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THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES

**INVESTIGATING MUSIC TEACHER JOB SATISFACTION, PROFESSIONAL  
DEVELOPMENT, AND ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

BY

Susan S. Henderson

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the  
University of South Alabama  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Education Leadership

May 2022

Approved:

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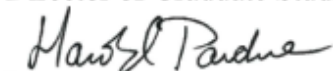
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Dean of the Graduate School: Dr. J. Harold Pardue

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May 2022

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents for always providing me with the encouragement and support needed to pursue my dreams, to my husband who has been there for me every step of the way from start to finish, and finally to my son for being my inspiration to reach the finish line.

I love you all more than words could ever express.

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## ABSTRACT

Henderson, Susan S., Ed.D., University of South Alabama, May 2022. Investigating Music Teacher Job Satisfaction, Professional Development, and Administrative Support. Chair of Committee: Benterah C. Morton, Ph.D.

This research study was designed to investigate music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support and to explore possible existing relationships between music teacher job satisfaction and number of hours of music related professional development while exploring possible relationships between music teacher job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support. Data, which were analyzed for music teachers ( $n = 47$ ), came from a quantitative survey and a series of qualitative focus groups. For the analysis of job satisfaction data, a mean of  $M = 4.23$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.76$  was obtained, indicating between a high to moderately high level of job satisfaction. Analysis of professional development data found a mean of  $M = 1.76$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.53$ , indicating participants attended between 0 and 15 hours of music-related professional development annually. Analysis of the administrative support data found a mean of  $M = 3.66$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 1.03$ , indicating between a neutral to moderate level of administrative support. Results indicated a positive relationship that was approaching significance between music teacher job satisfaction and amount of music related professional development. A strong positive correlation was found between music

teacher job satisfaction and perceived administrative support. Qualitative data analysis revealed the three major themes of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. Each major theme was then broken down into subthemes. The subthemes of professional development were collaboration and relationships, teacher preparation, stress, scheduling, and perceptions of the job. The subthemes of professional development were ideal professional development, relevant professional development, observations, and effects of music professional development. The subthemes of administrative support were ideal administrative support, examples of good administrative support, examples of poor administrative support, and administrator presence.

# **CHAPTER I**

## **OVERVIEW OF STUDY**

### **Introduction**

A recurring topic of discussion in the world of education is the national shortage of teachers (Madigan & Kim, 2021; Glazer, 2018). The teacher shortage extends to the more specialized area of music education, and a contributing influence on attrition is teachers leaving the profession before retirement (Hancock, 2009). This mixed-methods research study examined the relationship between music teachers' job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. A sample of music teachers consisting of elementary music, secondary vocal music, and secondary instrumental music responded to a survey to determine thoughts in the areas of job satisfaction, music related professional development, and perceived support of administration. Results of the study provided the levels of music teacher job satisfaction, music related professional development, and administrative support. Relationships were also examined between music teachers' jobs satisfaction in relation to annual amount of professional development and between music teachers' job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support. Based on those relationships, the study explored the connections further with qualitative inquiry in the form of focus group interviews. The implications of

this study provides administrators with evidence to consider for improving teacher retention.

### **Problem Statement**

High levels of general and music teacher attrition are a problem of practice that warrants attention, and the issue spans across schools of varying socioeconomic status. Teacher shortages in schools of low socioeconomic status are not a result of inadequate staffing, but rather an inability to retain teachers (García Torres, 2019). Predictions of teacher attrition are continuing to increase from the current 15.7% of teachers leaving the profession annually (Rumschlag, 2017), with many teachers leaving the career after only a few years. Research specifically related to music teacher attrition is dated, but a 2002 study documented an attrition rate of 17% within the first 10 years of teaching and an attrition rate of 34% after 6 additional years (Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Teachers leave the profession for a myriad of reasons, including low job satisfaction, with the term job satisfaction referring to the sense of fulfillment, gratification, pride, enjoyment, and happiness felt by employees (Ansah-Hughes, 2016). Additionally, music programs with high turnover rates caused by the attrition of music teachers can suffer from poor classroom culture, where students suffer from apathy and lack accountability (Kristofferson, 2019). Explored reasons for low teacher job satisfaction include lack of mentor programs and limited opportunities for collaboration with colleagues (Bautista & Wong, 2019), dissatisfaction and lack of support from administration (Matthews & Koner, 2017; Hancock, 2016), insufficient salary for the expected workload (Rickman et al., 2017), and stress and burnout from the demands of the profession, including test-based accountability (Ryan et al., 2017). Dunn et al. (2017) found seasoned teachers with

10 or more years of experience, who leave the field, still professionally identify as educators, suggesting outside factors influencing teachers' decision to leave the teaching field other than a simple loss of interest in the profession.

Teaching requires a high degree of sheer professional competence and motivation as teachers are required to take on the responsibilities and roles of leader, counselor, tutor, manager, and team member (Ansah-Hughes, 2016). The job expectations for music teachers are frequently very extensive and require a great deal of personal and professional commitment beyond that of non-music teachers. Additional rehearsals, concerts, contests, and public performances commonly take place outside of standard school hours. Matthews and Koner (2017) found from a survey of 7,463 experienced music teachers that 23.5% reported working conditions/workload/ time commitment to be the least favorite part of their jobs. The time spent at work can potentially cause family strain, and the compensation is not reflective of the time required to maintain a successful music program (Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Many school systems are forced to resort to lowering the standards of proficiency and experience to fill music teaching openings (Ingersoll et al., 2018), resulting in program declines. The issue of music teacher attrition is evident in the high rates of teachers leaving the field (Gray & Taie, 2015) and the large number of music teachers who suffer from job-related stress and burnout (Varona, 2018).

Constant advancements and changes in the field of education require teachers to become lifetime learners to keep pace with current educational trends. Active participation in professional development prepares teachers to face problems and prepare classroom activities to suit the lessons and students (Cockpim & Somprach, 2019). Professional development is an essential component of every teacher's career and serves



as the primary method for engaging the individual educator in learning directed toward improved performance (Angeline, 2014). Bautista and Wong (2019) found music teachers considered the most helpful PD experiences to have a deep and rich mix of content and dealt mainly with topics related to music knowledge, music related skills, and instructional practices. Routine engagement in professional development equips music teachers with the necessary tools to promote student learning (Bautista et al., 2017).

Similar to the way professional development influences teachers in the classroom, school administration has the power to affect a school's culture depending on leadership style, vision, and organization. Administrators play an important role in teacher job satisfaction, retention, and attrition (Baker, 2007), job satisfaction for educators is strongly associated with perceptions of supportive school leadership (Ansley et al., 2019). Examples of administrative support include providing mentors for new teachers, assisting teachers with behavior management issues, and cultivating positive school environments (Bennett et al., 2013). Typically, over the span of their careers and across various school settings, music teachers are exposed to a spectrum of leadership styles and personalities. Administrators who demonstrate transformational leadership are desirable in many fields, including education (Fowler et al., 2016). Employee commitment, job satisfaction, and motivation to learn have been linked to transformational leadership (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016). Teacher perceptions of distributed leadership have also been found through research to be significantly and positively associated with their job satisfaction (García Torres, 2019). These findings indicate a desire from teachers to be included in the delegation of leadership tasks and responsibilities.

## **Purpose of the Study**

Although an abundance of literature exists regarding teacher job satisfaction, little focuses specifically on music educators. The purpose of this research study is to investigate music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support and their possible relationships. The research study examines perceptions of current music teachers on how professional development and administrative support affect overall job satisfaction. By identifying primary reasons music teachers experience low job satisfaction, school administrators can formulate and implement countering measures to improve job satisfaction and reduce the overall rates of music teacher attrition.

## **Rationale and Significance**

Evidence suggests that a significant part of the problem of teacher attrition lies not in a lack of teacher education graduates, but in an inability for educational institutions to retain the teachers hired (Dupriez et al., 2016). Cultivating a workplace that places significance on music teacher job satisfaction is necessary to reduce the current rates of music teacher attrition, but limited research exists involving specific qualities of leadership associated with teacher attrition or job satisfaction (García Torres, 2019). Moreover, music teachers have also typically been excluded from explanatory studies focused on the features of effective PD due to the limited availability and variety of music specific PD initiatives (Bautista & Wong, 2019). Music teacher attrition has a wide range of repercussions including causing extra stress and dissatisfaction for the remaining music teachers who must take on extra responsibilities as well as a potential negative

impact on student learning and performance as experienced teachers are replaced by novice teachers with less experience (Russell, 2012).

### **Role of the Researcher**

The researcher works as a middle school band and choir teacher at a magnet school in a large public-school district in the Southeastern United States. Working for eight years as an employee of this school district has allowed her to form professional relationships with teachers within the district and with music teachers in the surrounding regions. The researcher is invested in providing research that contributes to the improvement of music teacher job satisfaction while also developing a lens through which to isolate and improve the specific area of music teacher attrition.

### **Research Questions**

The following research questions will frame the mixed methods research study:

#### Quantitative Research Questions

1. What is music teachers' perceived level of job satisfaction?
2. What is music teachers' amount of music related professional development?
3. What is music teachers' perceived level of administrative support?
4. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and the number of hours of music related professional development?
5. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support?

#### Qualitative Research Questions

6. What are music teachers' perceptions of administrative support?

7. What are music teachers' perceptions of professional development?
8. What are music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction?

### **Assumptions**

The study assumed that participants would answer the questionnaire honestly and objectively for the purpose of the study. Further assuming that participants who took part in the focus groups were invested in the purpose of the research study for improving current music teacher attrition rates. Finally, the study also assumed a general similarity between music and non-music teachers in relation to retention and attrition.

### **Delimitations**

A delimitation of the research study was that the data collected was only from two school districts with significantly different populations in socioeconomic and racial makeup. The participant sample included teachers from the population of music teachers from two neighboring school districts in the Southeast United States. The participants were also all from a respectively small geographical area and have a professional working relationship with the researcher.

### **Limitations**

A restriction of the research study is that all participants were from a respectively small geographical area and have a professional working relationship with the researcher and with each other. The electronic distribution of the survey might have also limited the response rate. The collection of data during the COVID-19 pandemic and restricted geography covered by the research could have influenced the overall results of the study.

## Definition of Terms

**Elementary music teacher:** A music teacher whose primary teaching concentration is general elementary music for students from kindergarten to fifth grade.

**Itinerant music teacher:** A music teacher employed in a position with teaching responsibilities spread across multiple schools.

**Professional development:** Professional development is broadly defined as activities or opportunities that are designed to develop educators' skills, knowledge, and expertise (Borko, 2004; Yoon & Kim, 2021).

**Secondary instrumental music teacher:** A music teacher whose primary teaching concentration is instrumental music for students from sixth to twelfth grade.

**Secondary vocal music teacher:** A music teacher whose primary teaching concentration is vocal music for students from sixth to twelfth grade.

**Teacher job satisfaction:** Teacher job satisfaction refers to the level of fulfillment a teacher gains from work and is a multidimensional construct due to the nature of the profession (García Torres, 2019).

**Teacher attrition:** Refers to the rate at which teachers leave the profession before retirement.

## Conclusion

This chapter contains an introduction to the topic of music teacher job satisfaction and its connection to music teacher attrition. Included is a description of the study conducted to provide additional research involving music teacher job satisfaction by investigating the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction and participation in professional development and the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction

and administrative support. The following chapters provide a review of current literature examining teacher job satisfaction and contributing reasons for music teacher attrition and outline the methodology that was used to obtain research data specifically targeted towards factors affecting music teacher job satisfaction. Chapter II begins with a detailed discussion of the issue of music teacher job satisfaction and its relationship to music teacher attrition and provide the theoretical framework upon which this research study is based. Next there is thorough discussion of current factors affecting music teacher job satisfaction including professional development, administrative support, teacher preparation and experience, working conditions, health, and salary. Chapter II concludes with a closer look at music teacher attrition and the importance of arts advocacy. Chapter III discusses the design of the research study and provides specific information detailing the sampling, participants, instrumentation, procedures, and concludes with the methods that was used to analyze the quantitative and qualitative data collected. Chapter IV presents the findings of the research study. Chapter V discusses the findings and their implications and concludes with the researcher's recommendations for future research and recommendations for policy and practice.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

This chapter explores the extant literature related to music teacher satisfaction as an effort to improve current music teacher attrition rates. The literature discussion will include an introduction to the issue of music teacher job satisfaction and attrition, the theoretical framework for this study, a brief history of teacher attrition, arts advocacy, professional development, administrative support, teacher preparation and experience, working conditions, music teacher health, salary, and music teacher attrition. Although some of the literature is somewhat dated due to a general lack of research in the field of music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support, all discussed literature is directly relevant to the research study.

#### **The Issue**

Despite a growing need for teachers in the education field, a sizable proportion of music teachers are still exiting or have plans to exit the profession. Robison and Russell (2021) found in a survey of 115 rural Wyoming music teachers that 12.1% of participants planned to leave the profession which remained consistent with the 12.3% found by Russell from a larger geographical sample of 312 music teachers in 2012 (Russell, 2012). A logical conclusion is that teachers leave the profession in part due to low levels of job satisfaction. Teacher job satisfaction refers to the level of fulfillment a teacher gains from

work and is a multidimensional construct due to the nature of the profession (García Torres, 2019). Madsen and Hancock (2002) determined that understanding the personal and professional variables affecting music teacher job satisfaction could provide answers as to why so many leave the teaching field before retirement.

Student enthusiasm, performance skills, and musical competencies have all been found to be significant contributing factors to music teacher job satisfaction (Heston et al., 1996), but high rates of teacher turnover caused by attrition negatively affect student achievement (Lindqvist et al., 2014). Other recognized factors that negatively affect music teacher job satisfaction include administrator support (Olsen & Huang, 2019), working conditions, workload, time commitment (Matthews & Koner, 2017). Additional recognized factors include negative student attitudes, and inappropriate student behaviors, and teaching load (Heston et al., 1996).

According to Rumschlag (2017), educators can feel irritated when not treated as professionals and lack control of their instruction when trying to conform to others' philosophies. High teacher attrition rates place a considerable burden on schools, teachers, and students while negatively influencing the effectiveness of the educational process (Hong, 2010). Cost implications are also associated with teacher attrition, as funds are needed to recruit and train new teachers (Wushishi et al., 2014).

The consistent increase in population in the United States over the years has led to growing numbers of students in the education system and requiring more teachers to service those students. The past thirty years in education has experienced a shift as the teaching force has become larger, less experienced, and more racially and ethnically diverse (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2017). Although there are more teachers in the profession



than there were thirty years ago, the growing numbers of students entering the classroom is still leaving schools with a shortage of qualified educational professionals. Moreover, over 50% of US teachers and principals are Baby Boomers that will soon retire and cause schools to face a teacher shortage that cannot be ignored (Huling et al., 2012). While the number of typical subject-area teachers at the middle and secondary school level increased by 68% from 1987 to 2016, the number of music teachers were among the slowest growing subject areas (Ingersoll et al., 2018).

Levels of teacher attrition are causing the quality of education to decline as seasoned teachers are replaced with new teachers that are lacking in experience. A review of the literature reveals a multitude of variables that affect teachers' job satisfaction and decisions of whether to stay in the teaching field or leave their position for alternate employment opportunities.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study drew its theoretical framework from the Existence-Related-Growth Theory (Alderfer, 1972) which is based upon both social and psychological foundations. Job satisfaction is perhaps one of the most prominent factors affecting teachers' decision to stay or leave the education profession based upon the *hedonistic philosophy* that states all organisms tend to move away from painful or unpleasant stimulus (Jordaan & Jordaan, 1989; Maforah, 2015). Abraham Maslow developed one of the most popular needs theories to determine job satisfaction of employees depicting a hierarchical order of needs that must be satisfied to motivate behavior (Maforah, 2015) which posits job satisfaction as being largely influenced by internal and personal factors (Pepe et al., 2017). Alderfer condensed Maslow's five hierarchical levels into three to create the

Existence-Related-Growth (ERG) theory that combines the physiological and security needs instead of separating them (Maforah, 2015). Under Maslow's hierarchy, before teachers can reach the self-actualization level the basic need of a feeling of belonging with an academic community must be established. Teachers are then able to attain mastery, achievement, and gratification (Rumschlag, 2017). In contrast, Alderfer's ERG model assumes the satisfaction of existence, relatedness, and growth needs does not necessarily follow a progression from basic needs to higher level-needs and an individual may be motivated by all three needs simultaneously (Dewey, 2020).

Alderfer (1972) defines ERG theory as a conceptual and empirical system for understanding, explaining, and predicting the satisfaction and desire properties of human needs. Existence refers to the basic requirements for daily living. Relatedness is the need for social interaction, and growth is the complex need for creativity, self-esteem, and worthwhile work. Alderfer et al. (1974) tested derivations from ERG theory and found the results to be consistent with previous results obtained by field correlational methods. This theory has been applied in a variety of professional fields such as medicine (Wang et al., 2021), business (Arnolds & Boshoff, 2002), and in education (Diep et al., 2019). While the ERG theory has been applied in different areas, this study uses the ERG theory as a theoretical framework because its three defining features are needs common to all workers, including music educators.

### **History of Teacher Attrition**

A review of literature regarding the problem of teacher attrition revealed literature dating back to the mid-1970s, supporting the theory that the issue of teacher attrition is a longstanding problem that has persisted over the last thirty years (Ingersoll et al., 2018).

Some of the earliest references to reasons for teacher attrition are related to overall job satisfaction and include dissatisfaction with working conditions, salary levels, limited opportunities for advancement, lack of respect, and a lack of support from administrators and peers (Smith-Davis & Cohen, 1989). These cited reasons are factors influencing teachers' decisions to leave the teaching profession (Smith-Davis & Cohen, 1989).

From the beginning, research has indicated that a disproportionate number of teachers leave the field in the early years of teaching (Smith-Davis & Cohen, 1989). Researchers' analysis of North Carolina public school teachers hired from the 1979-80 school year through 1996 found that by the end of the fifth year, a third of teachers left the profession. In this study, male teachers were much more likely to leave than female teachers, and high school teachers left at a rate higher than middle and elementary schools (Konanc, 1996). In recent years, Gray and Taie (2015) conducted a longitudinal study to examine public school teacher attrition and mobility for the first five years and found that out of all beginning teachers from 2007-08, 10% did not teach in 2008-09, 12% did not teach in 2009-10, and 17% did not teach in 2011-12. These findings are consistent with current research despite the passing of time.

Research still supports the idea that new teachers with less than five years of experience are more likely to leave the field than experienced teachers (Harfitt, 2015; Ingersoll et al., 2018). There are discrepancies about the precise current rates of teacher attrition, but the consensus of researchers is that the attrition rate of new teachers is high with some studies finding attrition rates as high as 50% in the first five years (Harfitt, 2015). Teacher exit rates are still much higher in secondary education than at pre-school and primary levels (Dupriez et al., 2016). Despite years of research analysis, the issues

and causes for teacher attrition are still persistent. Solutions applied to the problem have proven ineffective as evidenced by the growing presence of attention regarding teacher attrition.

Teacher attrition is a more non-linear and complex phenomenon than what is sometimes presented. In many cases, dropouts are temporary, and individuals sometimes leave and then return to the profession over time (Lindqvist et al., 2014). The willingness of former teachers to return is sometimes related to their career status, such as how many years they have in the teaching field or desired grades and subject areas being taught (Hancock, 2016). Additional research may help solve the problem of teacher attrition, but the consistency of the evidence contributing to teacher attrition from the beginning lends itself to the idea that a solution may be formed from the literature that currently exists.

The first five years of teaching are the initial survival stage, but even stage two teachers who surpass that milestone experience high rates of attrition in both music and general education (Eros, 2013). While successfully making it through the first five years of teaching is an important milestone, additional contributors that are important to teacher job satisfaction are the relationships teachers have with students and student engagement. An exploratory study conducted in 2017 found that overall music educators were satisfied in their teaching positions indicating reasons related to student engagement and relationships; however, 73.9% of the teachers who participated in the survey had been teaching less than 20 years, which correlates with the idea that teachers are leaving the profession earlier in their careers (Matthews & Koner, 2017). Regardless of whether music teachers leave towards the beginning, middle, or end of their careers, the abundance of scholarly literature (Bernhard, 2016; Ingersoll et al., 2018; Rumschlag,

2017; Shaw, 2018) dedicated to this topic provides irrefutable evidence that the issue of teacher attrition must be addressed.

### **Arts Advocacy**

The first national standards for music were created by a task force of music educators in 1994 (Rampal, 2015), recommending that all students receive music as a part of their education. A systematic literature review by Jindal-Snape et al. (2018) examines the association between children's participation in the arts and their academic achievement. While results from the research varied, there were general academic benefits for students that surfaced from participation in fine arts, such as increased confidence, creativity, and a more positive attitude towards learning. These findings lend credence to the philosophy that student participation in arts education can positively affect academic achievement. Administrators and parents need to be educated about the goals and importance of music education and the unique challenges that music educators face (Hancock, 2008).

Many fine arts educators object the promotion of arts education for academic benefit (Sochacka et al., 2016). Nevertheless, student achievement is a driving force in educational institutions, and for good reason, but it is increasingly rare for art to be taught just for the sake of art. As schools place more and more weight on curricular focus of the most tested subjects of reading and math, less time and resources are devoted to the arts (Shaw, 2019). Arts participation may include more intrinsic benefits than simply the instrumental, essentially economic justification of improved academic standards (Jindal-Snape et al., 2018). Music programs often have close ties to the community that are demonstrated by collaborations that are mutually beneficial, interesting, and even

empowering for students (Salvador, 2019). For students to receive any benefit from fine arts, there must be qualified and available music educators actively teaching in the field. For this reason, the objective of improving music teacher job satisfaction as an effort to reduce music teacher attrition should be given the warranted attention it deserves by academic researchers to ensure students are provided the opportunity to participate in fine arts education.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Math (STEAM) is growing in popularity as a program to enhance educational curriculums. While core teachers embrace the concept of using the arts to enhance the creativity of students and promote interests in STEM fields, some art educators object to the justification of arts inclusion only to improve student performance in other areas (Sochacka et al., 2016). Matthews and Koner (2017) even found from a survey of 7,463 K-12 music teachers their primary concerns for the profession included lack of support for music, loss of funding, and an emphasis on science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects. While arts education has been shown to positively impact student learning when incorporated into other curriculums, the value of art is not in what it can do for other subject areas. By adopting this limited viewpoint, the true benefits of art education are overshadowed by how it impacts student achievement.

