A MIXED METHODS INVESTIGATION OF K-12 MUSIC TEACHER BELIEFS AND THEIR RELATIONSHIP TO TEACHING PRACTICE

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A THESIS

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The purpose of this study was to investigate music teacher beliefs and the ways in which beliefs relate to teaching practice. The design of this study was modeled after the triangulation convergence mixed methods design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). Quantitative data about beliefs and practice were collected using a researcher-designed survey, which was completed by music teachers (N=37) from one southeastern Michigan school district. Qualitative data about beliefs and practice were gathered through interviews with four of the survey participants, who were selected using maximal variation sampling, and a narrative profile was developed for each interview participant. Both quantitative and qualitative data were then compared in mixed methods analysis by merging the two data sets through discussion. This merging and discussion of quantitative results and qualitative findings enables a more in-depth examination and understanding of music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice.

Results indicate that the music teachers studied hold a wide range of beliefs about the nature of music and music education, the nature of music teaching, and the nature of music learning and that these beliefs are connected to teaching practice. Differences found included those among beliefs of ensemble and general music teachers and between beliefs of elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Topics about which beliefs were examined include the goals and purpose of music education, musical talent, determinants of musical success, subject-centeredness vs. student-centeredness, and motivation and schema for teaching. Findings also
indicate that reflection is crucial in developing awareness of and further shaping beliefs.

However, many music educators may lack the time and/or opportunity to reflect on their beliefs.
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Chapter One: Introduction

Music teachers make countless decisions every day, all of which impact the educational experiences of their students. These decisions are made in regards to many different aspects of music teaching, including curriculum, methodology, pedagogy, lesson planning, materials/repetoire, assessment, and classroom management. In a study of four instrumental music teachers Conway (1999) found that each made decisions regarding curricula and objectives, program administration, recruitment, scheduling, choosing literature, classroom management, motivation, and assessment and grading. Each of these many decisions a teacher makes results in a different outcome for his or her students’ learning experience.

Music teachers have much freedom in making these decisions. The National Standards for Music Education were created as a guide for music educators, but they are not currently mandated. There is no standardized curriculum for music, and many school districts in Michigan have no music curriculum document at all (Conway, 2002, p. 54). Thus music teachers are often at liberty to make decisions as they see fit with very little restriction.

To help them in their decision-making, music teachers often draw on their own personal beliefs. Vartuli (2005) states that “teachers’ implicit theories about the nature of knowledge acquisition affect their behavior and ultimately student learning... Philosophical principles, theories, and belief systems guide teachers’ expectations... and the decisions they make in classrooms” (p. 78). “Our actions cannot be considered apart from beliefs- they are intermingled. Teachers’ beliefs and teachers’ actions in the classroom cannot be separated” (Thompson, 2007, p. 30). Thus music teachers’ beliefs about music teaching and learning will affect the choices they make and, in turn, will impact student experiences and outcomes.
Little is known, however, about the beliefs held by music teachers that may influence decision-making or about how those beliefs relate to teaching practice. This is true of preservice music teachers, as well.

Music teacher educators often find that [music education] students articulate a wide range of viewpoints, shedding light on who they are, their images of teaching and learning, and their perspectives on the profession. Yet often we do not appropriately acknowledge these beliefs, nor do we usually assist our students in recognizing, making explicit, and examining their beliefs. While the study of teacher beliefs can be messy, ‘properly assessed and investigated beliefs can be... the single most important construct in educational research.’ (Thompson, 2007, p. 30)

The purpose of this study is to investigate music teacher beliefs and the ways in which beliefs relate to teaching practice.

*Definition and Characteristics of Beliefs*

There has been much confusion in educational literature about the meaning of the word belief. Pajares (1992) suggests that many mistakenly characterize beliefs as being “based on evaluation and judgment” while knowledge is “based on objective fact” (p. 313). In the fields of anthropology, social psychology, and philosophy “beliefs are thought of as psychologically held understandings, premises, or propositions about the world that are felt to be true” (Richardson, 1996, p. 103), which is the definition that will be used in this study.

Nespor (1987) lists four features that distinguish beliefs from other forms of knowledge: existential presumption, alternativity, affective and evaluative loading, and episodic structure. Existential presumption refers to ideas that a person presumes exist and includes embodied
entities such as ability or laziness. An example of existential presumption in music education is the belief that musical ability is a “talent” which some naturally have and others do not. Alternativity “refers to conceptualization of ideal situations differing significantly from present realities” (Nespor, 1987, p. 319). When a music teacher makes a belief statement such as “If only I had new instruments, I would be able to teach my students better,” they are demonstrating alternativity. Affective and evaluative loading pertains to the involvement of feelings and values in beliefs, which often influences how and to what extent a music teacher covers certain content. Episodic storage refers to memory organization of beliefs “in terms of personal experiences, episodes or events” (Nespor, 1987, p. 320). A music teacher recalling a memory of a lesson in which he or she learned a new technique perceived to be positive is an example of episodic storage.

Green (1998) purports that beliefs are held in groups, or belief systems, and not in isolation. According to Green, these belief systems have three dimensions. The first dimension pertains to their quasi-logical relation. Beliefs can be derived, meaning they originate from other beliefs, or primary, meaning there is no further justification in any other belief. The second dimension of belief systems concerns the psychological strength of beliefs. Beliefs held with the greatest strength are known as core beliefs and are least likely to change, while beliefs held with less strength are peripheral beliefs and are more open to debate. Green’s third dimension of belief systems is that beliefs are held in clusters that can be isolated from other clusters. Thus a person can hold contradictory belief systems if those beliefs are never examined with relation to each other.
Beliefs are formed in different ways and influenced by various factors. Formation of beliefs may be a result of direct observation, indirect acquiring from outside sources, or self-generated through inference (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980, p. 63). Richardson (1996) cites three influences on the development of beliefs about teaching: personal experience, experience with schooling and instruction, and experience with formal knowledge, which includes subject matter and pedagogical knowledge.

This study will refer specifically to three belief components described by Ernest (1989). Ernest specifies three belief components of a math teacher. The first belief component is one’s view of the nature of mathematics, which includes implicit philosophies and beliefs about mathematics as a whole. The second belief component is one’s view of the nature of mathematics teaching, including teaching roles and actions and activities associated with teaching. The third belief component, one’s view of mathematics learning, includes learning process and behaviors and activities involved. These three components will be used to refer to the subject of music in the current study, which will examine music teachers’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education, the nature of music teaching, and music learning.

Beliefs and Practice

Although beliefs are related to actions, the two are not directly connected. One’s espoused models of teaching and learning (beliefs) may differ from one’s enacted models of teaching and learning (practice). The transformation of one’s beliefs about teaching and learning into classroom practices are “subject to the constraints and contingencies of the school context” (Ernest, 1989, p. 252).
Azjen and Fishbein (1980) agree that there is not a direct link between beliefs and actions, further stating, “it is inappropriate to use beliefs in an attempt to directly predict intentions or behavior” (p. 81). Although Azjen and Fishbein acknowledge that actions are ultimately determined by beliefs, there are two other components in the chain linking beliefs to behaviors: attitudes and intentions. “Beliefs influence attitudes…. [attitudes] influence intentions; and intentions influence behavior” (p. 80). Any change in one of these variables which fails to successively change the next will not lead to behavior change.

The lack of correspondence between a teacher’s beliefs and behaviors is largely caused by two factors: social context and level of consciousness of beliefs (Ernest, 1989). Many factors in the social context of schools influence teaching practice. These factors, which may include expectations of others (students, parents, administrators, etc.), institutionalized curriculum, and standardized assessments, can hinder a teacher’s ability to teach in accordance with his or her beliefs. “Secondly, there is the teacher’s level of consciousness of his or her own beliefs, and the extent to which the teacher reflects on his or her practice of teaching” (Ernest, 1989, p. 253). A teacher who takes the time to examine and think reflectively about his or her beliefs about teaching and learning will be better able to bring those beliefs to fruition. Vartuli (2005) echoes this, stating, “To become explicit they [beliefs] must be the subject of reflection” (p. 82). Other reasons cited by Vartuli for discrepancies between beliefs and practice include differing interpretations of concepts, lack of training, and disparate levels of specificity in measuring beliefs and practices.

Because many people do not examine and reflect on their beliefs, they are often unable to articulate them. Pajares (1992) asserts that “because individuals are often unable or unwilling…
to accurately represent their beliefs…. beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do” (p. 314). The current study examined the beliefs of 37 K-12 music educators by eliciting statements about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music learning and relating those statements to reports on actions in the classroom.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to investigate music teacher beliefs and the ways in which beliefs relate to teaching practice.

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Questions

1. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music and music education?
2. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music teaching?
3. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music learning?
4. What relationships exist between music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music, music teaching, and music learning?
5. How do stated beliefs relate to teachers’ descriptions of their teaching practice?

Mixed Methods Research Question

6. How do quantitative and qualitative analyses of music teachers’ beliefs and practice complement or contradict each other?
Chapter Two: Review of Related Research

Much research has been done on the topic of teacher beliefs in the general education field, as well as in many specific subject areas in teaching. Studies on teacher beliefs in general education have shown that teacher beliefs may vary in relation to teaching experience, level of students taught, and teacher perceptions of situations (Book & Freeman, 1986; Brousseau, Book, & Byers, 1988; Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding, & Cuthbert, 1988; Nespor, 1987; Schmidt and Kennedy, 1990). General education studies also found that teacher education may not have a significant impact on teacher beliefs (Brousseau, Book, & Byers, 1988; Brousseau & Freeman, 1988). Research in early childhood education has examined relationships between teachers’ beliefs regarding Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) and actual teaching practice (Bryant, Clifford, & Peisner, 1991; Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, Thomasson, Mosley, & Fleege, 1993; Parker & Neuharth-Pritchett, 2006; Wilcox-Herzog, 2002). Studies on teacher beliefs in the field of reading instruction have investigated the relationship between beliefs and practice and factors that affect the consistency between beliefs and practice, including reflection and external influences such as classroom management issues and district requirements (Gupta & Saravanan, 1995; Mastrini-McAteer, 1997; Powers, Zappay, & Butler, 2006; Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, & Lloyd, 1991). In the field of mathematics education, research has shown that beliefs-practice consistency is impacted by many factors, including reflection, prior school experience, and context (Ahrendt, 2004; Beswick, 2005; Raymond, 1997; Van Zoest, Jones, & Thornton, 1994). Teacher beliefs have been shown to affect teaching practice, including instructional goals and activities and implementation of curriculum, in the field of science education (Brickhouse, 1990; Enyedy, Goldberg, & Welsh, 2006; Kang & Wallace, 2005). Studies in art education also
support the ideas that beliefs impact curriculum change and are influenced by prior school experience (Crux, 1989; Grauer, 1998). Research has been conducted regarding specific beliefs in the field of music education, including definitions of good teaching, representations of self as teacher, definitions of musicality, beliefs about and use of evaluation, classroom management beliefs and skills, and philosophy and advocacy (Austin & Reinhardt, 1999; Brand, 1982; Brandstrom, 1999; Lane, 2007; Mills & Smith, 2003; Schmidt, 1998; Thompson and Campbell, 2007). However, few broad studies of music teacher beliefs and practice exist in the music education literature.

Teacher Beliefs in General Education

One area that has been examined in general education studies is how beliefs differ between elementary and secondary teachers. Book and Freeman (1986) surveyed 174 elementary and 178 secondary candidates at the beginning of their first teacher education course. The 210-question survey consisted of six sections: high school background and activities, college background, career plans, general orientation to teaching, general background information, and educational beliefs. Through chi-square tests it was revealed that “elementary candidates’ reasons for choosing teaching as a career tended to be child-centered; secondary candidates were more likely to be attracted to teaching by their desire to teach subject matter” (p. 48). Specific reasons given by elementary candidates included “the opportunity to help others” (p. 48), while “to apply what they learned in their major field” (p. 48) was cited by secondary candidates. “Knowledge of subject matter” (p. 48) was also identified by more secondary than elementary candidates as a characteristic of exceptional teachers. Another difference discovered was in sources of professional knowledge. More secondary candidates valued their own K-12 student
experience as a source of professional knowledge while more elementary candidates valued the
teacher education program.

Another area that has been studied in general education is understanding teachers’
interpretations of situations, which was examined by Nespor (1987) in the extensive Teacher
Belief Study (TBS). Eight teachers were followed throughout a semester, beginning with an
interview “focused on teachers’ general principles and beliefs about teaching, about their
students, about student behaviour, and about community and organizational contexts in which
they worked” (p. 317). The teachers’ classes were videotaped, and a second interview was held
to gather teachers’ explanations of their teaching practice, including response to the videotaped
classes. As well as enabling the identification of the distinguishing features of beliefs mentioned
in Chapter One, the results of this study led Nespor to suggest that “if we are interested in why
teachers organize and run classrooms as they do we must pay much more attention to the goals
they pursue… and to their subjective interpretations of classroom processes” (p. 325).

In addition to comparing elementary and secondary teachers, beliefs have been found to
differ between novice and experienced teachers. Brousseau, Book, and Byers (1988) found
several differences between novice and expert teachers’ beliefs. Four groups of pre-service and
experienced teachers were studied. The “Entry” group was comprised of 391 students enrolled in
an introductory educational psychology class at Michigan State University. The “Exit” group
consisted of 332 students near the end of their teacher preparation program at the same
university. The “Experienced” group was made up of 382 full-time classroom teachers from one
school district near the university, and the “Alumni” group included 90 of the university’s
teacher education graduates from across the United States. Each group completed a survey that
contained a section called “Educational Beliefs Inventory,” which used a five-point Likert scale to reflect beliefs about students (amount of responsibility given), curriculum (uniform), social milieu (role of schools in societal change), teacher (effort), and pedagogy (task-orientation versus student-orientation). Chi-square analysis was used to classify the survey items according to difference in response across the five variables of group, level (elementary/secondary), gender, school setting (urban/suburban/rural), and years of experience. Results indicated that neither setting nor gender appeared to affect educational beliefs. “The only variable that shows a significant effect on the vast majority of the beliefs measured was years of experience” (p. 38). The inexperienced (“Entry” and “Exit” combined) participants’ belief responses differed significantly from the experienced (“Experienced” and “Alumni” combined) participants’ responses on 48 of the 60 items. These results suggest that “the experience of working in and being responsible for one’s own classroom has a measurable impact on the individual beliefs” (p. 38). Also worth noting was the finding that the “Alumni” group and “Experienced” group, who were likely graduates of a variety of teacher education programs, differed significantly on only four of the 60 items, implying that teacher preparation has little lasting impact on beliefs.

One may assume that experience in a teacher education program has a great impact on pre-service teachers’ beliefs, but this may not be the case, as was suggested by Brousseau, Book, and Byers (1988). This was supported by Brousseau and Freeman (1988), who administered the “Educational Beliefs Inventory” to 57 teacher education faculty and 896 education students at Michigan State University. The students took the survey as designed, but rather than indicate their own beliefs, faculty members were asked to respond to each item in two ways: “how should graduates of your program respond to each statement?” and “to what extent do you deal with
each opinion/belief in the courses you teach in this program?” Responses to the first question were labeled as faculty’s “directionality,” and responses to the second question were labeled as “emphasis.” Directionality scores and emphasis scores were derived through numerical coding of faculty responses. When comparing these scores, results showed that faculty members emphasize some beliefs more than others, as would be expected. Faculty also agreed that two-thirds of the beliefs should be shaped, though they disagreed on which direction. Another finding was that “the higher in agreement among faculty members regarding the position a graduate should take when responding to a particular belief statement, the higher the level of emphasis that issue was likely to receive” (p. 270). When comparing faculty and student responses, agreement was found on 44 of the 53 belief statements. Interestingly, the nine of the 53 statements on which faculty and students did not agree were also statements that received little emphasis, indicating that faculty members are “more likely to reinforce prevailing beliefs than to challenge inappropriate beliefs or to encourage the development of informed beliefs regarding critical educational issues” (pp. 272-273).

Eisenhart, Shrum, Harding, and Cuthbert (1988b) examined beliefs of teachers in situations with varying levels of perceived control in a study that collected and analyzed data through “Heuristic Elicitation Methodology” (“HEM”). HEM elicits views from respondents without imposing researcher-generated categories and then uses responses to construct later interviews. The first phase involved open-ended interviews with four student teachers, “designed to elicit… views of teaching and the meaning attached to their work experiences” (p. 61). Responses were used to identify domains of work activities and attitudes toward work that were used in phase two of the study. The second phase used a “beliefs matrix” to elicit attitudes about
activities in three domains of perceived responsibility, expertise, and control: high, problematic, and low. Results indicate that teachers are more likely to have positive attitudes towards activities in which they perceive more responsibility, expertise, and control, such as developing and using materials. Conversely, teachers are likely to have negative attitudes towards activities in which they perceive less responsibility, expertise, or control, including disciplining students.

