestra, and concert choir) and Specialty (jazz band, show choir, indoor percussion ensemble) music ensembles within their school.
9. *Musicking* – a term coined by Christopher Small in 1998 that refers to the acts of performing and listening to music on an intelligent level.
10. *Music Making* – this term refers to the task of making music either by performance, practice, or any other means of physically singing or playing an instrument.
11. *Music Learning* – the process of learning music. This can include but is not limited to learning musical parts, learning music theory and history, and any

musical instruction time where the student does not sing or play his or her instrument.

12. *Music-Learning Culture* – the culture that is created by the parties involved in a particular music-learning environment that is defined by the goals, values, and practices set within that environment.
13. *Non-Competitive Music Program* – a music program that is does not participate in competitions, but may attend annual festivals for ratings.
14. *Non-Musicking* – a category of music participation that includes students who have chosen not to participate in any type of musicking outside of listening to music.
15. *Outside Musicking* – a category of music participation that includes students who only participate in musicking outside of the school setting. These students may perform music in garage bands, church ensembles, family settings, or may take private lessons.
16. *Primary Music Classes* – music classes that include traditional ensembles and methods of music learning: concert band, orchestra, and concert choir.
17. *Primary Musicking* – a category of music participation that includes students who are involved in Primary music classes.
18. *Specialty Music Classes/Ensembles* – this term is synonymous with Emerging Music Classes. It includes classes such as show choir, general music, jazz band, guitar class, piano class, indoor drumline, and anything else outside of the realm of band, orchestra, and choir. These classes tend to specialize in specific genres or areas of music and musicking.

19. *Specialty Musicking* – a category of music participation that includes students involved in specialty music classes.
20. *Social Norms* – behaviors that are expected in given situations.
21. *Statistical Overlap* – an overlapping of student responses occurring within a statistical question. It occurs when a participant selects more than one response given on the research questionnaire.

Chapter Summary

The purpose of this case study is to determine which factors persuade or dissuade students from participating in in-school music programs in a competitive music culture at a suburban high school in the United States. This research was designed to examine the relationships students have with music, both inside and outside of the school environment, and to better understand how students perceive the music offerings inside of their school. In doing so, music educators and researchers may better understand how to meet the musical needs of all students. Through a questionnaire distributed to five groups of students during the 2014/2015 school year, this research looked at answering questions regarding the student perspectives on music education across five established categories of musicking. It is the aim of the researcher that a greater understanding of the student musicking perspective will aid in better teaching strategies, a larger percentage of participation, and more diverse class offerings.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Music is a prominent force in the lives of adolescents, and they value its potency in directing the course of their daily activity as well as their long-range hopes and dreams. They consider music's function as a social "glue" for bringing them together with friends and peers, and as a bridge for building acceptance and tolerance for people of different ages, ethnicities, and other cultural circumstances. (Campbell, 2007, p. 233)

Introduction

Schools across the United States offer various types of music classes to students in each grade level, particularly at the secondary level (Green, 2008). Although not every school in the US offers music classes to their students, most who do may only provide *Primary* music choices (band, choir, and orchestra). Some schools offer specialty or emerging music classes such as jazz band, piano class, or guitar class. Student participation may be motivated by personal choice, family influence, peer urgings, attraction to non-music outcomes (social interactions, trips, competition, etc.), or student placement in particular music classes due to school graduation requirements (i.e. a student is in need of an art credit to graduate and the school counselor places them in a arbitrary music class) (Adderly, Kennedy and Berz, 2003; Siebenaler, 2006, Snead, 2010).

It is plausible that a large population of students in each secondary school potentially miss opportunities for musicking due to multiple factors such as limited funding, limited class offerings, limited time in a student's academic schedule or after

school schedule, and limited attention from teachers and administrators regarding student perceptions of music-learning cultures created within schools. Additional factors for non-participation could include low interest or excitement of class offerings, a musically competitive or otherwise intensive atmosphere/culture, community influences, negative previous experiences, and/or a lack of self-perceived talent. A more thorough understanding of student perceptions regarding music-learning cultures could aid music education researchers and practitioners in discovering new ways to cater to the needs of student musicians and those interested in becoming student musicians. This understanding requires analyses of various aspects of student life and school music cultures.

Music Preferences among Students

Snead (2010) stated that music listening is a favorable past time of most adolescents and only comes second to television watching. The amount of time spent listening to music increases from ages eleven to eighteen and the act of watching television decreases (Snead, 2010). Research also shows that between the ages of fifteen and eighteen, adolescents spend approximately two and a half hours each day listening to music (North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Roberts, Henriksen, & Foehr, 2004; Snead, 2010; Zillman & Gan, 1997). Not only do adolescents listen to recorded music more often as they age, but their preferences for musical styles drastically change between the ages of ten and twenty, and their interest in knowledge about the musicians whom they listen to increases (Snead, 2010). It is also during the adolescent years that music preferences shift from those of their parents into an establishment of personal genre preferences (Gembris, 2002).

In regards to student engagement, it seems important to recognize music preferences among students in the music classroom. Although the field of music education may try to be accepting of varying musical preferences, there is a debate as to whether or not music educators should attempt to influence the musical preferences of their students (Gembris, 2002). While some may argue that music educators should be the experts on what is and what is not appropriate musically and therefore must define student musical consumption, others may argue that it is far more effective to begin teaching students through the music in which they are already familiar (Gembris, 2002). Some research has shown that students would not prefer music that is complex (as could be found in art music), yet adolescents' musical preferences increase when the music in which they are exposed becomes more similar to what they already know musically (Snead, 2010). Although music educators may wish to positively influence their students through exposure to art music, research makes it seem as though music educators are only somewhat effective in having a lasting impression on adolescents' musical preferences (Gembris, 2002).

Music educators could potentially see an increase in music participation if the musical styles and ideals reflective of the musical needs and wants of students could be included in day-to-day musicking within the confines of the school environment. Music may become more meaningful to group constructs when class or social music making is available (Green, 2008). Student preference for specific genres of music may also determine student development as they age. According to Schwartz, adolescents who prefer extreme genres of music, such as heavy metal music, are often socially independent, although they demonstrate low levels of self-esteem and may at times

display self-doubt. However, adolescents who regularly listen to more positive forms of music often demonstrate high levels of self-esteem (Schwartz, 2003). With the changes in musical taste throughout a child's lifetime, it may be critically important to allow non-traditional music genres, musical instruments, and instruction into public schools. This approach would perhaps differ from grade to grade, with elementary instruction reflecting appropriate strategies for that age level, and secondary instruction reflecting the faster paced change of student interests in music listening and music participation during teenage years.

Hargreaves (2003) discussed the impact of age on musical preferences and perceptions. He listed four hypotheses as presented by LeBlanc (1991) (Hargreaves, 2003). These hypotheses are:

- (a) that young children up to the age of 8 years or so are prepared to listen to and express liking for a wide range of musical styles; (b) that as they move into adolescence, there is a decline in this "open-earedness": the variety of preferred styles decreases, and there is a marked increase in liking for "popular" styles, largely rock and pop music; (c) that with further progress into early adulthood, the range of tolerance for different styles widens once again; and (d) that there is a further decline in "open-earedness" as the listener matures to old age. (p. 243)

Such developmental aspects contribute to student musical preference and may lead to interest in specific musical instruments, genres, ensemble types, performance opportunities, and varied instruction that may or may not be offered within the school environment (Campbell, 2007). In regards to instrumental music, there has been some debate as to what types of instruments are chosen by which students. According to

Campbell, adolescents may identify with instruments such as guitar, bass guitar and drums as frequently as they identify with orchestral and band instruments. Campbell (2007) states that male adolescents more frequently desired to play guitar, bass guitar, drums and other “popular instruments” (p. 226) than females.

Student preference for these “non-traditional” instruments may lead to an interest in acquiring the skillsets associated with said instruments outside of the school setting, especially if the students’ schools do not offer the instruments as an option (Snead, 2010). Having students study instruments such as the guitar or percussion outside of their public school setting raises questions that pertain to proficiency levels, notation learning, ear development, etc. (Snead, 2010). These and other related questions should also be considered regarding whether or not students are getting instruction from degreed musicians, professional musicians, peers, adults, electronic means, or group learning (Campbell, 2007). Additionally, many cultural and social aspects play into the decision as to which instrument or which genre of music students choose to include in their lives and how they will pursue instruction on these instruments (Campbell, 2007). The outside music-learning culture may have more appeal than the inside school environment. This environment choice may fit a student’s needs at one age, but change as that student develops (Campbell, 2007).

Students in the adolescent stages of life may benefit most from a diverse school music environment. As the adolescent develops, many emotional needs are enhanced, and music plays a large role in the development of and ways in which adolescents deal with these strengthened emotional states (Behne, 1986). According to Behne (1997), “boys gravitate toward a more stimulative listening style, whereas girls tend to adhere to a more

sentimental listening style: Results show surprisingly clear how strongly individual listening styles are connected with the experience of individual problems” (p. 157). These experiences develop in relation to students’ self-esteem, sense of accomplishment, self-identity, and general emotional state. Behne (1986) discussed that it was probable that adolescents use the state of their emotions to influence their musical preferences. These emotions may be influenced by various factors that are associated with in-school or outside-of-school learning cultures and the music genres being experienced and learned. Because musical preferences and emotions are often linked, adolescents may strongly defend their genre preferences (Behne, 1994). This defense could be related to student’s desire to grow their independence in general as they age. Gembris (2002) reminds us that adolescents’ relationship with their preferred music does not exist as strongly while in the childhood or adulthood stages of their lives. If these student needs and developmental attributes are closely considered when constructing curricula, the inclusion of music that is important to adolescents within the public school system may be effective in not only meeting their personal musical needs, but also in aiding in their emotional health. Further explanation of the importance of music on the development of adolescent aged students is presented in the work of Behne, Baacke, and Gembris (Colwell and Richardson, 2002).

The functions of music in an individual’s life can be considered the essential influencing factors in the development of musical preferences . . . The functional use of music expands in adolescence in parallel with the increase in amount of listening. Music is used consciously or unconsciously for various reasons in everyday life. (p. 498)

Some research has also shown that students may identify themselves differently in accordance with the musical outlets they possess (Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007; Campbell, 2010; Gembris, 2002; Reynolds, 1995; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003). Adolescents, beginning at the ages of eight to ten start to identify more easily with popular forms of music and tend to start to disassociate with “childhood music” and classical or art forms of music. These new musical tastes and preferences for musical experiences could continue to develop for a long period of time as they age (Gembris, 2002).

Teacher Training

Student participation in public school music classes could be linked to current dominant teacher practices in music education in the United States (Reimer, 2003). Research has suggested that music educators may tend to stress training professionals and amateur musicians to exist in a ‘formal performance culture’ and may ignore the idea that society is full of music aficionados or people who only wish to involve themselves with musicking for leisure purposes (Reimer, 2003; Snead 2010). Reimer (2003) advocates a balance of curriculum and activities toward “. . . developing intelligent aficionados with *extensions* and *electives* for training amateurs and professionals” (Snead, 2010, p. 4). This challenge with educators may begin at the college and university level where the positive stigma of the “artist” becomes increasingly important. Other contributing research has indicated that music teacher training at the collegiate and university level advocates performance and content-based principals rather than catering to the individual needs of students (Bouij, 1998; Roberts, 2004; Snead, 2010). Within a collegiate or university setting, future music educators may be influenced to become better musicians but not necessarily better educators. In this setting, it is often that music educators are taught that

performance and instrumental or vocal proficiency takes priority over teaching methods (Bouij, 1998; Roberts et al., 2004; Snead, 2010). In this endeavor, it is possible that music educators then begin teaching students at the kindergarten through high school levels to prioritize musicianship and performance skillsets over the enjoyment of music making. It is also possible that teaching school musicians should be done in a way that most resembles the teacher's own most recent experiences with groups of students, largely large ensemble concert preparation and performance (Bouij, 1998). Depending on how a university student progressed as a musician while in college, music educators may or may not leave their licensure programs with an overt positive sense of musical and/or teaching self-worth (Faber, 2010). In addition to influences of recent college musicking experiences, any subsequent need for positive self-efficacy in their early (and later) years of teaching may influence music teachers to mimic the same music cultures in which they belonged while in high school. This comfort level with the familiar could mean that while music education at the university level may have promoted more diverse and student-centered music cultures in the schools, these ideals are abandoned for the customary ways of doing things; music education does not develop toward ideals that promote music for all students in varied musical settings (Bouij, 1998; Faber, 2010). Furthermore, it is possible that positive self-efficacy may be more affected by external rewards, such as competitive success, making these experiences become extremely important, if not the most important forms of recognition/validation of music teachers' educational efforts.

Views of School Administrators

In a study conducted by Carlos R. Abril (2008), principals at over 500 schools provided their perceptions of school music. Abril's study showed a disconnect between

music educators and their administration, though the study also showed many findings regarding what types of music classes schools were offering in the United States (Abril, 2008).

Band and chorus were the most common course offerings. Jazz/rock, general music, music theory, and string ensembles were courses in the next tier, with between 200 and 299 schools out of 541 offering them. It is also interesting to see how many principals would like to offer courses such as piano, strings, guitar, and music technology. This might simply be due to the fact that these courses were offered less frequently. It could also reflect principals' desire to involve more students in music through expanded course offerings, a possible sign of value toward music education. The low numbers of principals claiming they would like to offer mariachi could be explained by their unfamiliarity with it or a feeling that such a course would not be culturally relevant to students. (p. 76)

Abril stated that almost all of the surveyed schools in his study (98%) offered some type of music classes taught by a certified music instructor. However, it should be noted that only 34% of the schools he surveyed required music classes to be taken by all students. The percentages of schools that required music for all students were larger among middle and junior high schools, with the percentages significantly lower among the high schools surveyed (Abril, 2008). This lack of music course requirements may be a contributing issue regarding the low numbers of students involved in school music making.

Regarding participation and retention, Abril's study of school administrators suggests a possible disconnect between the music educator, the students, *and* the principals. Principals, and often music educators, believe that their students learn necessary musicianship skills through musical score study and performance practices rather than through composition or improvisation (Abril, 2008). Why is such an emphasis placed on performance based musical outcomes and less emphasis placed on some creative aspects of music making/music instruction? Abril discussed principals' perspectives on music offerings within their own schools stating, "The high numbers of principals indicating they needed more information about certain courses suggests that they lacked knowledge about certain types of music classes" (Abril, 2008, p. 78). Could it be that one of the reasons behind the lack of variety in school music class offerings is linked to a lack of knowledge of music educators and administrators of a wide variety of potential musical courses? Are music education majors being taught to redefine the typical school music curricula, and if so, are there specific methods courses taught that provide at least some level of training in group guitar, piano, rock band, or bucket drumming pedagogy? How would administrators respond to request to add these emerging music courses into the school curriculum?

Lack of participation could also be due to a lack of understanding of musical outcomes by administrators. In Abril's research, creativity was ranked third to educational outcomes; however, the principals surveyed in the study may have viewed performance as an act of creativity (Abril, 2008). Principals also offered that when considering music course offerings, there is concern for budgetary issues. It is known anecdotally that some school programs are more expensive than others, including music

programs, and specifically band and orchestra. That stated, many schools might find it easy to afford some unique music classes that may not only be cost effective, but also allow students who would not otherwise be interested in current course offerings or whom could not previously afford to participate, do so in more non-traditional music classes (Abril, 2008).

Some principals may also only see music classes primarily as settings in which students learn great life lessons, non-music skills that aid in other areas of life (Abril, 2008). Perhaps music classes are viewed for their entertainment value, and are not seen as academic pursuits. Additionally, many administrators may have a limited understanding of music achievement, linking such only to competitive success and the positive recognition that trophies bring to a school and its community. It should also be mentioned that the culture in most high schools in the United States is one where athletics are a dominant factor for identifying and rating school success, school and community pride, and student and teacher self-efficacy (Abril, 2008). Choirs singing the national anthem and marching bands providing music in the stands at sporting events may fulfill a need that principals and communities see as important, with little to no consideration to the musical/academic needs of the musicians themselves. Unfortunately, in some schools, the music programs are only seen as important because of the music, support, energy, sense of ceremony, they can provide sporting events and other school activities (Abril, 2008; Opsal, 2013).

It is evident that there are disconnections between educators, administrators, and students (Abril, 2008). Understanding the musical needs and desires of students may help researchers and educators reach a wider array of solutions to these and other problems in

music education. It is perhaps the music teacher's role to educate administrators as to the many musical values that music has to offer all students, in a wide variety of venues, in non-competitive and non-athletically driven settings. If we continue to offer only primary music courses and subsequently use competition as the best indicators of our programs' success, it seems we are aiding the perception that such best defines what music education is and should be in our schools (Campbell, 2007; Green 2008).

Defining Musical Abilities among Students

Musical ability may be described as any phenomena, which shows talent and ability in the area of music (Gembris, 2002). Such abilities may be measured in a number of ways and are subject to opinion in most cases, especially when considering the idea of musical talent. Nevertheless, many music educators may find it possible to identify musical ability through working with students and applying their own knowledge of musical ability/talent to what they see in their students' skill sets (Gembris, 2002). These teacher views could be well informed and reflective of best practices regarding accurate student assessment; however, some music educators may be extremely limited in their ability to properly assess students' music potential. Students may display a variety of musical abilities during their grade school and high school experiences, including skills that show aptitude, but perhaps not learned/trained skills (Gembris, 2002; Gordon, 1987). These musical abilities may often be the result of their experiences/exposures outside of school, fueled by their passion for performance, or they may be the result of exposure to experiences and training in varied music classroom settings. According to Gembris (2002), in order to understand the musical abilities present in students, we must first understand that there is an assumption that every human being possesses musical ability.

It is also possible for such musical abilities to be developed through exposure to said abilities (Gembris, 2002; Gordon, 1987). Musical abilities can range from basic musical knowledge and skills to professional levels of musicianship. Gembris also states that a majority of musicians are average when it comes to musical skills, similar to how a majority of people displays average intelligence. Only in rare instances are individuals highly gifted in music (2002).

Furthermore, students may only express their “full” musical abilities if educators allow solo, small group, or improvised performance to take place. Bennett Reimer (2000) stated, “it is through ‘doing’ that most students become interested in ‘knowing.’ In all of the arts, it is what students can actually do that is of greatest interest to administrators, parents and the students themselves” (p. 63). Many students however, may not experience opportunities in performance due to a lack of course offerings in the area of music, and if they do have these opportunities, they may only participate in a role that does not provide, or greatly limits, students from reaching their full potential as individual musicians.

Musical ability has been linked to a natural human phenomenon according to some research (Gembris, 2002). The acquisition of musical skills happens over a long period of time. The acquisition of musical skills does not cease at the end of adolescents so long as the musician continues to study music (Gembris, 2002). According to Shull “in all of the arts, it is what students can actually do that is of greatest interest to administrators, parents, and the students themselves” (Reimer, 2000, p. 62). Researchers have stated that every human possesses the ability to be musical in some sense. One may compare musical ability to that of intelligence; there are no completely unintelligent

people, likewise, there are no completely unmusical people. Because of this, every one may benefit from some sort of musical instruction in order to find where their musical abilities lie (Gembris, 2002; Gordon, 1987). If all people are capable of making and learning music in some way or another, why are there so many limited options for everyone to participate in musicking? The answer may be found through student perception analyses and the openness of music educators to experiment with new technologies, repertoire, styles, instruments, courses, and teaching methods.

Musical Self-Identity (Gates, 1991; Reynolds, 1995; Snead, 2010) is a concept that regards the way in which musicians view their musical abilities, influences, performance style, musical ideals, and self-value as a musician. It is a concept that identifies the artist as a particular type of musician or artist. The musical self-identity may range from someone who does not consider himself or herself a musician on any level to a person who views himself or herself as a virtuoso musician, as a classical musician, a hobbyist, or a rock musician. It is possible that musical self-identity may be related to a person's concept of their self-worth. According to Jeanne Wrasman Reynolds, the idea of a musical self-concept is compatible to self-worth. A person's musical abilities may not be different from other abilities but may be developed as to make up for loss in other areas such as a loss in athleticism or academia (Reynolds, 1995). The concept of Musical Self-Identity may influence the way in which students choose to or choose not to participate in the music classroom or in other musical ensembles (Austin, 1990, Reynolds, 1995). It should also be noted that the society in which a student lives might influence their Musical Self-Identity. According to Reynolds, the beliefs of a particular society may affect the self-concept of music in two ways. The

first way is the level of importance placed on participation in musical activities and the second is the impact of gender association with musical activities (Reynolds, 1995).

It may be possible for musical self-identity of adolescents to change over time (Reynolds, 1995). The factors identified in this research as reasons for participation or non-participation may also serve as influences that cause a student with no musical identity to become one with a strong music identity, or one that self-identifies strongly as being musical in the elementary grades to seeing oneself as musically inept in their later school years. If all students have some level of musical intelligence, can learn, and have opportunity to explore their musical life, it seems that by the time students reach high school, they should all see themselves as *musical* at least to some degree. Though many types of music classes are offered throughout the United States, it is difficult to say if the offerings are best suited for every student (Campbell et al., 2007; Green, 2002; Green, 2008). If specific classes such as guitar, piano, or rock ensemble are not taken into consideration, how may we discover the musical abilities of all students? If current music course offerings promote the large group experience above the individual experiences, are we also indirectly defining what it means to be a musician or even what music performance types best define true musicians?