Music teacher attrition could be the result of a variety of factors, but it is important that music teachers remain a separated and specialized teaching role. Beginning teachers outside of the music discipline frequently do not feel competent or confident teaching music in a school setting (Webb, 2016). The inclusion of fine arts in core subjects is admirable, however the fine arts have additional value in and of

themselves. The benefit of arts education has seen significant debate regarding cultural engagement, improved academic achievement, and as a contributor to the general creative economy (Sowden et al., 2015). Core teachers are frequently encouraged to incorporate fine art elements into their classroom activities to stimulate and enhance student learning. A study conducted by Sowden et al. (2015) promotes the inclusion of arts education for the creative cognitive benefit for students; as increasing numbers of music teachers leave the profession, the learning potential for students decreases. The results of this study found students who participated in improvisation interventions showed better divergent thinking and creativity after the intervention (Sowden et al., 2015). The implications of the study findings suggest that simple, arts-based improvisation interventions could have domain general benefits for creative cognition processes. Arts education should have a central place in the curriculum and be available to all children.

The issue of improving music teacher job satisfaction to reduce music teacher attrition is an important pursuit for academic researchers because of the negative implications that a lack of music education would have on students. Many music classrooms have their own unique cultures that draw students to them and nurture themes such as accountability, collaboration, leadership, relationships, and respect along with musicianship (Kristofferson, 2018).

Music education and the benefits it provides for developing children and children with special needs has recently become an area of interest to cognitive neuroscientists (Rose et al., 2018), noting structural brain differences between musicians and non-musically trained people. The Rose et al. (2018) case study follows an 8-year-old student

who was diagnosed with Comorbid Autism Spectrum Disorder, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder, sensory processing difficulties, dyslexia, and dyspraxia during the study. Results showed improvements in the child's fluid intelligence and motor skills after participating in music education for one year, concluding that musical learning has shown to have transfer effects that positively impact emotional and academic learning (Rose et al., 2018).

The music therapy profession is a growing field, and the potential benefits of including music therapy in public special education classes should not be discounted (Rose et al., 2018). The study in this article provides support for the advocacy of music education in schools, specifically in the area of special education. The findings merit additional research in the area of music education as a therapy tool for special education students, but fine arts are an important part of the curriculum for all students and should be available for every student.

### **Professional Development**

Ongoing professional development is a necessary part of any teacher's education. Professional development does more than simply educate teachers about new educational practices. It revitalizes teachers' passion while providing the motivation needed to continue in the profession, but empirical research targeting music educator professional development was virtually absent from the literature until approximately 15 years ago (West, 2021). Since then, the research has grown to include numerous systematic studies (e.g., Bautista et al., 2017; West, 2021; Yoon & Kim, 2021). The literature includes many definitions for teacher professional development, but for the purposes of this study professional development is broadly defined as activities or opportunities that are



designed to develop educators' skills, knowledge, and expertise (Borko, 2004; Yoon & Kim, 2022).

A growing form of professional learning for teachers is the participation in either local or distance learning Professional Learning Communities. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) support teacher professional development and shift the focus from teaching to learning (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). Research suggests that teachers who participate in a professional development (PD) school are more likely to persist in employment as compared to their traditionally prepared counterparts (Latham et al., 2015). Participation in PD is not the only component that influences teacher retention. Angeline (2014) suggests that teachers should be included in planning and implementing a successful personalized teacher development plan. Similarly, Johnson et al. (2019) advocate for the reframing of professional development as a local responsibility where decisions regarding PD would be generated by a network of teachers, teacher-educators, and administrators. The inclusion of teachers for the planning and implementation of professional development assigns a sense of ownership to the teachers. This idea is complicated for music educators who are often marginalized when school administrators design professional development activities forcing music educators to attend professional development sessions tailored to other subject areas (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). Negative views of music teachers for school led professional development include a disagreement that professional experiences are well received by the faculty, relevant to their teaching, and immediately applicable in the music classroom (Sanderson et al., 2019).

The kinds of questions music education researchers have been able to investigate regarding music-specific PD have been seriously restricted by the limited availability and

variety of music-specific PD opportunities (Bautista & Wong, 2019), and the specialized needs of music teachers are rarely addressed in formal PD (Todd & Hancock, 2015). The commendable improvements for music related PD in content specificity made between 1993 and 2012 were undercut by deficiencies in social interaction, voluntariness/autonomy, sustained duration, relevance, and inadequate policy support (West, 2021), resulting in a lack of effectiveness. Typical professional development opportunities offered to school music teachers are ineffective due to being sporadic, unsystematic, and capricious in both purpose and content (Bautista & Wong, 2019). Additionally, the needs and interests for professional development may change over the course music teachers' careers (Eros, 2013). Allowing music educators to participate in the planning and implementation of school wide professional development would increase the likelihood of planning professional learning that could also be applicable to music educators.

Music teachers have been found to engage in music related PD by attending and presenting at conferences and workshops, partaking in observations and collaborations, and even conducting individual research (West, 2021). Several motivational factors are associated with music teachers' participation in PD. Research reveals that the strongest motivational factors for teacher professional development include student outcomes, job satisfaction, and technology development (Potera & Mehmeti, 2019). This inclusion of technology development is interesting because Gallo (2018) actually found music educators engaged in significantly less activity devoted to computers for instruction in comparison to most non-music teachers and generally found such engagements less

useful. Furthermore, patterns of teacher PD participation have been closely linked with socio-demographic characteristics as well their beliefs as teachers (Yoon & Kim, 2022).

Professional development for teachers is not restricted to structured sessions and conferences. In fact, traditional generic, short, one-off lecture-style forms of PD typically offered to music teachers have been perceived by music teachers as the least helpful (Bautista & Wong, 2019). The nature of music education affords music teachers with unique opportunities to experience professional growth outside of the traditional classroom. Music teacher professional development includes but is not limited to the areas of conducting technique, rehearsal technique, and repertoire in addition to teaching strategies (Fraser, 2017). Eros (2013) states valuable professional development may also take place in unstructured formats such as informal interactions with other music teachers. An investigation regarding types of music teacher professional development found most music related PD initiatives place emphasis on instructional practices (e.g., music-specific pedagogies, teaching methods, how to use technologies in class), followed by music content knowledge (e.g., music theory and concepts, instrumental skills, singing; Bautista et al., 2017). Designing customized programs of study is another way for music teachers to rejuvenate teaching and continue professional learning (Fraser, 2017). Outside activities, such as concerts, conferences, preparation for student performances, and trips, are also associated with learning factors (Bukantaitė & Kubiliūtė, 2015). Music teacher professional development should include the areas of conducting technique, rehearsal technique, and repertoire in addition to teaching strategies (Fraser, 2017).

## **Retention**

### **Administrative Support**

Principal support within the school is an influential factor directly related to teacher job satisfaction (Olsen & Huang, 2019), suggesting that administrative support affects teacher longevity in the profession. Administrators have a direct impact on the retention of teachers at their school, and a higher level of support from the administration has been shown to increase the probability of teachers remaining at the school (Hughes et al., 2015). Novice and experienced teachers alike view administrative support and relations as prominent influences to remain in the teaching field (Bennett et al., 2013). Transformational leadership has become a focus of school administrators in recent years, and educational institutions actively seek out transformational leaders in the hiring process (Fowler et al., 2016). Just as transformational school leaders improve the likelihood of teachers to be committed to their work (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016), the style of leadership used by school administrators influence teachers' job satisfaction and performance. Achieving the best performance from employees requires more from education leaders than simply completing the administrative duties required of the position, there must also be an emotional understanding of employees and their professional needs. Leaders with high emotion perceptions positively influence employees and achieve higher performance (Vidyarthi et al., 2014). Music teachers face unique challenges from non-music teachers in relation to administration support. Issues commonly faced by music teachers include differing understandings from administration on the importance of music education, a tendency of administrators to perceive music education as an extracurricular activity, and challenges to the content of instruction

(Madsen & Hancock, 2002). Finding ways to increase administrator awareness of teacher attrition and training administrators on the different supportive methods might be a partial solution to reducing teacher attrition (Zhang & Zeller, 2016).

### ***Hard-to-Staff Schools***

Hard-to-staff schools constantly battle with the issue of teacher retention. Teachers frequently leave schools identified as low performing for other teaching options due to low achieving students or discipline problems. Hughes et al. (2015) examine the relationship between principal support and teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools and found the ability to receive support from administration in the areas of emotional, environmental, and instructional support impacted teachers' decision to stay or leave in hard-to-staff schools. Another notable result from the study was that principals perceived their support for teachers was greater than the support teachers felt they received (Hughes et al., 2015). The authors propose one way to improve teacher retention in schools is to increase the ratio of administrators to teachers. This would allow the principals to spend more individual time with teachers providing emotional, technical, instructional, and environmental support.

Principal leadership and job fit are contributors to teacher mobility and attrition. Player et al. (2017) found through data from roughly 3,000 teachers that leadership and person job-fit are predictors of teacher retention for both schools and the profession itself. Adjustments to leadership practice and closer screenings to ensure good job-fit could therefore positively impact rates of teacher mobility and attrition. Research is sparse in person-environment fit as a factor in teacher turnover in K-12 education (Player et al., 2017). Based on the findings in this study, the authors conclude that school districts

should validate leadership practices in schools and ensure teaching applicants' match the demands of the profession to increase the likelihood of long-term teacher retention.

Significant predictors for music teachers changing schools or leaving the field entirely include young age (less than 30 years old, 30-39 years old), extracurricular hours, dissatisfaction with salary, and limited support from administration (Hancock, 2008). Administrative support particularly has a large impact on the retention of music teachers (Player et al., 2017). Research has found administrative presence, support for enforcing student behaviors, providing constructive feedback, fair evaluations, and allowing teacher autonomy increases the probability of teachers remaining at a specific school (Ansley et al., 2019). Strong and effective leadership can be seen through established mentorship programs for new teachers, helping teachers resolve behavior management issues, and creating and promoting strategies to achieve a positive school environment (Bennett et al., 2013). Choices of professional development for teachers and staff can also indicate the insight and effectiveness of school leaders. The selection and scheduling of appropriate and effective professional development opportunities for teachers is an important responsibility of school administration, and flexibility, integration, and advanced technologies are important learning leadership factors needed to promote teacher professional development (Cockpim & Somprach, 2019).

The involvement of teachers in policy debates and decisions related to education is of vital importance (Dunn et al., 2017). Music teachers expressed feelings of frustration due to power issues and the perception of needing to become politically savvy in order to win over administration to successfully advocate for the inclusion of music in the school curriculum (Peters, 2016). A growing practice exists for teachers who resign to publicly

publish their resignation letters in order to feel professional and personally validated, suggesting that they did not feel that way in their teaching positions (Dunn et al., 2017). Music teachers encounter a multitude of dilemmas when they are evaluated by administrators due to the performance-based nature of their instruction (Shaw, 2019). Contract status and relationships with administration and the individuals who influence the administration determine the power of the music teacher (Peters, 2016), therefore it is in the best interest of music teachers to establish positive relationships with school administration and be in a better position to provide agency for their music programs. Regardless of teaching experience, school setting, or content area, administrative support is valued by teachers and can influence teachers' decision of whether or not to stay in the profession.

### **Teacher Preparation and Experience**

Limited literature exists differentiating the experiences of music teachers versus non-music teachers regarding teacher preparation and experience, but from the very beginning of their careers some of the challenges teachers face are substantial teaching loads, school mandated pedagogical and curriculum changes, diversity in the classroom, increasing technological demands, and professional development expectations (Harfitt, 2015). Quality education is important for training better teachers and greatly influences their professional success (Çevik Kiliç, 2017), but not even teacher training programs following the most rigorous and differentiated instruction can fully prepare teachers for the job. Promising preservice teachers who demonstrate mastery of the skills and abilities addressed in undergraduate training such as musicianship, pedagogy, technique, and

philosophy may still choose to leave music education regardless of undergraduate success (Hancock, 2003).

Educational training for many teachers begins before pre-service teachers enter teacher education programs in college. Just as non-music teachers rely on the culmination of their educational experiences to ready them for the teaching profession, preparation for the music education profession begins as early as high school as music teachers guide students to broaden their musical experiences in and out of school as they develop the skills needed for success as a music major (Thornton, 2015). These previous musical experiences along with pedagogical knowledge, skill development during training, and guidance and modeling all significantly influence teachers' preparedness to teach (Webb, 2016).

Considerate preparation has been connected to effective teaching (Parker et al., 2017), and pre-service music teachers perceive music-teaching programs as a supporting guide to prepare and show them the way towards effective teaching (Çevik Kiliç, 2017). A necessary component of preparation is obtaining experience in front of students in the classroom; therefore, fieldwork is included as part of all music education coursework that provides practical experience and valuable network building (Edgar, 2018). Despite these preparations, the decrease in support from what teachers are used to at the collegiate level can negatively impact their teaching experience (Gallant & Riley, 2014). Music teachers can also find themselves in a position where they are teaching outside their area of specialization, so providing undergraduate students with authentic and multi-context learning experiences in a range of music education environments may increase their opportunities for success in the music education profession (Kuebel, 2017). For example,



Kuebel (2019) found secondary instrumental teachers transitioning to elementary music identified peer teaching, observations, and authentic-context learning experiences to be the most important parts of their undergraduate programs to support their transition to elementary music.

Most public-school teachers in the United States leave the profession before retirement, however the focus of teacher attrition is usually placed on novice teachers (Glazer, 2018). The abrupt transition from the role of student to teacher can be a shock to new teachers. Novice teachers lack personal accomplishment in the beginning of their careers as they work towards all the professional requirements placed on them (Rumschlag, 2017). The discovery of the many additional tasks above and beyond basic instruction expected of the regular classroom teachers can overwhelm new music teachers as they struggle to balance their teaching responsibilities with supplemental duties.

### ***Mentoring***

The profession of teaching is unique in that a first-year teacher has the same performance expectations of a teacher approaching retirement, and Bennett et al. (2013) found novice and experienced teachers alike indicated administrative support, interactions with students, and a love of teaching to be significant influences for remaining in the teaching field. However, Ryan et al. (2017) found greater teacher experience to be significantly related to a lower likelihood of teacher migration between schools. As teachers gain experience, they become more effective as educational instructors with the greatest performance gains occurring between the first and second year (Henry et al., 2011). For music educators, genuine teaching experience is considered

one of the most important components of education programs (Parker et al., 2017). Research shows beginning teachers' experiences of their school contexts combined with their personal stories in the first year of practice shaped their professional identity. This culminated with teachers leaving and then rejoining the teaching fold (Harfitt, 2015). Henry et al. (2011) found that after three years there is a lack of increase in teacher effectiveness and that teachers who leave after three or four years are on average less effective. Possible explanations for lack of effectiveness in a teacher's fourth year are in response to being removed by tenure policies and the *Ashenfelter dip*, where employers decrease their work-related effort when they know they are leaving their jobs (Henry et al., 2011).

Mentoring is one strategy that is becoming more prevalent in the attempt to reduce high levels of teacher attrition by providing support for novice teachers. Mentoring can improve retention of new teachers who will subsequently be able to contribute to the transformation necessary for effectively increasing student achievement (Callahan, 2016). Mentors participating in new teacher mentoring programs can identify and encourage struggling new teachers to remain in the teaching profession (Sparks et al., 2017). Huling et al. (2012) supports the practice of implementing high quality mentor support to novice teachers in their first year. In 2002, Texas implemented the Novice Teacher Induction Program (NTIP), which was designed to increase teacher retention and utilize the experience and expertise of newly retired master teachers. Initial results from the program showed a higher retention rate for teachers who were active in the program than for non-participants. Follow up-data maintained these findings and showed a positive influence on the long-term retention of participants as to other novice teachers

who were not involved in the program. The practice of using recently retired teachers as mentors reduced the burden of currently active teachers and provided a resource of experience and knowledge for new teachers to draw from. Despite abundant recognition of the benefit of mentoring relationships for new teachers (Kutsyuruba & Treguna, 2014), not all schools maintain mentoring programs for new teachers even though strong support early on could make the difference between a teacher leaving the profession early or staying on through retirement. The transformational effect of mentoring is a necessary part in changing the system of education in the United States and should be considered by education leaders as a useful tool to assist novice teachers (Callahan, 2016).

### ***Teacher Preparation Programs***

Music teacher preparation programs should also prepare young teachers to teach in a variety of settings. Urban school settings are frequently underfunded, understaffed, and overpopulated, so for music teachers to remain effective in urban classrooms, music teacher preparation programs should offer experiences to better prepare students for teaching in urban settings (Anderson & Denson, 2015). In contrast, rural school settings may lead to music teachers developing feelings of isolation (Robison & Russell, 2021). Mee and Haverback (2014) examine early indicators that predict whether middle school teachers might leave the profession within the first five years and reasons given for contemplation of leaving the teaching field included classroom management issues, curriculum implementation problems, and organization issues (Mee & Haverback, 2014). Despite these concerns, the teachers felt their commitment to the middle grades, and the middle grades teacher program would help them overcome these problems. Actions taken to address matters of race in music education could have vast implications for student

outcomes, recruitment, retention, and even the perceived relevance of the profession (Rampal, 2015). Skills crucial to teaching in an urban setting but not necessarily taught in teacher preparation programs include the ability to relate to the urban student, galvanize parental support, and articulate to administration the importance of proper scheduling (Anderson & Denson, 2015). These skills should also be included in certification programs like Teach For America due to their major role in providing teachers for underserved urban and rural school districts (Brewer, 2014).

Music education programs typically afford relatively few opportunities to cultivate educators' abilities to recognize, acknowledge, and incorporate the multiple realities lived by students within the music classroom (Rampal, 2015). Studies indicate that effective social skills directly affect success in the classroom and in the social context of educational environments; ineffectual social skills can contribute to feelings of isolation, burnout, attrition, and migration (Johnson, 2014). Less effective teachers are more likely to leave the profession, so one potential strategy for reducing teacher attrition is to focus efforts on improving novice teachers' effectiveness in their first and second years (Henry et al., 2011). While there is no questioning the importance of undergraduate training, promising preservice teachers who demonstrate mastery of the skills and abilities from undergraduate training such as musicianship, pedagogy, technique, and philosophy may still choose to leave music education regardless of undergraduate success (Hancock, 2003).

### **Working Conditions**

Teacher turnover has seen an increase in the last three decades with notable percentage coming from low-income schools comprised of minority students (Simon &

Johnson, 2015). This issue is problematic to schools for financial, instructional, and logistical reasons. Rural settings also experience high music teacher turnover, potentially due to feelings of isolation. Out of a survey of 115 rural Wyoming music teachers, 39.47% of participants reported feeling somewhat isolated, 22.81% felt isolated, and 18.42% felt very isolated (Robison & Russell, 2021). Another study examining the professional integration of beginning teachers and the factors predicting an exit from the profession during the first years of their careers found a close relationship between job conditions over the first year in the profession and exit rates (Dupriez et al., 2016). Excessive testing is another concern for teachers since the passing of No Child Left Behind placed the burden of responsibility for improving education on testing (Lehman, 2019). Teacher turnover in high-need settings often stems from high stress and job dissatisfaction resulting from poor working conditions rather than problems associated with the needs of students (Ansley et al., 2019).

Many academic studies indicate that schools comprised mainly of students coming from vulnerable populations such as students from disadvantaged backgrounds, belonging to ethnic minorities, or facing learning disabilities have higher rates of staff turnover (Dupriez et al., 2016; Janzen & Phelan, 2015). Surveys also show that teachers who leave high-poverty schools with large populations of minority students leave to serve wealthier schools with whiter student populations; this trend has been interpreted by some researchers to mean “teachers systematically favor high-achieving, non-minority, non-low-income students” (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Funding for the arts is often limited in urban settings, and garnering funds for necessary materials can prove a monumental task (Anderson & Denson, 2015). Research shows that teachers who leave high-poverty

schools are fleeing the working conditions; an examination of six overarching studies and their findings conclude teachers leave schools to avoid poor working conditions that make it hard to teach and hard for students to learn (Simon & Johnson, 2015). This study is notable because it contradicts the notion that teachers leave low-income schools because of the students. Inadequate staffing for disadvantaged schools is more a result of inability to retain teachers rather than from a teacher shortage (García Torres, 2019). An effort to make improvements to working conditions, regardless of school economic status, could result in increased levels of teacher job satisfaction and improve upon the teacher turnover which troubles disadvantaged schools.

Zhang and Zeller (2016) found from a study of polled teachers that the majority agreed that factors like supportive leadership, time for collaboration, access to high quality curriculum and resources, clean and safe buildings, and relevant professional development are even more important than higher salaries when considered for retaining teachers. Further, the study revealed that attrition rates are higher in the areas of special education, math, and science, with no clear trend in attrition regarding gender, ethnicity, school level, marital status, parents' occupation, or whether they had children. Teachers who obtained alternative certification did have a lower long-term retention (Zhang & Zeller, 2016).

Within recent years, there have been numerous strikes led by teachers protesting salaries, but Ansley et al. (2019) found that to be less important than other factors, such as supportive leadership, relevant professional development, and basic needs like clean and safe buildings. Discovering ways to adequately meet these needs could go a long way in prolonging the career span of a teacher.