Similar to the findings of Brousseau, Book, and Byers (1988), Schmidt and Kennedy (1990) also discovered differences in the beliefs of novice and experienced teachers. Participants were teachers and teacher candidates from ten teacher education programs, including undergraduate students, first-year teachers, and experienced teachers. Each participant completed a questionnaire about the nature of various school subjects and what it means to be good at the subjects. Results showed several differences between the beliefs of experienced teachers, novice teachers, and college students, suggesting that “as teachers gain more teacher education and more experience teaching, their beliefs become more refined” (p. 7). It was also discovered that there was a wide range of beliefs held by all the participants. Schmidt and Kennedy state that this “scattered pattern of beliefs…suggests that teachers probably form their beliefs in isolation” and rarely have them challenged.

**Teacher Beliefs in Early Childhood Education**

A great deal of research in the field of early childhood education has focused on beliefs about Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP). Bryant, Clifford, and Peisner (1991) examined the developmental appropriateness of 103 kindergarten classrooms. The classrooms, which were randomly selected, were observed and evaluated for 2-3 hours. The tools used to measure DAP during the observations were the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale
(ECERS), a rating scale designed for preschool classes, and the Checklist of Kindergarten
Activities (CKA), designed by the researchers to rate the activities and materials present in the
classroom. Following the observation each kindergarten teacher and building principal
completed a questionnaire which measured knowledge and attitudes about developmentally
appropriate kindergarten practices. It was found that teacher and principal questionnaire scores
“were the most significant predictors of appropriate instruction” (p. 799). Data analysis showed
that only 20% of the kindergarten classes met the criterion for DAP, with another 20% of the
classes close to the criterion and the remaining 60% below the criterion. However, high
questionnaire scores indicated that the teachers and principals believe in DAP, which suggests
they need help in implementing the ideas of DAP.

Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, Thomasson, Mosley, and Fleege (1993) discovered a
relationship between teachers’ beliefs and DAP practices. Two hundred four kindergarten
teachers completed a questionnaire comprised of two sections. The Teacher Beliefs Scale (TBS)
asked teachers to rate the importance of various statements, reflecting their beliefs on DAP. The
Instructional Activities Scale (IAS) asked teachers to report which activities, both
developmentally appropriate and inappropriate, they offered in their classrooms and how
frequently the activities were included. As a validity check for the questionnaire, 20 of the
teachers were also observed in their classrooms. When comparing the questionnaire and
observation results, it was found that all but one of the 20 teachers observed showed congruency
between beliefs and practice. Furthermore, correlational analysis of all 204 questionnaires
revealed moderate correlation between reported developmentally appropriate beliefs and
reported developmentally appropriate practices, as well as stronger correlation between
developmentally inappropriate beliefs and practices.

Contrastingly, a study by Wilcox-Herzog (2002) discovered incongruence between
teachers’ beliefs and behaviors. Participants in the study were 47 early childhood educators from
22 centers mainly in the Midwest. A questionnaire was used to assess the teachers’ beliefs in the
areas of teacher sensitivity, teacher play style, teacher verbalizations, and teacher involvement, as
well as gather demographic information and teacher perceptions of whether or not they are able
to practice in accordance with their beliefs. The questionnaire revealed that 39 of the 47 teachers
felt they were able to practice their beliefs most or all of the time, with only two teachers stating
they were seldom able to practice their beliefs. Reasons cited for inability to practice beliefs
included parents, directors, and state regulations. Although most teachers felt they were able to
practice their beliefs in teaching, videotaped observations of the teachers classrooms showed no
significant correlation between teachers’ behaviors and their beliefs as reported on the
questionnaire. Wilcox-Herzog states that “these inconsistencies may be due to a variety of factors
including the lack of measurement specificity and the inclusion of participants with less extreme
beliefs” (p. 97).

Findings similar to Bryant, Clifford, and Peisner (1991) were reported by Parker and
Neuharth-Pritchett (2006), who found that belief in DAP did not always correlate with DAP
classrooms. In order to examine the DAP beliefs of teachers and the external influences shaping
their beliefs, 34 kindergarten teachers from seven schools in a rural southeastern U.S. school
district were surveyed, interviewed, and observed. Focus areas included perceptions of DAP/
child-centered instruction, perceptions of teacher-directed instruction, school philosophy on
DAP, and perceived pressures to make kindergarten more academic in nature. The teachers who characterized themselves as child-centered felt more pressure to ready students for the next grade level yet felt more freedom to make decisions regarding instructional practice than teachers who characterized themselves as being teacher-directed. Neither group articulated a clear understanding of the other group. Also, “many teachers, regardless of the type of instructional practices used in their classrooms, felt that all students benefit from child-centered practices. Unfortunately, it is clear that this belief did not necessarily translate into child-centered classrooms” (p. 76).

Teacher Beliefs in Reading Education

Varied findings regarding the relationships between teachers’ beliefs and practices have been reported in the field of reading instruction. Richardson, Anders, Tidwell, and Lloyd (1991) found a positive relationship between beliefs and practices in their study of 39 intermediate teachers from 6 elementary schools in two southwestern school districts. Using a mixed method approach, the teachers’ classroom practices and beliefs about the teaching of reading comprehension were studied. “The study looks quantitatively at the overall relationship between beliefs and practices, and qualitatively at the case data to develop an understanding of situations in which beliefs and practices do not match” (p. 561). Heuristic elicitation was used in interviewing each teacher regarding two kinds of beliefs: “declared or public beliefs about reading comprehension and how children learn to read in general” and “private beliefs…, or beliefs in action, by asking teachers to talk about specific students” (p. 564). The constant comparative method was used to develop categories for coding dialogue from the interviews, and the coded material was analyzed in two ways: theoretical orientations and individual beliefs
about reading and learning to read. The analyses were used to make predictions of classroom practices. The videotaped lessons were also analyzed and then compared to the interview analysis. It was found that agreement between teachers’ observed practices and beliefs as reported in the interview ranged from 66% to 92%. This led the researchers to claim “for most categories, practices could quite accurately be predicted from beliefs interviews” (p. 575), citing that beliefs-practice incongruence “may indicate that the teacher is going through a change process” (p. 579).

Gupta and Saravanan (1995) observed a lack of reflection on beliefs by student teachers. Ninety-six student teachers enrolled in a secondary school certification program in Singapore were involved in a 10-month course in which they were exposed to teaching practice and teaching theory classes. On-going questionnaires, a reading assignment, and concept maps were used to examine the student teachers’ conceptions of teaching reading and perceptions of their own reading strategies. It was found that the student teachers’ rankings of importance of objectives and the components of a reading lesson changed very little over the 10-month period, indicating that belief in traditional techniques persisted despite training in new techniques. When the student teachers perceived a shortfall in their own education in a given area, they were more likely to try new teaching strategies, while satisfaction with their own education in a given area resulted in less openness to change. Critical reflection on beliefs and past experiences might help student teachers see a purpose for incorporating new strategies.

Mastrini-McAteer (1997) found some congruence between teacher beliefs and practice. Eighteen randomly selected third grade teachers were surveyed regarding their beliefs about teaching reading. The teachers were also observed in their classrooms and then participated in a
follow-up interview. After comparing beliefs statements and observed practices, five of the 18 teachers were identified as teaching according to their beliefs. The factor that teachers claimed most influenced their beliefs about reading instruction was classroom experience. Other influences included classroom teaching experience, a noted reading expert, experienced colleagues, and university courses. Influences on how the teachers chose their current reading programs included individual decisions and outside forces, such as a required district curriculum or district testing. This is an example of Ernest’s (1989) claim that the transformation of one’s beliefs about teaching and learning into classroom practices are “subject to the constraints and contingencies of the school context” (p. 252). Another interesting finding of the study was that the students of the five teachers who taught in ways congruent with their beliefs had average reading scores well above the students of the other 13 teachers, as indicated by results of the DALT reading test. Mastrini-McAteer states that this suggests “beliefs-practice congruency seems to support effective teaching of reading” (pp. 277-278).

A study by Powers, Zappay, and Butler (2006) identified several factors for inconsistency between reading teachers’ beliefs and practice. A case study format was used to examine changes in beliefs and practices of four teachers over a year. The Literacy Orientation Survey (LOS) was used to measure teacher beliefs about literacy and literacy instruction. Each teacher was interviewed about their literacy practices, literacy decision-making processes, and changes in assessments and practices related to graduate course and clinical work. Then they were observed in the classroom for a total of ten hours each and in a university literacy clinic for more than 30 hours each. Reflective journals kept by the teachers were examined, and a final interview asked the teachers to reflect on gains made by their students. Triangulation and prolonged engagement
ensured validity. Results support the idea that beliefs and instructional practices are not always consistent and can be caused by factors including district requirements and classroom management issues. Findings also suggest that reflection is a key factor in beliefs-practice alignment.

*Teacher Beliefs in Mathematics Education*

The effects of reflection and context on teacher beliefs were both seen in a study by Van Zoest, Jones, and Thornton (1994), investigating the effect of a specific teacher learning environment on constructivist beliefs about teaching mathematics and classroom actions. The experimental group was comprised of four education majors involved in a specifically designed instructional program, while the control group consisted of 103 education majors not involved in the program. The researcher-designed Beliefs About Teaching Mathematics (BTM) was used to assess beliefs about mathematics teaching and was administered to both experimental and control groups. Video Analysis Teacher Action Scale (TAS), was used in analyzing four videotaped observations in terms of constructivism for each teacher in the experimental group, who were also interviewed individually. Independent *t*-tests comparing experimental and control groups showed significantly higher constructivist beliefs scores for the experimental group, which was further clarified in the interviews. This suggests that the intensity and supporting atmosphere of the instructional program impacted their beliefs. This is yet another example of the influence of context on belief formation and practice. Opportunity for reflection was also a factor cited that may have influenced beliefs. Despite their stronger beliefs scores, the individuals in the instructional program (experimental group) still “were not uniformly successful in translating these beliefs into action” (p. 52).
A study by Raymond (1997) also identified reflection to be crucial to teacher beliefs, especially those developed during teachers’ own school experiences. Raymond examined six elementary school teachers’ beliefs about mathematics and mathematics pedagogy, their teaching practice and factors that influence it, and their beliefs-practice consistency and factors influencing it. Data collection over a 10-month period included six interviews, five classroom observations, analysis of several samples of lesson planning, a concept-mapping activity on relationships between mathematics beliefs and practice, and a questionnaire on mathematics beliefs and factors that influence practice. Data were classified into three areas: (1) beliefs, (2) teaching practices, and (3) influences on beliefs and practice and beliefs-practice consistency. Analysis of the teachers, especially one (“Joanna”) chosen for extensive case study, showed differences in beliefs and beliefs-practice inconsistency were due to different influences, including student behavior/discipline and teacher’s own experience as a student. “The six…

teachers named prior school experience as the main influence on their beliefs about mathematics content, with their own teaching experiences and their teacher education experiences being the primary influence on pedagogical beliefs” (p. 573). Raymond cites that these “deeply held, traditional beliefs…have the potential to perpetuate…teaching that is more traditional, even when teachers hold nontraditional beliefs” (p.574), suggesting that “early and continued reflection…may be the key to improving the quality of mathematics instruction and minimizing inconsistency between beliefs and practice” (p. 574).

Raymond’s study inspired a similar study by Ahrendt (2004), which also identified reflection as a factor associated with consistency between beliefs and practice. A beliefs questionnaire was given to second and third grade teachers at two schools implementing a new
mathematics curriculum in the suburbs or a large Midwestern metropolitan city. Four teachers representing a range of beliefs were chosen through purposeful sampling. Interviews, videotaped observations, a beliefs questionnaire, and a model-generating activity served as data for the four case studies. Data were organized into five categories: (1) school setting, (2) teacher background, (3) beliefs about self, mathematics, and mathematics pedagogy, (4) perceptions of the new curriculum, and (5) description of practice. Analysis showed that while consistency between beliefs and practice varied, teachers who were more reflective had more consistency between beliefs and practice. Also, “participants who regarded themselves as having a high level of authority (for making instructional decisions about mathematics) identified mathematics and mathematics teaching beliefs to be major factors affecting [curriculum] implementation” (p. 157).

Beswick (2005) found incongruence between mathematics teachers’ constructivist beliefs and practice, suggesting the impact of context on the enactment of teacher beliefs. Twenty-five secondary math teachers from six schools in Tasmania, Australia completed a 26-item belief survey, indicating the extent of their agreement with various statements regarding the nature of mathematics, mathematics teaching, and mathematics learning. The teachers were also asked to administer the Constructivist Learning Environment Survey (CLES) to one or two of their mathematics classes, resulting in 39 classes surveyed. On the CLES students were asked the frequency of occurrence of various events in their classroom, thus measuring the degree to which each classroom could be classified as constructivist. Cluster analysis was used to group respondents by similarity of responses. Results showed that although the majority of teachers held constructivist beliefs, many had difficulty carrying them out in teaching practice. It was
suggested that “the extent to which the teachers’ beliefs…are manifested in their classrooms is a function of a range of contextual variables” (p. 51). One such variable is the nature of the particular class, as was suggested by Beswick after noting that one teacher had two classes showing varying degrees of constructivist practice. “Specifically, the ability level (as perceived by the teacher) and grade level of the class, and possibly the relative curriculum pressures perceived by teachers in some courses, impacted the way in which teachers enacted their beliefs” (pp. 64-65).

*Teacher Beliefs in Science Education*

Although inconsistencies exist between beliefs and practice, important connections between them have been made, especially in the field of science education. One study that supports the importance of the beliefs-practice connection is Brickhouse (1990). The effects of teachers’ beliefs about the nature of science and growth of scientific knowledge on their classroom practice was examined. Purposeful sampling was used in identifying the precollege (secondary) teachers in the Midwest. Over a four-month period each teacher participated in four hour-long interviews on their conceptions of the nature of science, roles as teachers, and students’ roles as learners and was observed in his or her classroom for at least 35 hours. Textbooks and teachers’ documents such as quizzes and worksheets were also used as data. Data indicated that “teachers’ views of the nature of science may be expressed in their classroom instruction” and that their “views of how scientists construct knowledge were consistent with their beliefs about how students should learn science” (p. 59). These findings reflect “the larger epistemological question of how scientific knowledge is constructed” and the “importance of content knowledge in forming the basis for effective classroom instruction” (p. 59). Additionally,
two of the three teachers showed congruence in their beliefs and practice, while the third teacher was prevented from teaching in accordance with his beliefs due to several obstacles.

Kang and Wallace (2004) also support the important connection between beliefs and teaching practice in a study focused on the beliefs of science teachers regarding lab activities and their relation to teaching actions. Three high school science teachers were interviewed using open-ended questions and “critical incidents” to elicit responses from which epistemological beliefs regarding lab activities could be inferred. Responses were coded into categories of teaching goals, teaching strategies, beliefs about science, beliefs about learning, beliefs about inquiry, and beliefs about students. A second phase of data collection included classroom observations and additional interviews, with analysis aimed at identifying patterns in teaching practice and links to beliefs. Results in comparing each teacher’s beliefs, as indicated in interviews, and practice, as shown in observations, revealed that “teachers’ epistemological beliefs and instructional goals can partly explain teaching practices and the use of lab activities in particular” (p. 160). Epistemological beliefs appeared to relate to instructional goals and guide design of instructional activities. Perceived teaching context also influenced how each teacher carried out his or her beliefs.

Enyedy, Goldberg, and Welsh (2005) found differences in beliefs to be consistent with differences in practices in a study of two seventh grade science teachers in Los Angeles who were implementing a new science curriculum. In order to investigate whether beliefs, identity, or other factors accounted for differing practices, the two teachers were each interviewed three times, and self-reports of beliefs were collected. Videotaped recordings of teaching were used to triangulate themes found in the interviews. This revealed differences in classroom practice
between the two teachers and in learning outcomes for their classes. Descriptive models of each teacher’s goals, knowledge, and beliefs illustrated key differences in beliefs about the nature of teaching and learning and of science, classroom roles, instructional goals, content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge. “Differences in the way these two teachers view the classroom and their role are consistent with the observed differences in their practice. And the contrasting views of the process of inquiry are also consistent with differences in practice” (p. 91). These results support the notion that beliefs should be considered when analyzing teaching practice.