Participation in School Music

One of the main goals of this research was to discover why students choose to participate in in-school musicking and why students choose to stay away from musicking in the school setting. There have been few studies on this subject and the results vary (Snead, 2010). One of the themes of this area of study references student attitudes toward music and the act of music making. In studies by Miznener (1993) and Siebenaler (2006)

no correlation was found “between singing skill and attitudes toward school choir participation. Better singers were not necessarily more interested in singing in choir” (Siebenaler, 2006, p. 2). Siebenaler goes on to say that another consideration for student participation is the belief that each student possesses about his or her own musical abilities. Students who have a higher level of self-esteem in regard to musical ability are more likely to participate in school musicking (Austin 1990; Siebenaler, 2006).

Some students feel that music education is necessary in order for them to become successful musicians. Research conducted by Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) focused on free-form essays written by students involved in their high school music programs. They found that students often accredited their music education for the success they experienced in music outside of the classroom (Campbell et al., 2007):

The development of performance skills is decidedly important to some adolescents who recognize that it is their music education that paves their way to the mechanics of playing with technique and expression. Little in the way of discrete commentary was offered for the somewhat abstract nature of singing, but the skills of playing instruments were frequently brought into students’ commentaries. (p. 227)

Another overall theme discovered among students was the sense of community or “family” felt while engaging in musicking in school settings. This “family” environment may have aided in acceptance among other students. Campbell wrote that the idea of “family” as it exists within the confines of the music classroom refers to the emotions associated with a sense of belonging to a specific group. Participation in music ensembles

may allow students to feel not only as part of a musical group, but also as something more meaningful in regard to social interactions (Campbell et al., 2007).

According to Virginia Davis, student musical meaning in music education experiences is linked to four categories: vocational, academic, belongingness, and agency. Each were categories of reasons that students gave for joining in musical ensembles and classes at their schools (Davis, 2009). The four categories in Davis's study are described as follows: In the vocational category, students feel that the strongest contribution of their participation in music class is that they seek interest in becoming professional musicians. In the Academic category, students expressed interest in the way music aided in their academic development. Making up the belongingness category, students found ways in which they felt a meaningful connection to the musical culture. They felt as if they belonged in the musical setting in which they were involved. Finally, in the category of agency, students expressed an importance to the way music impacted their psychological state or their overall self-esteem (Davis, 2009). Participants may have belonged to each of the four categories to some degree, with the percentage changing daily, hourly, or even moment-to-moment (Davis, 2009). Research by Adderly, Kennedy, and Berz discovered multiple reasons for music participation including peer influences, enjoyment of music, and the acquisition of musical knowledge. Interestingly enough, some of their participants also stated that they felt positive psychological effects of music learning (2003). Though it may not be evident to what degree these psychological effects motivate students to participate, such should be considered as an important non-musical outcome of school musicking. Music educators may help grow participation percentages

if all non-musical and musical outcomes that could result from a wide variety of offerings were considered important.

Choosing to Not Participate in Musicking

School music participation percentages may be decreasing because of a lack of variety of music course offerings (Campbell, 2007; Green, 2008; Snead, 2010). One of the issues with losing students who would have otherwise been included in school music making, could be that music educators do not offer the styles of music that students want to participate in making. Reasons given for repertoire selection in school music ensembles could often be related to what is considered “high” music versus what many possibly consider “low” musical styles (Strand, 2002). That is to say that there could be a perceived difference between music that has a purpose of being played in formal occasions and music that is better suited for everyday use. Though it can be argued that guiding students carefully and thoughtfully down a path that leads to art music consumption and even participation, it seems that such a path would be different for every student; meeting the individual needs of students means that we start each student’s path at a comfortable place that they know. “A rich musical understanding of a piece of popular music is more valuable than a shallow understanding of a classical symphony. If teachers can look beyond cultural and social biases, they will find that much popular music has real merit” (Strand, 2002, p. 284). A student may come to school with music experiences they have had for many years, informally.

Lucy Green (2008) has argued that there is an importance of music that is learned informally. This importance may contribute to the continuation of student interest in music making as a life-long pursuit. Many of the aspects of informal music learning are

similar to those of formal music learning. Both often require listening, group learning, and individual time spent practicing (Green, 2008; Strand 2002). Although the term *informal* may imply that there is no systematic method to learning music, Green has stated, “popular musicians who engaged in informal music learning described their approach as disciplined, systematic, and focused on technical proficiency, musicality, and interpersonal musical relationships” (Green, 2001; Strand, 2002, p. 284). Increased participation in school musicking could occur if informal musicking approaches were further explored for their potential to inform current pedagogy and best practice; students who participate in musicking outside of the school environment may show more interest in school musicking if the teaching practices seemed more like those experienced outside of the school setting. Informal approaches to learning music hold strength in that the process associated with informal approaches are developed by the people making the music and not the teachers. Green has suggested “music teachers begin to realize the potential of informal music-learning by engaging in informal music-making themselves” (Green, 2001; Strand, 2002, p. 284).

Participation in music is an extremely important part of some students’ lives (Adderly et al., 2003; Snead, 2010). After high school, in the collegiate setting, and into adulthood, some find it necessary to participate in music making even if they are not involved in an arts degree program or career in music (Faber, 2010). The extracurricular activities in which some students choose to engage allow students to feel better connected to their respective schools and allows social connections to be more meaningful during the high school years (Broh, 2002; Brown and Evans 2002).

Some students, however, do eventually decide to cease participation in music making (Reimer, 1970). The reasons behind their desire to no longer participate may be as simple as losing a passion for the activity or as complex as relationship problems between the student and the program with which they are involved. Reimer provided insight on the subject (Reimer, 1970):

Most children will never progress beyond modest levels of technical prowess. After the initial excitement of getting involved and showing some progress, the child often begins to realize that there are diminishing returns on his investment of time and energy. Novelty turns into routine, excitement turns into boredom, and the pleasures of progress diminish as limitations are realized. When the time comes that reinforcement by the social aspects of playing or singing in groups is no longer available, as when the student graduates, there is no longer any reason to continue with performance. (p. 131)

Students choose to not participate for innumerable reasons. Many students that do engage in in-school music instruction, end their school musicking because of various factors. The social outlet provided at one school level may be replaced with a different social group activity, one that perhaps requires less time, less money, less self-discipline, and fewer “rules”. Students may enjoy their school musicking, but enjoy something else more. The majority of high school music participants entering college choose to end their musicking completely (Waymire, 2009). Waymire goes on to state, some students fear that college-level auditions are much more difficult than high school auditions and that if they are choosing to major in something besides music, there simply is not a place for them to continue their large ensemble experiences. This may further reinforce the idea

that current music education in our schools indirectly defines who is best fitted for music instruction and participation, and those who are not. Students in high school or even middle school may decide early on that their musicianship/talent cannot keep up with the offered music courses or simply is not good enough for further continuation. Changing to non-music activities may provide middle and high school students with a way in which they fill some other needs that undetermined without an analysis of students' perceptions (Faber, 2010). Such is one of the primary reasons for this research.

Non-Traditional and Informal Music Curricula

It is possible that students react to music differently in the school music classroom than they do in their own homes, at concerts, or at churches in which they perform. The inclusion of musical forms outside of the realm of "Primary" school music may prove beneficial to the musical development of students; especially those who choose to be involved in music outside of the school setting. In discussing Lucy Green's work, Snead states (Snead, 2010):

Green's (2008) study introduced five principles of informal learning into British secondary music classrooms. These principles include: (1) informal learning starts with learner-selected music, (2) skills are developed by copying recordings by ear, (3) informal learning occurs alone and through peer-directed, self-directed, and group learning, (4) skills and knowledge are acquired through trial-and-error and holistic ways, and (5) informal learning integrates listening, performing, improvising, and composing. After being immersed in this project, Green found that adolescents who played together for extended periods of time, often

experienced ‘flow’ (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), engaged in enjoyable music making and learning, and played with appropriate ‘feel’. (p. 35)

The inclusion of informal music training in schools may open doors to many students who otherwise would not participate in music activities within the school setting. It could inspire students currently involved in school music making to enhance their own experiences within the school music setting, taking additional or various music courses that expand their musical knowledge and skill. Rolandson (2015) offers that expanding curricula to include alternative music courses may motivate new populations of students, thus increasing the overall percentage of participation within any given school. Lucy Green (2008) advocates specifically for the inclusion of informal music learning as a means by which to encourage larger populations of students to become involved in musicking. Green recognizes that there are parts of adolescents’ musical lives outside of the school environment that are not met in many school settings. Through bringing informal teaching practices into the school setting and allowing students to further explore popular forms of music, Green believes that music learning could become more meaningful for all parties involved (Green 2008; Snead 2010). Green’s work further mentions the importance of informal music on the musical training of adolescents. Her research reveals that there is a vital importance in allowing students to utilize the music they already know from home in the music classroom as a means of setting up success. By allowing students to perform their favorite types of music in the classroom, there is less “probability that they will have negative responses to both inter-sonic and delineated meanings in the classroom” (Green, 2008, p. 101). Additional studies have discussed “outside” music being brought into the school classroom. Though not all, much of the

recommended music would be considered pop, or popular music. Campbell et al states that music educators have long debated the topic of the inclusion of popular music being integrated into the core music curriculum of secondary schools (Allsup, 2004; Boespflug, 2004; Campbell, 1995; Durrant, 2001; Frith, 1996; Green, 2004; Hebert & Campbell, 2000). These studies suggest that there are aesthetic and social values placed on popular music that may resonate on higher levels with adolescents and the informal processes by which popular music is created. Such as improvisation-based or non-traditional methodologies may provide for a more stimulating musical experience that is more enjoyable to adolescents (Campbell, 2007).

Though curricula changes have been made in some school districts, these changes have not found sweeping approval by most music educators nor are they occurring quickly. According to Reimer (2000), music educators now have more access than ever to creating modern music workspaces for adolescents. He states that it is not completely uncommon for students to “find a music room equipped with guitars, African drums or other sophisticated percussion instruments, computers, keyboards, and MIDI keyboards, and students who do have access to such are more likely to be interested in the music curriculum offering” (p. 63). There are increasing multiple ways in which students may find an outlet for music within the current school systems in the United States; music educators may be limiting the students’ range of attaining musical expression through limiting the types of instruments offered within the school curriculum (Green, 2008). In order to boost student interest in music in school, to raise numbers in music participation, and to adhere to the needs of each student, more instruments should be included into public schools (Clements, 2010; Green, 2008; Reimer, 2000).

One of the more popular “non-traditional” school instruments is the guitar. Guitar education in the public school systems around the United States has grown in aspects of interest pertaining to student performance and teacher accompaniment (Clements, 2010; Green, 2008; Reimer, 2000). Music teachers have often found value in the acoustic guitar as an instrument to include in curricula for various reasons that may include its wide popularity in most all cultures, its use in a wide variety of genres, its portability, and its potential for use as an individual, small group, and large group instrument. It has seen exponential growth in the field of music education and could possibly be one of the most functional musical instruments in multiple settings (Reimer, 2000). The guitar is an easily accessible instrument in many ways as it takes up little space, is easily portable, and can be quiet or loud through the use of amplification or lack of amplification (Clements, 2010). The interest in personal/solo and musical endeavors in and out of the school setting and during and post public school years may also give reason for the inclusion of the guitar in public school music programs. The guitar may additionally be a great place to begin with the inclusion of other popular instruments. Abramo found that when his students were slowly persuaded to move away from the guitar, an eventual freedom of choice in his classroom setting resulted with students moving onto other musical opportunities including the exploration of other instruments (Clements, 2010). Another positive aspect to the inclusion of the guitar is that stylistically, the students are exposed to many forms of music outside of the standard band, orchestra, or choral repertoire all on one instrument. In their research, Clements and Abramo found the electric guitar especially versatile in the classroom setting (Clements, 2010).

An environment where students pursue different projects simultaneously provides challenges to classroom and sound management. Because of this, electric guitars can be more advantageous than acoustic guitars. Electric guitars can be plugged into headphones, providing relative ease for students to work individually or in small groups without the sound of other students' activities disturbing their work. It also provides a wider range of timbres than the acoustic guitar . . . Additionally, the electric guitar presents students with a wider palette with which to experiment and compose . . . By experimenting with these different timbres with the electric guitar, students can also discover how timbre creates contrast in the songs they listen to. (p. 19)

The addition of both acoustic and electric guitar into a school music program may be one answer to the low percentages of students involved in music classes. Abramo's research discovered that not only did the inclusion of a guitar class to existing music curriculum increase the number of students interested in music programs, it also allowed students who were already involved in other ensembles to experiment with an instrument outside of those in which they were already familiar (Clements, 2010).

The guitar is simply one instrument to be considered in the inclusion of "Specialty" school instruments. Some research has been written about the inclusion of steel drums, MIDI instruments, and the use of Garage Band software within the school music classroom. The implications for expanding musical offerings given by these instruments and technologies could provide students with many new palates from which to choose musical outlets (Green, 2007; Green 2008; Reimer; 2000).

Keyboard classes may also fit in easily with school music curricula. One of the main concerns is the cost for the instruments. However, as Shull states, with new technological advances in instrument making, cost does not need to be an issue. She states (Reimer, 2000):

Technological developments in the manufacture of musical instruments have greatly enhanced keyboard teaching in lab situations. While these systems can be expensive, teachers trained to use them correctly praise their creative uses and the speed with which students learn. On the other end of the scale, inexpensive individual electronic synthesizers that can withstand continuous classroom use are also available. On these, students can use preset rhythms and sounds to help develop rhythmic accuracy, add interesting harmonies, and learn about timbre and different styles of music. (p. 67)

Barbara J. Resch researched a middle school that incorporated steel drums into the curriculum for twenty years and she came to some conclusions as to why the program has been successful. First, there is the idea that students have an ability to be immediately successful on the instrument, at least to their ears, from the first time they strike the steel pan. "The sound of the instruments themselves is another draw. From the first experimental efforts, the player makes a nice sound . . . The timbre of the instruments is unique, mellow and rich, and varied" (Clements, 2010, p. 148). Furthermore, the repertoire provided for the steel drums can be versatile. Resch interviewed students who stated that they enjoyed playing difficult repertoire on steel drums because it was fun and challenging and the instrument allowed students to perform varied repertoire that was different from the music they performed in other musical settings. The inclusion of more

unique instruments allowed the school to give more musical opportunities and outlets to its students (Clements, 2010).

The inclusion of specialty instruments and/or instruments some students study outside of the music classroom settings may encourage higher in-school participation rates among the student population (Green, 2008; Reimer, 2000). Instruments such as the guitar, keyboard, bass guitar, steel drums, and drum set as well as newer trending instrumental curricula such as bucket drumming or rock band may encourage students whom would not typically involve themselves in music making and learning to try a music class (Clements, 2010; Green, 2008; Mackinlay, 2014; Reimer, 2000). The biggest challenge of the inclusion of such instruments is possibly teacher training. However, there are ways of providing more variety of instrument choices within the school setting if the music educators are uncomfortable performing or acquiring new skills for unfamiliar instruments (Green, 2008; Reimer, 2000). Music technologies are now more advanced than ever, and the potential of *Music Technology* class or composition class where the educator utilizes computer software with their students could potentially be an answer to persuading higher participation rates among every student population (Reimer, 2000). Bucket drumming and drum circle curricula have recently been developed, providing students and educators with cost-effective ways by which to conduct music classes with students of all ages, also providing students a creative outlet where each member of the ensemble is seen as equal (Mackinlay, 2014). Music educators should feel confident enough in their abilities to aid in constructing learning opportunities for all music students with rare exception.

Research has shown that music is important to all students (Reimer, 2000; Snead 2010). Providing opportunities for students to perform “their music” may need to be a large part of the future of music education (Snead, 2010). If exposing students to “high music/art music” is important to music education and the music field overall, starting school musical experiences where students are and leading them happily to Bach or Wagner seems a logical and well-intended path (Mackinlay, 2014).

Competition in Music Education

Music competitions are prevalent in today’s world of music education (Opsal, 2013). Often, these competitions are a means by which music educators may better determine and display the progress of their music programs (Howard, 1994). However, it is also possible that musical competitions could prove to be damaging to some musical values (Austin, 1990). While it is up to the individual directors and administrators as to how competitive a program may be, the musical and non-musical components of preparing for competitive success many take on varying degrees of importance and therefore may positively or negatively affect music education objectives and student individual achievement levels. Though the desire for competitive success and any motivation it provides may be innocuous, there is no way to completely and objectively measure this desire’s positive or negative effect on all individuals. “Competition’s role as an extrinsic motivator in a music classroom may uphold or erode the inherent value of music as expression” (Opsal, 2013, p. 1). Although competition allows music educators to further student understanding of musical concepts such as technical accuracy and sound quality through extra practice and lessons on the material, comments and ratings received from judged competitions may cause student interest in music to “shift to a more

superficial desire to win” (Opsal, 2013 p. 1). There seems to be two ends of the music competition argument – one that sees music competitions as completely healthy, the other stating the opposite- with varying levels of each side found in between. Howard (1994) and Rohrer (2002) found that student attitudes regarding music competitions to be that of excitement. This could be due to public support of competitions, especially in the United States (Opsal, 2013). According to Howard, music competitions allow students to remain on task and build better music programs through comparing themselves to other ensembles from competing schools and through listening to judges’ comments on areas where improvement is needed (Howard, 1994). Student, teacher, parent, administrator, and a community support of and attraction to competitive success is perchance normative behavior in today’s society. As stated in Chapter I, America is perhaps the most competitive culture of all industrialized countries (World Values Survey, 2013).

Some music educators state that competition may be used as a motivator to aid in the success of students, however it could interfere with subsequent achievement when it comes to complex tasks that may require higher order thinking (Austin, 1990). Musical competition may also negatively affect music educators who, because of the competitive pressure, neglect some of their educational duties in exchange for receiving high adjudication marks. Decisions to major in music education in the first place may be motivated by the opportunity to one day direct a highly competitive music program.

It may be better for music educators to invest less time concerning themselves with success on the competitive level and to focus more on how to better cater to the musical skill needs of their pupils (Austin, 1990). Miller (1994) ventures that pressure for students to excel in competition may require them to show skill beyond their true ability,

forcing them to abandon certain musical skills or techniques that are best for their development. He added that creativity and individualism might be lost because of their conflict with competitive goals- everyone doing everything in the same way or within performance constraints that do not every allow for individual expression.

Competition in music is dangerous to student musicians when the “level of effort or progress of students does not correlate with the level of performance as perceived by the judges at the competition” (Opsal, 2013, p. 6). Additionally, competition may change the emphasis from performances being musically expressive to performances that are near perfect, mistake free. Competition may prove detrimental to the acquisition of skillsets needed to become a successful musician by shifting the focus from the performance to beating an opponent (Rohrer, 2002). Although competition may motivate students to better some musical abilities such as technical proficiency, tonal quality, and sight-reading skills, it could also hurt the musicianship of students in that focus on the technicality of music may hinder proficiency on the emotional aspects of music (Austin, 1990; Howard, 1994; Opsal, 2013; Rohrer, 2002).

Most Influential Studies Guiding This Research

There are many studies that have helped guide this research in its development. Each has offered insight into what has been accomplished in music education research and what further research should be conducted in order to add a greater understanding on the subject of students’ musical lives. The following four research studies have been the most influential on this research topic.

Terry Gates (1991)

Terry Gates work, titled *Music Participation: Theory, Research and Policy*, studied music participation theory. His theory was based on the idea that there are six types of music participants. These include professionals, apprentices, amateurs, hobbyists, recreationalists, and dabblers. Gates determined that musicians might be placed into each category based on the musical value associated with the category in which each musician fell. He concluded that based on his theory, music educators could recruit more students if they better understood where musical value was placed within a specific music-learning culture. Gates adds that a majority of recruiters for music programs use anecdotal information. He claims that music could better enhance the lives of participants and attract more pupils if recruiters utilized research based on participants' personal musical values. He posed such questions as "what influences people's attitudes toward musical activities?" and "how do these attitudes influence people's behaviors in joining or leaving music performing groups?" (p. 3). His research suggested that careful examination of successful music performance groups with high retention rates through an examination of the musical values experienced by each member could yield important information that would benefit music recruiters.

Todd Snead (2010)

Todd Snead's dissertation, titled *Dichotomous Musical Worlds: Interactions Between the Musical Lives of Adolescents and School Music-Learning Culture*, researches the idea that some students in public schools find ways to maintain musicianship outside of the music classroom setting by emerging themselves in music making with friends in the home environment. Snead studied the dichotomous musical lives led by seven high school music students and attempted to better understand their

need for both a school led musicking experience and an out of school musicking experience. Snead asked specifically, “what interactions exist between the musical lives of adolescents and school music-learning culture” (Snead, p. 9)? Student involvement in school ranged from Primary band classes to jazz band and guitar classes, with musical involvement outside of the school setting ranging from performing in garage bands to playing music related video games and music listening. Snead also observed the students in various settings such as concerts, half time performances, and at home settings.