Research indicates that the school's socio-economic level is not linked to the risk of leaving the profession and teachers without certification are the most vulnerable to the risk of an early exit (Dupriez et al., 2016). Upon examining the accounts of certified, experienced teachers who left teaching after making significant investments in their career, Glazer (2018) found that invested teachers leave the profession not to seek a new career, but because after achieving success they began to find educational policies and practices objectionable. Additional examples of reasons for teacher transfers include school personnel actions, a desire for a better assignment, and dissatisfaction with administrators and working conditions (Hancock, 2016).

Motivation is another factor determining whether teachers stay in the educational field. The ability of teachers to reconcile family matters and career, rather good physical health, and work conditions satisfying for teachers can be regarded as positive preconditions for occupational motivation (Gabnyte & Strakšienė, 2014). Higher levels of confidence in and contextual support for intrapreneuring are predictors for stronger teacher motivation (Hanson, 2017), thus teachers suffering from a lack of motivation are more likely to leave the field. García Torres (2019) found teachers experienced a greater self-efficacy to collaborate with peers when granted greater control over their work conditions through distributed leadership opportunities, resulting in greater levels of job satisfaction. Lehman (2019) suggests an immediate improvement can be made to education by improving teachers' working conditions and treating them as professionals rather than hourly workers.

## **Music Teacher Health**

Music teachers are susceptible to experience job related health issues that can negatively impact job satisfaction, but very few studies have been performed regarding the numerous stressors and health-related risks of music education (Woolery & Woolery, 2013). Job related injuries for music teachers can include but are not limited to back injuries from the physical demands of the job, arm, wrist, or hand injuries from playing an instrument for a prolonged period of time, shoulder and back pain from conducting, vocal fatigue and strain, and hearing loss (Taylor, 2016). As musicians first, music teachers experience a high incidence of injuries (Bosi, 2017), and many of these injuries occur before entering the teaching profession. Plevnik et al. (2015) found from a study involving 58 participants that 89% of the respondents reported experiencing pain or discomfort during or after playing an instrument and 73.3% were teachers. Considerations that factor into health risks associated with the band directing profession include schedule, workload, administrative responsibilities, and high-profile performances (Woolery & Woolery, 2013).

### **Vocal Damage**

Some might consider the voice one of the most important tools for music teachers. Teachers rely heavily on their voices for the delivery of education material, managing the classroom, and directing student behavior, but music teachers are prime candidates for vocal damage due to the strain of speaking at loud volumes daily due to typically larger class sizes. This issue affects both new and seasoned teachers and can be detrimental to lesson delivery. Studies indicate that teachers with vocal disorders had a negative influence on students' learning outcome (Richter et al., 2016). Severe vocal damage can



result in teachers withdrawing from the profession early. Due to the demands of the profession, music teachers are four times more likely to visit vocal clinics than regular classroom teachers (Schmidt & Morrow, 2016). This could potentially explain in part why attrition for music teachers is slightly higher than regular classroom teachers.

Research has documented how teachers with voice problems can negatively impact student learning (Schmidt & Morrow, 2016). To counter this issue, vocal training programs have been developed and implemented to reduce teacher vocal strain (Richter et al., 2016). In 2012, the National Association of Schools of Music mandated member institutions to be responsible for providing information on injury-prevention and on maintaining vocal, hearing, and musculoskeletal health for students (Crappell & Lister-Sink, 2015). Richter et al. (2016) evaluated the results of a vocal training program to see the effect on the vocal quality for participating teachers, and despite an unaffected increase in vocal strain, the results found that the trained group was statistically significantly better able to sustain their voice quality than the control group. Vocal misuse can result in problems for students that sing or play a wind instrument as well (Trollinger & Sataloff, 2018). The topic of vocal health remains in the margins of policy discussion, but voice care should be established as a legitimate policy issue that confronts music teachers daily and should be viewed by educators and decision makers as a significant element of the music education profession (Schmidt & Morrow, 2016).

### **Hearing Loss**

Sustained exposure to music of any type that exceeds daily exposure levels over time can eventually result in noise-induced hearing loss, and as many as 50% of musicians may have problems with hearing loss to some degree (Dick, 2015; Taylor,

2016, pp.179-180), and damage to the hearing apparatus is dependent on intensity and duration (Dawson, 2015). Occupations with high noise exposure have a government standard foundation of no more than 85 decibels for an 8-hour period with exposure time being halved for every increase of 3 decibels; live and recorded music has a dynamic range that can peak at or above 95 decibels and hearing damage for both teachers and students is possible when exposed to 94 decibels daily for 60 minutes or less (Dick, 2015). Music teachers are exposed to higher levels of sound for sustained periods of time during music rehearsals than non-music teachers are during their instructional time. Hayes (2013) conducted a study exploring how the acoustical environment, class schedule, teaching style, musicians, and literature selection influenced the overall noise dose of the music directors. When comparing the noise doses of the participating directors to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health guidelines for noise exposure in industry, all were found to surpass these guidelines (Hayes, 2013).

### **Playing Related Injuries**

A significant percentage of playing-related injuries develop during the early stages of music development in high school and undergraduate studies (Bosi, 2017). Comparisons can be made between musicians and athletes and how dedication to a sport or activity can result in injuries (Dick, 2015). The greatest percentage of playing-related problems experienced by musicians affect the musculoskeletal and neurological systems (Dawson, 2015). Employers of musicians can draw upon the culture and practices of sportspeople and teams to assist musicians in better preventing and managing musculoskeletal disorders (Stanhope, 2016). Playing a music instrument is a physical activity that puts strain on the small muscle groups of fingers and arms and large music

groups responsible for optimal body posture (Plevnik et al., 2015). The muscles used to play an instrument get stronger, tighter, shorter, and form scar tissues while the opposing muscles grow weak and underdeveloped; this forms a major imbalance in the body and puts stress on the joints, including the spine, elbows, wrists, and fingers (Capasso, 2014). Studies of musicians who participate in drum corps document stress fracture injuries, musician hearing loss, orchestra players with musculoskeletal disorder, and adolescent music-related playing pain (Dick, 2015). Other studies found that out of an estimated 13,000 professional musicians, more than 60% suffered from a musculoskeletal injury severe enough to prohibit performance (Bosi, 2017).

While many musicians can recover from playing-related injuries, the recovery can be lengthy and directly impact daily routine and psychological state (Bosi, 2017). Injury prevention requires music educators to develop awareness and control over risk factors that cause pain and influence the emergence of injuries and teach the basics of preventative action to students (Plevnik et al., 2015). Preventative measures are easier to implement than corrective ones, so assimilating a program that promotes healthy vocal habits into the daily routines of teachers could have a positive impact on the problem of music teacher attrition. Some injuries, such as noise-induced hearing loss, are untreatable so prevention is the only recourse (Dawson, 2015). Richter et al. (2016) recommend that training programs be integrated into the education and occupational routine of teachers to improve and preserve their vocal health. Music teachers have the responsibility to educate themselves and their students about the various types of playing-related health problems to recognize them when they occur (Dawson, 2015). Becoming familiar with potential health issues connected to music performance will allow music teachers and

students to better identify them in a timely manner to prevent permanent damage. Addressing these problems early is crucial as one study found 79% of music students reported a history of playing-related pain before even entering university music training (Dick, 2015). Being proactive about building good habits early on is far better than attempting to unlearn faulty habits later (Crappell & Lister-Sink, 2015). Finding ways to address the occurrence and prevention of these playing-related health concerns could improve overall job satisfaction for music teachers and aide in the reduction of music teacher attrition.

### **Stress and Burnout**

Working as a music teacher can be incredibly stressful (Varona, 2018). Band directors in public schools face a variety of work-related hazards, and a balance must be found between professional and personal responsibilities (Woolery & Woolery, 2013). A study examining information regarding 40 reported band director deaths from 2001-2011 found there were more deaths reported in high school band directors than middle school or university directors, no band director deaths were reported within the first five years, and the age group with the largest number of deaths was the 56-65 age group with a total of 16 (Woolery & Woolery, 2013). The most common cause of death was by heart attack, possibly due to the large amount of stress associated with the profession suggesting that stress resulting from dissatisfaction can increase a person's susceptibility to heart attacks (Ansah-Hughes, 2016).

Janzen and Phelan (2015) posit that there is an emotional toll associated with teaching. This emotional toll, high levels of stress, can contribute to emotional burnout in teachers, which can then affect teacher job satisfaction. Madigan and Kim (2021) found

the three burnout symptoms of exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced accomplishment along with job dissatisfaction were all implicated to some degree in teachers' intentions to quit. Similarly, Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2017) found the strongest predictors of teachers' motivation to leave the teaching profession were burnout and job satisfaction. Although teacher burnout is an individualistic experience, exhaustion is commonly fostered through factors such as working conditions and increased pressure and accountability (Brewer, 2014). Understanding how education policy influences teacher stress and attrition is an important step to addressing the gap of the perceived difference of education training programs and the reality of the profession once students move on from their collegiate programs (Ryan et al., 2017). Including an emphasis on professional identity in teacher preparation programs is one suggestion to strengthen teachers emotionally, improve job satisfaction, and reduce attrition rates. Participation in professional learning communities for collaboration can lower the occurrence of burnout in music teachers working in isolation (Janzen & Phelan, 2015). In addition to lowering rates of turnover and absenteeism, improving employee satisfaction also has a beneficial impact on employee health and lifespan (Ansah-Hughes, 2016).

The stress related to the teaching profession causes educators to seek out ways of coping and managing stress (Hartwick & Kang, 2013). Stress, whether physical, chemical, or emotional, can cause dysfunction within the nervous system (Capasso, 2014). Although copious amount of research exists in relation to teacher stress and attrition, there has been little focus on spiritual stress coping strategies (Hartwick & Kang, 2013). Even though religion is not formerly taught in public schools, many teachers practice the religion of their choice in their personal lives. Hartwick and Kang

(2013) found that many teachers report managing professional stress through spiritual practices. By reducing professional stress with spiritual disciplines such as prayer, meditation, and sacred reading, teachers may better reach and teach students (Hartwick & Kang, 2013).

Teacher burnout causes a high percentage of teacher attrition (Rumschlag, 2017). Burnout occurs as music teachers experience high levels of occupational stress and can happen in educational settings with ample or insufficient resources or in a setting with strong or nonexistent administrative support (Varona, 2018). Teacher burnout is related to loss of control and self-esteem (Bernhard, 2016). Burnout can lead to teacher absenteeism and counterproductive instruction, which negatively affects student learning. Rumschlag (2017) collected data from 162 Ohio teachers and analyzed teachers' sense of personal accomplishment, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization in relation to burnout. Results showed a significant difference in how genders experienced burnout, and points toward future research to develop gender specific intervention techniques to minimize the effects of teacher burnout.

Music teachers are required to specialize in different areas (e.g., instrumental, vocal, general, elementary, etc.) and are frequently expected to simultaneously teach multiple music specialties to a range of grade levels (Kuebel, 2017). Music teachers required to teach in multiple music specializations experience more severe levels of burnout than those who taught a single music specialization exclusively (Bernhard, 2016). The severe levels of burnout experienced by music teachers teaching multiple specializations lead to decreased levels of job satisfaction.

Younger teachers tend to suffer from higher levels of emotional exhaustion than older teachers, and high school teachers experience higher levels of burnout than elementary and middle school teachers (Bernhard, 2016). Hong (2010) used six different factors to analyze teachers' professional identity: value, efficacy, commitment, emotions, knowledge, and beliefs, and micropolitics and found that teachers view themselves differently depending on what stage of teaching they are currently in. The most common issue among teachers involved in the study was emotional burnout. Pre-service teachers showed concrete and practical concerns for entering the profession, which suggests an understanding and realistic expectation of what occurs in the teaching field. Hong (2010) suggests the culturing of a professional identity in pre-service teachers in their teacher preparation program to reduce the chance of emotional burnout.

### **Salary**

Teachers are paid relatively less than college-educated workers are in other occupations (Rickman et al., 2017), and Hancock (2008) found music teachers who earn smaller salaries or are dissatisfied with their salaries are more likely to be a high attrition/migration risk. Because of these salary issues, some schools have adopted salary incentives based on how well teachers' students perform on assessments. Pay for performance (PFP) is a controversial policy that is becoming more present in US public schools. With this program, teachers are compensated based upon student performance. Jones and Hartney (2017) examine the influence of PFP on sorting patterns of K-12 public teachers across the United States. Results from the study show that, on average, school districts using PFP were able to secure new teacher hires with average SAT scores

that were about 30 points higher than the new teacher cohorts hired by districts that did not adopt PFP.

This is just one study on the topic of pay for performance in public schools. Teacher salary is a controversial topic that remains prominent in the media due to the numerous teacher strikes in recent history, but there is a lack of scholarly literature about this topic. It is logical for teachers to pursue jobs where there is a potential of a higher salary, so schools that offer pay for performance can be more competitive with their hiring policies (Rickman et al., 2017).

The effects of low educational funding on teacher salaries may have adverse effects in the areas of teacher quality, increasing class sizes, and teacher shortages (Rickman et al., 2017). By using the 3-year microdata sample of the American Community Survey for 2009-2011, researchers found that relative teacher salaries in the state positively affected the share of education majors that were employed as public-school teachers at the time of the survey (Rickman et al., 2017). Pay increases have the largest effect on hire rates among teachers with 2-3 years of experience and the effect diminishes with experience; higher teacher salaries provide the dual benefit of retaining and attracting a more effective distribution of teachers (Hendricks, 2015).

### **Music Teacher Attrition**

The high level of music teacher attrition is a problem of practice that warrants attention with approximately 16% of music teachers leaving schools every year (Hancock, 2009). Although the overall teaching force grew by 46% from 1987 to 2012, music teaching assignments had below average growth in comparison to teaching assignments for English as a second language, English language arts, mathematics,



foreign language, natural science, and special education that all grew at above-average rates (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2017). Hancock (2008) found that female music teachers were more likely than male music teachers to be a high attrition/migration risk and minor music teachers were more likely than White, non-Hispanic music teachers to be a high attrition/migration risk. Hancock (2009) analyzed and compared music teacher and non-music teacher data from four of the National Center for Education Statistics' Teacher Follow-up Surveys and found the rates of music teacher attrition, migration, and retention to be very similar to the rates of non-music teachers.

Many teachers leave the career after only a few years, and this high rate of teacher turnover negatively impacts students and schools. Music organizations may suffer as a result as students may not be afforded the best musical experiences possible without qualified teachers (Russell, 2012). Evidence that supports the issue of music teacher attrition can be found in the high rates of teachers leaving the field, low performance assessment scores, and a reduction of students participating in music programs (Wushishi et al., 2014).

Music teachers leave the profession for a myriad of reasons, but Hancock (2016) found the most important reasons music teacher's credit for moving were personnel actions, desire for a better assignment, and dissatisfaction with administrators and school conditions. The job expectations are frequently very extensive and require a lot of personal and professional commitment. The time spent at work can potentially cause family strain, and the compensation is not reflective of the time required to maintain a successful music program. Interestingly, music teachers who spend more time on instructional and noninstructional activities outside the regular school day have been

found to be less likely at high risk for attrition/ migration, despite spending extracurricular time on work being empirically associated with attrition among teachers in general (Hancock, 2008). This is potentially because extracurricular time on work (e.g., rehearsals, festivals, performances, summer planning) is the norm in most music programs and perhaps even an indicator of commitment to the profession. However, additional hours are a large contributor to music teacher burnout and excessive stress (Hancock, 2008), so situation is also clearly a factor.

Lack of mentor programs and limited opportunities for collaboration with colleagues are also issues that many teachers must overcome. Music teachers may also experience imposter syndrome, where typically successful individuals experience an irrational fear that they do not know enough to be successful in a music education career (Sims & Cassidy, 2019). Collaboration among music teachers is not commonplace in many American public schools (Battersby, 2019). Many schools only have one music teacher if any, so a feeling of isolation is not uncommon (Matthews & Koner, 2017). Research in these areas would help identify viable solutions that schools could utilize to improve music teacher job satisfaction and reduce the music teacher dropout rate.

Leadership has a huge impact on the issue of music teacher attrition through the establishment of school culture (Sanderson et al., 2019). Disorganized leadership can lead to extra teacher stress and anxiety. Teachers new to the field especially need a strong support system to provide encouragement and guidance through the early years. New teachers working under effective leaders are more likely to have a better experience and therefore more likely to continue in the field of education. While there are multiple

factors that lead to teacher attrition (e.g., salary, stress, workload, etc.), good leadership can negate some of those obstacles.

Çevik Kiliç (2018) conducted a study intended to examine the relationship between burnout levels of music teachers and their personalities; the researcher analyzed the data through qualitative and quantitative methods and produce results that support the argument personality type is an important factor of music teacher burnout. More factors contribute to burnout than simply a stressful work environment or being overladen with responsibilities. Burnout occurs when a large gap exists between a person's expectations and reality. This can be attributed to demographic features, expectations, and personality traits depending on the situation (Çevik Kiliç, 2018). Based on the findings, music teachers who have the characteristics of neuroticism had higher levels of burnout. Individuals working in the same conditions may or may not experience burnout symptoms depending on their personality type. Conducting personality tests for music teacher applicants, informing teachers about burnout syndrome, and establishing programs to help teachers who are more vulnerable to burnout could all help reduce the overall levels of music teacher attrition by reducing the number of teachers who fall victim to burnout (Çevik Kiliç, 2018).

High school directors appear to influence the career choices of students who pursue a career in music education (Thornton, 2015). Music education literature reflects the importance of recruiting quality students into the field. The relatively low percentage of total students interested in music education has led higher educational institutions to devote more resources into specialized recruiting strategies both institutionally and departmentally (Edgar, 2018). Future music educators show a large influence from high

school band directors in their decision to choose a career in music education. Current music educators identified the most common attribute of a potential future music educator involved excellent musicianship. Through his research, Thornton (2015) found that loving music, excelling in music, and having a variety of musical experiences appeared to be factors encouraged by teachers and were viewed as valuable for future music educators. A notable finding from the study was that opportunities to teach were not highly rated by participants as being important for teacher recruitment. This finding indicates the appeal of a career in music education for young students is not based upon the teaching profession, but rather an intrinsic love of music.

The issue of music teacher attrition might be affected by high school band directors showing selective encouragement to students who appear more likely to have an aptitude for the profession. The possible downside to this strategy is that if the rate of attrition does not decline, there will eventually be a shortage of music teachers in the field. The ability to successfully interact with various groups in the context of the school environment and associated community can considerably affect the success of the music program and potential career satisfaction (Johnson, 2014).

Classroom culture can affect music teacher job satisfaction and influence music teachers' decision to stay at a school. Thorough knowledge about the job expectations, requirements, and how to influence classroom culture are important for remaining active in the music education profession. A positive culture has student engagement and accountability as the two most prominent indicators while the two most prominent examples of a negative culture are student apathy and a lack of student accountability (Kristofferson, 2019). Regardless of positive school and classroom culture, sometimes

music teachers transfer schools to experience numerous improvements to their professional careers, including making a difference in others, working at a school with better operating conditions, and feeling a sense of personal accomplishment, intellectual challenge, and support (Hancock, 2016).

Battersby and Verdi (2015) recommend for music teachers and art supervisors to consider incorporating online Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) into their own programs not only to address professional development but also to address teacher isolation and attrition and student achievement. When surveyed, a group of school improvement grant recipients unanimously chose to incorporate some type of professional learning community and selected models that emphasized increasing and sustaining teacher collaboration in all disciplines (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). This evidence suggests music teachers desire opportunities to collaborate and share information and ideas. A national movement to promote supportive educational communities that allow teachers to teach, grow, and succeed would allow educators to more effectively lead students to reach their full academic potential and remain in the profession through retirement (Rumschlag, 2017).

### **Conclusion**

Teaching music is widely regarded as a special calling, and many enter the profession to make a difference in the lives of students. Teachers with various levels of experience have been shown to remain in the teaching profession because of student-teacher relationships and a love for the profession. (Bennett et al., 2013). Enthusiasm can wane over time as the mechanics of the job take over the teaching aspect, so taking care

to maintain the psychological and emotional sense of teachers is a start towards improving job satisfaction and keeping teachers in the profession longer.

A leading cause of the current teacher shortage is teacher attrition (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). When teachers leave the field early, they are replaced by novice teachers who are frequently in the first few years of their career. At-risk schools from more socioeconomically disadvantaged communities suffer from this phenomenon on a regular basis as experienced teachers move on and are replaced by teachers who have just completed certification. This cycle creates a deficit in student learning that is not easily rectified. While there are strategies being implemented to lessen the occurrence of teacher attrition, a permanent solution has yet to be discovered. Although all students are negatively affected by teacher turnover, the disparity between retention in higher socioeconomic and more disadvantaged communities where teachers leave for more well-resourced school systems serves to solidify the educational divide of privilege and resources for students between affluent and impoverished areas (García Torres, 2019).

Teacher job satisfaction is significantly linked to transformational leadership (Eliophotou-Menon & Ioannou, 2016). The ability to attract and hire a transformational leader can be vital to schools' success or failure. Successful schools cultivate higher levels of job satisfaction for teachers than failing schools, so hiring transformational leaders into school administration positions is beneficial for both the students and teachers (Fowler et al., 2016).

Identifying a solution to improve music teacher job satisfaction and reduce attrition could be a major step towards bettering the quality of education provided to students. The findings of a study by Wushishi et al. (2014) discovered the major effects

of teacher attrition are cost implication, increased teacher workload, poor student performance, and an added burden for administrations; recommendations are for the state government to improve the condition of service of teachers with the aim of reducing the rate of attrition to improve the educational standard of the state.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **Introduction**

The purpose of this research study was to determine the relationship between music teachers' perceived job satisfaction, amount of music related professional development, and perceived administrative support as well as to investigate teachers' overall perceptions of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. This chapter describes the mixed methods research design used to answer the eight research questions and provided information regarding the selection and recruitment of participants, data collection procedures, and mixed methods used to analyze the data. Information pertaining to the nature and psychometric properties of the quantitative instruments used in data collection is also presented, and qualitative interview protocols are described. The research questions that served to guide the study are as follows:

#### **Research Questions**

##### **Quantitative**

1. What is the perceived level of job satisfaction among music teachers?
2. What is the amount of music related professional development among music teachers?
3. What is the perceived level of administrative support among music teachers?



4. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and the number of hours of music related professional development?
5. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support?

#### Qualitative

6. What are music teachers' perceptions of administrative support?
7. What are music teachers' perceptions of professional development?
8. What are music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction?

### **Research Design**

This study followed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017). Both qualitative and quantitative data was utilized to inform conclusions in this mixed methods study, which consisted of a two-phase implementation where quantitative data was collected initially and then used to inform the collection of qualitative data (DeCuir-Gunby & Schutz, 2017). First, quantitative data was gathered through an electronically distributed survey containing questions designed to gather data regarding music teacher job satisfaction, amount of music related professional development, and perceived administrative support. The quantitative portion of this study followed a correlational design, which revealed the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support (Urduan, 2017). An analysis of the quantitative data was then used to inform the questions asked in the qualitative focus group sessions. The qualitative portion of the research followed a grounded theory approach, where the views of

participants in the study were used to form general explanations of the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Upon collecting data from the qualitative focus group interviews, the researcher explored participant responses to determine common themes regarding (a) the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction and administrative support and (b) the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction and professional development. The qualitative data was then used to provide more detail and perspective for the data gathered from the quantitative survey.

### **Recruitment**

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained from the University of South Alabama (Appendix A) prior to the recruitment of elementary and secondary music teachers. Representatives from two public school districts were contacted to facilitate the process of obtaining research approval from those school districts. After research approval was obtained from each school district (Appendix B) a school district representative contacted music teachers via email to alert them about the opportunity to participate in the research. Administrators from three private schools were also emailed to solicit the participation of their music teachers. These administrators provided the researcher with direct contact information for recruitment of their music teachers. The only inclusion criteria for participation in this study was that participants must be current teachers of music for students in kindergarten through the twelfth grade.

Music teachers identified through school-based recruitment were recruited via email to participate in the research. A brief introduction of the research and a link to the electronic survey were included in the recruitment email (Appendix C). The electronic

survey included an electronic Informed Consent Form which identified the investigators and outlined an introduction to the study, the study procedures, benefits of participation, risks of participation, confidentiality and document storage, the right to refuse, and contact information for any questions or study-related concerns or complaints (Appendix D). Music teachers provided their informed consent by clicking the button that represented the statement, “I acknowledge my informed consent to participate in this research study.” Upon providing informed consent music teachers were asked to respond to demographic items and the scales for job satisfaction, amount of professional development, and administrative support which are detailed later in this chapter. At the conclusion of the survey music teachers were provided an opportunity to indicate their interest regarding participation in focus groups to provide more detailed information following the survey submission. Music teachers wishing to participate were asked to provide their contact information.

### **Sampling**

Participants were selected by convenience sampling based upon geographic proximity to the researcher and school districts willing to allow teachers to cooperate in the research study. Approximately 100 K-12 music teachers in two neighboring public-school districts in the southeast United States were contacted via email from a school district representative with an invitation to participate in the study. The email included a description of the study and a link to the online survey. Participants were required to indicate informed consent before being permitted to continue to the survey questions. Of the 53 initial participant survey responses received, five participants did not provide any responses past the informed consent, and one participant did not answer any questions

pertaining to job satisfaction, leaving a final total of 47 participant responses to be considered for the study. Fourteen participants continued on to participate in the quantitative portion of the study by taking part in a set of focus group interviews designed to gather qualitative data. These selected participants were sorted into three focus groups based upon the teaching designations of elementary or secondary music and by instrumental or vocal music. The first focus group was comprised of four elementary music teachers, the second focus group consisted of five secondary music teachers (three secondary instrumental/vocal and two secondary instrumental), and the third focus group contained five secondary instrumental music teachers. The main factions of K-12 music educators are elementary or secondary and instrumental or vocal, so securing participants from each area provided representation for the broad spectrum of content area found in music education. Participants of the focus groups also provided a diverse range of experience, gender, and ethnicity. Questions for the focus groups (Appendix E) were designed by the researcher to obtain information regarding perceptions of music teacher job satisfaction, perceptions of administrative support, and perceptions of professional development. The varied backgrounds of participants provided for a wide array of music teacher experiences and perspectives.

## **Participants**

### **Quantitative Participant Demographics**

A total of 47 music teachers completed the electronic survey. All participants were current music teachers teaching within the kindergarten through twelfth grade range (K-12). About 9% of the participants' ages were between 21 and 25 years, 40% between 26 and 35 years, 10 % between 36 and 45 years, 8% between 46 and 55 years, 5%

between 56 and 65 years, and 2% were 66 and over. Approximately 45% of the participants were female and 55% were male. The only two races represented were White (83%) and Black (15%), with one participant choosing not to respond to the item on racial identity. See Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Participant Age, Gender, and Race Demographics*

Category	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
<b>Age</b>		
21–25 years	4	9
26–35 years	19	40
36–45 years	10	21
46–55 years	8	17
56–65 years	5	11
66 years or more	1	2
<b>Gender</b>		
Female	21	45
Male	26	55
<b>Race</b>		
White	39	83
Black	7	15
Prefer not to respond	1	2

About 13% of participants were beginning teachers with less than 4 years' experience, 28% had 4 to 9 years' experience, 23% had 10 to 14 years' experience, 15% had 15 to 19 years' experience, 9% had 20 to 24 years' experience, and 13% of participants had over 25 years of teaching experience. Approximately 55% of the participants indicated that a bachelor's degree was their highest level of education while 40% had a master's degree, 2% had an education specialist degree, and 2% had earned a

doctoral degree. Approximately 94% of the participants taught in a public setting while 6% taught in private schools as evidenced in Table 2.

Table 2.  
*Participant Education, Experience, and Setting*

Participant Information	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor's	26	55
Master's	19	40
Education Specialist	1	2
Doctorate	1	2
<b>Experience</b>		
less than 4 years	6	13
4–9 years	13	28
10–14 years	11	23
15–19 years	7	15
20–24 years	4	9
25 or more years	6	13
<b>Setting</b>		
Public	44	94
Private	3	6

Participants were asked to indicate their primary teaching concentration and were given the options of Elementary Music, Secondary Vocal Music, Secondary Instrumental Music, and Secondary General Music, and were asked to select all that applied. Since no teachers selected only Secondary General Music, the researcher chose to omit the responses for that option. The major concentrations for music teachers are elementary music, secondary vocal music, and secondary instrumental music. Approximately 23% of the participants were elementary music teachers, 13% were secondary vocal music teachers, 51% were secondary music teachers, 2% taught both elementary and secondary

vocal music, 4% taught elementary music and secondary instrumental music, and 6% taught secondary vocal and secondary instrumental music. The teaching concentration of participants is outlined in Table 3.

Table 3.  
*Teaching Concentration by Level and Specialization*

Teaching Concentration	Number of Participants	Percentage of Participants
Elementary Music	11	23
Secondary Vocal Music	6	13
Secondary Instrumental Music	24	51
Elementary & Secondary Vocal Music	1	2
Elementary & Secondary Instrumental Music	2	4
Secondary Vocal & Instrumental Music	3	6

### **Qualitative Participant Demographics**

A convenience sample of 14 music teachers participated in a series of three different focus groups for the qualitative portion of this study. Interviewees were selected based upon voluntary responses to participate in the qualitative portion of the study. Qualitative participants represented a varied range of age, years of experience, gender, and teaching designation. A diverse panel of participants from elementary music, secondary vocal music, and secondary instrumental music were chosen to provide varying opinions and experiences.

The first focus group consisted of 4 elementary music teachers. The second focus group session consisted of 2 secondary instrumental music teachers, 1 secondary vocal/instrumental/general music teacher, and 2 secondary vocal/instrumental music teachers. The third focus group session consisted of 5 secondary instrumental music

teachers. The focus groups all had both male and female participants, with a combined total of 8 female participants and 6 male participants. Across the three groups, the teaching experience ranged from less than 4 years to more than 25 years of experience. Representation in the focus groups was included for elementary music, secondary instrumental music, and secondary vocal music teachers. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect the anonymity of the interview participants. Table 4 illustrates more detail about the participants of the qualitative focus groups.

Table 4.  
*Focus Group Participants' Age, Experience, Gender, and Teaching Designation*

	Age Range	Years Teaching Experience	Gender	Teaching Designation
Focus Group 1				
John	26-35	10-14	Male	Elementary Music
Katherine	36-45	10-14	Female	Elementary Music
Sarah	56-65	10-14	Female	Elementary Music
Mallory	56-65	25 or more	Female	Elementary & Secondary Instrumental
Focus Group 2				
Joseph	26-35	Less than 4	Male	Secondary Instrumental
Kyle	36-45	10-14	Male	Secondary Instrumental
Daniel	56-65	25 or more	Male	Secondary Vocal/Instrumental
Gabrielle	36-45	10-14	Female	Secondary Vocal/Instrumental
Ansley	26-35	4-9	Female	Secondary Vocal/Instrumental
Focus Group 3				
Mason	26-35	10-14	Male	Secondary Instrumental
Tanya	26-35	10-14	Female	Secondary Instrumental
Megan	26-35	10-14	Female	Secondary Instrumental
Melissa	36-45	10-14	Female	Secondary Instrumental
Travis	26-35	4-9	Male	Secondary Instrumental



## **School District Demographics**

Forty four of the 47 music teacher participants were recruited from two neighboring counties in the southeastern United States (hereafter referred to as School District A and School District B). Demographic information for both school districts was obtained from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES – <https://nces.ed.gov/>) website and Public Schools Review website (<https://www.publicschoolreview.com/>), both of which house demographic data for local school districts.

School District A encompasses a large county containing rural, suburban, and urban areas. The school district contains a total of 90 schools (47 Pre-K, 72 elementary, 22 middle, and 18 high schools). Over 55,000 students are enrolled in School District A and there are over 2,900 teachers employed full-time for an average student/teacher ratio of 17.72. Out of the total student population in this school district, 4.7% are English Language Learners (ELL), 31% families receive food assistance benefits, and 26.8% of families live below the poverty level. The racial composition of students in this school district is as follows: 40% White, 50% Black, 4% Hispanic, 2% Asian, 1% Native American, and 3% two or more races. Twenty-nine music teachers from School District A participated in the study.

School District B represents a widespread suburban/rural county situated next to a moderately sized metropolitan area. This school district serves a total population of over 31,000 students and has a total of 43 schools (23 Pre-K, 26 elementary, 10 middle, and 10 high schools). School District B employs over 1,800 full-time teachers and has an average student/teacher ratio of 15.94. The racial composition of students in this school district is as follows: 72% White, 12% Black, 9% Hispanic, 1% Asian, less than 1%

Native American, and 6% two or more races. Approximately 5.8% of students are ELL, 14.6% of families receive food assistance benefits, and 11.8% of families earn an income below the poverty level. Fifteen music teachers from School District B participated in the study. The school district demographics are outlined in Table 5.

Table 5.  
*Demographics of School Districts of Research Study Participants*

Category	School District A	School District B
Number of Enrolled Students	55,272	31,299
Number of Schools	90	43
High Schools	18	10
Middle Schools	22	10
Elementary Schools	72	26
Pre-K	47	23
Full-Time Teachers	2,961	1,895
Student/Teacher Ratio	17.72	15.94
Percentage of ELL Students	4.7	8
Percentage of Students Receiving SNAP Benefits	31	14.6
Percentage of Students Below Poverty Level	26.8	11.8
Student Ethnicity Percentage		
White	40	72
Black	50	12
Hispanic	2	9
Asian	2	1
American Indian/Alaskan Native	1	<1
2 or more races	3	6
Music Teacher Study Participants	29	15

## **Instrumentation**

The two quantitative instruments used to gather the needed data for music teacher job satisfaction and administrative support were the Job Satisfaction Survey (Appendix F) and a survey titled *Teacher's Perceptions of Administrative Support* (Appendix G) that was developed from Weiss's survey entitled *Special Education Teacher's Perceptions of Administrative Support* (2001). A series five questions was used to collect data pertaining to annual amount of music related professional development (Appendix H). Additional demographic items were used to obtain information such as: years of teaching experience, primary teaching concentration, and personal information to describe the participants. Following the completion of informed consent (Appendix D) participants were asked to respond first to the demographic items, then to the job satisfaction survey, professional development questions, and administrative support survey, in that order. After completing the administrative support section participants were asked if they were interested in participating in the focus group sessions to provide more detailed information. If participants clicked "No" the survey ended—at which point their participation in the research concluded. Participants that clicked "Yes" were taken to an additional page where they were asked to provide their contact information. The survey concluded after the contact information was submitted. Each of the two instruments used in this study are described in the next sections in further detail.

### **Job Satisfaction Survey (JSS)**

The JSS is a 36-item survey created to assess employee professional development, and administrative support. The 36 items are divided into 9 subscales, and each subscale is associated with 4 items. The 9 subscales of the JSS are Pay, Promotion, Supervision,

Fringe Benefits, Contingent Rewards, Operating Procedures, Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication. The 3 subscales of Pay, Promotion, and Fringe Benefits did not apply to the variables being measured, so the corresponding items were removed for the purpose of this study, leaving a total of 20 items. A 6-point scale was used to measure each item with anchors of *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. For the purposes of this study the item choices were assigned numbers and modified to the following anchors: 6 = *Agree Very Much*, 5 = *Agree Moderately*, 4 = *Agree Slightly*, 3 = *Disagree Slightly*, 2 = *Disagree Moderately*, and 1 = *Disagree Very Much*. Participants were given the instruction “Please choose the one number for each of the following statements about Job Satisfaction that comes closest to reflecting your opinion about it.” One item example is “When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.” Information gathered from these items provided data regarding perceptions of music teacher job satisfaction.

In the original validation study, internal consistency reliability was determined by calculating a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for each subscale and the total scale from a sample of 2,870 participants (Spector, 1985). The subscale alpha reliabilities ranged from .60 to .82 and the total scale reliability for all 36 items was .91 (coefficient alpha; see Table 6).

Table 6.  
*Job Satisfaction Scale Internal Consistency Reliabilities by Subscale*

Subscale	Description	Alpha
Supervision	Immediate supervisor	0.82
Contingent Rewards	Appreciation, recognition, and rewards for good work	0.76
Operating Procedures	Operating policies and procedures	0.62
Coworkers	People you work with	0.60
Nature of Work	Job tasks themselves	0.78
Communication	Communication within the organization	0.71
Total	Total of all facets	0.91

The author of the scale granted permission to use the JSS under the condition that the results will be shared via email upon conclusion of the study. The JSS scale has been used multiple times with various populations. Yee et al. (2022) used the scale to measure job satisfaction for 86 preschool teachers. Reliability was not provided for the subscales, but the overall Cronbach's reliability was  $\alpha = 0.85$ . Putra et al. (2021) used the JSS scale to measure job satisfaction among 121 nurses in a military hospital and found a Cronbach's reliability score of  $\alpha = 0.91$ . Once again, the subscale reliabilities were not listed. Li and Huang (2017) used this scale to measure job satisfaction for 701 voluntary child welfare workers and found a Cronbach's reliability score  $\alpha = 0.90$  with the subscale reliabilities ranging from 0.69 to 0.84.

### **Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support**

The original survey created by Weiss was developed from research in the field and used to establish relationships between teacher's perceptions of administrative support along with other personal and workplace variables (Weiss, 2001). The survey is comprised of 20 questions that provide a unidimensional measure of administrative

support. A five-scale response system includes the anchors of *Agree*, *Tend to Agree*, *No Opinion*, *Tend to Disagree*, and *Disagree*. Participants were given the following instructions: “Below are statements relating to administrative support needs of teachers. Indicate your level of agreement for each statement by selecting the option that best describes your response.” An example of one statement is “My Observing Administrator provides me with the materials I need to do my job properly.”

The researcher was granted written permission from Dr. Weiss to use the survey instrument *Special Education Teachers’ Perceptions of Administrative Support* (Appendix I). Dr. Weiss also granted permission to modify the following language within the instrument: “Special Education” was removed from the title; “My principal...” was replaced with “My observing administrator...” Internal consistency reliability was calculated for all 20 items and a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient of  $\alpha = .96$  was obtained. Each of the 20 survey items was tested using an alpha-scale analysis to test for reliability. An overall alpha score of  $\alpha = .96$  established reliability of the survey (Weiss, 2001). The scale was used in two other studies (Crowder, 2013; Showers, 2008). Showers (2008) used the instrument to survey 125 special education teachers. No reliability data was provided. Crowder (2013) used the instrument to survey 91 teachers. Again, there was also no reliability information provided. Current research in administrative support was reviewed to establish content validity of the survey. Although the original survey was created to measure special education teachers’ perceptions of administrative support, the survey questions are not specific to special education teachers but are relevant to all certified teachers in public education.

## **Procedures**

Quantitative data was first gathered from an electronic Qualtrics survey distributed via email for music teacher participants to complete. The survey distribution occurred in mid-April towards the end of the school year to receive a high level of participation from music teachers. This window of time falls after state music assessments and before spring performances generally scheduled at conclusion of spring semester. Music teachers had two weeks to complete survey, and two follow up reminders were sent within the open timeframe. The raw quantitative data from the survey was extracted through the Qualtrics survey program and then SPSS was used to run the treatment. The quantitative data obtained from the survey was then used to shape and refine the qualitative interview questions in order to further investigate themes that emerged from the data. Fourteen participants were purposively selected from the quantitative pool of participants to take part in the qualitative focus group. Unique individuals were sought out to contribute their distinctive stories and perspectives. Qualitative data was then gathered from three focus group sessions conducted via an online (WebEx) video conferencing setting. The interviews were recorded with audio and video and lasted from approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes. The researcher transcribed the interviews and identified initial codes that were broken down and then consolidated into emergent themes.

## **Data Analysis**

### **Quantitative**

To begin quantitative data analysis the JSS survey responses for items 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 17, 18, and 20 were reverse coded to reflect that a higher score

indicates greater satisfaction. The responses for the professional development items were averaged to create an overall score for each participant. Next a standard analysis of the data was run in SPSS to calculate the mean, standard deviation, and standard error for the three research study variables of job satisfaction, administrative support, and professional development. The quantitative survey data was then analyzed for correlations and used to inform the collection of data in the qualitative interviews for similarities. A Pearson's  $r$  correlation coefficient was calculated to reflect the relationship between music teacher job satisfaction and perceived administrative support. Another Pearson's  $r$  correlation was run to determine the relationship between perceived music teacher job satisfaction and the amount of professional development.

### **Qualitative**

The interview data were transcribed, analyzed, and coded based upon emergent themes and trends. Open coding, axial coding, and selective coding were used to narrow the results to the most important categories of emergent data for comparison. The inductive procedures followed the process related to grounded theory described by Creswell and Poth (2018). First, open categories were developed, one category was then selected as the focus of the theory, and then additional categories were detailed with axial coding to form a theoretical model. Intersection of the categories then became the theory, or selective coding. The researcher used open coding to form categories of information by segmenting information and finding several subcategories to organize the sorting of data during analysis (Creswell & Poth, 2018). To determine axial coding, the researcher used analysis to examine the data to determine a central phenomenon, explore casual conditions, specific strategies, and identify context and intervening conditions (Creswell



& Poth, 2018). Table 7 provides an overview of data type, treatment, and phase for each of the eight research questions.

Table 7.  
*Data Type, Treatment, and Phase of Research Questions*

Research Questions	Data Type	Treatment	Phase
1. What is music teachers' level of job satisfaction?	Quantitative	Descriptive Statistics	Phase I
2. What is music teachers' amount of professional development?	Quantitative	Descriptive Statistics	Phase I
3. What is music teachers' level of administrative support?	Quantitative	Descriptive Statistics	Phase I
4. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and the number of hours of music related professional development?	Quantitative	Correlational Relationship	Phase I
5. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and perceptions of administrative support?	Quantitative	Correlational Relationship	Phase I
6. What are music teachers' perceptions of administrative support?	Qualitative	Open, Axial, & Selective Coding	Phase II
7. What are music teachers' perceptions of professional development?	Qualitative	Open, Axial, & Selective Coding	Phase II
8. What are music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction?	Qualitative	Open, Axial, & Selective Coding	Phase II

## Conclusion

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to investigate music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support as an effort to better understand music teacher job satisfaction. The quantitative data was

gathered through an online questionnaire that combined the Job Satisfaction Survey, Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support survey, and additional questions to gather professional development and demographic data. Findings from the quantitative portion of the study were further explored with qualitative data gathered from three focus group sessions, after which the data was coded and organized into major themes and subthemes.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the findings of the explanatory sequential mixed methods study conducted to answer the following research questions:

#### Quantitative Research Questions

1. What is the perceived level of job satisfaction among music teachers?
2. What is amount of music related professional development among music teachers?
3. What is the perceived level of administrative support music teachers?
4. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and the number of hours of music related professional development?
5. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support?

#### Qualitative Research Questions

6. What are music teachers' perceptions of administrative support?
7. What are music teachers' perceptions of professional development?
8. What are music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction?

Results from the quantitative portion of the study will be presented first starting with missing data and then continuing with reliability and normality information, descriptive statistics, and concluding with a summary of the quantitative findings. Next, the qualitative findings will be presented. Each theme will be identified and then broken down by subthemes. The qualitative findings will end with a presentation of additional findings that did not fit into any of the subthemes but were still relevant to participants' overall job satisfaction.

## **Quantitative Results**

### **Missing Data**

After removing the participants that provided no responses beyond the informed consent there were 48 participants that responded to the quantitative survey. One participant was removed from the study because no responses were provided on the JSS scale. The job satisfaction scale responses were a part of both correlations so the other data provided by the participant could not be applied to the research questions. Of the remaining 47, there was 1 missing response on the JSS. The scale had a total of 20 items and the most missing data for any person was 5% (20 items; 1 person missed 1 item;  $1/20 = 0.05 = 5\%$ ). The most missing data for any item was 2.13% (47 participants; 1 item had 1 person missing;  $1/47 = .023 = 2.13\%$ ). The total missing data on the JSS scale amounted to 0.11% ( $1/47 * 20 = 1/940 = .00106 = .11\%$ ). All participants provided data on amount of music related professional development attended annually. Likewise, there was no missing data on the administrative support subscale.