Teacher Beliefs in Art Education

The topic of teacher beliefs has also been examined in the field of art education. Crux (1989) investigated the role of teacher beliefs in classroom practices and how it might affect implementation of a new curriculum through case studies of four grade 8 art teachers in southern Ontario who were using a new curriculum. The six-stage holistic research process consisted of a questionnaire, pre-observation interview about program goals, a 4-week observation cycle, analysis of observations, post-observation interview for clarification, and final analysis and evaluation. Three of the four teachers were found to be teaching in practices congruent with their beliefs. Two of those three teachers were not found to have beliefs-practice congruence until their post-observation interview, when they had a chance to clarify what they were doing in the classroom and why. Factors that seemed to influence inconsistency between beliefs and practices were social, organizational, student needs, and resources. Beliefs appeared to play a part in whether or not each teacher chose to implement the curriculum, suggesting that teachers will not adapt curriculum change without reason to believe it will improve practice. Crux states that teacher beliefs act “as a guiding force in making classroom decisions and as an influence on
whether to use a new curriculum document or not” (p. 324). Additionally, due to the finding that all four teachers discussed factors that influenced their beliefs, Crux concluded that there appears to be a two-way directionality to beliefs in that “beliefs affect practices and some practices affect beliefs, causing a reorientation” (p. 320).

Grauer (1998) studied beliefs, the factors that influence them, and the relationship between beliefs and teaching practice in 130 elementary generalist preservice teachers and secondary specialists preparing to become art teachers. Each completed the Eisner Art Education Belief Index, containing 60 items “designed to elicit the extent to which the respondent is influenced by subject-centered beliefs or child-centered beliefs about art education” (p. 353). Four of each of the two types of teachers were then purposefully sampled using one-way analysis of variance and paired t-tests. These eight teachers participated in observations and interviews to gain further insight into understanding their beliefs and behavior in context, including the use of hypothetical situations or response to dilemmas for inference of beliefs. Data in the emergent design were analyzed by categorizing, synthesizing, searching for patterns, and identifying general themes and specific topics. The main idea to come out of the study was “that subject matter knowledge and beliefs of preservice teachers toward art education form a dynamic and evolving relationship” (p. 356). The secondary specialist teachers were found to have more subject-centered beliefs, similar to the findings of Book and Freeman (1986), yet most elementary generalist teachers were not found to hold definite child-centered beliefs. Also similar to the findings of Book and Freeman (1986) and Gupta and Saravanan (1995), the teachers “were influenced in the formation of their beliefs toward art education as much, if not more, by their own school-enculturated experiences with art as by the understandings developed
by their university education” (p. 357), though it was shown that those beliefs did correspond to values addressed in art methods courses. It was found that the art teacher education program did challenge preservice teachers’ conceptions of the role of the teacher, the common belief that artistic ability translates into successful art teaching, and the concept of artistic competence as innate talent.

**Teacher Beliefs in Music Education**

Few studies have been conducted that examine music educators’ beliefs about the nature of music, music teaching, and music learning. In studies of preservice music teachers “we have looked at … images and metaphors of teaching, their [teachers’] concerns, and specific beliefs such as conceptions of good teaching and classroom management” (Thompson, 2007, p. 32). Brand (1982) surveyed the classroom management beliefs and skills of 47 music student teachers at the beginning of the semester and again at the end of the semester and found no significant difference, suggesting student teaching does not affect classroom management beliefs of student teachers. The cooperating teachers were also surveyed, and no significant difference was found between classroom management beliefs of student teachers and cooperating teachers at either the beginning or the end of the semester.

Schmidt (1998) studied the beliefs and definitions of “good” teaching held by four preservice teachers, who were completing their instrumental music student teaching at a large university. Weekly discussions and follow-up interviews, along with participant-observation (by the researcher) and unstructured journals, comprised the qualitative data, which were analyzed through constant comparison, looking for themes, and developing categories. Results showed that the teachers
each entered the program with notions of what constitutes ‘good’ and ‘poor’ teaching, developed during thousands of hours spent as pre-college and university students observing teachers…. These experience-based understandings supplemented, interfered with, or negated theoretical information and teaching practices presented in the university or student teaching situation (Schmidt, 1998, p. 29).

It was also found that when the teachers lacked strategies in dealing with certain situations, they “resorted to the models of music instruction they knew best: their studio teachers and the conductors of the university performing groups” (p. 31). This example of the impact of a teacher’s own school experience is similar to the findings of Book and Freeman (1986), Crux (1989), Grauer (1998), and Gupta and Saravanan (1995).

Brandstrom (1999) looked at the ways music teachers define musicality in a two-part study. The first phase involved 24 music teachers who were asked “what is musicality for you?” and were given 10-15 minutes to write their answers. Analysis of the responses found the two main categories of musical achievement and musical experience. The second phase of the study involved qualitative interviews of four music teacher educators and four class-music teachers using a “conversational approach.” The two main ideas generated were absolute and relativistic views of musicality. “A basic aspect of the relativistic view, is that all human beings are musical and that each and everyone has the possibility to express him or herself in and through music” (p. 23). In contrast the absolute view “is based on the idea that musicality is biologically inherited and reserved for a minority of individuals” (p. 23). Brandstrom suggests that teachers should aim for a balance between these two views in order to avoid “a one-sided emphasis on the importance
of talent at the expense of the influence of the environment, including the pedagogical environment” (p. 24).

Austin and Reinhardt (1999) surveyed 137 music education undergraduates on their beliefs regarding the validity of various music education philosophy statements and the effectiveness of using those statements for advocacy. It was found that preservice teachers believe in diverse rationales for music education, and “preservice music teachers [seem to] believe in advocating for music programs on the basis of philosophy statements they deem most valid or true” (p. 28).

Mills and Smith (2003) surveyed 134 instrumental music teachers’ beliefs about effective instrumental music teaching in schools and in higher education and found that beliefs about good teaching in schools were different from beliefs about good teaching in higher education. Additionally, almost all of the teachers surveyed believed their own teaching was influenced by the teaching they received.

Thompson and Campbell (2003) examined preservice teachers’ representations of representations of themselves as teachers and how those related to their conceptions of teaching practice. The 99 music education students from a small northeastern university were asked to construct a metaphorical representation of themselves as teachers by drawing an image of themselves as a teacher, labeling it “A teacher is like…” or “Teacher as…”, and writing a short description of what the image shows. The data were analyzed qualitatively and categorized according to pervasive patterns. The participants characterizations of the teacher’s role fell into the categories of teacher as transmitter, facilitator, collaborator, or mentor/motivator/leader. The first three categories tended to be associated with knowledge-based roles, while the fourth
category was associated with social roles. Three underlying “root” metaphors were identified: production (acquisition of knowledge and skills within a discipline), growth (developing maturity), and travel (journey of education).

Third grade music teachers’ beliefs about and uses of evaluation were investigated by Lane (2007). A questionnaire was used to survey teachers 129 grade 3 music teachers in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Analysis of the survey results showed that the majority of teachers considered music to be more an academic subject than an activity. However, participation was considered the most important area in music instruction, followed by singing, effort, attitude, and appreciation, while improvising, writing and composing were ranked lowest. “It is interesting to note that non-music objectives... were all considered... to be more important than music objectives” (p. 36). Non-music criteria were also among the most frequently evaluated areas.

Implications for Further Research

It is clear from this review of research that broad examinations of teacher beliefs have been conducted in many subject areas. While researchers have looked at specific beliefs of music teachers on topics such as classroom management and evaluation, very few studies have looked at music teachers’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music learning. Even fewer studies examine the relationship between these beliefs and music teaching practice. In the field of general education Pajares (1992) stressed the importance of studying the relationship between teacher beliefs and actions, stating “Little will have been accomplished if research into educational beliefs fails to provide insights into the relationship between beliefs, on the one hand, and teacher practice, teacher knowledge, and student outcomes
on the other” (p. 327). Studying music teachers’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music learning and how these beliefs relate to teachers’ actions in the classroom may shed light on differences that exist in the practices of music teachers and reasons for those differences.
Chapter Three: Methodology

*Purpose Statement*

The purpose of this study was to investigate music teacher beliefs and the ways in which beliefs relate to teaching practice.

*Quantitative and Qualitative Research Questions*

1. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music and music education?
2. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music teaching?
3. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music learning?
4. What relationships exist between music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music, music teaching, and music learning?
5. How do stated beliefs relate to teachers’ descriptions of their teaching practice?

*Mixed Methods Research Question*

6. How do quantitative and qualitative analyses of music teachers’ beliefs and practice complement or contradict each other?

*Research Design*

A mixed methods design was used in this research to examine K-12 music educators’ beliefs about the nature of music, music teaching, and music learning and gather information on teaching practice. Creswell (2008) defines mixed methods research as a procedure for collecting, analyzing, and ‘mixing’ both quantitative and qualitative research and methods in a single study.... The basic assumption is that the use of both quantitative and qualitative methods... provides a better understanding of the research problem and questions than either method by itself. (p. 552)
The specific type of mixed methods design used in this study drew from the triangulation convergence model. “In this model, the researcher collects and analyzes quantitative and qualitative data separately on the same phenomenon and then the different results are converged (by comparing and contrasting the different results) during the interpretation” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 64). In the present study quantitative data was collected through a survey, and qualitative data was collected through interviews. Each data set was analyzed separately and with equal emphasis, and then the data sets were merged in a mixed methods analysis, as shown in Figure 1. “A basic rationale for this design is that one data-collection form supplies strength to offset the weaknesses of the other form” (Creswell, 2008, p. 557). Additionally, mixing quantitative and qualitative methods provides a more complete picture of music teacher beliefs than one method alone can provide.

![Figure 1. Triangulation convergence mixed methods design.](image_url)

Description of Research Site and Participants

*Survey site and participants.* Data was collected in two distinct sets in this triangulation convergence mixed methods design. The quantitative data collection involved the use of a survey...
questionnaire to gather insight into reported teacher beliefs and practice. Quantitative data was collected in a medium-sized school district in a southeastern Michigan suburb. All of the 40 kindergarten through twelfth grade music teachers in the district were invited to participate. The researcher chose to study this school district because it is similar to many other school districts in Michigan in various ways. These include racial, socioeconomic, and curricular similarities.

While the district studied may not be representative of all Michigan school districts, its similarity to many other school districts in Michigan increases the chances that “the individuals selected are typical of the population under study [music teachers], enabling you to draw conclusions from the sample about the population [of music teachers] as a whole” (Creswell, 2008, p. 151). The size of the district’s music faculty was a factor that influenced the choice of this site, as well as the researcher’s access to the site. All of the forty music teachers from the district were invited to participate in the study. Thirty-eight teachers responded and completed the survey, resulting in a 95% response rate. Due to unclear and/or ambiguous responses, one participant was excluded from the study, leaving a total of 37 participants. Two surveys were incomplete but were still included in the results. Participants included 8 high school teachers, 11 middle school teachers, and 18 elementary school teachers. Instrumental music (band or orchestra) was taught by 17 of the teachers, choral music by 7 of the teachers, and general music by 13 of the teachers. These numbers are based on teachers’ primary placements, although some stated teaching at multiple levels and/or settings. Also, one participant had just transferred settings from secondary choral to elementary general, but since she her teaching experience had been in secondary choral, she was counted as such in the survey. The music faculty also come from diverse backgrounds, including teacher education at different universities, practice of a variety of methodologies, and a wide
range of teaching experience. This diversity of backgrounds, teaching levels, and teaching areas within the sample increases the chances that “the individuals selected are typical of the population under study [music teachers], enabling you to draw conclusions from the sample about the population [of music teachers] as a whole” (Creswell, 2008, p. 151).

Interviews participants. After survey data was collected, preliminary analysis was conducted on participant responses in order to purposefully sample four participants using “maximal variation sampling” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 112). This purposeful sampling strategy was utilized to identify four participants with significantly different beliefs and/or teaching practice for participation in the qualitative part of the study. In addition to differing beliefs and/practice, participants were chosen to represent each of the four main areas of music teaching (band, orchestra, choir, and general music), as well as a variety in years of teaching experience. The four teachers participated in a one-hour interview with the researcher to investigate the nature of the differences in beliefs and/or practice more thoroughly. The four participants chosen were Scott, a middle school band teacher, Perry, a middle school choir teacher, Paul, a high school orchestra teacher, and Joan, an elementary general music teacher. (All names used are pseudonyms.)

Scott has taught middle school band for four years, all of which were in his current job. His survey responses suggested beliefs that were similar to those of other instrumental music teachers but more extreme. These responses included identifying his job title as “director” (rather than “teacher”), agreement that performance is the ultimate goal in a music class, and a stated exclusion of improvisation and composition in his teaching. Additionally, Scott voiced
agreement that the purpose of music education is to enhance ability in other subjects, as well as agreement that music is a talent and an area in which not all can achieve.

Perry has taught secondary choir for 27 years. He has been in his current job teaching middle school choir for 14 years. Perry was chosen for the interview because of his many years of teaching experience, as well as his survey responses. These responses included agreement that not all can be good at music and statement that product is the goal, as well as references to performance as a focus in his teaching.

Paul had performed and taught private lessons in classical and jazz guitar for 15 years before teaching orchestra for 21 years. He has been in his current job teaching high school orchestra for seven years. Paul was chosen for the interview because his responses included not only those common in instrumental music teachers (e.g. agreement that one needs to learn music theory and notation to be good at music) but also included atypical responses in comparison to the rest of the sample, such as statement of including improvisation in his teaching frequently, as well as frequent opportunities for students to work in small groups.

Joan has taught elementary general music for 13 years, the last nine of which were in her current job. She also teaches early childhood music classes privately. Prior to her teaching experience, Joan had majored in performance and had planned to pursue a masters degree in performance but decided to go into teaching after graduation. Her responses were typical compared to those of other elementary music teachers surveyed, including a belief that all children can be successful in the music classroom in a variety of ways.
Survey Tool

A researcher-designed survey was used to gauge the participants’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music learning, as well as information about teaching practice. The survey was created using an internet service called SurveyMonkey.com. Survey items included Likert-type rating scales, multiple choice, and short descriptive responses. The tool is available in Appendix A.

Survey Pilot

After initially creating the survey questionnaire, the researcher received feedback on the survey from a research associate at the University of Michigan Survey Research Center and made appropriate revisions to the tool. Before data collection began, the survey was piloted on a group of music teachers not included in the sample. The pilot was conducted in order to see if the instrument was clear and understandable, gathered a range of responses, and took a reasonable amount of time to complete. Twenty-two vocal, general, and instrumental teachers participated in the questionnaire pilot, including elementary and secondary teachers. After feedback was received from the pilot participants, the instrument was subject to further revisions in order to improve clarity and ease of use.

Interviews

After survey data was collected, the researcher conducted preliminary analysis of the survey responses, looking for interesting statements or trends in responses. “Maximal variation sampling” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 112) was utilized to identify four teachers with significantly different beliefs and/or practice who represented various levels (elementary, middle, and high school) and each of the four main areas of music teaching (band, orchestra, choir, and
general music) to participate in a one-on-one interview with the researcher. Open-ended questions were used to further investigate beliefs and practice. Participants gave open-ended responses, and the researcher used probes in order to elicit more information from the participants. Interview protocol can be found in Appendix B.

Scott, a middle school band teacher, was interviewed in the office of his music classroom after the school day had ended. Scott’s interview lasted approximately 61 minutes. Perry, a middle school choir teacher, was interviewed in his music classroom after the school day had ended. Perry’s interview lasted approximately 71 minutes. Paul, a high school orchestra teacher, was interviewed in the office of his music classroom after the school day had ended. Paul’s interview lasted approximately 63 minutes. Joan, an elementary general music teacher, was interviewed in her home since the school year had already concluded. Joan’s interview lasted approximately 38 minutes. Joan’s interview took significantly less time than the other participants because she was more direct in her responses, while Scott, Perry, and Paul tended to be more indirect in their responses, often discussing topics not specifically mentioned by the researcher, or provided great detail on certain aspects of their programs, such as repertoire-selection and rehearsal routine.

All interviews were recorded on a digital mini-recorder, as well as on a laptop computer through the use of the Audacity recording program. Interview recordings were then transcribed by the researcher.

Procedure

Permission to conduct research was obtained through the University of Michigan Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board in May of 2008, proof of which can be found in
Appendix C. Data was collected in two distinct sets in this triangulation mixed methods design. The quantitative data collection occurred throughout the summer of 2008. In June 2008 all 40 music teachers in the selected district were contacted through electronic mail and invited to participate in the online survey. Approximately half of the 40 teachers completed the survey within one month of being contacted. After about one month, the remaining teachers received a second invitation to participate through electronic mail. Approximately one month later, the teachers who had still not responded were contacted by telephone and invited to participate once more. By the end of August 2008, all but two of the 40 teachers had responded, resulting in a 95% response rate.

