

**A STUDY OF AMERICAN RURAL MUSIC EDUCATORS:  
THE IMPACT ON COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN MUSIC**

By

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as submitted on April 22, 2021:

- a. \_\_\_\_\_ Full approval to proceed with no revisions. The document should be prepared for submission to the Jerry Falwell Library.
  
- b. \_\_\_\_\_ Provisional approval pending cited revisions. The student must resubmit the project with cited revisions according to the established timeline.
  
- c. \_\_\_\_\_ Redirection of project. The student is being redirected to take MUSC 889 again, as minor revisions will not meet the expectations for the research project.

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## ABSTRACT

This study intends to discover and evaluate positive and negative relationships that music educators experience while teaching in rural educational settings and to discover if broader community involvement can help mitigate resource reductions. Influences such as the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) have accelerated reductions in music programs. The purpose of the investigation is to recognize the feasibility of rural music educators leveraging increased support through community involvement to benefit their local music programs and students. The study's focus is twofold: first, to discover and examine what causes rural music educators to not participate in building community musical opportunities; and second, to uncover whether music education parental support and student interest can be bolstered through community participation. The methodology utilized for the study was the phenomenological qualitative approach to collect data relevant for this study to test the research questions from a convenience sampling (N=11) of music educators. Results show that there were several negative influences that contributed to music teachers not engaging or leading community music opportunities.

Keywords: Community music opportunities, music-making, advocacy, awareness, connectedness, participation

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## **List of Abbreviations**

Community Music Therapy - CoMT

Elementary and Secondary Education Act – ESEA

Every Student Succeeds Act – ESSA

Institutional Review Board – IRB

Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics – JDE

Music Education National Conference – MENC

National Association for Music Education – NAfME

No Child Left Behind Act – NCLB

Parent/Teacher Association – PTA

Parent/Teacher Committee – PTC

Parent/Teacher Organization – PTO

Personal Income Per Person – PIPP

Sensory Friendly Concerts – SFC

Socioeconomic Status – SES

United States Department of Agriculture – USDA

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

If I were not a physicist, I would probably be a musician. I often think in music. I live my daydreams in music. I see my life in terms of music ... I cannot tell if I would have done any creative work of importance in music, but I do know that I get most joy in life out of my violin.<sup>1</sup>

- Albert Einstein, 1929

### Background

Hundreds of communities across the United States offer public band, orchestra, or chorus opportunities.<sup>2</sup> Community groups like this may take more participants to fill the required instrument parts or achieve a particular sound. Prominent urban or suburban music groups have a greater pool of participants to recruit. However, rural areas are less likely to have music ensemble opportunities because of significantly lower population density.

Rural schools usually provide basic music education for their students. In some cases, music educators teach at more than one school. While some rural schools may not facilitate a music classroom for the music educator due to possible building issues that may arise, using a utility cart is a common solution.<sup>3</sup> Rural music educator, Joelle Barrett, states that “Teaching from a cart is not an acceptable method of teaching, but it’s better than the alternative of having the music program cut when a building becomes overcrowded.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Haym Benaroya, Mark Nagurka, Seon Han, *Mechanical Vibration: Analysis, Uncertainties, and Control* (Boca Raton: CRC Press, 2017), 26, <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315118369>.

<sup>2</sup> K. K. Velben, “The Many Ways of Community Music.” *International Journal of Community Music* 1, no. 1 (August 2007): 10.

<sup>3</sup> Meghan A. Benson, “Effective Mentoring for New Music Teachers: An Analysis of the Mentoring Programs for New Music Teachers as Described in the Literature.” *Applications of Research in Music Education* 26, no. 2 (Spring, 2008): 44.

<sup>4</sup> Joelle Barrett, “Teaching a la Cart: Music on Wheels,” *Teaching Music* 12, No. 5 (April 2005): 28.

Community music programs offer a wide variety of opportunities, enabling people in rural locales to participate, be involved, and socialize with other participants in a way that they may never have experienced before. The benefits of these programs can range anywhere within financial, social, physical, and socioeconomic advantages. It is often challenging for citizens of rural areas to be involved in community music opportunities, which tend to be more suburban or urban due to distance and various socioeconomic hardships. Nevertheless, community music opportunities provide an enrichment for the participants and the community itself. Most rural communities have access to an educational institution such as an elementary or a secondary school for their children within their community. Often, such educational facilities have a music educator assigned to that district.

Community music programs not only benefit the general public, but they also can benefit the school music programs within their district. The local music educator within the rural communities can offer his knowledge, expertise, input, wisdom, talent, and other resources to facilitate more community involvement in music. Each member of the society is vital in creating an engaging musical community. Then, the community participants become stakeholders because they invest their time and efforts within the community music opportunity. The music educator also becomes a stakeholder because he offers his time, talents, and knowledge to facilitate, conduct, and direct the overall program. The music educator's reputation can be directly affected by participation and performance outcomes. The beneficiaries are the music program, music students, and the school district. The music program can benefit from community music opportunities by allowing students within the school district who are enrolled in music to be able to have social interaction with other people in the community who are involved in music. Through the cross-collaboration of community members and students, more

learning can take place. The music program benefits because community music opportunities and programs led by the community music teacher will create a personal connection, collaborate with other members in the community, and influence the support of its community education program in music. The school benefits because there is a connection between its staff and the community and direct involvement with community budgets and community learning. To comprehend the impacts of these connections better, it is necessary to understand a historical overview of these impacts upon rural music education.

### Rurality and Education Legislation

There exists no explicit definition of the term “rural.” The United States Census Bureau defines “rural” as an area with a population between 2,500 and 50,000 people, also known as an urban cluster.<sup>5</sup> However, it is still considered rural for communities with less than 2,500 residents due to common factors such as farming communities, mining towns, and geographical restrictions. Thus, rurality can be determined by social and economic conditions within the United States.<sup>6</sup> The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports that urban and suburban area populations and counties have increased since 2009, while rural non-metro area populations have decreased.<sup>7</sup> This report also reveals a decline in real personal income per person (PIPP) for rural and remote non-metro areas. This translates to hardships for rural schools

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<sup>5</sup> “How Does the Census Bureau Define Rural?” Rural America: United States Census Bureau, accessed July 1, 2020, <https://gisportal.data.census.gov/arcgis/apps/MapSeries/index.html?appid=7a41374f6b03456e9d138cb014711e01>.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> United States Department of Agriculture: Economic Research Service, *Rural America At A Glance*, (Washington DC, November 2019). <https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/95341/eib-212.pdf?v=9782.9>.

to protect existing Music Education programs in schools. Coupled with declining personal income, government legislation presents a new set of concerns for rural music education.

### NCLB and Music Education

The policies presented in the NCLB<sup>8</sup> Act signed into law in January 2002 created much uncertainty for music education's survival as a core element of learning in the United States. Although school administrators, board members, and teachers recognize the invaluable contributions of music education in public schools, they also have stated that music education is “nice, but not necessary.”<sup>9</sup> Music advocacy groups and publication companies like MENC or the *Journal of Music Education* have documented studies of NCLB’s effect on music education. Simply stated, the legislation was created to help level the playing field for all students regardless of learning ability, demographic association, or socioeconomic status. Even though it recognized music as a “core subject,” states were not required to test their students in music content. Instead, the U.S. government tested students in reading, mathematics, and science as a requirement. Any additional subject testing was at the discretion of the states. Most states recognized the value of music education; but, due to the level of importance that the U.S. government levied on the three test subjects, school administrators and teachers were forced to allocate most of their daily school schedule to preparing students in these subjects for testing. This translated to taking class time away from other curricular classes like that of music

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<sup>8</sup> “Introduction: No Child Left Behind,” U.S. Department of Education, Last modified January 19, 2005. <https://www2.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> David McKinley Hedgecoth and Marci Major, "Revisioning and Reinstating: Music Education After the Great Recession," *Arts Education Policy Review* 120, no. 4 (2018): 198.

education.<sup>10</sup> As a direct result, instructional time for music education was reduced by twenty-two percent.

Trinity University Music Education Professor and former editor of *General Music Today*, Diane Persellin, offered her thoughts about the effects that the NCLB Act has on early childhood music education, positing that the NCLB Act presented “more challenges than opportunities to early childhood music education.”<sup>11</sup> As a former commissioner on the International Society for Music Education Early Childhood Commission, her research showed that many schools feel the insurmountable hardship to expedite learning in the classroom to achieve passing scores on state and federally mandated achievement tests.<sup>12</sup> Music educator and researcher, Tina Beveridge, adds that NCLB has forced administrators and teachers to consider the financial support, professional development, and scheduling required when addressing music education.<sup>13</sup> These are the most significant factors that have affected music education. Towards the end of the NCLB tenure, Thomas Dee and Brian Jacob examined the past decade of education in America. They discovered that all general education resources were pulled from specials and extracurricular classes to fund core subjects, and to realign their focus on reading and mathematics that were predominately addressed on the high-stakes testing of NCLB.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> David McKinley Hedgecoth and Marci Major, "Revisioning and Reinstating: Music Education After the Great Recession," *Arts Education Policy Review* 120, no. 4 (2018): 198-199.

<sup>11</sup> Diane Cummings Persellin, "Policies, Practices, and Promises: Challenges to Early Childhood Music Education in the United States," *Arts Education Policy Review* 109, no. 2 (2007): 57.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>13</sup> Tina Beveridge, "No Child Left Behind and Fine Arts Classes," *Arts Education Policy Review* 111, no. 1 (2010): 4.

<sup>14</sup> Thomas S. Dee and Brian Jacob, "The Impact of no Child Left Behind on Student Achievement," *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 30, no. 3 (2011): 418.

Therefore, the meaning of NCLB is based on two theories: (a) that schools be held accountable for student achievement based on the risk of consequential sanctions which are incented to raise student achievement; and (b) that the disaggregation of student achievement data by subgroup would ameliorate long-standing achievement gaps between students of varying race and socioeconomic status (SES) by incenting schools to raise achievement for all students rather than just by raising average achievement.<sup>15</sup>

Throughout the infusion of the NCLB in education, there have been numerous research and studies that have exposed the negative impact this legislation on music education. Even though many of them show an overwhelming accolade of support for music education from parents and community members, there continues to be a decline in instructional time for music education, student involvement in music, and a shallowing pool of music educators to teach music subjects.<sup>16</sup>

In summary, Professor of Music Education at the Granada University in Spain, José Aróstegui, suggests that there are four primary reasons found for the decline in music education: (1) the model of curriculum supported in educational reforms; (2) an emphasis on standardized evaluation; (3) fewer resources available; and (4) a wrong approach on music advocacy.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Kenneth Elpus, "Evaluating the Effect of No Child Left Behind on U.S. Music Course Enrollments," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, No. 3 (October 2014): 216.

<sup>16</sup> Carlos R. Abril and Brent M. Gault, "The State of Music in Secondary Schools: The Principal's Perspective," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 56, no. 1 (April 2008): 71-72.

<sup>17</sup> José Luis Aróstegui, "Exploring the global decline of music education," *Arts Education Policy Review*, 117, No. 2, (2015): 96.



## ESSA and Music Education

To help reform the NCLB of 2002, the United States Department of Education developed parameters to redefine, create, and replace preexisting guidelines that would help students in K-12 public education succeed in their overall academic experiences. It is a common criticism among educators that the NCLB was an attempt to develop and enhance learning within all public schools by using management tools. However, that changed in 2015 under President Barack Obama's administration with the substitution legislation called Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).<sup>18</sup> Researchers Julia Fisher and Thomas Arnette from the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovation, a think-tank institution whose mission is to perform rigorous research on issues that heavily impact society, acknowledge that the ESSA legislation "...gives states the power to revisit the fundamental goals of their education systems and to potentially break free from constraints that have locked school systems into legacy funding, assessment, and accountability models over the past decades. Among other things, ESSA gives states new latitude to set goals, determine accountability metrics, and rethink how to intervene in their lowest-performing schools."<sup>19</sup> The ESSA replaced the NCLB by simply reinstating the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965.

The benefits that ESSA had on music education were far better than its predecessor. In general, ESSA allowed states to funnel federal funds into public school classrooms to help fund programs that directly benefit "...educationally deprived children in low-income areas; provide additional school library resources, textbooks, and other instructional material; finance

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<sup>18</sup> "Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)," U.S. Department of Education, Last modified March 13, 2017. <https://www.ed.gov/essa?src=rn>

<sup>19</sup> Julia Freeland Fisher and Thomas Arnett, "The State Innovator's Toolkit: A Guide to Successfully Managing Innovation Under ESSA," *The Christensen Institute* 1, No. 1 (October 2017): 2.

supplementary educational centers and services, broaden areas of cooperative research; and strengthen state departments of education.”<sup>20</sup>

The differences between the NCLB and the ESSA is that (1) while the held individual schools accountable for success on test scores, the ESSA granted the states authority to determine success; (2) while under the NCLB, states were told how and where to use funds for underperforming schools; however, the ESSA granted states the authority to determine the allocation of Title I funds for underperforming schools; (3) while under the NCLB states were required to evaluate their teachers by student test scores, the ESSA removed this requirement and allowed states the freedom to conduct teacher evaluations in the best way they see fit.<sup>21</sup> These and other related peripheral policies, now part of the ESSA, give music educators an advantage for their music programs.

According to the National Association of Music Education (NAfME), music educators benefited from the ESSA in three distinct areas: (1) ESSA clearly states that every student is to have a “well-rounded education,” therefore public education should adapt to a broader curriculum; (2) due to specific distinctions made by the ESSA, music is finally recognized to be an essential component in achieving this objective; and (3) because of the ESSA, schools can now use federal funding to focus on assisting underperforming schools in achieving the overall mission of developing successful students.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Michael L. Mark and Patricia Madura, *Contemporary Music Education* (Boston: Schirmer Cengage Learning, 2014), 78.

<sup>21</sup> Alice-Ann Darrow, “The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA): What It Means for Students with Disabilities and Music Educators,” *General Music Today* 30, no. 1 (October 2016): 42.

<sup>22</sup> “The Every Student Succeeds Act: What it Means, and What’s Next,” National Association for Music Education, accessed August 1, 2020, <https://nafme.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESSA-In-Plain-EnglishFINAL-2-2016.pdf>.

### Statement of the Problem

With the many different socioeconomic categories and influences in various regions of the United States, there is no one national inclusive plan or budget to help meet the needs of all students. As a result, areas that struggle economically may be more likely to cut music education programs to help keep their schools operating on a diminished budget. Rural music education programs may often be cut, underfunded, not supported, or overlooked.<sup>23</sup> This qualitative research study intends to discover and evaluate the effect on music education programs to which music educators experience while teaching in rural educational settings and discover if increasing broader community involvement can help mitigate these reductions.

### Delimitations

While this study serves to fulfill a gap in research, the data and conclusions are specific to this investigation. They should not be attributed to all music educators and community music-making opportunities. Participants (N=11) were pursued utilizing the convenience sampling method but were limited to only educators that have taught elementary through secondary education in a rural setting. As this research mechanism is newly developed, more extensive research and testing is recommended before conclusions can be assumed among all rural music educators.

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<sup>23</sup> Pergola, Joseph. "Music Education in Crisis." *School Band & Orchestra*, 02, 2014. 10, <http://ezproxy.liberty.edu/login?qurl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.proquest.com%2Fmagazines%2Fmusic-education-crisis%2Fdocview%2F1545626460%2Fse-2%3Faccountid%3D12085>.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative research study is to investigate the feasibility of rural music educators leveraging increased support through community involvement to benefit their local music programs and students.

### **Significance of the Study**

While there is an extensive collection of literature that supports the integration of the local community and school music programs, many rural music educators do not participate in facilitating community music outreach. There is limited research studying the reasons for the lack of community involvement. Hence, there needs to be a collective understanding of the reasons that contribute to the lack of community involvement.

### **Research Question and Sub-Questions**

This study's focus is twofold: first, to discover and examine how community involvement in music making opportunities benefit the music program, and second, to discover and examine how community involvement in music making opportunities benefit the students. The following questions will serve as the secondary agents of examination:

1. What causes rural music educators to not participate in building community musical opportunities?
2. How can rural music education parental support and student interest be bolstered through community participation?

### **Definition of Terms**

*Rural* – Any community of people considered not metro, urban, or suburban; any non-metro area that consists of a population of 19,999 or less.

*Stakeholders* – People who have a vested interest in a particular venture.

*Community* – A group of people recognized as having a connection or relationship within a particular locale and identifies as an autonomous society.

*Respondent/Participant* – Music educators who contributed to the study for this project.

### **Chapter Summary**

Local and national economic hardships have proven to have significant negative impact, not only in developed, but also in rural communities in the United States. Both the NCLB and the ESSA have contributed to the challenges that many music educators encounter. Yet, there is an idle resource that can be utilized by music educators to help lessen the effects of decreasing budgets and resources. The community potentially could help meet the needs of their school's music programs and students through music-making opportunities. This author examined the background of the decline of music education, analyzed literature pertaining to community music-making opportunities, and assessed probable outcomes of community involvement to discover if music educators are accessing their community to help mitigate support reductions.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Community music is an expression of cultural democracy, and musicians who work within it are focused on the concerns of making and creating music opportunities for a wide range of people from many cultural groups.<sup>24</sup>

- Lee Higgins, 2012

Community exists within both micro and macro levels of society. While a micro-sense of community can be established in more modest settings such as a smaller group of people gathering to engage in a particular activity, a macro-level can also be found in more extensive locations, such as neighborhoods and counties. These micro and macro levels of social interaction influence community music in much of the same manner. Community music participants come together to engage in music making as a band or choir; they also create long-lasting and nurturing relationships with one another. Community music is a “musical practice that is an active intervention between a music leader or facilitator and participants.”<sup>25</sup> According to Kari K. Veblen, skeptics believe “community music is just another word for a wide range of ‘music education’ programs that take place ‘outside’ the boundaries and schedules of ordinary school music programs.”<sup>26</sup> Veblen, along with David Elliot's assistance, investigated the broad spectrum of community music, examining and engaging in various forms of community music to better understand its design, and function in diverse societies. They both concluded that community music is significant to the operation and success of society:

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<sup>24</sup> Lee Higgins, *Community Music: In Theory and In Practice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 7.

<sup>25</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging in Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 3.

<sup>26</sup> Kari Veblen, “The many ways of community music,” *International Journal of Community Music* 1, no.1 (2008): 5.

Of course, all of this traces back to the powerful force of *music* in our personal and professional lives and in the daily lives of the many ‘peoples’ who make up our communities. Also, each of our orientations – as musicians, teachers, trainers, facilitators, therapists, learners, mover-and-shakers and, often, all of these – prompt us to recognize and reflect on the many ways we enable and empower people to develop their cultures, artistry, creativity, identity, health and ‘community.’ In and through music, these threads interweave in our daily work. For all these reasons, I wish to suggest that it is vitally important for ourselves, and for those we serve, that we *continuously reflect* on the ‘who-why-what-how-where-and-when’ of CM programmes around the world. This is the pathway to professionalism and personal growth.<sup>27</sup>

Participants, instruments, voices, venues, and leadership are perhaps the foundational components of creating good community music. Director of the International Centre of Community Music at Saint John University, Lee Higgins, and Professor and Director of the Laurier Centre for Music in the Community at Wilfred Laurier University, Lee Willingham, state that, “Community musicians intentionally set out to create spaces for inclusive and participatory musical doing. This impulse comes from a belief that music-making is a fundamental aspect of the human experience and, therefore, is an intrinsic and foundational part of human culture and society.”<sup>28</sup> While this may be, it is difficult to accomplish without the proper direction and instruction of someone who is educated and experienced in the practice of music-making itself. This creates an ideal opportunity for music educators to reach outside of their classrooms to assist or facilitate community involvement in music. Community music is, therefore, an

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<sup>27</sup> Kari Veblen, “The many ways of community music,” *International Journal of Community Music* 1, no.1 (2008): 17.

<sup>28</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging in Community Music: An Introduction* (New York; London: Routledge, 2017), 3.

interventionist approach between a music leader or facilitator and those participants who wish to be involved.<sup>29</sup>

The Literature Review is divided into five sections that will provide an overview of the sources accessed for this thesis. The first section addresses cooperative community by examining partnerships, relationships, and networking. The second section seeks to establish community intent by examining engagement and connectedness through music opportunities such as festivals and involvement. The third section establishes the effects of community on education, particularly music education, through a brief exploration of the history of music education, equality, technology, and pedagogy. The fourth section explores relationships between social science and community. Societal localities, economic factors, and cultures are explored. Finally, the last section evaluates the efficacy of community involvement.

### **Cooperative Community**

The word “cooperative” is often associated with economics and politics. In a global context, University of Zaragoza professors, Millan Diaz-Foncea and Carmen Marcuello, state that cooperatives function as a vehicle to help bolster economic potential in both small and medium sized “enterprises, as a mechanism for providing high quality services to groups that otherwise would not have access to them, and as a source of entrepreneurial and management opportunity.”<sup>30</sup> Cooperatives in America operate in much the same manner on a smaller scale,

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<sup>29</sup> Kari Veblen, “The many ways of community music,” *International Journal of Community Music* 1, no.1 (2008): 12-13.

<sup>30</sup> Millan Diaz-Foncea and Carmen Marcuello, “Entrepreneurs and the Context of Cooperative Organizations: A Definition of Cooperative Entrepreneur,” *Canadian Journal of Administrative Sciences* 30, no. 4 (2013): 238.



even down to the smallest societal interaction. Therefore, in its simplest definition, a cooperative's essence is a user-owned, user-controlled, and user benefited group or organization that operates autonomously.<sup>31</sup> This definition is demonstrated through the various partnerships, relationships, and networking in community music opportunities on the micro-level.

### Partnerships

Influenced by her education in music and business, and her experiences as director of Community Instrumental Groups, University of Miami professor, Melissa Lesniak, argues that the need for a strong partnership between schools and their communities is essential. Lesniak discovered that even though funding and resources may be minimal, community music programs and area universities and colleges can collaboratively provide resources to nurture and bolster string programs in schools, especially for those students who are less fortunate.<sup>32</sup> Lesniak suggests that starting a partnership within the educational institution's community fosters relationships and makes a personal connection. She also suggests that locating a free space for practice and performances can lend support and stability. Furthermore, Lesniak strongly encourages music leaders to secure funding, whether by supply, donations, or acquiring actual capital.<sup>33</sup> However, she also acknowledges a myriad of challenges that come with building an instrumental outreach program.<sup>34</sup> Yet, she counters these challenges by reminding her readers

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<sup>31</sup> Michael L. Cook and Fabio R. Chaddad, "Redesigning Cooperative Boundaries: The Emergence of New Models," *American Journal of Agricultural Economics* 86, no. 5 (2004): 1249.

<sup>32</sup> Melissa Lesniak, "Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact," *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 23.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 22.

that a strong partnership of community connections can help support these student music programs.<sup>35</sup> But, Lesniak is only one of several professional music educators that understands the need for partnerships between music programs and communities.

Case Western University Professor of Music Education, Lisa Koops, attended a daylong workshop in Ohio titled “Cleveland: A Community Committed to Our Children.” There she discovered that although there are several community programs regarding health, housing, parent support, and education, there is minimal mention of music as a facilitator to help enrich the community programs. In an attempt to curve the status quo, Koops asserts that by creating a partnership with a community organization, a music educator can bring more music into the community.<sup>36</sup> Koops suggests four starting points for establishing partnership: (1) form a relationship with community organizations; (2) become familiar with the organization; (3) consider beginning small; and (4) do not be closed-minded to any size idea.<sup>37</sup> Partnerships are a valuable asset and practice for cooperatives. Partnerships are not just limited to America but also practiced with success around the world.

In Australia, Flinders University Professor, Kathryn Hardwick-Franco, supports that partnerships between rural and non-governmental organizations, such a non-profit, are effective agents in helping music education programs in rural communities increase the well-being between teachers, students and the community.<sup>38</sup> She witnessed firsthand accounts of the success

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<sup>35</sup> Melissa Lesniak, “Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact,” *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 23.

<sup>36</sup> Lisa Huisman Koops, “Community Partners and Early Childhood Music,” *General Music Today* 32, no. 1 (2018): 37.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

of creating partnerships between rural communities in South Australia with non-governmental organizations. Not only did she observe expected positive outcomes, but she also was able to authenticate the connection between community partnerships and successful music programs with students that are considered “vulnerable, disadvantaged, and disengaged” in a rural setting.<sup>39</sup>

### Relationships

Where partnerships fulfill a purpose, relationships are intended to create and provide gratification and contentment. In an article addressing cultural vitality, University of Wollongong Professor of Human Geography, Chris Gibson, and Professor, Andrea Gordon, address community music participation within rural settings. In general, they surmise that community music involvement contributes to the greater good by implementing various community-supported music programs, such as bands, orchestras, choirs, and festivals. They state that,

Creativity is increasingly viewed as a facilitator of regional development via discrete cultural activities such as music, film, literature, fashion, and visual arts, where value is created not in physical production, but in creative content, and its semiotic meaning. Arts and cultural activities are in themselves nothing new; but in the past two decades, re-positioned as part of the creative industries, they have assumed an increasingly important position within regional development policy debates. The promise is that high-value activities in the arts, culture, and creativity can stimulate meaningful employment, attract tourists and inward investment, and also generate a lively cultural milieu that attracts innovative and highly educated people.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Kathryn Gay Hardwick-Franco, “Music Education in Remote Rural South Australian Schools: Does A Partnership with a Non-Government Organisation Work?” *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education* 28, no.1 (2018): 117-118.

<sup>39</sup> Kathryn Gay Hardwick-Franco, “Music Education in Remote Rural South Australian Schools: Does A Partnership with a Non-Government Organisation Work?,” *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education* 28, no.1 (2018): 104.

<sup>40</sup> Chris Gibson and Andrea Gordon, “Rural Cultural Resourcefulness: How Community Music Enterprises Sustain Cultural Vitality,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 63 (2018): 260.

Personal and economic relationships build happy and strong communities through education and opportunity, participation, and expression.

Amsterdam School of the Arts Music Educator, Constantijn Koopman, reiterates Gibson and Gordon's proclamation that community music promotes well-being. Although his article's essence was to address the negligence of music competence concerning community music-making, he states that "community music is aimed at people's well-being. Community music helps people to share experiences and to understand each other. These practices are understood as a means of developing communities and social cohesion."<sup>41</sup>

Music programs that are designed for community participation offer a great deal of advantages for their patrons. Members of these groups can interact with one another while also exercising skills and talents through rehearsals and performances. This social exposure allows the community to create relationships with school staff and administration. However, to pilot such an endeavor takes the leadership of someone who is skilled musically and has a vision for music as a whole.

### Networking

Partnerships and relationships significantly contribute to the music-making experience; however, none of this is possible without networking. From a cooperative community perspective, networking is simply the process of how a group of people interact with one another to create professional or social connections. Thus, through networking, people can develop

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<sup>41</sup> Constantijn Koopman, "Community music as music education: on the educational potential of community music," *International Journal of Music Education* 25, no. 2 (2007): 153.

partnerships and relationships. But does networking benefit music education programs? In an article published by the National Association of Music Educators (NAfME), music educators are encouraged to establish nurturing relationships by networking with local community music leaders and participants. The article emphasizes that community music educators need to connect with local music leaders and musicians to establish a mutually beneficial relationship. The Music Educator's National Conference (MENC) mission is to help provide and facilitate open-ended music opportunities for students through "encouraging the study and making of music by all." However, the wealth of ensemble choices in many communities brings up a central philosophical question: Are these community groups part of a coordinated effort to educate students or are music directors competing for talented students' participation?"<sup>42</sup> While this concern has validity, it is widely understood that the music educator's role is to establish partnerships and relationships by networking with local musicians and music leaders. This creates opportunities for strengthening existing community programs and provide cross-collaboration with participants.<sup>43</sup>

While examining a new approach to clinical music therapy for adults with developmental disabilities, Sandra Curtis and Chelsey Mercado discovered that the use of community music (instrumental, vocal, and ASL music interpretation) had powerful results in their patients. They saw changes in attitudes, engagement, relationships, and self-confidence. Moreover, they emphasize that networking is an essential factor in the new approach to music therapy. They identify that social networking is one of four successful strategies for building stronger

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<sup>42</sup> "Public School and Community Music Group Relationships," *National Association of Music Educators*, <https://nafme.org/about/position-statements/public-school-and-community-music-group-relationships-position-statement/public-school-and-community-music-group-relationships/>.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

relationships and community engagement.<sup>44</sup> It was community music-making that made this possible through the networking of music professionals and participants.

### **Engagement and Connectedness of Community**

Citizens and patrons of communities with music opportunities enjoy the partnerships and relationships developed through the networking of personal and professional connections made while seeking to contribute in some way to community music. Through various music-making opportunities, these connections and engagement create a sense of purpose and inner contentment for the participants. Community music opportunities such as festivals, strings programs, ukulele programs, and band programs can act as a vehicle for not only fostering an awareness and appreciation for music and music-making but may also aid in the learning of music and its agents, such as history, culture, and economics. Susan Hallman and Raymond MacDonald, contributors to the *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, ventured to review literature about music-making benefits within any given community. They discovered that the more the community is engaged in music through performances and education, the greater the individual will feel about themselves.<sup>45</sup>

Again, authors Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham discuss community members discovering and fulfilling their self-identity through community music participation. They first suggest that it is not a privilege to create and participate in music but rather an inherent right.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Sandra L. Curtis and Chesley Sigmon Mercado, "Community Music Therapy for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities," *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy* 4, no. 3 (November 2004). <https://voices.no/index.php/voices/article/view/1624>.

<sup>45</sup> Susan Hallman and Raymond MacDonald, *Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology: The Effects of Music in Community and Educational Settings* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2018): 775.

Through an ethnographic study, Lee Willingham discovered a direct positive connection between making music and one's identity. Moreover, for a person to be truly authentic, they first must be true to themselves and recognize that they are as genuine and unique as a thumbprint, which is an "aspect that is interwoven and connected to our creative aesthetic life, and that would include our relationship with music."<sup>47</sup>

Board-certified music therapist at the Kennedy Krieger Institute in Baltimore, Maryland, C. J. Shiloh, and professor of music therapy at Colorado State University, A. Blythe Lagasse, discovered that students and community members alike who were suffering from physical, emotional, and mental disabilities were experiencing a lack of connectedness within their community. This affected not only their self-esteem but also their social interactions and behaviors. Through Community Music Therapy (CoMT) efforts, researchers performed studies to discover how to better integrate both young and adult people with autism into their community while also helping to create a sense of community within the performers. To accomplish this, the use of Sensory Friendly Concerts (SFCs) was implemented to help those living with autism experience a music-making event in a venue created for social acceptance and community inclusion. The results were significantly positive for those with autism, as holistically, they began to feel more a part of their community.<sup>48</sup>

California State University Assistant Professor of Human Development, Rodney Beaulieu, Assistant Professor of Kinesiology, Hyun Gu Kang, and Music Professor and Lecturer,

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<sup>46</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging in Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 147.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> C. J. Shiloh and A. Blythe Lagasse, "Sensory Friendly Concerts: A Community Music Therapy Initiative to Promote Neurodiversity," *International Journal of Community Music* 7, No. 1 (2014): 121.

Shoko Hino, created and conducted a two-year community health program for senior citizens at a California assisted living facility with additional help of some students and adults. The program was designed to help older men and women reduce the fall rate exclusively using the Jaques-Dalcroze eurhythmics method. Pertaining to the older adults, the activities were designed to improve motor and cognitive skills such as listening, attention, memory, coordination, balance, and multitasking with progressive complexity.<sup>49</sup> Data collection was accumulated by interviewing focus groups by asking the participants questions: (1) What were the program's strengths, or what did you like most? (2) What was the most challenging, or what did you not like? And (3) What do you recommend for improving the quality of the programs?<sup>50</sup> The authors chose to use the Jaques-Dalcroze Eurhythmics method (JDE) because of its conventional physical activity use through music education. Their findings demonstrated that while the participants had increased social interactions and experienced pleasurable aspects, they also significantly improved balance and cognitive awareness. It is important to note that many participants asserted that JDE was much more successful than physical therapy or exercise activities.

### Festivals

Dawn Joseph explores the practice of music festivals in Australia as a vehicle for learning the history of a culture while also “shaping the future.”<sup>51</sup> He argues that the partnerships created

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<sup>49</sup> Rodney Beaulieu, Hyun Gu Kang, and Shoko Hino, “An Action Research Approach to Introduce Dalcroze Eurhythmics Method in a Community of Older Adults as a Promising Strategy for Fall Prevention, Injury Recovery and Socialization,” *International Journal of Action Research* 3 (March 2017): 276.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.



by community members and educational institutions can become a breeding ground for restoring vitality in a community that may have forgotten its past roots.<sup>52</sup> These relationships foster a newness for music traditions within their culture while introducing contemporary music practices and preferences. He concludes that offering music festivals can create a sense of belonging and purpose while also developing skills and community connectedness.<sup>53</sup>

Matt Brennan, Jo Scott, Angela Connelly, and Gemma Lawrence support similar conclusions that Joseph reached. They approached music festivals as a help for promoting awareness of climate change and environmental sustainability. While not necessarily intended for the benefits of music, they investigate the use of music festivals in Scotland as a way to inform communities about possible social, environmental, and health issues that concern their patrons. In this particular case study, they focused more on the attendees' impact on the music festival itself. They examined the effect that the attendees were having on the environment.<sup>54</sup> Even though there was no intent for music engagement, their investigation of several music festivals demonstrated that these kinds of festivals offered a median representation of community patrons that helped bring about awareness of environmental issues. In other words, music festivals informed the participants of social and ecological problems and brought community members together to discover a sense of purpose through the music experience.

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<sup>51</sup> Dawn Joseph, "Community Music-Making in Regional Australia: Creating, Improvising and Performing at A Festival," *International Journal of Community Music* 7, no. 3 (2014): 379.

<sup>52</sup> Dawn Joseph, "Community Music-Making in Regional Australia: Creating, Improvising and Performing at A Festival," *International Journal of Community Music* 7, no. 3 (2014): 380.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 383.

<sup>54</sup> Matt Brennan, Jo Collinson Scott, Angela Connelly, and Gemma Lawrence, "Do Music Festival Communities Address Environmental Sustainability and How?: A Scottish Case Study," *Popular Music* 38, no. 2 (2019): 252.

Ingebjorg Vestrum conducted a case study where he set up a social experiment in a rural community in Norway. He believed that rural communities experience challenges connected to the dwindling population and unsuccessful attempts to attract new residents.<sup>55</sup> Although this study had no music education intent, its success came from a former music teacher who constructed and contributed a musical approach to the study. The former music teacher's vision was to connect music to the rural community through opportunities such as a jazz music festival. He believed that such options help improve rural community well-being through community entrepreneurship.<sup>56</sup> He concluded that festivals are a productive and joyous method for bringing about change within a rural community. He states, “a municipality can harness creative individuals to create better-living conditions in a rural community suffering from stagnation and limited attractiveness to new residents. The municipality in this case study had a well-developed network of trust and local knowledge, which helped to increase the villagers’ involvement in the venture.”<sup>57</sup>

In addition to fulfilling purpose and connectedness, music festivals can provide opportunities for a community to strengthen its economy. Researchers Marie Mahon and Torsti Hyyrylainen teamed together to interview fifteen festival groups and individuals who are festival facilitators. “Drawing on the concepts of culture capital, resilience, and resourcefulness, the article investigates how the arts can work in providing wide-ranging possibilities for engaging with local development activities and shaping local development agendas in diverse and

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<sup>55</sup> Ingebjorg Vestrum, “The Embedding Process of Community Ventures: Creating A Music Festival in A Rural Community,” *Entrepreneurship & Regional Development* 26, no.7-8 (2014): 619-621.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 640.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*

changing rural contexts.”<sup>58</sup> Their research discovers positive results in rural economies' development by facilitating a music festival for local and greater-area residents. The success of the rural economy was directly linked to the connections made through music festivals. Yet, there is more to community engagement and connectedness than just the implementation of music festivals. Band, orchestra, and ukulele programs are other popular forms of involvement in community music-making.

### Involvement

Understandably, school-aged community residents need the support and involvement of family and friends. By parents, family, and community patrons contributing their time and resources, students can have a more gratifying and inclusive experience. Carrie Semke and Susan Sheridan evaluate and report data found in eighteen case studies that met their research criteria in discovering the positive connection between parental participation and cooperation in their children's educational experiences. The authors noted that “family involvement, family-school partnerships, and school-community partnerships all play important roles in educational programming.”<sup>59</sup> Family involvement is defined by parents' active and relevant interactions with their children to help facilitate productive learning and development.<sup>60</sup> Family-school partnerships provide enhanced learning opportunities for students through the freedom of communication, healthy relationships, respect for differences, and shared power among families

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<sup>58</sup> Marie Mahon and Torsti Hyyrylainen, “Rural Arts Festivals as Contributors to Rural Development and Resilience,” *European Society for Rural Sociology* 59, no. 4 (October 2019): 612.

<sup>59</sup> Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan, “Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature,” *School Community Journal* 22, no. 1 (2012): 22.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

and school.<sup>61</sup> School-community partnerships extend family involvement and family-school partnerships by creating and facilitating proactive interaction with people and resources in the community to provide support and services to families, students, and school programs.

One problem noted by the authors was the difficulty to achieve a worthy relationship between “home and school in rural settings and meaningful involvement of rural family members in educational decision making.”<sup>62</sup> Another problem was that rural education research questions were poorly constructed and failed to establish research as rural.<sup>63</sup>

The authors reviewed case studies conducted from 1995 through 2010. After manual and computer-aided searches were completed, reviews revealed that “(a) rural education research is dominated by descriptive research; (b) much more rigorous research on rural education is necessary; (c) there is a paucity of high and medium quality studies on parent involvement in rural education; (d) topics explored in rural research need conceptual refinement around rural research questions; and (e) approximately one-third of research conducted in rural settings is not intended to identify a rural phenomenon per se.”<sup>64</sup> The results from the study were pulled from samples located in rural areas of North America. To note, the authors define rural as “open country and small settlements of less than 2,500 persons that are not in the vicinity of the densely populated suburban areas known as urban clusters.”<sup>65</sup> Ultimately, the authors could not draw a thorough summary due to the low number of published research studies with various methods

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<sup>61</sup> Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan, “Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature,” *School Community Journal* 22, no. 1 (2012): 22.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, 34.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

and targets. However, they discovered that a common theme in all of the research studies was family, school, and community involvement through connections within the rural areas. This was demonstrated through participation in intervention programs and direct participation.