Interviews discussed musical influences of each student, teacher involvement, and what each student liked and disliked about the music by which they were surrounded. Snead’s results found that the interactions that occurred with in-school music learning influenced the musical decisions made in outside of school contexts. It also offers that there was some accommodation for the students’ interests within the school setting. Snead discussed how musical knowledge and skills gained by adolescents within the school setting carried over into their musical identities outside of the school setting. In his study, some of the researched teachers also made curricular decisions that aided in further promoting students’ personal musical interests. Furthermore, “adolescents’ comments and actions suggested that they appreciated the school music-learning culture for what it offered them. However, they also desired to engage in expansive music experiences that reflected the more authentic music practices they experienced outside of school” (p. 231).

Snead’s suggestions for future research stated that studies should occur to better understand the reasons why certain students choose not to participate in school music learning and how educators could go about better serving the musical needs of their pupils. He suggested that informal music learning may aid in student musical identity,

and stressed the importance of student perceptions on the music-learning cultures experienced both inside and outside of the school setting.

Dennis James Siebenaler (2006)

Siebenaler's research titled, *Factors that Predict Participation in Choral Music for High-School Students*, investigates the many reasons students choose to participate or opt out of participating in choral music programs in California high schools. This quantitative study featured one suburban school in Southern California in the spring of 2005. Two hundred eighty eight students in total completed a survey. One hundred seventy six of the participants were enrolled in a vocal music course at the school and one hundred and twelve were not enrolled. The latter group of students was gathered from English courses. Siebenaler looked at six vocal music ensembles: women's chorus, advanced women's chorus, men's chorus, show choir, jazz choir, and concert choir. Siebenaler also took note of the ethnicity of each participant in order to determine if there were any confounding variables between ethnicity and the type of music participation each student chose. The main goal of the study was to determine what factors could be used to predict participation in high school choral music classes and which factors contributed to the students' decisions to participate in a vocal ensemble and to determine if the type of vocal ensemble chosen by each student was the direct result of any factors. The study found that multiple factors played a role in either influencing or deterring participation. Such factors included a music specialist in elementary school settings, middle school choral participation, friend participation, a love for performing, encouragement of others, and frequency of purchased music recordings. The study outlined many ways in which students could be influenced to participate in school vocal

ensembles. The strongest influences seemed to be peer influence, family influence, and positive feedback on musical abilities from others. The study suggests that these may be important factors in determining which students will choose to participate in school music making in the choral music setting and allows for further research to be conducted in the area of student perspectives on school musicking.

Lucy Green (2008)

Lucy Green has conducted many types of research in the area of music education, particularly in the area of informal music learning. In her book, *Music, Informal Learning and the School: A New Classroom Pedagogy* (A follow up to her 2001 book, *How Popular Musicians Learn*), Green explores the many rehearsal techniques utilized by popular and informal musicians and how these techniques may be utilized by music educators to enhance the music learning of formal music students. These ideals are additionally represented in her book, *How Popular Musicians Learn*. This work discusses the ways of bringing informal music techniques into the formal music classroom and how to best use these techniques to aid in student musical development. The book also examines the student perspective of acquisition of musical skills through the use of “specialty” music learning and outlines how students may grow musically in aspects of performance, practice, and listening skills. Her work in this text seems aimed at guiding music educators toward ways to best reach students through music that is more relatable to each students’ at-home music experiences.

The idea of bringing informal techniques into the music classroom environment can be an uncomfortable concept to many music educators. Green’s book outlines the many ways in which the incorporation of said techniques may aid in overall musical

development, particularly with teenaged music students. Green covered topics including listening strategies, choices in repertoire, and flow (Mihály Csíkszentmihályi, 1990) among others. Green states “Many who go on to become successful popular musicians report that the music education they received at school was unhelpful or detrimental. For some, instrumental lessons, even in popular music genres, also provided a negative and often short-lived experience” (Green, 3). Supported by statements like this and her previous work featured in *How Popular Musicians Learn*, Green discusses many possible outlets for curriculum development utilizing popular music techniques in an attempt to help music educators better aid students in developing further in their musicianship.

Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003)

In their article, *A Home away from Home": The World of the High School Music Classroom*, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz discuss the many reasons why high school students decide to participate in band, orchestra, and choir. Their qualitative research uses structured interviews of 60 high school students from a suburban school in the northeastern United States. Twenty students were chosen from the school band, 20 from the school choir, and 20 from the school orchestra. The main goal of the study was to investigate the climate of the music classrooms at a suburban high school and to determine what the strongest factors were in persuading students to be involved with the music programs. The research showed four reasons for student participation. These included motivation from others to join the ensemble, the perception of the music ensembles from others within the school, the value of music, and the social aspect of the music classroom. The social climate within each music class was of largest importance to a majority of the students interviewed. The researchers state, “A significant finding is the

degree of importance students place on the social aspects of their ensemble membership. References to the social domain are peppered throughout the interview transcripts and embedded within each of the four themes” (Adderley et al., p. 204). Furthermore, the researchers found that members of the ensembles researched found value in the social aspects of the programs. Music ensembles allowed adolescents to meet others with similar interests and to form relationships with their peers that aided in navigating the difficult adolescent years of life. The researchers also discovered that students had created small subcultures within each music classroom. Although there was strong evidence of the social aspect of the music classroom being the most important to high school students, some offered an interest in the intellectual and psychological value of music making in school.

Chapter Summary

Research reflective of the current state of music education, the meaning of music to adolescents, and the ways some music educators are changing music education by incorporating informal methods, ideas, and non-traditional instruments into the music classroom have influenced this research. The literature presented in this chapter provides a variety of research that explores how students perceive the music making and learning experience. Though there are limited studies on student perception of school music, the literature reviewed here provides an informed starting point into such research.

Symposiums such as Tanglewood (1967) and Tanglewood II (2007) spelled out many important principles to music education regarding the overall experience and methodology behind meeting all students’ musical needs. Assertions from the 1967 conference included that all music educators should cater to the musical needs of students

through providing an exploration of ideas and values contained within multiple musical practices and that student musical preparation can be rigorous and involve a large variety of concepts, skills, and repertoires. Forty years later, Tanglewood II affirmed that students should be given the opportunity to improvise, compose, arrange, transcribe, and use technology to create music (Information about Tanglewood II, n.d.). Students should have many opportunities to explore every facet of music their teachers are capable of teaching. Like the Tanglewood Symposium of 1967 and 2007, the Yale Seminar in 1963 and the later Vision 2020 gathering (2000) reinforced the need for more diverse music curricula in our schools, yet little has changed by way of these important events; inclusive curricula deficiencies continue within the music education field.

Some basic principles may be drawn from this chapter. Through research, it is inferred that infants through adolescents generally enjoy music (Adderly et al., 2003; Broh, 2002; Brown and Evans 2002; Campbell, 2007; Faber, 2010; North et al., 2000; Reimer, 2000; Roberts, Henriksen, & Foehr, 2004; Snead, 2010; Zillman & Gan, 1997). There are now many outlets in and outside of the school setting, formal and informal, for students to participate in music making and learning (Campbell, 2007; Green, 2008; Mackinlay, 2014; Reimer, 2000; Snead 2010). Though related research has been done, there are many questions that remain regarding what the field should consider as best practice in music education, and additional questions remain regarding student perception of the value of music and specifically, music education in the schools. If there are so many possibilities for participation in music, why are there still such low percentages of students involved in music learning within our schools? Only 21.5% of high school sophomores were involved in a school-sponsored music program (i.e., band, orchestra, or

choir) in 2002 (Snyder, Dillow, & Hoffman, 2008). Are students not participating because of time requirements, a lack of room in their academic schedule, a lack of adult support, finances- or are they simply losing interest? Is the overall school music culture one that most students find unappealing or unwelcoming? What impact, if any, does the competitive aspect of some high school programs have on why students choose not to participate in musicking? When considering the competitive environment specifically, when music educators work diligently to ensure quality music learning occurs within competitive programs, are more students attracted to participation for the musical outcomes over the competitive ones? While the overall benefits and possible detriments of music competition is not explored in detail in this current study, a look into students' perceptions regarding music education in a highly competitive environment may offer insight as to how to begin to consider what type of music education school culture is most beneficial to the largest percentage of students. Educators who allow their students to compete musically in order to gain further skillsets associated with musicking may notice an increase in student participation than those educators who only teach the minimum skillsets to attain higher scores at musical competitions (Opsal, 2013).

Researchers presented in this chapter seem to agree that music education studies should explore ways by which music practitioners may better enhance the experiences of their current students while additionally attracting new students (Snead, 2010). Sizeable research attention has been given secondary schools in regards to student achievement outcomes in the large ensemble/Primary musicking area, but little exists that looks at *all* music needs of *all* students (Snead, 2010). When considering student needs and recent trends regarding social behaviors, particularly the attention currently given competitive

activities, what research outcomes might best inform music educators in how to achieve programs with larger participation percentages and with more musically fulfilled students? In order to better answer this question, research in the area of student perceptions of music-learning cultures in a competitive environment seems essential.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of the research was to determine aspects of school music culture that may persuade or dissuade high school students from participating in music learning and music making, particularly in a program deemed as competitive. This research aimed to examine commonalities and discrepancies among and between students who chose to participate across different types of music participation, as well as those who chose to not participate at all, in or outside of the school setting. Participants represented five musicking categories. These included primary in-school music making and learning (Primary); specialty in-school music making and learning (Specialty); outside-of-school music making and learning (Outside); students who participated in both in-school and out-of-school music making and learning (Hybrid); and students who chose not to participate in music making or learning (Non-Musicking). These five categories were vital to the research in order to ensure that the most common groupings of students within a high school setting were represented. This chapter will discuss: (1) the selection process of participants, (2) the materials needed to conduct this research, (3) the data collection procedures, and (4) the data reporting. A pilot study was conducted with three schools located near the school that was ultimately used in this research. Data gathered from the pilot questionnaire resulted in changes to the survey instrument to better serve the research questions.

Questionnaire

Based on a previous research design (Waymire, 2009), a questionnaire was created for the purposes of this case study. Modified after utilizing insight gained from a pilot study containing similar material, the questionnaire consisted of fourteen multiple-choice questions, twelve Likert-rated questions, and two open-ended response questions. All inquiries pertained to musicking experiences the participants had during their elementary, middle school, and high school years. Questions encompassed reasons participants chose to be involved in musicking, the types of musicking experiences chosen, and external motivators for musicking experiences such as parental and sibling influence. On several of the questions, participants were allowed to provide multiple responses and were given the option to “write in” a response if the most appropriate choice had not been provided.

Setting

The high school selected for this research represented a suburban demographic. The city in which the research took place consisted of a population of 10,454 and 16.87 square miles, according to the 2010 United States Census. The school district was founded in 1976 and consists of five schools – a primary school with grades kindergarten through second grade, an elementary school which held grades three and four, an upper elementary school consisting of grades five and six, a middle school housing grades seven and eight, and a high school with grades nine through twelve. The school had one feeder program, a single middle school located within two miles of the high school. The band and choir directors from the high school shared a working relationship with the middle school programs and traveled daily to those campuses to work with students in

grades six, seven, and eight. The primary, elementary, and upper elementary schools all featured elementary/general music classes. The upper elementary school included a sixth grade beginner band program. Students did not have opportunity to enter the choral program until seventh grade.

The high school was located within a fifteen-mile radius of two universities (one public and one private), three community colleges, and two small vocational colleges. Most of the directors present at the researched school held degrees from one of the two universities within fifteen miles of their school. These directors often attended musical and sports events at their former university and worked to maintain a connection with their alma maters through involvement with musical clinics, and by remaining in contact with the university faculty. Both local universities also had a history of sending student teachers to the researched high school to work with the band and choral programs, promoting continuous contact with music education and music performance faculty.

The school represented a highly competitive school music program, meaning that all of the music classes offered, excluding general music, were driven competitively; each musical ensemble involved itself with multiple music festivals and competitions on a local, regional, and at times, national level. All competitive ensembles had shown success at winning multiple awards at such competitions. The two show choirs at the school both consistently placed as local and state finalists, and have additionally won multiple competitions at the national level. The school's marching and concert bands have also placed as semi-finalists and finalists at multiple competitions on the state level. The marching band has been named State Champions four times in the past ten years, and in that time has not ranked lower than fourth place. The marching band has also participated

in the Hollywood Christmas Parade, Philadelphia Thanksgiving Day Parade, and the Presidential Inaugural Parade in years preceding this research. The school's indoor percussion ensemble has placed as a semi-finalist for the WGI World Championship competition in their respective division on five occasions and as a finalist at the same competition on two occasions prior to this research. The school's concert choir ensembles regularly attended local and state festivals where they have been awarded with adjudication scores that indicate "superior" ratings, the highest festival distinction possible. The band program also produces a winter guard that competes locally, regionally, and at the state level, consistently placing in the top percent of their respective competitive class. Because the school used in this research competed numerous times each year locally, statewide, and nationally, it is considered highly competitive. The following descriptions explain the differences between non-competitive, competitive, and highly competitive music programs:

- Non-Competitive High School Music Program – A music program that does not compete in contests where schools are ranked. These programs may attend music festivals where all schools can receive the same ratings.
- Competitive High School Music Program – A music program that competes in both festivals and competitions but limit the number of competitions to two or three each school year per ensemble.
- Highly-Competitive High School Music Program – A music program that involves itself with three or more competitions each year and may compete on state, national, and international levels with multiple ensembles.

There were 1123 students enrolled at the school during the time of the research investigation. Three hundred and fifty-five students were involved in the music programs within the school (31.61% of the total school population, which reflects an average at or just above the national mean). The school's website and information gathered from the school's principal provided this research with racial demographics. At the time of the investigation, these reports showed that a majority of students were Caucasian. It should be noted that the students answered questions differently in terms of their own racial identity than was represented in the data given by the school district. Further information on the discrepancies may be found in Chapter IV of this dissertation in Tables 1 and 2. The school racial demographics, according to the school district, were as follows:

- White/Caucasian – 80.43%
- African American – 17.35%
- Hispanic – 1.42%
- Asian/Pacific Island – 0.08%
- Other – 0.00%

There were two choir directors and four band directors present at the school as well as a paid team of choreographers, accompanists, and technicians to aid in the production needs of the various ensembles at the school. The only non-performance based class offered was general music (taught by one of the choral directors). Multiple courses represent the music program within the school:

- Show choir – An auditioned vocal group that performs popular styles of music, usually accompanied by a live band, utilizing stage choreography, stage props,

scenery, and costumes as part of their performances. There were two of these ensembles represented in the sample population.

- Concert choir – A Primary choral ensemble specializing in Western traditional, classical, religious, folk, and art forms of music. One of these ensembles existed as part of the sample population.
- General Music – A class designed to teach students about music fundamentals, music history, and music theory. One class was represented in the sample population.
- Marching Band – An instrumental ensemble that performs outdoors ~~often~~ for the purpose of entertainment or competition. One ensemble was represented in the sample population.
- Concert Band – An instrumental ensemble that performs in a concert setting, usually consisting of woodwinds, brass, and percussion instruments. Three ensembles were represented in the sample population.
- Indoor Percussion Ensemble – A percussion ensemble consisting of marching/battery percussion instruments and “pit” percussion instruments, often accompanied by electronic instruments such as keyboards, synthesizers, electric bass, and electric guitar, that performs indoors and often utilizes movement and visual stimuli to accompany their performances. One percussion ensemble was represented in the sample population.
- Jazz Band – An instrumental ensemble consisting of brass and woodwind instruments as well as a rhythm section – guitar, bass, drums, keyboard – that

perform jazz and popular styles of music. One jazz ensemble was represented in the sample population.

In many instances, students were involved in more than one of the music classes at any given time. Students involved in concert band were also involved in marching band; several students in jazz band were involved with the show choir as members of the instrumental pit; some instrumental pit members were involved with the general music class; etc. Of all of the class offerings listed, general music was the only class that did not participate in performances and jazz band was the only class offered where students performed but did not compete. The school's show choir, concert choir, marching band, concert band, and indoor percussion ensemble participated in multiple competitions per school year, and at times as often as six times a semester. It should be noted that students involved in concert band were also *required* to participate in marching band. All ensembles represented in the research setting required students to participate in after school and weekend rehearsals throughout the school year as scheduled by the music directors of each ensemble. At the height of each ensemble's competitive season, additional time dedicated to weekend competitions (after school or weekend rehearsals) most often elevated the weekly time commitment of an ensemble to 12–30 hours per week.

All of the ensembles/classes in the researched school were auditioned with the exception of general music class and concert choir. All of the performing ensembles required students to pay various fees associated with the programs' uniforms, stage props, stage equipment, choreographers, hired staff, and travel for competitions and festivals. The fees for each ensemble varied, with student costs ranging between \$500.00 to

\$700.00 dollars per school year. The fees varied year-to-year depending on the amount of travel allotted for each ensemble, causing some years' fees to exceed \$1,000.00 dollars. Students were given the opportunity to participate in various fundraisers throughout the school year to aid in reducing their participation fees. Some funding was made available through the use of boosters and district monies. This funding largely aided in maintenance of facilities used for practice and performance such as band and choir rooms, practice fields, and a performance facility located on campus, as well as instrument repairs and stage equipment.

Student Participants

Participants in this study were high school students in grades 9–12. All students were enrolled in high school music classes such as band, orchestra, or choir and/or other elective classes outside of music settings including art, physical education, health, and foreign language. Because students were required to participate in elective classes and are limited to choosing only a few electives throughout their high school career, participants were chosen from music classes and other electives to better represent an even distribution across the five established categories of musicking and the entire school population. This student sample was selected in order to represent five categories of musicking or non-musicking:

1. Students involved in Primary musicking in a high school setting such as concert band or concert choir.
2. Students involved in Specialty musicking in a high school setting such as jazz band, general music, show choir, or percussion ensemble.

3. Students involved in Outside musicking. These students were involved in ensembles or musicking outside of the school setting. This may have included church ensembles, garage bands, family music groups, solo music making, private lessons, etc.
4. Students involved in Hybrid musicking. These students were involved in musicking in both the high school setting and outside of the school setting.
5. Students who were Non-musicking or who did not participate in musicking either in school or outside of school.

Participants who completed questionnaires included students participating in more than one of the five categories or more than one music course at a time. Some of the students stated they were involved in private lessons on their primary school instrument, voice, or another instrument outside of what they used in school. Students gained access to private lesson instructors through their community, churches, local universities, music stores, or through recommendations from their school music teachers. In some cases, their school music teachers also acted as their private lesson instructors.

Teacher Participants

The two directors involved in this research attended a university within a fifteen-mile radius of the researched school. Both directors received their bachelor's and master's degrees at that university. Teacher One was thirty-seven years old at the time of data collection, and Teacher Two was forty-three years old. Teacher One spent 5 years as a director at the researched school at the time of data collection, and Teacher Two had 16 years of experience.

Research Questions

R₁ – What are some possible cultural and sociological aspects of the music classes in a suburban school in the Southern United States with a highly competitive music program that persuade or dissuade music participation?

R₂ – Of students who do not participate in in-school music classes or ensembles, how many participate in out of school musical activities and what are those activities?

R₃ – What percentage of students participating in in-school music programs practice or perform by themselves or with others on an instrument or in ensembles that differ from those in which they participate in school? How is this percentage represented within each of the five established musicking settings?

R₄ – What are the similarities or differences among student perception in regards to the overall school music-learning culture and how do these differ from the perceptions of the music directors at their school?

R₅ – What percentage of students are involved in both Primary and Specialty musicking classes?

R₆ – What percentages of students are possibly influenced by family members to participate in musicking?

R₇ – What are possible reasons students continue or discontinue participation in musicking in high school?

Research Hypotheses

H₁ – The music-learning culture represented within the school setting may persuade or dissuade student participation in musicking. Factors that may influence or hinder the desire to participate in school musicking include the enjoyment of previous

experiences with musicking such as at the middle school level, the competitive nature of the school programs, peer pressure, parental or sibling influence, and social reasons. The competitive nature of the programs may be the largest reason for students' decision for participation. Furthermore, most musicking and non-musicking students will indicate a desire for an increase in the types of music course offerings at their school. The nonexistence of specific music classes may hinder desires to participate in musicking within the school environment.

H₂ – A low percentage of students will represent the Outside musicking only category. These students may be involved in private lessons, church music ensembles, or garage bands.

H₃ – Students who participate in in-school musicking may display/use/share their talents outside of the school setting in areas such as church, community, or home settings. This includes students involved in ensembles such as church bands and/or choirs or students who take private music lessons outside of the school setting. Some of these students will perform outside of the school setting on instruments that differ from those they play in school. Students may perform on a variety of instruments outside of the school setting such as the guitar, bass guitar, drums, and piano. A large percentage of the students involved in school musicking may show interest or may practice musicking outside of the school setting.

H₄ – Student and teacher perceptions of the school musicking culture may differ greatly from one another due to the reasons students choose to or not to participate in the school music programs and the philosophies and/or behaviors of the music directors as well as outside influences such as prior exposures and family perceptions.

H₅ – A majority of the students involved in Specialty musicking within the school setting will currently be or were once part of a Primary music ensemble.