After the quantitative survey data was collected and preliminary analysis of responses was conducted, in February 2009 purposeful sampling was used to identify teachers to serve as interview participants. “Maximal variation sampling” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 112) was used to identify four survey participants for participation in a one-on-one interview with the researcher. This qualitative data collection consisted of interviews to investigate the nature of the differences in beliefs and/or practice more thoroughly. The four purposefully sampled participants were contacted by electronic mail in March 2009 and invited to participate. All four participants responded positively, accepting the invitation for the interview. Scheduling the interviews was difficult due to the participants’ busy schedules, but all were completed within four months. Scott’s interview took place in March 2009, Paul in April 2009, Perry in May 2009, and Joan in June 2009. Open-ended questions were used in the one-on-one interviews in order to allow the participants to “voice their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher” (Creswell, 2008, p. 225) through open-ended responses.
In July 2009 quantitative data was formally analyzed through the use of SPSS software to calculate frequencies and means, as well as crosstabulations. Following analysis of the quantitative data, the qualitative data was analyzed in August 2009. Quantitative and qualitative data were then analyzed together to come to a final merged analysis in September 2009.

Analysis

Quantitative analysis. The researcher worked with the University of Michigan Center for Statistical Consultation and Research in order to complete the survey data analysis. Survey responses were coded through the SurveyMonkey website and imported using SPSS software. Results were analyzed in SPSS by calculating response frequencies and mean scores, as well as cross tabulations to examine relationships between items. In addition, qualitative content analysis was used to analyze open-ended survey responses.

Qualitative analysis. Interviews were recorded and then transcribed. Broad categories of findings were developed based on initial observation. These categories included musical and nonmusical goals, student-centeredness versus subject-centeredness, teaching the way one was taught, ego, reasons for becoming a music teacher, definition of a “musician” and what it means to be musical, music as a talent, and contradictory beliefs or inability to articulate beliefs, possibly due to lack of reflection. Upon further examination of the interview data, specific descriptors were developed, and the transcripts were coded according to the descriptors. Coded data was then compared with the initial findings categories to arrive at a final analysis. A chart of codes developed can be found in Appendix D.

Mixed methods analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative data sets were compared in order to answer the mixed methods research question (“How do quantitative and qualitative
analyses of music teachers’ beliefs and practice complement or contradict each other?”). This comparison was done by merging the two data sets through discussion, most commonly by “report[ing] a statistical result. . . and then follow[ing] it up with specific quotes or information about a theme [from the qualitative findings] that confirms or disconfirms the quantitative results” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p. 140). This merging and discussion of quantitative results and qualitative findings helps to arrive at a more in-depth examination and understanding of music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice.

Each of these analyses- quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods- will be presented in the following chapters. Analysis and discussion of the quantitative data will be shared in Chapter Four. Analysis and discussion of the qualitative data will be shared in Chapter Five. Chapter Six will present a merging of the quantitative and qualitative data sets in a mixed methods analysis.
Chapter Four: Quantitative Analysis

This chapter will present the results of the survey portion of this study. Survey data was analyzed using SPSS software. Descriptive statistics were used to calculate response frequencies and mean scores. Chi-square Crosstabs tests were used to cross-tabulate variables in order to see how they are related to each other, and any difference of $p<.05$ was considered statistically significant. Results of this analysis will be organized into sections according to the research questions: beliefs about the nature of music and music education, beliefs about the nature of music teaching, beliefs about the nature of music learning, relationships between these beliefs, and relationships between beliefs and teaching practice. This will be followed by discussion of the results. It should be noted that due to the small sample size, results of this study may not be generalizable to all music teachers.

Beliefs about the Nature of Music and Music Education

What beliefs do music teachers have about the nature of music? Participants were asked to respond to five statements about the nature of music using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “7-Strongly Disagree.” The five statements were “Music is: (1) a form of expression, (2) a skill, (3) a talent, (4) a way of thinking, and (5) an art-form.”

All participants acknowledged belief that music is a form of expression and an art-form. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is a form of expression,” 30 participants (85.7%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” and 5 (14.3%) answered “2-Agree” (see Figure 2). The mean score was 1.14 on a seven-point scale. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is an art form,” 29 (82.9%) answered “Strongly Agree,” and 6 (17.1%) answered “Agree” (see Figure 3).
The mean score was 1.17. Zero participants answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” “4-Undecided,” “5-Somewhat Disagree,” “6-Disagree,” or “7-Strongly Disagree” in response to these statements.

Figure 2. Responses to the statement “Music is a form of expression.”

Figure 3. Responses to the statement “Music is an art form.”

Almost all participants acknowledged the belief that music is a skill and a way of thinking, but not as strongly. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is a skill,” 19
participants (54.3%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 9 (25.7%) answered “2-Agree,” 6 (17.1%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” and 1 answered “6-Disagree” (see Figure 4). The mean score was 1.74. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is a way of thinking,” 16 (45.7%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 10 (28.6%) answered “2-Agree,” 7 (20.0%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Undecided,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree” (see Figure 5). The mean score was 1.89.

Figure 4. Responses to the statement “Music is a skill.”
Figure 5. Responses to the statement “Music is a way of thinking.”

Participants varied most on whether or not they believed that music is a talent. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is a talent,” 11 (31.4%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 9 (25.7%) answered “2-Agree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 6). The mean score was 2.37.
What beliefs do music teachers have about the purpose of music education? Participants were asked to respond to eight statements about the purpose of music education using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “7-Strongly Disagree.” The eight statements were “The purpose of music education is to: (1) develop aesthetic awareness, (2) enable students to understand music, (3) enhance ability in other subject areas, (4) improve general intelligence, (5) improve quality of life, (6) prepare interested students for a career in music, (7) promote creativity, and (8) provide a means for self-expression.”

All participants acknowledged belief that the purpose of music education is to provide self-expression, enable understanding, promote creativity, and develop aesthetic awareness. When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music,” 25 (71.4%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 8 (22.9%) answered
“2-Agree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 7). The mean score was 1.34.

Figure 7. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.”

When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression,” 23 (65.7%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “2-Agree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 8). The mean score was 1.37.
Figure 8. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression.”

When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness,” 20 (57.1%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 14 (40.0%) answered “2-Agree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 9). The mean score was 1.46.
Figure 9. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness.”

When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to promote creativity,” 20 (57.1%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 13 (37.1%) answered “2-Agree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 10). The mean score was 1.49.

Figure 10. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to promote creativity.”
All but one participant acknowledged the belief that the purpose of music education is to improve quality of life. When asked to respond to this statement, 23 (67.6) participants (57.1%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 8 (23.5%) answered “2-Agree,” and 2 (5.9%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree.” Only 1 (2.9%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 11). The mean score was 1.53.

![Figure 11. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve quality of life.”](image)

Fewer participants acknowledged belief that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence, prepare interested students for a career in music, or enhance ability in other subject areas. When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence,” 7 (20.0%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “2-Agree,” and 8 (22.9%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 2 (5.7%) answered
“4-Undecided,” 5 (14.3%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 12). The mean score was 3.00.

Figure 12. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence.”

When asked to respond to the statement “The purpose of music education is to prepare interested students for a career in music,” 5 (14.3%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 7 (20.0%) answered “2-Agree,” and 14 (40.0%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 3 (8.6%) answered “4-Undecided,” 4 (11.4%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 13). The mean score was 3.03.
Figure 13. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to prepare interested students for a career in music.”

Participants varied most on whether or not they believed the purpose of music education is to enhance ability in other subject areas. When asked to respond to this statement, 6 (17.1%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 9 (25.7%) answered “2-Agree,” and 9 (25.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 2 (5.7%) answered “4-Undecided,” 1 (2.9%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 5 (14.3%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 14). The mean score was 3.29.
What relationships exist between beliefs about the nature of music and beliefs about the purpose of music education? While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to show a relationship between belief that music is an art-form and belief that the purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness. As shown in Figure 15, participants who answered “1-Strongly Agree” in response to the statement “Music is an art-form” were more likely to answer “1-Strongly Agree” in response to the statement “The purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness.”

Figure 14. Responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enhance ability in other subject areas.”
Figure 15. Relationship between responses to the statements “Music is an art-form” and “The purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness.”

Results indicated a significant relationship between belief that music is a form of expression and belief that the purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression. As shown in Figure 16, participants who answered “1-Strongly Agree” in response to the statement “Music is a form of expression” were more likely to answer “1-Strongly Agree” in response to the statement “The purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression.”
Figure 16. Relationship between responses to the statements “Music is a form of expression” and “The purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression.”

Do any differences exist between instrumental, choral, and general music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education? A significant difference was found when comparing instrumental, choral, and general music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education (see Figure 17). Instrumental and general music teachers’ agreement to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” was stronger than choral music teachers. General music teachers’ agreement with this statement was also slightly stronger than instrumental music teachers.
Figure 17. Relationship between primary music teaching setting and responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.”

Differences were also found when comparing ensemble music teachers (instrumental and choral music teachers) and general music teachers. While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to show that general music teachers tended to agree more strongly with the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” than did ensemble music teachers (see Figure 18).
Figure 18. Relationship between primary music teaching setting and responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.”

While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to show that ensemble music teachers tended to agree more strongly with the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence” than did general music teachers (see Figure 19).
Figure 19. Relationship between primary music teaching setting and responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence.”

Do any differences exist between elementary, middle, and high school music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education? A significant difference was found when comparing high school music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education with middle and elementary school music teachers. As shown in Figure 20, middle and elementary school music teachers’ agreement with the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” was stronger than high school music teachers.
Figure 20. Relationship between primary music teaching level and responses to the statement

“The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.”

Do beliefs about the purpose of music education vary based on years of music teaching experience? While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to show differences when comparing agreement with the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” among various years of music teaching experience. As shown in Figure 21, strength of agreement with this statement tended to vary inversely with years of experience.
Figure 21. Relationship between years of music teaching experience and responses to the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.”

Beliefs about the Nature of Music Teaching

What do music teachers believe is the most important part of music teaching?

Participants were asked to respond to seven statements about the importance of aspects of music teaching on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Most Important” to “7-Least Important.” The seven statements were “The most important part(s) of a music teacher’s job is to: (1) develop knowledge about music, (2) develop performance skills, (3) develop appreciation for music, (4) develop musical independence, (5) develop understanding of music, (6) encourage
students to think and question the world around them, and (7) transmit values of mainstream culture.”

The most importance was given to developing understanding of music. When responding to this statement, 17 (50.0%) participants answered “1-Most Important,” 13 (38.2%) answered “2-Very Important,” and 4 (11.8%) answered “3-Important” (see Figure 22). The mean score was 1.62

![Figure 22. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop understanding of music.”](image)

Developing appreciation of music was the second most important. When responding to this statement, 18 (52.9%) participants answered “1-Most Important,” 7 (20.6%) answered “2-Very Important,” 5 (14.7%) answered “3-Important,” 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Somewhat Important,” and 3 (8.8%) answered “5-Slightly Important” (see Figure 23). The mean score was 1.94.
Figure 23. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop appreciation for music.”

Many teachers believed developing knowledge about music and developing musical independence are also important parts of their job. When responding to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop knowledge about music,” 9 (26.5%) participants answered “1-Most Important,” 16 (47.1%) answered “2-Very Important,” 8 (23.5%) answered “3-Important,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Somewhat Important” (see Figure 24). The mean score was 2.03.
Figure 24. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop knowledge about music.”

When responding to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence,” 13 (28.2%) participants answered “1-Most Important,” 13 (38.2%) answered “2-Very Important,” 4 (11.8%) answered “3-Important,” 3 (8.8%) answered “4-Somewhat Important,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Not Very Important” (see Figure 25). The mean score was 2.03.
Figure 25. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence.”

Participants varied more in whether or not they believed developing performance skills and encouraging students to think and question the world around them are important parts of their job. When responding to the statement “The most important part(s) of a music teacher’s job is to develop performance skills,” 10 (29.4%) answered “1-Most Important,” 8 (23.5%) answered “2-Very Important,” 11 (32.4%) answered “3-Important,” 3 (8.8%) answered “4-Somewhat Important,” and 2 (5.9%) answered “6-Not Very Important” (see Figure 26). The mean score was 2.44.
Figure 26. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop performance skills.”

When responding to the statement “The most important part(s) of a music teacher’s job is to encourage students to think and question the world around them,” 11 (32.4%) answered “1-Most Important,” 7 (20.6%) answered “2-Very Important,” 3 (8.8%) answered “3-Important,” 5 (14.7%) answered “4-Somewhat Important,” 6 (17.6%) answered “5-Slightly Important,” and 2 (5.9%) answered “6-Not Very Important” (see Figure 27). The mean score was 2.82.
Figure 27. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to encourage students to think and question the world around them.”

Participants varied most in whether or not they believed that transmitting values of mainstream culture is the most important part of their job. When responding to this statement, 3 (9.1%) answered “1-Most Important,” 4 (12.1%) answered “2-Very Important,” 5 (15.2%) answered “3-Important,” 4 (12.1%) answered “4-Somewhat Important, 7 (21.2%) answered “5-Slightly Important,” 3 (9.1%) answered “6-Not Very Important,” and 7 (21.2%) answered “7-Least Important” (see Figure 28). The mean score was 4.36.
Figure 28. Responses to the statement “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to transmit values of mainstream culture.”

What do music teachers believe is the purpose of assessment? Participants were asked to respond to seven statements about the purpose of assessment using a five-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “5-Strongly Disagree.” The five statements were “The purpose of assessment is to: (1) assign grades, (2) determine what students know and understand, (3) guide instruction, (4) assign ensemble parts, (5) determine placement in ensembles, (6) determine how/when to proceed, and (7) improve instruction.”

All participants acknowledged belief that the purpose of assessment is to determine what students know and understand. When responding to this statement, 32 (88.9%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” and 4 (11.1%) answered “2-Agree” (see Figure 29). Zero participants answered “5-Strongly Disagree,” “4-Disagree,” or “3-Undecided.” The mean score was 1.11.
Figure 29. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to determine what students know and understand.”

All participants also acknowledged belief that the purpose of assessment is to improve instruction. When responding to this statement, 27 (75.0%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” and 9 (25.0%) answered “2-Agree” (see Figure 30). Zero participants answered “5-Strongly Disagree,” “4-Disagree,” or “3-Undecided.” The mean score was 1.25.

Figure 30. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to improve instruction.”
Most participants acknowledged belief that the purpose of assessment is to guide instruction and to determine how/when to proceed. When responding to the statement “The purpose of music education is to guide instruction, 25 (69.4%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 10 (27.8%) answered “2-Agree,” and 1 answered “3-Undecided” (see Figure 31). Zero chose “4-Disagree” or “5-Strongly Disagree.” The mean score was 1.33.

![Bar graph showing responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to guide instruction.”](Image)

*Figure 31.* Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to guide instruction.”

When responding to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to determine how/when to proceed,” 22 (61.1%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 13 (36.1%) answered “2-Agree,” and 1 (2.8%) answered “3-Undecided” (see Figure 32). Zero chose “4-Disagree” or “5-Strongly Disagree.” The mean score was 1.42.
Figure 32. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to determine how/when to proceed.”

Fewer participants acknowledged belief that the purpose of assessment is to assign grades. When responding to this statement, 8 (22.9%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 15 (42.9%) answered “2-Agree,” 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Undecided,” 7 (20.0%) answered “4-Disagree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “5-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 33).

Figure 33. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to assign grades.”
Participants varied most on whether or not they believed that assigning ensemble parts or determining placement in ensembles are the purpose of assessment. When responding to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to assign ensemble parts,” 5 (13.9%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 12 (33.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 6 (16.7%) answered “3-Undecided,” while 4 (11.1%) answered “4-Disagree,” and 9 (25.0%) answered “5-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 34). The mean score was 3.00.

![Figure 34. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to assign ensemble parts.”](image-url)

When responding to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to determine placement in ensembles,” 4 (11.1%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 10 (27.8%) answered “2-Agree,” and 5 (13.9%) answered “3-Undecided,” while 9 (25.0%) answered “4-Disagree,” and 8 (22.2%) answered “5-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 35). The mean score was 3.19.
Figure 35. Responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to determine placement in ensembles.”

Do music teachers value product or process more in their teaching? Most music teachers valued process over product, or at least product and process equally. When responding on a five-point Likert scale to the statement “As a music teacher, what is more important to you: Product or process,” 12 (34.3%) participants answered “3-Product and process equally,” 11 (31.4%) answered “4-Process somewhat more than product,” and 10 (28.6%) answered “5-Process.” Only 2 (5.7) participants answered “2-Product somewhat more than process,” and zero chose “1-Product” (see Figure 36). The mean score was 3.83.
Figure 36. Responses to the question “What is more important: Product or process?”