Moreover, “several studies went further to emphasize the importance of including community members in the development of research projects for or within rural communities.”<sup>66</sup> It is important to note that the rural teachers reported that the most significant barrier for family involvement activities was parents' lack of time.<sup>67</sup> The authors propose discussion for the following: (1) research in family-school connections in rural education lacks commonly accepted definition of “rural;” (2) “most studies do not specifically seek to investigate a rural phenomenon via their research aim or design;” (3) the majority of studies summarized for this review were descriptive in nature;” (4) “research in family-school connections in rural education lacks a commonly accepted definition of the constructs involved in those connections.”<sup>68</sup>

In 1927, C.A. Fullerton spoke at Iowa State Teachers College in Cedar Falls, Iowa, at the Springfield Conference. This conference focused mainly on music in rural communities in the United States. As a special guest speaker, Fullerton addressed music educators about what they can do to help enrich their rural communities' lives. He pointed out that even though teaching music from a one-room schoolhouse in a rural community was a huge venture, it was also a great challenge for the teacher, even as the teacher was probably not trained in teaching music. During the time of his speech, rural communities mainly were associated with farming. Fullerton called music educators' attention to understand that if a music educator were to go into a schoolhouse in

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<sup>66</sup> Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan, “Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature,” *School Community Journal* 22, no. 1 (2012): 37.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 38.

a rural community and teach music similarly to mathematics or language, the teacher would most likely not receive much enthusiasm. However, if that same music educator went out into the farmers' fields and taught music that would coincide with the day-to-day farming activities, such as radio, movies, and antiquated media, the teacher would probably receive an opposite and more positive reaction from adults and students.

He and a colleague conducted a thirty-two-week study using a standardized method of teaching rural elementary school students in a single state ten songs using a phonograph that collectively applied to the rural communities. The results were the students learning the songs with great accuracy in tone, pitch, and rhythm. Because of the rural students learning all the same songs, they could come together and perform the songs at rural community events, such as town meetings and farm bureau meetings. Other direct results of this standardized music education method in rural communities were the opportunities of music festivals, contests, and developing community music groups.

Using the standardized music education method in Iowa eventually led to the creation of Boy's Glee Clubs, Girl's Glee Clubs, and Iowa County Music committee, endorsed by Iowa county farmer's bureaus from across the state. Eventually, due to the success of the standardized method of teaching music, the training of schoolhouse teachers included observation time in a rural community school. Fullerton concluded that he would love to see state supervision of rural schools and not just the urban and suburban schools. He further states that the teacher assigned to the rural school be a teacher trained not just in core academics but also in music education. He encourages people who consider making regular financial contributions to rural school communities to do so with no reservation, which will benefit the students and the community for

years to come. As it was almost one hundred years ago, this same level of involvement and commitment are still vital in today's era.

University of Northern Iowa professor, Kevin Droe, examined “teacher and parent perceptions of school, family, and community connectedness as a function of music participation and community type.”<sup>69</sup> He defines connectedness as the strength of connection that an individual feels between two institutions, such as family and school or school and community.<sup>70</sup> Droe noted that students operate at their best academically when there is synergy between the school, family, and community. He selected five school districts of different sizes within the same state. Out of these five schools, he conducted interviews of parents and music teachers through questionnaires. Results yielded significant differences in awareness of family and school connectedness when families and schools were categorized by community type: rural, suburban, and urban. The findings show that parents signaled that community type does affect how parents view their connection between family and the school, and between the community and the school. It was noted that rural community parents have a stronger connection with their schools. Also noted was that the teacher-participants suggest that an improvement in school-family connectedness would benefit the music program and community.

### *Community String Programs*

Robert Gillespie, Joshua Russell, and Donald Hamann conducted a survey of sixty-four string music programs to examine and determine the positive or negative impact of string

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<sup>69</sup> Kevin L. Droe, “Investigating Parent and Teacher Perceptions of School, Family, and Community Connectedness,” *Contributions to Music Education* 40, no. 1 (2014): 60.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

programs on teachers, schools, school districts, communities, administrators, music programs, and students. The survey was organized into four sections: determining string program descriptions; the professional backgrounds and demographics of the string teachers; the impact that string programs have on their respective schools; and the impact that the string programs have within their individual school districts and communities.<sup>71</sup> The author's findings revealed that the vast majority of the string teachers are credentialed and certified music educators. The survey revealed that the increase of financial support in a music program directly benefits the program and the participants. There was also a significant relationship between community and music program benefits and success. Another finding was the increase of overall student enrollment in music programs within the school district while also simultaneously experiencing a growth of community and local music business support.<sup>72</sup>

This level of involvement in a strings program that is inclusive confirms Melissa Lesniak's argument for creating community music string programs in rural communities. Lesniak supports that, "When we are able to bring together students of varied backgrounds and experiences and when true diversity is seen across our elementary and secondary schools, honors, all-state, and collegiate ensembles, we will be providing a more holistic and comprehensive experience for all participants, regardless of their own socioeconomic status."<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>71</sup> Robert Gillespie, Joshua A. Russel, and Donald L. Hamann, "String Music Educators' Perceptions of the Impact of New String Programs on Student Outcomes, School Music Programs, and Communities," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, no. 2 (2014): 178.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 183.

<sup>73</sup> Melissa Lesniak, "Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact," *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 22-23.



### *Community Ukulele Programs*

Gillespie, Russell, and Hamann agree that educated directors lead successful community music programs. However, Robin Giebelhausen and Adam Kruse measure a successful community music program not just by the quality of the music being played, but also by the quality of the musician's attitudes.

Robin Giebelhausen and Adam Kruse set up a case study between four community ukulele groups to explore both their educational and social surroundings. In general, the article seeks to support the idea that there is no "one size fits all" when it comes to the foundations, objectives, and leadership of community ukulele groups. Their findings revealed that although some learning was taking place, most of the time, the community ukulele groups enjoyed the socializing aspects, such as fun, sharing similar interests, and musical performance.<sup>74</sup> The authors noted that the leaders functioned more in a coach and facilitator capacity. The authors suggest that location, priorities, leadership, and performance be considered for a more enriching community ukulele experience. Their findings are limited to such a small sample of groups to study. In addition to community ukulele group members' perspectives, the authors suggest that a much larger sample be analyzed over a more extended period of time to determine if a universal practice for community ukulele groups exists.

### *Community Band and Orchestra Programs*

Community participation in music can create an atmosphere of camaraderie between one another. Like sports, musicians who gather together feel as though they are part of something

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<sup>74</sup> Robin Giebelhausen and Adam J. Kruse, "A Smile on everybody's face: A multiple case study of community ukulele groups," *International Journal of Music Education* 36, no. 3 (2018): 355-357.

bigger than themselves. They are a part of a musical team like that of a choir or band. This social interaction and connectedness promote chances for new relationships while also providing an opportunity to bring together non-musicians as audience members to observe performances by the community music groups.

There are a host of different programs that can be offered for any community. Programs such as concert band, orchestra, musical theatre, choir, small instrumental or vocal ensembles offer local participants an outlet for music-making. Although various factors can contribute to possible limitations for creating or facilitating such music opportunities, it doesn't lessen the importance of considering such endeavors to help with student learning, music advocacy, and promoting community connectedness.

International performer, director, composer, and music educator, Brent Rowan, manages a community-based comprehensive band and small ensembles. Membership comprises mostly of elderly adults that are novices to instrumental ensemble playing. They come for the pure enjoyment of music-making and music education. Rowan suggests that through being authentic with his participants, he is able to connect with his members and develop a meaningful relationship.<sup>75</sup> He states that his participants “want to master something, to accomplish a skill or idea that he facilitates through a complex and yet empathetic leadership practice.”<sup>76</sup>

Debbie Rohwer, a former public school music educator and founder of the Denton New Horizons Band, suggests that through offering community-based music opportunities such as band, participants can not only experience the satisfaction of performing at a concert, but also

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<sup>75</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging in Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 35.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

experience adult music education. In her article, “Encouraging Dependence in Adult Concert Band Settings,” she states that,

...experiences can be provided for those adults who want independent learning of historical or theoretical musical components, but perhaps this activity could be a choice instead of presenting it as a one-size-fits-all activity. Indeed, we have had members in our group for whom we have organized classical listening sessions and theory classes over the summer months in order to address their interests, and the classes were very successful. Finding out members’ wishes may help the directors meet the musicians’ needs appropriately. Clearly, if we do not ponder the possibilities, we may only see one option, and while the school music model may work well for school music, community music may be able to flourish best within different parameters. Directors who can think outside the box may be able to benefit the adults in their programme in terms of the musical and social bonds that can form.<sup>77</sup>

Audrey Barbeau and Isabelle Cossette suggest that community members involved in a concert band performing concerts for their patrons is beneficial not only for music’s sake but also for the mental and physical well-being of both the performer and listener.<sup>78</sup> They conducted a brief study to determine whether sixty or older individuals have a better quality of life from participating in a concert band. They discovered that older adults have better health signs after just fifteen weeks of music-making and performing. They concluded with community members who elect to participate in music-making opportunities like that of concert band result in positive effects on their health, mental well-being, and social connections.<sup>79</sup>

Shibazaki and Marshall affirm the same general conclusions made by Barbeau, Cossette, and Rohwer. They concluded their study by exploring the positive impact of music concerts on individuals who have dementia. Although it was a small sample size within a community, their

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<sup>77</sup> Debbie Rohwer, “Encouraging ‘Dependence’ in Adult Concert Band Settings,” *International Journal of Community Music* 9, no. 2 (2016): 212-213.

<sup>78</sup> Audrey-Kristel Barbeau and Isabelle Cossette, “The Effects of Participating in a Community Concert Band on Senior Citizens’ Quality of Life, Mental and Physical Health,” *International Journal of Community Music* 12, no. 2 (2019): 269.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

findings revealed that music concerts could positively affect both mental and physical health for those who participate or are actively listening.<sup>80</sup> These results provide support for the implementation of music opportunities that incorporate concerts for the community and participants.

### **Music Education and Community**

Understanding the effects of community upon music programs must be premised with an understanding of previous legislative influence that has unfortunately generated difficulties for music educators to teach their music students effectively. Although recent legislation, such as the NCLB and ESSA, helped strengthen American education by focusing on the core subjects taught in K-12 schools, the legislation inadvertently redefined what subjects were considered “core subjects.” No longer was music education at the nucleus of a well-balanced education. This ultimately led to campaigns to defend the fine arts in schools. Budgets, staffing, and student participation suffered greatly. Nevertheless, through the various community involvement efforts, music programs could have the support they needed through the participants' advocacy and initiatives.

#### Music Education through Community Intervention

Since Lowell Mason advocated for Music Education and guided the Boston School Committee to accept it as a vehicle of holistic learning in 1832, there have been generations of great music educators who have influenced their students who have carried the mantle of music

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<sup>80</sup> Kagari Shibazaki and Nigel A. Marshall, “Exploring the Impact of Music Concerts in Promoting Well-Being in Dementia Care,” *Aging & Mental Health* 21, No. 5 (2017): 473-474.

education for years. Many of these great music educators experienced not having access to resources due to waning budgets or decreased support; therefore, they were forced to leverage and depend on the community for assistance. Music educator and contributing author for the *Music Educator's Journal*, Muriel Logerwell, wrote an article to encourage rural districts and schools. She describes chronologically how music educator, Lucy Hunt, campaigned for music education in rural schools. As Lucy went from school to school, sharing her vision and passion for music education, she grew a small first-year music education program in seventeen schools into a music program that employs six full-time music educators and two part-time assistants in sixty-three rural schools. Not only was the music program successful within its own right, but it also created a community connection. The music education program started with the guitar, as it was the only common instrument in rural homes. It was deemed “the pride of pupil and parent”<sup>81</sup> “People of various communities were so pleased with the improvement shown by the [students] that word spread from district to district and a number of schools that had not had the service asked for demonstrations of these musical activities.”<sup>82</sup> Logerwell noted the significance of what she described as a “very important element in the development of any program – the cost.”<sup>83</sup> As a result of a music educator's efforts, many parents within the rural communities became engaged in their child's music education. And, because of this, students in the rural school are receiving a more well-rounded music education.

Minnesota Music Teachers Association Historian, musicologist, and independent scholar, Sondra Wieland Howe, shares discoveries from research regarding influential women in Music

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<sup>81</sup> Muriel B. Logerwell, “Rural Music Program,” *Music Educators Journal* 30, no. 3 (January 1944): 62.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

Education throughout American history. Outside of high influential male music educators, such as John Philip Sousa, Albert Mitchell, Emile Jaques-Dalcroze, Bennet Reimer, Zoltan Kodaly, Shinichi Suzuki, Edwin Gordon, and David Elliot, Howe believes that women are just as influential and were creative in enlisting help from community members to meet the growing needs of their music students. Adversely, it was distinctly noted that women within the community were instrumental in helping ground music in churches, schools, and community events. For example, women were instrumental in implementing the Dalcroze and the Orff methods and approaches into music education.<sup>84</sup> While the community can intervene to help bolster and support music education altogether, the community can also intervene to assist individual students with specific needs.

Early Childhood Professor, Researcher, and Musician, Amanda Niland, describes the community's importance to music students with disabilities. She lists several community groups that have positive interactions with students who are disabled. Specifically, about music, she asserts, "These groups contribute to building a sense of belonging and community for families with young children."<sup>85</sup> However, families with disabled children often feel undesirable and unwanted, leading to not participating in music-making opportunities both inside and outside the music classroom. But, when a community comes together in meeting needs, barriers have become academic steppingstones. She highlights the value of community intervening to help disabled students through music, not addressing specific physical limitations, but by meeting the child's human need to make music and respond to music by participating in community music-

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<sup>84</sup> Gordon Cox, "Women Music Educators in the United States: A History by Sondra Wieland Howe," *British Journal of Music Education* 32, no 3 (2014): 327. doi:10.1017/S0265051715000303.

<sup>85</sup> Amanda Niland, "Singing and playing together: A Community music group in an early intervention setting," *International Journal of Community Music* 10, No 3 (2017): 275.

making opportunities. Niland states that meeting the needs of the students “honors the rights of children and families to feel a sense of belonging in their community and highlights the power of music to facilitate this.”<sup>86</sup> Although Niland speaks more of early childhood education, her assertions are also valid for secondary students.

As a scholar in the Department of Music Research at McGill University, Francisco Luis Reyes, discusses the benefits of embracing the community music approach to instruct elementary and secondary school students about various popular music genres. As there has not been an agreed consensus for a definition, he defines community music using broad terms to describe aspects and actions of community musical interactions to be inclusive. He adopts the International Society for Music Education definition: “Community music activities do more than involve participants in music-making; they provide opportunities to construct personal and communal expressions of artistic, social, political, and cultural concerns. Community music activities do more than pursue musical excellence and innovation; they can contribute to the development of economic regeneration and can enhance the quality of life for communities. Community music activities encourage and empower participants to become agents for extending and developing music in their communities. In all these ways, Community Music activities can complement, interface with, and extend formal music education structures.”<sup>87</sup> As a Latin-Grammy-nominated musician himself, Reyes uses his experiences to help bring a new perspective and approach to music education. Reyes articulates community music-making opportunities stimulates learning between the teacher and students; it reveals preferred types of

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<sup>86</sup> Amanda Niland, “Singing and playing together: A Community music group in an early intervention setting,” *International Journal of Community Music* 10, No 3 (2017): 285.

<sup>87</sup> Francisco Luis Reyes, “A Community Music Approach to Popular Music Teaching in Formal Music Education,” *Canadian Music Educator* 59, no.1 (2017): 24.

music that are relevant to students; it offers participants a chance to be proactive in performance and creation of music; it provides moments for collaboration and practice between participants; and community music operates respectively according to the culture and customs.<sup>88</sup>

## Social Science and Community

### Economic

There seems to be overwhelming evidence that demonstrates when music and community come together, there is a strengthening of the local economy. This is evident in metropolitan and urban areas and within the more rural areas as well. Authors Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham indicate that any form of community music-making is an opportune moment for entrepreneurship. “Projects in community music are essentially ‘start-ups’ in business jargon. Once an opportunity or a need has been identified, there are tried and true processes that are employed in the business sector that address all of the various steps in the journey.”<sup>89</sup>

Professor Robert Gillespie of Ohio State University, Professor Joshua Russell of the University of Hartford in Connecticut, and Professor Donald Hamann of the University of Arizona conducted a survey of sixty-four string music programs to examine and determine the positive or negative impact of string programs on teachers, schools, school districts, communities, administrators, music programs, and students. Their survey was organized into four sections: determining string program descriptions; the professional backgrounds and

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<sup>88</sup> Francisco Luis Reyes, “A Community Music Approach to Popular Music Teaching in Formal Music Education,” *Canadian Music Educator* 59, no.1 (2017): 25.

<sup>89</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging In Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 147.



demographics of the string teachers; the impact that string programs have on their respective schools; and the impact that the string programs have within their individual school districts and communities. The survey revealed that the increase of financial support in a music program directly benefits the program and the participants.<sup>90</sup> The financial support was most likely influenced due to the vast majority of the string teachers were credentialed and certified music educators. There was also a significant relationship between community and music program benefits and success. The researchers also discovered an increase in overall student enrollment in music programs within the school district, while also simultaneously experiencing a growth of community and local music business support.<sup>91</sup>

Agreeably, Professor Kevin Curtin from Alfred University, Ashley Schweitzer from Riverside Community Care, music teacher Kristen Tuxbury of Orange County High School, and Janelle D'Aoust from The Neighborhood Center, Inc., investigated to determine the contributing factors of resiliency of exceptional students that reside in struggling rural economic communities. The authors surveyed and interviewed fifteen school professionals. The authors identified eight common themes: (1) poverty; (2) isolation; (3) family instability; (4) positive attitude; (5) perseverance; (6) help-seeking; (7) supportive school environment; and (8) adult role models.<sup>92</sup> The study yielded findings that the participants' general consensus described poverty as challenging for exceptional students in rural communities. Other challenges include isolation

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<sup>90</sup> Robert Gillespie, Joshua A. Russell, and Donald L. Hamann, "String Music Educators' Perceptions of the Impact of New String Programs on Student Outcomes, School Music Programs, and Communities," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, No. 2 (July 2014): 180.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 184.

<sup>92</sup> Kevin A. Curtin, Ashley Schweitzer, Kristen Tuxbury, and Janelle A. D'Aoust, "Investigating the Factors of Resiliency among Exceptional Youth Living in Rural Underserved Communities," *Rural Special Education Quarterly* 35, No. 2 (2016): 5.

and family instability. “Many students come from low-income families, experience high unemployment, and rely on public assistance.”<sup>93</sup> They conclude that a combination of risk factors, positive personal qualities, and favorable social conditions within the rural community has significant outcomes resulting from their research.

### Culture

Amanda Soto, Chee-Hoo Lum, and Patricia Campbell conducted a study to understand the process and results of a partnership between a university and an American rural school in a distinctive remote community. Music education students from a university collaborated with a school in a rural community to teach music to the elementary students within their society. This collaboration was called *Music Alive! In the Valley* (MAV). The objective was to offer opportunities for social interaction and connections within rural communities through music performances, participation, and learning encounters. Through observations, interviews, and examinations over a single school year, the researchers concluded that because of the interactions of the university music educators and the students, the rural community was able to have a positive experience through concerts, holiday celebrations, and other community-invited events.<sup>94</sup> The rural elementary school principal states that the student’s reading test scores had greatly improved, possibly due to the interaction and instruction of the university music educators. Although a success in some ways, the researchers encountered challenges, such as

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<sup>93</sup> Kevin A. Curtin, Ashley Schweitzer, Kristen Tuxbury, and Janelle A. D’Aoust, “Investigating the Factors of Resiliency among Exceptional Youth Living in Rural Underserved Communities,” *Rural Special Education Quarterly* 35, No. 2 (2016): 5.

<sup>94</sup> Amanda Christina Soto, Chee-Hoo Lum, and Patricia Shehan Campbell, “A University-School Music Partnership for Music Education Majors In A Culturally Distinctive Community,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 56, no. 4 (2009): 340.

distance to connect with the rural community; adjusting personal schedules to find time to participate in collaboration with the rural school and community; and the university creating longer on-site residence for university music educators to interact and influence the students and community.<sup>95</sup>

University of Toronto Music Education Professor, Patricia Shand, runs an information column in the *Canadian Music in Education*, a journal for music educators in Canada and worldwide. In 2007, Shand disclosed accounts from guest contributor Janet Spring and her interactions in teaching music in schools in rural locations. Hired primarily for teaching music, Spring also accepted instructional positions as a library and social studies teacher to help improve her students' literacy skills and bridge gaps for cross-subject collaboration. Because of these added responsibilities, Spring garnered a more tenured position within the rural schools. She discusses how her rural culture experiences influenced her selecting repertoire pieces that would be relevant to her students and the community.<sup>96</sup> Spring recounts the wonderful interactions that occur with her music students and the community when festivals and activities related to the community's locale and culture come together. She states that, "Belonging to a warm and caring community is empowering, energizing, and enabling, and particularly for the music teacher who can encourage her students to be a part of what community experience through music."<sup>97</sup> The article further chronicles the myriad of music experiences that Spring's music students encounter when engaging with one another and community members.

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<sup>95</sup> Amanda Christina Soto, Chee-Hoo Lum, and Patricia Shehan Campbell, "A University-School Music Partnership for Music Education Majors In A Culturally Distinctive Community," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 56, no. 4 (2009): 354.

<sup>96</sup> Patricia Shand, "Teaching Canadian Music in a Rural Setting," *Canadian Music in Education* 48, No. 3 (Spring 2007): 19-20.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

Associate Professor of Education at Pennsylvania State University, Susan C. Faircloth, explores the challenges of education within a Native American rural community. No formal study was conducted or pursued. Opinions and conclusions were drawn from personal reflection, experience, and observation. Her premise is drawn from Michael Corbett's book *Learning to Leave* in 2007. Although not directly related to music education, one of Faircloth's concerns was the effect of student education versus the student's relationship with their respective communities.<sup>98</sup> Faircloth articulates the connections between the student's culture and their academic progress. To justify this claim, she recalls a personal experience as a student:

As I held Kanani [her 5-month-old niece] on a blanket on the ground, I began to realize that coming home, for me, has as much to do with remembering and reclaiming a sense of place in my heart, spirit, and mind as it does with the land that is attached to that place called home. When I'm struggling with the writing on an academic paper or presentation, I close my eyes and recall the sights, sounds, and scents of my grandmother's kitchen on a Sunday afternoon. That's home for me.<sup>99</sup>

#### Rural vs. Urban

Catherine Hunt conducted a study by researching key stakeholders' perspectives and opinions in rural and urban music programs in the United States. She asked broad questions in an effort to encourage her participants to answer by offering their own unique opinions and perspectives. The research was based on locales that were less than 10,000 to increase the chances of a better understanding of differences and similarities. The author chose four themes to define her results using the Developing Contextual Awareness (DCA) model. First, the rural music educators collectively emphasized the amount of involvement of their music programs

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<sup>98</sup> Susan C. Faircloth, "Re-visioning the Future of Education for Native Youth in Rural Schools and Communities," *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 24, no. 9 (2009): 1. <http://jrre.psu.edu/articles/24-9.pdf>

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

within the community that is expected from their community leaders. Although most administration does not consider this in the job description of the music teacher, rural parents strongly support having their children in music programs in the school district actively involved in the community. Second, there needs to be an understanding of the advantages and challenges for rural music educators. The most significant advantage of community involvement is the link to parental support, while the greatest challenge is maintaining some form of privacy within the community for oneself. Third, there is a heightened awareness for adequately preparing both urban and rural music teachers. Areas of competence that are of concern are music skills, pedagogy skills, organizational skills, and advocacy skills. And finally, the need for recruiting and retaining music educators. This is experienced in both urban and rural societies. Although lack of resources was a predominant area of concern, the greatest was the music teacher's demanding schedule.<sup>100</sup>

In 2010, the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) in Carlsbad, CA, funded a study whose aim was to identify the motivating causes that “discriminate communities maintaining and promoting high-quality music programs from those communities that do not.”<sup>101</sup> Researchers Martin Bergee, Becky Eason, and Christopher Johnson chose three communities that were winners of the “Best 100 Communities for Music Education” competition, and three communities that were not selected as winners. Based on more than just urban and rural status, they could determine shared similarities and differences between these communities and their music programs to be significant. It was determined that “communities that do not support their

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<sup>100</sup> Catherine Hunt, “Perspectives on Rural and Urban Music Teaching: Developing Contextual Awareness in Music Education,” *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 18, no. 2 (2009): 41.

<sup>101</sup> Martin J. Bergee, Becky J. A. Eason, and Christopher M. Johnson, “Galvanizing Factors of Communities Applying to be One of the “Best 100 Communities for Music Education,”” No. 186 (Fall 2010), 27.

school music programs are unlikely to apply for consideration as a “Best Community” competition. The researchers noted several distinctions: (1) music vs. athletics; (2) music and money; (3) communities and schools; (4) music vs. NCLB; (5) music and children with special needs; and (6) music as a life-skill that impacted the music program: Overall, the success of school music programs was directly related to the level of support given by the communities, regardless of being urban or rural.

### **Community Support**

Community support can apply to several different applications such as health, mental, and life skill development. More specifically, community support for music programs can be evidenced in how patrons respond when there is a financial, tangible, or psychological reassurance need on behalf of the music-making participants. The potential for this level of support can be cumulated through legitimate advocacy. Thus, advocacy will generate an awareness of the need by drawing attention to the circumstances surrounding the phenomena.

### **Advocacy**

Music advocacy has been a longstanding challenge for both music educators and their music programs. Even though Lowell Mason was able to defend music’s right as a core subject before the Boston School Board, music educators continued to confront the same challenges, such as dwindling budgets and student participation. These challenges for American music education are as prevalent today as when they were almost two hundred years ago.

In a 1993 *American Music Teacher Journal* publication, an article suggests there is not enough awareness or advocacy for arts education in public schools in America. The article urges

members of the Music Teachers National Association (MTNA) to accept the responsibility as music educators to ensure that present and future students have a well-rounded and complete education.<sup>102</sup> The article suggests that music educators need to be involved in legislation that influences music education in schools. Music educators are in a unique position to engage and create meaningful partnerships to advocate for music programs in all socio-economic status schools.

Chair of the National Community Outreach and Education (NCTM) in Lincoln, Nebraska, MarySue Harris appeals for music education advocacy. She recounts a workshop she attended at the MTNA conference in Minneapolis in October 1999. The overarching theme was encouraging music educators to be more active music education advocates in their schools, organizations, and communities.<sup>103</sup> She recounts learning different ideas and methods to help solve the various problems that many music teachers encounter when endeavoring for music advocacy. During the conference, the current MTNA president, Joan Reist, even went as far as to encourage those attending to be pioneers for paving the way of creating advocacy within their very own states to help bolster the support for music education through conferences and meetings. In addition to this, the president also encouraged music educators to create music education coalitions, organizations, community arts agencies, art councils and alliances, and other advocacy groups that can help procure funds and recruit members to help carry out the mission for arts education.<sup>104</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> "Music in the Community," *American Music Teacher* 42, No. 6 (July 1993): 50.

<sup>103</sup> MarySue Harris, "Music in the Community: New Advocacy Opportunities for the New Year: An Advocacy Challenge," *American Music Teacher* 49, No. 5 (April 2000): 82.

<sup>104</sup> MarySue Harris, "Music in the Community: New Advocacy Opportunities for the New Year: An Advocacy Challenge," *American Music Teacher* 49, No. 5 (April 2000): 82.

Public policy advisor, Tooshar Swain, of the National Association of Music Education affirms the same conclusions that Harris gleaned at the workshop. Expounding on more advocacy, Swain cautions that, “Before beginning a music advocacy endeavor, it is advisable to do some deep thinking about the vision of the music program in question.”<sup>105</sup> She outlines that advocacy needs to include local lawmakers, school administration and board members, and other recognized stakeholders. It is emphasized that a clear vision and plan be in place from the very beginning. Swain states that, “taking a step back to think about this vision will serve as a guide to ensure every goal set and action taken supports the broader mission. A vision also communicates the music programs’ values to the school.”<sup>106</sup> Swain articulates the progress made through the approval of music education as an official core subject and again in December 2015 through the ESSA legislation. The new legislation required that all states perform a comprehensive examination of their educational goals and standards. Thus, this gave birth to implementing detailed strategies to help students be better prepared for post-high school careers and higher education. Swain states that, “Across the country, music advocates worked to include music education in the plans, leading states to include access and participation rates in music and arts education in their planned accountability systems.”<sup>107</sup>

Moreover, Swain concludes that because of advocacy, music education is now recognized for its vital role in all students' education. “The most important attributes to effective advocacy seem intrinsic in those who love music: passion and the ability to listen. Getting

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<sup>105</sup> Tooshar Swain, “Music Education Advocacy Post ESSA,” *Choral Journal* 60, No 2 (September 2019): 23.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*



ourselves in the habit of using these skills to advocate for music education is crucial because we know music belongs, and we need it in every school across the country.”<sup>108</sup>

Chair of Music and Director of the Melbourne Conservatorium of Music in Australia, Gary E. McPherson, and Assistant Professor of Music Education at the University of Illinois, Karin S. Hendricks, agree that advocacy is a priority in leveraging support for music education. They conducted a study of over three thousand American elementary and secondary school students to discover what motivates students to study music more than other subjects, such as English, mathematics, physical education, science, and art. McPherson and Hendricks formulated two approaches when considering the more extensive issues facing American education. The first approach is music education advocates need to initiate greater energy in “demonstrating the importance of music as a part of the academic curriculum.”<sup>109</sup> The second approach is for music educators to emphasize higher expectations, or standards, for music performance through aligning lesson content to both state and national standards to compete with standard alignment for other core subjects within general education.<sup>110</sup> This alignment is the minimum for expectations of music students.

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 25.

<sup>109</sup> Gary E. McPherson and Karin S. Hendricks, “Students’ motivation to study music: The United States of America,” *Research Studies in Music Education* 32, No. 2 (2010): 205.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 205-206.

## Awareness

Before there can be advocacy for Music Education, there must be a consciousness of what is taking place. Communities need to be aware of needs within the music programs. Communities can help meet these needs and advocate for the needs of students.

Glen Schneider is an experienced music educator teaching high school instrumental ensembles, director of the Metea Valley Symphony Orchestra, and is an instructor at VanderCook College of Music. In an article he published in 2016, he proposes that a school music program is in direct correlation to the amount of marketing done for the music program. He presents four critical elements of behavior that the music educator must engage to successfully market one's music program, not just staff and parents, but also to the community. The first key element is being present in the community. The music educator should be creating as many opportunities for the community to observe the music program, such as concerts and parades. The second key element is the communication of student achievement. The music educator should be boasting his student's accomplishments to the community through media and written publications as much as possible. The third key element is connecting the community to witnessing the contributions that music education makes in the student's lives through updates, interviews, and ceremonies. The fourth key element is how music educators create unique opportunities for everyone (parents, teachers, students, and community members) to interact and respond to music education enrichment in the school and community.<sup>111</sup> Overall, marketing the music program allows community members to be both indirectly and directly involved by providing an opportunity to be engaged through interactions with the students, parents, music

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<sup>111</sup> Glen Schneider, "Marketing the Music Program to Your Community," *School Band & Orchestra* (December 2016): 14.

teachers, and school. Moreover, having an awareness of school music program necessities helps establish local community support.

### Efficacy

In addition to advocacy and awareness of community and music education, there also exists the ability to generate a desired outcome. This efficacy is not something new; however, it may be an untapped resource for music educators. Patrick Jones is the Dean of the School of Arts at Utah Valley University. Before serving as dean, he was a Colonel in the U.S. Air National Guard, serving as the chief of budgeting and policy for all eleven U.S. Air National Guard bands. In a 2010 article, Jones substantiates that making music can promote the development of socialization through voluntarily consorting with like members of one's community, known as "social capital."<sup>112</sup> Jones makes his case that there has been a steady decline in participation in civic activities. The continuing decline of social interaction and participation of members in their respective communities threatens the civil society, the community's economic well-being, and geopolitical stability.<sup>113</sup> Jones posits that music's inherently social nature helps people develop the kinds of social interactions and connections that can thwart isolation. The issue is the development of social interactions that bring people together, encourage and foster success, and build a peaceful and prosperous community. He also notes that "strong ties" within the community create relationships with other people like family members or close friends. To help accomplish this goal of meaningful social connection, people who engage in community arts

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<sup>112</sup> Patrick M. Jones, "Developing Social Capital: A Role For Music Education and Community Music In Fostering Civic Engagement and Intercultural Understanding," *International Journal of Community Music* 3, no. 2 (2010): 292.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

activities develop the social connection that fosters community improvement; develop tolerance and cultural understanding; and produce economic benefits.<sup>114</sup> “Thus, there is an important role for music educators and community musicians to play in helping people develop skills, knowledge, habits, and dispositions to engage in such musical pursuits that can ultimately help them develop the weak ties and bridging capital that strengthen communities.”<sup>115</sup>

University of Colorado music education instructor, Daniel Isbell, penned an article encouraging music educators in rural locations to utilize as many resources as possible to help strengthen their music programs. Resources can vary from community to community, but the music educator must be mindful of what is available. Isbell reinforces the need for understanding the constructs of a rural area. In other words, there needs to be an understanding of the who, what, where, and why of rural areas. He proposes that music educators need to be “sensitive to the concerns of their communities.”<sup>116</sup> Concerns range from student needs to student and community relevancy. Isbell concludes that, “A rural music teacher’s willingness to take risks and try new approaches in organization and pedagogy, even if those changes seem radical at first, will keep the music program fresh and engaging year after year.”<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Daniel Isbell, “Music Education in Rural Areas: A Few keys to Success,” *Music Educators Journal*, (November 2005): 34.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

## Chapter Summary

### Defining the Problem

The literature reviewed denotes that music opportunities for community members, students, and stakeholders have significant positive effects. There is minimal literature that records findings from studies regarding music educators being facilitators of such community music opportunities. Musicologist, philosopher, and educationalist Constantijn Koopman asserts that, "...the potential of community music as a force of music education has received little attention at the level of theoretical analysis. Most literature on community music describes specific projects of community music without dealing systematically with educational issues. And if authors do touch on the educative potential of community music, they mainly relate to such general values as self-employment and social empowerment. The development of musical competence as such has largely been neglected."<sup>118</sup>

### Needs for Understanding

Making music outside of the classroom through partnership programs within orchestras, bands, and other community outreach programs are just some of the qualities that characterize community music. The overall intent of community music is not to learn music theory or history, but to predominately create and play music. There are moments where musical knowledge is enhanced, and skills are refined as natural outcomes from practicing and performing music as a group. Formal pedagogical music education styles can hinder students from learning in the music

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<sup>118</sup> Constantijn Koopman, "Community Music As Music Education: On the Educational Potential of Community Music," *International Journal of Music Education* 25, No. 2 (2007): 152.

classroom. By implementing a community music approach in conjunction with other pedagogical practices, music educators can instill an interest in music and music-making in students.

Community music opportunities are not new to any culture. The literature review denotes that these kinds of music opportunities have their place in countries, especially the United States. While some music educators have taken the opportunity to facilitate community involvement, little literature supports encouraging American rural music educators to help accommodate or administer community music opportunities to help leverage support for their school music programs.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

### Introduction

This study's main purpose is to discover how music programs are impacted when community music programs are available. Subsequently, the research aims discover possible reasons why music educators may not provide community music opportunities within their respective rural school districts and to uncover possible common links to successful implementation of community opportunities that may have benefitted the rural school music programs.

The methodology described in this chapter uses the phenomenological qualitative approach to collect data for this study. The method is based on combined techniques outlined within three scholarly research sources. This chapter discusses the research design, participants, research setting, instrumentation, procedures, and data analysis to answer the primary and secondary research questions.

### Design

The design for this phenomenological qualitative study was grounded in the descriptive or survey research design, where the study pursues to characterize circumstances taking place in real-time while also attempting to analyze details by utilizing various subjects and questionnaires to help fully describe the phenomenon being studied. The framework for the research design of this study is based on a combination of three techniques outlined in Phelps, Sadoff, Warburton and Ferra's book, "A Guide to Research in Music Education;" SAGE Publication's "Qualitative Data Analysis in Research Methods in Education" by Chuck and Schutt; and Sang-Hei Lee's

“Scholarly Research for Musicians.” The rationale for using more than one approach to create the framework for this study is that the qualitative researcher does not “approach research problems with a preestablished method. Instead, they draw on multiple methods.”<sup>119</sup>

### Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions for this study are:

**Primary RQ1:** How does community involvement in music making opportunities benefit the music program?

**Primary RQ2:** How does community involvement in music making opportunities benefit the students?

### Hypotheses

Four potential outcomes were examined:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Many rural music educators are involved in community music programs but are not directly involved in leading a community music program in their rural school district.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Many rural music educators are held back from facilitating community music programs because of time.

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<sup>119</sup> Roger P. Phelps et al., *A Guide to Research in Music Education* (Lanham: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2005), 79.



**H<sub>3</sub>:** Many rural music educators are held back from facilitation community music programs due to a lack of financial support.

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Many rural music educators are held back from facilitating community music programs due to a lack of resources, e.g., location and participants.

The null set:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Many rural music educators are not involved in community music programs but are not directly involved in leading a community music program in their rural school district.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Many rural music educators are not held back from facilitating community music programs because of time.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Many rural music educators are not held back from facilitation community music programs due to a lack of financial support.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** Many rural music educators are not held back from facilitating community music programs due to a lack of resources, e.g., location and participants.

### **Participants**

Because of time constraints of the COVID-19 global pandemic, a convenience sampling was taken from known associates' recommendations. The pandemic created a national emergency that shut down businesses and services nationwide. Subsequently, schools were forced to cancel the remainder of the school year. This posed a great deal of difficulty in

connecting with rural music educators and administrators. The participants (N=11) came from a contacted pool of forty-two music educators and administrators.