## **Reliability and Normality**

In the original validation study internal consistency reliability was determined by calculating a Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each subscale and the total scale from a sample of 2,870 participants (Spector, 1985). The subscale alpha reliabilities ranged from .60 to .82 and the total scale reliability for all 36 items was .91 (coefficient alpha).

Internal consistency reliability was determined for all 20 items by calculating a Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each subscale and the total scale from a sample of 47 participants for both instruments. Reliability with strong internal consistency was found for Job Satisfaction ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ), and a good reliability with strong internal consistency was found for Administrative Support ( $\alpha = 0.97$ ). Professional development was measured with one item, so reliability was not calculated. All three variables of music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support displayed no substantial depart from normality. Music teacher job satisfaction had a skewness of .42 ( $S_{kp} = .42$ ) and kurtosis of .45 ( $\kappa = .50$ ), professional development had a skewness of .68 ( $S_{kp} = .68$ ) and kurtosis of .10 ( $\kappa = .10$ ), and administrative support had a skewness of .48 ( $S_{kp} = .48$ ) and kurtosis of .57 ( $\kappa = .57$ ). The normality, skewness, and kurtosis results for all three variables fell within the expected ranges. (Figures 1, 2, & 3).

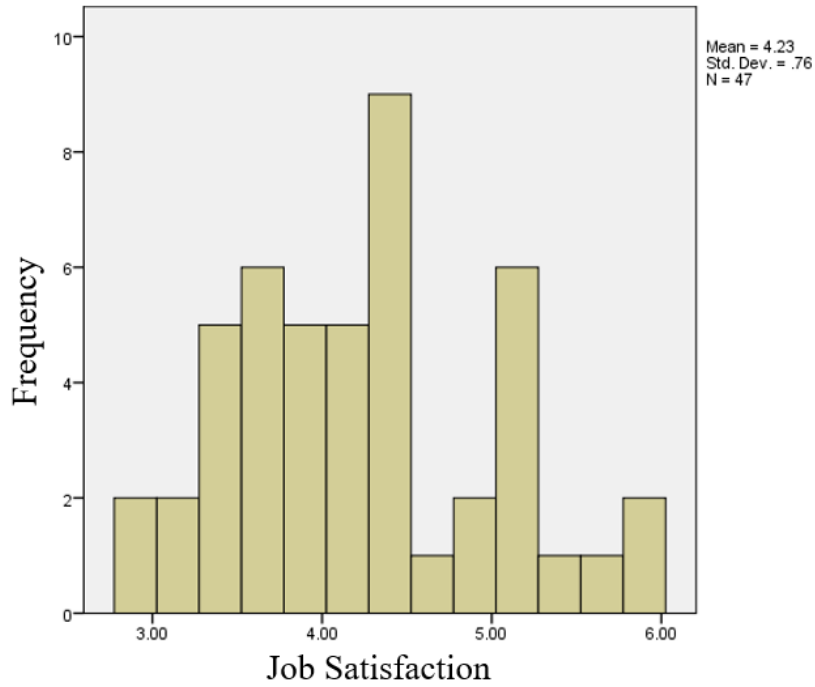


Figure 1. Participants' Perceptions of Job Satisfaction Normality.

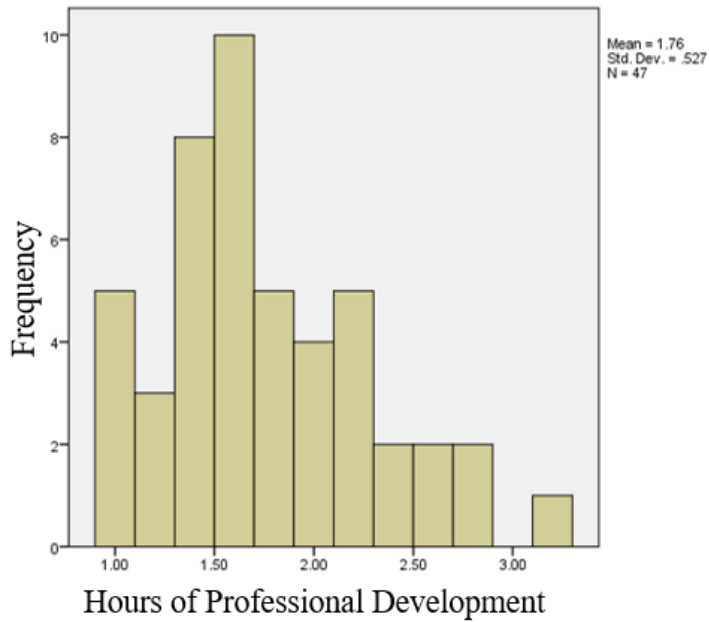


Figure 2. Music Related Professional Development Normality.

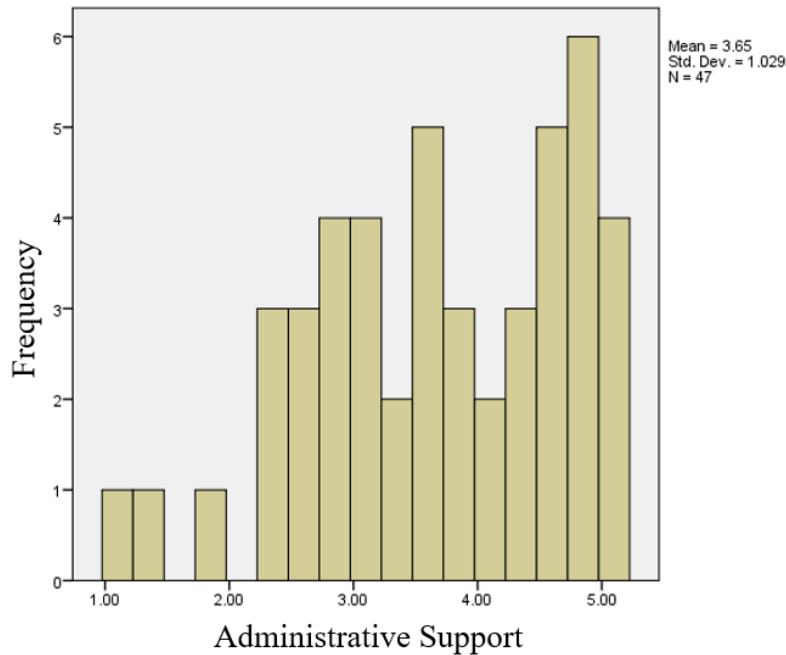


Figure 3. Participants' Perceptions of Administrative Support Normality.

### Descriptive Statistics

In order to answer research questions one through three the means and standard deviations were found for job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. For the analysis of job satisfaction data, a mean of  $M = 4.23$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.76$  was obtained. According to the anchors of the scale a score of 4.23 indicates between a high to moderately high level of job satisfaction. Analysis of professional development data found a mean of  $M = 1.76$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 0.53$ . This score indicates participants attend between 0 and 15 hours of music-related professional development annually. Analysis of the administrative support data found a mean of  $M = 3.66$  and a standard deviation of  $SD = 1.03$ . Based on the nature of the scale

a score of 3.66 indicates between a neutral to moderate level of administrative support. Descriptive statistics for all variables are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8.  
*Mean, Standard Deviation, and Standard Error for Variables*

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Standard Error
Job Satisfaction	4.23	0.76	0.11
Administrative Support	3.66	1.03	0.15
Professional Development	1.76	0.53	0.08

To answer Research Question 4, a Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated to determine the relationships between the variables of music teacher job satisfaction and music related professional development. A weak positive relationship was found between the amount of music related professional development attended and music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. This weak relationship was approaching significance ( $r = .28$ ,  $r^2 = .08$ , and  $p = .06$ ). This result indicates music teacher job satisfaction increases slightly with the amount of professional development attended. A strong positive relationship was found between the amount of administrative support and music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. This strong positive relationship was statistically significant ( $r = .65$ ,  $r^2 = .42$ , and  $p < .001$ ). This result indicates that the music teacher job satisfaction increases as administrative support increases.



Table 9.  
*Correlations Statistics for Research Study Variables*

Correlation	Correlation Coefficient	<i>P</i> value
Job Satisfaction & Professional Development	0.28	0.06*
Job Satisfaction & Administrative Support	0.65	<.001**

*Note.* \* = $p < .05$ , \*\* = $p < .001$

### **Summary of Quantitative Results**

Results from the quantitative data analysis indicate a job satisfaction level between high and moderately high for music teachers, teachers attended an amount between 0 and 15 hours of music related professional development annually, and a perception of a neutral to moderate level of administrative support. A weak positive relationship approaching significance was found between music teacher job satisfaction and music related professional development, indicating a possibility that music teacher job satisfaction increases with amount of music related professional development. Finally, a strong positive relationship that was significant was found between music teacher job satisfaction and level of administrative support, indicating that music teacher job satisfaction level increases as the perception of administrative support increases.

### **Qualitative Findings**

Three different focus group sessions were conducted to obtain rich data on music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. The focus group interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes where participants were asked a series of open-ended questions. They were coded and sorted into the three major themes: job satisfaction, professional development, and

administrative support. Each theme was then divided into concentrated subthemes (Refer back to Table 7). Pseudonyms were assigned to each music teacher for the purpose of protecting participants' anonymity. Qualitative data analysis focused on emerging themes gathered during the focus group sessions and the responses from music teachers. Examination of the data revealed three main themes: job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. The three main themes were further refined into a series of subthemes. Table 10 provides a breakdown of each theme and corresponding subthemes.

Table 10.  
*Qualitative Data Themes and Subthemes Research Study Variables*

Theme	Subtheme
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaboration &amp; Relationships</li> <li>Teacher Preparation</li> <li>Stress</li> <li>Scheduling</li> <li>Perceptions of the Job</li> </ul>
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideal Professional Development</li> <li>Relevant Professional Development</li> <li>Teaching Observations</li> <li>Effects of Music PD</li> </ul>
Administrative Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideal Administrative Support</li> <li>Examples of Good Administrative Support</li> <li>Examples of Poor Administrative Support</li> <li>Administrator Presence</li> </ul>

### **Job Satisfaction**

When asked to describe their current level of job satisfaction, most of the music teachers reported that they liked or loved their job. Tanya expressed that she loved her

job because she got to play and teach music all day by stating, “I love my job. I even tell the students that I feel like I have the best job in the world, ‘cause I get to play music all day, and you know, help them learn music all day too.” Mason stated, “I love my job. [I’ve] always loved my job.” Sarah described a feeling of being home and referenced her relationships with the other teachers at her school and the feeling of being valued:

I feel at home at that school. I feel the camaraderie of all the teachers. I feel valued. They love what I do. They know who I am. It’s just a very comfortable “I’m home”, and that’s the words I use. “I’m home.”

Mallory mentioned her musical equipment when expressing her high level of job satisfaction, “I’ve got a lot of equipment, so that thrills me.”

While some participants expressed admiration for their jobs some feelings were not so straightforward. Melissa, for example, stated, “I do love my job, but I don’t always like my job.” This sentiment was indirectly echoed throughout all three focus groups as the music teachers were asked to provide accounts of both positive and negative experiences pertaining to professional development and administrative support. In contrast to Melissa, Travis stated, “I like my job- I don’t say that I love my current position. I’ve had other positions that I liked better.” His reasoning for this stems from the fact that he currently teaches at three different schools and “just to go into three schools every day wears down on you a little bit” (Travis). While Travis liked a previous position better, John shared that he enjoys his current job better than his previous position because of increased levels of support:

I did private school for ten years before this...I compare what I had before and what I have now, and what I have now is so far above what I had before in terms of, well, job satisfaction and support and just like, funds to buy stuff with.

Although they initially responded with high levels of job satisfaction, some of the music teachers still shared situations where they experienced feelings of disappointment and not being valued. One example of this is Katherine, who revealed how music teachers are among the first pulled to cover classes when a substitute is unavailable and stated, "Sometimes with the current situation we kind of get used as substitutes, so our classes do get cancelled a lot...it's disappointing all around when you're missing classes to have to fill out another position." Gabrielle, a second example, originally responded that she was "very satisfied" and assigned her satisfaction score as an 8 out of 10 but shortly thereafter spoke of a lack of care from administrators that led to not feelings of not being valued. Gabrielle's feelings stemmed from administrators not understanding music programs and how that perceived feeling of not being valued extended down to the students:

[The administrators that weren't doing a fabulous job] were the ones that were ignorant and chose to stay ignorant. Almost intentionally wanting to not understand because they didn't care. Overall, it feels like just a lack of care. And I think that's really scary because it makes you feel like you're not valued in your profession at all, and it makes your kids feel that way too because they sense it.

These two examples are only a small portion of the finding in this category. In fact, the theme of job satisfaction was broken down into the five subthemes of

collaboration and relationships, teacher preparation, stress, scheduling, and perceptions of the job.

***Collaboration and Relationships: Send up the bat signal***

One subtheme that emerged from the larger theme of job satisfaction was how relationships and collaboration with peers can impact music teacher job satisfaction. A partial reason for this is other music teachers understand the hardships and complications of the profession. Mallory described the impact of peer relationships as, “I think that the relationship you have with your peers professionally makes a big difference. Because they’re like you, you know. You have a commonality. I think that’s just important. It really is.”

Music teachers are unique in that there is frequently only one music teacher working at a school. Melissa provided the following comparison of music teachers versus non-music teachers: “We are such a specialized field, and it is much more common to be alone in the situation. We’re not like a math or science teacher where there’s a team of those teachers in the building.” Because many schools employ one music teacher at most, participants that taught with other music teachers at the same school acknowledged their good fortune to have music colleagues on the same campus. Gabrielle demonstrated this by stating, “I feel like I’m lucky because I have someone to work with and that makes a big difference. In contrast, Travis came from the opposite situation:

Most of us are the only person in our school, or in my case, the only music band director at three schools, so it can be really kind of lonely because you can’t talk with other teachers at your school about the challenges that you’re having and that kind of stuff.

Sarah is an itinerant music teacher like Travis, traveling to different schools. Although there was not another music teacher at her base school, she was still able to form meaningful relationships with the other teachers. However, at her second school she found it harder to form those connections because of her limited time on campus:

It's a different vibe at that school... It's a different mindset among the teachers.

It's a bit more drop them off and be gone, and I'm only there part-time, so I really have no connections with them at all.

A common practice in educational institutions is to assign mentors to new teachers that serve as a guide and provide advice and support in early teaching years. Megan discussed the benefits an established support system for music teachers of all concentration areas is and how it served to help her:

It's very, very, very beneficial for the elementary and middle school directors to have that support system and another colleague, even if it's at another school that they can call on. It doesn't necessarily have to be a band director or a music teacher. It could be anybody really, but somebody that knows what they're having to deal with...Having a colleague that you can really lean on for support has helped tremendously for me.

Melissa agreed with the sentiment that it is important to have someone to lean on, even if that person is not another music teacher. However, she commented further that it is important to find a specific music community to be a part of.

I do agree that it's good to have someone in your building who, it doesn't have to necessarily be another band director, but I do think it's important to have band director mentors, and to kind of find your community of band directors.

Finding a teaching and learning community to be a part of provides music teachers with support from peers along with resources and opportunities to collaborate. Collaboration can sometimes be made difficult by rivalries between programs, but Mallory shared her experiences receiving assistance from other directors as a band director in two different states, giving a glimpse into the various climates that exist in the music education world.

[In my Mississippi, the band directors] were like buddies. No one worked against anyone else. It didn't seem like there was any kind of negativity. They were all just there for each other. Now, I've been here [in Alabama] a long time, okay, and so this has changed a good bit, but when I first came here it was so dog-eat-dog...and I can remember being so surprised when ... there were some really strong band directors who came and helped me out.

Despite strong rivalries existing between programs, she still received help from an experienced director who was willing to come assist her during the height of marching season. Other participants also had examples to share of seasoned directors coming forward to offer guidance. During her first year of teaching, Tanya was contacted by an older band director that kept checking up on her because he knew her teaching situation was very different from the school she graduated from. That initial offer of help developed into a long-term mentor relationship that provided support in her early teaching years:

I really appreciated him just reaching out. Like, he didn't give up...He stayed on top of me, and then from there anytime I just needed advice or if I needed to vent,

I was like, “Hey big brother, we need to talk” and he would call me back and he’s like, “Oh, you sent up the bat signal. What’s going on now?”

From that initial relationship Tanya was able to form connections with other band directors to form a supportive network to advise each other or just to vent. She continued by saying:

I felt like that helps hold me in my position because I know I’m not alone in this. I’m not crazy. The kids, they’re just a little off and on, depending on what day of the week you got them, but, you know, having others to lean on really helps because I’ve thought many times about changing careers, but it really helps to lean on other people that are going through a similar situation.

Overall, music teachers felt access to a mentor and a discipline-specific music community is important for maintaining the well-being of music teachers and to offset situations in which music teachers do not have the benefit of another professional music educator at their school. Participating in a mentor type relationship or joining a music teacher community is an alternative route for music teachers without additional music teachers on their campus to engage in collaboration and form supportive relationships.

***Teacher preparation: They just throw us to the wolves***

A second subtheme that emerged from the qualitative data analysis was music teachers’ lack of preparation for teaching in their respective college programs. Melissa described a few of the issues she had with collegiate programs for music education:

A large part of what we do is stuff that was never taught in college, even some of the rehearsing of bands. Um, I don’t think we do a good job of setting new teachers up for success in the classroom in general. They just kind of get thrown



in there and it's like, 'Good luck, hope you survive. And if you can survive those first few years, it will start to get a lot easier and you'll kind of figure it out.'

Many of the directors felt that they were not adequately prepared to handle student discipline. Kyle shared that during his first years of teaching he experienced feelings of defeat over his inability to effectively handle student behavior:

Some of the classes in my earlier years were so awful, and I had no idea what to do with that. I mean, they don't teach you that in college. What do you do with kids who aren't going to listen to you? Who aren't going to sit down? Who aren't going to do this? And I remember going home feeling defeated over just that very thing right there.

During the focus group sessions, parallels were discussed on how running a band program is akin to running a business, and that band directors are essentially administrators of their programs. Megan listed the similarities between running a band program and running a business including all the paperwork, organization, and requirements that fall outside of the teaching realm and are not taught in college music education programs. She summarized by saying, "Yeah. They just throw each of us to the wolves and give you a pat on the back and say, "Don't screw up."

Music education majors are certified K-12 but teaching elementary music and teaching secondary instrumental or vocal music are very different things. Katherine began teaching secondary instrumental music but then transitioned to elementary music. She shared how she did not feel prepared when she first transitioned and had to rely on the curriculum that the district had thankfully provided:

When [I] first started teaching elementary, I didn't have a lot of curriculum. I had options for curriculum, but I didn't know what I was doing...the county providing a national based curriculum that everybody uses, that kind of helped me out as a band person going into elementary [music].

Ansley was currently teaching outside of her specialization. She shared that her primary concentration was secondary instrumental music, but she was currently in a position solely teaching secondary vocal music. A key finding regarding teacher preparation was participants felt unprepared. The concerns discussed by participants included a lack of preparation in undergraduate programs for classroom management and for effectively teaching in the multiple concentrations associated with music teacher certification.

***Stress: Can I have a breather here?***

A third subtheme that emerged from the larger theme of job satisfaction was the stress related to the music education profession. The topic of stress and its effects on music teacher job satisfaction was discussed in both secondary focus group sessions, but not among the elementary music teachers. When commenting on work related stress Tanya shared, "Work gets really stressful. It gets really stressful, especially when we're trying different things and it's just not working out." Gabrielle theorized that stress could be a reason music teachers leave the profession early and stated, "I think people leave early because they get stressed out or they can't come back from that stress, and they realize it's just not worth it." Causes of stress among secondary music teachers included dealing with the effects of Covid-19, a lack of support from administration, public

expectations, and the strenuous demands of the job (i.e., grueling schedule, teaching load, administrative duties, etc.).

As with the rest of the world, Covid-19 hit music programs hard. Melissa's band program had recently been through a troubling situation and expressed how Covid-19 just added to their struggles. She shared the following statement:

What my program has gone through of having to deal with some of those effects on top of the Covid effect and knowing what the public expects out of my program has definitely been a stressor this year. Well, it's kind of like, "Well, that's nice." I could say it's Covid but they're not going to care, and I think we're going to be feeling that way for a few years.

She continued further to discuss the difficulty of finding any downtime during the year and the rigorous demands of the profession even through the "off" summer months:

I [just think] the job's hard. It's hard to not work for 12 months, and the expectation too. And we are also administrators, particularly at the high school level of running fairly large programs and then to do all this on top, and it's kind of like "Really, can I have a breather here?"

Public expectations were also a concern for Mason who described how there was general pressure to keep up numbers in his program despite declining enrollment and scheduling issues:

When you look at our school there's the pressure of how we used to march like twenty tubas. Well now we have seven and people see that and they're like "Oh, they're not doing so hot. They've only got 170 members this year? Whoa, what's

happening over there?” It’s like, are you kidding me? So that pressure, uh, for that standard is almost unreasonable and unattainable.

Megan felt that stress could be alleviated by an increase of support from school administration and stated, “I wouldn’t feel as stressed out sometimes if I had the support from the higher ups across the board. Participants’ level of stress had a direct impact on overall job satisfaction. In summary, work related stress for music teachers included dealing with the effects of Covid-19, public expectations, lack of support from administration, and the strenuous demands of the job that are specific music educators.