H₆ – The majority of all students involved in school musicking have been influenced by at least one family member.

H₇ – Students choose to continue or discontinue participation in musicking for a variety of reasons. Such reasons may include parental pressure, peer pressure, a desire for continued development of musical skills, music-learning culture specific reasons, the appeal of competition, an interest or lack of interest in the music selected to be performed, or non-musical factors such as social interactions.

Procedures

The researcher obtained permission from the superintendent and school's principal to distribute and collect questionnaires to a population of the school's students as part of obtaining approval from the Institutional Review Board. Upon receiving IRB approval, the researcher distributed questionnaires to the participants' school. The research instrument was given to the school principal with detailed instructions on how to distribute the questionnaire to band, choir, and other elective instructors in the field of physical education, art, and foreign language. A total of 360 questionnaires were sent to the school. The return rate was 97.8% with 352 questionnaires returned to the researcher. Each questionnaire was completed anonymously. The questionnaire served to answer research questions guiding this case study. Each questionnaire contained a total of sixteen questions, with an addition of some demographic inquiries regarding gender, ethnicity, and type of musicking with which each student was involved. The questionnaire format included multiple choice, Likert-scale, and open-ended questions.

The questionnaire was designed to be as short as possible based on recommendations gathered from the pilot study. A series of questions were asked regarding the students' decision to participate or not participate in musicking both inside and outside of the school setting. The Likert-scale questions were followed by two open-ended questions, allowing students to describe the reasoning behind their choices to participate or not participate in musicking and in what ways these students used music in their everyday lives.

Upon analysis of the questionnaires, the researcher designed interview questions for the music directors informed by information given by participants regarding the culture present in the music classrooms. The teacher questions were sent as part of an emailed document to the instructors' school email address. Questions for the music instructors were designed based on the responses received from the student participants. This was done in order to better inform information regarding the music-learning culture at the researched school. Because several of the student responses to the open-ended items on the questionnaire discussed the competitive nature of the music programs, performances, and the expectations of their directors, four interview questions were created for the music instructors to determine any similarities or discrepancies between the perceptions of the music teachers and the perceptions of the students. The questions created discussed the topics of music teaching philosophy, the music-learning culture within the school, and music student learning expectations. The music instructors' responses aided in inferences regarding the music-learning culture present within this particular high school.

Delimitations

This case study used a sample of convenience; the school used in this research was within close proximity to the researcher. Three hundred sixty questionnaires were sent to the school to represent a population of 1,123 students. The school used in this research is unique to this study. Although the school used in this research represented a diverse population of high school students, this study does not claim to represent all populations in all high schools. Furthermore, although the questionnaire reached an approximately one third of the researched school's population (31.34%), not every student attending the high school completed the questionnaire; had data been collected from all participants, data may have showed additional or differing information.

The researcher was not present during the disbursement, taking, or collection of the questionnaires used in this study. The design of the questionnaire as well as teacher interaction with students during their completion of the questionnaire may have influenced student answers. All details regarding how the questionnaires were distributed are unknown even though clear written instructions were given to each teacher via the school principal.

Both music teachers who completed questions for this research were unaware of the researcher's identity during the disbursement of student questionnaires. The researcher's identity was revealed through email correspondence after the collection of the questionnaires. It should be noted that although steps were taken to eliminate bias, the researcher had a previous working relationship with one of the music instructors used in the research.

Limitations

The school's principal determined how the questionnaires would be distributed, allowing the researcher access to only the elective classes at the school. Although, instructions were given to distribute the questionnaires evenly, the principal chose to distribute the questionnaires to the elective teachers himself and thus there was no way to control the number distributed to each class. Of the 360 questionnaires, 352 (97.8%) were returned. This sample size represents a confidence level of 95% and confidence interval of 4.33 (there is a 95% certainty that 45.66% –54.33% of the total school population would have responded similarly to the 352 participants).

The 352 participants who completed the questionnaire may not completely represent the entire school population in all regards. The research presented here may not be a reflection of every competitive or non-competitive music learning and music making school culture within the United States.

Though originally designed as interview questions to be completed face-to-face, the teacher questionnaires were changed to a written format that utilized four open-ended response questions transmitted via email due to one of the music directors deciding they did not wish to meet for an interview. The responses given through the teacher questionnaire may have been more impactful had a face-to-face interview taken place. Because the teachers were sent questionnaires and emailed their responses, it is possible the responses were not as thorough as they may have been had an interview taken place. Additionally, self-report data is subject to the Hawthorne Effect where participants may be influenced to modify answers because of the knowledge that they are being observed.

CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

Music education research suggests that there is need for more comprehensive studies regarding student perceptions of the music-learning cultures within their schools (Snead, 2010). This case study was conducted in an attempt to determine how school music-learning cultures affect student decisions to participate in musicking inside and outside of the school setting, and specifically in a program that is highly competitive. The data presented here was collected to attempt to answer seven research questions that pertain to the music-learning culture within a highly competitive music program.

A sample of high school students (N = 352) from a suburban high school with a total enrollment of 1,123 in the Southern United States participated in the study. Three hundred sixty questionnaires were sent to the researched school and 352 were returned. Participants included students in elective classes offered at the school – Concert Band, Marching Band, Concert Choir, Jazz Band, Show Choir, General Music, Physical Education, Art, and Foreign Language classes in an effort to represent student elective choices, music and non-music electives alike. Since all students were required to take an elective, and the courses chosen contained student enrollment from all four grade levels, a sample somewhat representative of all grades was likely. Questionnaires were given to the school's principal to be distributed among teachers of the elective courses. Responses were returned to the researcher within a week of their distribution.

Data Reporting

Table 1 shows the demographics of the population of the entire school selected to participate in this study. The information was taken directly from the school’s website.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of the School

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Total Students at School	1123	100
Ethnicity – As Reported by the School District		
Caucasian	904	80.43
African American	195	17.35
Latin	15	1.42
Asian	9	0.80

Note: As reported by the School District (N = 1123).

It is important to note that the ethnicities reported by the school district differed from those reported by the students who completed the questionnaire (Table 2). Whereas the school district only reported on the ethnicities of Caucasian, African American, Latin, and Asian, when given opportunity to identify with these categories and to write in a more specific response, participants identified as Caucasian, African American, Latin, Asian, Native American, and Other. According to Brown, Hiltin, and Elder (2006), “we know little about the stability in self-identification among adolescents as they age. Development of a sense of racial self-categorization is inherently social and occurs within

racially structured, often discriminatory, interactions (Brown, Hiltin, and Elder, p. 1299).”

The sample population identified as predominately Caucasian at 75.29%, with the smallest percentage represented by Native American students at and 1.70%.

Table 2

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	265	75.29
African American	41	11.65
Other	25	7.10
Latin	8	2.27
Asian	7	1.99
Native American	6	1.70

Note: As reported by the participants (N = 352)

Table 3 shows the distribution of gender represented by the participants. There were more females than males in the sample. Some students did not respond to the question or chose to identify as both male and female, or simply listed “other” as their gender choice. These responses were combined, representing 0.85% of the sample population.

Table 3

Gender Characteristics of Participants

Characteristics	Number	Percentage
Gender		
Female	237	67.32
Male	112	31.81
Other/Didn't Respond	3	0.85

Note: As reported by participants (N = 352)

Participants were grouped into five categories of musicking, established in Chapter I, for the purpose of this research (see Table 4 and 5). These were *Primary Musicking*, *Specialty Musicking*, *Outside Musicking*, *Hybrid*, and *Non-Musicking*.

Students involved in concert band or concert choir (*Primary Musicking*) represented the largest group of participants, at 38.07%. Students involved in musicking both inside and outside of the school setting (*Hybrid Musicking*) were the second largest group in this study at 25% of all questionnaires completed. These students were involved in some sort of musicking within their school setting and participated in musicking outside of the school setting in multiple areas such as church ensembles, family music groups, garage bands, and private lessons. *Non-Musicking* Students made up the third largest group at 19.03%, *Specialty Musicking Students* made up 11.93%, Students

involved in only *Outside Musicking* made up 4.82% of the population, and 1.14% of the participants chose not to respond to the type of musicking question.

Table 4

Type of Musicking by Participants

Musicking Category	Number	Percentage
Primary	134	38.07
Hybrid	88	25
No Musicking	67	19.03
Specialty	42	11.93
Outside	17	4.82
<i>No Response</i>	4	1.14

Note: Overlap is included (N = 352)

Some participants chose multiple answers on the questionnaire regarding types of musicking. Students involved in Primary Musicking may have also been involved in Specialty Musicking, etc. This statistical overlap is represented in table 5. There are four categories represented here. These are *Primary Only*, *Specialty Only*, *Outside Only*, *Hybrid Total*, *No Musicking*, *Primary and Specialty*, *Primary and Outside of School*, *Specialty and Outside of School*, and *Primary/Specialty/Outside of School* and Students who did not respond to the question (*No Response*).

Table 5

Overlap of Musicking by Participants

Musicking Category	Number	Percentage
Primary Only	134	38.07
Hybrid Total	88	25
No Musicking	67	19.03
Primary and Outside	54	49.09
Specialty and Outside	26	23.63
Primary and Specialty	22	20
Specialty Only	20	5.68
Outside Only	17	4.82
Primary, Specialty, and Outside	8	7.27
No Response	4	1.14

Note: Reflects overlap between musicking types (N = 352)

Along with the participants' current state of musicking at the time of questionnaire completion, each participant was asked whether or not they had school musicking experiences at the elementary and middle school levels. Their responses are shown in tables 6, 7, and 8. Almost all participants, 96.60%, stated that they had experienced or participated in musicking at a previous school. Some of the participants, 3.13%, claimed they had not participated in musicking previously, and 0.28% chose not to answer the question. It should be assumed that most students in advanced grades did not join band as beginners, as such is extremely rare. Doing so in choir is perhaps more

common. It can be assumed then that some students' non-participation is due to the lack of previous experiences/in-school training.

Table 6

Previous School Experience with Music Classes

Experience With Musicking at a Previous School	Number	Percentage
Yes	340	96.60
No	11	3.13
No Response	1	0.28

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Table 7 shows that 94.89% of all participants indicated they had an elementary musicking experience. This percentage is reflective of national averages as reported by the US Department of Education in *Arts Education In Public Elementary and Secondary Schools, 1999-2000 and 2009-10*.

Table 7

Elementary Experience with Music Classes

Elementary Music Experience	Number	Percentage
Yes	334	94.89
No	17	4.83
No Response	1	0.28

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Table 8

Middle School Music Participation

Middle School Music Participation	Number	Percentage
Yes	287	81.53
No	64	18.18
No Response	1	0.28

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Participants were asked to rate music experiences in their elementary music classes. These ratings used a Likert scale with 1 representing *extremely negative* and 5 representing *extremely positive*. The choice of *neutral* was given so as to account for participants who were either unable to answer (they could not recall their experience) or who felt indifferent or had no opinion about their elementary experience instead of being forced to respond with a negative or positive selection (Johns, 2005; Krosnick et al., 2002). A majority of the participants stated that their elementary musicking experiences were positive as shown in Table 9. Of all participants, most (38.92%) rated their elementary musicking experience as positive while 1.99% reported it to be extremely negative.

Table 9

Elementary, Middle, and High School Experience Rating

Scale	Elementary	Middle School	High School
Extremely Negative	7 (1.99%)	14 (3.97%)	16 (4.54%)
Negative	14 (3.98%)	14 (3.97%)	17 (4.83%)
Neutral	97 (27.56%)	41 (11.64%)	8 (2.27%)
Positive	137 (38.92%)	99 (28.12%)	89 (25.28%)
Extremely Positive	76 (21.59%)	111 (31.53%)	131 (37.21%)
No Response/ No experience	21 (5.97%)	73 (20.73%)	91 (25.85%)

Note: Presented as number frequency and percentage (N = 352)

More students elected to participate in musicking at the middle school level than those who did not. Table 10 shows various reasons why students chose participate in musicking at the middle school level (n = 279). Continued interest in music (75.63%) and enjoyment of previous musicking experiences (66.31%) were the largest reasons for music participation at the middle school level. Table 11 shows data related to responses for students (n = 73) who chose *not* to participate in musicking at the middle school level. The highest percentages of responses for non-participation were *other interests* (68.75%), and *no interest in classes offered* (54.69%). Reasons for non-participation that had the least impact were peer pressure (4.69%), receiving no recognition from a music teacher (4.69%), lack of parental support (3.13%), and pressure from an adult to not participate (1.56%).

Table 10

Why students chose to participate in middle school music

Response Chosen by Student	Number	Percentage
Continued interest in music	211	75.63
Enjoyed previous experience	185	66.31
Friends were joining	156	55.91
Performance opportunities	147	52.69
Continued instrument skills	129	46.24
Continued singing skills	123	44.09
Social interests	115	41.22
Try something new	108	38.71
Received recognition from a director	67	24.01
Sibling influence	57	20.43
Parental pressure	50	17.92

Note: Overlap is reflected (n = 279)

Table 11

Why students chose not to participate in middle school music

Response Chosen by Student	Number	Percentage
Other interests	44	68.75
No interest in classes offered	35	54.69
Needed time for academics	16	25.00
Took too much time	14	21.88
No participation at the elementary level	9	14.06
Financial reasons	5	7.81
Unaware of the opportunity	4	6.25
Peer pressure	3	4.69
Received no recognition from a director	3	4.69
Lack of parental support	2	3.13
Pressure from an adult	1	1.56

Note: Overlap is reflected (n = 73)

Tables 12 and 13 show similar data to that of tables 10 and 11; however, tables 12 and 13 indicate students' decisions for or against participation at the high school level. Students chose *pressure from an adult* least frequently (1.56%) as a reason for non-participation. Again, *no interest in classes offered* (46.84%) and *other interests* (64.57%) ranked highest for students reasoning for non-participation. Like the middle school participation reason responses, the high school responses (Table 13) reflect *enjoyment of previous experience* (75.86%) and *continued interest in music* (82.76%) as the most popular reasons for participation. *Parental pressure* and *sibling influence* ranked lowest, both at 18.77%.

Table 12

Why students chose to participate in high school music

Response Chosen by Student	Number	Percentage
Continued interest in music	216	82.76
Enjoyed previous experience	198	75.86
Performance opportunities	152	58.24
Continued singing skills	129	49.43
Continued instrument skills	124	47.51
Friends were joining	123	47.13
Social interests	111	42.53
Try something new	80	30.65
Received recognition from a director	55	21.07
Parental pressure	49	18.77
Sibling influence	49	18.77

Note: Overlap is reflected (n = 261)

Table 13

Why students chose not to participate in high school music

Response Chosen by Student	Number	Percentage
Other interests	51	64.57
No interest in classes offered	37	46.84
Took too much time	32	40.51
Needed time for academics	30	37.97
Financial reasons	8	10.13
Lack of parental support	6	7.59
No participation at the elementary level	6	7.59
Received no recognition from a director	5	6.33
Unaware of the opportunity	4	5.07
Peer pressure	3	3.80
Pressure from an adult	2	2.53

Note: Overlap is reflected (n = 91)

In order to consider possible correlations between student participation and the importance of music in their lives, a Likert response question asked participants to rank the level of importance of music to their day-to-day lives. Table 14 reveals that almost half of the population (48.01%) stated that music was *extremely important* to their day-to-day lives and 32.39% claimed music as being *important* to their lives, combining for 80.40% of participant responses. Only 15.34% of the population said that they were indifferent to music being important or unimportant to their lives. Surprisingly, 2.56% of all participants claimed music as being *unimportant*, and 1.42% claimed music to be *extremely unimportant*. It should be noted that not all of the students who chose the answers *extremely important* and *important* on the question were involved in musicking of any kind.

The terminology used for the Likert scale question reflected within Table 14 reflects results of the pilot study. Unlike other Likert questions that contained a *neutral* response choice regarding feelings for past experiences, the choice of *neutral* was changed to *I'm Indifferent* on this particular question to reflect current, ongoing feelings. A choice of *neutral* may infer no feelings either positive or negative. The inclusion of *I'm Indifferent* may have allowed for students who feel they have both negative and positives which may vary depending on multiple factors, but do not identify definitively either way, to respond in a manner that best described their feelings at the time.

Table 14

Importance of Music

Importance of Music on Everyday Life	Number	Percentage
Extremely Unimportant	5	1.42
Unimportant	9	2.56
I'm Indifferent	54	15.34
Important	114	32.39
Extremely Important	169	48.01
No Response	1	0.28

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Table 15 shows the number of hours each participant claimed to listen to music each day. This data is based on self-report and may not reflect best accuracy since students were estimating. This data may indirectly reflect the importance of music in the participants' day-to-day lives, as shown in table 14. Within the participant population,

hours of listening did not seem to play a significant role in whether or not the participant was involved in musicking. Of all participants, 85.52% answered that they listened to music more than one hour per day, and 8.52% answered that they listened to less than 1 hour of music. It should be considered that listening might be defined differently by all students, where music listening may play a primary role in selected activities or as a secondary or even tertiary role.

Table 15

Hours of Listening

Hours Spent Listening to Music Daily	Number	Percentage
Less than One Hour Per Day	30	8.52
One to Three Hours Per Day	99	28.13
Three to Five Hours Per Day	119	33.61
Five to Seven Hours Per Day	47	13.32
Eight or More Hours Per Day	53	15.06
No Response	4	1.37

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Participants were asked to select their favorite genres of music. Their responses may be found in Tables 16 and 17. Table 16 specifically shows responses from a list of twenty provided genres. Participants ranked *pop* music as their preferred music genre at 65.63%. *Rock* music came in second at 61.36%, and Latin music ranked lowest at 4.38%. Some students (n = 59) also wrote multiple genres of music on the questionnaires that were not reflected in the initial question (Table 17). This resulted in the addition of 28

genres that were not part of the list provided by the researcher. As definitions of genres may not be universally understood, this list may not show absolute accuracy and may reflect the exclusion of some subgenres. Indie received the largest majority of responses at 37.29% of the students who provided “write in” responses. Most write-in responses received only one vote.

Table 16

Genre Preference

Genre Type	Number	Percentage
Pop	231	65.63
Rock	216	61.36
Hip Hop/Rap	174	49.43
Jazz	171	48.58
Christian/Gospel	165	46.88
Classic Rock	150	42.61
Alternative	137	38.92
Country	114	32.39
R&B/Soul	99	28.13
Classical	91	25.85
Blues	80	22.72
Dance	75	21.31
Electronic	69	19.60
Metal	63	17.90
World	62	17.61
Other	59	16.76
Folk	52	14.77
Latino	17	4.83
Reggae	52	14.77
Latino	17	4.83
Did not respond	2	0.57

Note: Uses choices from the questionnaire and reflects overlap (N = 352)

Table 17

Additional Genres Listed By Participants as Favorite Musical Genres

Genre Type	Number	Percentage
Indie	22	37.29
Dubstep	7	11.86
Punk	6	10.17
All Types	5	8.48
Broadway	5	8.48
Trap	3	5.08
My Music	2	3.39
New Age	2	3.39
Listed Specific Artists	2	3.39
A capella	1	1.69
Acoustic	1	1.69
Bluegrass	1	1.69
Celtic	1	1.69
Chillstep	1	1.69
Drum Corps	1	1.69
Foreign	1	1.69
Instrumental	1	1.69
Motown	1	1.69
Polka	1	1.69
Post Grunge	1	1.69
Post Hardcore	1	1.69
Psychedelic Rock	1	1.69
Rockabilly	1	1.69
50s	1	1.69
70s	1	1.69
80s	1	1.69
90s	1	1.69

Note: Reflects choices not given on the questionnaire (n = 59)

Table 18 depicts the number of family members whom have participated previously in music. The purpose of this question was to determine if previous family musicking participation had any possible impact on student decisions to participate in music. It should be noted that the participants were allowed to select more than one

option and therefore overlap is reflected within the table. Students’ mothers were given the highest percentage of past music participation at 40.63% and only 14.20% of participants claimed no family members having involvement in musicking. Although this question was included to better inform the research question, the impact of family participation on influencing student participation for musicking may only be speculated.

Table 18

Family History of Musicking

Family Member	Number	Percentage
Mother	143	40.63
Other Family Member	128	36.36
Sister	120	34.09
Father	103	29.26
Brother	89	25.28
No Family Members	50	14.20

Note: Reflects overlap between family members (N = 352)

Table 19 shows student preference for music classes that were not currently offered at the participant’s school. Based in part by previous research (Mantie, 2013), fifteen choices were provided on the questionnaire. Additionally, students were given opportunity to list course note provided. *Piano* (55.68%) and *guitar* (44.32%) classes were ranked highest among the sample population as most desirable classes, whereas *blues band* class (7.10%) received the fewest responses. Five students chose to “write in” types of classes they desired to be included in their school program. Two students listed

orchestra. Two, a violin class, and one student stated they were interested in taking a conducting class.