### Recruitment

Participants were selected by recommendations from known acquaintances. The rationale for recruitment is based on the convenience sampling method, where participants are “convenient” sources with which to cumulate data relating to the research.<sup>120</sup> As part of the selection criteria, participants were required to have: (a) been currently teaching music in a rural school setting; (b) been a veteran music educator in a rural setting; (c) been currently an administrator in a rural school, or (d) been a veteran administrator in a rural school. Participants were both male and female. These people contributed voluntarily. The researcher contacted the subjects by email, informing them of the purpose and protocol of the research. The aim was to collect data from representatives from the four major regions of the United States as recognized by the U.S. Census Bureau: Northeast; South, Midwest; and the West.<sup>121</sup>

The researcher contacted forty-two possible candidates, with only 11 volunteering for the study. The range of years of experience as music educators totaled approximately 217 years, with the youngest teacher being a first-year music educator only having seven months of professional teaching experience. A retired music educator is the eldest, having approximately 38 years of professional teaching experience. Participants agreed to have their identities anonymized to

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<sup>120</sup> Mike Battaglia, *Encyclopedia of Survey Research Methods: Convenience Sampling* (Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.), 149.

<sup>121</sup> The United States Census Bureau, *Census Regions and Divisions of the United States* (Washington DC, 2018), <https://www.census.gov/geographies/reference-maps/2010/geo/2010-census-regions-and-divisions-of-the-united-states.html>.

provide an inclusive conclusion without any bias and provide a sense of privacy to ensure a more objective response without fear of any employment backlash.

### **Setting**

The research setting was to take place in a safe and private designated room within the university library. Due to the untimely nature of a global pandemic, the researcher changed the setting for the interviews. The researcher conducted the interviews at his private home in an isolated room for the participants' privacy. The researcher also conducted interviews in a safe isolated room on the university campus.

### **Instrumentation**

The instrument used for the survey was a series of twenty-one predetermined questions, not including the opening acquaintance questions. These acquaintance questions served as preliminary initiatives to discover the participants' background information, such as personal education, personal experiences, and school/classroom particulars. Initial questions served as a means of verifying the participant's qualifications for this study. After the preliminary questions, the questionnaire was constructed to reflect all inquiries in a sequential format distributed to the participants one week prior to the interview.

### **Procedures**

Before the survey being administered, permission to conduct the study was attained through the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB) (see Appendix A). Approval was also attained from the university's library to conduct the private interviews in a sound-secure group

study room. However, these plans were slightly altered when the campus closed due to the state order from the governor's office that all educational institutions were ordered to close. The interviews were then conducted in a sound-secure room at the researcher's own home.

Each participant was scheduled for a particular day and time to complete the questionnaire (see Appendix B, C, and D). On their respective day of the interview, each participant had to sign and submit, via email, their "IRB Consent Form" (see Appendix E) before the study could commence. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, and then the recording deleted in compliance with the agreement of the study.

Data was collected from both active and retired music educators through individual interviews answering a predetermined series of questions that included participant demographics, educational background, perceptions of interaction with their community, and benefits of community involvement within music.

### **Data Analysis**

Answers to the questionnaires were first recorded using a digital audio recording app that is proprietary Apple iPhone, equipped with iOS 13. Once the interview was completed, the recording was transcribed by a private out-of-state medical transcriptionist. After successful transcription, the recordings were deleted to ensure the protection of each participant and their identity. Data was analyzed and entered into a spreadsheet for the generation of visual representations of data.

The participants were granted the opportunity to contribute information that helped to understand demographics, personal education, community environment, and cultural influences

by answering “unrehearsed” preliminary questions at the start of the interview. This aligns with narrative analysis, where the participants respond with their personal experiences of actions and events that have or are taking place in their lives. Their responses helped validate their occupation as a past or present rural music educator or administrator while also providing an opportunity to discover any foundational similarities shared between participants.

The process used for data analysis consists of five phases:

1. Documentation of the data and the process of data collection
2. Organization/categorization of the data into concepts
3. Examining relationships to show how one concept may influence another
4. Authenticating conclusions by evaluating alternative explanations, disconfirming evidence, and searching for negative cases
5. Reflexivity, which is the self-examination of one’s interactions while conducting the research.<sup>122</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Joseph Check & Russell K. Schutt, “Qualitative Data Analysis: Research Methods in Education,” *SAGE Research Methods* (2017): 7.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH FINDINGS

### Introduction

Music Education Philosopher, David Elliot, understands the profound impact of music making opportunities for both listening and participating individuals. The benefits are not a one-dimensional experience, but rather a multidimensional experience that provides people opportunities for relating, expression, and enjoyment. In his book, *Music Matters*, he asserts:

The internal goods and values of musicing are not abstractions. Through the progressive development of musical understanding with musical and educative teachers and facilitators, all students can achieve human flourishing, communal well-being, an empathetic sense of self-and-other, as well as a sense of meaningfulness, enjoyment, and a creative way of life.<sup>123</sup>

The study evaluated eleven participants' perspectives regarding their past and present experiences as music educators teaching in a rural community to discover benefits and challenges as a rural music educator.

### Literature Review Findings

Community involvement and music education are often closely associated and practiced in many localities. There is support that shows the benefits of connecting rural music education and programs with its community members. This relationship has been ongoing for decades. In an article in *Business Insights: Global* titled "How School Music Programs Came into being: The Internal Combustion Engine, Talking Pictures, and Inspired Leadership Came Together to Create

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<sup>123</sup> David James Elliott, *Music Matters: A New Philosophy of Music Education* New York: Oxford University Press, 2015, 280.

what we Now Call School Music," the authors present a historical overview of how school music programs came into existence.

In the late 1800s, music programs such as theatre, orchestra, and community bands were flourishing because of financial support from community organizations such as trolley companies. However, by the 1930s, community music programs suffered financially due to economic hardships, which led to many community music groups' canceling.<sup>124</sup> The article documents how music educator and advocate, Joseph Maddy, met with venture capitalist, Carl Greenleaf, to share his idea of implementing instrumental music into public school curriculum across America. Greenleaf liked the idea and quietly funded the endeavor.<sup>125</sup> After World War II and the Korean War, Maddy's vision became an ongoing reality for decades. Although the article reports a direct link between thriving industry and school music programs, it also informs of the continual "fretting" of the demise of school music programs due to unstable economic conditions.<sup>126</sup> Rural areas were not immune to experiencing these conditions; however, the music educators and advocates within society worked together to help find solutions for deteriorating budgets and support.

Contributing Columnist and Music Educator, Muriel Logerwell, recounts a story of a young lady named Lucy Hunt who went from school to school, sharing her vision and passion for music education. She grew a small first-year music education program in seventeen schools

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<sup>124</sup> "How school music programs came into being: the internal combustion engine, talking pictures, and inspired leadership came together to create what we now call school music." *Music Trades* Nov. 2015: 132. *Business Insights: Global*. Web. 29 Mar. 2021.  
[http://bi.gale.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/global/article/GALE|A434320703?u=vic\\_liberty](http://bi.gale.com.ezproxy.liberty.edu/global/article/GALE|A434320703?u=vic_liberty)

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

into a music program that employed six full-time music educators and two part-time assistants in sixty-three rural schools.<sup>127</sup> Not only was the music program successful within its right, but it also created invaluable community connections. The Music Education program started with the guitar, as it was the only common instrument in the rural homes, thus was deemed “the pride of pupil and parent.”<sup>128</sup> “People of various communities were so pleased with the improvement shown by the [students] that word spread from district to district and a number of schools that had not had the service asked for demonstrations of these musical activities.”<sup>129</sup> Logerwell noted the significance of what she described as a “very important element in the development of any program – the cost.” She describes the “one-room schoolhouse” situation by stating that, “The average one-room school pays one hundred dollars each year for an hour and a half of instruction a week from the visiting teacher.”<sup>130</sup> As a result of one music educator's efforts, many parents within the rural communities became engaged in their child's music education. And, because of this, students in rural schools received a well-rounded education.

As Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Leadership in American Indian Education, Susan Faircloth articulates the power of community in discovering purpose and direction for a holistic education. As Faircloth tells her story, reveals that as a highly educated professor, she has never forgotten her upbringing. She recollects, “I began to realize that coming, for me, has as much to do with remembering and reclaiming a sense of place in my heart, spirit, and mind as it does with the land that is attached to that place called home. When I'm struggling with the

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<sup>127</sup> Muriel Logerwell, “Rural Music Program,” *Music Educators Journal* 30, No. 3 (January 1944): 61.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*



writing of an academic paper or presentation, I close my eyes and recall the sights, sounds, and scents of my grandmother's kitchen on a Sunday afternoon. That's home for me."<sup>131</sup>

Faircloth concluded that her most influential teachers were her mother and grandmother. She believes that "local control" is the key for rural communities to thrive. Effectively speaking, local control is the idea that local communities have the right to decide and shape the future and direction of children's education.<sup>132</sup> Community education can include songs, dances, and stories through performing, listening, and observing.<sup>133</sup> Faircloth concludes that through local control, those who are affected the most – rural families, children, and communities – are empowered to define the purpose and direction of [their] education."<sup>134</sup> This gives struggling music programs the needed support to sustain their teaching music endeavors and participate in music-making opportunities.

### Cooperative Communities

Cooperative communities are societies that empower their patrons to participate and support their local music programs through partnerships. Melissa Lesniak and Lisa Koops both discovered that students could have access to resources and opportunities that otherwise may not be available through community partnerships. Koops strongly supports music teachers' need to accept their community service responsibility and encourages them to pursue partnerships with

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<sup>131</sup> Susan C. Faircloth, "Re-visioning the Future of Education for Native Youth in Rural Schools and Communities," *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 24, no. 9 (2009): 2.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

as many organizations as possible.<sup>135</sup> Kathryn Hardwick's case study also validates Lesniak and Koop's findings. Her study revealed that partnerships between schools and organizations have positive impacts on music education. Positive effects included a more content and prosperous community; an increase in interest in the arts; and increased support for music educators.<sup>136</sup> Cooperative communities also empower their patrons through relationships. In a case study observing various rural communities by Chris Gibson and Andrea Gordon, they document that "smaller community run productions and programs contribute to rural cultural resourcefulness, encouraging creative frugality, engaging passionate people to express themselves, and to endure."<sup>137</sup> Because of this, Gibson and Gordon conclude that "such activities contribute to regional development holistically, by enriching cultural life, increasing and deepening social relationships, and encouraging newcomers to settle and establish friendship networks."<sup>138</sup> Constanijn Koopman acknowledges that there is also the strengthening of a community's social welfare through relationship connections in addition to holistic music-making and learning opportunities.<sup>139</sup> However, to establish partnerships or relationships in the community, patrons must engage through networking. In a study performed by Sandra Curtis and Chelsey Mercado, it was discovered that relationships and partnerships were created through both the facilitators

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<sup>135</sup> Lisa Huisman Koops, "Community Partners and Early Childhood Music," *General Music Today* 32, no. 1 (2018): 37.

<sup>136</sup> Kathryn Gay Hardwick-Franco, "Music Education in Remote Rural South Australian Schools: Does A Partnership with a Non-Government Organization Work?" *Australian and International Journal of Rural Education* 28, no.1 (2018): 117.

<sup>137</sup> Chris Gibson and Andrea Gordon, "Rural Cultural Resourcefulness: How Community Music Enterprises Sustain Cultural Vitality," *Journal of Rural Studies* 63 (2018): 268.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Constanijn Koopman, "Community music as music education: on the educational potential of community music," *International Journal of Music Education* 25, no. 2 (2007): 161.

and participants' networking.<sup>140</sup> This creates a more meaningful experience for all music participants.

### Engagement and Connectedness of Community Findings

There is a direct correlation between when an individual actively engages in community music and how he perceives himself. Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham,<sup>141</sup> along with Susan Hallman and Raymond MacDonald,<sup>142</sup> validate this very notion that it is a human right for any individual to engage in any form of music-making to feel good about himself. This privilege gives community participants the music-making opportunities of their choice. Opportunities such as festivals, string groups, ukulele ensembles, and bands can produce brief moments of connectedness. These occasions provide a sense of belonging and learning simultaneously. Dawn Joseph, Matt Brennan, Jo Scott, Angela Connelly, and Gemma Lawrence arrived at the same conclusion in their studies where community music-making facilitate more than a recreational experience; it can offer periods of music education.

### Music Education and Community

Since music education's inception in the United States as a "core" subject in 1832, many individuals were made aware of a need in the community. Music educators, such as Lucy Hunt,

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<sup>140</sup> Sandra L. Curtis and Chesley Sigmon Mercado, "Community Music Therapy for Citizens with Developmental Disabilities," *Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy* 4, no. 3 (November 2004). <https://voices.no/index.php/voices/article/view/1624/1384>

<sup>141</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging In Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017).

<sup>142</sup> Susan Hallman and Raymond MacDonald, *The Oxford Handbook of Music Psychology*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).

recognized that music in rural communities must be taught in schools. Through her efforts, she was able to enlist community support for music education.<sup>143</sup> Sondra Howe concluded in her study of researching influential women in music education that people can intervene to help strengthen music education through various means of support, such as participation and finances.

Moreover, she also concluded that the people could intercede for students' personal needs, such as students with special needs. Amanda Niland corroborates this conclusion in her study of community intervention with early childhood music education. By stating that even though her overall objective was to demonstrate the invaluable benefits of community music by providing music-making opportunities, she concluded these music-making opportunities be readily available for families of children who have a particular disability. Families who have access to these opportunities see an increase in the sense of belonging and recognizes the children's potential in making music.<sup>144</sup>

In addition to students with disabilities, Francisco Luis Reyes encourages the public to support all students regardless of political, social, economic, and cultural circumstances. Reyes's study informed music educators of the importance of using popular musical genres within music education. Though several conclusions were made, Reyes notes that all students can have access to a successful, inclusive, and well-rounded education through community patrons' intervention in music-making opportunities.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Muriel B. Logerwell, "Rural Music Program," *Music Educators Journal* 30, no. 3 (January 1944): 66.

<sup>144</sup> Amanda Niland, "Singing and playing together: A Community music group in an early intervention setting," *International Journal of Community Music* 10, No 3 (2017): 285.

<sup>145</sup> Francisco Luis Reyes, "A Community Music Approach to Popular Music Teaching in Formal Music Education," *Canadian Music Educator* 59, no.1 (2017): 28.

## Social Science and Community

When examining the strength of a community's economy or culture, there is significant support that community music-making opportunities have direct positive outcomes. Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, who contributed to various studies, discover that partnerships are created, developed, and solidified through community music projects. They conclude that because of these strong partnerships, the possibility of financial benefits can be used to help struggling organizations and groups.<sup>146</sup>

Gillespie, Russell, and Hamann conducted a study examining newly started string programs on teachers, schools, districts, and communities. During their research, they discovered that when more music opportunities are added to a school's music program, there is the potential for decreased financial support.<sup>147</sup> However, through an energetic awareness, they concluded community members could help with sustaining programs for their children actively involved in music.<sup>148</sup>

Another direct positive outcome in community music-making is how it can impact its own culture. To premise these findings, it is important to note that because each community is unique, like that of a fingerprint, the conclusions drawn upon in the various studies are to be generally applied. In a study that documented the inception, process, and outcomes of a university-school collaboration initiative, Soto, Lum, and Campbell identified significant findings related to community and culture. One result helped the researchers to conclude that

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<sup>146</sup> Lee Higgins and Lee Willingham, *Engaging In Community Music: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2017), 145-146.

<sup>147</sup> Robert Gillespie, Joshua A. Russell, and Donald L. Hamann, "String Music Educators' Perceptions of the Impact of New String Programs on Student Outcomes, School Music Programs, and Communities," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, No. 2 (July 2014): 181-182.

<sup>148</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-186.

their “partnerships led to important insights in music, education, and culture that may well shape the work of the prospective teachers and the children of the Valley for generations to come.”<sup>149</sup> These kinds of collaborations with communities help create sustaining relationships and facilitate moments of music learning experiences.

Another collaboration encounter transpired when a Canadian music educator added the school librarian and social studies teacher's role to her already busy schedule. Janet Spring documents her experiences juggling these roles to help reach her students in a more meaningful way. She discovers that in accepting these additional duties, she can interject music that can emphasize the lesson content, while strengthening her student’s knowledge of national patriotism through music-making opportunities. Thus, building a more robust culture of national citizens. She concluded that, “As we move to the future, we should continue to express our developing Canadian identity, our history, and our heritage as well as our diverse, expanding multicultural influences through music. We can also effectively utilize this music to make connections between all areas of the curriculum.”<sup>150</sup>

### Community Music Education Advocacy

The overall arching purpose of community music-making opportunities is to advocate for music education, bring awareness of the challenges that face music education, and demonstrate music education's efficacy. A 1993 article in the *American Music Teacher Journal* concluded

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<sup>149</sup> Amanda Christina Soto, Chee-Hoo Lum, and Patricia Shehan Campbell, “A University-School Music Partnership for Music Education Majors In A Culturally Distinctive Community,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 56, no. 4 (2009): 354.

<sup>150</sup> Patricia Shand, “Teaching Canadian Music in a Rural Setting,” *Canadian Music in Education* 48, No. 3 (Spring 2007): 20.

that there is not enough awareness or advocacy for music education.<sup>151</sup> The article reveals that time and energy are the most common contributing factors for refraining to be more active in advocating for music education.<sup>152</sup> MarySue Harris arrived at this same conclusion during a Community Outreach and Education (COE) workshop during an MTNA convention in Minneapolis. However, she elevated the declaration by adding that it is the responsibility of music advocates “to work together championing music education.”<sup>153</sup> Tooshar Swain concluded in her study of music advocacy and awareness post-ESSA, that “Now is the time to embrace the role of music advocate fully. Educators, parents, local businesses, and general music advocates can have very busy ‘day jobs’ that require time and resources. However, music advocacy must be seen as part of the ‘job’ to instill the consistent persuasion necessary to create and enhance quality music programs.”<sup>154</sup> As advocacy is practiced, awareness begins to materialize, creating opportunities for community members to engage. Glen Schneider encourages all music educators to perceive their music programs through the lens of marketing. He concluded that successful music programs are birthed out of creative marketing. “Where programs thrive, the local community sees a need for music education, they are willing to pay for it, and they understand the short-term and long-term benefits of the experience.”<sup>155</sup> Schneider’s conclusion also demonstrates how advocacy and awareness bring about a desired outcome. This efficacy of

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<sup>151</sup> “Music in the Community,” *American Music Teacher* 42, No. 6 (July 1993): 50.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> MarySue Harris, “Music in the Community: New Advocacy Opportunities for the New Year: An Advocacy Challenge,” *American Music Teacher* 49, No. 5 (April 2000): 82.

<sup>154</sup> Tooshar Swain, “Music Education Advocacy Post ESSA,” *Choral Journal* 60, No 2 (September 2019): 25.

<sup>155</sup> Glen Schneider, “Marketing the Music Program to Your Community,” *School Band & Orchestra* (December 2016): 14.

community music opportunities can manifest in many forms. Patrick Jones's study concluded that through civic engagement, three outcomes are desirable for any music advocate:

First, globalization has made the development of intercultural understanding and civic engagement some of the most crucial things people must develop for our era and the foreseeable future.

Second, knowing that social capital is the stuff from which such understandings and engagement emanate, music educators and community musicians can focus their efforts not simply on the sonic sphere and cultural contexts of music, but also the development of social capital through helping students develop the knowledge, dispositions, habits and musicianship skills necessary to engage musically in a variety of social settings with a variety of other people throughout life.

Third, as some research has shown, pedagogical approaches that foster student engagement makes a difference in developing student interaction, decision-making, and leadership skills.<sup>156</sup>

### **Preliminary Questions**

Before the first of the thirteen main questions were posed, four preliminary questions were asked to help verify the participant's background for the study, while also creating confidence between the researcher and the participants. The four preliminary questions are:

- (1) What level of education have you acquired for teaching music?
- (2) How long have you been a music educator?
- (3) What grade levels have you had experience in teaching?
- (4) What influenced you to become a music educator?

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<sup>156</sup> Patrick M. Jones, "Developing Social Capital: A Role for Music Education and Community Music in Fostering Civic Engagement and Intercultural Understanding," *International Journal of Community Music* 3, no. 2 (2010): 298.



Below are four visual representations of the data collected from the preliminary questions.

### Education

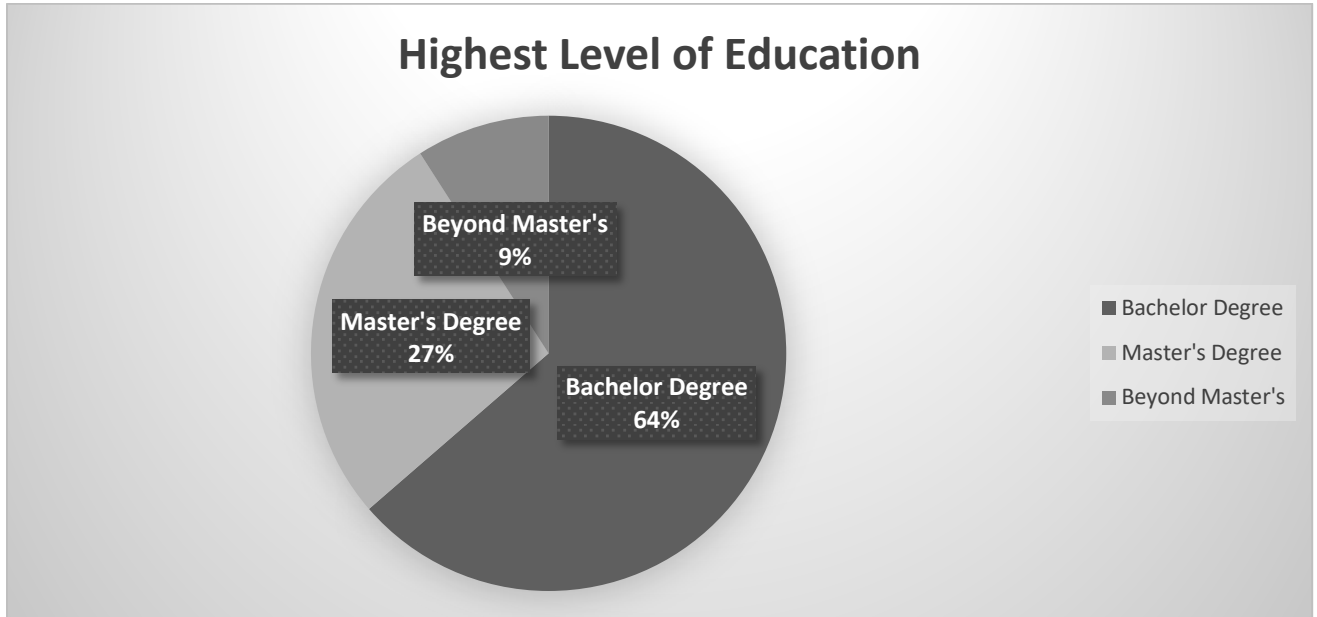


Figure 4.1. Highest level of education attained by respondents

### Teaching Experience

Table 4.1

*Itemized teacher yearly experience*

Teacher	Total Years Teaching (years)
A	22
B	28
C	12
D	23
E	38
F	16
G	16
H	17
I	23
J	1
K	21

## Grade-Level Experience

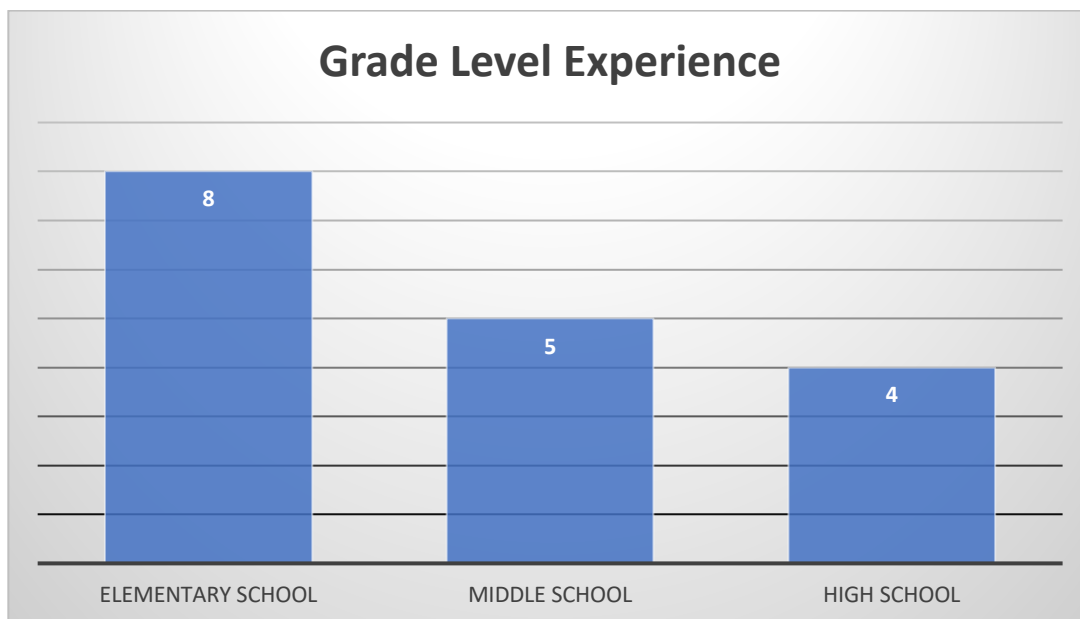


Figure 4.2. Summary of grades taught by respondents

## Career Influence

During the preliminary questions, the participants were asked what influenced them to become music educators. Although several collective factors influenced their decision to pursue music education, three main influences were discovered as common factors for their chosen vocation. The greatest was the influence of a former school music teacher, with 6 (54.5%) respondents testifying that a retired music teacher had influenced them in becoming a music educator themselves. Melissa Lesniak discovered this same influence while interviewing a music educator.<sup>157</sup> During the interview, the music educator described her elementary music teachers as

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<sup>157</sup> Melissa Lesniak, "Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact," *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 23.

“very influential in her life and described her experience in the Symphony’s program as one that inspired her to seek an opportunity to work in an outreach program.”<sup>158</sup> Table 4.2 details the three main influences for choosing music education as their vocation and the number of respondents who cited their significant influence. The responses from each participant determined assumptions.

Table 4.2

*Major Influences for Music Education Vocation*

Number of Teachers	Major Influence	Assumptions
6	Former school music teacher	K-12
3	Church or ministry affiliated	Music pastor/director
2	Family-related	Parents who participated musically

### **Rural Community Music Education Interview Survey**

There were eleven interviews with music educators that were coordinated in agreement with each participant’s schedule. Although each participant was given the option to conduct their interview by phone or by video call, all chose to be interviewed by phone.

Assurance of confidentiality was provided to each individual before their interview. Confidentiality was disclosed both in the body of the initial contact email (Appendix A), follow-up email (Appendix B), and an attached consent form (Appendix C). Although the initial time

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<sup>158</sup> Melissa Lesniak, “Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact,” *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 23.

allotted for the interview was 15-20 minutes, the approximate average time was 26 minutes. After successful transcription of the recorded call by an off-site unaffiliated clerk, the recordings were deleted per the agreement stated within the emails and consent form. In addition to maintaining confidentiality, the participants' identities were anonymized by assigning an unidentifiable code in place of their name, such as *Teacher A*, *Teacher B*, etc.

Permission to conduct the interviews was approved through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) through their application process. Once approval was received, interviews were conducted and documented for analysis by transcribing the respondent's feedback. Before the data analysis began, the interviews' transcriptions were cross-checked and approved by the researcher to verify the participants' information and opinions were accurate in their recordings. The audio recordings were deleted, and the approved transcriptions were stored on an external memory drive for further reference and verification of information used in the research and this paper.

The purpose of this study was to discover if music educators in rural schools are reaching out to their community to provide music opportunities. In addition to this purpose, another aim is to investigate possible reasons why music educators may not provide community music opportunities within their respective rural school districts and connect any possible common links to successful implementation of community opportunities that may benefit the rural school's music program.

There were thirteen main questions posed to the participants. Some questions contained additional sub-questions to help elaborate on the participant's responses to the main question.

The questions are as follows:

1. Are you currently active, or have been involved, in facilitating music opportunities for your community?
2. Does your music program have performance opportunities for your students?
3. Do you do any other kinds of musical events?
4. Are these concerts promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or do they tend to be of interest primarily to parents of the performers?
5. Is there a connection between the music program and athletics?
6. Do you have a music “boosters” program?
7. Does your music program work with a community theater or musical theater group?
8. Is there a music store nearby?
9. Do you offer community music groups or lessons?
10. How have these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher, your students and your music program?
11. What benefits have you seen from being involved with the community?
12. Is there anything holding you back from being more involved?
13. Can you name up to three things you would like to see within the following two to five years to your students, your music program, and community because of community involvement?

## Main Questions

*Question #1: Are you currently active, or have been involved, in facilitating music opportunities for your community?*

Question one addresses the participation status of music educators in facilitating music opportunities to their communities. Eight out of the eleven participants answered yes, while three of the participants answered no. Those who answered yes were able to move on to the second main question of the interview. Those who answered “no” were asked a series of sub-questions to understand their reply to answering no. Reasons for not being active in facilitating music opportunities for their community include (1) no genuine apparent interest in community music opportunities; and (2) no personal interest in creating opportunities. A third respondent cited that as a first-year music teacher, they were new to the area but are very interested in creating or facilitating a community music outreach.<sup>159</sup>

When asked by the interviewer for considerations and motivators for facilitating community music outreach programs, the respondents cited that the benefits can positively impact their music programs. Teacher J suggests that whether facilitating or participating in a community music program, there is always the potential for musical reinforcement. “I think that the more time students spend in music outside of school, the better they’re going to do in my class for sure...It helps in character development. It helps you be a better, more well-rounded person.”<sup>160</sup> In the same respect, Teacher G supports the benefits of having a community music outreach in stating that “...you get a lot of help from the people in your community, and it’s

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<sup>159</sup> Teacher J, interview by author, Lynchburg, June 1, 2020.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

definitely something that any music program will benefit from, because the people that are in the community, especially the parents are willing to lend a hand and really want to see their kids perform and succeed.”<sup>161</sup> Their responses align with past studies' findings to measure the success of involvement in community music-making, such as string, band, or ukulele programs. Family and community participation contribute to a more holistic and successful music education and potentially beneficial for students to achieve academic goals within rural settings.<sup>162</sup>

*Questions #2:* Does your music program have performance opportunities for your students?

AND

*Question #3:* Do you do any other kinds of musical events?

Questions two and three are related in nature but were separated to help guide the interview process. Collectively, the questions addressed school music program opportunities that they provide for their students. All the participants cited a winter and spring concert as part of their school's calendar each year. Below, Table 4.3 depicts some of the programs that the participants offer their students.

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<sup>161</sup> Teacher G, interview by author, Lynchburg, June 1, 2020.

<sup>162</sup> Carrie A. Semke and Susan M. Sheridan, “Family-School Connections in Rural Educational Settings: A Systematic Review of the Empirical Literature,” *School Community Journal* 22, no. 1 (2012): 43.

Table 4.3

*School music programs offered to students*

Music Program Offering	% of Teachers	Assumptions
Winter Concert	100	District requirement
Spring Concert	100	District requirement
All-County Band/Chorus	9	Participatory
Patriotic Holiday Concert/Program	27	Participatory
Parades	9	Participatory
Community Outreach (i.e., caroling)	9	Participatory

While the winter and spring concerts were unanimously listed as music-making opportunities for their students, few respondents listed community outreaches as part of their regular school year routine—those who did experience a more satisfying accomplishment. In a study to determine cultural resourcefulness, Chris Gibson and Andrea Gordon recognize that, “All societies have traditions of musical performance and expression. Music is a powerful visceral force; it can foster feelings of community and belonging while establishing a sense of self-identity and place.”<sup>163</sup>

*Question #4: Are these concerts promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or do they tend to be of interest primarily to parents of the performers?*

Question four explores whether music educators promote their concerts and programs, as listed in questions two and three, to the general public in their community or just the students' parents and family. Although four respondents said they advertise and promote their music

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<sup>163</sup> Chris Gibson and Andrea Gordon, “Rural Cultural Resourcefulness: How Community Music Enterprises Sustain Cultural Vitality,” *Journal of Rural Studies* 63 (2018): 259.



programs and concerts to their community, seven of the participants said they do not promote their music programs and concerts to the community. These seven respondents cited two significant concerns. The first is parking, where there is inadequate space for parents and family to park their cars safely and efficiently. The second is seating inside the performance space. Five respondents said that the majority of their performances are standing room only. This, coupled with occupancy limits set by the local code enforcement, creates barriers for bringing in more people to observe the students.

The four music educators who do advertise to their community said they use various means of advertising. The most popular was social media (i.e., Facebook), followed by local newspapers, school websites, flyers, and local businesses. All four respondents eluded using the various methods of promoting their music performances through advertising that is free.

*Question #5: Is there a connection between the music program and athletics?*

Question five asks the participants if there is a connection between their music programs and athletics. Seven respondents answered “no” that they do not have a connection with athletics, while three respondents answered “yes” in having a strong connection to their school’s athletic program. Those who do not have a connection all teach in an elementary school setting where it was disclosed that they do not offer a competitive athletic program for their students at the elementary level. Those three who are strongly connected to their school’s athletic programs teach in a middle and high school setting. One respondent did not answer the question.

*Question #6: Do you have a music “booster” program?*

Question six addresses music and booster programs. Booster programs are closely related to, but not exclusive to, middle and high school athletic programs. They provide a means of financial support and morale for both curricular and extra-curricular activities. However, they are also a practice for music programs in the middle and high school levels. When asked if they had a music booster program, three responded “yes,” seven responded “no,” and one gave no response. The three music teachers who responded with “yes” taught at the middle and high school levels, while the seven who replied “no” all taught at the elementary level.

Although the seven “no” respondents have no official music booster program, three cited that they regularly rely on their school’s PTA, PTC, or PTO for needs that may arise within the school year. The other music educator noted that their governing school board does not allow any fundraising type and that all music needs must be presented to the school leadership for purchase consideration.

*Question #7: Does your music program work with a community theater or musical theater group?*

Question seven asks if the participant’s music programs are connected to their community’s theatre group. And while ten participants responded that their programs are not associated with their community’s theatre group, one participant encourages their students to attempt to participate in their community theater as much as possible actively. The music teacher, Teacher F, notes that in addition to their students being on stage, students are actively working backstage with such tasks as lighting, props, and recording.<sup>164</sup>

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<sup>164</sup> Teacher F, interview by author, Lynchburg, June 1, 2020.

Even though ten participants responded “no” to having a connection with local community theatre, three cited that they have had students in the past take it upon themselves to participate in their community theatre actively. Two of the ten participants noted that they have a strong desire to be directly involved with their community theatre, but distance is a significant factor.

*Question #8: Is there a music store nearby?*

Question eight aimed to examine the impact of music stores and the participant’s music programs. When asked if they were connected to a local music store, ten responded “yes,” while one responded “no.” The participant who answered “no” cited that distance was the hindering issue, with the closest music store being over one hundred miles away. The majority reveal that their community music store offers instrument rental programs for local students, while providing instrument lessons.

It is important to note that even though there is a strong connection between schools and local music stores, the music teachers will purchase many music supplies online because of faster delivery and better pricing.

*Question #9: Do you offer community music groups or lessons?*

Question nine readdresses the previous question in a more personal application by asking the participants if they offer music lessons to their community, whether solo or in groups. While nine participants responded that they do not offer music lessons outside of school, two answered that they offer lessons outside of the school day. These two respondents reported that by providing the lessons, they could make more meaningful connections with the students' families. This corroborates with Lisa Koop’s interest in music educators committing to start connecting

through music opportunities to build constructive relationships that foster both learning and entertainment.<sup>165</sup> Both respondents feel that this is vital to helping their students succeed musically in the school and the community. Lessons offered included piano, voice, guitar, and flute.

Out of the nine participants who responded that they do not offer music lessons outside of school, Teacher A said that they used to provide lessons to their community, but unfortunately do not have the time to do so anymore. Teacher K does not offer community music lessons because they are afraid of creating a conflict of interest between them and their school. Teachers C, D, E, and G, said that even though they aren't facilitating music lessons for their community, they have not ruled it out completely. Time and interest are shared concerns between these respondents.

*Question #10: How have these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher, your students and your music program?*

Question ten addresses the direct impact that community music opportunities have on the participants as teachers, their students, and their music program. As shown in Table 4.4, five common positive influences are shared amongst the participants.

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<sup>165</sup> Lisa Huisman Koops, "Community Partners and Early Childhood Music," *General Music Today* 32, no. 1 (2018): 37.

Table 4.4

*Impact of community music opportunities*

Student Opportunities	# of Teachers
Performing through community interaction or connectedness	4
Created relationships	2
Encouraged practicing and class attendance	2
Inspiration	3
Improved music literacy	2

While these five popular main themes are related to student opportunities, two participants cited that they benefitted through professional development because of their past involvement with community music-related opportunities. Teachers D and I both suggest that even though their programs and students have shown growth, they as music educators grew through being forced to discover and develop their knowledge and association with music literature; reach out to other teachers for advice; and, at times learning new things simultaneously with others around them in their community.

*Question #11: What benefits have you seen from being involved with the community?*

Where question ten addressed the impact that community music opportunities have on the participants, question eleven focuses more on itemizing the benefits of being involved with the community. In this question, a significant number of participants saw a stronger relationship and trust with their community constituents as a benefit from being involved in music within their

community. This was followed by another shared benefit of opportunities for both the student and teacher to perform. Table 4.5 presents the more significant benefits shared by the respondents.

Table 4.5

*Benefits of community music involvement*

Benefits	# of Teachers	Assumptions
Teacher recognized by parents and community	3	
Enlisting support from the community	3	
Establishing relationships and trust within the community	6	
Opportunities to perform	4	
Students receive a well-rounded education	3	

Although not one of the more popular responses, three teachers specified that through community music involvement, their students can receive a more well-rounded education. This affirms the conclusion from previous studies that “understanding how different community music groups function could offer valuable insight for school music teachers concerned with teaching for life-long musicianship.”<sup>166</sup> A similar study also concluded a “wide range of positive

<sup>166</sup> Robin Giebelhausen and Adam J. Kruse, “A Smile on everybody’s face: A multiple case study of community ukulele groups,” *International Journal of Music Education* 36, no. 3 (2018): 350.

outcomes for students and the overall music program” involved in community music-making opportunities.<sup>167</sup>

*Question #12: Is there anything holding you back from being more involved?*

Question twelve approaches possible barriers that are preventing the participants from being more musically involved in their community. Overall, eight obstacles were suggested as barriers that hindered any active motivation to create and facilitate involvement. These obstacles included money, school administration and staff support, parental support, and distance. However, the most significant barrier was the lack of time in the music educator’s schedule, both professional and personal. Contributors to the lack of time included current school schedule load and parental responsibilities. Table 4.6 illustrates some of the more common barriers that the respondents mentioned.