*Are elementary or secondary music teachers more likely to value process or product?* No significant difference was found between elementary and secondary music teachers’ valuing of process or product. However, future research should investigate whether elementary music teachers tend to value process more and product less than secondary music teachers, as shown in Figure 37.
Are ensemble or general music teachers more likely to value process or product? No significant difference was found between elementary and secondary music teachers’ valuing of process or product.

Do music teachers believe that performance is the goal? Most music teachers did not believe that performance is the goal in a music program. When responding on a five-point Likert scale to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music,” 5 (14.3%) participants answered “2-Agree,” 5 (14.3%) answered “3-Undecided,” 14 (40.0%) answered “4-Disagree,” and 11 (31.4%) answered “5-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 38). The mean score was 3.89.
Figure 38. Responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.”

Are ensemble or general music teachers more likely to believe performance is the goal? When analyzing participants’ responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music,” no significant difference was found between ensemble and general music teachers’ beliefs.

Are elementary or secondary music teachers more likely to believe performance is the goal? While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data shows differences when comparing elementary and secondary (middle and high school) music teachers’ beliefs about performance. As shown in Figure 39, secondary teachers’ agreement with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music” was stronger than elementary teachers.
Figure 39. Relationship between primary music teaching level and responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.”

*Are music teachers who believe performance is the goal more likely to value product over process?* A significant difference was found between music teachers who believe performance is the goal and those who do not. As shown in Figure 40, teachers who agreed with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished piece of music” were more likely to value product over process, while teachers who strongly disagreed with the performance statement were more likely to value process over product.
Figure 40. Relationship between responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music” and the question “What is more important: Product or process?”

Do music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors/directors? When asked to respond on a five-point Likert scale to the question “Where do you feel your job falls on the following continuum,” 11 (32.4%) participants answered “5-Teacher,” 17 (50.0%) answered “4-More teacher than conductor,” and 6 (17.6%) answered “3-Both” (see Figure 41). Zero answered “1-Conductor” or “2-Conductor more than teacher.” The mean score was 4.15.
Additionally, at the beginning of the survey teachers were asked to provide their job title as an open-ended response. In describing their job title, 26 (70.3%) participants labeled themselves “teacher,” and 8 (21.6%) labeled themselves as “director” (see Figure 42). One (2.7%) participant did not provide an answer, and two (5.4%) only described their subject, e.g., “elementary music.”

Figure 41. Responses to the question “Where do you feel your job falls: conductor or teacher?”

Figure 42. Responses given for “job title.”
Do any relationships exist between the belief that performance is the goal and how music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors/directors? While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to suggest a relationship between belief that performance is the goal and how music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors. As show in Figure 43, participants who labeled their job as “5-Teacher” (not at all conductor) were more likely to strongly disagree that “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished performance of a piece of music.”

![Bar chart showing the relationship between responses to the question “Where do you feel your job falls: conductor or teacher?” and responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished performance of a piece of music.”](chart.png)

*Figure 43.* Relationship between responses to the question “Where do you feel your job falls: conductor or teacher?” and responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.”
A significant difference was found between participants who labeled themselves as “teacher” and participants who labeled themselves as “director.” As shown in Figure 44, participants who labeled themselves as “director” showed more agreement with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished performance of a piece of music.”

![Figure 44](image_url)

**Figure 44.** Relationship between responses given for “job title” and responses to the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.”

Do any relationships exist between the valuing of process or product and how music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors/directors? A significant relationship was found between valuing of process or product and how music teachers identify themselves as
teachers or conductors. As shown in Figure 45, participants who identified themselves as “5-Teacher” (not at all conductor) were more likely to value process (not at all product).

![Figure 45. Relationship between responses to the questions “Where do you feel your job falls: conductor or teacher? and “What is more important: Product or process?”](image)

No significant difference was found between participants who labeled themselves as “teacher” and those who labeled themselves as “director.”

**Beliefs about the Nature of Music Learning**

*Do music teachers believe anyone can learn music? Do music teachers believe anyone can be good at music?* Participants were asked to respond to the statement “Anyone can learn music” using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “7-Strongly Disagree.” All participants acknowledged the belief that anyone can learn music to some degree,
as 20 (57.1%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 12 (34.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 46). Zero chose “4-Undecided,” “5-Somewhat Disagree,” “6-Disagree,” or “7-Strongly Disagree.” The mean score was 1.51.

![Figure 46. Responses to the statement “Anyone can learn music.”](image)

Participants showed less agreement with the statement “Anyone can be good at music.” When responding to this statement, 9 (25.7%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 10 (28.6%) answered “2-Agree,” and 10 (28.6%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 3 (8.6%) answered “4-Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Disagree” (see Figure 47). The mean score was 2.49.
Figure 47. Responses to the statement “Anyone can be good at music.”

Does the belief that anyone can be good at music differ among music teachers at different levels or in different settings? No significant differences were found between music teachers at different levels or in different settings regarding the belief that anyone can be good at music. However, future research should investigate whether high school teachers may not agree as strongly as elementary or middle school teachers that anyone can be good at music, as shown in Figure 48.
Figure 48. Relationship between primary teaching level and responses to the statement “Anyone can be good at music.”

What do music teachers believe makes a person good at music? Participants were asked to respond to twelve statements about factors that make a person good at music using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “7-Strongly Disagree.” The twelve statements were “To be good at music, a person needs to: (1) have a talent for music, (2) have musical parents, (3) be exposed to a good musical environment, (4) be interested in music, (5) have a kind of ‘musical mind,’ (6) have a basic knowledge of music theory, (7) have a good ‘ear,’ (8) learn how to read music notation, (9) have a good teacher, (10) develop musical skills, (11) receive appropriate musical instruction, and (12) take lessons at an early age.”
Most participants did not acknowledge belief that a person needs to have musical parents or take lessons at an early age to be good at music. When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have musical parents,” 8 (22.9%) participants answered “7-Strongly Disagree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 10 (28.6%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” while 3 (8.6%) answered “4-Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “2-Agree” (see Figure 49). Zero chose “1-Strongly Agree.” The mean score was 5.49.

![Figure 49. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have musical parents.”](image)

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to take lessons at an early age,” 9 (25.7%) participants answered “7-Strongly Disagree,” 7 (20.0%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 12 (34.3%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” while 3 (8.6%) answered “4-
Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “2-Agree” (see Figure 50). Zero chose “1-Strongly Agree.” The mean score was 5.34.

Figure 50. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to take lessons at an early age.”

Almost all participants acknowledged belief that a person needs to develop musical skills and be exposed to a good musical environment to be good at music. When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to develop musical skills,” 15 (42.9%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 16 (45.7%) answered “2-Agree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree” (see Figure 51). Zero chose “5-Somewhat Disagree,” “6-Disagree,” or “7-Strongly Disagree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “4-Undecided.” The mean score was 1.74.
Figure 51. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to develop musical skills.”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to be exposed to a good musical environment,” 18 (48.6%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 12 (34.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 4 (11.4%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree.” Zero chose “4-Undecided,” “5-Somewhat Disagree,” or “7-Strongly Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Disagree” (see Figure 52). The mean score was 1.71.
Many participants acknowledged belief that a person needs to be interested in music, have a good ‘ear,’ or have a basic knowledge of music theory to be good at music. When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to be interested in music, 17 (50.0%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 9 (26.5%) answered “2-Agree,” and 5 (14.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Undecided,” and 2 (5.9%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree” (see Figure 53). Zero chose “6-Disagree” or “7-Strongly Disagree.” The mean score was 1.88.
Figure 53. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to be interested in music.”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a good ‘ear,’” 9 (25.7%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 13 (37.1%) answered “2-Agree,” and 9 (25.7%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 2 (5.7%) answered “4-Undecided,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree.” Zero chose “6-Disagree” or “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 54). The mean score was 2.29.
Figure 54. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a good ‘ear.’”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a basic knowledge of music theory,” 5 (14.3%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “2-Agree,” and 12 (34.3%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 4 (11.4%) answered “4-Undecided,” 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 55). The mean score was 2.83.
Figure 55. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a basic knowledge of music theory.”

Participants varied more in whether or not they believed that a person needs to receive appropriate musical instruction or have a good teacher to be good at music. When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to receive appropriate musical instruction,” 9 (25.7%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 12 (34.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 4 (11.4%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” while 2 (5.7%) answered “4-Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 4 (11.4%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 56). The mean score was 2.89.
Figure 56. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to receive appropriate musical instruction.”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a good teacher,” 6 (17.1%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 12 (34.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 6 (17.1%) answered “3-Agree,” while 4 (11.4%) answered “4-Undecided,” 4 (11.4%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 57). The mean score was 3.00.
Participants varied most in whether or not they believed that a person needs to have a “musical mind,” have a talent for music, or learn how to read music notation to be good at music. When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a kind of ‘musical mind,’” 3 (8.6%) answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 5 (14.3%) answered “2-Agree,” and 17 (48.6%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” 4 (17.1%) answered “4-Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 1 (2.9%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 58). The mean score was 3.17.
Figure 58. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a kind of ‘musical mind.’”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a talent for music,” 2 (5.7%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 6 (17.1%) answered “2-Agree,” 10 (28.6%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” 5 (14.3%) answered “4-Undecided,” 6 (17.1%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 3 (8.6%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 59). The mean score was 3.80.
Figure 59. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a talent for music.”

When responding to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to learn how to read music notation,” 2 (5.9%) participants answered “1-Strongly Agree,” 6 (17.6%) answered “2-Agree,” 9 (26.5%) answered “3-Somewhat Agree,” 4 (11.8%) answered “4-Undecided,” 5 (14.7%) answered “5-Somewhat Disagree,” 3 (8.8%) answered “6-Disagree,” and 5 (14.7%) answered “7-Strongly Disagree” (see Figure 60). The mean score was 3.97.
Figure 60. Responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to learn how to read music notation.”

Do music teachers at different levels, in different settings, or with different years of experience have differing beliefs about what makes a person good at music? No significant difference was found between elementary and secondary music teachers’ beliefs about what makes a person good at music.

A significant difference was found between ensemble (instrumental and choral) and general music teachers’ belief that a person needs to learn to read music notation to be good at music. As shown in Figure 61, ensemble music teachers were more likely to agree to some extent (1-Strongly Agree, 2-Agree, or 3-Somewhat Agree) that a person needs to learn to read music notation to be good at music, while general music teachers were more likely to disagree (7-Strongly Disagree, 6-Disagree, 5-Somewhat Disagree.
A significant relationship was found between years of music teaching experience and belief that a person needs to have musical parents to be good at music. Agreement that a person needs to have musical parents to be good at music strengthened with years of teaching experience, as shown in Figure 62.
What do music teachers believe are the most important determinants of success in music? Participants were asked the question “How powerful are the following factors in determining success in music?” and rated seven factors on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Most Powerful” to “7-Least Powerful.” The seven factors were (1) student home background, (2) student talent, (3) student interest, (4) student knowledge about music, (5) teacher use of effective teaching methods, (6) teacher attention to student interests/abilities, and (7) teacher enthusiasm.

Most participants acknowledged belief that student interest and teacher use of effective teaching methods were very powerful determinants of success in music. When rating the power
of student interest in determining success, 22 (62.9%) participants answered “1-Most Powerful,”
11 (31.4%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” 1 (2.9%) answered “3-Powerful,” and 1 (2.9%)
answered “4-Somewhat Powerful” (see Figure 63). Zero chose “5-Slightly Powerful,” “6-Not
Very Powerful,” or “7-Least Powerful.” The mean score was 1.46.

Figure 63. Responses rating the power of student interest as a determinant of success in music.

When rating the power of teacher use of effective teaching methods in determining
success, 22 (62.9%) participants answered “1-Most Powerful,” 11 (31.4%) answered “2-Very
Powerful,” 1 (2.9%) answered “3-Powerful,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Somewhat
Powerful” (see Figure 64). Zero chose “5-Slightly Powerful,” “6-Not Very Powerful,” or “7-
Least Powerful.” The mean score was 1.46.
Figure 64. Responses rating the power of effective teaching methods as a determinant of success in music.

Many participants acknowledged belief that teacher enthusiasm and teacher attention to student interests/abilities are also power determinants of success in music. When rating the power of teacher enthusiasm in determining success, 21 (60.0%) participants answered “1-Most Powerful,” 8 (22.9%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” 4 (11.4%) answered “3-Powerful,” 1 (2.9%) answered “4-Somewhat Powerful,” and 1 (2.09%) answered “5-Slightly Powerful” (see Figure 65). Zero chose “6-Not Very Powerful” or “7-Least Powerful.” The mean score was 1.66.
When rating the power of teacher attention to student interests/abilities in determining success, 14 (41.2%) participants answered “1-Most Powerful,” 13 (38.2%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” and 7 (20.6%) answered “3-Powerful” (see Figure 66). Zero chose “4-Somewhat Powerful,” “5-Slightly Powerful,” “6-Not Very Powerful” or “7-Least Powerful.” The mean score was 1.79.
Figure 66. Responses rating the power of teacher attention to students interests/abilities as a determinant of success in music.

Participants varied most when rating the power of student knowledge about music, student home background, and student talent. When rating the power of student knowledge about music in determining success, 1 (2.9%) answered “1-Most Powerful,” 8 (22.9%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” 14 (40.0%) answered “3-Powerful,” 8 (22.9%) answered “4-Somewhat Powerful,” 2 (5.7%) answered “5-Slightly Powerful,” and 2 (5.7%) answered “6-Not Very Powerful” (see Figure 67). The mean score was 3.23.
Figure 67. Responses rating the power of knowledge about music as a determinant of success in music.

When rating the power of student home background in determining success, 4 (11.4%) answered “1-Most Powerful,” 8 (22.9%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” 9 (25.7%) answered “3-Powerful,” 7 (20.0%) answered “4-Somewhat Powerful,” 3 (8.6%) answered “5-Slightly Powerful,” 3 (8.6%) answered “6-Not Very Powerful,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “7-Least Powerful” (see Figure 68). The mean score was 3.23.
Figure 68. Responses rating the power of home background as a determinant of success in music.

When rating the power of student talent in determining success, 1 (2.9%) answered “1-Most Powerful,” 9 (25.7%) answered “2-Very Powerful,” 12 (34.3%) answered “3-Powerful,” 6 (17.1%) answered “4-Somewhat Powerful,” 4 (17.1%) answered “5-Slightly Powerful,” 3 (8.6%) answered “6-Not Very Powerful,” and 0 answered “7-Least Powerful” (see Figure 69). The mean score was 3.34.
Do music teachers at different levels or in different settings have differing beliefs about what determines success in music? A significant difference was found when comparing high school, middle school, and elementary school music teachers’ beliefs about the power of student home background as a determinant of success in music. High school teachers tended to rate student home background as a more powerful determinant of success than did middle or elementary school teachers, as shown in Figure 70.
Figure 70. Relationship between primary teaching level and responses rating the power of home background as a determinant of success in music.

A significant difference was also found when comparing instrumental, choral and general music teachers’ beliefs about the power of effective teaching method as a determinant of success in music. Instrumental music teachers tended to rate teacher use of effective teaching methods as a less powerful determinant of success than did choral or general music teachers, as shown in Figure 71.
Figure 71. Relationship between primary teaching setting and responses rating the power of effective teaching methods as a determinant of success in music.

While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the data seems to suggest differences when comparing instrumental, choral and general music teacher’s beliefs about teacher attention to student interests/abilities as a determinant of success in music. Instrumental music teachers tended to rate teacher attention to student interests/abilities as a less powerful determinant of success than did choral or general music teachers, as shown in Figure 72.
Figure 72. Relationship between primary teaching setting and responses rating the power of teacher attention to student interests/abilities as a determinant of success in music.

Do music teachers at different levels have differing beliefs about whether talent is necessary to be good or successful at music? No significant differences were found when comparing elementary and secondary (middle and high school) music teachers’ agreement with the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a talent for music” or belief in the power of talent as a determinant of success in music. However, future research should investigate whether secondary teachers may be more likely to believe that talent is necessary for a person to be good or successful at music than elementary teachers, as shown in Figure 73 and Figure 74.
Figure 73. Relationship between primary teaching level and responses to the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a talent for music.”

Figure 74. Relationship between primary teaching level and responses rating the power of talent as a determinant of success in music.
Do any relationships exist between the belief that music is a talent and belief that anyone can be good at music? No significant relationships were found between participants’ agreement with the statement “Music is a talent” and agreement with the statement “Anyone can be good at music.” No significant relationships were found between participants’ agreement with the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to have a talent for music” and agreement with the statement “Anyone can be good at music.” No significant relationships were found between participants’ belief in the power of talent as a determinant of success in music and agreement with the statement “Anyone can be good at music.”