Table 19

Preference for “Other” Music Classes Not Offered at Participants’ School

Type of Music Class	Number	Percentage
Piano/Keyboard	196	55.68
Guitar	156	44.32
Songwriting	131	37.22
Percussion/Drums	75	21.31
Rock n Roll Band	63	17.90
Music Technology	47	13.35
Other Music Class (Not Listed)	45	12.78
Composition Class	44	12.50
Music Theory	42	11.93
Steel Pan/Steel Drums	42	11.93
No Response	41	11.65
Music History	38	10.80
World Music	34	9.66
Jazz Band	31	8.81
Blues Band	25	7.10

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352)

Likert-Scale Questions

Table 20 shows the mean and standard deviation for the Likert-scale question presented to participants for question 14. The only descriptors provided were those that indicated the extreme responses from least agree to most agree. Tables 21–32 show the mean and standard deviations between groups for all Likert-scale questions presented for question 14.

Table 20

Mean and Standard Deviation for Likert-Scale Question 14

Dependent Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
<i>I am satisfied with the music classes my school offers.</i>	4.00	1.06
<i>I would like to see more music classes offered at my school.</i>	3.55	1.11
<i>Our music classes are only designed for the musically talented/gifted.</i>	2.73	1.15
<i>Everyone should have the opportunity to make music in school.</i>	4.10	0.97
<i>Music classes are only designed for certain types of students.</i>	2.68	1.24
<i>Music should be offered in every school.</i>	4.45	0.90
<i>Music should be required for every student.</i>	2.37	1.19
<i>I enjoy the music performed by my school's music ensembles.</i>	3.85	1.09
<i>Students who participate in music classes at my school seem satisfied.</i>	3.78	1.00
<i>The music ensembles at my school perform a wide variety of music.</i>	3.63	1.13
<i>The music ensembles at my school hold many performances each year.</i>	3.90	0.98
<i>It is too expensive to participate in the music classes offered at my school.</i>	2.94	1.08

Note: Reflects all participants (N = 352). 1 = Least Agreeable, 5 = Most Agreeable.

Table 21

I am satisfied with the music classes my school offers.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	4.25	4.62	2.76	4.43	2.95
<i>SD</i>	0.86	0.54	0.97	0.78	0.95

Table 22

I would like to see more music classes offered at my school.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	3.53	3.88	3.65	3.92	2.91
<i>SD</i>	1.08	0.06	1.27	0.90	1.10

Table 23

Our music classes are only designed for the musically talented/gifted.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	2.65	2.41	2.82	2.59	3.19
<i>SD</i>	1.09	1.02	1.19	1.16	1.18

Table 24

Everyone should have the opportunity to make music in school.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	4.23	4.17	3.88	4.47	3.51
<i>SD</i>	0.83	0.99	1.11	0.79	1.00

Table 25

Music classes are only designed for certain types of students.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	2.60	2.52	3.41	2.45	3.07
<i>SD</i>	1.17	1.31	0.80	1.26	1.28

Table 26

Music should be offered in every school.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	4.53	4.79	4.12	4.67	3.96
<i>SD</i>	0.81	0.47	1.22	0.67	1.12

Table 27

Music should be required for every student.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	2.26	2.70	2.29	2.76	1.94
<i>SD</i>	1.11	1.26	1.10	1.26	1.04

Table 28

I enjoy the music performed by my school's music ensembles.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	4.01	4.41	3.12	4.25	2.94
<i>SD</i>	0.96	0.67	1.11	0.91	1.07

Table 29

Students who participate in music classes at my school seem satisfied.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	3.82	4.17	3.65	4.08	3.19
<i>SD</i>	0.94	0.96	0.70	0.89	1.00

Table 30

The music ensembles at my school perform a wide variety of music.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	3.89	3.81	2.71	4.05	2.79
<i>SD</i>	0.97	1.04	1.10	1.01	1.04

Table 31

The music ensembles at my school hold many performances each year.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	3.89	4.17	3.53	4.27	3.42
<i>SD</i>	0.94	0.99	1.07	0.80	0.99

Table 32

It is too expensive to participate in the music classes offered at my school.

Mean/SD	Primary	Specialty	Hybrid	Outside	Non-Musicking
<i>M</i>	2.82	2.67	3.77	2.90	3.13
<i>SD</i>	1.05	1.07	0.83	1.08	1.09

Open-Response Questions

Two open-response items were included at the end of the research questionnaire. These two questions were: *What types of things do you enjoy about the music programs at your school?* and *If you could change anything about the music programs at your school what would it be?* Responses ranged from extremely negative remarks regarding the state of the school's music programs to extremely positive remarks about the musicking environment and opportunities given to the participants. Tables 33 and 34 display the subject matter ranges that exist from the open-ended questions. Once responses were received, they were coded for analysis based on subject matter.

The highest ranked response for what students enjoyed most was spending time in ensembles with their friends (21.88%). *Ease of classwork* ranked lowest at 0.28% (Table 33). As seen in Table 34, students stated they wanted more class offerings (17.90% of participants), lower cost to participate in music programs (7.95%), and changes to time restraints such as rehearsal schedules (7.39%). Some disquieting responses including those in which participants stated a desire to get new teachers for the music programs (4.54%) or the desire to eliminate the music programs altogether (2.27%).

Table 33

What types of things do you enjoy about the music programs at your school?

Subject Students Discussed	Number	Percentage
Being and working with Friends	77	21.88
Enjoyment of Music/Learning Music	54	15.34
Did not Answer/Question did not apply	52	14.77
Performance/Performing	50	14.20
Cited Specific Classes	28	7.95
Competitions/Travel for Competition/Winning	24	6.81
Positive or Fun Environment	24	6.81
Teachers	23	6.53
Chose to speak negatively on subject/Liked Nothing	21	5.97
Listed Music Specific Skills	15	4.26
Everything	15	4.26
Acceptance from peers/teachers	13	3.69
Diversity of Music or Classes Offered	13	3.69
Watching Football Game Performances	8	2.27
Pride in School/Music Programs	7	1.99
Self-Expression	7	1.99
Stress Relief	4	1.14
Challenges	3	0.85
Creative Outlets	2	0.57
Costumes	1	0.28
Ease of Classwork	1	0.28

Note: Reflects overlap (N = 352)

Table 34

If you could change anything about the music programs at your school what would it be?

Subject Students Discussed as needing changes	Number	Percentage
No Changes/Keep Programs the Same	100	28.41
Wanted More Class Options	63	17.90
Did not answer/Question did not apply	56	15.91
Wanted Lower Cost/Fees to Participate	28	7.95
Rehearsal Times/Time Restraints	26	7.39
Desired New Teachers	16	4.54
Desired a wider variety of Music to perform	14	3.98
Attitudes of Peers	12	3.41
Desire to Eliminate the Programs Altogether	8	2.27
Enrollment Numbers	7	1.99
More Support from School	7	1.99
More Trips/Competitions/Chances to Win	6	1.70
Different Auditions/Audition Process	6	1.70
Wanted More Student Diversity	4	1.14
Different Costumes/Uniforms	3	0.85
Less Pressure to participate	3	0.85
Different Performance Opportunities	3	0.85
Change Everything	1	0.28
Focus on needs of students	1	0.28
Grading	1	0.28
Less Performance Opportunities	1	0.28

Note: Reflects overlap (N = 352)

Though data analysis of the responses to the open ended questions, presented for each of the five categories of musicking settings, may have provided some insight to the reasons why students choose or choose not to participate in musicking at the school level. The researcher elected to eliminate this possible data set from the study due to several reasons that include but are not limited to overlap, empathy toward other students, and degree of knowledge regarding the music programs present within the school. Although this information would be relevant to this body of research, it did not inform the research

questions that only addressed all participants. The intent of the analysis of the open-ended questions was to discover what factors persuaded or dissuaded musicking participation in schools, and therefore a decision was made to only include analysis of the participants as a whole and not within the five categories presented in this research.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

Students' choices to participate in high school music programs, whether they are competitive or not, are affected by multiple factors. The culture within high school music programs seems to be the largest influence on how students choose or choose not to participate in musicking within the school setting. Consistent with Snead (2010), this research shows that music is an important aspect of the day-to-day lives of most adolescents. However, not all students are interested in participating in making music. This could be due to student interests in other activities that occupy their time or that students are more interested in listening to music rather than making music.

Since its conception, the intent of this research has been to better understand ways of providing meaningful musical experiences for larger student populations through analyzing student perceptions and their musical needs in comparison to the musical environments currently made available by music directors. Researching a musically competitive high school allowed for insight to be gained into how such music programs influence student participation, or lack thereof. While some student participants seemed to thrive off of the competitive environment both in regards to the number of competitions attended each school year and with competitive results, others felt alienated by the environment. This alienation seemed to occur as a result of various factors surrounding the highly competitive atmosphere. Students who desired to be involved in musicking as strictly an artistic outlet may have felt less comfortable with participation in a competitive program, even though the music directors claimed competition to be

secondary to the artistic and student disposition development goals of the program. Some participants feared being judged/evaluated or seen as not “good enough”. Others simply saw the competitive environment as too niche or un-relatable compared to “normal” or “usual” everyday music listening or performing activities. Perceptions of those participating in the more competitive ensembles included that those students were of a unique and selective subculture of the entire school population, a subgroup into which non-participants may not “fit” or simply would not want to belong in the first place.

Gates (1991) discussed categorizing music participation into six categories: professionals, hobbyists, dabblers, amateurs, apprentices, and recreationalists. Tenets of this framework are certainly mirrored by the participants of this study. Some participants of the current study saw music participation as a means by which they could stay busy after school. Others saw music participation as a venue for artistic expression. Some claimed music to be the best part of their lives. Specific data from questionnaire responses allowed students to be placed into five categories/settings that represented their in- and out-of-school music participation choices. The collected data within these five categories provided a variety of information for analysis, and created interesting questions regarding participant responses: Did positive associations with their music programs influence student questionnaire responses? Could it be inferred that students’ perceived positive experiences, as shared with their peers, influenced the way they responded so favorably to the competitive culture present in their music program?

If students associated positive experiences gained on trips to competitions/contests, such could have influenced their decision to write about how they favor winning at competition or competition in general. The phenomenon of positive trip

experiences along with strong ratings at festivals and competitions, occurring over a period of many years, seems to have greatly influenced a school and community culture that desires and celebrates a highly competitive program.

Results Related to Likert-Scale Questions

Each questionnaire item was designed to inform the research questions. Each Likert-scale item was based on previous research (Waymire, 2009), and was further modified based on results of a pilot questionnaire. Though results of these items will be further discussed later in this chapter as part of specifically addressing each research question, points of interest of each Likert-scale question (questionnaire items 4, 6, 8, 12, and 14) warrant some attention here.

Items 4, 6, and 8 asked participants to rate their elementary, middle school, and high school music experiences from being extremely negative to being extremely positive. Students who did not have music any given level were directed to move on to the next question; responses to these questionnaire items came only from students that had taken music courses. Responses as seen in Table 9 show that as students progressed from one school level to the next, there were consistent changes that occurred regarding frequency of responses. Indications of extremely negative experiences increased from elementary to high school, as did negative responses, though these increases were relatively small, 7 versus 16 responses for extremely negative and 14 versus 17 for negative experiences. It is possible that the most recent experiences carried more emotional weight, or that as students matriculated through the music program, they were not rewarded as much as they felt they should have been in relation to the amount of time they had dedicated to the program. Responses of *neutral* decreased drastically over time,

from 97 for the elementary experiences, to only 8 at the high school level. These results suggest that students remain in music programs because they like them; they have *positive* and *extremely positive* experiences. As supported by results shown in Tables 10–13, as well as open ended questions, this data indicate participation motives similar to those found in previous research (Bushong, 2005; Moyer, 2010; Stewart 2005), these reasons can vary greatly and represent everything from economics or artistic pursuits, to needs for arts credits or social interactions.

Though the frequency of indicators of *positive* experiences from the elementary level to high school *decrease*, from 137 to 89, the number and percentage of participants indicating their experiences as *extremely positive* increase from 76 to 131 (21.59% to 37.21%). This shift can be described using ratio, with the *positive* to *extremely positive* indicators regarding the elementary experience at 1.8:1, and the high school ratio of *positive* to *extremely positive* as .68:1. This data point may be reflective of increasing positive experiences students have as they “stick with” the program. It should also be stated that additional students (accounting for higher percentages) who may have marked their experiences as *neutral* or less positive have by and large dropped from the program by the time they reach high school.

Questionnaire item 12 asked participants to use a five-point scale to rate how important music was to their lives, from *extremely unimportant* to *extremely important*. The large majority of students responded that music was *important* or *extremely important* to their lives, 80.40%. This data support findings in previous research that shows how important music is to adolescents (Campbell, 2007; Gembris, 2002; Hargreaves et al., 2003; Snead, 2010). With 19.60% reporting that they are *indifferent*, or

feel music to not be important, it is possible that these participants separate listening from doing. In other words, if listening most often requires no increased physical or mental engagement, perhaps it carries less importance than performing music. Additionally, if music is seen as simply “background” sounds, a perfunctory part of day to day goings-on, it may not be “important” to some in the way that other day to day happenings are important. Enculturation and exposure to music at early ages may also play a role in how one sees music’s importance to their everyday life as a teenager or even as an adult (Juslin & Laukka, 2004).

Questionnaire item 14 required participants to respond to a five-point Likert scale question regarding multiple items that represented students’ perceptions on specific areas of the music-learning culture within their school (Table 14). To gain further insight into student perceptions, the Likert responses were grouped by each participant’s respective musicking category to better understand the mean and standard deviation between group responses after the initial analysis of the sample population ($N = 352$) (Tables 21–32).

The results were as follows:

Likert Item A - *I am satisfied with the music classes my school offers:*

With a mean of 4.62 and a SD of only .54, the Specialty Musicking group ranked highest. This could be due to the fact that they were involved in the most auditioned groups within the music programs at their school. Interestingly enough, the Hybrid Musicking group had a mean of 2.76, which was lowest of all musicking categories. It could be speculated that these students were less satisfied with the programs and decided to seek other means by which to create music outside of the school setting. It could be

inferred that the time they spent in in-school musicking was not enough to meet their musicking needs and therefore other musicking outlets were discovered outside of school.

Likert Item B - *I would like to see more music classes offered at my school:*

Students in the Outside Musicking category represented the highest mean (3.92) of all categories of participation, though not markedly. It could be inferred that they were unsatisfied with the music classes offered within their school and therefore sought musicking experiences outside of the school environment.

Likert Item C - *Our music classes are only designed for the musically talented/gifted:*

Students in the Non-Musicking category had the highest mean at 3.19. This may suggest that these students were not involved in school musicking because they actually believed the music programs to be designed for the musically gifted or because the culture within the school promoted the idea that only musically gifted students were involved/allowed in the music programs. Furthermore, the Specialty Musicking category had the lowest mean of all of the groups at 2.41. One could speculate that these students felt that their diverse musical needs were being met due to the variety of ensembles in which they participated and therefore tended to “disagree” with the statement.

Likert Item D - *Everyone should have the opportunity to make music in school:*

It is interesting to note that the highest mean came from the Outside Musicking group (4.47). It seems that students who made up this category felt they did not have an opportunity to participate in the ensembles or classes offered at their school- that their particular interests and needs were not considered. With a SD of .79, opinions were quite similar between group members.

Likert Item E - *Music classes are only designed for certain types of students:*

The largest mean (3.41) came from the Hybrid Musicking group of participants. Experiences in both in-school and out-of-school musicking could have prompted these participants to rate this statement higher than others who only had experiences musicking with either in-school or out-of-school settings because they see themselves as having varied talents, some of which are not met in school. Students in the categories of Primary, Specialty, and Outside musicking all indicated responses that were fairly neutral, showing a combined group mean of 2.51, perhaps because their needs are currently being met.

Likert Item F - *Music should be offered in every school:*

Students who made up the Specialty Musicking population of participants had the highest mean of 4.79. Perhaps these students were the most satisfied with their musicking experiences in school and saw that if all schools were similar to their own, such would be a positive. The SD for this group of .47 indicates a strong consensus of opinion. This group was comprised of auditioned groups that may have received special attention from the music instructors, school, and community, prompting students to rank this item higher as they may have been more satisfied than others with their experiences. Non-Musicking participants showed a mean of 3.96, indicating that though they do not participate in musicking, they feel that in-school music instruction is more important than not and should be offered in school.

Likert Item G - *Music should be required for every student:*

The lowest mean (1.94) came from the Non-Musicking group of participants and the highest from the Outside group (2.76), perhaps indicating that students see music as

an elective and therefore an opportunity for students to explore their individual interests in a democratic way. Since the Non-Musicking students do not participate in any musicking, it could be inferred that they were less passionate about participation or they simply had interests other than music. It is interesting to note that although all students ranked this item rather low, the highest was Outside Musicking at a mean of 2.76 and SD of 1.26. These students were not involved in musicking within the school setting, yet a small majority still saw in-school music instruction more important than not.

Likert Item H - *I enjoy the music performed by my school's music ensembles:*

With a mean of 4.41, the Specialty Musicking group of participants ranked highest on this Likert response. This is unsurprising as it could be suggested that they were most passionate about the music they performed being that they were involved in ensembles that specialized in Jazz, Pop, or Rock styles of music. Additionally, as many of the students in this group also participate in Primary ensembles, they were experiencing the widest variety of music compared with all other students in the program. The lowest ranked mean (2.94) came from the Non-Musicking group of participants. It could be inferred that they did not participate in musicking for various reasons including a lack of interest in the music performed by school music ensembles. That stated, the mean and SD (1.07) suggest that the majority, though a small one, of participants in this group do enjoy the music performed by the school's ensembles to some degree.

Likert Item I - *Students who participate in music classes at my school seem satisfied:*

Although all responses were close regarding mean, the Specialty Musicking group ranked highest ($m = 4.17$). It could be speculated that these students were most satisfied

with their experiences in musicking because they chose to participate in multiple ensembles representing the most variety of experiences and the most time commitment to the program. Additionally, the overall school and community support for the competitive music programs could promote a general view that regardless of personal need, the competitive success caused most all aspects of the program to be seen as satisfactory.

Likert Item J - *The music ensembles at my school perform a wide variety of music:*

Surprisingly, the Outside Musicking group had the highest mean (4.05) of all categories of participation and the lowest mean came from the Hybrid Musicking group (3.53). It is difficult to speculate what may have caused this discrepancy since both groups were involved in out-of-school musicking. Perhaps, the Outside Musicking group of participants answered based on observations, informed and uninformed, and the students involved in school musicking desired a wider variety of music to be taught, but that such was not possible if competitive goals were to remain intact.

Likert Item K - *The music ensembles at my school hold many performances each year:*

At a mean of 4.27, the Outside Musicking group represented the highest ranked responses. Like Likert Item J, it could be speculated that these students' observations from outside of the programs prompted them to respond in a specific way. Again, students involved in school musicking may have been desensitized to judging if the number of performances given a year were too few or too many. If the music programs perform and compete with the same frequency year to year, there may be no bases for

comparison. Furthermore, the Non-Musicking group ranked lowest in responses ($m = 3.42$), which may be due to their non-interest in musical performances from year to year.

Likert Item L - *It is too expensive to participate in the music classes offered at my school:*

The Hybrid Musicking group of participants ranked this highest ($m = 3.77$). It should be considered that these students were involved in Primary Musicking and outside-of-school musicking because they could not afford the fees associated with the ensembles and chose to seek outside musicking outlets to make up for their missed opportunities in school. It is also interesting to note that the Non-Musicking category represented the second highest ranked group with a mean of 3.13. It would be logical to assume these students were not involved in school musicking partly due to the cost of the programs.

Results as Related to Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this research was to determine if any cultural, sociological, or personal preference factors existed that influenced music participation in a highly competitive music program. The results are unique to this research and may only reflect the school that was used in this research. Although this study does not claim to represent all competitive and highly competitive music programs in the United States, it does show results that may better inform the topic.

Research Questions

In the questionnaire, thirty questions in varying formats were used to answer seven research questions proposed by the researcher. The questions and results are as follows:

R₁ – What are some possible cultural/sociological aspects of the music classes in a suburban school in the Southern United States with a highly competitive music program that persuades or dissuades music participation?

While this study is limited to a single suburban high school in the Southern United States and the demographics that particular school holds, the collected data is valuable in the type of information and questions for future research it has produced. Understanding student perceptions of their music-learning culture may enhance ways in which music educators approach teaching. Consistent with Snead's (2010) research, this study found that music-learning culture may have an important impact on the way students perceive music and therefore may reflect many students' decisions to participate or exclude themselves in musicking in school. A majority of participants claimed music to be an extremely important aspect to their daily lives as can be seen in Table 14 of Chapter IV. This matches previous research that discusses adolescents increased interest in musical activities and listening (North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Roberts, Henriksen, & Foehr, 2004; Snead, 2010; Zillman & Gan, 1997). One hundred and sixty-nine of the participants stated music to be of an extreme importance to their personal lives. This is consistent with responses from other questionnaire items regarding student reasoning to continue participation in music once reaching the high school level. Students claimed their desires to continue participation in musicking from their elementary and middle school years were a result of their continued interest in music and enjoyment of previous musicking experiences (Tables 11 and 13 from Chapter IV).