Table 4.6

Detractors against more community involvement

Detractors	# of Teachers
Time	9
Family	2
Finances	3
Community Interest	2

<sup>167</sup> Robert Gillespie, Joshua A. Russel, and Donald L. Hamann, “String Music Educators’ Perceptions of the Impact of New String Programs on Student Outcomes, School Music Programs, and Communities,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, no. 2 (2014): 186.

*Question #13: Can you name use happen within the next two to five years to your students, your music program, and/or community because of community involvement?*

Question thirteen concluded the interview by asking each participant to list up to three things they would like to take place within the next two to five years that would influence their students, music program, or the community because of their involvement. The respondents gave eighteen suggestions, but not all were shared between them. The more popular suggestions were (1) more financial support from the school board and community; (2) for parents to take a more active role in their child's music education; (3) more open support from school administration and staff; and (4) more community support for music education.

The respondent's answers to the questionnaire were significant in helping to test the hypotheses. However, *Teacher I's* response was unforeseen while addressing question twelve and thirteen. While many respondents suggested time as a hinderance for becoming more involved in helping facilitate more music making opportunities, *Teacher I* emphasized the importance of connecting more with family before accepting more responsibility in music making opportunities. *Teacher I* states:

I mean, of course, time is always the answer for everyone, but I'm curious that there would be enough interest...In light of the last couple months with the COVID virus, of course you know schools have been shut down, [and] let me tell you what, I've seen such a benefit in my life and my family's lives of us not having to run around and, you know, go here, there, and everywhere...go to this practice, go to this then that, you know, we have slowed down, and let me tell you what, my answer would have been different two months ago, but after having this time to slow down, I don't know that it's a really good idea to offer more and more and more and more in this day and age. I think that we as a country are too busy as it is...we're too busy as a nation and do we really need to add or offer more and more and more on our plates, and so you know, that's kinda how I feel right now.

This response invites the opportunity to further research this perspective beyond this study.



## CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS

### Rationale for the Study

Chapter One introduced specifics relating to the background, purpose, significance, delimitations, and rationale of the research study. These specifics help support a campaign to discover and examine what causes rural music educators not to build community musical opportunities. Secondly, they discover how parental support and student interest be bolstered through community music-making opportunities.

Chapter Two explored literature that shared facets of community music-making and comprehensive assistance. The areas discussed were cooperative community through partnerships, relationships, and networking; engagement and connectedness of community through festivals and various involvement; music education and community through intervention; social science and community through economic, cultural, rural, and urban influences; and community support through advocacy, awareness, and efficacy.

Chapter Three discussed the research method used to identify outliers for rural music educators not participating or connecting with the people of their community. The study was conducted as a phenomenological qualitative project. The phenomenon lies in the perception and experiences of the participants with teaching in a rural setting. The design was a constructed set of predetermined questions posed to each participant. The various responses to each prompt within the questionnaire represent the data collected and analyzed to test the hypotheses.

Chapter Four characterized each question and response while illustrating any possible themes or relationships that may or may not support the hypotheses through graphs and tables. The study confirmed four outliers for music educators not enlisting community involvement: time, financial support, family obligations, and community interest. However, the study also

revealed that music educators struggled in their current programs with administrative and parental support.

### **Summary of Study**

The study consisted of the researcher contacting forty-two rural music educators, with only eleven responding to participate in the study. The participants (N=11) were initially contacted through email for recruitment, then completed their interview by phone within a few weeks. Each participant was given an equal opportunity to answer each question without any risk of bias or judgment from the researcher. Data was collected by fielding responses from each prompt within the questionnaire and analyzed for patterns and themes.

Overall, three themes became evident during the study. First, music teachers with immediate families are less likely to participate or facilitate in music-making opportunities. Second, music teachers are not well informed of community music interest. And third, music teachers are aware of the potential benefits of societal participation in music-making opportunities, yet they lack the enthusiasm to engage.

### **Summary of Purpose**

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative research study was to investigate the usefulness of rural music educators anchoring or improving their rural community's involvement to help provide support for the school's music program and students. The study revealed that the participants all agreed that active community involvement would benefit the music program and students, while also strengthening community connectedness and relationships with the students.

### **Summary of Procedure**

The study's procedure began with initial and follow-up emails being sent to forty-two possible participants, of which only thirteen responded: 11 yes; 2 no. The participants (N=11) were given a phone interview or video call; all chose phone interview. Most interviews took an average of twenty minutes to complete. All respondents were asked the same set of questions. The sub-questions were dependent on their responses to the main questions.

### **Summary of Findings and Prior Research**

This section addresses the research questions and the findings. The primary research question is, "Through what opportunities does the community have to be involved in music?" Accompanying the primary research question are two secondary research questions: "How does community involvement benefit the music program?" and "How does community involvement benefit the students?" Each question, and related sub-question, within the questionnaire used to conduct the interviews, had their own unique set of findings.

*Are you currently active, or have you been involved, in facilitating music opportunities for your community?*

Eight out of eleven respondents acknowledged that they have been, involved in providing opportunities for the people within their community. Although not directly asked by the interviewer, respondents expressed two primary opportunities: providing private music lessons and leading a music ensemble. However, the three respondents who acknowledged that they had not been involved in delivering community music opportunities suggest that there is either no

personal interest as a teacher to do so or no interest within the community itself to facilitate any music outreach.

It is important to note that all eleven teachers collectively agree that the benefits of creating music opportunities far outweigh the alternative. Many teachers suggest that it would create advocacy for the music program. Others added that the outreaches such as band, orchestra, and theatre would offer their students additional opportunities to use their music skills for personal growth and development. Other respondents suggested that it would create an awareness for parents to become actively engaged in their children's education through music.

*Does your music program have performance opportunities for your students?*

This question was combined with the third question in Chapter Four. For this chapter, it has been separated to show the transparency of the findings. All the respondents cited two main music performances for their students each year: a winter concert and a spring concert. Winter concerts primarily center around Kwanzaa, Hannukah, and Christmas. However, spring concerts center around various ideas but most commonly are used to showcase what the music students have been learning throughout the year.

*Do you do any other kinds of musical events?*

While winter and spring concerts were the two most popular responses to the previous question, respondents were prompted to offer more musical events that they facilitate. Events such as an all-county band or chorus concert; patriotic concerts; parades; caroling; and community outreaches, such as nursing homes, were given as active opportunities for their students.

*Are these concerts promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or do they tend to be of interest primarily to the performers' parents?*

The two previous questions list several music opportunities for their students, but this fourth question begins to present insight on community relationship with the music educator and program. The various school-related performances are usually promoted in-house for parents and close family, but what about the people of the community? Some respondents acknowledged that they promote or market their performances to the community using communication such as newspapers, school websites, and flyers. The most popular means of suggested advertising was Facebook because it is instant and free. It is noted that some of the respondents use local businesses to help promote their performances as well. A large percentage of the participants admitted that even though they support promoting school music concerts to the community, they do not actively pursue promoting because of logistical problems such as seating capacity and parking.

*Is there a connection between the music program and athletics?*

This question is geared more towards the secondary school level. Not many, if at all, elementary or middle schools have an athletic program that would facilitate a pep band or marching band. However, it is important to note that there are always opportunities for elementary and middle school music programs to come alongside the high school music program and help contribute to the cause of music education and advocacy.

*Do you have a music “booster” program?*

Just like the previous question, this question is geared more for high school music programs. Yet, a “booster” program is not exclusive to only athletics. It can take on different forms for music programs such as PTA, PTO, and PTC programs. However, seven respondents acknowledged that they do not have a booster program, while three respondents acknowledged that they have a booster program. The seven participants rely on their school’s in-house organizations to help with funding, while the other three participants work closely with their booster program chairperson. One participant did not respond to the question. Past research has affirmed that fundraising is a vital component helping music educators provide a quality education for their students.<sup>168</sup>

*Does your music program work with a community theater or musical theater group?*

In theory, most rural areas do not have a theater company or program outside of what the school provides for its students due to facilities and finances. Yet, the question poses an opportunity for music educators to explore possibilities of facilitating such an offering to help connect students and the school music program to community members. While ten respondents replied that they do not have any connection with a community theater company, one did acknowledge that they encourage their students to be actively participating in their community theater as much as they can.

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<sup>168</sup> Kenneth Elpus and Adam Grise, “Music Booster Groups: Alleviating or Exacerbating Funding Inequality in American Public School Music Education,” *Journal of Research in Music Education* 67, no. 1 (2019): 20.

*Is there a music store nearby?*

The music educator, music program, and the students can benefit from a healthy relationship with their local music store, even if the local music store is outside of their rural community. When asked if they were connected to a local music store, ten of the eleven respondents acknowledged that they have a working relationship with a music store. The benefits ranged from discounts on products and services.

*Do you offer community music groups or lessons?*

Teaching music in a classroom to students does not translate to teaching private lessons outside of their contracted school hours. In other words, it is a common misconception that school music educators also teach private lessons. Out of eleven participants, only two responded that they currently offer private lessons within the community, while one responded that they used to provide lessons but have since retired.

*How have these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher, your students, and your music program?*

Each participant contributed a great many perspectives and opinions regarding the impact on themselves, their students, and the music program from being involved musically within the community. The most shared response were the performance opportunities given to the students and the teacher. Coupled with this response is the idea of connectedness. At a macro-level, the school district becomes connected to its community, while at the micro-level, each student and participant, including audience members, become connected.

*What benefits have you seen from being involved with the community?*

The study yielded a variety of benefits for music educators engaging in music opportunities with their community. Participants were allowed to contribute as much as they wanted and expound on their perspectives of community involvement. Overall, two benefits were emphasized as being the most desired. The first was establishing relationship and trust between the music educator, program, students, and community. This networking of connectedness can create an interrelation of advocacy and support for the students and music program. Also, it provides the people of the community an outlet to be engaged in music.

The second biggest benefit shared between the respondents was the copious opportunities to perform. Most may gravitate to the performers being the music students, but the study revealed that performers also included the music educator and the community's people.

*Is there anything holding you back from being more involved?*

Although loosely connected to the questionnaire's first question, this question allowed the respondents to freely express their opinions regarding their interpersonal interactions with community music opportunities. With 82% of respondents agreeing, the most popular restrictor for music educators becoming more involved in their community is time. Distinctions of time included available hours, prior commitments, no foreknowledge of available time for community participants, and venue scheduling. The second most popular restrictor of involvement was finances. Distinctions that made up finances were funds to purchase instruments, music, and supplies; possible salary or stipend for the facilitator; and other unknown associated fees or expenses.



*Can you name up to three things you would like to see within the next two to five years to your students, your music program, and/or community because of community involvement?*

Respondents were asked if they could name up to three anticipated milestones they would like to see come to pass within the next five years. Although there were over thirty viewpoints, four significant views were shared between all respondents: (1) more financial support from the school board and community; (2) parents taking more interest in their children's music education; (3) more program support from school administration and staff; and (4) more community support for music education within the schools. It is important to note that the respondents were very forthcoming about their administration and the community's generic support. Support for the music program and its students seems to be acknowledged at best, that is somewhat superficial. However, they would like to see more of a genuine advocacy for music education through active participation and contributions from administration and community members.

### **Limitations**

Although the study yielded various data points that showed dependence and independence, the study unquestionably displays limitations. As in any investigation, careful discretion should be exercised when making inclusive assumptions based on the data collected by virtue of the following reasons:

1. The sample size was too small to represent a macro-depiction of all rural music educators in the United States;
2. The time of the study was during a global pandemic. This means that there was limited access to rural schools because of metro, urban, and rural school closures nationwide to help curve the spread of the virus; and

3. The respondents answered only thirteen questions in one interview. Further preparation and collaboration could possibly refine and add additional questions to discover other significant connections amongst the data.

### **Recommendations for Future Study**

The following recommendations for future study are based on the procedures, limits, and findings from this study:

1. The sample size was only eleven music educators. A greater sample size (e.g., eight rural music educators per state, thus equaling four hundred) would allow for a much better representation in which to assume any outcome;
2. The study was completed within five months. Perhaps extending the time for research and data analysis would generate a more extensive battery of data by allowing respondents more time to contemplate more detailed responses;
3. The study was adapted for rural music educators and their perceptions of leveraging community support. By including administrators, staff, students, parents, and community patrons, the outcomes could show a greater significance in the benefits of community support and involvement; and
4. The study targeted rural school music educators. Perhaps by performing a cross-analysis with metro and urban area music educators, the data analysis could reveal significant similarities and differences in leveraging community support.

### Implications for Practice

There is no doubt that prekindergarten through high school music educators have many hindrances that would inhibit them from accepting more responsibility regarding facilitating music opportunities outside of their obligations by their employer. However, based on the study, the underlying consensus is that rural music educators can have a more rewarding music program by connecting with their community by offering music opportunities. Melissa Lesniak came to this same conclusion, yet elevating this finding by stating, “When we are able to bring together students of various backgrounds and experiences and when true diversity is seen across out elementary and secondary schools, honors, all-state, and collegiate ensembles, we will be providing a more holistic and comprehensive experience for all participants, regardless of their own socioeconomic status.”<sup>169</sup> Music educators who associate and network in a meaningful way with the community's people create moments for connectedness. These moments manifest themselves as music educators promote and urge community attendance at concerts, which can increase advocacy for their music program through first-hand experiences. Former Vice President of MTNA, Joan Reist, challenges and encourages all those in any music-related endeavor to be proactive in delivering the message for the need of music education. She states that, “The era of advocacy is just beginning for supporters of the arts and, at this juncture, it must be the responsibility of all members of the music profession – along with their colleagues in the other arts – to do everything possible to ensure that future generations be given the opportunity

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<sup>169</sup> Melissa Lesniak, “Establishing String Outreach Programs for Long-Term Success and Impact,” *American String Teacher* 67, no. 5 (November 2017) 23.

to ‘grow up complete.’”<sup>170</sup> Thus, music educators that facilitate music opportunities to community patrons open possibilities for increased program support and financial subsidies.

Probably the most significant advantage for rural music educators would be the encouragement and support of the students. Students will have the chance to assemble with members of their community to rehearse and perform, thus leading to the possibility of nurturing relationships that could bring lifelong support and encouragement for both parties. Students come to music class with a greater sense of worth as both a person and a musician.

### **Thesis Summary**

Research shows unlimited potential for community music-making opportunities that benefit music educators, music students, and community members. These benefits range from improving economics, to increasing commutative relationships, and effectively to a more inclusive and holistic music education for all. The Primary Research Questions address the various opportunities for communities to be involved in music. The findings show that there are a significant number of opportunities for a community to be engaged in music. These opportunities present occasions for interactions between patrons, teachers, students, and parents. Such interactions allow for moments to connect and strengthen relationships amongst one another while also informing about needs that may be pressing in music education. To some extent, music educators may already be aware of the benefits of such interactions, as the research uncovered. However, few music educators are compelled to engage in connecting with their community in an effort to help bolster their music programs and better educate their music students.

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<sup>170</sup> Joan Reist, “Music in the Community,” *American Music Teacher* 42, No. 6 (July 1993): 50.

The review shows significant benefits for music programs and students. However, the literature review revealed a gap showing whether music educators are taking advantage of the untapped potential to help bolster their music programs. Out of the four hypothesized potential outcomes, it is revealed that while many rural music educators are aware of the potential for support for their music program and students, many do not take advantage of community music-making opportunities because of lack of resources, such as time and money. Research does show that if they do engage in these opportunities, their resources, support, and participation will also grow.

The first hypothesis states that, “Many rural music educators are involved in community music programs but are not directly involved in leading a community music program in their rural school district. Testing this hypothesis against the data from the research, it is the null-hypothesis that was verified stating that, “Many rural music educators are not involved in community music programs and are not directly involved in leading a community music program in their rural school district. Out of the eleven respondents, none were actively engaged in community music opportunities.

The second hypothesis states that, “Many rural music educators are held back from facilitating community music programs because of time.” The data from the research verified this to be an accurate assumption with nine of eleven respondents reporting that time is their primary concern for becoming more involved with community engagement. The null was disapproved.

The third hypothesis states that, “Many rural music educators are held back from facilitation community music programs due to a lack of financial support.” The data from the

research suggest that while this is a plausible concern, it is not the consensus of the respondents with only three of eleven citing finances to being a detractor for more community engagement. Therefore, this also makes the null-hypothesis plausible stating, “Many rural music educators are not held back from facilitation community music programs due to a lack of financial support.”

The fourth hypothesis that is tested in this study states that, “Many rural music educators are held back from facilitating community music programs due to a lack of resources, e.g., location and participants.” Although it’s revealed that lack of resources is a concern with two out of eleven respondents citing this issue, it is not the overall consensus of the respondents, making the hypothesis plausible. Moreover, the null-hypothesis becomes plausible as well stating that, “Many rural music educators are not held back from facilitating community music programs due to a lack of resources, e.g., location and participants.”

Community music-making opportunities can give music educators access to more “tools” in their music program “toolbox” for leveraging support and bolster learning in their classrooms. While this study shows that there is not a significant quantity of music educators taking advantage of this due to the low participation numbers, it is strongly advised that a greater study be conducted to test the hypotheses further and discover possible outliers that may contribute to low participation of music educators engaging with their community outside of the music classroom.

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**APPENDIX A: INITIAL CONTACT EMAIL/LETTER***000*

[MUSIC TEACHER/PRINCIPAL/SUPERINTENDENT]

[NAME OF SCHOOL/DISTRICT]

[PHYSICAL ADDRESS]

[MAILING ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE]

Dear [MUSIC TEACHER/PRINCIPAL/SUPERINTENDENT]:

As a graduate student in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Music Education degree. The purpose of my research is to discover what music opportunities are available for involvement to your community, and how this affects your school music program and students; and I am writing to invite eligible participants to join my study.

Participants must be 18 years of age or older and must serve in an education and/or administrative capacity at a rural school that has a music program. Participants, if willing, will be asked to engage in a short interview either by phone or Facetime. Before the interview, you will receive an email containing the interview questions to help facilitate thought-out responses and expedite our time. On the day of your interview, you will receive an email within two hours of the set interview time as a courtesy reminder of our appointment. I will be contacting you at the agreed time, so there will be no need to place a call to me on your behalf. It should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete the interview. For accuracy of information, the interview will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. After successful and accurate transcription, the audio file will be deleted immediately. Participation in this study will be confidential. Any names or identifiable information collected will be replaced with a pseudonym.

In order to participate, please contact me at 207-227-7478/sharris226@liberty.edu for more information or to schedule an interview. The deadline for participation is April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

A consent document will be emailed to you when you receive your interview questions for review prior to the official interview. The consent document contains additional information about my research. You will need to sign the informed consent document and return it to me no later than the time of the interview.

Participants will receive a \$10 VISA prepaid gift card as a courtesy for participating in the interview. I look forward to hopefully hearing from you soon. Thank you and good day!

Sincerely,

Mr. Stanley Harris, (A.B.D.) DME  
Professor of Music Education and Piano  
207-227-7478/sharris226@liberty.edu

**APPENDIX B: FOLLOW-UP EMAIL/LETTER**

[MUSIC TEACHER/PRINCIPAL/SUPERINTENDENT]  
[NAME OF SCHOOL/DISTRICT]  
[PHYSICAL ADDRESS]  
[MAILING ADDRESS]  
[CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE]

Dear [MUSIC TEACHER/PRINCIPAL/SUPERINTENDENT]:

As a graduate student in the Music Education Department in the School of Music at Liberty University, I am conducting research as part of the requirements for a Doctor of Music Education degree. Last week an email was sent to you inviting you to participate in a research study. This follow-up email is being sent to remind you to respond to my email if you would like to participate and have not already done so. The deadline for participation is April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to take part in a phone call or Facetime interview. Before the interview, you will receive an email containing the interview questions to help facilitate thought-out responses and expedite our time. On the day of your interview, you will receive an email within two hours of the set interview time as a courtesy reminder of our appointment. I will be contacting you at the agreed time, so there will be no need to place a call to me on your behalf. It should take approximately 15-20 minutes for you to complete the interview. For accuracy of information, the interview will be audio recorded for transcription purposes. After successful and accurate transcription, the audio file will be deleted immediately. Participation in this study will be confidential. Any names or identifiable information collected will be replaced with a pseudonym.

To participate, contact me either through email, phone, or text to schedule an interview. My contact information is located under my signature of this correspondence.

A consent document will be sent to you as an attachment to the email containing the research questions before the official interview. The informed consent document contains additional information about my research. Please sign the informed consent document and return it to me no later than the time of the interview.

If you choose to participate, you will receive a prepaid VISA gift card, valued at \$10, as a thank you for your time and input. Thank you for your time and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Mr. Stanley Harris, A.B.D. (DME)  
Professor of Music Education and Piano  
PH:207-227-7478  
EMAIL: sharris226@liberty.edu

## APPENDIX C: RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

### Consent

**Title of the Project:** Encouraging American Rural Music Educators to Develop Community Involvement

**Principal Investigator:** Mr. Stanley Harris, (A.B.D.) Doctor of Music Education DME, Liberty University School of Music

#### **Invitation to be Part of a Research Study**

You are invited to participate in a research study. In order to participate, you must be 18 years of age or older and must have served in an education and/or administrative capacity (e.g., music educator, principal, or superintendent) at a rural school that has a music program. Taking part in this research project is voluntary.

Please take time to read this entire form and ask questions before deciding whether to take part in this research project.

#### **What is the study about and why is it being done?**

The purpose of the study is to discover if there is a pattern or link between community involvement in music activities lead by the rural school district's music educator and the school's music program. The research will be interview-based (over the phone or Facetime) from administrators, principals, and/or music educators in rural communities in America. My hypothesis is that when music educators are musically involved in their community, the result is that the community will be much more supportive of the school district's music program through its involvement, thus encouraging the music students and possibly bolstering the financial and social aspects of the music program.

#### **What will happen if you take part in this study?**

If you agree to be in this study, I would ask you to do the following things:

- Answer a series of interview questions that you will receive prior to the interview. The approximate duration of the interview will be between 15-20 minutes.
- Interviews will take place via phone or Facetime and will be recorded.

#### **How could you or others benefit from this study?**

Participants should not expect to receive a direct benefit from taking part in this study. Benefits to society include possible brainstormed opportunities to help enhance the community, music program, music teacher, and students.

**What risks might you experience from being in this study?**

The risks involved in this study are minimal, which means they are equal to the risks you would encounter in everyday life.

**How will personal information be protected?**

The records of this study will be kept private. Research records will be stored securely, and only the researcher will have access to the records.

- Confidentiality will be protected by assigning codes to any names or identifiable information that is collected. Interviews will be conducted in a location where others will not easily overhear the conversation.
- Data will be stored on a password-locked computer and may be used in future presentations. After one year, all electronic records will be deleted.
- Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. After successful and accurate transcription, the recordings will be immediately erased. Only the researcher will have access to these recordings.

**How will you be compensated for being part of the study?**

Participants will be compensated for participating in this study. Each participant will receive a prepaid VISA gift card worth \$10 within four weeks after the conclusion of the interview. If participant declines at any time to fully complete the interview, then they will not be eligible for compensation. Email addresses will be requested for compensation purposes.

**Is study participation voluntary?**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**What should you do if you decide to withdraw from the study?**

If you choose to withdraw from the study, please contact the researcher at the email address/phone number included in the next paragraph. Should you choose to withdraw, data collected from you will be destroyed immediately and will not be included in this study.

**Whom do you contact if you have questions or concerns about the study?**

The researcher conducting this study is Stanley Harris. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact him at 207-227-



7478 or email at [sharris226@liberty.edu](mailto:sharris226@liberty.edu). You may also contact the researcher's faculty sponsor, Dr. Rebecca Watson at [rwatson10@liberty.edu](mailto:rwatson10@liberty.edu).

**Whom do you contact if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?**

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd., Green Hall Ste. 2845, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

**Your Consent**

By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will be given a copy of this document for your records. The researcher will keep a copy with the study records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

*I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.*

The researcher has my permission to audio-record me as part of my participation in this study.

---

Printed Subject Name Signature & Date

**Before agreeing to be part of the research, please be sure that you understand what the study is about. You can print a copy of the document for your records. If you have any questions about the study later, you can contact the researcher/study team using the information provided above.**

**APPENDIX D: IRB APPROVAL LETTER****LIBERTY UNIVERSITY**  
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 6, 2020

Stanley Harris  
Rebecca Watson

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY19-20-153 “Encouraging American Rural Music Educators to Develop Community Involvement”

Dear Stanley Harris, Rebecca Watson:

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

101(b):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met: The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

Your stamped consent form can be found under the Attachments tab within the Submission Details section of your study on Cayuse IRB. This form should be copied and used to gain the consent of your research participants. If you plan to provide your consent information electronically, the contents of the attached consent document should be made available without alteration.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at [irb@liberty.edu](mailto:irb@liberty.edu).

Sincerely,  
**G. Michele Baker, MA, CIP**  
*Administrative Chair of Institutional Research*  
**Research Ethics Office**

**APPENDIX E: CITI PROGRAM CERTIFICATE**



Completion Date 19-Feb-2020  
Expiration Date 18-Feb-2023  
Record ID 35474159

This is to certify that:

**Stanley Harris**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Curriculum Group)  
**Social & Behavioral Researchers** (Course Learner Group)  
**1 - Basic Course** (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**Liberty University**



Verify at [www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2111c336-4d3c-4722-a994-b1b974df0595-35474159](http://www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w2111c336-4d3c-4722-a994-b1b974df0595-35474159)

**APPENDIX F: RESPONDENT'S TRANSCRIPTS*****TEACHER A***

Part 1:

Teacher A: Hello?

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher A?

Teacher A: Yes.

Stan: Hi, Teacher A. This is Stan Harris from Liberty University. How are you doing'?

Teacher A: Oh, I'm good. How are you?

Stan: Oh, good. You awake this morning?

Teacher A: Oh, yeah.

Stan: So how are things up there in [anonymized location]?

Teacher A: Things are good.

Stan: All the snow gone?

Teacher A: Well, I live in [anonymized location], so I don't know if their snow's gone or not, but ours is.

Stan: Gotcha, okay. Yeah. Well, thank you very much for volunteering to do this interview. I promise it'll be painless.

Teacher A: No problem.

Stan: So one thing I will tell ya' is in order for me to send you your gift card, I'm gonna need you to email me your address, so when you can, just email that to me, and I'll get that out to you as soon as we finish all the interviews.

Teacher A: Sure.

Stan: Okay! Alright! So here we go. Tell me for the record, how do you pronounce your last name?

Teacher A: It's , exactly like it looks.

Stan: Okay. Cool. Perfect! Teacher A. So, let's start with . . . tell me about yourself, like your upbringing, you know, going through school, and you know, post high school education and things like that and what inspired you to become a music teacher?

Teacher A: Yeah, I was thinking about that question, and I'm like, I'm not really sure if there was a what or a who that inspired me. I guess all my life I kinda thought I would like to be a teacher, and then, when I went through school, I enjoyed music. In middle school, I played trumpet, and they desperately needed a trombone, and we had a new music . . . our old music teacher was really not much of a hands-on guy. He just was there, and we got a new one, and he was trying to get people, so he got me to switch over to trombone, which I loved, and felt like it was needed, and so, I went through high school and played trombone, so had more stuff to do. At that point, I didn't really think I was going to be a music teacher. I actually got out of school and decided not to go to

**(Dictation ended here. Nothing further dictated).**

Part 2:

Stan: This is Part 2 of Teacher A's interview. The recorder cut off for some reason. But anyhow, she answered the acquaintance questions, which is in Part 1, so this Part 2 section is basically all the questions, and I'm going to paraphrase her answers.

Question 1: Are you currently active or have been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Answer: Yes. She was both a student and then became the teacher of a community steel drum band, as well as community chorus director and participant.

Question 2: Does your music program have performance opportunities for her students in school?

Answer: Yes. She has a spring concert and a winter concert but does not do anything for Memorial Day or Fourth of July or anything like that.

Question 3: Do you do any other kinds of musical events, like hosting a concert from a local college or anything like that for her school?

Answer: She said no. She is a teacher between two schools. She teaches on [anonymized location] in [anonymized location], as well as [anonymized location] Elementary and Middle School in [anonymized location].

Question 4: Are these concerts promoted to and attended by the general public as community events or do they tend to be of interest primarily to parents of the performers?

Answer: They do offer the community the opportunity to come and see the concerts free of charge, but mostly, the concerts are attended by the parents and other family and friends of the students.

Question 5: Is there a connection between the music program and athletics?

Answer: No. There is nothing connected there.

Question 6: Do they have a music booster's program?

Answer: No, but they do have a PTO or PTA, a parent-teacher association or organization, and any time she has a need, they do provide the funds for the need.

Question 7: I asked her what were some things that they needed?

Answer: There were a couple of instruments that needed to be purchased for some students, some repairs on some instruments for students, as well as some supplies, like music stands and reeds and cork grease, things like that.

Question 8: Does your music program work with a community music theater or music theater group?

Answer: There have been some students in the past that have come through and have been associated outside of school with working with a music theater group.

Question 9: Is there a music store nearby.

Answer: Yes.

Question 10: How far?

Answer: It's probably within 20 to 25 minutes of both of the schools.

Question 11: Do they offer instrument rentals or private or group lessons?

Answer: Yes, they do all of those, as well.

Question: Does she offer community music group lessons or individual lessons?

Answer: She used to. She used to have 19 students, but because she got busy with teaching, she had to cut back on those, and as of now, teaching lessons have been put on hold, as she is doing lessons inside the school.

Question 12: How have these opportunities impacted you as a teacher, your students, and your music program?

Answer: These opportunities have impacted her as a teacher through her interaction with people in the community. It impacted her students, because she has created a relationship with them, as well as her music program has strengthened, not necessarily in numbers, but in support through seeing students be a little more consistent in their practicing and showing up for class.

Question 13: What benefits have seen from being involved with the community?

Answer: The parents and family and friends can actually put a face to the name of the music teacher, so that they actually, when they see her, again, there is a relationship there, as well as they see the importance of supporting the students in their musical endeavors through performances and other things like that.

Question 14: Is there anything holding you back from being more involved, i.e., facilities, staff time, finances, lack of interest, things like that.

Answer: Time is probably the largest factor. There is just not enough time in the day to be able to teach and then do something outside of school time, as she has family, and she has other things that need to be dealt with in her personal life. Distance is an issue, as well. Being that she teaches in two rural communities, the distance is a huge factor, as she drives over an hour each way.

Question 15: Can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen in the next two to five years with her students, her music program, or the community because of the community involvement.

Answer: She would love to see more support financially for the music programs of rural schools. Students are suffering or are left out from learning, because they do not have proper working instruments or proper equipment in order for them to be able to learn. She gave an example, a real-life example: She has a student who would love to play the saxophone. The school has a saxophone, but it is in such disrepair that it would cost more to fix it than it than to buy a new one, or even a used one. So the students asked the parents to do the rental program. They said no. Then, the student asked the parents to do a rent-to-buy option, and then still said no. Then, the student asked for a saxophone for Christmas, and they didn't get it. The student asked for it for their birthday, and they still didn't get it. The teacher confronted the parent, and the parents said it's just too much money, and they don't have the money to be able to spend on that instrument. So, the student really wants to learn, but cannot because of the lack of supplies or, in this case, the instrument. The student has now dropped out of band, because they are not able to play the instrument they wanted.

### ***TEACHER B***

Teacher B: Hello?

Stan: Hello! Is this Teacher B?

Teacher B: This is Teacher B!

Stan: Hey, this is Stan Harris from Liberty.

Teacher B: Hey, Stan! How are ya?

Stan: Oh, just peachy! How are you?

Teacher B: I'm good. I'm just enjoying some time in [anonymized location] with the new granddaughter.

Stan: Oohh!

Teacher B: Yeah, she came a couple weeks early, so I'm doing a little bit of visiting, but I'm free now.

Stan: I sent you an email 'cause as I was getting' ready to call you at 9 o'clock my time, I thought, uh-oh, maybe she . . . . .

Teacher B: Oh!

Stan: Oh, boy! So I sent an email, and I'm like . . . so I looked up your phone number, and it said [anonymized location] or [anonymized location], so I said okay, I'm gonna take a guess that maybe she's an hour behind, so . . .

Teacher B: Oh, I didn't even think of the time thing.

Stan: Yeah, not a problem. Did I catch you at a bad time or are you all set?

Teacher B: I'm all set. Yup. My daughter just got home, and um, I'm free, so . . .

Stan: Awesome! Well, before we start, I will say that in order for me to give you your gift card, you just gotta shoot me your email . . . or your mailing address, and I'll send those out.

Teacher B: Oh, that certainly isn't necessary . . . goodness gracious, don't worry about that. I'm happy to visit. Don't worry about that.

Stan: Well, thank you so much.

Teacher B: No.

Stan: Okay, so here we go. So tell me a little bit about yourself, yak know, like where you came from, your education . . .

Teacher B: Okay, well, I actually was born and raised in [anonymized location], and I did the two things after college that I was never gonna do. I was never gonna marry a farmer, and I was never gonna move back to [anonymized location], so there yak go. I did get a Bachelor of



Science Degree in Music Education with a vocal major and an instrument minor from [anonymized location].

Stan: Yeah, wow!

Teacher B: And then I've been in [anonymized location] ever since. I am still married to, yak know, my farmer and, uh, I taught in [anonymized location] the first year we were married. We were married in March, and so it was in the middle of the school year, and I didn't have a job, so I started teaching piano lessons in [anonymized location], which is a little tiny town about 20 minutes from [anonymized location], and I taught there through that year. Then, in '83, I got a job in [anonymized location], which is another little town about the size of [anonymized location] and that's about 30 miles north of [anonymized location], and so I taught there for 2 years. Then, we had our first baby, and I kinda felt like I wanted to be closer to home, and the [anonymized location] position opened up, and so, I got the job in [anonymized location] when that opened up, and um, aside from taking a couple of years off to stay home with my youngest – we have three –

Stan: Yeah. . . .

Teacher B: I've been in [anonymized location] until 2013 when I retired, so . . .

Stan: Wow!

Teacher B: Yeah, and it's been really, really good. It was a great run, and I think that [anonymized name] told you I was retired, correct, yes?

Stan: Yes.

Teacher B: Yes, okay.

Stan: Yes. Now what inspired you to become a music educator?

Teacher B: Ya know, I think it would have to be a pair of teachers that was here one year. They were a young couple and they were a married couple, and he taught senior high band and choir, and his wife taught elementary music, and I was in sixth grade when they were here, and I would definitely say that it was probably . . . her name was [anonymized name] . . . and it would be her, because she did so many extraordinary things, um, yak know, started a Super Sonic Singers Group for sixth graders and whoever wanted to be in it, and we got to do actions with our songs, and we met separately, yak know, during recesses, and of course, that to me. . . I think I probably was inclined to really enjoy music anyway, but she was the one who put the magic in it for me, I think.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: I also had another really great elementary teacher prior to [anonymized name] and she was a local gal who . . . she had married and moved away and was teaching elsewhere, and

her husband was actually killed in the Tet Offensive, and so, she had twins who were small, very small, when he was killed, and she moved back to [anonymized location] and she also was a very, very good teacher. So along the way, I had a couple really great teachers I would say in my elementary years who probably were the ones that inspired me most.

Stan: So you had a rich history of inspiration?

Teacher B: I did, and when I was in elementary, um, there was a wonderful high school teacher that was here for a long time, and he did a lot of musicals and things like that, and of course, that I loved, because I was the youngest in my family, so my older brothers and sisters were in the shows, and that was just also very magical for me, so just being able to go see what older kids were doing, yak know, that there were those kinds of opportunities made a difference, I think, too.

Stan: Okay. Are you currently active or have ever been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher B: I don't what you'd call currently active. I do as of the time I quit teaching up until now . . . this fall is a question just because of the COVID virus, but I have been kind of organizing and arranging and doing my own little homemade shows, and we've been doing those in the fall at our new opera house, and those are all community things, all homegrown community, and then, we always do a Christmas gala. That's another show that is with a little dinner theater or a dessert theater that we do. So I guess I do facilitate a couple shows a year, I guess. Yeah . . .

Stan: Okay, wow!

Teacher B: Yeah, it's fun, it's fun!

Stan: Good! Now obviously, the majority of these questions we're going to be relating back to when you were an educator, so . . .

Teacher B Right.

Stan: So, I'm assuming that you had music programs while you were a teacher, I'm assuming something like a Christmas concert or a spring concert?

Teacher B: Yes.

Stan: Did have any other kinda concerts?

Teacher B: We usually had a fall concert. I was K-12 vocal most of my years of teaching. I was instrumental part of the time, but most of the time, I was K-12 vocal.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: So we would have an elementary Christmas concert or a fall, one or the other. We kinda switched off.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: We also had an elementary spring concert. High school, 7-12, we had a fall concert, a Christmas concert, and early, in the early years, um, we used to have a mid-winter concert and a dessert theater in the fall, which was the really big deal for our kids. They loved that! It involved a lot of acting and all choreographed, and it was with the band and the choir together. But as the years went, we ended up giving up on the midwinter concert just because of the fact that we sort of got shut out by basketball schedules.

Stan: Oooohhh . . .

Teacher B: So, the high school activities association increased the number of allowed games and, of course, who isn't gonna go for that?

Stan: Yeah, no kiddin'

Teacher B: There literally was not a time when we could find a time for a concert, so that was kinda sad, but it was our reality, so that's what happened.

Stan: Okay. Now, the concerts that you had at school, were they advertised for the community or just primarily the parents and family?

Teacher B: No, they were advertised and very well attended by the community, I would say.

Stan: Okay. Now, would you say that you had any connections with your music program and athletics?

Teacher B: Yes, it was required (laughs)!

Stan: (Laughs)

Teacher B: Oh, yes! There had to be a pep band at the games, and so, there was a pep band at every game, and um, that sorta faded somewhat when our school went co-op with another school.

Stan: Ooohh, yes.

Teacher B: Because, yak know, we . . . we had games other places, and it was just . . . and along with that came a kind of declining enrollment, and when we did have games in [anonymized location] a lot of the students who were in band, also had to work at the concession stand or at the senior stand, and so, it was hard to find . . . yak' know, it was just actually hard to find bodies. If they weren't playing, they were probably gonna be having to be work in one of the stands, so I . . . we don't have the pep band for example at every tournament. We used to have a town that played. Each school would take turns playing, and I think they do that at all anymore.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: I think there are pep bands at some home games, but at tournaments, they just play . . . they play music over a loudspeaker, yak' know. That's what they do, so . . .