***Scheduling: It’s a problem***

A fourth subtheme revealed by the qualitative data analysis was the impact of scheduling on music teacher job satisfaction. Mallory shared an example that she described as the biggest issue she had faced since transitioning to working general music. She was working as an itinerant music teacher and one of her principals gave her an impossible schedule and refused budge even after the district fine arts supervisor stepped in:

I had already tried to work with her on it, and all she gave me was a schedule that was so crazy that I was heading in the wrong direction one morning I was so confused...I had to literally jump off the interstate and turn around because everything was so skewed. So, then my supervisor said, “No, no, no. I’m going to talk to her and get this all worked out,” because when [I tried] to get things worked out with her she had me screaming down the hall in one direction, screaming down the hall in another direction [on an] absolutely no size cart—a tiny cart, you know. And it was just fine with [the principal]. It was just fine with her

as long as she didn't have to look at it, and so when the supervisor went in, she couldn't make heads or tails and [the principal] just said "Deal, no deal. Forget it." And [the kids at that school] just lost music that year.

Naturally, the effect of an elementary school losing music for an entire year due to the inflexibility of a principal would have a negative impact on the students. This in turn has a negative impact on a music teacher's job satisfaction since their primary objective is to teach music to children.

Bell schedules are another "scheduling" issue music teachers have to navigate from year to year. Mason recounted when his school transitioned from block scheduling to a period schedule that resulted in a loss of half of the band's scheduled rehearsal time, and they were still held to the same performance standards with half of the preparation time:

About three years ago we were on block scheduling, and when we were on block scheduling ...band met every single day. Well, now we're on a seven or eight period day, and they still met every day but literally half of the amount of rehearsal time. So, the expectation is still really high, however, we've lost half of the rehearsal time.

A final issue of scheduling participants reported that negatively impacted music teachers' job satisfaction was students being placed or pulled from classes randomly, especially mid-semester. While no participant wanted students randomly placed into their performing classes, they were much more upset about the instances of students being removed or added several weeks into the semester. Tanya described the struggle of erratic

student schedule changes and the difficulty of maintaining the attention of students who are further along while having to start completely over with new students:

“We’re getting students put in our classes randomly or pulled out of our classes randomly. Like, sometimes even with the students fluctuating throughout. It’s hard to keep track of everything and it’s hard to really figure out what would even work because getting ready for a performance when I have kids constantly in and out of my class. Okay, well, how can I keep these kids going while I have to start [new] kids how to hold an instrument without the rest of the class getting distracted?”

Gabrielle faced similar struggles of having kids added late into the semester or removed from the class after they had already purchased an instrument:

“Hey, let’s just put this kid in week 7 in your class. Not one, not three, not four, not five. Like let’s just dump a pile in. Oh, and let’s take the ones out who have already bought an instrument and are invested.” That’s happening. That’s a problem.

Ansley experienced a different scheduling situation where she was only able to have choir classes comprised of seventh grade students who were swapped to a different elective at the change of the semester. Although she was only able to teach students for one semester in their seventh grade year, she was still expected to build a choir program and participate in district level choir activities and assessments:

I’m still held to the same standards [as the school’s band program], but I’m not given equal treatment as far as, my students don’t choose to be in my program. They’re required to take my class, and again, I only have them for one semester.

Teaching students that do not want to learn is a challenge for any teacher, but it can be even more difficult in a performance based fine arts class. Negativity is catching, therefore when students do not wish to participate or perform it can cause issues for the rest of the class. Daniel gave a similar example:

One of the worst things that ever happened to [one of our band programs] years and years ago was the administrator there decided if kids were problems, they would put them in the band. And [the poor director] had, I bet, over 200 kids in the band, but there was a good 50 or more that were just back there being problems.

All in all, the examples of impossible elementary music schedules, adding or removing students late into the semester, or placing unwilling participants into performance based courses highlight how impactful poor scheduling can be on music teachers' job satisfaction and the overall well-being of their programs.

***Perceptions of the Job: We're not considered the expert***

The performance-based nature of music programs result in a public based opinion as to what programs really do. A fifth subtheme that emerged was perceptions of music teachers and their programs. Elementary and secondary music teachers all felt there were misconceptions of what music teachers and music programs actually do. John was frustrated by the assumption that elementary music is simply singing and dancing and stated, "There are standards and that real learning happening in my classroom. We're not just having fun. We're not just singing songs and dancing." Travis also wanted to be acknowledged as a serious academic program and said, "I want to be treated like what I'm doing is a serious part of the academic program of the school, not an after school

club. Ansley mentioned that music teachers sometimes feel like they are not considered the professionals in their own field and stated, “ I think what a lot of us feel sometimes is that we’re not considered the professional. Like, we’re not considered the expert in our own field.

The secondary band participants especially expressed a frustration in the focus group sessions with the tendency for administrators and the general public to only place value in marching bands at football games. Megan shared:

It’s just so hard to get everybody outside of the band world to see us outside of the Friday night lights. That is a hard thing because everybody thinks that we don’t do anything for the remainder of the year. It’s like, what do you do in the room after football season? You just sit around and twiddle your thumbs? I’m like no, there is so much more that goes on past football. Football is just one quarter of the year. So that’s like, kind of the downside of it that, you know, trying to get the rest of the school to appreciate everything else that we do.

Melissa shared a similar frustration:

I teach [at] a really good school. I have really good students, I have good parent support, and I do have what I would call good administrator support. I find it frustrating is all they view us is the marching band of football games. Like, in a home football game all four or five of my administrators are there for the football game, but in the past four years at a band concert I haven’t had an administrator. And I think that’s a disservice to the students also. [Nor will they] come to a competition. I was having a conversation with my principal [and told him about] our county jamboree on Tuesday and he was like, “Oh yeah, I’m gonna try really



hard to make it.” And I’m like, but this is what we do. But they’ll be there for the Mardi Gras parades but not for the stuff [that] is truly about band and I feel that more for my students than I do for me because I’m...just going to do what I do... I wish at times we weren’t always viewed as the kind of people there to go cheer on the football team....This schedule is just grueling in the fall...It’s nonstop and I think that’s where maybe my satisfaction goes down.

In conclusion, music teachers at both the elementary and secondary levels desire for their programs to be acknowledged as legitimate academic programs with valid curriculum instead of only being associated as entertainment.

### **Professional Development**

Music teachers responses to the questions surround professional development revealed a strong concern towards the issue of not having enough contract hours to engage in meaningful PD. Melissa related the scope of this issue across all educators by stating, “We’re not given enough time within our contract hours to be able to engage in meaningful professional development...It’s a problem, I think, across education, not just in the band director and music world.” She continued by relating the struggle of balancing the desire to improve professionally while still managing daily expectations and additional requirements:

It’s like we want to make ourselves better and stuff, but at the end of the day our teaching loads and all the requirements that are put down on us, that...most of us are failing to do with ...our contract hours that we are given. We’re already not able to handle that load and then to put the PD on top of it makes it a lot more challenging.

Participants reported the desire to participate in professional learning, but not at the expense of missing rehearsal time with their students. Tanya was concerned with students not practicing in her absence and stated, “ I hate to miss school time to go do anything else because my kids need the practice because of course they’re not practicing when they’re not in front of me.”

Likewise, Kyle also brought up the point that he worries about what is happening in the band room when he is away for professional development and that he is never truly gone:

I’m happier being in the band room, to be honest, than I am sitting in any meeting, especially when it comes to not musical PD. And even some musical ones it’s sometimes a waste of time, and I worry about what’s going on in the band room. The subs are texting. I’m never really away from the band room when we’re gone.

Analysis of the qualitative data pertaining to professional development revealed the subthemes of music teachers’ ideal PD, relevant PD, observations, and the effects of music related PD.

### ***Ideal Professional Development: The perfect PD***

The subtheme of the participants’ ideal professional development found that music teachers desire PD that can be applied to their specific teaching situations and that are continuous. When describing her ideal professional development, Sarah stated, “The perfect PD to me is very hands on. It’s knowledge that we can use. John felt that the most useful PD sessions were “The ones that get you thinking about specific ways you can use

what they're presenting. Melissa expressed a desire for an improved method of presenting and implementing new skills acquired during professional development:

Where it's not just a one and done thing...I think that's the biggest complaint. It's like, you attend a really good PD session and you're like, "Well that's awesome I have all these new things. How am I going to implement them? And what if they don't work?"... I need...a better system in place, particularly for band directors where we're one to a school, or maybe two if we're lucky, but one that somehow has it in place to truly help us get better. Which means you need checkpoints along the way and it's not just like, "Attend this session. Here you go. Good luck. Bye."

She continued on to compare professional development to the circle of teaching:

It's like the circle of teaching. Like, we don't do that in PD. We just get thrown the material but it's never like, "Okay, well let me go apply it, and can I come back and have questions now, and how can I evaluate this. This really helped me and if it didn't, why not?" " And we never get PD like that, and I think particularly for younger directors that would be invaluable and we don't get that. We just get, "Good luck."

Like previous examples from participants Mason also felt strongly that material presented at a professional development session should be revisited continually throughout the year and not just a onetime session:

It needs to be something that we can continually discuss throughout the year for trying to incorporate new concepts... if it's important enough to talk about once it needs to be a continuous effort, and that goes with any professional development.

The participants' unanimous wish for applicable and continuous professional development opportunities serves as a strong representation of music teachers' desire to engage in professional learning that will also benefit their students. In short, the ideal PD for music educators is PD that is relevant and sustained.

***Relevant Professional Development: We wonder why we even wasted that time***

The focus group music teachers overwhelmingly found music related professional development to be more impactful than general professional development offerings, with most preferring to attend music conferences. This sentiment was described exactly by Melissa when she stated:

Typically, the PD sessions where I have come away feeling like I have learned something that is gonna make me a better director or has something that I feel is going to be beneficial for my students has just about always come away from some type of music conference I have attended.

In regard to mandatory school related PD Joseph said, "I have yet to have a useful session presented that I've had to attend, like, at the school." Kyle felt that although applicable professional development is meaningful there were still many that were a waste of time. He went on to explain:

I think, for me, some of the more meaningful professional development would be the ones where I felt like I could use what they were saying. There are so many of them we go there and sit there, and we wonder why we even wasted that time.

The majority of the focus group participants viewed local annual professional development as an obligation rather than an opportunity for professional learning. To this effect, Travis stated, "The school sponsored stuff has never really been meaningful to

me.” Furthermore, annual professional development was largely perceived as a waste of time and negatively affected the outlook for future professional development when a musical classroom setting was not apparent. Mason stated:

If I’m sitting through a PD that well, one I’ve done every year or one that I just can’t figure out how it relates to me in my classroom, I feel that it’s almost a waste of time and that puts me in a bad mindset for future PDs.

Megan also had a negative opinion of school-led PD:

Any type of professional development that we do at [my school] I never come away like, “Well, we’re going to have a great year,” because it’s never geared towards band. Most of the time I do come back frustrated because the other two fellows that I work with are completely technology illiterate and I have to do their PD for them.

She continued to say that although she does enjoy music related PD, she would rather be doing something else for PD not specific to music:

The only PDs that I’ve ever come out of feeling satisfied and realizing, you know, I love what I do is AMEA stuff, Midwest stuff, or things that [our fine arts supervisor] has scheduled for us because that’s geared towards our subject.

Everything else I just feel like I’m sitting there in another meeting that I could be doing something else and I’m thinking, “Okay, what else do I have to do today?”

Although the majority of participants did not feel school sponsored professional development was beneficial or meaningful, one participant was able to give an example of how a school wide professional development was helpful to him personally by

providing new insights into the personalities of his colleagues and their method of thinking. Mason shared the following account his school-led PD:

It was one of those personality trait survey things, and you have to figure out what moves you. What motivates you? How do you lead?... And they related to Star Wars, and it turned out that I was the giver like Padma Amadala, and one of my colleagues that I worked closely with, he was Darth Vader. He was the supervisor of things, and of course, our head director was Emperor Palpatine. He was the mastermind behind things, and you know, that's all silly and fun but it helped me understand my colleagues more who I work with directly.

He continued to explain how the PD helped his colleagues to work closer:

When it comes to planning or anything right now, we understand how each of us think. We kind of balance each other out but we didn't know that until we had done that PD, and I know it was really silly, but it was actually extremely informative that I got back to a lot.

Although this PD was lighthearted, it still provided valuable insights into his colleagues that served to strengthen their working relationships. Overall, the majority of music teachers felt that school led professional development was generally a waste of time with the exception of a few instances where direct application could be made.

***Observations: I've learned way more from just watching them do their job***

Another subtheme that appeared from the larger theme of professional development was the subtheme of observations and how they served as powerful learning opportunities for music teachers. Travis shared the following comparison of observing other teachers versus listening to a presenter at a conference:

I've learned way more from watching the best teachers in my building, even people that aren't even band directors, at all these elementary schools. I've learned way more from just watching them do their job than I ever have from listening to a presenter at a conference or anything like that.

Kyle also spoke of the benefit of music educators listening to other groups perform:

Some of the best things we can do as music educators is the listening to other groups perform. How do they get to where they get and that kind of thing? We learn more by listening to each other than really talking to each other, I feel, and that's just my thing. I come back more talking about what I listened to than what I sat through.

Participants felt that listening to each other's ensembles and watching fellow music teachers run their rehearsals would be a valuable form of PD. Mason provided an insightful observation about band directors compulsion to help one another and how music teachers can learn so much just by watching each other:

I would love to go work in a county helping out other band programs. We're all about helping each other. We really are. I just wish that we could do that more often and sitting down, observing each other would be huge and very valuable.

He went on to describe mandatory observations from college that provided perspective for various situations:

We used to do visits in college. I had to go visit like, ten other schools. They had to be a variety from inner city to really rural to, whatever, and every situation was extremely different. This band director's worried about breaking up fights in the hallways while also being the assistant football coach at the junior high while this

teacher has been here literally for 40 some years and just gets the job done.

There's so much you can learn from each other that we just don't get.

There was a consensus from participants that observations of other music programs and directors was a valuable source of professional learning different from more traditional forms of PD.

***Effects of Music Professional Development: I can conquer the world now***

A final subtheme of professional development was the effect resulting from music teachers' participation in professional development. Several participants mentioned feeling revitalized or having more energy after attending a professional development session or conference. Sarah shared an experience from a virtual PD she attended:

It was a Zoom [session] so you lose a little bit of that in-person enthusiasm, but what she brought to the screen and then portrayed through the screen to all of us...It just gave me so much more energy and opened up my mind to so many different things that we could do.

John then chimed in that, "For me PD just overall is fun", and Sarah added, "When we go to music PDs the energy from everybody else and the energy from the presenter is what I take home with me. That's what I love." Kyle appreciated the opportunity to speak with other music professionals at music conferences just to have a reminder that he is not alone in the issues he faces:

The fact that you're around other music people at these conferences and professional developments is a nice refresher that you're not alone and what you're doing, it's not just your school. There's other people going out there going



through the same similar thing sin the same day to day issues that we all have, and to occasionally hear that is really nice.

Tanya felt encouraged after attending a virtual summer PD with professional trumpet player, Wynton Marsalis:

It was just refreshing to hear from a professional perspective, especially someone ...to encourage us as musicians and as band directors- to just keep going. And after that I felt really refreshed and I felt like, “Oh, I can conquer the world now because this guy over here, he gave me a pat on the back.” It was great just hearing from him, hearing his stories, and then listening to him demonstrate some techniques that we could use in our classrooms and also just listening to him perform for us.

Tanya continued that she felt arts related PD helped to renew her spirit and even sought out PD for new ideas:

Anytime I do go to music or even just arts related professional development I always have this renewed spirit that, you know, now I can do this. I’m okay. I’m recharged...I’ve even sought out different organizations to attend their professional development just to get an extra boost and get ever fresher ideas.

Unfortunately, not all reported effects of PD were positive. In one instance it is noted that attending mandatory PD resulted in points off a participant’s end of the year evaluation. This is illustrated by Gabrielle who recalls, “On my evaluation a couple of years ago I was docked because of all the days I had to go out on PD. Like, docked way down.” Being docked on her end of the evaluation for attending mandatory professional

development could explain why Gabrielle felt that PD could sometimes be overwhelming and even add to music teachers' stress level:

It gets to be too much. Instead of it being organized in such a way where it's like, "Yes, I'm looking forward to this week! It's gonna be amazing and I'm going to learn so much, and the kids are gonna have such a great experience." It's not that way. It's like there's this and then this, and then this and then this... and that's stressful, in my opinion.

The participants reported that participation in music related PD could re-energize music teachers but could also be overwhelming. It is of note that participants related both positive and negative impacts of PD. Music teacher responsibilities, such as special honor bands or choirs, sometimes call for additional days out of school that are not required for non-music teachers and can be viewed as "excessive" as with Gabrielle's example. Just like with anything else it is important for music teachers to find a balance of professional development that helps to improve teaching practices without causing deficiencies in other areas.

### **Administrative Support**

All the music teachers interviewed agreed that administrative support is very important for music teacher job satisfaction and the success of music programs. When asked about administrative support, Gabrielle shared "I've had some really awesome principals. I'm very grateful for them. And then I've had some that I wonder why on earth are doing what they're doing." Other participants had similar experiences to Gabrielle where they had worked under what they considered both good and bad administrators.

Melissa described her perception of good administrative support as the ability to make program changes and have the backing of the administration:

I do have what I would call good administrator support. I feel like I could go to them, and I'd have their support on things, and I have had in this position where we want to make program changes [and] they have never questioned what changes we have wanted to make.

John also felt he had an administrator that would support changes as long as there was a clear associated plan and stated, "My principal at my school is very easy going. He's pretty much if you have a plan and have a way to show him that this is what you're doing, then he's okay with it."

A strong commonality from all three focus groups was that music teachers were happier when they were allowed to do their job without being micromanaged by the administration. Sarah said, "My school is amazing. I love, love, love my administration and... it's whatever you want to do. You provide an education for her children at that school [and] she's a happy camper." Sarah also had the following to say about her administrator: "To know that [my administrator] appreciates what we do and values it, that's huge."

Mallory also had positive things to say about one of her previous administrators for elementary music who was adamant that her students needed musical training: "I've worked with some really neat principals. One of them sat me down and just went into how important ... it is to their learning very young that they have music full training and that she wanted every one of her younger grades definitely to have musical training, and she only had a quarter of a unit because they were constantly playing catch up and

she was having to sink money in other places, but she says “My babies have to have music because it helps their brain”, and I think that was really cool.

There is a perception that administrators do not really understand the nature of what happens in music programs, and this feeling was expressed by several of the music teachers. John recounted a situation of disconnect where his annual PTO program needed to be rescheduled and the principal wanted to know why they were even having the program despite the fact they had already been working on it for three months. Jason expressed the effect of this disconnect between priorities on his feelings by sharing, “I felt like a failure because I had not, I guess, educated him as much on what it is that we do.”

Mason expressed similar sentiments about administration not understanding what music programs really are and what they do:

Administrators don't get us. They just don't understand the subject. They just don't get it. They've been math teachers, English, coaches. What they know about band is Friday nights. That's what they know band is because I haven't had a coach come to a band concert, like, ever. I would love to see the football team show up to a band concert. How cool would that be? But it never happens because [they don't know what band is. They don't realize what band is].

The subthemes that emerged from the analysis of qualitative data regarding administrative support were participants' ideas of their ideal administrative support, examples of good administrative support, examples of poor administrative support, and a shared desire for administrators to be more present in the music classroom and at

performances. In summary, administrative support was deemed very important by participants for the success of their programs.

***Ideal Administrative Support: I just want to be treated like a professional***

When describing their ideal administrative support, the consensus was that music teachers wanted to be acknowledged as professionals of their content area, not micromanaged, and desired for administrators to be present both in the classroom and at performances. Mason described his ideal administrative support as:

When you have administrators that recognize what our needs are as music teachers and they provide PD that directly goes to us, that tells me that they're listening to us. They understand what struggles we are having in our specific classrooms and situations which is only going to improve and benefit the relationships between us and our administrators, which is only going to improve job satisfaction that much further. ...I've had some great administrators in the past years and, uh, a lot of it was because they got it. They understood, and that means more than they even realize.

Travis preferred his administrators to be aware of his program but at a distance:

I'm more of the type that prefers an administrator to just stay out of my way and let me do my job, but I do think it's important for administrators to acknowledge what's happening with the program just for the sake of the kids.

His basic wish for an administrator was, "I don't want to be micromanaged. I just want to be treated like a professional." In contrast, Mason preferred an administrator to occasionally stop by his room:

Where an administrator can walk into my classroom and the kids don't freak out because it's normal occurrence that he comes by just to say hello and hear what we're working on. I'd like for my administrator to be aware of what's going on in my classroom.

Megan had a similar outlook:

I like principals that allow me to just teach and do my thing. So yes, stay out of my way, but then yes, come by and just listen to us. Um, and, you know, don't micromanage me. Don't tell me how to do my job because you've never done it before unless obviously, you've been a band director before.

Gabrielle had experienced what she considered both good and bad administrative support and shared, "I've had administrators who let me do my job. They're the best... And then I've had the opposite where they try and micromanage everything and undermine you and embarrass you in front of students. Overall, the participants' ideal administrative support included administrators who: drop in occasionally to listen to rehearsals, attend performances, and do not micromanage.

***Examples of Good Administrative Support: You want to do what for me?***

Although there were very strong examples shared of situations where music teachers felt supported by an administrator, Ansley was unable to think of any examples of good administrative support. Melissa, however, had a very powerful account to share of an administrator paying for a substitute so she could handle the ramifications of an accident:

[My program] had an accident and so I had a lot on my plate, and he actually looked at me and said, "We need to take something off your plate while you are

dealing with the ramifications of this event, so is there a substitute that can come in and teach your beginning band classes for you for the week so that you can have more time to focus on this other stuff right now?” And I just sat there dumbfounded because I was like, “Excuse me, you want to do what for me?” And he hired a substitute. Like I didn’t have to take any leave. It didn’t come out of my band budget. It came out of his budget, and for that week my beginning band classes were taught by a retired musician so that I could focus on other things that my program needed at that time. ...He was always very aware of that stuff, and I still appreciate that to this day.