To further answer research question 1 regarding reasons for participation and non-participation, two open-ended response questions were given at the end of the participant

questionnaires. These two questions were: *What types of things do you enjoy about the music programs at your school?* and *If you could change anything about the music programs at your school what would it be?* Responses ranged from extremely negative remarks to extremely positive remarks about the musicking environment and opportunities given to the participants. Students often referenced similar topics in their responses. These included: musical competition, popularity, performance, winning, and likes and dislikes for other students as well as their teachers. Some responses were negative and some remained positive in regard to what student participants most enjoyed about their school's music programs. An abbreviated but representative list regarding responses to the question, *what types of things do you enjoy about the music programs at your school?* is presented here (Note: there are some grammatical and spelling errors in the student responses. Some capitalization errors were corrected for ease of reading):

- The band does good during football season. They turn up in the stands and get the student section excited.
- Nothing. I hate the music programs.
- I enjoy the show choir at our school. They put in a lot of work to perform a show to us, and to compete to make our school name good.
- Trips, Concerts, Marching Season.
- Performances, Experiences, solos, trips.
- I enjoy the show choir at our school. They put in a lot of work to perform a show to us, and to compete to make our school name good.

- That you are able to be with friends, you are able to keep yourself busy not having to worry about being bored. I like to enjoy watching the band people having fun and their experiences.
- They all seem fun for other people who do them. I don't participate.
- I don't like the teachers. They don't focus on the kids who don't sing. They are awful.
- They win awards.
- I enjoyed the differences and talents that each student brings to the table. We all have one goal and that's to be the best known choir even if we're not in the higher choirs like show choirs.
- They are very good and our indoor percussion is a world class percussion line.
- Nothing. It's too narrowly focused. All we have is band and show choir. Need other types of offerings.
- They win a lot.
- I enjoy the opportunity to sing in a choir and perform on stage. I am thankful for the opportunity to hear beautiful music sung in several different singing parts.
- Music programs build friendships along with performance and communication skills in all who participate. At my school, those who have interest in the world of music, have the opportunity to fulfill that.
- Everything but the teachers.
- Trips!
- Not much. Mainly winning.
- The music we play, the competitions and games we go to.

- That there is no school in the state better than us. Also we have a wide variety of music offered for a wide variety of students.
- I enjoy the social aspect as well as the hard work that goes into it. It has taught me more than regular classes.
- I enjoy how free you could be in our choir class. Our two choir teachers preach about being yourself and it being alright to make a mistake. I enjoy the new things I learn in that class and enjoy the fact that I've grown on this choir.
- The people, like friends. Probably mostly the directors and experiences with friends. Practices are fun and I like that everyone, or most everyone, puts a lot of effort into something to work toward earning something important.
- We have such talented people and it's great doing it together. Competitions!!

Spending time with friends was revealed to be the most important theme as is shown in Table 33 of Chapter IV. This is consistent with the research of Adderly, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) and Siebenaler (2006) who stated factors that influenced music participation. Being with and working beside friends was mentioned in seventy-seven of the participant responses. This was followed by the enjoyment of music, which was mentioned fifty-four times. The theme of competition and winning at competition (whether positive or negative) seemed to be an important aspect to participant responses. The open-ended responses are visible in Chapter IV, where competition, winning, or trips were mentioned in twenty-four responses of the 352. It could be inferred that although the directors claimed that competition was secondary to the actual music-centric and character building goals of the music programs, the competitive culture was certainly present throughout the school and the students saw this culture as a primary influence on

the music programs. It should also be noted that some of the student responses from participants who excluded themselves from musicking stated negative responses regarding the music programs at their school. This could be due to a general dislike for the programs or it could be the result of students feeling alienated from the programs as a result of certain factors such as the competitive culture. The general consensus from the student population who participated in school musicking was that most students enjoyed their experiences. Their responses showed a correlation between their enjoyment and several themes associated with the music programs such as competitions, trips, being with friends, and performance opportunities (as seen in Tables 33 and 34).

Students who did not participate in musicking within the school setting may have had opinions influenced by the culture they witnessed occurring with their peers who were involved in school musicking. These students could have also developed their opinions based around observations of student attitudes, performances, and community responses to the music program.

The second open-ended question on the research tool asked, *if you could change anything about the music programs at your school what would it be?* Like the responses of the first open-ended question, there were several themes present. An abbreviated but representative list is presented here:

- Make it more accessible to more students. It's way too expensive! Especially show choir and indoor percussion ensemble. And the students in those programs can't ever participate in anything else because indoor and show choir take up so much time.
- Bring prices down for band instruments and kick out the lazy teachers.

- More classes offered. The Show Choir people seem to be treated better than other students.
- To lessen the amount of importance on every student participating and focus on each child's individual needs, preferences, and ability.
- Some people can't afford it and some people have negative attitudes about being in the group.
- Make it for all students, not just students with money. Not all students have the money to participate but would like to.
- The [show choir] at our school seems like it is based a lot on looks instead of voice. Also, the cost is very high to participate.
- For there to be more different classes, not being forced to take a music class, to treat everyone the same even if some are more musical than others.
- Band takes up too much time and doesn't allow students to participate in other school activities and outside of school.
- Not have them or get new teachers.
- The costs because they are WAY too expensive, and also widen the varieties of music the band plays because they can get extremely bland and played out.
- It would be the mirrors facing us. I hate looking at myself while I sing. Other than that. I wouldn't change a thing. Oh, I could ask for more trips for the concert choir, like competition wise.
- Not as much individual attention to favorites only.
- Get new directors for show choir.
- Be taught better and less pressure.

- Some girls are very talented and should have gotten into show choir. I believe only pretty, popular girls/guys get in.
- More competitions. Update stuff.
- More music that the students would enjoy more or letting the students choose which is their favorite. Also less religious music because it makes some students lose their opportunities to perform or go to competitions.
- I would change how they allow students into the choral program. Some students do not have enough respect for the choral program to be involved in it. We have higher expectations and standards than that.
- Marching band should only be for those that are competent in marching and are skilled in their musical abilities.
- I'd like to be more involved at school - to know what's going on more often.
There's a lack of communication between the music department, teachers and the head office, so our schedule changes often as a result of that lack of communication.
- We win next year.
- The group should encourage students to be open about what is being performed to hopefully spark interest in non-members to join.
- We should do like more recently added songs. We usually do ones that are older.
- More musical programs! We only have marching/concert band, jazz and show choir, we need more support as well from other departments.

As seen in Table 34 of Chapter IV, students mentioned the financial considerations of participating in their schools music programs twenty-eight times. Students were given opportunities throughout the school year to fundraise to pay for their membership fees, however with the cost of uniforms, instrument maintenance, choreographer fees, band and show choir camp, and the cost of competition trips, it would seem difficult, although possible, to only use fundraising as a means to pay for the entirety of one's membership. Additionally, most of the collected student fees paid for non-musical components of the program. It should be mentioned that there were no fees associated with the general music class offered by the school.

Some students mentioned that they would have enjoyed experiencing a larger variety of music to perform as well as more music class offerings at their school. Table 34 showed sixty-three responses mentioning the desire for a wider variety of classes. This response ranks second to the one hundred responses claiming no desire for change. This is consistent with the opinions regarding questionnaire item fifteen that asked students to list courses they would like to see offered (see Table 19 from Chapter IV). Student responses to item fifteen showed a significant interest in piano class (n = 196), guitar class (n = 156), and songwriting class (n = 131).

The responses from questionnaire item fifteen and the responses from open-ended question two suggest that it is possible, at least in this particular school, that student needs are not necessarily being met in regard to class offerings. Of course, various factors play a role in the types of class offerings that are provided from district to district. However, if one of the problems with music education is the size of the population of students who are involved in school musicking, it could prove beneficial to further

consider student perceptions into class offerings. Previous research has agreed that future studies should include student perceptions of class offerings, perhaps allowing music educators and administrators to better understand musical value as seen by their students (Abril, 2008; Austin, 1990; Elpus, 2014; Pitts, 2005; Snead, 2010).

Continued analyses into possible reasons for non-participation include teacher influences. Student responses to the second open-ended question revealed dissatisfaction with the music teachers and pressures they may have placed on students. Table 34 showed sixteen participant mentions of dissatisfaction with current music teachers/wanting new music teachers. If competition were a secondary aim of the programs as stated by the directors, why would some of the students feel pressured to do well in a musically competitive environment? These negative effects of musical competition are also present in previous research that showed competition to be detrimental to one's musical education (Opsal, 2013; Rohrer, 2002). Although students who were members of the music programs seemed largely satisfied with their music teachers, participants who were not involved responded most negatively about the music teachers. This may further suggest that the outsider perceptions of the music directors could have been a factor in student non-participation.

As with the first open-ended question, some students decided to mention competition when answering the second open-ended question. These participants stated if they could change anything it would be that they would want to *win next year*, have *less religious music because it makes some students lose their opportunities to perform or go to competitions*, have *more competitions*, and have *more trips/competitions for the concert choir*. In fact, only one student mentioned a desire for less

performance/competition opportunities (Table 34). These responses seem to be a product of the competition-culture that was cultivated within the school. Again, the directors stated that competition is secondary to the main goals of the music programs, but in multiple cases, student perceptions show otherwise.

When teacher and student perceptions and goals are similar, a positive synergy may result that allows for high levels of student achievement and satisfaction (Hargreaves, D. J., Marshall, N. A., & North, A. C., 2003, p.151.). As evidenced by the student open-ended responses and teacher questionnaire responses, it may be inferred that there is disconnect between teacher and student in regard to music program goals. Teacher Two stated that the program uses “competition to motivate the students, but it is not the focus of our program,” yet when asked what types of things students enjoy about the music program, some students were quoted as stating “They win awards”, “They win a lot”, and “Not much. Mainly winning.” It is possible that winning is or has become important to the lives of these student participants. Perhaps students enter the program for musical reasons but become attracted to the non-musical outcomes of competition, especially when placing well or winning is the norm and not the exception. Over time, competitive success could have created a music-learning environment that largely caters more to competitive outcomes of music rather than performance. Furthermore, it seems as though competition and travel are synonymous in the responses of many participants. If the students associated competition with the excitement of travel, and the school was well-known for winning many competitions each year, it may be possible that students viewed competition winning and travel excitement as a single entity.

Although only speculative, it could be possible that students, as well as their teachers, saw music festivals they attended outside of their competitions as competitive events. Festival ratings could be misinterpreted as rankings. Receiving festival ratings of 1-1-1 from judges could possibly be misconstrued as winning, especially when the ensemble that received the ratings compete regularly in music competitions throughout a school year. If another school, and specifically a rival school or music program earns ratings of 1-1-2, some could see this as a lesser score and therefore a lower rank.

One of the more interesting sets of responses on the questionnaire came from the question asking participants if they would like to see other music class offerings at their school. Unsurprisingly, most students claimed they would like to see more class offered. Piano class and guitar class were ranked as highest interest. This could be because these instruments are perceived as “cool” or because they are popular instruments in the types of music the participants claimed to have most enjoyed. Like previous research has shown (Boespflug, 2004; Campbell, 2007; Green, 2002; Green 2008), there is much interest in the inclusion of Specialty or non-traditional instruments and genres in the music classroom.

The research hypothesis that the competitive nature of the programs within the school may have been the largest reason for student decision for musicking participation was partially confirmed. Furthermore, the hypothesis that most participants would desire different music class offerings was confirmed.

R₂ – Of students who do not participate in in-school music classes or ensembles, how many participate in out of school musical activities and what are those activities?

Results of this case study indicated that a small percentage of students who were not involved in musicking in the school setting, did participate in musicking outside of the school setting ($n = 17$), representing 4.82% of all participants. If access had been given to distribute questionnaires to non-elective classes, the percentage of students involved in outside musicking may have been higher. The students involved in Outside Musicking indicated on their questionnaires varied types of out-of-school music participation such as church ensembles, family music ensembles, private lessons, and self-study or playing music for personal satisfaction.

The research hypothesis that a low percentage of students would be involved in musicking outside of the school setting was confirmed through this study.

R₃ – What percentage of students participating in in-school music programs practice or perform by themselves or with others on an instrument or in ensembles that differ from those in which they participate in school? How is this percentage represented within each of the five established musicking settings?

Results from this study indicated that students who were involved in musicking in the school setting often chose to participate in musicking outside of the school setting (25%) (Chapter 4, Tables 4 and 5). Students involved in the Hybrid category, which represented a population of students involved in musicking inside and outside of the school setting, made up the second largest group of participants ($n = 88$) at 25%. The Hybrid category was broken down into three groups (Chapter 4, Table 5) – Primary and Outside; Specialty and Outside; and Primary, Specialty, and Outside. Primary and Outside represented the largest of the groups ($n = 54$) at 49.09% of the Hybrid population. The Specialty and Outside group represented the second largest ($n = 26$) at

23.63% of the Hybrid population. And Primary, Specialty, and Outside represented the smallest group ($n = 8$) at 7.27% of the Hybrid population. Much like the results of research question two, students in the Hybrid Musicking category indicated multiple types of outside musicking involvement on the questionnaires such as church ensembles, community music programs, private lessons on their school instruments as well as on other instruments, garage bands, and family music ensembles.

The research hypothesis stating that students would be involved in outside musicking if they were involved in school musicking was confirmed with many of the students involved in school musicking expressed that they enjoyed participating in musicking outside of the school setting. Similar to Snead (2010), these students were involved in many types of outside musicking that often differed from the experiences they had in the school setting.

R₄– What are similarities or differences among student perception in regards to the overall school music-learning culture and how do these differ from the perceptions of the music directors at their school?

An important aspect of this case study showed a possible disconnect between teacher and pupil. The two teachers' responses mentioned that they were interested in teaching leadership, teamwork, and positive social interactions between students. However, many student responses indicated that the student population within the school viewed the music programs as a means to win competitions. Although not all students mentioned winning as the biggest motivator for their participation in school musicking, students did mention the competitive aspects of the music programs often, inferring that

the student population saw the music programs at their school more as competition based programs and less as musically based programs.

Discussion of Teacher Responses

Several themes are present in the teacher responses. Each teacher shared similarities, but their overall philosophies differed. When asked about their philosophy of education, Teacher One mentioned that “*maybe one day [their students] will be doing the same thing [teaching music],* whereas Teacher Two mentioned *most of [their] students will not be music majors or have careers in music, [they] try to give [their students] a foundation of steadfast work ethic and goal-oriented tasks that they will be able to apply to any endeavors they choose in life.*” Both teachers similarly offer that they desired for students to love and appreciate music. Each teacher stated in their responses to question 2 that they desired their students to feel confident in taking risks and trying new things. Teacher Two was the only one to mention something they would change about their music classroom by stating, “*the only thing [the director] would change about [the] environment [would be] to have more technology involved.*”

The third question in the teacher questionnaire produced interesting responses. Whereas Teacher One discussed a desire for students to have *basic musical understanding*: “*sight-reading skills, performance skills, etc.*” Teacher Two stated they “*do not turn ANY student away from our program unless they physically/mentally/medically are unable to participate. [And they] look at every incoming student as a “blank slate.” It is [the teacher’s] job to mold students to make them susceptible to learning.*” These responses could be related to different philosophies of teaching, or they could be a product of specific program goings-on at the time,

reflecting what each teacher had on their mind at the time when responding to the questions. The first teacher seemed to be thinking about an auditioned group whereas the second teacher seemed to be discussing both auditioned and non-auditioned groups. Only one of the teachers, Teacher Two, decided to speak further about their program. It was during this response that they mentioned that they “*use competition to motivate students, but it is not the focus of our program.*” Mentioning the use of competition as a motivator relates directly to some of the student responses received. Whereas the teacher response mentioned competition as a “motivator”, several student responses did not reflect teacher perceptions, but rather infer that competition was a larger part of the programs at the school. “Music instructors’ approaches to competition in music play a significant role in students’ attribution of value to music over other external factors” (Opsal, 2013, p. 32).

Although some teacher responses reflected student perceptions, some were opposite. While it could be argued that student and teacher perceptions in any area of study differ, the differences presented here largely reflect all-encompassing aspects of the program and not ordinary details that are expressed differently by students as compared with adults.

The research hypothesis that student and teacher perceptions of the music-learning culture would differ was confirmed. Whereas teachers claimed that competition was secondary to the programs and that they were mostly concerned with student musical achievement, some students claimed that their favorite parts of the music programs revolved around competing and winning.

R₅ – What percentage of students were involved in both Primary and Specialty musicking classes?

Students were gathered from different music, and other elective classes within the researched school. The largest number of participants was gathered from Primary Musicking courses (concert choir and concert band). These students made up 38.07% of the entire participant population. A large portion of the researched population was also involved in more than one music ensemble at their school. Statistical overlap between groups – Primary, Specialty, Hybrid, Outside, and Non-musicking – occurred with one hundred and ten of the three hundred and fifty-two participants (Chapter 4, Table 5). A total of 75% of the students were involved in some form of in-school musicking, whether it was Primary, Secondary, or a combination of the two. Students involved in a Specialty ensemble may have been required to participate in a non-auditioned group, or be required to participate in a Primary ensemble. Participation in multiple ensembles could be largely and in part motivated by participants’ passion for musicking, as and/or their need for the social environment these ensembles provide. Of the three hundred and fifty-two participants, only 20% were involved in both Specialty and Primary music classes ($n = 22$).

The research hypothesis that stated that a majority of students involved in the Specialty Musicking categories would be involved in Primary Musicking ensembles at some point in their high school careers was confirmed. Although not all students were involved in both, 20% were involved in both either simultaneously or at separate times during their high school experiences.

R₆ – What percentages of students are possibly influenced by family members to participate in musicking?

Although no question was provided for asking if participants had family members who *influenced* their decision to participate in musicking, students were asked if they had family members *involved* in music previously (Chapter 4, Table 18). The results showed that participants' mothers were the largest group ($n = 143$) to have previously been involved in musicking and their brothers ($n = 89$) were the smallest group to have previously been involved in musicking. Only fifty participants (14.20%) claimed to have not had a family member previously involved in musicking. Although this data does not show significance to the research, it is interesting to point out that as similar to findings of Austin (1990), more females were involved in musicking than males. The mention of mothers' potential influences could be related to the gender of the participants.

It is plausible that participants were influenced to be involved in musicking because they had family members who had previously been involved in either inside or outside of a school setting. Three hundred and two students (86%) claimed to have had a family member involved in musicking at some point in their lives (Chapter 4, Table 18). It may only be speculated that family played an influence on student decisions to participate in school musicking, as there were no questions on the questionnaire to indicate whether or not the participants felt influenced by family members.

The research hypothesis that family history of musicking played a role in influencing participant participation was not confirmed. Although many students claimed to have had family members who had previously participated in music, the question did not inform whether or not the family history influenced student participation. There were also no indications in open-ended responses regarding family influence.

R₇ – What are possible reasons students continue or discontinue participation in musicking in high school?

While research question 1 asked about reasons students chose to participate or not, question 7 was designed to inform the study as to why students stay in the program, or drop out. Participants were asked if they had previous experiences with music at either the elementary or middle school levels (Chapter 4, Table 6). Most stated that they had (eleven stated they had not, and one did not respond to the question). As students aged, the percentage of participants decreased. Whereas 94.81% of participants claimed they had an elementary music experience, only 81.53% stated they participated in music classes in middle school. It is probable that this is due to students losing interest during middle school and when given an option to participate in music classes or in other electives, the other choices piqued the students' interests more than music offerings. However, a decrease in participation could be the result of other factors such as cost of participation or a non-favorable elementary school musicking experience. In fact, when asked to rate elementary music experiences, only 60.51% rated their experience as *positive* or *extremely positive* and 33.53% rated theirs as *neutral*, *negative*, or *extremely negative* (5.97% did not respond to the question).

The reason given most for continued participation in musicking at the middle school level was “continued interest in music” and the reason given most for non-participation at the middle school level was “other interests” (Chapter 4, Tables 10, 11, 12, and 13). In regards to the high school setting, participants ($n = 261$) similarly indicated the biggest reason for continued participation in musicking to be “continued interest in music” ($n = 216$). Enjoyment of previous musicking experiences was the

second largest reason given by participants ($n = 198$). The least ranked reasons for continued participation in the high school setting by participants were “sibling influence” ($n = 49$) and “parental pressure” ($n = 49$). It should be noted that these responses reflected overlap in that participants were able to select multiple responses on the questionnaire. This was done to account for students who chose to participate for multiple reasons.

The largest dissuasion for continued participation in musicking with ($n = 79$) included “other interests” (64.57% of responses) and “no interest in classes offered” (46.84% of responses). The least given reasons for non-participation in school musicking at the high school level by participants were “peer pressure” (3.80%) and “pressure from an adult” (2.53%). Like some of the other items on the questionnaire, the results here may have been more impactful had the researcher been given access to classes outside of the elective classes offered at the researched school.

It is interesting to note that at both the middle school and high school level, “*continued interest in music*” was the most frequently chosen reason for continuation and “other interests” was the most common reason for discontinuation.

The research hypothesis that multiple factors would influence decisions for or against music participation in the school environment was confirmed. This research found that students continued participation for multiple reasons including the enjoyment of music and further interest in acquiring musical skillsets, while reasons for discontinuing participation included students finding other interests or they were dissatisfied with the music class choices offered at their school.