Stan: Okay. Did your program have a music boosters association or a music boosters program?

Teacher B: Yes, we did.

Stan: Alright.

Teacher B: And it was composed of, I would say, a small group. It was more like a committee that was then the facilitators for things like asking parents to bring bars for lunch after the concerts, which we used to do. Or if there were fundraisers, they would organize those to raise money for any equipment that we needed. Um, and they would also do organizing for parents to help work at our dessert theater, which required some parental supervision.

Stan: Okay. Now, did your music program ever work with a community theater or musical theater group?

Teacher B: No, no. I didn't.

Stan: Alright. Is there a music store nearby?

Teacher B: The nearest music store would be, I would say, closest within about 120 to 140 miles, so no, not real close in proximity.

Stan: Wow. Okay. Did you, as a music educator, did you ever offer music lessons, group or individual, in the community?

Teacher B: I did not.

Stan: You did not. Alright, okay. By reflecting back on all the things that took place in your teaching career, would you say these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher, your students, and your music program?

Teacher B: Absolutely.

Stan: Can you give me some examples or tell me how they did impact you?

Teacher B: Impact the community? Is that what . . . I just wanna make sure I'm understanding you right.

Stan: Well, there's three parts to that. How impacted you, the teacher; how it impacted your students; and how it impacted your program. These different opportunities that you had, um . . .

Teacher B: Oh, okay, I see.

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher B: Yes, definitely, ya' know, um, I always kinda felt that, even though as a music teacher, you are kind of on stage all the time, it was a positive for me, I felt, because it gave, it gave parents an opportunity to see and hear what their children were learning and if it . . . if they liked it, which they usually did, it really helped me build a relationship with those parents. So all those public performances that we had were ways for me to connect with the parents who then, in turn, would really encourage their kids to be involved. So, I felt that . . . and kids learned to love to be on stage. By working with things in the community, I thought the best thing about [anonymized location]. . . yak know, [anonymized location], I have to say it's a very unusual small town. We're only a town of about 300 people, well 350 probably, but we have a community of really interested and extraordinarily talented people who are very invested in music. So I always thought that putting on community things that could maybe pull some students in was good verification for my students to see that music wasn't just for you when you were in high school, that some of the young adults that you thought were cool did it, too, even though they were out of school and had other jobs or were farming or whatever they were doing. So, yeah, I guess that's what I would say.

Stan: Would you say that even though you were professionally a music educator and you're retired now, you're still a music educator, so is there anything that's holding you back from being more involved musically in your community?

Teacher B: Yes, it is . . . it is . . . and I would have to say that this is such a generic term, but people are too busy.

Stan: Yup, I get it.

Teacher B: It's scheduling. It's scheduling with students, um, yak' know when their sports seasons are done now, they are all in other, what do they call 'em, they're, I don't want to say freelance, but I forget what they're called . . . they're all in traveling sports groups that go here and there, and it's kind of . . . it's not school sponsored, it's just kind of something they all do. And adults? Oooohhh, I think adults are harder now than they used to be to get together, because there's . . . of course, not since the pandemic, but . . .

Stan: Right.

Teacher B: But they travel everywhere now. Ya' know, people don't really stay home on the weekends like they did in small towns years ago.

Stan: That's true.

Teacher B: So I guess that's . . . it's, it's hard for me to not feel badly when I try to schedule something, and people are saying, "Ooohh, I just don't have time," or, so I tend to stay away from that more, I guess.

Stan: Alright, okay. Last question. You're doing wonderful. Can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen within the next couple of years to music students or music programs or the community because of community involvement?

Teacher B: Mmmmm . . . I don't think I got to that question on the survey for some reason. Well, it would certainly be nice to, um, be able to have the opportunity, whether it would be . . . whether it would be time that could be arranged for students to be involved in something outside the school, yak' know, they do job shadowing programs in school now. Um, that might be kinda cool to have kids who are interested in doing theater or whatever to do some of that. I don't think that's an option for them right now.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: That would be one thing.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher B: I don't think I can think of anymore at this point. Just to have them more available. That would be nice.

Stan: Okay, alright. Well, other than that, that's the end of the interview. I mean, it was painless, 17 minutes and 36 seconds.

Teacher B: Yeah.

Stan: (Laughs)

Teacher B: I hope it was helpful?

Stan: It was, and I really appreciate you takin' time. Again, if, if you send me your mailing address, I will get a gift card out to you.

Teacher B: No, no, no. Don't. Please don't do that. I'm glad to help. I'm just retired. I have lots of time, so I was happy to help you. Don't bother with that.

Stan: Well, thank you very much!

Teacher B: Good luck! Good luck as you pursue your doctorate. That's pretty neat. What are your intentions?

Stan: Well, I would . . .

Teacher B: Your hopes and dreams . . .

Stan: My hopes and dreams . . . well, my hopes and dreams are to be able to get a full-time contract here at Liberty University serving under Rebecca Watson.

Teacher B: Aaahhh! Oooohhh! Wouldn't that be great!

Stan: I agree. I would love to do that. She's a wonderful teacher.

Teacher B: Isn't she something?

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher B: She's just a special girl. That's fer sure.

Stan: Well, that she is, and I let her know that you said hi and that . . .

Teacher B: Yes, please do!

Stan: Yeah, absolutely. But again, if you have any other things that you'd like to add to this, throw me an email. I would love to put into the interview.

Teacher B: Okay, well, good luck to you. It was nice visiting with you.

Stan: Thanks, you too.

Teacher B: Take care.

Stan: Yes, Ma'am. You too. Bye, bye.

Teacher B: Bye, bye.

### ***TEACHER C***

Teacher C: Hello?

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher C?

Teacher C: This is.

Stan: Hi, Teacher C this is Stan Harris. How ya' doin'?

Teacher C: Good. How are you?

Stan: Oh, doin' just peachy. How are . . . now I called where?

Teacher C: Um, all the way in [anonymized location].

Stan: [anonymized location] oh my goodness! So how are things up there?

Teacher C: Oh, we're . . . we're doin' pretty good. With COVID-related stuff, we're pretty open and businesses are able to, ya' know, say if they want you to wear a mask or not and that kind of thing, but . . . yeah.

Stan: Good! Well . . .

Teacher C: How 'bout you guys?

Stan: Well, we fared pretty well through the whole thing. Right now, everybody's trying to figure out the best way to deal with the spikes and, ya' know, new cases and how they're goin' open school and conduct it and all different kinds of things like that.

Teacher C: Oh, yeah. . .

Stan: We'll figure it out. We'll just go along with it (laughs).

Teacher C: Yes. I just see that the universities, that they're gonna be opening up fully for you guys.

Stan: Yeah, they're supposed to on August 1<sup>st</sup>. However, the governor is making things a little bit difficult, so I'll be interested to see how everything pans out (laughs).

Teacher C: Last minute changes.

Stan: Yes, last minute changes, and we just go with the flow, I mean. . .

Teacher C: Yeah.

Stan: So, I am rather embarrassed to say, but I have only got 28% on my laptop and my charger is way over on the other side of the library, so I am going to . . . actually, I'm here at the library on campus, and I have this private room, and I thought my laptop was charged. I swore I charged it, but obviously, I didn't, so I'm gonna fly through these questions.

Teacher C: No problem!

Stan: So let's start right at the very beginning. Um, just tell me about yourself, ya' know, your education and what inspired you to become a music educator.

Teacher C: Sure. Well, I grew up in a very musical family. Both of my parents were music educators and were both musical ministers in their church, as well, so the house was filled with music. We always, ya' know, with the influence of church, because \_\_\_\_\_ their job there. We would, ya' know, attend their concerts when we were young, and I just grew up to really want to do that, so my parents inspired me. My dad helped choose as a band director, and I told him when I wanted to choose my first instrument, um, I said, "I don't wanna play the flute. I don't wanna play the saxophone. I wanna do something different, and um, so I took up the bassoon, so I started as a 5<sup>th</sup> grader on the bassoon, and that was my main instrument through



college. I went to [anonymized location] here in [anonymized location], and got my Music Ed. Degree, focusing more on instrumental K through 12, and then, I got an add-on for \_\_\_\_\_ at the time, 6-12 General Music. And then, I'm entering 13 year, 13<sup>th</sup> year of teaching, and I've had a lot of different experiences teaching different classic . . . different areas. Um, from a little bit of band, part-time band, like 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade, um to general music, pretty much kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade at 1 school, doin' a little bit of choir. My 2<sup>nd</sup> position that I had was everything, K through 8 music, band, choir around music.

Stan: Wow!

Teacher C: Um, yeah (laughs), um, it was a 2-person. . . short story. It was a 2-person position before I received it. . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher C: . . . and, yup. Then, the position I had prior to the one I have now, I was only teaching band, 5<sup>th</sup> grade through 8<sup>th</sup>, and then, I'm currently now in a part-time position, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade general music and beginner strings, so . . .

Stan: Oh.

Teacher C: I kind of . . . moved my focus. Why I chose the job I'm at right now is because it's in my own hometown, and closer to my family and, um, an opportunity to teach a son. He's in 3<sup>rd</sup>, going into 4<sup>th</sup> grade now, so I thought, you know, maybe this is just where God's leading me, so . . .

Stan: Gotcha, okay.

Teacher C: Yeah.

Stan: Okay. So are you currently active or have been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher C: Hmm. . . . actively . . . um, facilitating. . . um.

Stan: Yeah, anything like, ya' know, I have some interviewees that they do teach private music lessons, and then, were some that were leader of a ukulele group, so anything like that for your community?

Teacher C: Um. . . I can't say that I ever took the private lesson-teaching route.

Stan: Okay, alright.

Teacher C: I'm not currently leading any groups, but through my position, definitely, ya' know, wanted my groups to get out in the community.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher C: But I'm not currently leading, if that's answering the question.

Stan: No, no. That's fine. Now does your music program that you, in your school, do you have performance opportunities for your students . . . like, spring program, things like that?

Teacher C: Definitely. You know, our general music students, kindergarten through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, they get an opportunity to perform twice a year. . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher C: . . . which in other districts, we only did once a year, so I think that's kind of an up . . . Our school district obviously has strings, which I think is a plus, compared to other districts that can't or don't offer, but I think that that attracts some families, too. Um . . . yeah.

Stan: Alright. So do you have any other kinds of musical events that you do with your kids that are necessarily for the community, like a parade or maybe you take out your kids out caroling? Do you do anything like that?

Teacher C: Um, so this is just my 1<sup>st</sup> year at this current position.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher C: Um, we did a Veteran's Day Program for the school district inside the building, but we didn't do any outside community things. But in the past, I've had positions that yes, with my band, we did parades. Um, I took them on field trips to go see like performances.

Stan: Okay. Were these . . . .

Teacher C: (inaudible)

Stan: I'm sorry. Go ahead.

Teacher C: (inaudible) . . . yeah.

Stan: Okay. So the concerts that you do with your kids for music programs, um, in your music program, are these concerts promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or are they primarily just for the parents and other family?

Teacher C: They are primarily for the parents.

Stan: Okay, alright. Now, are there any connections between your music program and athletics by any chance?

Teacher C: Ummmm. . . I mean I know that the high school band director, they definitely, ya' know, play pep band, play for the football teams, and um, there seems to be a really strong support there.

Stan: Yeah, okay, I have some, like I had an elementary teacher who would, once every year, she was invited to have her 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> grade choir go and sing to the . . . the National Anthem for a basketball game, National Anthem for a football game, and then, I believe she also did 1 baseball game with her choir, so I know she had that connection with her feeding school, so that's why I was asking that question.

Teacher C: Sure.

Stan: So, do you . . .

Teacher C: (inaudible)

Stan: Yeah . . . it was, it was. It seemed . . . seems like a pretty good idea. Now, do you have a music boosters program, music financial program that you have for your students?

Teacher C: Um, because we're a K-12 district, I know the middle school's director and the high school director, I believe there's either 1 or they have 2, I think just 1, collective one. I have not been involved at this point yet.

Stan: Okay, alright.

Teacher C: But yeah, at a prior, um, at a prior position, when I, yeah, my 1<sup>st</sup> position, I was at a place for 7 years and, um, yeah, I helped run the booster club that was there. We called it "Music Boosters." We didn't want it to only be band; we wanted it to encompass general music, as well. Um. . . and then, my 2<sup>nd</sup> position, we actually. . . we didn't have a booster club, but attached to the PTA group, they had a fine arts little group, which I thought was very cool and unique, um, and that group of parents, they were really focused on bringing in musicians from the community or . . . like a bag piper came in and performed for the students. That was really cool. Or an artist from the area coming in, so that was a really cool group, 'cause they kind of inspired me at that school, and one spring, we did a big fine arts night and incorporated parts and the band playing kind of throughout the night, like solos in the hallways, and attached with the musical that was also scheduled in that evening, too. The kids did some . . . musical projects that were just great in the library, so, it was just kind of a very cool event. That was opened up to the public, but again, it was focused more on the kids.

Stan: That's a lot, that's very good! Now, does your music program that you have that you work with currently, do they . . . are they associated or are you affiliated with any community theater or music theater group?

Teacher C: Connected to a musical theater?

Stan: Yeah, like is there a community theater out there, um, that you work with closely to . . . to push your kids to be involved in?

Teacher C: I know our middle school choir and general music teacher is someone that really focuses on the musicals for the school . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher C: . . . um, but I'm not quite sure if she is connected with any outside agency . . . I do know there are a few theaters in the area, um, and outside community groups that do music theater or theater that can definitely be tapped into.

Stan: Okay. Is there a music store nearby?

Teacher C: We have a small one in town, right in [anonymized location], and then, the next closest one is 20 minutes away in [anonymized location] for example.

Stan: Alright. Do they offer instrument rentals or private or group music lessons?

Teacher C: Yes. Yes they do.

Stan: Okay. I think you've already alluded to this, but do you offer any community or music lessons to your community, like private piano or something like that?

Teacher C: I currently do not personally.

Stan: Alright. Now, with everything that we've talked about – and we're gettin' towards the end now – you're doin' wonderful (laughs) . . .

Teacher C: Oh, thank you.

Stan: With everything we've talked about, how have these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher or your students or music program?

Teacher C: Hmmhmm. I guess I'll start with myself personally. Um, my focus was just really trying to give my students an opportunity to really be outside of the classroom where music can take them. Um, through that live performance or just being able to give back to their community and performing for their community, there's just so many different ways they can be involved in music. So I really tried to either share within the classroom how that could be possible and then taking them to places, as well. Um, oh, I should say that our current, um, my current job right now, um, the company called [anonymized company], I'd heard about that they had already established like every year, a group would come in and perform for our kids, so we did that last year, and that involved the choir kids, so just, that was super cool, right [anonymized name]? My son's right behind me. He was a part of that, too, and they got to dress up and experience a very quick rehearsal time beforehand, but I had to prep 'em. Overall, I felt like it went really well . . . to be able to be side by side with professionals and perform, it was pretty cool.

Stan: Awesome! Good!

Teacher C: So, yeah, those kinds of things would be impactful for the students, but I think they will never forget things like that, ya' know?

Stan: Absolutely. Now any benefits you've seen from being involved with the community when you were involved with doing stuff with members of your community, by any chance?

Teacher C: So, if when they were either a part of the boosters or a part of . . .

Stan: Yeah, anything like that. . .

Teacher C: . . . or a part of the \_\_\_\_\_ (inaudible).

Stan: Yeah, anything like that. An example of that, I had a middle school teacher who was brand new at teaching middle, and they were trying to organize a community music festival, and a parent of one of the kids in their band saw that he was struggling a little bit, so a benefit that he got from being involved with the community doin' this festival was that he got a full-time parent helper to assist him with supervision of the kids, getting stuff ready the night before a program, just all different kinds of things, so um, have you seen anything like that?

Teacher C: Totally, yes. Um, I can say at my 1<sup>st</sup> position, I was there for 7 years, you have a chance to build a program and build your, ya' know, families that know you and connections. The relationships are just \_\_\_\_\_, and so there's that trust there, and so, when families get involved in the booster club and then volunteer, oh my goodness, yes, they were the best ever (laughs) with helping out, with fundraisers, and chores. Who can, I mean, it was just like where . . . where are these families in these last few positions? Maybe it's just my approach, and maybe I need to pivot a little bit, um, the families that were in that 1<sup>st</sup> community, they were just like all hands on deck, how can we help, and it was really great. So, um, yes, I've definitely seen that.

Stan: Awesome. Okay. Now, is there anything holding you back from being more involved in the community, like maybe it's facilities, maybe it's time, maybe it's finances or lack of interest, anything like that?

Teacher C: Hmm. . . um, I think for me, for example, with like private teaching and having a family . . . I got a family and they're . . . in my mind, the only way to be able to work it is to . . . If I'm public teaching, then, ya' know, fill my evenings or weekends with teaching, and I just didn't want to take that time away from my family, so that was kind of . . . time and family, um, and that's probably what a lot of it is at this point.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher C: Yeah, just find the balance has been. . . has been a challenge I will say, and that's for myself.

Stan: I get that. Last question: can you name up to 3 things - so it can be 1 thing, 2 things, or 3 things - so you can name up to 3 things that you would like to see happen within the next 2 to 5 years to your students or to your music program or anything in the community because of the involvement in the community?

Teacher C: Yes. The 1<sup>st</sup> thing that came to my mind is, um, we have a dance studio, a dance company in our community, and they are thriving very well, and they always a Nutcracker performance every year, and um, and so, I've been talking with the head of the company, because my daughter also takes classes, this year, she started, and um, we've been collaborating, wanting to do some type of . . . oh, she's like, "I can bring in my students, and they can dance for you and do a demo kind of thing," but we haven't been able to work it out, and with COVID and all of those restrictions, we'll probably won't get to it this year, but how we can create and make it happen, um, of making some connection, I really definitely want to be able to connect with like the studio more. I think that would be valuable.

Stan: Okay. Alright. That concludes the interview. That's it. That was very simple, very easy. Thank you so much.

Teacher C: Yes.

Stan: I would ask, if you can, if you would like to, email me your mailing address, because I would like to send you a \$10 prepaid Visa card just as a way to say thank you for taking time out and, again, I appreciate it, and if there's anything that you want to add in this email after this, after ya' hang up that you think of later, please feel free to do that, as well.

Teacher C: Okay, sure. And are you interested in wanting to interview other teachers?

Stan: I would love to interview other teachers. If they, if you . . . if you wanna shoot me some names and some email addresses and . . . I would be more than happy to contact them. I am gonna wrap up my interviews by next Tuesday. So, anything would be great. I would love to get 3 more people that would really round off my research, so . . .

Teacher C: Sure. I can send you my parents if you want to interview them, and then, I can get shoot it up, just to keep it with the teachers in my district if that would be helpful and maybe some of them . . .

Stan: Absolutely! Yeah, that'd be great! That would be wonderful! Thank you so much!

Teacher C: Okay, yeah.

Stan: Okay, alright. Well, you have a wonderful day. Good luck with COVID, and I hope to hear from you soon then.

Teacher C: Thank you so much, Stan!

Stan: Thank you. Bye, bye.

**TEACHER D**

Teacher D: Stanley, how are you?

Stan: I am doin' well. How are you doing?

Teacher D: I am also doing well. Thank you.

Stan: Great! Is it Teacher D?

Teacher D: Yes, that's right.

Stan: Great. Well good. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to do this. I promise it will be painless.

Teacher D: I'm happy to help.

Stan: So, the thing I was mentioning in the email. . . the consent form? If you can get that filled out and just thrown back at me, that would be wonderful.

Teacher D: I think I already sent that it. I only sent the last page. Do you need me to send the first two?

Stan: Nope, just that last page is fine.

Teacher D: It should be there the next time you're in your email. I took a picture and sent it back.

Stan: Awesome? And the other thing I was going to mention then was also send me an email with your address, and I will get you a prepaid Visa card. I mean it's not much, and I'm payin' for it out of my own pocket, but it's just something to say thank you for your contributions. So, just throw that at me in an email, and we will take care of ya'. How's that sound?

Teacher D: Sounds great! I . . . that's a nice bonus. I wasn't expecting that one. [anonymized name] . . . I'm assuming you know [anonymized name].

Stan: I sure do, she's a sweetheart.

Teacher D: She's the one who tagged me on Facebook when your wife posted about it.

Stan: Ohhh. . . okay.

Teacher D: So, that's how . . . . I've known her since I was a little girl. Her mom was my first piano teacher.

Stan: No kidding! Wow! (laughs)

Teacher D: So . . .

Stan: Man!

Teacher D: That's how it all got started, and then I got taught . . . [anonymized name] in college, her mom through one of my music ed professors.

Stan: I'm assuming at ?

Teacher D: Yes, I went and got my undergrad in Music Ed, and my Master's is in something they don't offer anymore called Fine Arts, and I did voice and what was then called Interpretative Speech, it would be more like a theater emphasis.

Stan: When did you graduate from Bob Jones?

Teacher D: My undergrad was in '01 and my Master's was '03.

Stan: I wonder if you maybe you and I were in classes together, 'cause I graduated in '99 from Bob Jones.

Teacher D: Okay. Were you Music Ed also?

Stan: I was a double major. I was Bible and music, and then, I ended up switching to Bible as my major and music as my minor, 'cause I didn't have time to take the Platform Exams . . .

Teacher D: Yes.

Stan: Which was silly. I should've done it, but oh, well.

Teacher D: Wow. I guess it might depend on like if you took your theory classes at your regular time, you might have been done with them before I got there. It probably depends on . . . like I, a lot of times, had minors that weren't the same year, but most of the majors . . . I guess it depends on . . . what was your principal instrument?

Stan: I was piano and trombone. I had two of 'em, so . . .

Teacher D: So who were your teachers?

Stan: Oh, well, my main piano person was Gilman. . . Chris Gilman?

Teacher D: Oh, ah. . . I can't . . . [anonymized name]

Stan: Gillam . . . yes, Gillam. That's who it was . . . Gillam. And I also had Duane Ream.

Teacher D: Okay. Yes! So do you play by ear really well?



Stan: I can. I play by note and by ear really well.

Teacher D: 'Cause I am . . . both of them would have been hard for me, because they are both very good at playing by ear, and I am not.

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher D: So, I had [anonymized name] for classical, and then, I had, during student teaching, I took a semester of hymn playing with [anonymized name].

Stan: Ohhh . . . Ruth. I miss her. I've had such wonderful opportunities with Sound Forth Music when they were around, to work with her and stuff . . .

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: . . . so that was a lot of fun

Teacher D: Yes, yes. No, she was great, and she . . . even though she plays by ear, she had a really systematic approach to the hymn playing that broke it down for people like me who don't really play by ear. . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher D: . . . and that was really helpful.

Stan: \_\_\_\_\_ Yeah, I . . . I miss it. Some of the professors I had I know are either retired, moved, or passed away.

Teacher D: Yes, so did you have [anonymized name] or [anonymized name] for trombone?

Stan: I had Paul Jance.

Teacher D: Okay. Some of siblings took from him when they were in, I guess, like junior high and high school.

Stan: Yup.

Teacher D: Um...they didn't . . . Well, one of my sisters played in trombone choir in college, but she didn't take lessons.

Stan: Oh.

Teacher D: She was Piano Performance major, so . . .

Stan: Oh, no kidding. Wow. Well we got quite a bit of connection. This is fun!

Teacher D: Yes, it definitely is! So, did you marry someone from [anonymized university]?

Stan: No, I ended up . . . after I graduated from Bob Jones, I moved up to Maine where I was an interim pastor for six months, then moved to northern Virginia, and I was a . . .

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: . . . I was a music teacher in northern Virginia in Fairfax County.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: . . . I was also in, what's that, Prince William County? I was teaching at a Christian School there. Then, I ended up moving back north to Maine where I met my wife after several years, and she is a graduate from Pensacola Christian College, so . . .

Teacher D: Okay, so you all have quite the gamut there with [anonymized university] and [anonymized college] and now [anonymized university]?

Stan: Oh, yeah, the only thing we're missing now is Tennessee Temple, but they folded their doors.

Teacher D: (laughs) There ya' go. So . . . do you . . . it looks like you actually teach . . . you're already doing some teaching there at [anonymized university]. Is that correct?

Stan: Yes, that's correct. I teach Music Education and Piano.

Teacher D: Okay. Good for you!

Stan: Yeah, it's a lot of fun. Like I say, I taught for 17 years in K through 12 music, and one year, while I was teaching, I was also an Assistant Director of sports bands at the University of Maine, so . . .

Teacher D: Oh, wow!

Stan: . . . it was a lot of fun. I loved teaching, but yeah, I'm looking at trying to actually teach promising teachers about music (laughs).

Teacher D: Yeah. . . so how did you get interested in getting your PhD?

Stan: Well, okay, so I'm going to give you. . . I'm going to really shorten it down.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: I was actually goin' for my degree in Education from Bob Jones University. . .

Teacher D: I saw you already have an EdS.

Stan: Yes, and so I . . . I had started my EdD at Bob Jones, and then, they closed the programs.

Teacher D: Yes . . .

Stan: They told me . . . they said, we are going to send all your paperwork to Liberty University and continue it there. So they sent everything there . . . Liberty . . . and I got in contact with them, and I went as far as my EdS, and I stopped because I was busy at the time and was also a worship pastor at a church. Then, my wife and I, after ministry . . . we just got burned out with ministry . . .

Teacher D: Hmmhmm. . .

Stan: . . . and, um, we said it's time for a change for our family, for us, and I got a phone call from Liberty University saying, hey, would ya' like to teach Music Education? So, I came down, and they said, we want you to teach Music Education, but you need to have a full Doctorate, so don't finish your EdD.

Teacher D: Yessss . . . .

Stan: So, they told me not to finish my EdD. They want me to finish with a specialty in Music Education, so that's why they put me in the program.

Teacher D: Do they do . . . do they do any of it online or do you have to be there in person.

Stan: Nope. Okay, so we just launched in January the DME, the Doctor of Music Education Program, and it's completely, 100% online.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: I will tell you this, it is a fantastic . . . fantastic program.

Teacher D: Yess. . . well, I'll probably look it up, 'cause when I saw that you were down at Liberty . . . I've looked at doing it before, but like, the USC program, what I've seen online, the classes did not look interesting to me.

Stan: Ohhh, yeah.

Teacher D: And like they were . . . . and some of it may be just me, I don't know, but I looked at [anonymized university], but, um. . . you know [anonymized name] at [anonymized university]?

Stan: I do know [anonymized name], yes.

Teacher D: Okay. So he said. . . which this may have changed, but at that time, um, he had recently had a Music Ed who had gotten turned down for entering into the program. They weren't . . . anyway, so it's not something I'm seriously looking at, but it is something I've thought about, and . . .

Stan: Yup . . .

Teacher D: . . . so that's interesting to know that you all have that online program.

Stan: Yeah, I mean, if you want, I can give your name to a lady at the college here, and she can send you all kinds of information to your email or to your home, in terms of all the specifics of the classes, and the general overview and the program learning outcomes and stuff like that that interest you.

Teacher D: Okay, I wouldn't mind just . . . I mean . . . I don't know if I . . . like, I think this coming school year is going to be pretty challenging because of adjusting with COVID, but it is definitely something that . . . I don't know if I'll do it right now, but I've definitely thought about it before, and it would be helpful to be able to take a look at that.

Stan: Absolutely. And listen, ya' got my number, ya' got my email. Any time you have questions, you know, shoot 'em to me, because I'm gonna be teaching those classes startin' this fall, so . . .

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: . . . I would love to help out in any way I can, if you're interested, but regardless, I count this a blessing to be able to connect with somebody from Bob Jones and roughly in my generation, so this is great.

Teacher D: Yes! No, it is kind of interesting, because who knows . . . I mean . . . I did not look you up, so I didn't even know . . . you know, when you see somebody's face, you're like, oh, I do remember that person. Sometimes, when you pass on the sidewalk, you would see the same group of people for an entire semester, you know, and your schedules went that way, and then, the next semester, you might not see them very often at all, because you had something different going on, but . . .

Stan: Yeah, no. You know what, it's funny, 'cause I was telling some of the people . . . or not telling . . . but in my family, they loved Patch the Pirate growin' up, and when I was growin' up, I never was raised on Patch the Pirate. Patch the Pirate wasn't a big thing until my junior, senior year in high school when I was at a Christian school, and,

Teacher D: Yes.

Stan: . . . I sat next to this girl by the name of Tara, and her last name is Hamilton,

Teacher D: Ohhh . . . yes.

Stan: Yup, so I went on one date with her, and . . .

Teacher D: Ohhh, you did?

Stan: I did! So I got to say, hey, I dated Tara Hamilton – one time. (laughs)

Teacher D: (laughs)

Stan: So . . .

Teacher D: When I was . . . I guess it must have been my freshman year, ‘cause she was still in the academy, but she sat in front of me in chapel.

Stan: Oh, did she?

Teacher D: Yesss . . . .

Stan: Well, there.

Teacher D: Yes, and then, I got to teach her daughter. They were in [anonymized location] for one year while her husband was on staff . . .

Stan: Yup.

Teacher D: . . . and I got to have [anonymized name] in Music Class, so that was fun. We got to connect a little bit there.

Stan: Oh, that is so cool!

Teacher D: Yesss . . . No, there . . . there are lots of small . . . small world, I think, within Christian circles a lot of times. It seems like there’re different connections.

Stan: It does.

Teacher D: So . . .

Stan: Well, let’s get . . .

Teacher D: So, how many children . . .

Stan: No, no, I was just goin’ to say, I mean, I know you’d mentioned about time frame and everything for ya’. I was goin’ to say we can get the interview started, but you had a question, so go right ahead.

Teacher D: No, I was just, ‘cause . . . you had mentioned getting your kids settled, so I was going to ask you how many kids you have?

Stan: I have three beautiful children.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: I've got a 9-year-old, an 8-year-old, and a 6-year-old.

Teacher D: Okaaayy, that's great! Those are fun ages!

Stan: Oh, they are, and they are . . . .

Teacher D: They're all the ones I get to teach, and it's fun to watch 'em.

Stan: It is. It's fun to listen to 'em. It's amazing how you can experience life again, only through their eyes, ya know?

Teacher D: Yesss!! Everything is new and exciting for them in a way that it isn't really for us anymore, and it kind of reawakens your appreciation for some things.

Stan: Amen to that! It's true!

Teacher D: Yes.

Stan: Well . . . . well, let's go for it.

Teacher D: Okay, sounds great!

Stan: So, the series of questions I'm going to ask you, um, they're very simple. I'm just goin' to follow a flowchart.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: . . . ya' know, when you say yes to something, it takes me to one portion of the flowchart and when you say no, it takes me to another. That's all it is.

Teacher D: Okay, okay.

Stan: So, the #1 question: Are you currently active or have been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher D: Yes.

Stan: Does your music program have performance opportunities for your students?

Teacher D: So my program at school?

Stan: Yes.

Teacher D: Yes.

Stan: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about 'em. Like how many concerts, maybe, you have a year? I'm assuming things like spring concert, Christmas concert, anything like that.

Teacher D: Yes. So, um, I'm in charge of the choirs . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: . . . and I have three groups that rehearse. So, we have . . . okay . . . fall semester, which this year, obviously, this coming year, I don't know if we'll have any. I hope we'll have some, but . . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher D: . . . they're still looking at . . . (laughs). . . how they're even gonna do choir, because of all the concerns about singing. But first semester, we would typically have, I think, at least five with choir, plus a program.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: I think I've had as many as . . . sometimes I've ended up with like seven within six or seven days, you know, like half school days?

Stan: Hmm, hmm. Okay.

Teacher D: So anywhere from five to seven, 'cause we'll do two that are kind of official school performances, and then, I try to take . . . I think . . . you probably don't even need to know all that, but . . .

Stan: No, no, this information is good, because the more information I have, the easier to is to allocate my data analysis in my findings.

Teacher D: Okay.

Stan: So anything you give me is good, so you. . . you feel free to say what you need.

Teacher D: Okay. So we usually do one at school, we do one on campus in the student center, and then, I usually . . . we'll go sing at a couple of nursing homes or retirement homes. I take a group to sing at the [anonymized house] . . . um. . . we've gone to the [anonymized club] in downtown [anonymized location]. We've sung in the Christmas parade before.

Stan: Nice!

Teacher D: So . . . a variety of . . . We've also done a couple of . . . um. . . well, one of them at the [anonymized club] was a musical . . . yeah, like a local confederation of music clubs at a local club that we've sung for a couple different ones here in the area, too, at Christmastime.

Stan: Okay. . . alright, now . . .

Teacher D: And then . . .

Stan: Oh, go ahead . . .

Teacher D: Sorry, go ahead . . .

Stan: Well . . .

Teacher D: Well, second . . .

Stan: (laughs) You go. Ladies first.

Teacher D: Oh, ha, ha! Sorry! Second semester, we don't usually have quite as many. We have two for sure, 'cause we'll do a chapel performance, and then, our final one is the only one that's a true evening performance.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: Um. . . sometimes we've sung at the museum and gallery before. We, um . . . I guess those the varieties of types of things we've done. We did get sing at [anonymized center] and an artist series when they did a big Jubilate Deo a few years ago.

Stan: So you're . . .

Teacher D: That was . . .

Stan: So, you're pretty involved with . . . with, ya know, performing concerts for the parents and then performing concerts outside of the classroom for the community.

Teacher D: Yes . . . I . . . well, I want them to have those true performance opportunities, as well as ones that I would consider more ministry opportunities . . .

Stan: Okay. . .

Teacher D: . . . and I also really work if . . . Now, first semester, it's all Christmas, because all of our performances are around Christmastime, but second semester, the two concerts are spread out, so I try to do completely different music, for the most part. For the two concerts, they are learning a LOT of music.

Stan: Okay. So, are these concerts and things that you do, are they promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or do they tend to just be of interest primarily to parents?

Teacher D: I would say mostly parents. I mean, they're on the school website or on the Facebook page. This year, our school music coordinator did a good job at Christmastime, making little 30-second video promos to post, and you know, I think we would randomly have, you know . . . obviously, other people could come, but I would say most of our clients . . . you know . . . most of those who come are going to be parents, grandparents, friends. . .



Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: The beauty of elementary is . . . ya know . . . parents . . . ya know . . . a lot more people want to come.

Stan: Yes, that is very true (laughs).

Teacher D: It's not . . .

Stan: Is there a connection between your music program and athletics?

Teacher D: Uh, when you say connection . . . like. . . at the elementary level, we don't have any official athletics. The high school level, they would definitely have students that would participate in both.

Stan: Okay. So, there . . . there . . . like for me when I was teaching. . . when I was teaching at a K through . . . actually, it was a pre-K through 5 school in northern Virginia, I would take my fifth-grade chorus over to our feeding high school, that we would feed our kids into this high school and do the Star-Spangled Banner before basketball games.

Teacher D: Okay, I see what you're saying. We, um, a number of years ago, we sang the National Anthem a couple of times for university ballgames. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: . . . we have not . . . it's been several years. I'm not . . . well, it's not the same setup now that they have the Bruins, so they don't have necessarily as many . . . .

Stan: That's right.

Teacher D: I guess they still have the championship, but they're not necessarily as huge as they were when we were in school.

Stan: Right. Yeah, that's right. Yup, makes perfect sense.

Teacher D: I mean, it doesn't mean they wouldn't ask us. We did one basketball game, and we did one soccer game. We did a soccer game when they did the most recent [anonymized university] played [anonymized university]. We sang at that one.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Does your music program . . . do you have a boosters program, a boosters event at all?

Teacher D: We do not. We aren't really allowed to do fundraising. They have changed that a little bit in the last couple of years. They did a couple of . . . They do one big offering in the fall, and they do . . . but it's school . . . it's like elementary schoolwide. So, I don't have anything

specific. I'm limited on what I can ask parents to do, because we've had parents complain in the past about getting asked from too many sources.

Stan: Got it. Okay. Does your music program work with a community theater or musical theater group?

Teacher D: No, I mean I've had some students who are singing in a local children's choir, but we . . . I don't know that we have any specific connection, other than I do get requests from campus when they need children for productions . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: . . . so, I don't know if that would be . . . fall in the same category.

Stan: It does. It does, actually. Yes.

Teacher D: So, like next year. . . I mean I assume they're still doing it. . . I don't know exactly what it will look like, but um, they're doing another musical, "Tale of Two Cities," and there's the young \_\_\_\_\_, um, and so, [anonymized name] asked if I had any, so I sent it out to girls of the right age who I thought might be interested and could do it. Um, I don't who he has decided on for the role, if he decided to choose any of them, but I have things like that come up, not every year, but, you know, on a fairly regular basis. I'm not surprised anymore when I get those requests.

Stan: Okay. Is there a music store nearby?

Teacher D: Yes, we have both [anonymized store]. That was probably, I'm sure you remember, and then we also have another one, [anonymized store].

Stan: Oh, I never heard of that one.

Teacher D: It's not as close to the school, but they'll deliver. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: . . . um, and it's owned by a believer, somebody who was actually my first band director.

Stan: (laughs) Um, do they offer instrument rentals, private or group lessons?

Teacher D: At the music store . . . or at school?

Stan: Yes.

Teacher D: Um, yes, I'm fairly confident . . . both of them do rentals, both do lessons. I'm not sure on private. . . I mean, I'm sure they would also do private. I'm not sure about the group setting at the stores.

Stan: Okay. Do you yourself offer music lessons to your community?

Teacher D: I did in the past. I am not currently.

Stan: Okay. Now, everything we've talked about, these opportunities, how have they directly impacted you as a teacher, your students, and/or your music program?

Teacher D: Well, I think they really help me grow? I am constantly trying to find new music that would both. . . so, I'm always looking for something . . . they have to like it, but I also want it to be something that helps them grow and me grow. If I'm doing the same music all the time . . . and sometimes, the growth is thinking about, you know, you plan a program based on, like several years ago, we sang at the [anonymized conference], and we could only sing three songs, so in three songs, what I can do that, you know, shows off what the kids can do in a variety of forms, is fun, is serious, is beautiful, so when have those different opportunities, sometimes you're selecting music, you're making plans, and as you learn new music, as they learn new music, you know, it's stretching you . . . I know you know this, but each piece that you do has different aspects and, like one year, for some reason, we did a bunch of hemiola, and so, they thought it was so cool that they knew the term "hemiola." So, I have found that my elementary students can do just about anything if you have time to teach them and prepare them.