A similar example was shared by Mason where his principal demonstrated a caring attitude and concern for his general wellbeing:

My first year...my principal cared enough about me that he came to my room and literally kicked me out twice. I was working and it was like, six o’clock at night, you know, ‘cause I have work to do and he said, “No, you’re done. It’ll be there tomorrow.” It was the most caring advice I’ve ever received from an administrator because he knew that he did not want, he didn’t want me to burn it out, you know, and that meant a lot to me. So that kind of support, uh, is very valuable and meant a lot to me.

Mason shared yet another example from a different administrator where his superintendent actually stepped in and ran a band rehearsal when Michael had an unexpected issue with his blood pressure:

There was a time where my blood pressure, like, freaked out on me so he came to my room and grabbed the nurse. [The] nurse took me to his office, I sat in his

office, he gave me a fresh Coke, and he rehearsed my band for the rest of the period.

Participants of the focus group sessions expressed an appreciation for administrators that helped provide equipment for their programs. Mallory shared one such example by stating, “I have a very generous principal. He keeps digging in his principal fund and buying band instruments.”

The music teacher participants especially liked when administrators showed an interest in their music programs’ performances. Melissa shared how she previously had two administrators that would vie for the opportunity to attend her spring band concert over a sporting event:

I had two administrators at that school, and they would fight over which one would get to attend the band concerts ‘cause usually there would be a sporting event that would conflict, particularly in the springtime, and they would argue. They would tell me each individually that they were fighting to be the one that got to come to the band concert and not go to the spring sporting event, and that always made, like, I mean, it’s just going to make anyone feel good that you’ve got both administrators really fighting to wanna come see your product and support your kids.

Good support from administrators not only positively impacts music teachers, but also benefits the students of music programs as well. The focus group interviews provided a variety of examples of what participants perceived as good examples of administrative support including support in the area of concert for music teachers’



welfare, providing equipment for programs, or even the simple act of attending a performance.

***Examples of Poor Administrative Support: I almost left the profession***

When asked to describe situations when an administrator had failed to support them as a music teacher, the participants were able (and eager) to call forth a multitude of examples. Melissa shared two memories from one of her earliest teaching positions as a band director. The school had a band program of over 200 students and Melissa was told that not only would she be teaching all the students herself with no assistant, but she would also be taking over the orchestra program which was another 70 kids. When describing her feelings after her advisor spoke to the principal on her behalf, she said, “I felt very kind of just defeated ‘cause he said the principal just didn’t care about the workload that he was putting on me.” For the second situation, she returned to school after summer break only to find everything from her band office had been moved out and left sitting in the middle of band room because her office had been taken over for something else without notifying her. She then shared, “That same job I almost left the profession over because of instances like that.”

Not all the examples given were so severe. For example, John explained how he felt the need to purchase his own classroom resources because the administration would not provide them when he said, “I have a lot of other resources that I’ve purchased myself because at my other school, they weren’t going to.”

In some of the examples given by participants where administrators failed to support them as a music teacher, the administrators were not subtle in their lack of support. Daniel shared a particularly harsh example when he said, “It’s really not good

when you look at a principal in his office and say, “Hey, you really wouldn’t mind if I just walked out the door and never came back.” And the principal sits there and doesn’t say anything.” Another severe example was shared by Megan when she recounted an example of how her principal wanted the band to pay for their own seats at football games for the season because of the social distancing ordinances created due to the newly created Covid-19 protocols. A surprising example shared by Tanya involved an administrator who was actually a former band director:

I had an assistant principal who was also a band director, but she wasn’t very supportive of me, which was a little surprising to me...Like, she was not supportive in any way, and I felt like any opportunity she was given to tear me down she would...My first few years of teaching were rough because of my administration and especially that assistant principal who just wasn’t supportive of me and my program....It was rough being under a former band director who did not come to my band room to offer advice and to help, but to belittle me and talk about what she did in her glory days.

Instead of serving as a valuable resource and providing the support a new teacher really needed, the administrator chose instead to belittle and demean her.

The focus group participants viewed consistency in administrators as an important trait. It was frustrating to music teachers when administrators were not consistent with their own policies or with how they treated various programs at the schools. Gabrielle expressed her feelings regarding inconsistency when she stated, “I’ve had principals that would say one thing and then do another, and that was incredibly frustrating. Ashley also expressed frustration with the disparity between the treatment of the band and choir

programs at her school by sharing, “I don’t feel like I get equal treatment, but I’m held to the same standards as the band program.” Examples of poor administrative support shared by participants included administrators demonstrating a disregard for the wellbeing of the music teacher, unrealistic program expectations, and inconsistent treatment of music programs housed in the same school.

***Administrator Presence: It’s kind of a big deal***

All the participants shared the same desire for a stronger administrator presence both in their classrooms and at performances because it demonstrates an interest. Katherine had the following to say regarding administrators visiting her elementary music classroom: “So I just think that when an administrator actually comes into our room, it’s kind of a big deal because usually they just kind of pass by and um, not really interested in what we do.”

Secondary teachers also wanted administrators to visit their rooms more frequently. Mason spoke his need for acknowledgement from administrators and of the tendency for band directors to be left to their own devices and be isolated:

I’m one of those people that I do need a pat on the back. Like, I’m that person and a lot of times, you know, we’re kind of left to our own devices and not often seen. You know, we’re seen in the public constantly but having an administrator just come to our classroom just to poke their head in doesn’t happen that often with me, and I wish it would happen more. My classroom is separated from the building and, I don’t know, I just kind of sometimes feel alone, you know, and some people really like that. I’m not. Um, so I wish I had a stronger working relationship with my administrators.

Megan really liked how a former principal made it a point to support all of the school's programs, including attending all of the band's performances if possible or at least watching a video of the performance if he could not be there in person:

He supported everyone which was very nice because he would try to show up to everything that was going on with all the organizations...He would make it a point to pop in for all three ensembles' [state band assessments]. He would show up to our Christmas concert, show up to our spring concerts. Obviously, he would be at the football games, so he would see us perform then. He would come to the Mardi Gras parades. Everything that we did he would try to come to, at least pretty much all of our performances, and if he couldn't make it, he asked if there was a video of it, like the following Monday which was nice because, you know, he wanted to watch it.

Travis had the opposite experience of consistently not having any administrators attend his students' performances. He was so frustrated by it that he shared, "I had half in mind that when I got tenured, maybe we would go around [at concerts] and call each school individually and have the administrators recognized just to show that they weren't showing up."

Despite initially having a poor experience with having a former band director as an administrator, Tanya spoke of current assistant principal who was a former band director and really appreciated his knowledge of band during his spontaneous classroom visits:

I feel really lucky because one of my assistant principals used to be a band director, so he understands and he's had times in the past where he would just pop

into my classroom, especially getting ready for a concert. I would have full band practice during school and every now and then he would just come in and he would start getting onto my students like, “You know you should be sitting up. You need to be doing better.” You know, he would just go ahead and get on them for me so I could just be on the podium. He’s had moments where he would just come in and just start playing a drum and then just walk out, and the kids are like,” Whaaat?!” Yeah, he’s a musician too. Yeah, don’t mind him. But just having that support and him just walking in every now and then to show the kids hey, you can do like me one day. You know, I really appreciate that....I feel grateful to have that support from that standpoint.

In this case, having a former band director as an administrator proved beneficial because of his general knowledge of band programs allowed him to provide an extra level of support not possible from an administrator with no knowledge of how band programs operate. Mallory also felt very fortunate to have a principal who used to be in band:

There’s nothing more to say about my present principal because he was a band geek. You know, one day I’m teaching and he’s back there playing on the Orff bells with the kids, you know, so he understands the curriculum. He understands how important it is.

All participants wanted more administrator presence both casually during daily rehearsals, and also at performances. Additionally, the deeper insight into the curriculum and issues faced by music teachers is an advantage for administrators who were formerly part of music programs or were music teachers themselves because it provides more opportunities to provide meaningful support for the music teachers at their school.

## **Additional Findings**

The focus group data included additional findings that did not fit into any of the subthemes but were still relevant to participants' overall job satisfaction. Additional responses impacting job satisfaction that were notable included student achievement, having available resources, and parental support. Participants also contributed their views on the issue of music teacher attrition. To conclude the focus group sessions, participants were asked a series of general questions relating to perceptions of music teacher attrition. When asked why music teachers leave the profession early, there were a few different speculations presented. Mason theorized a connection between musicians transferring the need to perfect their play to a need to perfect their program and overworking themselves to the point they leave the profession:

I think part of it is the nature of what we are. We're musicians, right? And we're musicians first. Before we ever became a teacher, we were musicians, and we have spent hours and hours and hours and days and weeks and months and years in practice rooms working to perfect everything. Now when we're teaching, we're trying to do the same thing, but we are limited by the time we have. We are constantly being hounded with other things that are not related to our programs directly and it's causing us to end up, we end up overworking ourselves because we don't want a halfway program. We want the absolute best we can offer, and we just get tired of working so hard that we end up working ourselves out of the profession.

Gabrielle related the issue of music teacher attrition to poor support from administration by asserting, "If there's support, you're gonna want to stay. You're gonna

want to do the best you can for that administrator.” Melissa offered another opinion and related high levels of attrition back to poor teacher preparation saying, “I think that’s where you have, you have a large attrition rate there because [music education students are] not given the tools needed.” These theories all have merit and could potentially all be significant factors affecting music teachers’ decision to leave the profession before retirement.

### **Summary of Qualitative Findings**

Qualitative findings from the three focus group sessions included the themes of (1) jobs satisfaction, (2) professional development, and (3) administrative support. The major themes were then broken down into subthemes. The subthemes for job satisfaction included collaboration and relationships, teacher preparation, stress, scheduling, and perceptions of the job. Subthemes for professional development included ideal professional development, relevant professional development, teaching observations, and the effects of music PD. The subthemes for administrative support were ideal administrative support, examples of good administrative support, examples of poor administrator support, and administrator presence. Additional findings that did not fit into any of the larger themes but were still relevant to participants job satisfaction included student achievement, having available resources, and parental support.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter contains the interpretations of the findings of the study examined through the lens of the Existence-Related-Growth (ERG) theory. Results for each research question are discussed and compared to the literature. Suggestions for future research are presented based upon the study results along with recommendations for policy and practice.

#### **Discussion and Conclusions**

This mixed methods study investigated the perceptions of current music teachers in the three areas of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support through examination of their observations and experiences with the purpose of understanding better understanding music teacher job satisfaction as an effort to reduce music teacher attrition. A quantitative survey provided data for music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, number of music related professional development, and perceptions of administrative support. These variables were further explored with qualitative data collected from three focus group sessions.



## **Quantitative Research Questions**

Quantitative data was gathered with an electronic self-report questionnaire created by combining two instruments to measure job satisfaction and administrative support and adding the necessary questions to collect participant demographics and professional development data. The Job Satisfaction Survey (Appendix F) was used to measure music teachers' job satisfaction, professional development was measured by the number of hours participants spent annually participating in music related professional development (PD), and administrative support was measured by the Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support survey (Appendix G).

### ***RQ1. What is music teachers' perceived level of job satisfaction?***

Job satisfaction falls under the growth component of the ERG theory as job satisfaction stems directly from the satisfaction derived from worthwhile work. Music teachers are musicians first, therefore the need for creativity is an integral part of the profession. To answer the first question the descriptive statistics were calculated for the data from the JSS. Results indicated music teachers had a high to moderately high level of job satisfaction ( $M = 4.23$ ,  $SD = 0.76$ ). These findings of high levels of job satisfaction are consistent with other studies measuring music teacher job satisfaction (Baker, 2007). A study by Baker (2007) involving 87 early career secondary choral educators found similar results with 85% of participants reporting to be somewhat or very satisfied with their teaching positions and most intending to stay in their current teaching assignment. Although the overall rating of job satisfaction by music teachers in the study was generally high, it cannot be assumed there are no causes for dissatisfaction so further qualitative evidence is needed to provide scope to the results.

***RQ2. What is music teachers' amount of music related professional development (PD)?***

The second research question was answered with analysis of music teachers' responses to the PD portion of the questionnaire. The study results indicated music teachers attended between 0 and 15 hours of music-related professional development annually ( $M = 1.76, SD = 0.53$ ). Collaboration and cooperation with peers are a major component of most PD offerings and the relatedness needs of the ERG theory assumes a need for social interaction. Active engagement in PD also indicates a desire for professional growth like the ERG theory suggests.

Educators' sometimes measure their effectiveness based on accomplishments of their students, so they enjoy seeing students do well. Potera and Mehmeti (2019) found in a quantitative study of 170 teachers the highest motivating factors for professional development were 1) student outcomes ( $M = 1.48, SD = 0.50$ ), 2) job satisfaction ( $M = 1.54, SD = 0.50$ ), and 3) technology development ( $M = 1.60, SD = 0.49$ ). Yoon and Kim (2021) found from a 2018 survey of 2,411 teachers that approximately 75% of participants reported they participated in PD activities designed to improve their content, curriculum, and pedagogical knowledge, but teachers were less likely to participate in PD activities related to general teacher practices. Likewise, music teachers often feel that PD related to general teacher practices are not applicable to the music classroom but are still frequently required to attend them. The quantitative portion of this study only measured participants' music related PD experiences, so it is likely the overall amount of PD attended annually is higher than the reported number due to the required local and state PD mandated each year.

***RQ3. What is music teachers' perceived level of administrative support?***

Administrative support is important for any professional educator (Cockpim & Somprach, 2019), but especially for content areas that fall outside of the core subjects of math, science, language arts, and social studies. Examination of the data found music teachers perceived a neutral to moderate ( $M = 3.66$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) level of administrative support. While this result indicates administrators do support their music programs to some extent, there is still room for improvement. Support from administrators not only benefits music teachers and their programs, but administration and leadership style have also been found have a large impact on school culture as a whole (Sanderson et al., 2019). According to the third level of the ERG theory, workers need to be able to find levels of self-esteem in the work they produce, and administrators have the power to directly impact music teachers' work self-esteem by providing support or denying it. Hancock (2016) analyzed 270 music teacher records from a national survey and found 20.8% identified dissatisfaction with administrator support to be the most important influence leading to music teachers deciding to change schools. Administrators should be cognizant of the impact they have over all school employees' psychological welfare, including music educators.

***RQ4. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and the number of hours of music related professional development?***

The fourth research question was answered by comparing participants' reported level of job satisfaction to their annual number of hours of music related professional development. A weak positive relationship that was approaching significance ( $r = 0.28$ ,  $r^2 = 0.08$ , and  $p = 0.06$ ) was found between the amount of music related professional

development attended and music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction. This result indicates that music teacher job satisfaction increases slightly with the amount of music related professional development attended. A study by Bautista and Wong (2019) found music teachers perceived that the duration of PD tended to be directly proportional to its helpfulness. If the duration of PD is directly proportional to its helpfulness and the amount of music related PD attended is proportional to job satisfaction, it can be surmised that music teachers find relevant and helpful PD increases overall job satisfaction which is also in accordance with the growth need of the ERG theory.

Additional review of the literature produces mixed results regarding the impact of professional development on music teacher job satisfaction. Yoon and Kim (2021) found teachers with higher participatory PD profiles had significantly higher job satisfaction while Potera and Mehmeti (2019) found teachers' degree of job satisfaction and the increased demand or need for participation in professional development were not reciprocally linked. Three groups of factors identified by Bukantaitė & Kubiliūtė (2015) that encourage learning in the workplace are evaluation, functional, and structural factors, and teachers' learning in their workplace is encouraged by their desire to improve professionally, confidence in themselves and their opportunities, and a desire to feel good in their work environment. While the literature contains mixed results regarding the impact of PD on teacher job satisfaction, study results generally show a positive correlation between the participation in PD and teacher job satisfaction (Bautista & Wong, 2019; Potera & Mehmeti, 2019; Yoon & Kim, 2021).

Music teachers have been found to identify and self-initiate music related professional development to meet their personal, collaborative, and reflective needs for

the different stages of their career cycles (Johnson et al., 2019). This need to self-initiate music related PD might be due to a lack of satisfaction in school-led PD opportunities. Sanderson et al. (2019) found a survey of 518 music teachers to be generally satisfied in all surveyed aspects of their working conditions except for school led professional development, where participants' consensus was mostly negative. These results were echoed in the qualitative findings of this study. The identified groups of factors that encourage learning in the workplace and music teachers' tendency to self-initiate music related professional development both support the findings of this study that suggest a positive relationship exists between music teacher job satisfaction and number of hours of music related professional development.

***RQ5. What is the relationship between music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and perceived level of administrative support?***

Administrators play an important role in teacher job satisfaction, retention, and attrition (Baker, 2007), and perceptions of supportive school leadership is strongly associated with job satisfaction for educators (Ansley et al., 2019). This study found this to be consistent with a statistically significant strong positive relationship ( $r = 0.65$ ,  $r^2 = 0.42$ , and  $p < .001$ ) between the amount of administrative support and music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction, indicating that music teachers' job satisfaction increases as administrative support increases. Although there is limited literature pertaining specifically to music teacher job satisfaction and administrative support, the results of this study are consistent with existing perceptions regarding teacher job satisfaction and administrative support (García Torres, 2019).

## **Qualitative Research Questions**

The participants' qualitative responses are arranged by the three major themes of job satisfaction, professional development, and administrator support to align with the research questions. Each theme also contains a series of subthemes. While these thoughts are not all inclusive, they do provide an enlightening glimpse into the world of music educators and examples of situations they encounter.

### ***RQ6. What are music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction?***

Analysis of the discussion from the focus group sessions revealed the five subthemes related to the overarching theme of job satisfaction: (a) collaboration and relationships, (b) teacher preparation, (c) stress, (d) scheduling, and (e) perceptions of the profession. ERG theory indicates that teachers' needs affect job satisfaction, and these findings are indicative of teachers' needs for both relatedness and growth.

Participants felt strongly that all music teachers should be part of a community for support and mentorship which is consistent with Baker (2007) who found that "Colleagues in the music field" was ranked highest on teachers' and principals' responses to the rating of the importance of types of professional assistance and that the support of other teachers has been shown to be a primary factor in early career music teachers' decision to stay in the teaching profession. Plainly stated, music teachers rely on support from their colleagues. Participants' reasoning for joining a professional community was largely based upon the foundation that music teachers are frequently isolated in their teaching positions. Hancock (2008) indicates that music teachers are often members of small departments and generally left to make their own pedagogical decisions (Hancock, 2008), so opportunities to collaborate with other music teachers generally welcomed.

Participants strongly felt that either teaching with another music educator or forming professional relationships with other music educators greatly affected their overall job satisfaction. The ERG theory posits relatedness, or the need for social interaction, as a basic need which explains why an investigation of 321 secondary music educators found music teachers who left the profession were less likely to have had a mentor (Russell, 2012). The findings from this study provide further evidence to support the importance of music educators participating in some form of professional interaction with other music educators, whether it be engaging in mentoring style partnership or simply joining a professional community of other music educators.

Another subtheme identified from the larger theme of job satisfaction was teacher preparation. Focus group participants found their undergraduate music teacher programs had not prepared them to effectively teach all music content areas. Preservice music educators are often required to declare a specialization such as instrumental, choral, or general music, and specify an age group, for example, secondary or elementary music, although upon graduating it is most common for music teachers to earn a K-12 or PK-12 music teaching license (Kuebel, 2017) which grants the certification to teach all music specializations and grade levels. While a lack of research shows how frequently it occurs, it is not uncommon for music educators to teach outside of their primary specialization at some point during their careers with the most common out-of-specialization transition being to elementary music (Groulx, 2015; Kuebel, 2017). This was consistent with findings from the current study as two of the focus group participants reported teaching outside of their primary concentration, with one participant being a secondary instrumentalist teaching elementary music and the other being a secondary

instrumentalist that currently teaches secondary vocal music. A qualitative case study of five instrumentalists teaching elementary general music found most participants felt unprepared to teach elementary general music when they first began due to a lack of exposure to elementary music throughout their undergraduate degree programs (Kuebel, 2019). The study findings support and agree with Kuebel's findings. As many music educators work outside their area of concentration, consideration should be taken by current music teacher educators to utilize their current curriculum to better prepare music educators for success in a multitude of teaching scenarios (Kuebel, 2019). Additional areas participants reported to be lacking in their undergraduate music teacher programs were managing student discipline, and basic business fundamentals.

Stress and scheduling were two additional subthemes that emerged from the overarching theme of job satisfaction. Working as a music teacher can be incredibly stressful (Varona, 2018), and participants in all three focus group sessions brought up scheduling as an important issue. The ERG theory identifies routine and schedule as part of the basic existence needs, so disruption will negatively affect workers. Grievances described by participants included unreasonable class schedules for the music teachers to follow, adding and removing students from classes late into the quarter, placing unwilling students into performance-based classes, and not having a schedule conducive to building a program. Participants also resented being required to teach non-music courses. The requirement of music teachers to teach non-music-related courses is a fairly common occurrence as Matthews and Koner (2017) found 16% of surveyed music teachers reported teaching at least one non-music-based course. Situations such as these were also



causes of stress for focus group participants. Although these stress and scheduling issues are listed under job satisfaction, they are also closely tied to administrative support.

A final subtheme that emerged from the larger theme of job satisfaction was perceptions of the profession. Participants largely felt that administrators and the public view music programs as halftime entertainment for football games or that elementary music consists of singing and dancing. These concerns are not new, as Madsen and Hancock (2002) found music teacher concerns related to administrator support included differing understandings of music education importance, perceiving music as extracurricular activity, and challenges to the content of instruction. This concern of how music programs are perceived was present at both the elementary and secondary level. To summarize, although participants generally expressed high levels of job satisfaction, important identified factors affecting job satisfaction included collaboration and relationships, teacher preparation, stress, scheduling, and perceptions of the job.