Recommendations for Future Research

This case study was designed to better understand how the music-learning culture in a high school in the United States might impact student perceptions on the music programs, and how these perceptions affect course offerings now and in the future. The findings represent only the themes that emerged in the particular environment where this research took place, representing one suburban high school, thus results may not represent all high schools in the US.

The number of student questionnaires received, the location, and demographics of the school in which this study took place limited this study. With a school population of 1,123, the returned questionnaires may not have represented the entire population. As a result, future research should include more questionnaires distributed and returned.

Concurrent with Snead's 2010 study, this research showed that various factors impact students' decisions to participate or not participate in in-school musicking. To better understand cultural aspects to musicking persuasion, further research should be conducted in schools that display varying demographics from that of this study. Furthermore, a cross examination of different school demographics may prove useful in better understanding social and music culture differences. Research that compares rural, urban, and suburban school settings using methods similar to this study may prove beneficial. Future research should also include schools that are not perceived as highly competitive. A comparison of musically competitive and non-competitive schools could show evidence of a possible need to change recruitment strategies for high school music directors and how positive student achievement outcomes may be gained through non-

competitive motivations. Finally, a study of community and family impact on high school music participation could also yield interesting and beneficial data.

Because the teacher responses were gathered using a brief and open-ended format, it was difficult to do a fully informed comparison of student and teacher perspectives. A new research tool created to include questions both students and teachers could answer would be beneficial. Further research should look into using quantitative methods to gather information from music teachers on the subject of student participation to better match quantitative responses from students, with more detailed analyses of correlations between various influences and outcomes within and outside of the music-learning environment. Furthermore, a comparison of teacher and student responses from musically competitive and non-competitive schools from different parts of the United States could provide insight on how regionally-based cultures may impact student desires or lack of desires for various musicking experiences.

Further research should also include analysis of possible correlates between categories of musicking participation, as well as descriptors representative of participants in each category including sex, race, previous experiences, financial support, academic skills, etc. If future research utilizes the open-ended questions or similar questions to the ones presented in this research, careful consideration should be made to include a separation of musicking types while coding responses to better understand how students in different musicking environments react to the open-ended responses. Results of distinguishing responses between specific groups may allow future researchers to better understand the reasons students choose specific musicking outlets over others and may

yield interesting results in terms of further understanding group perceptions within schools.

Research Summary

Research in the field of music education has focused primarily on classroom practices and procedures, teacher and student behaviors, and how each influences student achievement (Snead, 2010). “Rarely do researchers consider the adolescent perspective on music participation and learning, and rarely do researchers consider how music teaching and learning are perceived and experienced outside the classroom (p. 237).” Despite the reality of what each individual educator promotes in their programs, whether it be competition, music performance, highest artistry, or simplistic musical “fun”, many music educators may see that the most important goal of music education is to reveal, inspire, and grow students’ own musical endeavors. While teaching students about or how to perform *art music* may be an additional or ultimate goal, starting there seems counter-intuitive and risky. With rare exception, art music is not “in their ear”, not in their world, and not what makes them musically excited now. Without student perceptions on the music-learning culture with which they emerge themselves, and those they have access to but do not enter, we may never accurately understand the musical needs of adolescents. Although these will change on an individual basis, over time, educators must find a way to ensure the needs of all students are examined and met through an understanding of student perception.

It was not an intention of this research to advocate or condemn the competitive aspects of music programs in high schools. The original intent of this research was to determine factors that promote or deter students from participating in musically

competitive high school programs. The research results showed that there existed a great interest in the competitive aspects of the music curricula even though both directors claimed competition to only be a “motivator” and not the original intention of the programs. The original intent of the music programs within the school may not have been focused primarily on winning competitions or receiving high ratings at festivals, but the hard work and dedication from both faculty and students along with the support of the school and community certainly has influenced the music programs to sustain a high level of competitive success for decades.

Results of this research are consistent with previous studies in the area of student perception, suggesting that students may provide a better understanding to the types of learning that may best occur within the classroom environment (Duke, 1987, Henniger, 2002, Morrison, 2003). Students participate in music for a variety of reasons ranging from emotional outlets, to psychological benefits, to the sheer enjoyment of music (Adderly, Kennedy, and Berz, 2003; Davis 2009).

The music-learning culture at the researched school was complex in that it seemed to inspire a population of students while ostracizing others. Because the school was musically competitive, many students felt pushed away from the music ensembles. Based on their responses to the questionnaire, some participants involved within the music program also expressed feelings of alienation. These students stated they felt inferior to the auditioned ensembles or they felt that some ensembles received more attention from their teachers and community than the ensembles with which they were involved.

From an analysis of the interviews conducted with two music directors, it may be inferred that music-learning culture is created almost exclusively by music educators and

can produce both positive and/or negative outcomes for the music programs within schools and with the musicians they produce.

The school chosen for this research was additionally unique in that it provides many opportunities for students to be involved in music classes. Many of the students' open-ended responses display a strong desire to compete and to win. Yet, some participants stated that the competitive natures of the music programs are deterrents to their decisions to participate in school musicking.

This research does not imply that competitiveness is harmful to a student's music education, but proposes that music instructors should carefully analyze the competitive nature and school wide interest of their programs and the impact competition may have on their students. Music competition could be positive to a student's musical education if the music-learning culture reflects "good sportsmanship" and appropriate musical growth, however, if the program only promotes winning, the competitive nature of the program may hold negative deterrents to students' musical growth. Previous studies have shown that students will experience increased motivation in the weeks that lead to a competition or festival, however long term effects of competition on student achievement in music has not been thoroughly researched (Opsal, 2013).

Although many students seem to be completely satisfied with the current state of their music education or the music programs represented within their school, there are some aspects of the culture created within the music programs that may prove to be counterintuitive to the actual goals of the music educators present within the school. Numerous research participants claimed to be satisfied with their involvement in the school's music programs, however some students stated they desired for a better, more

diverse learning environment. Furthermore, the student participants in this study may have misinterpreted the yearly program goals and philosophies of the teacher participants represented in this research.

Conclusion

Research has shown that music is an important part of the development of adolescents, providing a means of expression and an avenue to connect on important social levels with their peers (Arnett, 1995; Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007; Larson, 1995; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2002). Studies have offered that students were well-aware that their musical accomplishments might have been directly attributed to the music education they received in school (Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007). Music is capable of allowing students to express themselves in a manner that may not be achieved by any other means.

One of the problems music educators face is a limitation on the ways in which they can open up doors of musical exploration and expression to *all* students. Unfortunately, not all students will have access to a quality music education because not every student's needs could be met if there are limited school and community resources or an overall lack of understanding of the value of music in the schools. Some students will inevitably be alienated by the courses and culture of the music programs with which they have access. If a quality music education is seen as beneficial to the development of adolescents, should all music educators look toward providing better opportunities by which more students can be involved in musicking? Through a better understanding of student perceptions of the music-learning culture in which they exist, music educators may better prepare ways by which to cater to the individual musical needs of *all* students.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

118 College Drive #5147 | Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001

Phone: 601.266.5997 | Fax: 601.266.4377 | www.usm.edu/research/institutional.review.board

NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: CH14072108

PROJECT TITLE: Meeting the Musical Needs of Adolescents: Working Toward an Understanding of Student Perspectives of the Music Learning Culture Among Five Categories of Music Participation

PROJECT TYPE: Change to a Previously Approved Project

RESEARCHER(S): Jeremy Kellett

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Arts and Letters

DEPARTMENT: Music/Music Education

FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: N/A

IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Exempt Review Approval

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 01/30/2015 to 01/29/2016

Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

LETTER OF RESEARCH REQUEST - PRINCIPAL

Good afternoon,

My name is Jeremy Kellett and I am a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi. I am currently working on my dissertation, which involves the perceptions of music making among groups of high school students. I would like your permission to distribute surveys regarding the subject at your school. As part of seeking IRB approval for this research I must have written consent from the principal of all schools involved.

Attached is a letter briefly explaining my research and intent. Please read it and sign the bottom if you are willing to allow me to use your school as a survey sight.

I can arrange to pick up the letter from you this week.

Please respond to this email to let me know if you are or are not willing to allow me to collect data at your school.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Jeremy S. Kellett
Ph.D. Candidate
The University of Southern Mississippi

APPENDIX C

LETTER OF RESEARCH INTENT - PRINCIPAL

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Jeremy Kellett and I am a Ph.D. student in music education at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting research on the perceptions of students regarding music making and music learning. I believe your school would be an excellent site for my research because of its location, demographic diversity, and music programs. I am contacting you to see whether you would be willing to cooperate with my study during the 2014-2015 school year.

My research will include:

- One anonymous survey to be completed by music and non music students

The survey I wish to provide your school with will take no longer than 10-20 minutes for each student to complete. As the researcher, I will not be passing out the surveys as a means of anonymity. Rather, I will allow educators to pass out the surveys to their students and I will arrange to pick them up at a pre-determined date.

All surveys (with students) will be arranged to be completed for times and places that are most convenient for participants and will not interfere with students' class time or teachers' responsibilities.

I am in the process of seeking approval for this research through the proper channels at the district office and The University of Southern Mississippi and would not begin my study until I have received that approval.

Please sign the bottom portion of this letter if you are willing to allow me to conduct this survey at your school. Please contact me if further information is required. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Jeremy S. Kellett
Doctoral Candidate, Ph.D. in Music Education
The University of Southern Mississippi

I, _____, will allow Mr. Kellett to conduct survey research within my school.

Signed _____ Date _____

APPENDIX D

PARTICIPATION RECRUITMENT LETTER TO MUSIC TEACHERS

My name is Jeremy Kellett and I am a Ph.D. student in music education at The University of Southern Mississippi. I am conducting research on the perceptions of students regarding music making and music learning. I believe your school would be an excellent site for my research because of its location, demographic diversity, and music programs. I am contacting you to see whether you would be willing to cooperate with my study during the remainder of the 2013-2014 school year.

My research will include:

- An anonymous survey to be completed by music and non music students
- Review of district and school music program documents (e.g. curricula, handbooks, class syllabi, etc.)

All surveys (with students) will be arranged to be completed for times and places that are most convenient for participants and will not interfere with students' class time or teachers' responsibilities. Likewise, my observations of music classes will be minimally invasive, as I do not wish to disturb the classroom environment. Most of the data collection for this study would take place between April 2014 and May 2014.

I am in the process of seeking approval for this research through the proper channels at the district office and The University of Southern Mississippi and would not begin my study until I have received that approval. Further information and details about the study will follow if you are willing to participate in this study. Please reply if you are interested in participating in this study.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email and for considering this research opportunity. Please feel free to call or write me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely, Jeremy S. Kellett
Doctoral Candidate, Ph.D. in Music Education
The University of Southern Mississippi

APPENDIX E

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

DO NOT PROVIDE A NAME OR IDENTIFICATION OF ANY KIND ON THIS DOCUMENT, PLEASE!

This is an anonymous survey. No one will contact you, know any personal or confidential information about you, nor link your answers to you in any way. So please be as open and honest as possible. By completing this questionnaire, you are giving permission to the researcher to use this data.

Circle All That Apply:

I have participated in music classes at a previous school

I participate in music classes at my current school

I currently do not participate in music making or learning

I participate in music making or learning outside of the school setting. Please Specify (example: I play in a band/garage band, family music group, church music ensemble, etc.):

_____.

I am currently enrolled in (Circle all that apply):

Band Orchestra Choir Jazz Band Private Lessons Other

1. How do you identify your gender?

Male Female

2. How do you identify your personal race/ethnicity? Circle One:

African American Caucasian Asian Latin Native American

Other _____

3. Did you have music class as part of your elementary school experience? Circle One:

Yes No

4. If “Yes”, circle the indication that best describes your music experience at the elementary level. If “No”, skip this question and proceed to the next question.

Extremely Negative Negative Neutral Positive Extremely Positive

5. Did you participate in music classes at the middle school level?

Circle One:

Yes No

6. If “Yes”, Rate your overall middle school experience.

If “No”, proceed to the next question and skip this one.

Extremely Negative Negative Neutral Positive Extremely Positive

7. In the appropriate column, please indicate the reasons for your decision to participate or not participate in music classes in middle school:

Circle All That Apply:

Those who **DID NOT** Participate:

No participation on elementary level
Other interests
Lack of parental support
Peer Pressure
Pressure from an adult
No interest in classes offered
Financial Reasons
Took too much time
Unaware of the opportunity
Needed time for academics
Didn’t receive recognition from teacher
from teacher

Those Who **DID** Participate:

Enjoyed previous experience
Continued interest in music
Continued instrument skills
Continued singing skills
Performance opportunities
Friends were joining
Parental pressure
Sibling influence
Try something new
Social interests
Received individual recognition

8. If you have taken/are taking music classes at the high school level, rate your overall high school experience:

If you do not participate in music classes proceed to the next question and skip this one.

Extremely Negative Negative Neutral Positive Extremely Positive

**9. In the appropriate column, please indicate the reasons for your participating or not participating in music at your school:
Circle All That Apply:**

Those who **DID NOT/DO NOT** Participate:

Those Who **DID/DO** Participate:

No participation on elementary level
Other interests
Lack of parental support
Peer Pressure
Pressure from an adult
No interest in classes offered
Financial reasons
Took too much time
Unaware of the opportunity
Needed time for academics
Didn't receive praise from teacher
teacher

Enjoyed previous experience
Continued interest in music
Continued instrument skills
Continued singing skills
Performance opportunities
Friends were joining
Parental pressure
Sibling influence
Try something new
Social interests
Received individual praise from
teacher

10. How often do you listen to music, on average, each day? Circle One:

Less than 1 hour 1 to 3 hours 3 to 5 hours 5 to 7 hours 8 or more hours

11. What is your preferred/favorite genre(s) of music? Circle all that apply:

Alternative	Blues	Christian/Gospel	Classical	Classic Rock
Country	Dance	Electronic	Folk	Hip Hop/Rap
Jazz	Latino	Metal	Pop	R&B/Soul
Reggae	Rock	World		

Other _____

12. How would you rate the importance of music to your personal life?

Circle One:

Extremely Unimportant	Unimportant	I'm Indifferent	Important	Extremely Important
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13. Do you have family members who participate or used to participate in music making or learning inside or outside of the school setting? If so, circle all that apply.

Brother Sister Mother Father Other Family Member

14. RATE THE FOLLOWING: 1 = Least Agreeable, 5 = Most Agreeable

I am satisfied with the music classes my school offers.	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to see more music classes offered at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
Our music classes are only designed for the musically talented/gifted.	1	2	3	4	5
Everyone should have the opportunity to make music in school.	1	2	3	4	5
Music classes are designed for only certain types of students.	1	2	3	4	5
Music should be offered in every school.	1	2	3	4	5
Music should be <u>required</u> for every student.	1	2	3	4	5
I enjoy the music performed by my school's music ensembles.	1	2	3	4	5
Students who participate in music classes at my school seem satisfied.	1	2	3	4	5
The music ensembles at my school perform a wide variety of music.	1	2	3	4	5
The music ensembles at my school hold many performances each year.	1	2	3	4	5
It is too expensive to participate in the music classes offered at my school.	1	2	3	4	5

15. If not currently offered, would you be interested in taking any of the following classes at your school?

Circle All That Apply:

Guitar	Piano/Keyboard	Percussion/Drums	Steel Pan/Steel Drums
Music Technology	Music History	Music Theory	World Music
Composition Class	Rock n Roll Band	Jazz Band	Blues Band
Songwriting	Other		

16. Answer the following to the best of your ability. Please be as open and honest as possible.

What types of things do you enjoy about the music programs at your school?

If you could change anything about the music programs at your school what would it be?

APPENDIX F

TEACHER QUESTIONNAIRE

This interview is part of a dissertation project to be completed by a graduate student at the University of Southern Mississippi. Your name and school will remain completely anonymous throughout the process and completed project.

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. You do not have to answer any questions with which you feel uncomfortable.

Questions:

1. Would you briefly describe your philosophy of music education?
2. How would you describe the learning environment you have tried to create within your music classroom? Would you change anything about the environment you have created?
3. What qualities (musical and otherwise) do you look for when attracting students to your program?
4. Is there anything you would like to add or to let me to know about your music program?

APPENDIX G

RESPONSES FROM TEACHER ONE

Responses From Teacher One

This interview is part of a dissertation project to be completed by a graduate student at the University of Southern Mississippi. Your name and school will remain completely anonymous throughout the process and completed project.

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. You do not have to answer any questions with which you feel uncomfortable.

Questions:

Ha ha these are questions I haven't thought about in years. Please correct my grammar and reword it to where it sounds better.

1. Would you briefly describe your philosophy of music education?

I want my students to appreciate music for it's worth. I have a deep understanding and appreciating for music and want my students to at least learn to appreciate music and maybe one day they will be doing the same thing.

2. How would you describe the learning environment you have tried to create within your music classroom? Would you change anything about the environment you have created?

I have hopefully have created a free learning environment where students are not afraid to try new things. They need to feel comfortable in the choir room to try new things.

3. What qualities (musical and otherwise) do you look for when attracting students to your program?

I wish all students had the basic musical understanding: sight-reading skills, performance skills, etc. I also want students that are well behaved. I teach them about class, dignity, and professionalism. If students cannot conduct themselves accordingly (in my class and in other classes) they do not need to be involved in this program.

4. Is there anything you would like to add or to let me to know about your music program?

*No I think you know me pretty well and what I stand for.**

* It should be noted that the researcher had a prior working relationship with this director. All biases were considered during, and after data collection.

APPENDIX H

RESPONSES FROM TEACHER TWO

This interview is part of a dissertation project to be completed by a graduate student at the University of Southern Mississippi. Your name and school will remain completely anonymous throughout the process and completed project.

Answer the following questions to the best of your ability. You do not have to answer any questions with which you feel uncomfortable.

Questions:

1. Would you briefly describe your philosophy of music education?

My philosophy of music is student growth centered. My goal is for each student to have an enriched life through music. My first goal is to earn the student's trust and for them to understand that their well-being is my primary concern. Secondly, I create an environment that is conducive to learning through classroom management and controlling the discourse among students to encourage them to take risks. Understanding that most of my students will not be music majors or have careers in music, I try to give them a foundation of steadfast work ethic and goal-oriented tasks that they will be able to apply to any endeavors they choose in life. Most of all, I want them to have a love and appreciation of music that will last them a lifetime.

2. How would you describe the learning environment you have tried to create within your music classroom? Would you change anything about the environment you have created?

I have created an environment where the students are willing to take risks and that they understand that taking risks is a part of a successful life. I call it a "Failure Lab." Once the students are comfortable with this environment, exponential growth happens. The only thing I would change about this environment is to have more technology involved.

3. What qualities (musical and otherwise) do you look for when attracting students to your program?

We do not turn ANY student away from our program unless they physically/mentally/medically are unable to participate. We do not "kick" students out of band unless they have egregious violations of school policies. We look at every incoming student as a "blank slate." It is our job to mold those students to make them susceptible to learning.

4. Is there anything you would like to add or to let me to know about your music program?

We focus on long-term success both for the student and the program. We do not skip steps in the learning process; we merely accelerate the advancement through them. We use competition to motivate students, but it is not the focus of our program. We try to be on the cutting edge of the products we produce for our students and the musical paradigms we set for our concert programs. Our goal is exponential growth.