Stan: That is so neat. Cool. And what benefits have you seen yourself from being involved in the community.

Teacher D: Um, I mean, you build relationships. I'm involved in a couple of local music clubs connected with federation building relationships, getting . . . I mean, I've actually had opportunities to perform myself, not just with my students as a result of things like that, so that's helped me grow. I, ya' know, one of my goals was joining local organizations just to be able to be a testimony, because you can't, you know, if you're connected with people, you can't get to know them and share the Lord. And in this area . . . maybe it's true where you are, too, but, um, a lot of people would at least, on some level, claim to be Christian, but aren't necessarily so.

Stan: I gotcha.

Teacher D: So, um. . . .

Stan: Oh, go ahead and finish up.

Teacher D: I mean, that, I guess that would be the main thing is, both the personal and professional growth. Um, because of being involved in the community, I'm the . . . I'm now the Southeast Region Chair for the National Federation of Music College Junior Composer Contest, which sounds cooler than it is (laughs), because like a lot of volunteer roles, it's a lot of work,

but I've also really enjoyed, you know, getting to connect with and encourage the next generation of composers. . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher D: . . . and that came because of being connected to that local organization.

Stan: Okay. Is there anything holding you back from being more involved, like facilities, staff time, finances, lack of interest, etc., stuff like that, in your community musically?

Teacher D: Ummmm. . . I mean the tricky thing on the elementary level is . . . oh, and maybe other levels, too, but you're always trying to balance fun opportunities without making it too busy, 'cause children also need to be children. Their parents are already busy. They're the ones that have to get them everywhere. It's not like high school and college where, you know, they sometimes drive themselves. So sometimes there are limitations on that, what else is going on? I'm not, I mean, there are always, you know, more things that, you know, could I get more Orff instruments or could I, but for the most part, I think especially for a Christian school, I'm pretty blessed and, like a lot of the times for concerts, if there's a special instrument, because of our connection with the university, even if I don't personally have it, I can borrow it.

Stan: Gotcha. Okay. Last question, are you ready?

Teacher D: I'm ready!

Stan: Alright. Can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen within the next two to five years to your students or to your music program or the community because of community involvement?

Teacher D: Oohh. . . Things I would like to do or things . . . .

Stan: Well, just things you would like to see happen. For example, I had one interviewee that said they would like to see, for instance, students be less busy and have more family time within the next two to five years, so . . .

Teacher D: Oh, okay, so not just . . . not necessarily musical?

Stan: Well, ya', I mean it kinda goes along the lines of musical, but . . .

Teacher D: Hmm hmm.

Stan: . . . but on the flip side, I had another teacher say, um, you know, yes, I would like to see a new auditorium built for our middle school and high school performances for music. So, you know . . .

Teacher D: Ooohhh, okay.

Stan: I've got all kinds of spectrum facets, so . . . .

Teacher D: Well, one thing that we were supposed to do last year, but did not get to because of COVID, we were supposed to see a war memorial temple, so I would love to perform in a more acoustically live space. We currently perform in our cafetorium, which again, this coming year may not be the year that that happens, but you know, it makes a . . . we've gotten permission to do that, and we were scheduled to do it, but God intervened.

Stan: He sure did.

Teacher D: So that would be one thing. Um, the year we went to ACDA, this hall we sang in was amazing, and it just confirmed what you kind of know, but unless you've experienced it with your group, it made a huge difference. Like, that's how professional children's choirs sound so good.

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher D: You know, could I . . . . I mean I know I'm prejudiced, but I think my kids sound good, but that makes a huge difference.

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher D: Let's see, um . . .

Stan: You don't have to come up with the third. I mean, you gave me two really good ones right there.

Teacher D: Um, so I guess, one thing continued encouragement of them, I guess. Again, this is a musical one, but that more of them would be, I think more of them taking some kind of lesson - instrument or piano lessons - 'cause that enriches their lives both now and in the future, and really, you know, when they're taking piano or they're taking flute or they're taking violin or trumpet or trombone, we're all winning. That's what I've talked with instrumental teachers before about that just . . . the best combination for them is when they're, you know, getting . . . Like my once-a-week general music class may make them an appreciator of music, but that's not really going to make them a musician, I guess, if that makes sense.

Stan: Yup, makes perfect sense. Okay. Well, you've . . . you've reached the end, and I don't think you have any bumps or bruises. I think you did very, very well.

Teacher D: Well, I hope it will help you in your study and what you're figuring out and enjoyed getting to chat.

Stan: Yes.

Teacher D: How far are you in this process?

Stan: I just turned in my first rough draft, now, I'm in the second phase, and I'm almost finished my second phase. That's why I'm trying to get these last, um, interviews done because this second phase is I report my findings and do my conclusion, and then, I immediately enter my third phase, probably within the next week or two, and that is gonna be the editing and preparing for the defense, and then after that, it's done.

Teacher D: Okay! The end is in sight!

Stan: Yes, and that'll all take place within about 6-8 weeks.

Teacher D: (Whistles) My brother is working on a PhD on Church History from [anonymized seminary].. .

Stan: Oh, wow!

Teacher D: . . . but he's still on his coursework. They do kinda of a . . . most of its online, but I think he has to go to campus for a week a semester or something like that, although with COVID, this past semester was still . . . the week that would've been on campus was still off . . . was still online, but . . .

Stan: Yup.

Teacher D: . . . he lives in [anonymized location], so they just pop up to [anonymized location] for that one week.

Stan: Gotcha.

Teacher D: His kids homeschool, so they all go up, and my sister-in-law actually has a library card, so she'll take them to the library and . . .

Stan: Oh, wow.

Teacher D: . . . . do all kinds of fun things, so . . .

Stan: That is really neat!

Teacher D: Yeah, so I . . . I'm excited for him and, um, he, well, I know that you're experiencing the difficulty of being a parent and a spouse and working and going to school and all of those things.

Stan: Yeah, I had a conversation with a guy a couple of weeks ago, and he asked me, you know, he said, "I'm thinkin' about doin' the Doctor of Music Education," and, I said well good, and he said, "Well, my wife and I are thinkin' first about havin' children and then I'll get it started, but I'd just, you know, like to see a little bit more about it," and I said, if you intend to do it, get it done now . . .

Teacher D: (laughs)

Stan: . . . before you have children (laughs).

Teacher D: I am not married, but I am glad that I did my Master's right away, because it's harder to think about going back, than, you know, 'cause it's just a different way of thinking. I like going to workshops and thinks like that, but that's much lower . . . lower pressure, you know, and you have to think through finances. Like, I was a graduate assistant, so I didn't have to pay, other than with my energy and my time.

Stan: I know, I do.

Teacher D: So lots of factors. If you can get it out of the way early, then, that's sounds bad. I enjoyed getting my Master's. I enjoyed working, but I think you know . . .

Stan: I know exactly what you mean.

Teacher D: (laughs) Oh, my! Well, if there's anything else I can help you with, let me know, and I hope everything goes well!

Stan: Yes, Ma'am, and thank you so much and have a nice day!

Teacher D: You, too, Stanley! Bye, bye.

### ***TEACHER E***

Blanks at:

9:38.3

13:29.9

17:30.4

19:07.6

Stan: Hello?

Teacher E: Are you Facetiming?

Stan: No. Is this Teacher E?

Teacher E: It is Teacher E.

Stan: Hi! How are you doin'?

Teacher E: I'm well. How are you?

Stan: Good! Not too bad. How's [anonymized location]?

Teacher E: It's pretty quiet actually. We've had a rather peaceful day. We didn't know what to expect. It's the first time we've flown with COVID, so . . .

Stan: Yeah, wow!

Teacher E: . . . everything's good!

Stan: Are the airlines seem to be cleaning things up and keeping things safe for ya!

Teacher E: Yeah. It's funny. The plane was packed, but there's not that many people in the airport, so . . .

Stan: Oh . . .

Teacher E: . . . I guess, less flights going out, but the ones that are going out are pretty full.

Stan: Good. Well, that's a good thing. At least, it keeps people employed and keeps things goin'.

Teacher E: Yes, exactly.

Stan: Well, I . . .

Teacher E: (inaudible)

Stan: Go . . . go ahead.

Teacher E: You're at [anonymized university], and you're doing a research project for. . . I forget the title.

Stan: Yes, I'm, I'm doin' a research project on, tryin' to figure out what opportunities does the community have to be involved in music and how does community music involvement benefit your program and also your students, so I am doing this as part of my dissertation work, and I need four more teachers or music educators, retired or active, to complete the research.

Teacher E: (inaudible)

Stan: You still there?

Teacher E: I am. Can you hear me?

Stan: Yes, yes. I can hear ya. So, if you know of four others, please let them know. Give me their information, and I'll reach out to them, but I would love to connect with them to complete this research and get it turned in. (laughs)



Teacher E: Ya', okay. Oh my gosh! I can't even imagine. I'm not a research person. I got a second Master's a couple years ago, because I wanted to study with a composer at [anonymized university].

Stan: Oh, wow!

Teacher E: Yeah, I'm a composer now, as well as a music teacher, but anyway, I hated the research (laughs).

Stan: I understand! (laughs)

Teacher E: My hat's off to you. You're doin' the right thing. Get it done!

Stan: Well, I know your time is limited, so let's dive right into it, and we'll getcha goin'.

Teacher E: That sounds great!

Stan: Great! So first of all, before we get started, if you . . . I sent you a consent form. You get the consent form filled out and sent back to me, and in that email, if, ya' know, put her address, I will send a prepaid Visa card. Um, it's not a lot. I'm payin' out of my own pocket, but it's just something to say thank you for takin' time.

Teacher E: Aww . . . that's awfully kind of you.

Stan: Absolutely! So, okay, just tell me a little bit about yourself, like your education and what inspired you to become a music educator?

Teacher E: I, well, I got my original degree in Music Education, but I didn't what I wanted to do right after that, so I stuck around and got my Master's in Piano, and after that, I decided I really didn't wanna teach, and I, um, my husband and I went into ministry. . .

Stan: Uh huh.

Teacher E: . . . and we went into college ministry full time. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E: . . . for a while, and I had taught piano to pay my way through grad school, and I had these people that were begging me to teach piano to their kiddos, and so, I started teaching piano again, and ya' know, you get the music teaching bug, and I decided to teach, but I had gotten my degree in [anonymized location] at a private school and none of it counted in [anonymized location].

Stan: Oooohhh . . .

Teacher E: So, I had to basically go back to school, and I had to take like 18-hour classes and student teach all over again, so I did, and, uh, that's about 16 years ago. So I've been in the public schools since, um, for about 16 years.

Stan: Okay, alright. Now, when you said a private school, I was . . . was that a Christian University in [anonymized location].

Teacher E Yeah, [anonymized university].

Stan: Yeah! That's where I went to school. Who'd you study under?

Teacher E: Well, let me see. I had [anonymized name] for piano. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E . . . and [anonymized name] I mean, you're younger than I am, so these people are all retired.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E: . . . um, but yeah, it was such a fabulous program. It just wasn't accredited, and everybody down here just had nothing to do with them, because it wasn't accredited, so, um, I . . .

Stan: Really?

Teacher E:: . . . should have had, ya' know, I was . . . my certificate was Band, Instrumental, and Choral, but here, in [anonymized location] I had to choose one or the other, so I had been accompanying high school choir in [anonymized location]. . .

Stan: Yup.

Teacher E: . . . and I loved it so much, and I got all re-enthused with choral music . . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher E: . . . I had been a singer, and ya' know, when I grew up, ya' didn't have to choose between band and choir. I was in both all through high school and college, so having to choose was kinda crazy, but then, I just decided to do the choral, so that's kinda that history.

Stan: Whoa . . . okay. Well, you, you said that I'm younger than you. When did you graduate from Bob Jones?

Teacher E: In 1982.

Stan: Okay, alright. Well, I graduated in '99, so okay. Yup, okay, yup.

Teacher E: (laughs)

Stan: I had Chris Gilman as my piano instructor. . .

Teacher E: Yup, okay. . .

Stan: . . . but then I ended up, I was a double major, Bible and Music, and then I ended up claiming Bible as my major and Music as my minor, because I didn't have time to take the platform exams. I was too busy with Hebrew and Greek . . . .

Teacher E: Oh, my goodness, yeah. . .

Stan: . . . so I'm kickin' myself, but that's okay. (laughs) So, alright, so those were acquaintance questions. Now, let's get into the big questions, and we'll fly right through these. These are pretty easy for ya'. So, are you currently active or have you been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher E: Uh, yes, so I have, I'm, I'm split between two schools, because we don't have the funding here in [anonymized location] where we live, so I teach sixth, seventh, and eighth grade at middle school, and then, I have two high school choirs at the high school, which ya' know, is problematic, because there's no intermediate choir. So what I did to facilitate. . . basically, what that does is it reduces your advanced choirs to an intermediate choir, if ya' know what I'm sayin'. . .

Stan: Yes.

Teacher E: . . . so to facilitate what I wanted, I started two afterschool groups, a men's group and a women's group, and the women's group was quite select. They had to, ya' know, sight-read their part while somebody else was sight-reading another part, and uh, ya' know, pretty strict limitations for those that could get in, because I could only meet with them an hour a week, but while it's very short, these two groups became largely my voice in the community.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E: So, ya, I would take . . . um, here's for an instance, we sang, ya' know, the barbershop quarter women?

Stan: Yup.

Teacher E: Yeah, so we sang in their concert. We sang with them in towns. We've sung at the beachfronts. We've sung for the Black History Leadership Conference down at the oceanfront. We've sung for them all, ya' know, big and small. I've taken them down to [anonymized location] and had them sing on [anonymized island] and do workshops for students there that don't have a music program.

Stan: Ooohhh. . .

Teacher E: So, ya, we've done some extensive work outside of the building.

Stan: Okay. Now does your music program at your school have performance opportunities for your students?

Teacher E: Yes. So, we have our regular three concerts a year – fall, winter, and spring. Fall and winter at the high school I am currently, um, we do the fall and winter programs with the Fine Arts Program, which is, ya know, the band and the strings are participatory in that, and then our spring concerts, we, ya' know, showcase all of our own students at our own concerts. We do that on campus. The kids get asked to sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" here and there and that sort of thing.

Stan: Okay. Alright. And do you have any other kinds of musical events like community parades or Christmas hand bells or carolers that you do with your students?

Teacher E: Oh, yeah, so for Christmas, we get asked to sing a lot of places. We do an annual sing at, at, there's a mall center that pays us to come and carol around the shops, and then, there's the beachfront . . . they call it the [anonymized name] (laughs) . . .

Stan: Wow! (laughs)

Teacher E: We go down and sing for the [anonymized name], um, and usually get invited to some other concert event in town for Christmas.

Stan: Wow! Okay, so you do quite a bit! Wow!

Teacher E: Yeah.

Stan: Now, are these concerts promoted to or attended by the general public as a community event or do they tend to be of interest to just parents and performers?

Teacher E: No, believe it or not, there's more community involvement than there is parent involvement. I think one of my problems that we've had in the last 10 years, we've got parents working 2 and 3 jobs, and a lot of them don't even come to the concerts.

Stan: Ooohhh . . .

Teacher E: So, it's hard to even find someone who can come on the field trips with us, so we'll go to these events, and I'll have the minimum number of parents to come as chaperones, but yeah, the other parents don't show up. It's not generally because they're not interested; it's just because they're working so much.

Stan: Alright, okay. Now, do you have a pep band?

Teacher E: We do. Now, that would be [anonymized name] thing, because he's the band director, and they play for . . . we get three pep rallies a year during school, so the pep band

would play for that, and then . . . they play . . . . it's basically the marching band where you have the drum corps . . .

Stan: Hmm hmm. . . .

Teacher E: . . . . and then, ya' know, the center, central corps. So if you go to the football games, for instance, the pep band is the marching band, which is only about 40 members now.

Stan: Okay, alright . . . and do they travel for any other games besides playing for home games?

Teacher E: They do home games, but they do like, I don't know, eight or nine competitions a year.

Stan: Wow! Okay.

Teacher E: It's incredible. So ya' know, we put in all this work to keep our programs together and to keep our kids together, but yeah . . .

Stan: Okay. So, I'm assuming' that you have a music boosters' program?

Teacher E: I do.

Stan: Okay. How does that function, and when, if they raise funds, what's the money used for?

Teacher E: Well, in our case, I know the band is different, because they have to raise funds for a lot of other things, but for Chorus, I'm raising funds to replace our outfits. I rent my uniforms to the kids, so while I have one set of uniforms for the beginner and one for the advanced choir, and I rent them out every year, and ya know, we raise funds from whatever is not raised from rentals to keep those updated. Um, most of the things that we do in the Chorus is the kids are allowed to, since it's not run through the school – it would be illegal if it was done through the school – but since we're our own organization, they can raise funds for their own field trips. Um, that's what largely is done.

Stan: Okay. Now, does your music program work with a community theater or musical theater group.

Teacher E: No, we don't do that.

Stan: Okay. Is there is a music store nearby?

Teacher E: Yeah, we have several music stores that are pretty supportive, music and arts mostly.

Stan: Okay, alright. Now, do they offer instrument rentals, private or group lessons?

Teacher E: Yes.

Stan: They do . . . okay. Do you personally offer community music group lessons?

Teacher E: Other than the afterschool rehearsals that I do, no, because there's no time left.  
(laughs)

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher E: No, really, there just isn't.

Stan: Okay. Um, um, are these done directly through your school or is it through a community education program?

Teacher E: So, the music stores, and I believe we have about three of them: \_\_\_\_\_, Music and Arts, and whatever, they offer their own private lessons and rentals and so forth. Um, the school provides free instruments to the students, so the school rents instruments for the student population. I don't think they have to pay for those.

Stan: Okay, well alright. Now, how, and maybe you can't answer this, but how have the opportunities, these opportunities, directly impacted you as a teacher, your students, or your music program?

Teacher E: Um, well, I tell ya' I do have a friend, and she's not related to any of the music stores, but she is a vocal teacher, and she's done tremendous work with some of my kids, 'cause there's, ya' know, some students have particular issues with their voices or confidence or whatever, and it's just more than you can get done . . .

Stan: Mmmmmm. . .

Teacher E: . . . in a large group situation, and she's . . . with at least three of my students, she really, really made a big difference in the last couple of years. So I love having that. She's got a full studio now, but often, if I have a student with any kind of vocal issues that have the ability to pay for the lessons, I will refer them.

Stan: Nice, okay. What benefit have you seen from being involved with your community, you personally?

Teacher E: Um, I think that the community at large just really enjoys the kids. Um, whether we're at the mall – we used to actually sing at the airport. They don't do that anymore (laughs), but we used to do that, too. Um, this is a for-instance, when we sang for the [anonymized name] which is really something, because it's down at the beachfront, and the people that are in the marathon dress up like Santa. You have strollers and all kinds of crazy things goin' on and all dressed up in some fashion like Santa, but we were cheering them on while we were caroling, and this was, by no means, a performance as much as it was just singing, but they were cheering for us. So, that was just really sweet.

Stan: Oh, man, that's great! Just a couple more questions, and then we're all done. Is there anything holding you back from being more involved, like facilities, time, finances, lack of interest, anything like that that's holding you back?

Teacher E: Well, I would say there are two things: the school is so macro- and micro-focused on testing that that gets everybody's time and attention and money, and it's just been really hard to . . . the arts are suffering because we are not a part of those core classes that gets testing, so we've been cut. But secondly is time, and this is the interesting thing about technology. Our whole district, everyone, all of the students have their own Chromebooks. Everything is online, which helped us during COVID and all.

Stan: Certainly.

Teacher E: . . . but the difficulty is that for teachers, we have five times the amount of work we used to have, so not only are you doing lesson plans and learning to play the music so you can accompany your choir and learning to sing every part so you can teach your choir and making up tests and keeping a . . . we have a very high curriculum of expectations of the music department, but you're also now making online lessons and tests and that sort of thing, and it's, it's, ya' know, and we already were nurses and doctors and (laughs) counselors and \_\_\_\_\_ officers and you name it already. It's just . . . and then, with fewer parents to help, my parent organization is down to just a few parents, and just enough to hold the positions, and so, we're really hurting in that. Everyone's time is so limited.

Stan: Yeah, absolutely, no, I totally understand. Last question: can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen within the next two to five years for your students, for your music program, or your community, because of community involvement?

Teacher E: Ah, interesting. Well, I think in the world of technology, I wish there were a better way for music teachers to share. So, ya' know, there are a number of sites that have been sharing, like math teachers share with math teachers, and science teachers with science teachers.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E: [anonymized academy] is one of those, but we don't have anything like that for music. So here we are, each teaching like five different subjects with no one else in our building teaching those five subjects, and we have to come up with all the plans and tests and everything. There's just no sharing goin' on. I think that would help if we could come up with some type of a platform for sharing. So that's one thing.

Stan: Yup.

Teacher E: I think the other thing is if we could . . . ah, I guess I don't know what the solution would be, but if we could allow the \_\_\_\_\_ that states they need to have music, because it's always the first thing to go. Oh, you need another AP class, give up your Chorus. Oh, ya' know, and I feel like that if music was given the place that it deserves, not just because I'm a music teacher, but because I'm a teacher of human beings, I see the benefit to the spirit of the students that they get from being in the community of chorus or band.

Stan: Right.

Teacher E: That can't be replaced, and these are kids that may not get that community on the basketball team, 'cause they're no good at that, ya' know (laughs). Um, and so, I wish that we could be recognized for what we do provide to the students' education.

Stan: Absolutely. I think those are wonderful things, and those wonderful things that I think administration needs to be aware of. That, that will really provide some support for your program, so that is very well said. So just one more time for the record, you teach between two schools and one is an elementary school, is that correct?

Teacher E: No, it's a middle school.

Stan: Oh, okay, it's a middle school, is that sixth through eighth?

Teacher E: So, yeah, I have a sixth-grade class, a seventh-grade class, and an eighth-grade class. This year, there's about 40 in each one.

Stan: Wow! Okay. Alright, so you . . . .

Teacher E: Then, at the high school, I have a Beginning Chorus and an Advanced Chorus . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher E: . . . but I do have my two afterschool events for which I'm not really paid any extra, but it's because of what it gives back to the choir, the vocal development, the maturity, that it feeds back into the choir, it's been worth my time.

Stan: Got it. Okay. Good, good. Oh, man, you have, you've provided wonderful input, and I cannot wait to get this uploaded into my system. It's just, ah, what a blessing! Is there anything that I can do for you? Ya know, maybe, is there a prayer request or something I can add to my list to help you out.

Teacher E: Oh, I'd love that!

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher E: Yeah, just pray that, ah, as we come back together this fall, that we'll be able to, as teachers, reach these kids. It's gonna be difficult. I'm sure you've heard the roll-outs from other people, but one of the roll-outs is maybe that half the students come Tuesday and Thursday, half the students come Wednesday and Friday, and the teachers have meetings on Mondays, so that's one of the roll-outs. Another one is that we stay at home and do our lessons online, but just be praying for these music teachers that we figure it out, because we're not like masked, and we rely on ensembles . . . so to try to find a way to do that.

Stan: Okay. I can absolutely do that. Listen, you have been such a help. Get that form sent to me with your address, and probably in the next couple of weeks, I'll be sending out all the prepaid cards to all my contributors. So, I just appreciate your time.



Teacher E: Absolutely! I'm excited about your project.

Stan: Well, thank you! And I'll keep you posted on it, too.

Teacher E: Okay, sounds wonderful!

Stan: Thank you so, so much! Safe travels, okay?

Teacher E: Thank you.

Stan: Okay, yes, Ma'am. Bye, bye.

Teacher E: Bye, bye.

### ***TEACHER F***

Teacher F: Hello?

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher F?

Teacher F: Yes, it is.

Stan: Hi, this is Stan Harris calling. How are you?

Teacher F: I'm fine. How are you?

Stan: Oh, just peachy! (laughs) So where exactly am I calling?

Teacher F: This is my home in [anonymized location].

Stan: [anonymized location]! Good! How is it out there? Is it nice?

Teacher F: Yeah, it's pretty hot right now. [anonymized name] and I share an office.

Stan: Aaahhh! Gotcha! Okay. Well, I'm sure your time is absolutely precious, because it is vacation.

Teacher F: (laughs)

Stan: Yeah, when I talked with her, she was absolutely fantastic. She was wonderful, and she recommended you for it and said that you'd be a wonderful participant with input . . .

Teacher F: Awww . . .

Stan: . . . so I appreciate you taking time.

Teacher F: And would you explain further what you're working on?

Stan: Okay, well, I am completing my research for my dissertation in Music Education. I'm just tryin' to finish up my participants, and I need roughly between 12 and 15 participants and you're number 10.

Teacher F: Oh, congrats! Where are you attending, and what is your dissertation about?

Stan: Sure! I am attending Liberty University, and a matter of fact, I'm also a professor there. In order to get tenure, you gotta have your doctorate degree, of course, so, I am finishing that up. My dissertation is about encouraging music educators who may have taught in rural situations or are currently in rural situations to enlist community involvement.

Teacher F: Oh, okay.

Stan: This leads me to the first question. Can you tell me a little bit about yourself and what inspired you to become a music teacher?

Teacher F: Oh, okay. Well, I'm someone who knew I wanted to go into music pretty early. I remember doing a report on it in middle school. Always loved, ya' know, singing or whatever. I actually went to school at \_\_\_\_\_, thinking I would be a double major in Education and Performance. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: . . . and quickly realized that would take me 6 years and, Performance, they just need you to be good, so, I changed just to Ed and continued on. My junior year, I ended up an internship at a local church, and that's where I discovered that I absolutely loved conducting, 'cause I was leading the \_\_\_\_\_ choir, adult church choir, and then, the youth choir, and so it was kind of helpful \_\_\_\_\_ that I figured that out. My whole family, kind of, is a family of teachers. My grandfather and uncle were both principals. My mom teaches at the jail . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: . . . and there ya' go! I just finished my 16<sup>th</sup> year, and there ya' go!

Stan: Oh, goodness gracious! Sixteen years, yeah, that's great! I was teaching music for, not including what I've done currently at Liberty, I've been 17-1/2 years.

Teacher F: That's great!

Stan: I love it! Love it! Now, you mentioned that you do K through what again?

Teacher F: No, I'm high school.

Stan: High school. Oh, okay.

Teacher F: Yes, I've always taught 9 through 12 in a public school system. Then, outside the school system, I get church, and, at times, I've taught some younger and some adults, but um, the school system is my \_\_\_\_\_.

Stan: Absolutely. Okay.

Teacher F: Certified teacher involvement (laughs).

Stan: Oh, okay. Is the school that you teach at, is it an all-day school or I said it's an all-day school, is it a 9-month school, 10-month school, extended day . . .?

Teacher F: Nine month.

Stan: Nine-month school, okay, cool. The question to kick off everything then is this: Are you currently active or have you ever been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher F: Ummm. . . well, I mean outside of church, I sing professionally with the [anonymized location] Chorale, and we have an education program there called the "Young Singers Project."

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: Um, I was a mentor at \_\_\_\_\_, I guess, 4 or 5 years for that, and um, then, I am member of the [anonymized location] CDA, the professional Choral Directors' Association, and last summer, we did a, um, choral leadership workshops, canvassing for college and high school students. I was on a leadership team for that.

Stan: Wow!

Teacher F: I guess those are really the two big things.

Stan: Okay. Now, does your music program at school have performance opportunities for your students?

Teacher F: Yes.

Stan: Okay. Can you tell me how many and what type of concerts you do each year?

Teacher F: In the school, we have two \_\_\_\_\_ it will even take up like the regular chorus concerts, and then, we had like a senior . . . I'm the director at the Academy for Performing Arts in [anonymized location], and so then, we have like a senior production performance at the end of the year. And then, we did a fair number of community performances. We performed at the [anonymized location] Symphonicity for their Nutcracker performances

that they do with Ballet [anonymized location] International, um, the choir. We did that in December. We did, actually, three weeks before we went into quarantine, we performed for the administrators' conference that happened down at the Oceanfront, performed there once. Um, and ya' know just other \_\_\_\_\_ type of things.

Stan: Okay, so do you have any other kind of musical events, um, where you are performing for the community specifically?

Teacher F: Well, I mean, our concerts are open and free to everyone . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: . . . and we have fair \_\_\_\_\_, ya' know, one of my teacher group, and we advertise for our concerts \_\_\_\_\_ and our school website, but ya' know, social media and stuff, as well.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: So, we have a partnership with \_\_\_\_\_ chorale, which is an adult choir in the area.

Stan: Is there any connection between your music program and athletics?

Teacher F: Um, we are asked to sing the National Anthem at a lot of big events, like all the pep rallies, and if we host the district cheerleading or wrestling or anything like that, we, um, actually committed \_\_\_\_\_

Stan: Sure.

Teacher F: \_\_\_\_\_ performers the National Anthem for the open house and Academy Night, you know, graduation, and all those things, as well.

Stan: All those . . .

Teacher F: We have, since it is the Performing Arts Academy, we had like a holiday showcase, and we had a spring, I think it 3 different showcases, talent shows throughout the year that are performed not only during the day for the students, but then, at night the \_\_\_\_\_ open to the public, as well.

Stan: Okay. Now, you mentioned that you have a boosters' program. Can you tell me how that functions and if you raise funds, what you use the money for?

Teacher F: Um, well, it's called "Friends of the Academy," and \_\_\_\_\_ administration, since it is an academy, there's like an overall board that oversees all 5 strands, and then each of the 5 strands elects its own officers and things. So, we did some fundraisers, ya' know, throughout the year, and then, those funds went to various things that are needed. We, um, actually had to pay off a little bit of debt that was left by the previous teacher, and then, we

bought some gifts for the seniors, since they had missed their graduation and everything this year.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: Then, we are currently saving money, 'cause the program needs new dresses.

Stan: Okay. Now, does your music program work with any community theater or musical theater group?

Teacher F: Um, we have a theater put on a musical every 3 years, and my students are encouraged to, ya' know, participate in the community, and I had several students who either performed with [anonymized location] Stage Company or at the . . . gosh, what's it called. . . the um . . . it's \_\_\_\_\_ theater. I had one that did \_\_\_\_\_ theater and one who did a show over in [anonymized location]. They get credit for such performances, and then, our seniors, all the seniors in the academy actually had to an internship in the community. . .

Stan: Wow!

Teacher F: . . . so I had students who went and helped out with \_\_\_\_\_ elementary school music programs and ones who worked at recording studios in town or with music therapists at the hospital. They did 2-day job shadowing experience and practicums.

Stan: Wow! That is really cool! Now, do you, do you know of any music store nearby?

Teacher F: Music store?

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher F: We have a partnership with [anonymized name] and um, I had any this year work there, but I did have had students work there. They're really good about offering summer internships. . .

Stan: Oh, good! Great!

Teacher F: . . . for our students.

Stan: And they offer instrument rentals, private or group lessons?

Teacher F: Yes, yes.

Stan: Good, good. Okay. Um, now do you yourself offer community music group lessons or singles lessons.

Teacher F: I do have a private voice studio, um, that is rather small at the moment, 'cause I have the infant or a toddler at home, so, but I teach private lessons.

Stan: Okay, \_\_\_\_\_ yeah, yeah. Great! And you said you have an infant and a toddler?

Teacher F: Oh, I guess he's just an inter-toddler, he just turned 2, and then I have a 10-year-old daughter.

Stan: Oh, well, wonderful! Well, you are blessed, that's for sure. I got 3. I got a 9-year-old, an 8-year-old, and a 6-year-old, so I get it.

Teacher F: Ohhhh, great!

Stan: They are a blessing. So, how have these opportunities that we've talked about impacted you as a teacher, your students, and your music program?

Teacher F: I think it's . . . being a performer myself, um, I've always tried to encourage my students to see, um, ya' know, the opportunities there are for music in the community and around the state. During this quarantine situation, I had them do actually 4 online little research assignments. I had music therapy, music education, music performance, and music ministry. I just want them to understand that this is a possible, ya' know, career path and, um, what kind of career options are out there for them or even just interests.

Stan: Sure.

Teacher F: Um, I just don't think they know a lot about it. My seniors, I made them do another research project where they had to, um, a list of 15 or 20 performing groups in the area, and they had to, ya' know, find out information what they rehearse and whether they had a vision, because I want them . . . not that they have to necessarily have a career in music, but I want them to continue with music, um, and enjoy it forever or at least support it, so and you always try to maybe make those connections with them, and the baseline of that is the education aspect to be sure that they are all true musicians that are musically literate.

Stan: Okay. That's makes perfect sense. Now, what benefits have you seen from being involved with the community, whether it's yourself or your classes, your choir?

Teacher F: Um, I've seen students who, um, ya' know, did get . . . well, I mean, just for an example, I had a student who did perform with the [anonymized location] Stage Company this past year, and because of those, ya' know, wonderful experiences, she ended up not only gaining life experience, connections that would like help her \_\_\_\_\_, but she got a scholarship for college, um, because of it, so there is that. I've had a lot of students who have gone off to college, and even if they aren't majoring in it, they still participate in the choir and they just, ya' know, they come back and visit or \_\_\_\_\_ say how it's been, ya' know, a blessing to have something like that still in their life. It keeps them well rounded and helps them make new friends and, um, gives them something that seems normal to them when they are starting into situations like college or life. Um . . .

Stan: Is there anything holding you back from being more involved? For instance, facility, staff time, finances, lack of interest, anything like that, in being more involved in your community to provide music opportunities?

Teacher F: Um, the school system, especially right now, they have so many requirements on you that you and some, you get things \_\_\_\_\_ to you and you gotta check some boxes, you gotta check the boxes, which it is important to hold us all accountable, but it does limit the amount of free time you have to explore some of those other options. Um, and so, it's a little challenging. I have also been in, this is my third high school that I've been in, and I have had situations where my budget was so small that it prohibited me from taking my groups out to the communities and it didn't have an extra \$150 for me to take a bus or, ya' know, for the accompanists, so finances are a reality of, ya' know, the schools. There is not always, but sometimes, a really negative stigma with elective classes that we had, for examples, the students were going to sing at the International Tattoo this year before the quarantine happened, and they were so looking forward to that. They were goin' to get to meet people from around the world, perform in the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest tattoo in the world, I mean, really it would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and yet, I still had teachers who were angry that they were going to be missing one of their classes, um, to do one of these performances. Um, and not to belittle their classes and I did communicate with them 3-1/2 months ahead of time. But there are some teachers who just don't value the arts and don't understand why it's important . . .

Stan: Mmmmm . . . .

Teacher F: . . . which is frustrating, and some of the teachers and administrators truly get it, but um, there's a lot to be done.

Stan: Okay. No, I've run into that several times. I understand. Can you name up to 3 things that you would like to see happen within the next 2 to 5 years to your students, your music program, or for your community because of community involvement with music?

Teacher F: Um, I would like for . . . I don't know which direction it would go, but because of community involvement, the public supports arts in the school more vocally.

Stan: Yup.

Teacher F: I don't know if this whole pandemic is going to help or hurt it, um. I mean schools over the past 10 years, I've watched them cut budgets and cut benefits and cut retirement plans and cut, ya' know, staffing, and increased cost \_\_\_\_\_, and I've watched over the past 10 years, and it gets kind of worse and worse. Unless people want to go into the profession now . . . . so now, in the music world, I'm seeing people be put into art teaching positions who are not maybe the best choices, because there is nobody else that wants to do it. Um, and I hope that the whole discussion of reopening of schools or whatever makes schools and the arts and all of it, teachers a little more valued, um, and supported, and part of it is monetarily, teachers' salaries may need to be increased, our budgets need to be increased. We shouldn't be spending thousands of dollars out of our own pocket to buy, ya' know, stuff for our students and classes.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher F: Um, and then, the 3<sup>rd</sup> one, um, specifically for students, I don't know if it's, ya know, I'm not old enough that I'm going to blame it all on cell phones, but technology has really changed them, and they want things a lot faster, um, I don't feel like education has caught entirely up with that. Ya' know, so they're spending a lot of time on social media or things that might not, ya' know, a payout for them in the end, other than making them slightly more emotional, um, but if the school system was able to invest in training for the teachers or software or hardware or programs for even kids, then they could use that, um, ya' know, to our educational advantage. I think that would be wonderful. Um, just being in this quarantine for the past couple of months and having to do online learning, I don't want, actually, to do it 100% of the time forever, but it does present some opportunities, but ya' know, the technology resources and support would need to be there for us to move the music education forward that way.

Stan: Wow! So, you are a veteran teacher, no doubt about it. Wow! I, I love your input. It's going to really help with the research that I'm doin'. It's very good. That was the last question. I really appreciate your input, I really do. It's, it's amazing when I talk to the teachers how much experience and knowledge and things that I haven't experienced or haven't even thought of. I am gathering and being influenced by you all, so thank you very much.

Teacher F: Oh, no problem!

Stan: Now, for doing this interview, you get a \$10 prepaid Visa card, and, if you could just email me your address, I will get that out within the next 2-3, maybe 4 weeks max, just as a way of saying thank you.

Teacher F: Well, thank you for that, and I wish you the best of luck.

Stan: Yes, yes, and I hope this quarantine thing really settles down so we can get back in our classrooms, so good luck with that.

Teacher F: Me, too, and on the one hand I desperately miss it, and especially choral arts where it's awful right now (laughs) during the pandemic, but ya' know, being a parent of 3 younger kids, I'm fearful, and I want to make sure everyone's safe, and so . . .

Stan: Absolutely! No, I got it. Well, if there's anything else you would like to add that you think of later, please feel free to either call, text, or shoot me an email. I would love to throw it in. Thank you.

Teacher F: You're welcome! Alright, bye, Stanley.

Stan: Have a nice day. Bye, bye.



*TEACHER G*

Teacher G: Hey, Stan, what ya doin', Man?

Stan: Hey, not too bad. How you doin'?

Teacher G: I'm doin' pretty good!

Stan: Ha, ha! Ya livin' the dream?

Teacher G: Oooohhh, yeah. The dream. We actually had a music teacher meeting today, and we're talking about what our backup proactive plan is for, just in case, we don't go back to school on time? They're talking about doin' like some online modules and stuff for kids, and they could be put on Jump drives and CDs for the kids that don't have Internet access and stuff.

Stan: Yah . . . Wow. Well, you're not busy then, are ya? (laughs)

Teacher G: Oh, besides that, I'm doing reach out videos to parents and students that at our school. I'm the guy that's basically become like the PR person to try to keep the parents and students in the loop as how everybody's doin' and ah . . . at [anonymized location] Elementary and what we're up to and the things that we're to reach out to kids and everything. You should check out the videos. They're on Facebook.