A significant relationship was found between the belief that anyone can be good at music and the belief that some children naturally have a mind for music while others do not. Participants were asked to respond to the statement “Some children just naturally have a mind for music, and some children don’t” using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from “1-Strongly Agree” to “7-Strongly Disagree.” As shown in Figure 75, results suggest that those who believe more strongly that anyone can be good at music are likely to not believe that some children have musical minds and others do not, while those who do not believe anyone can be good at music are more likely to agree that some children have musical minds and others do not.
Figure 75. Relationship between responses to the statements “Some children just naturally have a mind for music, and some children don’t” and “Anyone can be good at music.”

**Do any relationships exist between music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education and beliefs about the most important part of their jobs?** A significant relationship was found between the belief that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music and the belief that the most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence. Teachers who strongly agreed that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music were also likely to believe that the most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence, as shown in Figure 76.
Figure 76. Relationship between responses to the statements “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” and “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence.”

Results also suggest that future research should investigate whether teachers who strongly believe that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music may also feel that developing understanding of music is the most important part of their jobs, as shown in Figure 77.
Figure 77. Relationship between responses to the statements “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music” and “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop understanding of music.”

Results suggest that future research should investigate whether teachers who strongly believe that the purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness may also feel that developing appreciation for music is the most important part of their jobs, as shown in Figure 78.
Figure 78. Relationship between responses to the statements “The purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness” and “The most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop appreciation for music.”

Relationships Between Beliefs and Teaching Practice

Do any relationships exist between beliefs about determinants of success in music and use of assessments? A significant relationship was found between belief that talent is a determinant of success in music and frequency of assessing participation. Participants were asked how often they assess student learning through seven different means: (1) practice records, (2) written work, (3) portfolio, (4) participation/effort, (5) attendance, (6) informal observation, and (7) performance tests/rating scales. Participants who assessed more often through
participation/effort tended to agree more strongly that a person needs to have a talent to be good at music, as shown in Figure 79.

*Figure 79.* Relationship between responses rating the power of student talent as a determinant of success in music and frequency of assessing through participation.

Do any relationships exist between music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of assessment and the ways in which they assess student learning? No significant relationships were found between participants’ beliefs about the purpose of assessment and the ways in which they assess student learning. However, future research should investigate whether teachers who assess student learning through practice records may be more likely to believe that the purpose of assessment is to assign grades, as shown in Figure 80.
Figure 80. Relationship between frequency of assessing through practice records and responses to the statement “The purpose of assessment is to assign grades.”

Do any relationships exist between how music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors/directors and how often they incorporate each of the national standards into their teaching? A significant relationship was found between whether music teachers identified themselves as teachers or directors and how often they incorporate improvisation into their teaching. Participants were asked how often they engage students in nine activities: (1) singing, (2) playing instruments, (3) improvising, (4) composing/arranging, (5) reading/notating, (6) listening/analyzing/describing, (7) evaluating, (8) examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines, and (9) examining relationships between music and history/culture.
Participants who described their job title as “teacher” engaged students in improvisation more frequently than participants who described their job title as “director,” as shown in Figure 81.

![Figure 81](image)

**Figure 81.** Relationship between responses given for job title and frequency of teaching improvisation.

A significant relationship was found between whether music teachers identified themselves as teachers directors and how often they incorporate composing or arranging into their teaching. Participants who described their job title as “teacher” engaged students in composing/arranging more frequently than participants who described their job title as “director,” as shown in Figure 82.
A significant relationship was also found between how music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors/directors and how often they incorporate examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines into their teaching. Participants who described their job title as “teacher” engaged students in examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines more frequently than participants who described their job title as “director,” as shown in Figure 83.

Figure 82. Relationship between responses given for job title and frequency of teaching composition/arranging.
Figure 83. Relationship between responses given for job title and frequency of teaching relationships between music and other arts/disciplines.

What factors may influence music teachers’ decisions to include or exclude improvisation or composition in their teaching? Participants were asked to provide an open-ended response to the questions “What factors influence the planning of your lessons? (What do you consider when deciding what and how to teach?)” It was noticed that several participants mentioned performances and time as factors that influenced their planning. Responses were then coded to reflect whether or not a participant mentioned each of these two factors. Analysis indicated 12.1% (4) of participants mentioned performances as a factor that influences their planning, and 21.2% (7) mentioned time as a factor. When this was cross-tabulated with frequencies of teaching improvisation and composition, no significant differences were found. However, results suggest...
that future research should investigate whether teachers who believe time and performances are factors that influence their planning may be less likely to engage their students in improvisation and composition (see Figure 84, Figure 85, Figure 86, and Figure 87).

Figure 84. Relationship between frequency of teaching improvisation and performance as a factor that influences planning.
Figure 85. Relationship between frequency of teaching composition/arranging and performance as a factor that influences planning.
Figure 86. Relationship between frequency of teaching improvisation and time as a factor that influences planning.
Figure 87. Relationship between frequency of teaching composition/arranging and time as a factor that influences planning.

Discussion of Survey Results

Analysis of the survey data revealed many commonalities in music teachers’ beliefs. Interesting differences among music teachers’ beliefs were also found. These differences were discovered in comparing beliefs of elementary and secondary teachers, ensemble and general music teachers, and teachers with varying years of experience.

Common beliefs regarding the nature of music and music education were found among music teachers. All music teachers who participated in the survey expressed belief that music is a form of expression and an art-form, and most believe that music is a skill and a way of thinking. Some teachers agreed that music is a talent, while others did not. All participants expressed
belief that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, to provide a means for self-expression, to develop aesthetic awareness, and to promote creativity. Most of the teachers surveyed believe that the purpose of music education is to improve quality of life, but not all teachers expressed belief that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence, prepare interested students for a career in music, or to enhance ability in other subject areas. Teachers who expressed belief that music is an art-form were also likely to believe that the purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness. Teachers who expressed belief that music is a form of expression were also likely to believe that the purpose of music education is to provide a means for self-expression.

Instrumental and general music teachers expressed stronger belief that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music than choral teachers (which may be due to the small number of choral teachers surveyed), and general music teachers expressed this belief more strongly than instrumental teachers. General music teachers also expressed stronger belief than ensemble (instrumental and choral) music teachers that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music. Ensemble music teachers expressed stronger belief than general music teachers that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence. Elementary and middle school teachers expressed stronger belief that the purpose of music education is to understand music than high school teachers, and teachers with less teaching experience expressed this belief more strongly than teachers with 25 or more years of experience.

The differences found between ensemble and general music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education suggest that these general music teachers may be more likely to
justify their music programs through musical goals, such as developing musical understanding or
developing musical knowledge or skills. Meanwhile, these ensemble music teachers may be
more likely to justify their music programs through non-musical goals, such as improving
intelligence or developing teamwork or discipline. This difference in justification for music
education may be rooted in the differences between the programs themselves. General music
teachers such as these typically aim to develop a broad musical experience for their students that
will lay a foundation for future musical endeavors in their lives. It would then make sense that
their general music programs are justified based on musical outcomes. Meanwhile, these
ensemble music teachers may realize that the musical skills they teach are often situated and
context-specific, so the justification for their ensemble music programs is more likely to be based
on broader non-musical outcomes, such as developing general life skills.

When examining beliefs about music teaching, developing understanding of music and
developing appreciation for music were identified by the teachers as the parts of their jobs they
believed were most important. Developing knowledge about music, developing musical
independence, and developing performance skills were also identified as important parts of their
jobs. Encouraging students to think and question the world around them and transmitting values
of mainstream culture were identified by teachers as the parts of their jobs they believed were
least important.

All teachers expressed belief that the purpose of assessment is to determine what students
know and understand and to improve instruction, and almost all expressed belief that the purpose
of assessment is to guide instruction and determine how/when to proceed. While some teachers
expressed belief that the purpose of assessment is to assign grades, assign ensemble parts, or determine placement in ensembles, other teachers did not.

No differences were found between ensemble and general music teachers valuing of process or product. Further investigation may find that elementary music teachers value process more and product less than secondary music teachers. Very few teachers expressed belief that the ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music, and all of those who did were secondary teachers. Teachers who believe the ultimate goal is to prepare performance were also likely to value product more than other teachers.

All teachers identified themselves as “teacher” over “conductor” or teacher and conductor equally. However, when asked to state their job title, over 20 percent described themselves as “director.” Teachers who described themselves as “director” were more likely to believe that the ultimate goal in a music class is performance. Teachers who identified themselves as all teacher and no conductor disagreed more strongly with the belief that the ultimate goal of a music class is performance and tend to value process much more than product.

When examining beliefs about music learning, it was found that all teachers expressed belief that anyone can learn music but expressed less belief that anyone can be good at music. No differences were found among levels or settings regarding the belief that anyone can be good at music. However, further investigation may find that elementary and middle school teachers may believe more strongly than high school teachers that anyone can be good at music. High school teachers may be less likely to believe that anyone can be good at music due to the advanced repertoire and rigorous performance schedule typically found in high school music programs.
Most teachers do not believe that one needs to have musical parents or take lessons at an early age to be good at music. Almost all teachers expressed belief that one must develop musical skills, be exposed to a good musical environment, be interested in music, and have a good “ear” in order to be good at music. Many teachers also expressed belief that one must have a basic knowledge of music theory or receive appropriate musical instruction to be good at music. While some teachers expressed belief that one needs to have a good teacher, have a “musical mind,” have a talent, or learn how to read notation to be good at music, others did not express these beliefs. No differences were found between elementary and secondary teachers’ beliefs about what makes a person good at music. Ensemble teachers were more likely than general music teachers to believe that a person needs to learn to read notation to be good at music. Teachers with 25 or more years of teaching experience were more likely to believe a person needs to have musical parents to be good at music than teachers with less experience.

Student interest, teacher’s use of effective teaching methods, teacher enthusiasm, and teacher’s attention to students’ interests/abilities were identified by teachers as the most powerful determinants of students’ musical success. Knowledge about music, student’s home background, and talent were identified as less powerful determinants of success. More high school teachers than elementary or middle school teachers believe that home background is the most important determinant of success. This may be because students from more supportive home environments are likely to receive more encouragement to practice and attend performances, both of which may be viewed as important in high school music programs. Choral and general music teachers expressed stronger belief than instrumental teachers that teacher’s use of effective teaching methods and teacher’s attention to students’ interests/abilities are important determinants of
success. Typically instrumental music programs in this district tend to be traditional in nature, focusing on “the music,” which may account for these instrumental teachers not placing as much value in effective teaching methods or attention to student interests/abilities. While no significant differences were found between elementary and secondary teachers’ beliefs that talent determines success, results suggest that further investigation may find that secondary teachers may be more likely to believe that talent is necessary to be good at music.

Few significant relationships were found between beliefs about music and music education, beliefs about music teaching, and beliefs about music learning. For example, one would expect that teachers who do not believe that one needs to have a talent to be good at music would also believe that anyone can be good at music, but no such relationships were found. This absence of relationships between beliefs could be due to a lack of teacher reflection. It is also possible that these beliefs are situated in isolated clusters and not being reflected on in relation to each other.

Teachers who believe the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music were also likely to believe that the most important part of a music teacher’s job is to develop musical independence, and further investigation may find that these teachers also are likely to believe that enabling students to understand music is the most important part of their job. Further investigation may also find that teachers who believe the purpose of music education is to develop aesthetic awareness also believe that developing appreciation for music is the most important part of their job.

When examining relationships between beliefs and teaching practice, it was discovered that teachers who assess more often through participation/effort tended to agree more strongly
that a person needs to have a talent to be good at music. This may suggest that these teachers do not truly believe that all students are capable of achieving in music and so must assess in a way that does not focus on musical skill or ability. No significant relationships were found between beliefs about the purpose of assessment and modes of assessment utilized, but further investigation may find that teachers who assess through practice records may be more likely to believe that the purpose of assessment is to assign grades. This would suggest that practice records are simply used to assign grades rather than to truly gauge student learning as other modes of assessment can do.

Relationships between beliefs and teaching practice were also found when looking at incorporation of the National Standards for Music Education. Teachers who describe their job title as “teacher” engage their students in improvisation and composition more frequently than teachers who describe themselves as “director.” Those who identify themselves as “teacher” also engage students in examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines more frequently. These results suggest that teachers who view themselves as “directors” are likely to place more value in activities that are directly related to music performance, including singing, playing, and reading notation. Improvising, composing, and examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines may be seen as less directly related to performing, thus teachers who view themselves as “directors” may not find as much value in those activities.

A relationship was also discovered between infrequent incorporation of improvisation and composition and belief that performance is a factor when planning. Teachers who stated that performances influence the planning of their lessons were the least likely to engage students in improvisation and composition. This suggests that these teachers make performances a priority
and spend more time on activities that will directly improve performances, such as singing, playing, and reading. Teachers who listed time as a factor that influences their planning were also less likely to incorporate improvisation and composition.

A quantitative survey can only provide a broad picture of music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice. Qualitative interviews were conducted with four of the survey participants in order to investigate music teachers beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice more deeply. The findings of these interviews will be presented in the following chapter.
Chapter Five: Qualitative Analysis

This chapter will present interview findings in the form of a narrative profile for each interview participant. Each profile will be organized by common themes drawn from the analysis, each of which relate to one or more of the research questions for this study.

The first theme is motivation and schema for teaching. All music teachers have their own motivation for entering the music teaching profession and a mental schema for what a music teacher is and does. One’s reasons for going into teaching and one’s concept of what a teacher is are likely to suggest one’s beliefs about music teaching.

The second theme is ways of defining concepts having to do with musical ability. There are many general terms used in the music teaching profession that may be used or defined differently by different people. Participants were asked to discuss how they define these terms. Questions asked included the following: What does it mean to be musical? What is a musician? What is musicianship? What is music comprehension? What is music literacy? The way in which a teacher defines these terms will likely suggest their beliefs about music and music learning.

The third theme relates to basic activities that go on regularly in teachers’ classrooms. Music teachers make many decisions in their classrooms daily. The way in which music teachers make these decisions and conduct their daily teaching practice in the classroom will likely suggest one’s beliefs about music teaching and music learning.

The fourth theme pertains to subject-centeredness versus student-centeredness. How teachers focus their attention on their subject or their students may be seen as an indicator of teachers beliefs about music teaching and music learning.
The fifth theme relates to teachers’ statements about goals for their music program and the purpose of music education. From these statements, one may infer teachers’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education.

The sixth and final theme is awareness of beliefs. This will focus on the degree to which teachers are able to articulate views and opinions that are rooted in their deeper beliefs.

*The Story of Scott, a Middle School Band Teacher*

Scott has taught middle school band for four years, all of which were in the current district. He teaches two sections of sixth grade band and two ability-based bands comprised of seventh and eighth grade students. Outside of his teaching job, Scott also arranges music for marching bands.

*Motivation and schema for teaching.* Scott’s own music experiences in school have had a strong influence on him. Scott reflects that he was motivated to enter the music teaching profession as a result of his own school music experiences. Scott believes music really helped him when he was a young student because it was a strength for him. “Music was something. It was my forte.” Scott didn’t feel he was good at other subjects such as English, math, or writing but was able to find success in music. “I really got something I could attach to. . . and it just made me have something that I was good at.” Scott feels that the success and confidence he experienced in music transferred over to his other classes. “It just made me a better student overall.” This boost in confidence and self-esteem is something that Scott hopes to pass on to his own students.

Another way in which Scott’s own school music experiences currently impact him is in his schema for music teaching. Scott’s schema for teaching is based on the band teachers he had
in school. Scott tends to teach in the way he was taught. When discussing his daily routine for teaching, he states “. . . that’s what I learned. That’s all my other band directors did. I don’t know. . .” When presented with progressive teaching ideas, Scott reacts negatively and tends to stick with his traditional ideas about band teaching. “There’s lots of times. . . where they try to introduce all this new stuff, and it seems like every time anyone introduces new ways of doing things, new philosophies, it always goes back to the old one in band.” Scott feels confident that teachers in the band profession have things figured out and that change is unnecessary.

That’s the one thing about band: It hasn’t changed much in a hundred years. We’re still doing the same things just about the way we did back when Sousa bands started. We rehearse the same way, a little bit less offensive maybe [laughs].