APPENDIX I

STUDENT RESPONSES FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #1

Open Ended Question #1
It's good experience and great teachers
I love the music program. It's changed my life.
Allows me to express myself and strengthen my talents
I like music
Hanging with my friends, meeting new people, just the experience
We make friends in the program and in other programs
I get to learn different skills, interact with my peers as a team, and appreciate music and performance more
The participation and comedy
The passion and dedication the directors' demand. And the many opportunities they have opened up in my life
The people, like friends. Probably mostly the directors and experiences with friends. Practices are fun and I like that everyone, or most everyone, puts a lot of effort into something to work toward earning something important.
They keep me busy. I like music so it's enjoyable
The music
I like music so I do everything music related
The challenges
Performances, Experiences, solos, trips
That all students who play instruments or sing can participate
Performing
Nothing
N/A
It teaches you how to be social and meet other people and how you can have fun in school
Friends join, Play fun music
It's a creative outlet for students who might not fit in. I enjoy being with my friends.
They open up many opportunities and provide a getaway for many students
I enjoy the togetherness and how everyone plays a part.
I enjoy the social aspect as well as the hard work that goes into it. It has taught me more than regular classes.
This one time at band camp
Friend, Music
Drum line
Everything
They way the music sounds and how you play them
The variety of different programs offered (show choirs, chorus, band, intro to music, general music, etc.) I like listening to bands and show choir (I'm in both)
I enjoy the network of people I meet through doing band. The leadership experiences I've achieved, and the chance to mentally challenge myself

I can't say because I don't take a music class in high school, but from others they seem not happy with how the class is. But I do work with the band, and love it
I don't have an interest
I do not know, I do not take a musical program
I enjoy the show choir at our school. They put in a lot of work to perform a show to us, and to compete to make our school name good
Nothing
Their performances are really good
I love playing with the guitar at a more academic level
There are a lot of performance opportunities available
They are not mandatory
That they offer the class to everyone.
N/A
It gives the students a chance to express themselves in a way they might not otherwise have
The variety of options
Nothing
Personally I don't really care that much, but I do enjoy seeing some of the show choir performances and when the band pumps us up during a football game or pep rally
I don't have an interest
Nothing
I really don't see any music programs at all because I don't know about them.
They are good at playing music, and they have good performances
I don't really care
I don't
I like the type of music that the music programs at my school
I don't know
I'm not in it and don't know anything about it
I enjoy singing and learning different things
N/A
These music classes often show students their unknown talent and hopefully they use it to their advantage.
N/A
Marching Band because it's fun to do and allows me to meet new people
It's enjoyable to watch
I haven't taken a music course at PHS
They are fun for the people who take them
Not much work
Diversity unprejudiced
I don't enjoy the music programs at my school
It is an easy class that still offers interesting information (in regard to general music)
I don't go to them a lot, sounds like they work at least a week (They sound like they work really hard)
We make music
The people and the music we play

Playing Music
Everyone has a chance to do something
The experience
I don't know
Indoor Percussion Marching Band
Indoor
Marching Band
The music
I take general music and I enjoy learning about the history of different types of music
The teachers are very fun and encouraging towards the students. I think that they understand that music can be frustrating to learn ad they bypass this setback by fun learning activities.
N/A
N/A
That I already know everything
The type of music they choose and the dances
N/A
Indoor
Performance
Everything
Show Choir
Band is the only thing I really enjoy. Everyone has something in common and wanted to be in there, unlike chorus.
The way everyone treats each other like family and how we are helped with singing varieties of music
N/A
N/A
The performance opportunities
The friendships built
Everything But the teachers
Opportunities to perform
The directors are nice and supportive
Teachers are serious
I enjoy performing as well as learning how to read music
The friendships made and the directors who impact our lives greatly
I enjoy the people and the directors make it fun for us
I really enjoy the big family that you make with all the people in the program
Experiences
N/A
Performing. We go places
Creating Friendships, Learning about musical things
That there is no school in the state better than us. Also we have a wide variety of music offered for a wide variety of students.
I like to be around the people/social activities the programs offer
I love how our band knows when it's time to play and when to be professional

I like the band directors and learning new music
The Places we go, the people we meet, and the music we play
Yes
Friends are in band, Good and productive activity, Relatively low stress
It's fun and I enjoy playing the music and our director is pretty awesome
The people and support of directors
I enjoy the fact that many of the students in these programs seem to enjoy it
Performances are fun. The social life increased
It is fun. A way to talking to people
Marching Band
The Alphabet
Show Choir Performances, Band Competitions, Band trips, Section teachers that teach a section during marching band
I enjoy the opportunity to be in a group of hardworking musicians
I enjoy the directors and the challenges they give to us
I like the music they give us
The People
The people and the experience
N/A
It is a place in the school to belong to. Everyone in the program shares the same interests in music, so it's a fun experience
My Favorite part about musical education programs is the marching band
Not much. Mainly winning
I see wonderful friends and teachers, Play great music, challenging myself
I like the competitions we have during marching seasons and the football games we perform at.
Stuff
They are fun
It is quite neutral
The People
Marching Band
N/A
I enjoy the music and certain people
They're cool
Playing music with my friends is the best part of any day.
Trips, Concerts, Marching Season
Music shows and trips
Everything but the teachers
The activities that the students do
Being with like-minded people and performing and learning musical shows
Participating in Band, Playing music sheets, marching
I enjoy all the opportunities
Marching Band
Social aspects, the people you meet, experiences

We Travel and playing at concerts
Bonds it forms between students
Trips
Time with friends and playing music
Learning
My friends are in band, music
It gives me an experience and let me make new friends
Marching band and of course band trips
The social opportunities
All of the band directors are great and great music
The people, music, marching and friends
I enjoy the creativity of music. I enjoy making it. I like being with my friends
Friends in it. Stress-free extracurricular
Performances, marching band/the show, show choir performances, songs jazz band plays
Color guard and band performances
I enjoy that my band director does not give up on someone and even if they aren't the best in their section, they are still included
Band
N/A
Everything
A great experience to enjoy music with others who also enjoy music
New friends, fun experience
I enjoy actually working together with other people to create music and performing it
Learning different music
We all get to know each other very well
I like how we have the opportunity to meet people like me
The people in it. Practices, Performances. Everything
The band directors, the strictness of the program, the great amount of learn, the great amount of playing opportunities
Playing awesome songs
The music we play, the competitions and games we go to
Marching Band
The Sound
Everything
Support, friends, creativity, challenging
Support, friends, creativity, challenging
Everything, especially being able to put on that uniform
I made some good friends
N/A
Nothing. It's too narrowly focused. All we have is band and show choir. Need other types of offerings
N/A
I don't Know
I like the performances that the marching band does during halftime at football games

I just like the songs they sing. That's it
N/A
Everything
Entertaining
The music is nice and the people are cool. The shows are cool
N/A
Everything
I don't Know
I'm not included in the music program so I don't know anything about it
Nothing. They are too limited.
They are nice
Watching the performances
Watching the show choir perform
I like listening to the band at football games and watching the show choir perform the shows because the show choirs are amazing and I love them
That you are able to be with friends, you are able to keep yourself busy not having to worry about being bored. I like to enjoy watching the band people having fun and their experiences
I enjoy hearing the band play at football games
I enjoy the fact that it gives people an opportunity for extra curricular activities
Nothing
Everyone can participate, they perform well
I only enjoy debate
N/A
The people that are in the programs really seem to enjoy themselves
Singing, food, people, places
None
I don't take anything
N/A
N/A
I enjoy the music making
The band does good during football season. They turn up in the stands and get the student section excited.
?
N/A
Some of my friends are in band
I am not a part of a music program
I'm not in one so I can't really answer, but my friends say they are ok.
Nothing, I hate music programs
I don't
They are very good and our indoor percussion is a world class percussion line
They're very dedicated and entertaining
They win a lot
I don't like the teachers. They don't focus on the kids who don't sing. They are awful

The marching band always has a great half time show. I also enjoy it when they play in the stands
They offer different music programs at my school but I'm not that interested taking any music classes at this semester because I have all core classes and I don't have time to take any music programs at my school
I enjoyed the differences and talents that each student brings to the table. We all have one goal and that's to be the best known choir even if we're not in the higher choirs like show choirs
Listen to music
Our band is awesome. Friday night at our football games
Nothing. Don't take any
They all seem fun for other people who do them. I don't participate
N/A
I enjoy watching the music programs perform
They win awards
When they perform at football games
I'm not in music programs, so IDK
N/A
It has very entertaining performances and the music teachers are good at what they do.
I enjoy performing and practicing for our performances
Learning and improving my skills
Fun to have a family of musically talented people
I enjoy how free you could be in our choir class. Our two choir teachers preach about being yourself and it being alright to make a mistake. I enjoy the new things I learn in that class and enjoy the fact that I've grown on this choir
In my school's music program I enjoy how they accept everyone whether or whether not they can sing or not
They all have different kinds of songs and you get to see different people sing
Being able to enjoy singing. Getting to perform with your friends
I enjoy the music and having the class with my friends. And improving my talents
I enjoy the environment in general. I enjoy the songs we perform and attending the performances. I love the satisfaction of doing good at a performance
N/A
People
The variety of music offered. The teachers are nice. It's a great way to meet people
I just really enjoy learning about music and singing
It Helps us teenagers get involved in things that are positive and it lets us meet new people
I really like the performances we have here and the competitions we have once in a while
I enjoy that there is a variety of things taught (ex: culture related music, singing songs in different languages.) I also enjoy the amount of performances we have
Performing, Experience, Dance and Sing
It's open for everyone. It's a family
Free to every one
Friendships, performance ability, improves confidence

Friends. Second family
Traveling. The different types of music they offer for us to sing as well
I enjoy the opportunity to sing in a choir and perform on stage. I am thankful for the opportunity to hear beautiful music sung in several different singing parts
The faculty and the support of the community
It lets you express yourself
The singing and learning new things about music
Singing, Being with friends, having fun while working
The ability to have a group of people together that like similar things
The Songs we Sing and the type of dancing we do
N/A
Lots of people
Show choir is fun and I love performing
I enjoy performing and being on stage and better training my voice
I enjoy the chance of being able to participate in a class that allows you to experience what you want to do for a living.
Literally Everything
I enjoy how much time and effort is put into the program
I love how opening and accepting they are
Being able to let go and do what I love
Performing, Singing, Dancing, and friends. Trips
It's fun and I enjoy doing it
I love SHOWCHOIR!
Meeting new people, and being able to express myself through music
I enjoy the people I'm able to meet. I enjoy furthering my performance ability
We get cute dresses and make new friends
There is different music programs like if you can't dance or don't wanna dance
I get to meet other show choir people
It's great for friends and new skills
Friends, music, choir, competition, other
Friends, singing, dancing, traveling
Being with friends, performing, getting my mind off other things
Get to meet new people and getting to do what I love the most which is singing and dancing
I enjoy learning different types of music and dances that help me be more passionate about music
I enjoy being able to come in and put everything else up
We get out and perform
Meeting new people, performing
N/A
People
We are a team and if one of us fall then we all fall
You become a family and grow on each other and you have more friends. Your abilities and skills become stronger as the year goes on.
I enjoy the wide variety of music. I also enjoy learning the history of music.

Song choices and music education. Also enjoy performance and learning
Anyone can be in them
I like trying out for solos (even though I never get one) I like singing and helping people with singing
The teachers and how they teach. Most of the music we do
It is one way to show your personality. It's one thing that you can do strongly. One place you can open up
It's different kinds of music so you get introduced to different cultures and their music. I like putting our own little twist and make it their own thing
I'm allowed to be myself and I don't have to worry about having to live up to the standards of anyone else
A great choir teacher
Most of the time, the positive environment
Music, sight-reading
I enjoy all the close friends it has allowed me to make, all I enjoy being able to express myself through my performances
I'm not currently in show choir because I had no interest at beginning of year but God changed my plans. I love the program. It has been so good, I'll be trying out next year
Meeting new people having good experiences. Learning about music and different ways it could be made
Trips, Teamwork, Positive Environment
The opportunity to perform for a wide range of audiences
I enjoy that almost everyone is accepted. I just really like music. LOL
N/A
Everything
That everyone gets along and it makes you feel special and different
Show choir
The music we dance to and the environment
I enjoy learning different singing techniques
I enjoy the "family" it opens up to me and feelings it allows me to express. I enjoy being able to be myself
Meeting new people
Singing and Dancing
Friends, Glory from stage, experiences
Dancing
Being able to participate in music in a setting with friends
Social benefits, helps me learn music better
We have such talented people and it's great doing it together. Competitions!!
Performing! As well as being able to learn about something that I love
Friends and performing
The music itself; I enjoyed concert choir because of the wide variety of music the group and I were exposed to
All
N/A
Performances, Singing, Dancing

The friendships that are made. The opportunities to perform and the doors that are opened through it.
The people and the ability to attend trips and perform with friends
I enjoy performing
Our music programs offer opportunity for any student who wishes to be involved
Our director wants us to be the best we can and provides life lessons as well as music lessons. We are taught integrity
I love to sing and play instruments
I get to be myself and do my favorite thing
Opportunities to be with friends. Performing
Music programs build friendships along with performance and communication skills in all who participate. At my school, Those who have interest in the world of music, have the opportunity to fulfill that.

APPENDIX J

STUDENT RESPONSES FROM OPEN-ENDED QUESTION #2

Open Ended Question #2
Haircuts
To have more money for it.
More classes offered
Nothing
Nothing
I like it the way it is
Expense and atmosphere (seldom but occurring)
A try out to get into marching band
That we had an orchestra and a more extensive music program (theory, composition)
Nothing
More affordable
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing, it's all about the music
More classes
Less expensive
I wouldn't change anything
Everything
N/A
Time Limit
More Concerts and variety of music
We should have a longer class period for music
I would want them to take more field trips
I would not change a thing
Nothing. I love it
A wider range of instruments
Nothing
Drama
Attitudes, though you can't change them
Nothing
I'd change that not many people know about them
I'd like to be more involved at school - to know what's going on more often. There's a lack of communication between the music department, teachers and the head office, so our schedule changes often as a result of that lack of communication
For it to be something that people will enjoy to do not something they are forced to do. Marching season all year
Nothing
I don't take a musical program
The [show choir] at our school seems like it is based a lot on looks instead of voice. Also, the cost is very high to participate

Make it for all students, not just students with money. Not all students have the money to participate but would like to
More performances during school hours
Add a rock n roll band
More diversity in music picks
More classes offered. (The Show Choir people seem to be treated better than other students)
The choice in music that is taught
N/A
I wouldn't know, I don't take them
I would add more options
More Singing
The costs because they are WAY too expensive, and also widen the varieties of music the band plays because they can get extremely bland and played out
Nothing
Not have them
Nothing
Nothing, because I am not a part of any of them so know nothing about what goes on in that class
Really nothing
Get rid of it
There are mostly preps and it needs to be a wide variety of people
For them to not feel forced on us
I would not change anything
The music teachers
I would add more activities
Bring prices down for band instruments and kick out the lazy teachers
N/A
Concert band, because it sometimes gets boring
Nothing
More variety, less demanding of time slots on school schedules
Make them more open for skill ranges
Play instruments when trying to learn how to play them
Practice times
Wider diversity, in-depth, good teachers
N/A
I have no idea
We win next year. Lol
I would not change anything
Play more music
Have more practices
Require tryouts for marching band
Nothing [our] Band #1
Nothing, [our] Band, All day every day

Nothing. I love this
Nothing
More Death metal
I think the music program is great! I wouldn't change a thing
I would add guitar classes and reduce costs
N/A
N/A
More exclusive. More about music people actually listen to
I don't go to them much so I don't know
N/A
N/A
Nothing
Nothing
More learning class (intro into) such as piano, strings, voice lessons
Some girls are very talented and should have gotten into show choir. I believe only pretty, popular girls/guys get in.
Nothing
N/A
N/A
A vote on songs we play
Marching season all year
The teachers
None
Nothing
Show choir and Band are all year...need a break sometimes
Nothing
None
Nothing really
I wouldn't change anything
The attitude of the people and also directors
N/A
Prices
Not so many practice hours
Nothing. [Our] Band all day every day. But it would be nice to have a theater department.
A wider variety of classes/music performed
Nothing
I don't think anything needs changed
N/A
No
N/A
Nothing
Nothing
Really can't complain
Nothing

Nothing
Marching Band all year long
The people I sit by
Nothing
I would implement more music related classes
Offer more classes
Harder Music
I wouldn't change anything
I wouldn't change anything
Blaze it
I would make it more difficult to get into
Marching band should only be for those that are competent in marching and are skilled in their musical abilities
Less Practice
Nothing
The concert season
Other Stuff
No Motard
Nothing except the students
The tubas are too heavy
The stress from auditions
I know a lot of people who want to play guitar so maybe guitar lessons and also during football season we could have practice for the last period instead of first
I would put in more music the most people do not listen to
I honestly do not know
More influence from video games
Marching season all year
Marching season all year
Management
Making the programs more affordable
The cost and adding more variety to the music
Playing together as a whole band, practicing all scales, major and minors
Honestly, nothing
Nothing
Only put people who want to do it in the class/classes
Nothing
N/A
The variety of music classes
N/A
Isn't anything, So many Practices
More concerts and more variety of music
Music class will be at the end of the day
More concerts, more variety of music
IDK, nothing

None
Play more music
More classes involving music. Longer class periods for music
N/A
More musical programs! We only have marching/concert band, jazz and show choir, we need more support as well from other departments
Cost less
I would not change anything. I love it the way it is
More Freedom
N/A
Nothing except a few annoying people
Everything is satisfactory
Prices
I would give us all more time during class
The pricing
Nothing
I wouldn't change anything
Shouldn't be graded on how well you play, but the fact that you play. Like a participation grade
None
Make classes longer
We should have sectionals during concert season
N/A
The kind of music we play
Nothing
Nothing
Nothing
The fees of the big trips
I'm not sure
N/A
More class offerings
I would love to have a class for people who just want to learn to play instruments. (Guitar or something)
Less Expensive, more types
I would like more funding so students could have more freedom to explore music
Don't really care what they do, that's why I'm not in it
More mentor-student relationships in sections rather than grouped and divided by ability
Nothing
Cheaper
Nothing
N/A
IDK
I don't know
Nothing, because I know nothing about it

Offer more types of classes. Not everyone who studies music wants to participate in groups like the marching band or show choir
More options and flexible times
Nothing
Nothing
Offer more classes
For there to be more different classes, not being forced to take a music class, to treat everyone the same even if some are more musical than others
I would offer orchestra
I don't think that it should be required to graduate
Nothing
Make more variety
To lessen the amount of importance on every student participating and focus on each child's individual needs, preferences, and ability
N/A
N/A
Nothing
I wouldn't change it
I don't think you should have to take a music class
N/A
N/A
The Cost
Offer some private lessons or small classes to learn guitar and drums and such. I want to play an instrument but don't want to be in band.
Band takes up too much time and doesn't allow students to participate in other school activities and outside of school
N/A
IDK dude
N/A
I don't know
To not have them
To disappear
More people would join
The strictness
Not have them or get new teachers
Make it more accessible to more students. It's way too expensive! Especially Show choir and Indoor percussion Ensemble. And the students in those programs can't ever participate in anything else because indoor and show choir take up so much time.
I don't think so that want to make any changes about the music programs at my school
It would be the mirrors facing us. I hate looking at myself while I sing. Other than that. I wouldn't change a thing. Oh, I could ask for more trips for the [concert choir], like competition wise
Not be mandatory. Freedom of Choice. Stop practice in the mornings when I sleep!
STOP practicing on Saturday mornings. I can hear it at my house

IDK
In middle school pushing the recorder was pretty awful. I'd change having that and having to perform
To support the choir a little more
I wish we had more music programs
What type of music and how long they practice daily
Variety of Programs
Cut down on how many we have
N/A
I might would change how they don't do any performances during school
I wouldn't change anything
Have a bigger variety of music other than classical and teach how to play music instruments to students who are interested. Example: piano, guitar, violin
N/A
I would probably change nothing. Whether we're there for a credit or for personal interest, we still have a goal and that's to progress in our singing
I would change that there is no piano class at my school instead of having to go to a performing arts school to get the class
To have some be cheaper than what they are
Nothing. I think it's great
If I could change something, I would want another director added so each part could have a teacher helping them
I would change how they allow students into the choral program. Some students do not have enough respect for the choral program to be involved in it. We have higher expectations and standards than that
The People
Judgment
The small amount of student in the class
Not sure
Allow us to perform a more wide variety of music
More music that the students would enjoy more or letting the students choose which is their favorite. Also less religious music because it makes some students lose their opportunities to perform or go to competitions
Less religion involved in the songs sung. Children who misbehave or show repeated lack of effort should be kicked out. Children should have to audition for normal choir as well as show choir and normal band.
Nothing
Upgraded/Updated tools
More competitions. Update stuff
More affordable for all students
The amount of money it takes
Spread it around the school more and get more outsiders involved
Not as much individual attention to favorites only
Get new directors for show choir
I would change the cost and the peer pressure/bullying. If you sing better than someone

or etc., they're more than likely to pick on you.
I wouldn't change a thing
Nothing
To have more opportunities and more funding
Not have favorites and having a better opportunity to be in the mixed group
N/A
Nothing
Nothing
More people!!! And more Equal.
Wouldn't Change a thing.
More support from school
I would make it cheaper
Longer class period
That people were less scary
Nothing really
Nothing! Love it the way it is!
I don't want to change anything except for choice of clothes (AKA: Costume)
Add a songwriting class
The type of music performed. The level it is performed on
Some people can't afford it and some people have negative attitudes about being in the group
I wouldn't change anything
To be less expensive
More rehearsal time
It's all wonderful
Nothing
Nothing
To hold surprise events
I wouldn't change a thing
The time we are in here I would make it longer
Nothing
N/A
N/A
I don't know
A lot of kids have attitudes and it makes all of us suffer because we are a team
I would like to have more of today's songs
I would change the mind frame people have for music.
People who aren't here for benefit of the group should not be here to pull us down
That there are more programs
That we all get a chance, good or bad, to have a solo
Pick more today songs
Nothing. The people who don't care can get out.
We should do like more recently added songs. We usually do ones that are older
I would like to see more people involved

Price of Show Choir. Musical expertise required for admittance into choir
Be taught better and less pressure
Nothing
I would make it to where the whole school was more active and accepting to the performing acts
N/A
Play more music, do more hands on things, teach about notes and how to song write. How to make music out of ordinary things
None
To increase Diversity
More appreciation
N/A
Nothing
No
N/A
More recent music rather than older music
There isn't anything I would change about our music program
I would make it to where everyone in the music programs got together and put on at least one show all together
N/A
Nothing. It's Great
N/A
Nothing
More availability
Put more available
Nothing
We need more different types of music courses
Nothing
The group should encourage students to be open about what is being performed to hopefully spark interest in non-members to join
Nothing
N/A
N/A
That people who aren't interested in it couldn't be involved
More time during school hours
Politics
Offer more specialized technique classes
I would love a musical theater program at my school. Many talented people would be interested in it
Nothing
Nothing
Takes time from academics
More instrumental opportunities

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