Stan: Oh, they are?

Teacher G: Look up my name. Yeah, yeah, they're on . . . just look under [anonymized name] and you'll see 'em. They're there.

Stan: Ya, we'll have to do that. I'd be interested to see some of that.

Teacher G: Yeah, no problem.

Stan: Hey, so what you can do . . . I'm drawing a blank. Did you fill out the consent form by any chance?

Teacher G: I wanted to. The problem is our printer was acting really dumb at that time, and then, of course, they, it finally printed something that we told it to print five days ago, and so, what I'll do is, I'll try again to print that same consent form, see if I can send it to the printer to see if it will print from my phone? If it does, I'll text you and, do I just mail it to you?

Stan: Well, actually, all you gotta do is take a picture and email it to me. That's all you gotta do.

Teacher G: Wonderful! That's even better. Oh, yeah, I can do that. That's not a problem. I'll be happy to do that.

Stan: Yeah, and if you wanted to, just take a picture of it on your phone, like from your screen, take a picture from your phone, and then just sign it with a little ink, that little pen that's in the photos or whatever if you have an iPhone, and then just take a screen shot of it or send that to me. That will do, too.

Teacher G: Oh, I see what you're sayin'. Take a picture of the form and then just do the signing with like the . . . . I know what you're talkin' about, where you use like the pen or whatever?

Stan: Exactly. Yes.

Teacher G: Okay. I can try that, too.

Stan: Then also, email me your address, so I can get you your gift card, as well.

Teacher G: Oh, okay, yeah, not a problem. So I'll be glad to do that.

Stan: Good. Alright, well then, let's get this goin' then. Shouldn't be too hard. Should be pretty painless.

Teacher G: Oh, yeah. I actually . . . I prepared in advance.

Stan: Good deal.

Teacher G: So you can't hit me with anything I'm not used to.

Stan: Ha, ha! So just tell me about yourself, like your origins of like where you're from and your upbringing, education, and then, you know, your college education. Then, tell me also what inspired you to become a music teacher.

Teacher G: Alright, okay. Well, my dad was in the Air Force, so I grew up in four different states: [anonymized locations], and I was part of different music programs at different schools. I sing a lot in the church. I started on saxophone when I was in fifth grade, and then I picked up the acoustic guitar in high school, and it was kinda funny . . . my parents thought it was a joke, so they bought me a guitar. It was like one step up from Toys 'r Us, and they thought that'd be the end of it, and no more than two years later, they were buying me one that was a lot more expensive. Then I attended \_\_\_\_\_ University, and I would say that it was my saxophone professor, [anonymized name], who, ah, he still teaches over there, and he was the one that inspired me to be an educator, 'cause I go to see through his eyes, like I used to do a lot of things with him. Like, I directed the jazz band with him. We did a seniors honors project together. He helped me work out my Master's Thesis and things like that, and just watching him work and the things that he did is what really very inspired me. He said that, you know, you're great as a performer, but performers are limited because they're away from their family so much. Educators get to perform and have families, and they also have the pleasure of molding that next generation of musicians, so you get to have your cake and eat it as an educator.

Stan: Alright, alright, cool! Wow! So then are you currently active or have you been involve facilitating music opportunities for the community?

Teacher G: As of right now, no. I don't know if this counts, but a year or two ago, I was the contemporary music director at my church, and we did have people come in, and they would, like we would encourage them to come in and be a part of the team and just spread the love of God through Christian music. So, we discovered that the time away from our family was hard, so it, it, it's hard to balance family and work a lot of times, especially when you're a musician, 'cause you and I both know, it's a lot of work.

Stan: Absolutely. Yup. Okay. So, I think you've already mentioned one, but just for the sake of asking the question, what are reasons as to why you are not involved in community music-related outreaches, and you said one is family and two is time? Are there any others you can think of?

Teacher G: Well, in [anonymized location] where I currently teach, it's a small town, so there are, you know, there's not like a big demand for it, but you know, that will, that may change. In the future, I'm hoping that it will, because my plan is to make the program in [anonymized location] as strong as it possibly can be, so I'm not sayin' I wouldn't be involved, but it would probably be another thing that, that, holds me back, limited, is the age of my kids. They're not old enough to be alone by themselves, so I have to home a lot, 'cause my wife, she works a lot of hours at [anonymized location] Health and Rehab Center. She's an occupational therapist, so ah, I'm basically Mr. Mom.

Stan: No, I get it, really I do. Do you believe that there can be benefits to your school's music program and its students through community opportunities?

Teacher G: Absolutely. Just havin' the music program this year, like I told you before, I came in with basically nothing. We had a VCR in the room, and there were no . . . the kids just weren't learning anything, but I discovered there was a child there who had been there since kindergarten, and he had not had a chance to study guitar with anyone, so he and I were having a regular guitar meeting on Mondays and any day he could come in, and I've also noticed our parents and staff have been very supportive, and there's a lot of people in the community that'll reach out and help out with props for programs. I had a parent reach out and did the psychiatrist's booth for the Christmas program we put on just this past December. So you get a lot of help from the people in your community, and it's definitely something that any music program will benefit from, because the people that are in the community, especially the parents, are willing to lend a hand and really want to see their kids perform and succeed.

Stan: Sure, okay. So, how many and what types of concerts do you have each year? I mean, there's the normal Christmas concert or winter concert and then your spring concert. What other ones do you perform?

Teacher G: Okay. Well, right now, we have had our Christmas and Black History Program. The Black History Program was basically focusing on the Night at the Apollo, so we had a lot of the Motown it featured, like the Temptations and Dianna Ross and the Supremes. We also

featured – what was his name? Trying to think of the guy who wrote, “Oh, Happy Day.” We did the “Oh, Happy Day,” version of Sister Act 2, the fourth, and they did an awesome job with that. The second grade, they’ve gone caroling for residents at the [anonymized location] Health and Rehab, and that’s something they hadn’t done before. We also had, we had seven fifth grade students participate in the All-County Chorus, and our fifth grade was . . . we were working on a promotion ceremony using the song, “Believer,” by Imagine Dragons, and then, also, the fourth grade was working on rehearsing a tribute song. I think they were gonna do, “My Wish,” by Rascal Flatts. I think they were gonna do something like that or I can’t remember what other ideas they had, um, in their back pockets, but they were really, really excited about that. And then, we’ve also had a KG and first grade, they do these little mini performances, uh, for our parents and grandparents who come in for lunch and stuff. We’ve educational songs. We’ve done patriotic songs. We did the Veteran’s Day reach-out. We did “God Bless the USA,” by Lee Greenwood, and we also did, um, what was the other one? I can’t think of it off the top of my head, but I know we did one other song.

Stan: Okay, yeah, okay. So these events, these concerts, are they promoted for just the parents of the students or are they promoted for even the community?

Teacher G: They’re promoted for both, Stanley. The caroling and the All-County Chorus, those were for community, that reach out to the community, and then, the school performances, we do target the parents and grandparents, but they are open to anyone. We also do these programs as a way to keep our parents involved at [anonymized location] Elementary School.

Stan: Alright. Do you take any of your students and participate in athletics with them?

Teacher G: As of right now, we do not do anything with, you know, the athletic program, like, if you’re talking about pep band or marching band or anything like that, because right now, at [anonymized location] or just a [anonymized location] county, the band program doesn’t even start ‘til sixth grade, which is out of my zone.

Stan: The reason I ask, and this is just a side note, kinda puttin’, puttin’ this on pause, the interview, but like something I used to do with my kids to get them involved, um, with like athletics, like even with our college . . . the University of Maine . . . the Maine Black Bears. They, you know, they would have games, like on the field for soccer or for baseball, so I would take my kids and we would practice the “Star Spangled Banner” and go to the games and sing the “Star Spangled Banner.” So I didn’t know if you do anything like that where you get them out and do stuff.

Teacher G: Oh, that’s something that we will definitely do. It’s just that it gonna take more developing of the program. Like I said, I came in with this program basically nonexistent, Stan. I mean, the principal, all I’ve been hearing all year long from everyone, even the sped [special education] teachers have been so glad to finally come to music class, and the kids are actually learning music.

Stan: Yay! Good!

Teacher G: Yeah, I completely agree with you. I am more willing to get a group together and to do the “Star Spangled Banner,” ‘cause right now, they actually use a recording. I think the lady they use is Madea.

Stan: Oh, really? (laughs) Okay. Do you have a music boosters’ program for your music \_\_\_\_\_ at school?

Teacher G: As of right now, our PTO, that’s basically our program, and there is money that’s given to the music program each year, and then, the music teacher, if we feel that we can . . . if it’s something that we think is affordable, then we can request funds from the PTO, but we do that at the meetings, and then that’s up to the discretion of them to decide whether or not they’ll approve it to allocate those funds.

Stan: Okay. Does your music program at your school have any connections or work with a community theater or a music theater group in the area?

Teacher G: Not at the moment, no.

Stan: Alright. And is there a music store nearby?

Teacher G: (laughs) Well, there’s the music \_\_\_\_\_ [name of store?] here in [anonymized location], but I also use Amazon and West Music. Unfortunately, [anonymized location] isn’t exactly where you’re gonna find a guitar center and anything like that.

Stan: (laughs) Okay. And do you yourself currently offer any music group or solo lessons to anybody.

Teacher G: I haven’t done that now, but this could happen down the road, after the music program is more established. Like I told you, that young man who came in from fifth grade, and I found myself teaching him guitar lessons, you know, that could be something that develops over the course of the next few years, because obviously, there are a lot of kids in that area that play guitar. They’re into the country, bluegrass-type stuff, so that might be a way to kinda phase that in.

Stan: What benefits have you seen, whether as an observer or a participator, with being involved with music in the community?

Teacher G: Well, like I said, the support from the parents and the community is just awesome. When we went to the [anonymized location] Health and Rehab Center, I met not only the administrator there, but he’s also the mayor of [anonymized location]. So he got to see our kids perform, and he was talkin’ about, “Well you guys are coming back every year, and I’ll be sure that ya do, and I’ll also promote you throughout the community,” and I know that we’ll be caroling at more places than that next year. But the connections that you make from performing is really good, and like I said, the parents coming in with their ideas and helping out with making our programs even better, we have a custodian who’s actually helping right now to make our music room better. I don’t if I told you about that Piano Pathways that we were putting together.

Well, we finally got that together. It's not in there yet, but I did see when I was in there a few weeks ago on the stage, and it looks absolutely wonderful.

Stan: Nice! Good! Alright, last question: Can you name up to three things you would like to see happen within the next two to five years to your students, your music program, and/or your community because of community involvement in music?

Teacher G: Okay. My students . . . I definitely wanna see more kids go on to be a part of the choral and band programs in middle school. I definitely wanna see that. That's one. Two, I would like to see more of the funding going into the arts programs. It's not that I have a problem with funding going to the athletics – it goes without sayin', but we definitely need more funding. If they want to see the music program continue to grow, then we do have to have money for the resources to make that happen, so more funding would be great. And then, third, the other thing, I just wanna see more parents continue to be involved in the program and for the program continue to grow through parent involvement. To be the best it possible can be, so that when these kids leave, they'll know they had the best elementary education in music they possibly could have.

Stan: Fair enough, Mr. Jack! That's it! We are done.

Teacher G: Awesome! That's sounds good, Man! That was very painless!

Stan: Yeah, it pretty much is. I had one young lady this morning, she's a new teacher, and she didn't have a whole lot of answers, but she emailed later and said, "I was thinkin' about that interview, and I got tons of ideas now!"

Teacher G: Oh, so she kinda gets a little bit tongue-tied when she's talkin' to ya, I guess?

Stan: I think she just, as a first-year music teacher, she's just thinking more along the lines of how do I survive my first year, rather than, I gotta grow this program, so I need to think outside the box.

Teacher G: Is it the one at [anonymized location]?

Stan: Ummmm . . . well, I'm not allowed to tell ya' where, but . . .

Teacher G: Okay. I think I might know who it is, and I'll tell ya right now, for a first-year teacher, if it's the one I'm thinkin' of, she's phenomenal. I mean, she is absolutely wonderful. I got to watch her work over at the All-County Chorus, and she just did a remarkable job with those kids.

Stan: Wow!

Teacher G: I mean she's got teaching in her blood. I mean both her parents are teachers, but she definitely the person to go to, and the team that I'm working with right now, like I said, we're doin' this curriculum where we're tryin' to put things online, and one of our teachers,

[anonymized name], she's over at [anonymized location], she had this whole spreadsheet of a curriculum she put together with a friend of hers last year.

Stan: Yup.

Teacher G: So now, instead of starting at square one, we do have a guide, we have a base to work with.

Stan: Oooo . . . that's good!

Teacher G: Yep!

Stan: I appreciate your time. Go ahead and get me that consent form before Monday, and also, your address . . .

Teacher G: Yeah, I'll definitely get that out to you. You know what, I'll make that one of my top priorities.

Stan: Yeah and give me that address so I can get you some money.

Teacher G: And if you get the dissertation done, I'd love for you to send me a copy of it. I'd like to see it.

Stan: Absolutely! I'd have no problem with that.

Teacher G: And will you actually be publicly giving this or is it a private defense.

Stan: Well, the dissertation I have to submit to the University. Then, when the University gives me the all-clear, then I'll be able to hand it out to people, whoever I want or given them access to the website that will contain it, because it will all be copyrighted material.

Teacher G: Right, oh yeah, of course.

Stan: So they're telling me I can't just hand it out to anybody, but you know, where you were a contributor, I think there's ways around that. (laughs)

Teacher G: Ah, you can't actually mention me by name then?

Stan: That's right. I have to put you down as a . . . oh, I forget the word . . . I have to use a pseudonym for your name.

Teacher G: Oh, okay, a pseudonym (laughs).

Stan: Yup, yup! So it's all part of the . . .

Teacher G: \_\_\_\_\_ do a [anonymized name]. If you don't believe me, ask my elementary school mates.

Stan: Ya . . . (laughs) Hey, it's all good, Buddy. It's all good, so . . .

Teacher G: Alright, I'll get that consent form out to ya', and I look forward to reading your dissertation, and good luck with that, Man!

Stan: Sounds great! I appreciate it! Thank you, Buddy!

Teacher G: No problem! Take care.

Stan: You, too. Bye!

Teacher G: Bye.

### ***TEACHER H***

Teacher H: Hello?

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher H?

Teacher H: Yes, it is. How are you?

Stan: Hey, not too bad. How are you?

Teacher H: Doin' good.

Stan: Good, good. Did I catch you at a bad time? Is this . . . .

Teacher H: No, this is fine.

Stan: Alright. Great! So, yeah, I apologize for the confusion there on the time. I'm glad I emailed.

Teacher H: Well, I was wondering. I was like I'm assuming, 'cause I know, I mean, I actually looked at Liberty to do some \_\_\_\_\_ test online, so maybe, he's not there. I don't know where they're at.

Stan: So were you looking at enrolling in the Master's or the Doctorate Level Program?

Teacher H: Master's. I'm actually doing my counseling certificate. Well, yeah.

Stan: Good for you.



Teacher H: Yeah, soooo . . . I thought I'd stay here in [anonymized location], so I wouldn't end up doin' . . . because I was going to have to actually go there, like twice throughout the course, so I was like, yeah, that's a little had right now, 'cause at the time, I had just had a baby. It was like . . . nah.

Stan: Bless your heart! Yeah, no kidding. I understand. Well, I'm sure that you have 101 things to do, so let's jump right into this. You ready?

Teacher H: Sure!

Stan: So first of all, I emailed you the blank consent form, so if you could sign that and get that back to me, that would be great, and also, e-mail your address, so I can send your gift card.

Teacher H: Oh, okay.

Stan: Okay, you ready?

Teacher H: Sure, let's go!

Stan: So, tell me a little bit about yourself, you know, just a brief overview of your, you know, your growing up and education all the way through college and also tell me what inspired you to become a music educator?

Teacher H: Okay. Well, I grew up actually in the area I'm teaching at right now, so I kinda came back home, and at that point, we were definitely a very rural area, but it's definitely grown over the last couple of years. So, um, at that time, it was a small . . . like we had 3 little elementary schools with only about 300 to 400 kids, you know. I was active in, like, the choir there, um, in elementary already. Then, in our district, when you got to fifth grade, you had to either choose choir, band, or art, and so, I went the band route and did that up until high school. Then, I switched back into choir.

Stan: Hmm, hmm.

Teacher H: Then, I went back into color guard for a little bit of . . . well, into my high school while doing choir, too. Um, but it would ultimately be my high school choir director that he pretty much said, "You're gonna do this," like be \_\_\_\_\_, you know. He'd dragged me kicking and scream . . . because I wanted to be an architect (laughs), but yeah, probably the other side of the spectrum there, but he, um, helped me get, you know, because I was the first one to go to college in my family and stuff. So, he really helped me, as far as figuring out the application process and took me auditions and everything. I went to what was at the time [anonymized location] Now it's [anonymized location]. So they renamed it, but that is where I did my undergrad. Then I did two years, again another rural town, [anonymized location]. Then, from there, I've been, for like the last 15 years, um, back home, back in the [anonymized location] area.

Stan: Wow! So I'm sure it's been quite a ride, uh?

Teacher H: Yes, I've seen quite the change over the years.

Stan: Well, are you currently active or have been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher H: Oh, yes.

Stan: Go ahead . . .

Teacher H: As far as like . . . well, we have in the little town of [anonymized location], we have a thing called, [anonymized location/name], which initially was like, "Hey, do you wanna bring your choir to sing along," and it's like little vendors and stuff set up. Now, it's kinda turned into . . . I pretty much coordinate all the different schools to come there and set up with the sound system and risers and coordinate that with the city and stuff.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher H: So that is one of the big things we do in the fall.

Stan: Okay. Alright. . . .

Teacher H: I was saying that as far as, like in the city, as well, at Christmastime, they've started a Christmas parade, so I now, every year, create a float (laughs), and my kids sing through the parade route (laughs).

Stan: Wow!

Teacher H: Yeah, (laughs).

Stan: So, does your music program, like you said, your music programs . . . you give your kids opportunities for performance? So besides . . . I assuming a Christmas concert, winter concert, spring concert, and your float in the parade . . . what other kind of concerts do you do with your students throughout a year?

Teacher H: Okay, so like each grade level at my campus has a program. 'Cause our school stage at our campus is really small, and it's very poorly built (laughs), no lying, no sir. I'm at the oldest elementary school now, so um, so my second, third, and fourth graders perform over at the high school auditorium: they do their Christmas programs there. Then, kinder and first do programs in the spring, and we do those on campus. They're a little bit smaller. I actually divide . . . . we have six classes per grade level and be able to fit the parents and the kids on the stage and everything, we actually divide it, where I do two performances in one night back-to-back with three classes at a time.

Stan: Wow! Okay.

Teacher H: Yeah, yeah . . . . so, everybody has . . . .

Stan: So you're busy at all are ya?

Teacher H: No, um (laughs). So every grade level has a chance to do some performance throughout the year. The, fourth grade is my big year where they get to do ensembles. I have the show choir, and I also have an Orff ensemble, and so, we do concerts just at the campus. We usually have, like you know, our fall concert and spring and then a very-end-of-year concert, which this year, has been completely different (laughs). Like I said, choir would go sing in the fall at the [anonymized location/name]. I would take them out caroling. We go, like, to nursing homes. HEB is a big grocery store here, like that's a big thing in [anonymized location], and so, they have a really cool little balcony area where the kids stand and sing, you know, while people are shopping, and that's always fun. So, yeah, I take them caroling at Christmas, and then typically, I would take them an again in May, and we should go visit those nursing homes again. That's their reward trip where I take them to like a little pizza/game place for lunch.

Stan: Oh, that is really neat. No, I used to do something similar to that when I was teaching up in Maine. We would do a concert for an aging community center, but afterwards, we'd all go to Pizza Hut and just chow down on pizza and salad, mostly pizza though.

Teacher H: Yeah (laughs).

Stan: So, are any of these concerts that you put . . . any of these performances, are they promoted for just the parents of the performers, or are they also promoted for attendance from the community?

Teacher H: Um . . . the grade level ones at campus are definitely just pretty much for the parents, just due to lack of space really. Um, we pack in . . . just like, you would do with three classes at a time, it's a full house, like people standing along the edges (laughs). It's, it's, yeah. I've been like places . . . I mean, it's not that I necessarily promote it myself, but you know, people are just coming anyways to the parade and like [anonymized location/name], and that is our big exposure where they get to see people beyond just their parents watching 'em, ya know?

Stan: Okay. [anonymized location] is spelled [anonymized location]?

Teacher H: Yes. So the district is made up of three . . . it's a tri-city and then tri-county, actually, but it is [anonymized locations], and so those three towns together have created the one district. My campus is in [anonymized location], so I try to follow along with the [anonymized location] events. When I first started teaching, [anonymized location] didn't have very much like that, so I actually, like [anonymized location] did [anonymized location] Festival, and I would do that, but now, that we've gotten bigger and bigger to where we now have eight different elementary schools, we kinda try to stay within our own cities for those events (laughs).

Stan: Okay. Makes sense. Wow! That's a busy schedule right there.

Teacher H: Yeah.

Stan: Is there a connection between the music program that you're involved in and any athletics?

Teacher H: Not really, no. I mean, with my kids, now that has not been the case. Now, we did actually throw around the idea this year just because we were supposed to sing . . . I do a hockey game with my choir. We had a hockey team here in [anonymized location], this was they're last year, and they were leaving, and then, we. . . all this stuff happened, and everything got shut down and cancelled, so my kids didn't to go sing.

Stan: Wow!

Teacher H: So, yeah. But that is the one athletic thing that I have still done with them, but you know, next year I'll be looking for something new. We had a baseball team. It's a little bit further of a drive for our parents, but the hockey team . . . The hard part with that, though, the tickets are not covered, so then, it eliminates some of those families that can't afford to buy the tickets and bring their kids you know?

Stan: Yeah, I do. Do you have like a music boosters' program in your school?

Teacher H: Do not. I guess when I first started teaching there, the whole district kinda changed their fundraising policies. Um, I guess the first two years, I was allowed to do some fundraising – like I did pictures with Santa and different things like that, but they started saying the community was just getting tired of being bombarded with fundraisers, so at the elementary level, I'm not allowed to have a fundraiser. The school does one fundraiser for the entire campus, and then, funds are kinda distributed there. So . . . but I do not have my own boosters . . . yeah, we're not allowed to. At the secondary level, they do, but not in elementary. With that being said, I have a full Orff set, I mean, I have easily 25 to 30 Orff instruments, a class set of \_\_\_\_\_ [musical instrument, sounds like “tupanos”] and, you know, so I'm very well set . . .

Stan: Wow!

Teacher H: . . . as far as that part goes, yeah, plus a budget. I mean, it's not crazy big, but I do have easily . . . spending money of like about a thousand dollars to buy supplies each year, and I'm very fortunate to have a good relationship with my secretary, so (laughs) you know, when it comes down to like, oh, I have this, so can I get this, and she's always willing and ready to, like, buy the decorations for the float and stuff like that, so . . . While I'm not able to have a boosters, I'm really wanting for much, I would say.

Stan: That makes sense. When I was teaching, as well, I was told always make friends with your secretary, and that is so true, but in addition to that, you should always be extremely good friends with your custodial staff.

Teacher H: Custodians . . . yep!

Stan: Okay. So does your music program work with any community theater or any musical theater group in the community?

Teacher H: No, we have not done that.

Stan: Alright, alright. Is there a music store that is nearby your school?

Teacher H: We do now, and we call it The Forum. It's kind of like a little mall that's probably only about 10 miles from where I'm located at the school campus, and they actually have a music and arts store there where they have lessons and different things, as well.

Stan: Oh, so they do offer private lessons?

Teacher H: Huh, huh, yes.

Stan: Do you, yourself, offer any private music lessons to the community outside of school?

Teacher H: I do not anymore. I used to, um, kids tend to change all that (laugh).

Stan: They do.

Teacher H: But, yeah, so now . . . it just got to be too much, you know, and then, the district also got a little weird about, you know, could you actually do the lessons there on campus, and was that, you know, so I just finally gave up? We gave up, but I have people ask all the time.

Stan: Okay. Would you say that these opportunities have directly impacted you as a teacher?

Teacher H: Yeah, I mean, as new things come up. Like, I didn't originally start with, um, like the Rampage hockey game, and you know, the first time we were told like, you're gonna take a group of fourth graders and have them sing the National Anthem in front of all these people, it was like, you know, ooohhh! (laughs) But definitely, I mean, those opportunities have pushed me to try new things. The parade is fairly new: that's only been like in the last three years now, you know?

Stan: Mmmm . . . . Okay.

Teacher H: Yeah.

Stan: How about your students? Have they directly impacted your students?

Teacher H: I think so. It's just that chance to, like I said that, yes, they get to perform for their parents, and they love that, but being able to actually perform for others, you know, I think they're very excited to, like, "Are we gonna \_\_\_\_\_ the Rampage?" It's always, "Are we gonna be on the Jumbotron?" "Yes, you're gonna be there! Please don't act like a fool! (laughs) But they definitely get excited about it, and then, the parade, we won a trophy, so that was a big deal for them.

Stan: Good! Now, what benefits have you seen from being involved with the community? So, as you take your students out and you do things for the community, what benefits have you seen from that – you know, maybe if your music program, for your school, or for you professionally?

Teacher H: Well, I will say . . . I mean, just that connection that you make with people, you know. Like originally when I started working with the city, it was a whole lot of me trying to

figure everything out, where now, we have a working relationship where they bring a trailer, load up risers for me, you know, I mean there's that whole setup where it was like I was dragging everything and doing it all, where now, we work together. Even with the nursing homes, like I have one lady if I haven't called her by March, she's calling me, like you know, when you bringing' those kids back? So, I mean just that connection with the community, you know, even the board members, I will say, even at like one of our... I guess we were at the parade and our sound system was not the best. So, he was like, "We're gonna fix that for you!"

Stan: Ah hah.

Teacher H: You know, 'cause it just so happened that our board members were actually on a float, kinda close by us, so . . . .

Stan: Ahh . . . okay, alright.

Teacher H: Yah, you know, I mean more than anything, it's just that connection and people know, and then I think it leads to more opportunities, because I've had people reach out. One year, we have a fiesta, that's a big thing here for [anonymized location], um, which got cancelled, too, but (laughs) it likes a celebration and takes place over several weeks and stuff. But we were invited even to sing at one of those, because you know, just one of things where I made a connection somewhere along the line, and somebody thought of our group and asked. So it opens up more opportunities, I guess.

Stan: Good! Okay. Now, is there is anything that is holding you back from being more involved in facilitating community music opportunities?

Teacher H: Oh, yes.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher H: Funds. I would say funds. Like, um, we're very close to a Six Flags, so you know, within 30 drive, 30 minutes driving, and they offer, you know, like choir festivals, where we could actually go and be judged and stuff like that, but it comes down to funds. We don't have the transportation money, and again, I don't have the money to pay entry fees for the kids and all that, so . . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher H: I mean there are . . . I would say for our area, we are in like a prime location where it's, you know, maybe 4 or 5 minutes to [anonymized location] and 30 minutes to [anonymized location], which are huge cities, but because we don't have those funds, it really limits what we can do.

Stan: Okay. Now, can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen within the next two to five years to you, to your students, or to your program because of community involvement.

Teacher H: Because of community involvement. Trying to think of exactly . . . exactly what you mean. Like, as far as opportunities for them to perform.

Stan: Well, yes, it can be that. It could be actually anything. It's a very broad question, so let me rephrase it. Maybe a better way to say it is can you think of up to three things that you would like to see happen in the future for your students or for your music program or for you because of you taking your kids in the community or having them be active in the community by doing music? For instance, like maybe because you did the National Anthem, maybe you would like to see your kids get invited to a major league baseball game to perform the National Anthem. I mean, something like that.

Teacher H: Yeah, I mean, I think one of the things, too, is even just being out and getting a chance for my kids to see live performances. You know, um, again, we are right there . . . the [anonymized location] Symphony this year came out to our district, but it was only for one grade level, so trying to make those connections, you know, like, if we were combined with some theater, because we do have a lot of community theater to see if they would bring a performance to our kids, so the kids get that opportunity to actually see a live performance would be one goal, you know. 'Cause as it stands right now, fourth grade is the only grade level that gets to see the Symphony, and that's the only experience we've had so far.

Stan: Ahhh . . . . okay. Wow.

Teacher H: Yeah, I know, and again, there's a smaller [anonymized location] Symphony and there's the [anonymized location] Symphony, and they're all like right here, but it's just the transportation fees and make those connections to get the people there.

Stan: Okay. Good. Well, that's it. That concludes my questions. Do you have any questions for me?

Teacher H: No, so I just print this. . . . I just need to like sign and then, I guess, upload it again send it back, that's all you need?

Stan: With your address and email so I can get you your gift card.

Teacher H: Okay, so I have to ask real fast, what is [anonymized name] doing? Is she teaching or she up there . . . how did you... okay.

Stan: Yeah, she teaches here at Liberty University, and as a matter of fact, she has been the point person for taking the charge to build and, you know, build the program by courses and build the program by students for music education, and so, I came on board to help her as an adjunct professor, and now, I am finishing this doctorate so I can help her full time because she is swamped. She is . . .

Teacher H: I can imagine.

Stan: She is such a wealth of knowledge, and the kids absolutely love her. She is so good.

Teacher H: Yeah, well we miss her here. (laughs)

Stan: Well, I . . . you know what? Please feel free to reach out to her. Do you have your email address at all?

Teacher H: I do not actually.

Stan: Okay. I will . . .

Teacher H: We kind of lost track over the years. Every once in a while, I see something on Facebook where she was at, but I had no idea that was where she was at, though.

Stan: Yeah, I will go ahead and throw her email out to you, and please contact her and ask her how she's doing. She'd love to hear from you, I know.

Teacher H: Okay. That'd be awesome.

Stan: Okay?

Teacher H: Alright, well, I will get this . . . I'll scan it real fast and get that sent back to you.

Stan: And don't forget your address.

Teacher H: I won't. Alright. Well, thank you so much.

Stan: Thank you so much.

Teacher H: No problem. Bye.

Stan: Alright, bye.

### ***TEACHER I***

Teacher I: Hello?

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher I?

Teacher I: Yes.

Stan: Hi, this is Stan Harris with Liberty University. How're you doin'?

Teacher I: Oh, good.

Stan: Did I catch ya' at a bad time?



Teacher I: Well, no, I didn't realize you were in Maine, I guess. You're an hour earlier than my time zone. Alright, go ahead.

Stan: Oh, I'm . . . that's right . . . oh, I apologize. You want me to call you back at your time.

Teacher I: No, no, no. It's good.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher I: I was just running upstairs.

Stan: Bless your heart! I know then you're probably busy, got a lot of stuff to do, so we'll get right into the survey here.

Teacher I: Alright.

Stan: First of all, just tell me a little bit about yourself, like your education, where you're from, where you grew up, as far as school and stuff.

Teacher I: I grew up in a rural town about, I don't know, 35 miles east of [anonymized location], and, um, I was raised out in the country, I guess, um, and my parents were, you know, heavy into music as not primary, but as entertainment or whatever, you know, just \_\_\_\_\_. My mom, you know, she loved to sing, harmonize. My dad played a bunch of, I call them hillbilly instruments, banjo, violin, guitar, so I was brought up around instruments and my siblings, you know, they sang or played some sort of instrument, as well. So that's kinda my upbringing. I've always been around music and always enjoyed singing. I enjoyed harmonizing. I enjoyed . . . I took piano lessons for a little while, I guess in third grade. Didn't like lessons, so I got out of that. Um, and a, in junior high, you know, it was expected that we'd all join the band, and so, I wanted to join the band. I play the trombone, loved it in junior high. In high school, I hated marching band, and so my parents let me quit after my sophomore year. Uh, but I'll tell you what, I was always wanting to sing, but I was too chicken, honestly, until at the end of my sophomore year, I got up the courage to ask to try out to be in a choir – the high school choir – and of course, they took me \_\_\_\_\_, so I auditioned, and so he put me in Varsity Choir, and that was where, you know, that was where I found my niche. I found my passion. I found what I wanted to do, you know, what I really, really enjoyed, you know. So then, come along to college, um, my dad's a CPA, and my brother-in-law, he's a mechanical engineer. So, you know, my dad was pushing me into business, but my brother-in-law was pushing me into engineering, and so, I didn't really have any interest in business, but engineering had always interested me, and so, I started at [anonymized location] as a mechanical engineering major. Well after one semester of a bunch of C's and D's, I said, okay, this is not, this is not for me, this is not where God wants me. So I was kinda undeclared. After that, I stayed at [anonymized location]. Then, I was very involved in my church. I was very involved in my \_\_\_\_\_. There's a local student ministry on campus, so we were at a convention, oh ah, ah, \_\_\_\_\_ training workshop, this, that, and the whatever, and that's where, you know, honestly, that God . . . I felt just a calling on my life from God to go into music somehow, somewhere. I didn't know, you know, in really what capacity, and so, by then it was, I guess, the middle of my

sophomore year at college, I auditioned there, [anonymized location] School of Music, got the letter saying, “We feel it is in your best interest that you not be a music major.” Well, I was devastated, because I tell you what, because I just know that that was where, I mean, God wanted me in music somehow, so my high school director had always encouraged his students who were going to pursue music to go to . . . there’s a local school, oh about 25 miles outside of [anonymized location][? sp] in the town of [anonymized location] right down the road, called [anonymized location], and they had a great, you know, Music Education Program, blah, blah, blah. So I was remembering what he said, of course, not as prestigious as [anonymized location], but I was like, you know what, if this is where God wants me to go, I’m going to audition. So I auditioned at [anonymized location]. Of course, they took me right away, and that was it. I mean, you know, that was my career path that I had \_\_\_\_\_ [cut off] for. You know, I had anticipated doing high school choir, you know.

Stan: Hmm . . . hmm.

Teacher I: Um, but the, oh, it was the lady, whatever she’s called, at the very beginning, said, “You know what, go ahead and do your all-levels certification. You only need another six more hours, blah, blah, blah.” So I went ahead and \_\_\_\_\_ buy it. I’m not going to do elementary, but yeah, I’ll do my all-level and make me more marketable, blah, blah, blah, whatever. So I did my four more years of, you know, music studies at [anonymized location]. Then, with student teaching, my first placement was at an elementary campus, and I loved it! I loved it! I was like, I could do this, I could do this. In the meantime, I was always, at my senior year in college, my, uh, well a pastor that I knew nearby in a little bitty town, just five miles out from my house, actually, they were looking for a worship leader, part-time worship leader, and so, I didn’t feel a calling to go into the music ministry, but you know what, if God, you’re opening this door, I’m gonna go ahead and go there. That was in the fall of 1996, and so, I started directing . . . there was a small choir and leading the music on Sunday morning and this, that, and the other at that church, and that’s, so that’s happening in the meantime. Um, so then, okay, so \_\_\_\_\_ for a little bit back to student teaching at elementary level, loved it, and then I had my high school level. I hated it! I absolutely hated it! I had a cooperating teacher who, to be honest, took advantage of me. He would just not show up – this is like the first week I was there – he just wouldn’t show up and be three hours late, and I’m like, what am supposed to do? He hadn’t left me any instructions – you know, it’s the first weeks of school, you know. And he was, “Oh, well, I knew you’d be here, you’d watch my classes,” that kind of idea. Well, I didn’t know what I was doing. He gave me bad marks. I ended up being pulled out by my university supervisor and placed in another campus for the remainder of my whatever, you know, I did my minimum of six weeks there, then she put me another campus to just finish out the year. So it was not a good experience.

Stan: Wow . . .

Teacher I: But I knew that I could do it, and I was intrigued, and so, that’s where I’m \_\_\_\_\_, and I ended up getting a job in another small town right outside of [anonymized location]. I’m a homebody, and I love where I live, and so, this was an easy drive to this little town, and anyway, I’ve been teaching in that district for . . . this is my 23<sup>rd</sup> year, I guess. In the

meantime, I still continue to be the worship leader in my church, never left that church, and so that's kind of my life's story in music, I guess you could say.

Stan: Okay. Wow! That's quite a history! Wow! Good deal! I'm glad I asked, and you took time to introduce yourself. Well, then, I've got a series of questions I'm gonna fly through for ya. I'm anxious to hear your answers. So are you currently active or have ever been involved in facilitating any music opportunities for your community?

Teacher I: Well, depending on how you define that, yes, definitely through my church. I mean, we do all kinds of community activities musically through my church from, I don't know, performing at the 4<sup>th</sup> of July, the local 4<sup>th</sup> of July parade, to singing at the, ah, the city square, they have these sing things going on on weekends. Um, so with, you know, through my church, yes.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Anything outside of your church?

Teacher I: Well, through my school. I'm an elementary campus that goes K through 4, and so, but we do, you know, perform in the community, as well. For instance, someone took us Christmas caroling at local businesses and nursing homes. Um, we know, when there are patriotic events, we had . . . one Veteran's Day recently, they opened up the Veteran's Memorial that, we were, we were privileged to sing at. I had my fourth-grade choir, to sing at such events, as well. So when events of, you know, allow themselves or whatever, then we do such things. There not as scheduled, I guess you could say. Well, I take that back, the Christmas caroling that we do every year. We also . . . I have an Orff instrument ensemble, and we perform in the community every year. We used to go to one of the [anonymized location] art museums, and they let us play there at the art museums. It was a pretty incredible experience for everyone involved, for the kids and the parents, the community, as well. Of course, this year, with the COVID virus, all that was shut down, but in any case, yeah, this spring is very unusual obviously, but yes, that type of community involvement.

Stan: You have performances like your Christmas concert, your spring concert, 4<sup>th</sup> of July . . .

Teacher I: Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes. Yes, definitely. I teach K through 4, and each grade level at Christmastime or holiday day, wintertime, they have a winter show, each grade level. You know, that happens. And then, you know, the different grade levels perform also throughout the year, as well, and that is mainly for . . . \_\_\_\_\_ one of your questions. That's mainly for the parents, you know, parents and family members, you know, that is not necessarily . . . I mean, the community is invited, but you know, the parents are the ones that show up.

Stan: I know this one might be geared more towards high school, but there are some schools that do capitalize a little bit on this or take opportunities, rather, but is there any connection between the music programs that you offer and athletics?