Scott is especially skeptical of newer approaches that vary greatly from his concept of what band teaching and learning should look like. “I’m not a big fan of any of the new ways of thinking.” Scott specifically mentions his dislike for the “Gordon system” in middle school band, explaining that students need to know counting for reading rhythms and letter names of pitches. Because Scott believes that counting and letter names are essential elements in a band class, he discounts the value of the Gordon approach because “they don’t make students accountable for knowing note names, knowing specific rhythms.” Knowing these things is important to Scott “especially when you’re doing some of the stuff that the symphony band is doing here, where we’re doing grade four-plus music.” Training his students to play advanced literature is a priority for Scott, “and if those kids didn’t know note names, we’d be nowhere close to where we were. If they didn’t know specific counting, we’d still be doing ‘doo-day’[laughs].” Scott believes in sticking with tried and true techniques for teaching band and doesn’t feel change is necessary. “I
think if you were to look back 50 years in the past, if you were to watch a rehearsal, I think it would be basically the same thing you would see today.”

*What does it mean to be musical? and other musical definitions.* Scott’s definition of what it means to be musical focuses on expressive elements in one’s playing. “I guess the kids that play musically, they do stuff that’s not written on the page.” Dynamics, phrasing, and inflection are all key components to being musical in Scott’s view. Technical skills on one’s instrument are also necessary. “Some kids can play really musically because they aren’t inhibited by their instrument. . . . So they kind of have to have a mastery of their instrument before they can be really musical about it.”

In Scott’s view the term “musician” refers to someone who devotes considerable time and effort to music and practicing. “Being a musician, I think, takes a lot of training and exercise and work.” Scott’s definition of the word musician implies what is thought of as a professional musician. “I think a musician is more of a person that kind of, that’s what they do for their life. . . . They do it for a living. They’re good at it.” This belief is also evident when Scott describes his own students. “I don’t really consider them musicians. . . . I think that most of them are too young to be considered ‘a musician’.”

Scott also considers a “musician” to be someone who has a special talent for music. “I think musician kind of already says you’re good at music. You’re musical.” Scott’s words suggest that he believes that music is a talent which some people have and others don’t. When discussing his students in terms of being musicians, Scott states, “the students are here to learn *how* to be a musician, and eventually that will come if they have that innate talent.” Scott
believes that the potential to be a musician is not something that everyone possesses. “Some people can’t be quote-unquote ‘a musician’ because they might not have that talent.”

Scott seems to believe that because some students may not have a talent for music, they do not belong in a music class, especially if those students are hindering the progress of more talented students.

A lot of people think: well, music education for everyone, and yeah, to an extent. But you also have to think about how those kids are gonna hold back the other kids’ education and how far those kids can go if they’re not gonna be held back.

It seems to be for this reason that Scott doesn’t mind if some students drop out of his band program. “If those kids make the ensemble, by dropping, make the ensemble improve, I have no problem with it. Because it’s not for everyone.”

When asked what the term musicianship meant, Scott spent a bit of time thinking in silence. He expressed belief that musicianship encompasses everything that a person can do musically. “It encompasses the technicality of your instrument. It encompasses your intonation. Just everything as a whole.” However, Scott continued by saying “that’s a difficult one. . . .I don’t know. I’ve never really thought about that.”

Scott believes the term music comprehension refers to one’s understanding of music. When specifying what he meant by understanding music, he mentioned understanding how to play music and understanding how to read music. As previously mentioned, Scott’s concept of music reading includes being able to mathematically “count” rhythms and know letter-names of pitches and fingerings. One could then conclude that Scott considers music comprehension to be
the decoding of music notation and transfer of that notation to an instrument. Scott later says that students are comprehending music if they can play a piece on their own.

If you have someone singing it to you all the time or counting it out for you, that’d be like someone spelling out each word for you and saying a sentence over and having you repeat it. It doesn’t necessarily mean you understand it. But if you can read a book, you understand- If you can read a book, hopefully that means you can understand what you’re reading.

Scott’s use of the word “hopefully” in this analogy seems to imply that he senses that his students may not truly understand what they are playing just because they are able to recreate the sounds from notation.

_Nuts and bolts of the music classroom._ Scott tends to stick to a daily routine in his band classes. Each day students enter the room and begin warming up on their own. After approximately seven minutes Scott leads the students in an “official warm-up” for about ten minutes, for which there is a sequence of scales, chorale, and tuning. “Then we get straight into the music and rehearse almost until the bell rings.”

Scott’s classes tend to be comprised of “traditional” band activities: playing instruments and reading notation. Little description of other activities was given. When asked his opinion on the National Standards for Music Education, Scott replied, “Honestly, I don’t know much about them. . . . I think most band directors have no clue.” Scott feels that the standards are a little bit unreasonable and that he doesn’t think he could cover them all in 55 minutes a day, especially with all of the demands band teachers have to deal with, including publicity, fundraisers, solo and ensemble, and festivals. However, Scott feels that what he is giving his students is valuable
enough. “I get the kids playing their instrument well, and I try to expose them to different types

of music.”

Scott takes his rehearsals very seriously and expects his students to do the same. “I try to

push the kids really hard.” Scott makes it clear to his students that he has high expectations for

the group. “Some people don’t understand how hard of work it is to play an instrument, and they
don’t understand the level of which I expect them to be working.” If students are not putting in
the effort that Scott expects, he has no problems with those students dropping out of his program.
“Some kids don’t want to be pushed that hard, and they don’t make it. They end up taking
another class, which . . . doesn’t hurt my feelings. If it’s not for them, it’s not for them.” Scott has
goals for what the group should be achieving performance-wise, and if individuals are not
helping to achieve that goal, he believes they don’t need to be in his band.

Scott also has a clear grading policy which he presents to his students. Participation
comprises fifty percent of their grades. “That’s basically come to class, you have your
instrument, your music, you sit there, and you do exactly what you’re supposed to do.” Practice
cards account for thirty percent of a student’s grade, and the remaining twenty percent is playing
tests. These tests usually correspond with upcoming performances. “When we have a concert
coming up. . . . I go right down the line, hear it individually.” Scott stresses that students need to
play the excerpt perfectly to get the full twenty points. He allows students to retake their playing
tests “because you have to learn it anyway for the concert.”

**Music-centered or student-centered?** Whether a teacher is subject-centered or student-
centered is an indicator of their beliefs about music teaching and music learning. In listening to
Scott’s description of his classroom routine, it is clear that he tends to focus on “the music.”
When talking about his rehearsals, Scott says that in his class “about 75 to 85 percent of that is playing, and the rest is me instructing, helping them sound better.” When talking about his classes, Scott spends a great deal of time discussing music-related things. These include what key signatures students should play scales in, whether parts need to be doubled, spending time on “what [piece] needs the most work,” repertoire as curriculum, and so on. Almost none of Scott’s discussion focuses on student needs or student interests. The few times Scott does mention student needs are in the context of choosing repertoire, focusing on whether or not students could handle playing their parts. Still, it is clear that “the music” is the focus for Scott. “I can basically play what I want with the top band here.” As mentioned earlier, getting his groups to play advanced literature is a priority for Scott, regardless of what they take away from the experience. “I get the kids to play their instruments, make them sound good, and hopefully they get something out of it.”

Performing is a big part of Scott’s program. He seems to plan his classes around repertoire, saying “the repertoire is the curriculum to me.” The repertoire in Scott’s program is primarily planned around concerts. In order to ensure that students attend the concerts, Scott automatically deducts 20 percent of a student’s grade if he or she misses a concert. As mentioned previously, Scott allows students to retake playing tests “because you have to learn it anyway for the concert,” implying that the concert is the main impetus for making progress.

Scott’s reference to himself as a band “director” also implies a music-centered view. As a band “director,” Scott’s job is to “get the kids to play their instruments, make them sound good,” and put on concerts. Scott also demonstrates the ego and competitiveness that can be seen in some band directors.
I try to compare myself to [another middle school in the district] because I know they have a really good program there. . . . and I want my bands to be better than theirs. I’m pretty competitive when it comes to having a better band. . . . I want to be the best band wherever we go.

Scott prides himself on having his students play advanced literature. “My symphony band is the curriculum of a high school band. They’re doing music that high schools do.”

Goals and purpose of music education. Music teachers’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education can be inferred through their statements about goals for their classrooms and statements about the purpose of music education. As already mentioned, one of Scott’s goals is performance. “The ultimate goal is the product.” In terms of goals for his students, Scott hopes that they leave his classroom understanding the value of hard work and that “to be a part of something excellent each one of them has to do their job.” Scott also wants his students to develop some level of musical independence. When his students leave his program, Scott hopes that they can play a piece of music on their own and can also teach another student how to play. Appreciation is another goal that Scott has for his students.

I know that most of the kids aren’t gonna go into music or necessarily do music when they’re older in life, but I hope they can just at least appreciate it and know that it was a part of their education, an important part.

When asked what the purpose of music education is, Scott cites many reasons, most of which are non-musical. Scott believes music education is important because it teaches discipline, makes you a better student, makes you think at a higher level, provides an outlet for students not doing well in other subjects, and gives students a familiar place where they can feel comfortable.
The only musical justification Scott gives for music education is that it gives students an artistic outlet. It is interesting that Scott spends a great deal of his effort and attention focusing on “the music” yet he believes the purpose of his program is to achieve primarily non-musical outcomes.

Awareness of beliefs. Scott’s interview showed indications that he may be unaware of many of his deep beliefs. Scott replied without pause when answering questions pertaining to his teaching practice. However, when posed with more philosophical questions, such as what it means to be a musician, Scott frequently hesitated, often pausing to think. Along with pausing, another indication of Scott’s possible unawareness of his beliefs were his comments while answering these questions. When asked what it means to be musical, Scott replied, “Um, oh geez... let’s see... that’s a difficult one.” Later after stating that being musical sounds like kids are speaking through their instruments, Scott exclaims, “Oh, that was a good one!” as if he surprised himself by saying it. When asked how he defines musicianship, Scott replies, “I don’t know... I’ve never really thought about that.”

Since beliefs may be held in isolated clusters which may be contradictory if never examined in relation to each other (Green, 1998), contradiction may also be an indicator that one is unaware of their beliefs or has not reflected on contradictory beliefs. Some of Scott’s views or statements seemed to contradict others. An example of this was when Scott was discussing what it means to be musical. First Scott stresses that musicality has to do with expressing what’s not written on the page, saying “I have a lot of kids that can play really well technically, but it’s boring to listen to. The kids that don’t always play technically well may be very musical.” A short while later when asked to describe an instance where a student was musical, Scott focuses on technique. “They kind of have a mastery of their instrument before they can be really musical.
about it.” These two statements may be seen as contradictory. Another example of contradiction exists when Scott is discussing his aversion to new philosophies. Scott expresses feeling that a certain approach was “forced down our throats” in college and that “these people who think there’s one way is like... You seem kind of arrogant if you think this is the only way that works.” Yet in the same conversation Scott discusses in depth what students in band have to know. “You have to know exact countings. You have to know where they stand in a measure. You need to know numbers.” His insistence in these requirements seems to contradict his criticism of those who think there is only one way that works. These contradictions, along with frequent hesitation and comments of uncertainty, indicate that Scott may not be fully aware of his deep beliefs, possibly due to lack of reflection on those beliefs.

The Story of Perry, a Middle School Choir Teacher

Perry has taught middle or high school choir for 27 years, 14 of which have been in the district being studied. He teaches sixth grade choir, seventh grade choir, eighth grade choir, an auditioned choir consisting of seventh and eighth graders, and sixth grade music.

Motivation and schema for teaching. Perry chose to become a music teacher because of his passion for music. Music was always a big part of Perry’s life when he was growing up. He sang in a gospel choir at church, and his family members were all involved with music, singing, playing piano, and performing in bands. Perry’s brother even wrote for Motown. “So I was always around music.” However, it wasn’t until after starting college that Perry decided to go into music teaching. He started college as a journalism major, and it wasn’t until being encouraged by his piano teacher, from whom Perry began taking lessons in twelfth grade, that he
decided to change his major. That encouragement seemed to dispel any thoughts he might have had that he didn’t have enough musical training to become a music teacher.

Music, it was really a passion. I just know that I started late with piano. And I felt you had to start much earlier to be a music major. . . . I didn’t know anything about theory, history. I just liked singing.

Despite his passion for music and singing, Perry was not involved in any music classes when he was in high school. “I didn’t like the choir. I didn’t like the songs they sang. So I did absolutely nothing.” Perry hopes that this is not the case for his students. “Sometimes I wonder if the music I pick sounds as boring as the music that I heard when I was in high school [laughs] because that just didn’t do it for me!” One might assume that Perry’s schema for music teaching may have been developed in response to his own school music experiences or lack thereof.

What does it mean to be musical? and other musical definitions. Perry’s definition of what it means to be musical is centered around aural perception. “The ear, I think, is crucial.” In Perry’s view a person who is musical is someone who “knows what sounds decent, can tell a good sound from a sound that’s not good, a melodious sound for one, can hear parts, just can correct things to make it sound best.” Perry mentions that he believes that when referring to a musical person, it’s “the whole nature/nurture. I think it’s both. I think part of it you might be born with, and I think the other part you learn.” However, Perry goes on to compare himself to his brothers, saying “I’m probably one of the least talented.” In talking about a brother who can play by ear, Perry states, “I don’t have that gift.” These comments suggest that he views musicality as a talent. Later in our conversation when discussing musicianship Perry seems to changes his mind, as he says, “I almost wanna say nature. . . . that’s part that I think is nature.”
When asked to define what a musician is, Perry pauses and seems indecisive. He then comes to a decision that a musician is someone with both a passion for music and musical skills that they’ve developed. A musician is a person who can, um... share passion, um... via whatever his instrument is. . . . coupled with. . . . I don’t want to say correct notes, but it’s more than just passion. Because what if you’re passionate and you’re singing all the wrong notes? . . . . So that’s where the learned, nature, both, you know. Passion with, um... skills I guess. Learned skills. A combination.

Similar to his view of musicality, Perry believes that musicianship involves aural perception. “You can hear, number one.” To Perry musicianship not only involves hearing but also the ability to adjust and improve one’s singing.

You know when it’s not quite there. I mean, you can hear it and you can work on it to make it where it should be. Because what if you can sing and you hear something’s not right, but you can never get better with it? . . . . So you say it’s not right, but [you] can correct it.

Perry believes that practice can help develop musicianship. When describing how one can develop musicianship, Perry says “I think that the more you enjoy what you’re doing, that helps. But repetition and you study, practice.”

When asked to describe music comprehension, Perry “thinks out loud” for a minute about the broadness of that term and how it needs to be defined. He then says that an example of music comprehension could be “when I play a pitch, when I play ‘DO’, they will be able to sing any tone of the scale doing up. So I’m saying it has to be defined individually because it’s so broad.”
When Perry goes on to specify what music comprehension involves, he says, “Well, comprehension I would think... hmm... [pauses] Well, maybe that’s understanding. Not necessarily written.” However, Perry does define music literacy as the ability to read music. When asked to describe what a musically literate person can do, Perry responds, “Know meter signatures, can clap basic rhythms, and in choir can sing. Sing, you know, a melody.”

_Nuts and bolts of the music classroom._ Perry’s classes are organized by a common routine. Perry starts his classes with an activity he calls a “challenge,” which is typically notation or theory-related. The main purpose of the “challenge” is to get students focused. 

They’re so used to doing board work with other classes. So you know a lot of kids need that continuity. . . . because if it’s just singing, somehow it’s ‘I can do whatever I want.’

It’s too free. So I like to start them where they’re focusing on a challenge. Perry’s rehearsal then proceeds in a fairly traditional manner. The “challenge” is followed by a “typical warm-up.” Perry says that he will “then go into a song, probably one they know well, and then work on something, whatever my goal is for the day. Then of course you’re supposed to end with something fun.” As mentioned earlier, Perry likes to choose music that he thinks students will enjoy. Perry uses this same routine fairly consistently for all of his classes. “Pretty much it’s the same.”

Perry’s description of activities in his classroom focuses mainly on singing, reading, music notation, and learning music theory. However, when asked about the National Standards for Music Education, Perry states, “I’ll be perfectly honest. I really don’t read them, but I know I’m doing that stuff.” “I utilize them without actually having them in front of me.” After being read the list of the standards, Perry does admit that he may neglect some of them “especially
when you’re getting pushed for the concert” and says that the bulk of his class time is spent on singing. Perry mentions dealing with improvising when working on a jazz piece, but it becomes evident that Perry’s interpretation of the term improvisation is actually “ad lib, add liberty to the music.” Perry later refers to opportunities for student creativity in his choirs, an example of which involves creating an acronym for the letter names of the lines or spaces on the staff. “‘I’m giving you two minutes. Come up with an acronym you have not heard before.’ . . . You would be surprised. . . . Yesterday I had around three that were really good, so that’s the creative right there.”

Performances are a big focus for Perry. He also takes his students to festival but tries not to focus on ratings.