***RQ7. What are music teachers' perceptions of professional development?***

The four subthemes of ideal PD, relevant PD, observations, and the effects of music related PD emerged from the larger PD theme. The literature supports the participants' views that professional development should be continuous and spread over a long period of time. Bautista and Wong (2019) found in a music teacher study involving a qualitative focus group of 12 participants and a quantitative survey of 98 participants that music teachers prefer long and work-intensive PD initiatives that focus on a mix of content directly applicable in class and value active learning opportunities and interacting with familiar fellow colleagues. Participants of the study shared that their most helpful PD experience averaged 67 hours ( $SD = 139.4$ ). Similarly, Potera and Mehmeti (2019)

found the need for continuous professional development to be the top motivational factor for PD. These findings agree with the focus group responses where participants repeatedly expressed a desire for sustained relevant PD offerings directly applicable to their music class settings and opportunities to observe rehearsals and performances of other ensembles.

The ERG theory suggests workers have a basic need for social interaction which can be fulfilled by participation in professional development. While Gallo (2018) found from an analysis of the 2011-2012 Schools and Staffing Survey that music teachers were significantly less likely to collaborate with other educators on issues of instruction and engaged in significantly less technology-related professional activity, they reported significantly higher levels of satisfaction and engaged in more content-specific activity than some higher stakes disciplines. This matches the responses from the focus groups where participants had a higher enjoyment of music related PD and reported feeling reenergized and having a renewed spark after attending music conferences. West (2021) advocates that socially interactive and sustained PD participation should be increased which was also a sentiment expressed by all three focus groups. The overall findings from the focus group sessions relating to professional development are that music teachers want sustained and relevant PD opportunities that include the observations of other ensembles performances and rehearsals, and that music related PD has an overall positive effect on music teacher job satisfaction.

***RQ8. What are music teachers' perceptions of administrative support?***

Participants' perceptions of administrative support could be categorized into the four subthemes of ideal administrative support, examples of good administrative support,

examples of poor administrator support, and administrator presence. Participants described an ideal administrator as one who would allow them to have agency over their programs and provide support when needed without micromanaging. While there were many examples given of both positive and negative examples of administrator support, participants had an easier time thinking of instances where they did not feel supported. The literature reflects this as one study found a major concern of 120 band director respondents centered on a perceived lack of support from school officials and the community at large (Heston et al., 1996). Overall, the focus group participants wanted administrators to show more support by having a stronger presence in the classroom and making an effort to attend performances not related to secondary events such as football games and parades.

### **Additional Findings and Discussion**

The focus group data included additional findings that did not fit into any of the subthemes but were still relevant to participants' overall job satisfaction. Additional responses impacting job satisfaction that were notable included student achievement, having available resources, and parental support. Student enthusiasm, performance skills, and musical competencies have all been found to be significant contributing factors to music teacher job satisfaction (Heston et al., 1996). Robison and Russell (2021) found in a survey of 115 rural Wyoming music teachers that 21.4% of participants planned to migrate to different teaching jobs within five years and 12.1% planned to leave the profession altogether. This rate has remained consistent over the past fifteen years as Hancock (2008) also found from a survey of 1,931 music teachers that participants who

indicated greater levels of administration and parent support were less likely to be at high risk for attrition and migration.

### **Limitations**

The limitations of this research study include recruiting participants from a respectively small geographical area that had a working relationship with the researcher. It is possible the response rate was limited by the electronic distribution of the electronic survey, and data collection occurred during the height of the first wave of the Covid-19 pandemic, so the researcher was not able to access as many people to recruit for the study. Another limitation was the lack of representation of novice teachers in the focus group sessions. The restricted geography covered by the research could have also influenced the overall results of the study. These limitations could be addressed in future research by expanding the geographical area from which participants are recruited and including novice teachers in the qualitative focus group sessions.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

The examination and exploration of the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support conducted in this study provide a better understanding of music teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and is intended to serve as a resource for school administrators to help improve overall music teacher job satisfaction. Based on the study findings the researcher has several recommendations for further research into music teacher job satisfaction. Results of this study reveal a significant relationship between music teacher job satisfaction and administrative support and indicate a relationship that is approaching significance between music teacher job satisfaction and professional development. The focus group

sessions revealed strong feelings of both like and dislike for professional development that was dependent on whether the professional development was valid and targeted towards music teachers. The researcher recommends exploring in more detail the relationship between music teacher job satisfaction and professional development with distinction between the type of professional development being attended. While studies have been done on music teachers' perceptions of the most and least helpful professional development (Bautista & Wong, 2019), the quality of music teacher professional development (Bautista et al., 2017; Gallo, 2018), and music teachers' professional development needs (Johnson et al., 2019) there is a lack of literature addressing music teacher job satisfaction in relation to types of professional development. Further exploration of this topic would serve advantageous to both music educators and school administrators when planning professional development activities. The author also recommends researchers to further explore contributing factors to music teacher attrition.

### **Recommendations for Policy and Practice**

Depending on the expectations of specific music programs, the music education profession can be one of great sacrifice but also great reward. Music educators enjoy working with students and revel in their accomplishments (Matthews & Koner, 2017), but as this study has shown, administrators have the ability to provide invaluable support to assist or they can create additional challenges for music teachers to overcome. While aspects of the profession can prove challenging to the most seasoned of educators, effective administrative support would serve to benefit all music educators no matter in which stage of their career they currently are.

This study exposed three current issues music teachers associate with administrative support. The first was a lack of administrator presence in their classrooms and at their performances. Music teachers expressed a strong desire for administrators to be present in their classrooms and especially at performances. The second issue was a lack of understanding from administration about music programs and what they do. Participants felt that administrators did not understand them or the music curriculum. A third issue was discontent with current scheduling practices. Insufficient administrative support has been identified as a primary motivator for music educators to leave the profession and one of the biggest concerns expressed by music educators is the general lack of support for music (Matthews & Koner, 2017). One explanation may be that principals perceive their support for teachers is greater than the support teachers feel they receive (Hughes et al., 2015). Educating administrators and equipping them with a better understanding of the music teacher profession and specifically how to support music educators is a small step in the right direction for improving music teacher job satisfaction and reducing music teacher attrition rates.

Although music teachers share many similarities with non-music teachers, there are aspects of the music education profession that deviate from the education profession norm (e.g., curriculum flexibility, performance expectations, extracurricular requirements). Therefore, administrators should be educated on what music education programs need and expect regarding support from the administration. Initial exposure to the specific nature and needs of music teachers and music programs could be introduced to future administrators through administration certification curriculums, but the implementation should be a continuous and sustained effort as music programs grow and

change over time. To achieve the first component, administrators should communicate with their music teachers early in the year to secure the schedule for major performances and make an effort to attend at least one performance per year. Ideally administrators should attend all major performances but may not be able to due to scheduling conflicts. To achieve the second component, administrators should secure a copy of either the state or national music standards to become more educated on the goals and workings of music programs in their schools. Curriculums of music programs follow basic standards, and awareness of these will better help administrators to understand and support their music programs. Finally, the third component can be achieved by administrators reviewing and revising their scheduling policies. Communication with their music teachers will help to minimize any misunderstandings about scheduling inadequacies or insufficient practices.

Administrators have the potential to improve music teacher job satisfaction by becoming more educated about what music educators do and the challenges associated with running performance based educational music programs. Implementing changes that will help and support music educators will ultimately improve music teacher job satisfaction and hopefully be a start to reducing rates of music teacher attrition.

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## **APPENDICES**

## Appendix A

### IRB Approval Certificate

irb@southalabama.edu



TELEPHONE: (251) 460-6308  
AD 240 · MOBILE, AL. 36688-0002

#### INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

April 6, 2021

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Principal Investigator: Susan Henderson  
IRB # and Title: IRB PROTOCOL: 21-081  
[1696296-1] Factors Affecting Music Teacher Job Satisfaction  
Status: APPROVED      Review Type: Limited Review  
Approval Date: April 5, 2021      Submission Type: New Project  
Initial Approval: April 5, 2021      Expiration Date:  
Review Category: 45 CFR 46.104 (d)(2): Research that only includes interaction involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording):

iii. The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can be readily ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by 45 CFR 46.111(a)(7)

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*This panel, operating under the authority of the DHHS Office for Human Research and Protection, assurance number FWA 00001602, and IRB Database #00000286 or #00011574, has reviewed the submitted materials for the following:*

1. *Protection of the rights and the welfare of human subjects involved.*
2. *The methods used to secure and the appropriateness of informed consent.*
3. *The risk and potential benefits to the subject.*

The regulations require that the investigator not initiate any changes in the research without prior IRB approval, except where necessary to eliminate immediate hazards to the human subjects, and that **all problems involving risks and adverse events be reported to the IRB immediately!**

Subsequent supporting documents that have been approved will be stamped with an IRB approval and expiration date (if applicable) on every page. Copies of the supporting documents must be utilized with the current IRB approval stamp unless consent has been waived.

#### Notes:

There are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of data

## Appendix B

### School District Research Approval



**Mobile County**  
**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

1 Magnum Pass | Mobile, Alabama 36618 | 251-221-4000 | www.mcps.com

**BOARD OF SCHOOL COMMISSIONERS**  
Reginald A. Crenshaw, Ph.D., President - District 3  
William C. Foster, Ed.D., Vice President - District 5  
L. Douglas Harwell, Jr. - District 1  
Don Stringfellow - District 2  
Sherry Dillihay-McDade - District 4

**SUPERINTENDENT Chresal D. Threadgill**

March 22, 2021

Ms. Susan Henderson  
213 Jill Lane  
Satsuma, AL 36572

RE: Permission to conduct research

Dear Ms. Henderson,

The Mobile County Public School System grants permission and approval for your research proposal, *Factors Affecting Music Teacher Job Satisfaction*, to be conducted in schools in the district. Approval is given, however, with the following stipulations:

1. Involvement is to be on a voluntary basis. You must advise your participants that they are not obligated to participate in your study.
2. You must comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act.
3. Confidentiality must be guaranteed for all participants.
4. Any and all surveys must be administered electronically through this office.
5. Approval for the above referenced study is granted for one year from the date of this letter.

Upon conclusion of the research, one completed copy of your study should be submitted to the MCPSS Division of Research, Assessment, Grants, and Accountability.

Best wishes to you as you continue your research efforts.

Sincerely,

Susan Hinton, PhD  
Executive Director  
Research, Assessment, Grants & Accountability

**LEARNING TODAY. LEADING TOMORROW.**







**BALDWIN COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
*Building Excellence*

***OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT***

Eddie Tyler, M.Ed., Superintendent  
2600-A North Hand Avenue  
Bay Minette, AL 36507  
E-Mail: [etyler@bcbe.org](mailto:etyler@bcbe.org)

TEL: 251-937-0308  
FAX: 251-580-1856

April 12, 2021

Susan Henderson  
Citronelle High School

Dear Ms. Henderson:

As per your request, approval is provided to speak to Baldwin County Public School regarding your survey. **Please be advised the final decision will remain with the principal to distribute information on his/her campus.** A copy of this letter should be taken with you when visiting our schools or accompany the material if sent through the mail.

Your interest in the Baldwin County Public Schools is appreciated.

Sincerely,

*Eddie Tyler*

Eddie Tyler  
Superintendent

## Appendix C

### Invitation Email to Participate

Good morning,

My name is Susan Henderson, and I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of South Alabama. You are being invited to participate in a research study that examines the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, and administrative support and to examine perceptions of current music teachers on how professional development and administrative support affect overall music teacher job satisfaction. We hope to discover and investigate the connections, if any, between music teacher job satisfaction, participation in professional development, and perceived administrative support to better understand how to improve music teacher job satisfaction as an effort to reduce rates of music teacher attrition.

If you have additional questions about this research study you may contact me at [sh1630@jagmail.southalabama.edu](mailto:sh1630@jagmail.southalabama.edu) or 251-221-3452, or you may contact my major professor, Dr. Benterah Morton, at [morton@southalabama.edu](mailto:morton@southalabama.edu) or 251-380-2765.

For questions about your rights as a research participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at 251-460-6308 or email [irb@southalabama.edu](mailto:irb@southalabama.edu).

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Susan Henderson



## Appendix D

### Informed Consent

#### Informed Consent

**Study Title:**

**Factors Affecting Music Teacher Job Satisfaction**

**Investigators:**

Susan Henderson, Doctoral Student, 256-656-2270, [sh1630@jagmail.southalabama.edu](mailto:sh1630@jagmail.southalabama.edu)

Benterah C. Morton, Assistant Professor, 251-380-2765 [morton@southalabama.edu](mailto:morton@southalabama.edu)

**Invitation:**

You are being invited to participate in this study that examines the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and administrative support. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, and administrative support and to examine perceptions of current music teachers on how professional development and administrative support affect overall music teacher job satisfaction. We hope to discover and investigate the connections, if any, between music teacher job satisfaction, participation in professional development, and perceived administrative support to better understand how to improve music teacher job satisfaction as an effort to reduce rates of music teacher attrition.

**Study procedures:**

Our research plan consists of two parts (1) a brief electronic survey and (2) 45-60 minute focus groups interviews. You will be involved in one survey. Selected participants will be invited to participate in the focus group interviews. All data collected, including recordings of interviews and focus groups, will be password protected and stored on a secure server.

**Benefits of participation:**

The anticipated benefits to participants include feeling good about being part of a research study and providing details about the impacts of two factors currently affecting music teacher job satisfaction. This study has the potential to benefit music teachers and K-12 school administrators by providing valuable data that can be utilized to improve music teacher job satisfaction. Researchers may also benefit from this study as they continue to understand and investigate contributing factors affecting music teacher job satisfaction and causes of music teacher attrition.

**Risks of participation:**

There is a nominal risk of loss of anonymity for interview and focus group participants. To the best of our knowledge, there are no known risks associated with completing the survey.

**Confidentiality & Document Storage:**

Data collected within this study will not be anonymous, however, efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality of the data and participants. The data will be downloaded and stored on a secure password protected hard-drive. The data will be retained indefinitely. Portions of the data may be used in journal articles, conference presentations, books, website presentation, and additional research projects and will be kept anonymous through the use of pseudonyms.



You should be aware of long-term privacy issues associated with participation. Your identity will remain confidential unless disclosure is required by law, or at your request. The researchers are mandatory reports, meaning that any information discussed of an illegal nature, or that specifies harm to self or others, may need to be reported to the appropriate authorities.

**Right to refuse:**

You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty or loss of any benefit to which you might otherwise be entitled. Should you choose to withdraw from this study please notify researchers in writing.

**Contacts, Questions, and Signature:**

For questions about your rights as a research participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact the Institutional Review Board at 251-460-6308 or email [irb@southalabama.edu](mailto:irb@southalabama.edu)

You have read the Informed Consent Document. All questions regarding participating in this study have been answered. You may direct additional questions regarding participation in this study to the researchers.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

	USA Institutional Review Board	
	Approved:	04/05/2021
	IRB Number:	21-081/1696296-1

## Appendix E

### Qualitative Focus Group Questions

#### Qualitative Focus Group Questions

1. Describe your ideal professional development.
2. Describe a meaningful experience(s) when participation in a professional development offering has increased your effectiveness as a music teacher.
3. What are your thoughts on the impact of professional development for music teachers?
4. Describe a meaningful experience(s) in which your administrator has supported you as a music teacher.
5. Describe a meaningful experience(s) in which your administrator has failed to support you as a music teacher.
6. Describe the ideal relationship between a music teacher and administrator.
7. Describe your own job satisfaction.
8. What contributing factors and/or experiences have shaped your job satisfaction as a music teacher?
9. What do you think might improve music teacher job satisfaction?
10. What are your perceptions on why some music teachers might leave the profession early?
11. What do you think might be done to reduce the likelihood that a music teacher might leave the profession early?

\*Follow up questions will be asked to obtain rich data from participants on the themes represented in this interview protocol.

	USA Institutional Review Board	
	Approved:	04/05/2021
	IRB Number:	21-081/1696296-1

## Appendix F

### Job Satisfaction Survey

<b>JOB SATISFACTION SURVEY</b> Paul E. Spector Department of Psychology University of South Florida <small>Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.</small>		
	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT.	Disagree very much Disagree moderately Disagree slightly Agree slightly Agree moderately Agree very much
1	I feel I am being paid a fair amount for the work I do.	1 2 3 4 5 6
2	There is <u>really too</u> little chance for promotion on my job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
3	My supervisor is quite competent in doing his/her job.	1 2 3 4 5 6
4	I am not satisfied with the benefits I receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
5	When I do a good job, I receive the recognition for it that I should receive.	1 2 3 4 5 6
6	Many of our rules and procedures make doing a good job difficult.	1 2 3 4 5 6
7	I like the people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
8	I sometimes feel my job is meaningless.	1 2 3 4 5 6
9	Communications seem good within this organization.	1 2 3 4 5 6
10	Raises are too few and far between.	1 2 3 4 5 6
11	Those who do well on the job stand a fair chance of being promoted.	1 2 3 4 5 6
12	My supervisor is unfair to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6
13	The benefits we receive are as good as most other organizations offer.	1 2 3 4 5 6
14	I do not feel that the work I do is appreciated.	1 2 3 4 5 6
15	My efforts to do a good job are seldom blocked by red tape.	1 2 3 4 5 6
16	I find I <del>have to</del> work harder at my job because of the incompetence of people I work with.	1 2 3 4 5 6
17	I like doing the things I do at work.	1 2 3 4 5 6
18	The goals of this organization are not clear to me.	1 2 3 4 5 6

	PLEASE CIRCLE THE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH QUESTION THAT COMES CLOSEST TO REFLECTING YOUR OPINION ABOUT IT. Copyright Paul E. Spector 1994, All rights reserved.	Disagree very much	Disagree moderately	Disagree slightly	Agree slightly	Agree moderately	Agree very much
19	I feel unappreciated by the organization when I think about what they pay me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20	People get ahead as fast here as they do in other places.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21	My supervisor shows too little interest in the feelings of subordinates.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22	The benefit package we have is equitable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23	There are few rewards for those who work here.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24	I have too much to do at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25	I enjoy my coworkers.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26	I often feel that I do not know what is going on with the organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27	I feel a sense of pride in doing my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28	I feel satisfied with my chances for salary increases.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29	There are benefits we do not have which we should have.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30	I like my supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31	I have too much paperwork.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32	I don't feel my efforts are rewarded the way they should be.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33	I am satisfied with my chances for promotion.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34	There is too much bickering and fighting at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35	My job is enjoyable.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36	Work assignments are not fully explained.	1	2	3	4	5	6

## Appendix G

### Teachers' Perceptions of Administrative Support Survey

#### Teachers' Perceptions Of Administrative Support

**Directions:** Below are statements relating to administrative support needs of teachers. Indicate your level of agreement for each statement with an "X" in the category that best describes your response.

"My Observing Administrator..."	Disagree	Tend to Disagree	No Opinion	Tend to Agree	Agree
1. provides me with the materials I need to do my job properly					
2. provides me with the equipment I need to do my job.					
3. provides me with the financial support I need to do my job.					
4. involves me in decisions related to me and my job.					
5. provides opportunities for professional collaboration.					
6. has my respect and trust.					
7. interacts with me frequently.					
8. attends to my feelings and needs.					
9. recognizes and appreciates the work I do.					
10. provides current information about teaching learning.					
11. provides helpful feedback about my teaching.					
12. informs me about agency and/or school policies					
13. supports my actions and ideas.					
14. explains reasons behind programs and practices.					
15. helps me solve problems.					
16. supports me with my interactions and practices.					
17. understands my program and what I do.					
18. provides leadership about what we are trying to achieve.					
19. provides appropriate assistance when a student's behavior requires it.					
20. encourages me to try new ideas.					



## Appendix H

### Quantitative Professional Development Questions

On average per school year, how many hours do you participate in each of the following professional development activities?

	0-7 hours	8-15 hours	16-23 hours	24-33 hours	33 hours or more
University course(s) related to music teaching?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music observational visits to other schools?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music workshops, conferences, or training sessions in which you were a presenter?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other music workshops, conferences, or training sessions in which you were NOT a presenter?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participation in any music professional development activities specific to and concentrating on the content of the subject(s) you teach?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Appendix I

### Permission to Use Instrumentation

**Henderson, Susan S/Barton**

---

**From:** William Weiss <WWeiss@njedda.org>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 12, 2021 10:29 AM  
**To:** Henderson, Susan S/Citronelle  
**Subject:** RE: Requesting Permission to Use Perceptions of Admin Support Survey

**CAUTION:** This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Susan,

I used the work of others to complete my dissertation.

You have my permission to use my work and my blessing for your success!

**Dr. William G. Weiss**  
**Executive Director**  
**North Jersey Elks Developmental Disabilities Agency**  
**1481 Main Avenue**  
**Clifton, New Jersey 07011**  
**973-772-2600**  
**ww Weiss@njedda.org**

---

**From:** Henderson, Susan S/Citronelle <shenderson1@mcps.com>  
**Sent:** Friday, March 12, 2021 8:15 AM  
**To:** William Weiss <WWeiss@njedda.org>  
**Subject:** Requesting Permission to Use Perceptions of Admin Support Survey  
**Importance:** High

Dr. Weiss,

My name is Susan Henderson and I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of South Alabama working on my EdD in Education for Leadership and Administration. For my dissertation research study I am collecting data to explore the relationships between music teacher job satisfaction, professional development, and perceived administrative support. I came across your survey when researching instruments to measure administrative support through a dissertation by William J. Crowder, Jr., and I am reaching out to see if you would also grant me permission to use your survey for my research with the same language modifications.

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

Sincerely,  
Susan Henderson

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

## **BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH**

Susan S. Henderson was born in Madison, Alabama, on April 12, 1987. She graduated with a Bachelor of Music Education in 2009, and a Masters in Music Education in 2012, from Auburn University, Auburn, Alabama. In addition, she earned an Education Specialist in Instructional Leadership (2019) from the University of South Alabama. She anticipates earning her Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of South Alabama in May 2022. Susan currently teaches as a middle school band and choir director. She is married to Anthony Henderson, Jr. of Fruitdale, and together they have one son, Asher.