Teacher I: No. We don't do anything . . . other than our school PE . . . occasionally, we do like a PE music program combined, but when I hear athletics, I think secondary, you know? So I would have to say no.

Stan: Does your school or do you have a music boosters' program at all at your school?

Teacher I: No, I do not. We have our school PTC . . . we are not allowed to. That's a district rule. We are not allowed to have any, at the elementary level, we are allowed to have a PTA or PTC group, but one group for the entire campus, period, that's it, so we're not allowed to have any other, I mean, if we get support, it's through the schoolwide PTC.

Stan: Okay. Alright.

Teacher I: . . . but I do not have just a separate music . . . that's not allowed in our district.

Stan: Does your music program work with any, like community theater or musical theater group in the community?

Teacher I: No. The only thing is within . . . in house, I guess you could say, you know. So we don't work . . . other than districtwide events, I mean, every now and again, we have a district honor choir that performed, and there may be theater things going on, but typically, it's . . . and that's a very select group, you know, but typically, it's . . . everything that we do is really in house. It's not necessarily . . . I mean, of course, the community's invited to whatever theater things we do, but it's . . . I really see that question as being outside of your little local school, so I'd have to say no.

Stan: Alright. No, no that's fine. Is there is a music store nearby?

Teacher I: Yes.

Stan: What's your relationship with them like?

Teacher I: Um, they're work with the district wonderfully. They're, you know, they're \_\_\_\_\_ know, all the, I mean, they really work with secondary more, but elementary, as well, like you know, when it comes time for recorders, I tell them to go to this particular store, and they give us a price break and all that good stuff, and you know, so they're really good, um, with . . . go ahead.

Stan: Well, I was just going to ask, do they offer private or group lessons at this location?

Teacher I: They do, and when a parent comes to me or student comes to me saying, you know, "I wanna take private lessons," "I wanna take piano lessons," "I wanna take violin lessons," I direct them to . . . I have a couple of names, you know, private students, I mean private teachers in the area, but I also recommend . . . I tell 'em, \_\_\_\_\_ [anonymized store] – [anonymized store] right down the road, they offer lessons, as well, and so, yes.

Stan: Okay, so do you yourself, do you offer any community music lessons.

Teacher I: Through my church, every now and again. It's not a scheduled thing, I mean, it's like just really every now and again. So I've done group guitar lessons. That's mainly what I've done – group guitar lessons, and that's, that's about it . . . like, but school-wise, I don't.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Have these opportunities that you as a teacher, that you have, that were able to be directly involved in, have they benefited you as a teacher, your students, or your music program?

Teacher I: Well, of course, all the way around. I mean, um, I will just say, like our honor choir, you know, districtwide events or whatever, community events, you know we bring in, what'd you call it, ah, someone from outside the district, and it's almost like a professional development for the teachers, 'cause we're learning all kinds of new things. We're watching the guest conductor work with the children, and of course, the children, you know, are getting all kinds of insights, so you know, it's great all the way around.

Stan: Good! Good! So you've seen benefits from being involved in the community, this portion of it.

Teacher I: Oh, yes! Oh, yes! And even like when we have . . . right now, here, we have . . . well, I should say, we haven't the past few years, but like we would have district-wide performances where one elementary school would perform right after the other after the other, and even in those events, just being able to watch other teachers within our district work with their children and perform, you know, and having the kids getting to see each other, each group perform, you know, that's, you know, of course, benefits all the way around, as well.

Stan: Okay. Would say that there's anything holding you back from being more involved in your community, as far as facilitating like a community band or community orchestra or community ukulele or guitar group? Is there anything holding you back from doing that?

Teacher I: I don't, you know, I read that question, and I don't know . . . I mean, of course, you know, time is always the answer for everyone or whatever, but, and I'm curious that there would be enough interest . . . I don't know, I don't know how to answer that, I guess.

Stan: Alright, that's fine.

Teacher I: And it's like, do I want to? Is that something that I want to do? Do I want to add one more thing to my plate, I guess? I don't know.

Stan: Yeah, no, no, totally . . .

Teacher I: That's kind of a lousy answer I realize, but I don't have a good answer.

Stan: That . . . that . . . that is perfectly fine. That'll do for an answer. Now, the last question – here it is. Can you name up to three things that you would like to see happen within the next two to five years to your students, to your program, and/or community because of community involvement in music?

Teacher I: In light of the last couple months with the COVID virus, of course you know schools have been shut down, let me tell you what, I've seen such a benefit in my life and my family's lives of us not having to run around and, you know, go here, there, and everywhere . . . go to this practice, go to this and then that, you know, we have slowed down, and let me tell you what, my answer would have been different two months ago, but after having this time to just slow down, I don't know that it's a really good idea to offer more and more and more and more in this day and age. I think that we as a country are too busy as it is, so I don't have an answer, as far as what three things I would add, because I almost feel . . . this is how I feel at this moment, you know, like I said, due to this COVID virus, just reflecting on everything, is we're too busy as a nation and do we really need to add or offer more and more and more on our plates, and so you know, that's kinda how I feel right now.

Stan: Sure. No, that's a great answer. It's a very honest answer. Alright. Well, that's the end of the survey, that's it, or the interview, rather. Do you have any questions for me before we finish?

Teacher I: Uh, I don't. I wish you the best of luck, and I hope that your studies go well, and . . .

Stan: Now, one thing I will need from you is I will need you to email me your address, so that I can send you your gift card, so as soon as you email me that address, I will begin to process that, and I will email you just as soon as it goes out.

Teacher I: Alright, that sounds good!

Stan: Yeah, I really appreciate, Joe. It's been a huge help. You gave some wonderful insight.

Teacher I: Well, thank you. I appreciate it.

Stan: Yeah, you have yourself a great day there in [anonymized location]!

Teacher I: You do the same, alright, in Maine.

Stan: Okay, bye, bye.

Teacher I: Bye, bye.

### ***TEACHER J***

Teacher J: Hello.

Stan: Hello, is this Teacher J?

Teacher J: Yes, it is.

Stan: Hey, this is Stan Harris from Liberty University. How ya' doin'?

Teacher J: I'm doin' good. How are you?

Stan: Good. Not too bad. Ummm. . . so is it raining down there today?

Teacher J: It is. It's storming pretty bad.

Stan: Yeah, it's pretty bad here, too. It got really bad there a little bit last night, but . . .

Teacher J: Hmm, hmm.

Stan: I thank you very, very much for participating in this, in this research that I'm doin' for my dissertation, and I will need you to email me your address so I can send you your gift card for participating. So, I just wanted to throw that out there, but thank you very much. So, just tell me about yourself, like you know, what kind of education you have, where you're from, how you got to be a music educator, stuff like that.

Teacher J: Yeah, so actually I also went to school at [anonymized university], and I have my Bachelor's in Music Education from there, and live in [anonymized location], and I grew up here. I, let's see, um, this is my first year working as a teacher.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher J: And I moved to Wilson, still in [anonymized location], but a new town. It has been interesting, but I enjoyed it.

Stan: Okay. Alright.

Teacher J: Yeah.

Stan: What inspired you to become a music educator?

Teacher J: Yeah, I've been in music my whole life really. Um, my parents, you know, started me in like children's choir in church and, um, I started playing flute in band in sixth grade, and I've been playing ever since. Um, I've just really enjoyed it; it's something that I love, and when I was in high school, I got the opportunity to help some other students and kinda of give little private lessons to them, because I was the most experienced musician in my school for a couple of years, so my teacher had me helping them. I really enjoyed that, and I thought that was something that I would really like to do.

Stan: Gotcha. Okay. Alright. Now where you grew up, was it a rural area, an urban area, a suburban area?

Teacher J: Most of my life, I would say it was in a suburban area, but, um, probably the last few years of high school was more of a rural area.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Okay. So, let me ask you this then, have you ever been or currently are active in creating music opportunities for your community.

Teacher J: Ah, for community, like not my students?

Stan: That's correct.

Teacher J: Not at the moment, but that's mostly because I'm new to the area. That's something I would love to become more involved in.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Now, so, list for me specifically reasons as to why you're not involved in community music-related outreaches. So you mentioned one, which is 'cause you're new to the area. Are there any other underlying factors?

Teacher J: I would say some of it is just, I, for a while, I just didn't know what options there were and there are some I've found kind of recently, but the pandemic has prevented me from joining anything at the moment. Ya' know.

Stan: That's true. Do you believe that there are benefits to your school music program and its students through community opportunities?

Teacher J: Oh, fer sure, yes.

Stan: Can you explain why you believe there is benefit?

Teacher J: Ya, I think that the more time students spend in music outside of school, the better they're going to do in my class fer sure. I think that, I think that maybe it could help create interest. I know at my school, there's kind of a general lack of interest in music and the arts in general, but if, you know, they could find some things outside of school that they were interested in, I think that might help them get more involved with the stuff that I offer them.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher J: Also, just, you know, I think that music in general is, um, important as a subject. It helps in character development. It helps you be a better, more well-rounded person.

Stan: Okay, yeah, that's, that's very good. Do you have any . . . or let me ask it this way, do you do any other kinds of musical events at your school, like band concerts, or anything like that?

Teacher J: So, it's an elementary school, so this past year, we had a program for each grade level. I'm hoping to condense that a little bit next year, because that was a lot – maybe two or three grades at a time.

Stan: Okay.



Teacher J: But we had one for each grade level. Um, there's also, fourth and fifth grade have a couple of performance opportunities that are more with the county, like All-County Chorus, um, and that's about it right now. I would love to start something after school, like an \_\_\_\_\_ [sounds like "orph"] ensemble or chorus, but I haven't been able to do that yet.

Stan: Okay. Are these concerts promoted to and attended by general public as a community event, or is it just something that is primarily presented for parents of the performers?

Teacher J: Mostly just for parents.

Stan: Okay, just for parents. Um, and, um, let me see here. You're my first person doing research here, so, um, um, does your school's music program work with any community theater or musical theater group in your community.

Teacher J: Not directly. I do have some students who are a part of one, but I have not made those connections personally.

Stan: Is there a music store nearby?

Teacher J: I am aware that there are a couple nearby. I'm not sure where they are. I've not been there myself.

Stan: Okay. Alright. Do you know if they offer instrument rentals and private or group lessons and stuff like that there?

Teacher J: Um, I'm not sure, I do know there is a studio in the downtown area that offers private lessons, but I don't have much information on it.

Stan: Do you, yourself, offer music lessons to your community or are you going to . . . like flute lessons and things like that?

Teacher J: I would love to. I just, again, haven't had a chance to make a lot of connections yet. I do have a couple of students who I've been giving piano lessons to after school, just because they're already in an afterschool program, and they're there anyway, but I haven't advertised that, and they're not paying me.

Stan: Okay. Have you seen these opportunities that you've had to interact with your students . . . have you seen any benefits to your program with them being involved with music outside of school? Have you seen any direct benefits?

Teacher J: The ones who are involved outside of school are much more involved during school, and there is a noticeable difference between them and students who are not involved.

Stan: Wow! Okay, okay, good. I've got one more page, and I think you're almost done.

Teacher J: Uh huh.

Stan: Yes, so I got a couple more questions. What would be motivators for you to consider being a facilitator of music opportunities in your community?

Teacher J: Motivators? Um, I really, there's intrinsic motivation. I really just enjoy it. Um, I think if they were going to pay me for it, though, would be a great motivator.

Stan: Sure.

Teacher J: Um, yeah, and also, I guess it would depend a little bit on what kind of commitment it requires, like how much time.

Stan: Alright.

Teacher J: Yeah.

Stan: So, can you name up to three things you would like to see happen within the next two or five years to your students, your music program, and/or your community because of community involvement? That's a big question.

Teacher J: Mmmm.

Stan: So, name up to three things that you would like to see happen.

Teacher J: I would definitely like to see my students get more involved just in general. That could be either at my school or in something in the community. I would love to see the community encourage my students to become more involved. Um, that could be through a lot of things, I guess. Maybe like advertising for different opportunities and just encouraging them, saying like, "Hey, come join us and do this." I would also really like to . . . . I mentioned wanting to start something after school, like either a chorus or an \_\_\_\_\_ [sounds like "orph"] ensemble, and if I did that, I would love to have opportunities to perform for the community.

Stan: Sure. I do have one more question. How many and what type of concerts do you do within a school year. Like, you know, obviously, you'll have a winter program or Christmas concert. I'm sure there's a spring concert, so can you tell me anything else that you do besides that?

Teacher J: Yeah, mostly just a program for each grade level, and then, um, the fourth and fifth graders, they have the opportunity to All-County, and then there's something's like All-County, but it's for Christmas. They do have to audition for that, though, and otherwise, I have not been able to start an after-school program yet, so that's all that my school currently offers.

Stan: Well, Teacher J, you've answered all the questions, and you did it under the amount of time that I thought, so that's really cool.

Teacher J: Awesome!

Stan: So if you could, yeah, just go ahead and email me your address.

Teacher J: Sure.

Stan: And I will email you just as soon as I send that out, so that you will be expecting it, and, if you have any questions regarding your responses to this or if you would like to add anything, throw that in the email, as well, and I just appreciate your participation. It really means a lot to me, and I wish you the best day. Do you have any questions for me before we hang up?

Teacher J: don't think so.

Stan: Okay. Well, you rock! Thank you so much!

Teacher J: You're welcome!

Stan: Okay. Have a great day. Stay dry!

Teacher J: You, too.

Stan: Okay, Bye, bye.

### ***TEACHER K***

Teacher K: Hello?

Stan: Hi, is this Teacher K?

Teacher K: Yes, this is.

Stan: Hey, yeah! How ya' doin'?

Teacher K: Good! How are you?

Stan: Good! Not too bad. How's weather over there?

Teacher K: It's finally warming up (laughs)

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher K: We're almost afraid to have warm, heat up too much, 'cause then, we'll have wildfires, so . . .

Stan: Ohhh, bless your heart. Where exactly do ya' live?

Teacher K: Ahhh . . . it's in [anonymized location], so it's like center of the state, but they call it [anonymized location].

Stan: Yup, yup.

Teacher K: So. . . .

Stan: Wow!

Teacher K: And where in Virginia are you?

Stan: Ummm . . . we're probably about an hour from the border, 45 minutes to an hour from the border of West Virginia in the southern part of the state.

Teacher K: Okay.

Stan: So, I'm originally from Maine, so I understand about northern weather.

Teacher K: Oh, yeah.

Stan: When I moved down here for my job at Liberty, I was thoroughly surprised with the weather, but it's all good.

Teacher K: Yeah, yeah.

Stan: So, thank you for contributing. I know you've got a lot of things goin' on, so I'm going to make this as quick and as painless as possible. I do want to say, though, if you could email me your address after you finished this interview, I'm going to mail you a \$10 prepaid Visa card. I know it's not a lot, but just a way of saying thank you for taking time out.

Teacher K: Oh, thank you. That's very kind.

Stan: So, alright, you ready?

Teacher K: Yes, I am.

Stan: Okay, here we go. So, to start off, just tell me a little bit about yourself, like your education and what or who inspired you to become a music educator?

Teacher K: Ummmm. . . I have been, let's see, education-wise, this is my . . . I just finished my 21<sup>st</sup> year. So I did 4 years in [anonymized location] . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: . . . at an urban school, and then 10 years in [anonymized location], which was a really tiny, rural school . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K . . . and then, 4 years in the [anonymized school], and then, I'm now . . . I just finished my 4<sup>th</sup> year at [anonymized school] here in [anonymized location].

Stan: . . . and is that a high school, middle school.

Teacher K: It's a junior high, so I'm working at 8, 9, junior high.

Stan: Ok, 8, 9, junior high. Nice, good.

Teacher K: There are anywhere between 950 to 1000 kids at just that grade level.

Stan: Oh, wow! That's amazing!

Teacher K: So, we're kind of a big rural (laughs).

Stan: No, no, no, that makes perfect sense, absolutely.

Teacher K: So what inspired. . .

Stan: Yeah, what inspired you?

Teacher K: I had gone. . . I had done . . . my undergraduate was in Music Performance and Political Science.

Stan: Alright.

Teacher K: Then, about 2 years after I graduated with my undergrad, I decided to go back and get a Master of Arts and teaching degree. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: . . . and then. . . probably the biggest influence was one of my professors at the [anonymized university] – that's where I went – in [anonymized location] . . .

Stan: Yeah, okay. Wow! Good deal. Well, let me kick it off with this. Are you currently active or have been involved in facilitating music opportunities for your community?

Teacher K: So, let me see, are you talking like outside music opportunities throughout the area?

Stan: Yes!!

Teacher K: Umm . . . wow.

Stan: Like, for instance, it could be, you could be, you could teach instrument lessons, voice lessons, or maybe you organized a sing-along or maybe you have a ukulele group or something like that.

Teacher K: What I have been doing is, um, I'm involved with a group called "Stage Kids," which is a local musical theater youth group.

Stan: Yes!

Teacher K: So it ranges from ages 4 to 17, and my son was involved in it, and then, I started to . . . and then, I'm currently on the board for that group, but then, I've also run body percussion classes with it, and then, some other classes through that group.

Stan: Sure.

Teacher K: Um, as for lessons and stuff like that, I don't do those just because of that gray line of being a teacher and then also doing, like having a private studio outside of it. . .

Stan: Yup.

Teacher K: . . . but I have . . . um, since I am teaching currently, 'cause I've kind of taught everything, ya' know – band, choir, you name it – um, I did . . . so anytime, so I teach, this is my 3<sup>rd</sup> year just teaching choir, that I also have helped out the drumline and I'll work with kids after school on percussion stuff. I wouldn't say that what I'm doing isn't necessarily . . . the "Stage Kids" stuff is very structured, but everything else is on a need basis, because of just opportunities for the students, and then, like what are they available to do, and most of those connections are going to happen within the school.

Stan: Gotcha. Okay. Do you do any kind of musical events, which I'm sure you do, with your school program, like Christmas, or anything like that?

Teacher K: Oh, yeah. We do . . . this year doesn't really count, but in years past, we will do 2 to 3 major concerts, like a winter/Christmas one, and then, our spring festivals, and then our spring finale concert.

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher K: In addition to that, there's a community festival called "The Apple Blossom," which is a festival, and my choirs will sing at that, as well, which I've also been involved in, um, yeah, so we have public performances like that, and then any opportunities that we can. Anymore, it's . . . the worst part about being like in a 2-year school is that you have 'em for such a short amount of time that it's just . . . you want make sure they have good enough experiences . . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher K: . . . that they keep going, and so, a lot of it . . . big travel or the other things outside of the community, that's more for the high school, the 10 to 12.

Stan: Okay, alright. Do you do any other kinds of musical events for like, uh, for like community parades or caroling or anything like that, specifically focused for the community?

Teacher K: Umm. . . it . . . not as of yet. I think the thing that happened. . . a little back-story on it. I was coming in after a choir teacher . . . one choir teacher left, a long-term sub, and then, I, so one group of kids in 2 years, I was their 3<sup>rd</sup> choir teacher, and that was my 1<sup>st</sup> year teaching at that, and so I just, so I did – sorry for the long explanation –

Stan: No, no, no, please go ahead.

Teacher K: When I first got back from teaching overseas, I was teaching at a . . . I taught a 5-7 band program, and then, the choral position opened up, and I'm just better with older kids, um, so when I took that, I was kind of rebuilding, like having to piece back a program that had kind . . . it had lost some steam, and it had been very successful in the past, and I just wanted to get back up there.

Stan: Good, good.

Teacher K: So the past 2 years has really just kind of rebuilding, there's been a lot of rebuilding that's happened, and so, the community stuff, which I was teaching in [anonymized location], I did all the time, but that was how we did it. Like we caroled every year. We would sing at church events, things like that. It's just that I really haven't been able to get any traction with that, and then, we got shut down, so . . .

Stan: Yeah, yeah.

Teacher K: It's on my long-term goals, and not knowing what the future holds, I would like to still do that and sing in the nursing homes, carol for the Christmas tree lighting, um, but it hasn't, it just hasn't been able to occur within the past couple of years.

Stan: Are these concerts that you do for your school, ya' know your Christmas concerts and festivals, are these promoted to and attended by the general public as a community event, or do they tend to be of interest primarily to like parents of the performers?

Teacher K: We, we try to promote as far as we can from that. Our district is very, very good at promoting using like Facebook and other forms of social media. I've, our, our, our cafetorium, it basically, it closes, our auditorium, it's a cafeteria normally, but then, it will close down, and it seats about 590. . .

Stan: Yup.

Teacher K: . . . and it's generally standing room only for performances.

Stan: Wow!

Teacher K: Um, we did a joint concert with the high school, and that was like, that was probably, I mean, that was a broad community invite. Um, plus having kids involved in . . . ya' know, when I worked for Stage Kids, you're always promoting your other parts. So, I'm saying like, "Hey! Come to the concert!" and then, I sing with a community choir, and I would promote in there, as well (laughs)

Stan: No, I get it. No, absolutely. Is there a connection between your music program at school and the athletics program?

Teacher K: Ummm. . . our athletics are a little weird, because we have 8<sup>th</sup> graders that are middle schoolers and 8<sup>th</sup> graders that are high schoolers.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: So, um, we're not as attached. When I was teaching in [anonymized location], for the 10 years that I was there . . .

Stan: Uh huh.

Teacher K: . . . which, like not programmed, and it was really small when I first got there, I was working with the athletic director all the time. I would have, I would give the choir the National Anthem. I would give the band the pep band stuff. Like, I've always worked, I always tried to work with the athletic department and have that be just another opportunity, because it's just a different form of performance.

Stan: Alright, okay, okay, good! No, no, I totally understand. Do you have a music boosters' program for what it is that you do?

Teacher K: For our specific school, we don't, because of that 2-year, because it's such a short. For kids, the fundraising group is there, but it's, it hasn't been that need to have the music boosters.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: For example, our, like, I just used money to replace our shell, which was falling apart, and that money just came out of district money, like we had the money for that. Generally, the music boosters, the high school, the 10/12, both 10/12, they have, they have music boosters, but the 8/9's really don't just because, again, we are a 2-year stop, and there's not, there hasn't been one created, and then, in the years past, they haven't had one, because it's still treated like a middle school and not necessarily a high school.

Stan: Okay, okay, alright. So, if money is given to your program, what do you usually or in general put that money towards?

Teacher K: Um, because we haven't had to use money for transportation or . . . and because if we're going on field trips or things like that, if we're invited for that, then that's where we would



put that money. If money is donated, um, I tell ya', initially right now, I'd probably put into our new robes (laughs). I think they're older than I am, and I'm 40-something, but it . . . a lot of times, what's been nice is we have a . . . we have a full-time choir, full-time band, and then, a half-time strings/mariachi teacher there . . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: . . . so, there's, there's a lot of . . . if any of us have extra in our budgets, we help each other out with it, because it's like, we're all . . . we want kids to stay in the department. We want to be, to have success with it. Um, if people were to donate, I would be extremely transparent on what I would use it for, and even when things hopefully get back to normal, there's a choral festival at a college about an hour and a half from here, and if we were to get an invite for that, that's . . . I would specifically fundraise for that. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: . . . getting us to be able to go that. Um, again, I'm, I was able to get here when financially things are going pretty well.

Stan: Okay. Does your . . . and I think you've already . . . I think you've sort of alluded to this already, but does your music program work with a community theater or community musical theater group?

Teacher K: It hasn't, because there's . . . it's, um, merely because . . . so we're in [anonymized location], and [anonymized location] is just across the river. I mean it's like a mile away, but it's 2 separate counties. . . the local theater organizations. . . the Stage Kids one, that like . . . they are . . . I will have a bunch of students that've gone through the Stage Kids Program and the Stage Kids artistic director actually directed a show at the school I was at, so there's a lot of that . . . there's a lot, um . . . the programs are growing because of personality of, if you \_\_\_\_\_ .

Stan: Hmmm. . .

Teacher K: . . . and I think that's one of the things that I've noticed from schools on the other side to schools in [anonymized] and in [anonymized location], is that there's . . . I don't want to use the term \_\_\_\_\_ personality, but I would say that there's a lot of that, which does . . . because you're a small community and because those, those programs, they're known by the people that have kind of created them and established them, so when you ask that question, is there anything official, like the closest I can say in an official community/school partnership was in February, right before everything hit, we . . . the community choir that I sing with, the [anonymized location/name] Chorale, did a giant concert with [anonymized location/name] high school, and so, a number of these students I had already worked with, so it was actually a concert in a big performance venue in [anonymized location], and it was . . . that was an actually an official high school, that was an official [anonymized location] and community choir event.

Stan: Ohhh. . .okay.

Teacher K: And then, there the . . . and like, there's, there's a Messiah Singalong, and it's like, well, it's promoted in the schools, like yeah, hey, go to the singalong, and then, ya' know, when you go to sing at it, it's a huge fundraiser for, for the food bank, and so, and the people that are directing movements are teachers in the area, so I mean, there's a lot of that, though it's not necessarily certain, it's like, there's only about 25 of valley, so you're gonna run into us, so . . .

Stan: Yeah, exactly. . . okay. Now, is there is a music store nearby?

Teacher K: We have 2. There is [anonymized store], which specializes . . . . is really quite good at band instruments and, ah, band instruments and then teacher music ordering. Then, in the one in [anonymized location], is really good for, like, guitar, bass drums, studio equipment, things like that.

Stan: Okay, do . . .

Teacher K: And there's enough need that both of them are very strong.

Stan: Okay. Now, now, I'm assuming they both rent instruments, yes?

Teacher K: Yes, they do.

Stan: Okay. Do any of them or both of them, whatever, do they do private or group lessons?

Teacher K: Yes, both of them do, and, ah, like, um, the one in [anonymized location], the one that's close to us, [anonymized store], the one that specializes in band instruments . . .

Stan: Yeah. . .

Teacher K: . . . those . . . the lessons that they provide there are more of like typical band . . . so they'll do percussion, they'll do brass, they'll do woodwinds, and then, at [anonymized store], it's . . . they'll do a lot more guitar, drum set. There's another organization . . . it's [anonymized organization], I believe, and there's a lot of vocal instructors that work out of that, so they just provide the space, and then, [anonymized organization] does have 3 people that also given private lessons, as well, and that can be one of the classes that the kids can take that just are a part of that.

Stan: Okay, and you yourself, do you offer any music lessons to the community?

Teacher K: I, I haven't just because I didn't wanna . . . I don't wanna gray that line.

Stan: Sure, okay.

Teacher K: Like and it's, that's, because I'm a percussionist 1<sup>st</sup> and kind of a vocal 2<sup>nd</sup>, I never wanna . . . like, I will tell the band teachers, now, I'll say if they ever wanna, ya' know, a lesson here or there, great, come on over, but I've never, have never done it that way, just because it is a

small community, and there's a graying of that line that I just don't know, like I haven't been able to navigate it that well.

Stan: Okay, alright. No, that makes sense. I get that. Now, everything that we've talked about, have these opportunities directly impacted you as a teacher or your students, um, and your program?

Teacher K: Absolutely!

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: I, oh, gosh, the Stage Kids. . . um, I have a men's choir of 26 this past year, and out of the 26 of them, 5 or 6 have been involved in the Stage Kids Program . . .

Stan: Nice.

Teacher K: . . . which was great, because it's like I know what you can already do, and then, my audition women's group had about 10 that had been involved, so out of a group of about 33, about a third had been, at some point in time, done either Stage Kids, the Short Shakespeare Program, or some other kind of community music group in there. And that's a lot of . . . that there's not, in addition to Stage Kids, there's like, there's Musical Theater of [anonymized location], there's the Leavenworth Summer Theater, which is about 15 miles down the road, and they do summer shows, so they'll do Sound of Music on the Hill and do 2 other musicals, and it's, ya' know, so, I . . . there's a huge benefit to having kids being a part of those. . .

Stan: Absolutely.

Teacher K: . . . just because you get that, there's the other side. They get, they're experiencing . . . they're experiencing different opportunities, but in addition to that, too. What's nice about the Stage Kids one is that the Mission Statement is like it's where they're building character one child at a time, and it's nice, because like, you can trust them with like, go work this part, and they're not going to go an screw around. It's like, they understand the immediacy of getting things done . . .

Stan: Yeah .

Teacher K: . . . and the responsibility that's involved with performance, so . . .

Stan: Okay, alright . . .

Teacher K: My . . . yeah.

Stan: Alright. No, no, everything you've said has been wonderful. Now, what benefits have you seen personally from being involved in the community, ya' know, whether it's takin' your students out or whether it's you yourself being a performer or being a facilitator, what benefits have you seen from that?

Teacher K: Um. . . it . . . are you talking specifically in the classroom?

Stan: Well, um. . .

Teacher K: Or just in general?

Stan: Well, just, yeah, just in general, just as broad as I can make, so that way, it gives you plenty of room to answer the question. But, yeah, the benefits that you've seen from being involved with the community. Ya' know, for example, I had one teacher who took her elementary kids to sing the "Star Spangled Banner" for their high school football team on the field, and because of that, ya' know, it wasn't like an 8-part harmony kind of thing, but because of that, she had a parent of one of the football players write a big, fat check, um, ya' know, to her program at the school to buy whatever supplies she needed, so she really benefited. Ya' know, and it could be more than that, I mean, not just monetary, but it could also be, hey, my kids have . . . have gained confidence and courage in bein' performers, ya' know, anything like that.

Teacher K: Okay. I think the benefit . . . well, um, one of the . . . one benefit. . . I'll speak to a couple of them. The 1<sup>st</sup> one I'll speak of is when I first got there, and it's been this way for the years that I've been there, teaching a choir, I've always had this audition-only women's group, and I always tell them, I said, ya' know, since you're auditioning, even though it's 8<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>, you're going to the high school audition festival, and so, ya' know, I don't want you to go to the middle school one and kind of get a thump on everybody, I want you to go to their. . . have you be challenged, and the benefit of that, I got more kids joining the program, because it's like, oh, we're gonna be this . . . he's gonna to take us to, ya' know, the Harbor Day, and like, my guys. . . the benefit, like the guys' choir, the exact same thing, and those numbers. . . I've only had the group for. . . I started it my 2<sup>nd</sup> year there, and there were 12 guys in it. Then, this year, there were 26, and next year, it'll be the largest group at the junior high with 34.

Stan: Nice!

Teacher K: So, so, the . . . that . . . that, I've benefited from that. There is a lot of, and part of that is, they know that I'm also a working musician in the community, so we both come at . . . so we will talk rehearsal stories, and like, oh gosh, when a director gets off topic, and then, you don't get anything rehearsed, so (laughs) similar to something that I would have done, um . . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher K: . . . for me . . . I do have the luxury, because it's an 8/9, I can do things for the sake of doing it for music and an opportunity and the experience that they're gonna have, versus the . . . versus just doing it so, like, we can get money from the Rotary or get money from that. But the other benefits I've had is that kids continuing on, like if they don't continue on in high school, I feel like that's . . . then, what's the point.

Stan: Yeah.

Teacher K: I want them to be lifelong lovers and practicers . . . . pract. . . .

Stan: Practitioners?

Teacher K: Lifelong musicians . . . yes, thank you. (laughs)

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher K: Those are . . . there's a lot of intangibles with that . . .

Stan: Right.

Teacher K: . . . and I work really closely with the high school director, so I . . . we will go through with each kid and we're like, okay, what happened to this one, and we'll, ya' know. . . and because it is. . . it's, it's such a weird place for me, because most of my teaching I would be the only music teacher, and I wasn't part of a bigger system, and it's only been since 2013 that I've been one of a team of music teachers. For the first 13 years, it was just me kind of getting to do what I wanted to, so a lot of the benefits that I've seen have been . . . are more of a shared reward, versus an individual.

Stan: Okay, alright.

Teacher K: If that makes any sense.

Stan: Okay, alright. No, that does. No, it makes perfect sense.

Teacher K: I don't know if it helps.

Stan: No, no, it was very good. Now, is there is anything holding you back from being more involved in, in community music, like facilities, time, finances, lack of interest, family, anything like that.

Teacher K: Uh, I would say I . . . for the 10 years . . . when I first started working in [anonymized location], um, my wife and I were married, we didn't have our son, and my son was born in 2007, and when we moved to, when I taught overseas in [anonymized location], like, I was not able to . . . I was not able to keep that balance between . . . like a healthy balance between school and family or school, or like work and family, and even when my wife and son came back a year and a half in, and I stayed another year and a half, like I kinda tipped really far into just working all the time.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: So, it's . . . the priority . . . and I will say this to the kids. I'm like, ya' know, by son's 13 now, and it's like that and . . . and like, I'm not willing to sacrifice (laughs), I'm not willing to get to the level that I was before my son was born, nor do I want to get to that place where I was just doing my job. My wife and son are definitely the priority.

Stan: Absolutely.

Teacher K: Yeah, and I won't be able. . . and it's not that it's a hold back, it's just that . . . it's just to re . . . it's just a different way of teaching. I just gotta be a lot more efficient. I can't like waste the time . . . and I'm not good at it (laughs) . . .

Stan: (laughs)

Teacher K . . . striking that balance. When you spend that much time, like when I was first up in [anonymized location] my wife would make cookies for the pep band, because that would be the entire winter, and even when my son was born, it was never like, ya' know, just have to choose between the family and the school. I had a messed up way of dealing with it on that. Um, other things that are . . . if you were to say things that keep me from it, there's. . . it's just . . . it's not fully understanding all aspects of the community, too. I don't which . . . where the gaps are, in order to find those opportunities. . . .

Stan: Alright.

Teacher K: . . . and that, I think some of that comes from me just not knowing. . . . I grew up in [anonymized location], so I'm . . . there are a lot of things that have been established in the [anonymized location] that are very good, and like, musical theater has a very strong history here. Marching programs has a very strong history. The choirs do, and it's finding where . . . so I mean, one of the things that would be the true . . . how I do create . . . like what opportunities are there that I can create for them at the 8/9 level that are going to continue on that goal of making them be lifelong lovers of music? So, there that. There's almost an ignorance to it, and there's so much information that you don't which to like go into. . . and it's small town, so there are families here that have been around for generations, and it's knowing how best to do that. I generally will spend a year-plus just learning the layout of the land, and then, okay, where . . . that was, the eye-opening thing to me when I first started working in [anonymized location]. . . the basketball teams wouldn't lose, the band was 25, and there was only 11 in the choir. I remember asking one of my band students, I said, well, what happens when the basketball team starts to lose. He looked at me, and he just, like, "They don't." I was like, oh, God! My first thought was like what's gonna fill that gap of pride.

Stan: Yup.

Teacher K: (laughs) and ya' know, sure enough . . . there's was a lot of foundational work that I put in in [anonymized location]. I . . . boosting up the choir, making the band . . . 'cause the band just existed because of the basketball team.

Stan: Alright.

Teacher K: So one of the goals that I had was that people wouldn't ask, oh, what do ya' do after the basketball season's over, because it would be like, oh, it's February, you're done, like, wow! So, it's really kind of understanding the culture and what's there. A lot of us that are teaching at the junior high and high school, there has been a lot of turnover with the middle school and the

high school positions, so I came on 4 years ago. We just got a new junior high band teacher last year. We have a new high school band teacher 2 years ago, so . . . and then, at the intermediate schools, the 5/7 schools, there's been lots of turnover there, as well.

Stan: Alright. So last question for ya', you're doin' great! Can you name anything that you would like to see happen within the next 2 to 5 years for your students or your music program or the community because of community involvement? Can you give me anything you'd like to see happen?

Teacher K: I, oh, there's a wish list, okay, things that I'd like to do for community involvement. The 1<sup>st</sup> one of all, there's a group called The Apollo Club, and it rehearses actually in the choir room that I teach in on Tuesday nights, and I was so upset about this, because in March, we had talked about doing, having my men's group sing with them, and it's a men's group, a men's group that's been around for like a 100-plus, and we were going to do a direct performance together, and then, I was like grrr. . . . so, there is in [anonymized location], a friend of my started this one called The Brothers Sing On, and it was a big male, it was like, it started off with like 2 high schools and a college group, and now, it's like a larger event, something along those lines. I would love for . . . I would love for that barrier between the community and the schools to kind of be gone (laughs).

Stan: Ahhh. . .

Teacher K: Like, I would love, I would love for the community involvement, and because . . . there's a real, there's a real beauty in seeing . . . for kids to see adults that are doing it, because there's just so much love for it.

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: And there's . . . I also think there's a responsibility for the adults . . . like energy's supposed to flow downwards. . . like the olders are supposed to take care of the youngers, so we're supposed to shepherd these students so that when they go to their communities, there could be thriving wind ensembles and, ya' know, bands and choirs and string groups . . .

Stan: Hmm, hmm.

Teacher K: . . . because I think. . . there are ways we intentionally disinvite. . .

Stan: Okay.

Teacher K: . . . and what I mean by that is just how easy is it for us to create these opportunities? That's like, that's why [anonymized location] wasn't good for me in 10 years, because community and, like, my first, I had a sacred concert in [anonymized location] and there was a public school, so it's one of those ones where, like, the community, there's a need for this in the community, let's meet that. So \_\_\_\_\_ it's creating, creating some sense of tradition with that, but then, also more opportunities to see . . . for the students to be able to see what it looks like to be a vocalist for 30 years, as opposed to just 15 or being an oboe player for 30 years, what

you do with this, not just have it be something that can be intrinsically rewarding, in addition to it being extrinsically rewarding.

Stan: Okay. Yeah, no, that's very, very, very good. Absolutely. That is the last question. You have made it through. Congratulations!

Teacher K: Oh, thank you! (laughs)

Stan: (laughs) No, you gave me great, great feedback, and I'm looking forward to adding this into my data analysis. I really appreciate it.

Teacher K: My pleasure.

Stan: And like I said, send me your address, and I'll mail that card out, probably within 2 or 3 weeks, that'll be goin' out, and I just cannot thank you enough for taking the time out to do this.

Teacher K: My pleasure, my pleasure, and best wishes on this and good luck!

Stan: Absolutely! Thank you so much!

Teacher K: Thank you, Sir!

Stan: Bye.

Teacher K: Bye.



**THESIS COMPLETION FORM**

Stanley N Harris, III

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Music Education

Thesis:

A STUDY OF AMERICAN RURAL MUSIC EDUCATORS: THE IMPACT ON  
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN MUSIC

Major Field: Type Field Here Biographical:

Personal Data:

Education: (prior degrees)

Stanley Harris Completed the Thesis Project for the Doctor of Music Education at

Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA on \_\_\_\_\_(date).

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ADVISOR'S APPROVAL/ DATE