I keep it focused on the music. . . . ‘You need to do the things we discussed in the music room. . . .’ If you’re focused on musical elements, normally the ratings will follow, but if you’re focusing on a ‘1’, kids. . . can’t even focus on what’s most important. Despite his dislike for ratings, Perry does like festival because “it really forces the teacher to teach.” Perry feels that “you can pull someone off the street who can teach a kid to sing, but they can’t teach them the other skills,” such as sight-reading. “They test those other skills at festival. . . . So that is really forcing you to teach. That’s what I like about festival.” Perry later refers to the teaching of those other skills as a form of marketability for choir teachers. “Average person can teach a kid to sing a song. . . but they can’t do the other stuff. So I mean, just in terms of teachers marketing themselves, you need to have something that anybody just can’t do to market yourself.” This comment suggests that Perry believes developing skills besides singing is important because it validates the necessity for his job.
Music-centered or student-centered? Perry’s discussion of his teaching and classroom suggest a combination of focus on music and focus on students. When planning what to teach, Perry feels “you have to go in the order in which they [students] learn.” Perry stresses the importance of beginning with simpler concepts in order to prepare students for more advanced concepts. “A lot of people try to do rounds first [when teaching harmony. . . . A partner song is easier because it’s more independent. So you really need to know the structure in terms of how students learn.” Perry feels sequencing of instruction is important, as is teaching in a way that considers the logical process by which we learn music.

Some people have them [students] sight-reading the first day. Well, that’s not how we learn to read. You don’t pick up a book and start reading it. You speak first. So I mean if you go in a natural way, they sing a song. That’s a lot easier than trying to force the sight-reading. So I try to go in a progressive manner.

Perry’s focus on student needs, sequencing of instruction, and consideration of the music learning process all suggest a student-centered approach.

However, Perry also show signs of being subject-centered. While Perry says he values both process and product in his classroom, he also mentions “Let’s face it. As music teachers you’re judged pretty much by the concerts.” Concerts sometimes force Perry to neglect other activities in his classes. As previously mentioned, when discussing some of the National Standards, Perry says, “I may not do enough of that, especially when you’re getting pushed for the concert.” It also seems that Perry regards concerts as the main goal for his classes. When discussing the winding down of the school year, Perry mentions, “the good thing is we haven’t had the concert. So until the concert you’re working. The hard part is when the concert is over,
and they know it’s over and you know it’s over.” This implies that the concert is the reason for having music class.

Goals and purpose of music education. Perry’s goals for his music program are primarily extra-musical. “Really I think it’s not about music. I think it’s about life. And I think you’re trying to teach kids to be successful. . . . Hopefully they have an appreciation for music, but. . . my bigger picture is for them to be successful.” It is for this reason that Perry gives his students “lectures on life.” Perry wants his students to “pick up on traits,” such as straightforwardness, honesty, high expectations, and work ethic. “I expect you to work hard because I’m gonna work hard. I expect you to give a hundred percent.” If he brings the ensemble in early in a performance, he admits it to the students “so they can sort of realize, you know, he’s just honest. You know, he’s real. And I think students appreciate that.”

When asked what his musical goals are for his classroom, Perry explains, “just the basics. That if I were a high school teacher, I would be pleased to get you in my class and say ‘Whoa, you can sing in tune!’” Along with singing in tune, Perry’s list of basic musical goals includes breathing, listening, tone quality, ability to sing a cappella, and knowledge of music theory. Perry ends by saying that “if [students] work hard and they have an appreciation for music, then I think you’ve done a good job. And something that you’ve passed on can transfer hopefully to another area, whatever they want to go into.”

Perry believes music education is important for primarily extra-musical reasons, such as developing intelligence and creativity. Perry begins his explanation of why music education is important by saying “because I think it can open up not just, you know, being bookish but the right side of the brain as well as the left.” Perry believes music education is “good for you
cognitively. . . it’s good for applying skills to different areas.” Perry also mentions that music education can teach students discipline, creativity, and is “good for the affective domain.” Perry believes that music education teaches focus, listening to others, working together, and “getting kids to realize it’s not about you. . . how to be a good team player.” “So I just think in general it just helps you become a better citizen.” Perry also believes “teachers need to have a philosophy of why they do what they do. Because I know mine is bigger than music.

Awareness of beliefs. Perry shows some indications of possibly being unaware of his deep beliefs. These indications include occasional pauses before and while answering more philosophical questions, such as defining what a musician is. Occasional contradictions could also be found in Perry’s views. When Perry describes what makes him feel successful in his classroom, he focuses on student effort rather than developing musical skills. “OK, so they learn music skills. Then what? They forget music skills.” Perry explains that the most important thing is that “students give a hundred percent. . . to me that’s the biggest thing- effort.” However, he later focuses on improving students’ skills, saying “I feel good when I leave work because I really do believe I get [students’ skills] a little higher than where they were when they came in the classroom. Apparent contradictions such as this, along with hesitation in expressing philosophical views, indicate that Perry may not be fully aware of his beliefs.

The Story of Paul, a High School Orchestra Teacher

Paul has taught high school orchestra for 21 years, seven of which have been in the district being studied. He teaches ninth grade orchestra, two ability-based orchestras consisting of tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students, and an extracurricular jazz orchestra. Outside of teaching in the public schools, Paul teaches private lessons and keeps up a performing career.
Motivation and schema for teaching. Paul did not originally intend to teach orchestra. Before deciding to become a school music teacher, Paul earned both bachelors and masters degrees in performance. He made a fifteen-year career of performing on jazz and classical guitar and teaching classes in classical guitar pedagogy and jazz studies at a nearby university, in addition to teaching his own private guitar studio. However, Paul later realized that this was not a lucrative career. “Once I hit my early thirties I realized that I needed something a little more steady. . . . and I went back and got my certification,” after which he began teaching school orchestra. A passion for music was the drive for both Paul’s performing career and his teaching career.

Certainly I felt I had something to impart to kids. I’m not gonna lie and say it was the burning desire of my life to be a teacher. I always, as most people I think, went into music because I loved to play. I loved music. And that’s why I say later on in life I realized I really liked kids.

This love of music combined with an interest in children is what Paul feels enable him to be a successful teacher now. “You have to love what you do and you have to really like kids, and you’ll be successful.”

What does it mean to be musical? and other musical definitions. Paul’s definition of what it means to be musical involves both technical skill on an instrument and expression. “I think that being musical means to have all the technical barriers down, or most of them down, to be constantly pursuing a deeper thought in how you’re gonna project a musical phrase.” Paul specifies that developing good technique on an instrument is something at which “some people are just physically more gifted,” and to have sense of musical phrasing, “a lot of that is natural.”
While everyone can gain something from learning music, “I think a lot of kids can get to a certain point technically... but that little extra bit... I’m not sure they have it. I just think to be innately musical is a little beyond the norm. And a lot of it is genetic.” Paul also clarifies that there are varying levels of being musical but still seems to believe that being musical is a special talent. “Everyone can get a good musical experience out of playing an instrument, whether they’re innately musical or not. There’s the communal aspect of it... the social aspect. So there’s a lot of different levels. But to be truly musical I think is a gift.”

While Paul seems to believe that being truly musical is a talent, he believes that there are many ways of defining what a musician is. After initially seeming flustered by the question of what is a musician, Paul first talks about professional musicians who perform as a job. He then states, “These kids here, they’re truly musicians. And I think probably with them, they’re more inspiring to be in front of than a lot of professional orchestras because it’s still fresh and new.” Paul goes on to say that “it’s a wide gamut. I couldn’t give you one definition for that.” In talking about his program, Paul later mentions “we’re training kids to become musical or musicians,” and that this is a reason why developing individual skills is important.

Paul also seems indecisive in his definition of musicianship, saying “there’s several layers of that.” Paul then expresses belief that musicianship covers a broad range of actions. “There’s the little baby that utters a sound, you know, the musicianship of that. There’s my principal violinist this year who’s become a very accomplished musician on his instrument. And there’s several layers in between.” Through the act of verbalizing his thought process, Paul comes to say that “I suppose musicianship would imply a commitment to presenting a musical performance to the best of your possibility” and then that “musicianship to me implies
commitment. . . . that you can tell if someone’s put the time in, and there’s definite thought behind what went on. There’s definite work that went on to come to a final product.”

Paul also seems unsure when asked to describe his definition of music comprehension. After pausing for a time Paul says “that’s got to mean so many different things to so many different people.” He continues to say that music comprehension could be knowledge about music, talent on an instrument, an understanding of the major components of music, or knowledge of music theory. After more “thinking out loud” Paul realizes that “my mother couldn’t play a note but she loved to sing. . . . so she had a certain comprehension of what music meant to her.” He also notes that a friend of his who is a composer has a different level of music comprehension in the way he decides how compositions will develop. Paul then says, “to a little child a nursery rhyme is a certain kind of comprehension, and it’s almost all aural. So I think [music comprehension] really covers everything.”

Paul also believes there are varying degrees to music literacy. His students may be able to play Shostakovich, “but do they have any idea how that’s put together?” He then says that he wouldn’t think of music literacy “in the compositional way at all, unless we’re teaching theory” but that music “literacy would imply notes, rhythms. . . being able to sight-read a piece, um... values, tempos, tone, those kinds of things. . . . Just the basic components that go into performing on their instrument.”

Nuts and bolts of the music classroom. Paul has a daily routine that he uses in all of his orchestras. He begins with a warm-up, which starts with scales and a variety of bowings. The warm-up continues with exercises that deal with intonation, the “key we’re going to be addressing,” ensemble skills, and a bowing or rhythm technique that will be used in the literature
they will be playing that day. After the warm-up, the rest of Paul’s class is “a pretty hot rehearsal.” When describing his top group, Paul says that after the warm-up “then we sit down and we really work on music. It’s just a really tight, intense, great rehearsal of music from stem to stern.”

Paul describes occasional composing and chamber music units in his classroom, but most of his descriptions of his teaching focus on rehearsing repertoire. When asked about the National Standards for Music Education, Paul replies, “Now I’ll be honest with you. . . . I don’t even look at them.” Paul feels that it is silly for an unknown group of people to decide what he should be doing in his classes.

I’m a professional musician. I’ve been doing this for 50 years. I’ve been in front of kids for 25. And for me to look at a set of standards set by some arbitrary board is absurd...

From the minute a kid picks up an instrument and draws a bow across the string, I know exactly where the kid’s at. I know exactly what the kid needs.

However, Paul tends to only mention skill at playing one’s instrument when discussing what kids need in his class. Paul feels that the standards are not realistic for teachers to cover. “I just think in pursuit of all these standards, we’re just thinning ourselves out. . . . Rather than touching on all these things, find a few things that are really important and build from there.”

When asked what those “few things that are really important” are for Paul, his first priority is tone quality. “Kids got to understand what a real tone sounds like. . . . have a concept of what your instrument’s about.” Paul’s next priority is proper technique and “approachment to the instrument,” explaining that he gets students “that aren’t set up properly, and there’s just not way they’re gonna be able to excel.” Paul’s third priority is learning how to play in tune and
developing a sense of rhythm. Paul feels that once students have these basic things in place, “then you can start to pursue the music more deeply.

Pursuit of the music is something Paul takes very seriously in his classes, especially his top orchestra. “The top group, they’re all in there because they really love to play, and they really want to make music.” This is what enables them to “really work in music” and have “a really tight, intense, great rehearsal of music from stem to stern.” When describing students’ motivation for being in orchestra, Paul explains “the real drive to play is to make music.”

Paul tries to provide opportunities for students who are talented or serious about music, “[counseling] kids that are serious about music realistically as to what their options are.” Paul brings clinicians in to work with his ensembles, “with the real serious groups in particular, the ones who are going to Solo and Ensemble.” Paul also encourages students to take private lessons. “If I see a kid that’s really talented, I can farm them off to a really fine private teacher. . . . They really need the expertise of a very fine player if they’re going to go to the next step.” Paul also describes his enjoyment when his freshman orchestra was particularly advanced.

We had the violins almost all study, and we had some star players in the other sections. So that group was more like a symphony, which was amazing. We played outstanding music all year. So that group last year was a little more of a serious music type of ensemble.

*Music-centered or student-centered?* Paul’s discussion of his teaching and classroom suggests a combination of focus on music and focus on students. Paul feels that music is the vehicle through which he reaches students and that students are central. “Bottom line is the kid,
and as soon as we stop putting them first, then I think that we probably leave the profession. [Kids] should really be the focus, at least in my view.”

Other aspects of Paul’s classes also suggest a student-centered approach. Paul does a chamber music unit. Students work in trios and quartets, and “they’re on their own for a portion of the time.” During this time Paul says, “I’ll sort of walk around and I’ll listen in on what’s going on.” This opportunity offers students time for musical decision-making and developing musical independence. Paul also stresses the importance of developing the skills of the individual rather than just the group. “Sometimes in pursuit of getting that last performance we don’t really develop the individual skills that the kid needs, that’s gonna make them more successful as individual musicians.” Emphasizing individual skill development and offering opportunities for independent musical decision-making indicate that Paul is student-centered.

However, Paul also show signs of being subject-centered. Paul seems to hold “the music” in high regard. He mentions that helping students develop basic proficiency on their instrument is necessary and “then you can start to pursue the music more deeply.” The focus of Paul’s rehearsal is to “really work on music,” and Paul seems satisfied by a particularly successful year where “we played outstanding music all year.” Paul talks a lot about repertoire choice, commenting that he considers “the level of the kids can play at” as well as “I’ve gotta really like the piece, too.” He typically plans pieces based around themed concerts, including Halloween, holiday, pop, and one that includes “real serious, the orchestra string literature.”

Paul’s focus on “the music” goes hand-in-hand with focus on performances. When asked what factors influence his planning for what he will teach on any given day, Paul replies, “It’s
always music driven. In other words, we’re trying to get the best possible performance that we possibly can.” Paul’s focus on performance and repertoire indicate that Paul is subject-centered.

**Goals and purpose of music education.** Paul’s goals for his classroom are primarily musical. Paul wants his students to develop the basic skills mentioned previously: good tone, proper technique, ability to play in tune, and sense of rhythm. He also hopes that his students gain a love of music and a sense of accomplishment.

The hope is that they leave with a sense that perhaps they’re playing the piece a little better than they did the day before, maybe they have a little more insight into the whole process than they did the day before, maybe they’re having a little more fun than they had the day before. . . . Just hoping that it’s a positive experience.

When discussing why he believes music education is important, Paul gives primarily extra-musical reasons. Paul views music as a means for establishing discipline, establishing a sense of community, establishing a sense of artistic pursuit. There’s just a lot of things that are important to kids’ personal development. . . .

We’re trying to impart some life lessons, and the way we do that is through the process of creating a piece of music.

Paul later reiterates that music education provides a way to develop social skills and learn teamwork, “suppressing your own ego in pursuit of something that’s more communal.” Music education also puts people in touch with their artistic sides, “connects them to other human beings,” and crosses “national lines” through exposure to music from different ethnicities.

Additionally, Paul mentions, “the bottom line is I think it [music education] is fun” and gives students a break from other classes, such as Advanced Placement courses. “I really view music
as being a tremendous ambassador and a wonderful way of communicating. It’s almost, as I said, the vehicle more than anything else.”

_Awareness of beliefs._ Paul shows many signs that he is unaware or unsure of his beliefs. Paul is able to describe his teaching practice without hesitation, but he frequently pauses to gather his thoughts when responding to more philosophical questions, sometimes making comments like “Ah jeez, I don’t know” or “I’ve never really thought about that.” Near the end of our discussion Paul begins to show signs of reflection. When I mention wanting to close with some philosophical questions, Paul says, “Well, this is kind of neat actually, because I really know what I think about some of these things until the words start coming out of my mouth, and I’m going ‘Do I really believe this?’ You know?” Paul seems to be enjoying our discussion because “I find it pretty interesting. It’s kind of a little self-analysis here. Do I really think this?”

When I thank Paul for his time, he concludes by saying

> Well, it was cool for me, too. Like I said, I’ve never really thought about a lot of this stuff. You just do your thing, and you’re so busy every day, and then all of a sudden someone says, ‘Well how do you really think about, feel about this?’ And I go, ‘Do I really feel this way?’ [laughs] I’m not sure I like that!

_The Story of Joan, an Elementary General Music Teacher_

Joan has taught elementary general music for 13 years, nine of which have been in the district being studied. She teaches first through fifth grade general music and also a fourth and fifth grade choir. Additionally, Joan has her own early childhood music program, where she teaches music classes for infants, toddlers, and preschool-age children.
Motivation and schema for teaching. Becoming a music teacher was not Joan’s original intention. “I actually started with completely different plans!” Joan earned her undergraduate degree in performance and intended to continue to a masters program in performance, as well. However, during her senior year Joan took a class in early childhood music which profoundly changed how she viewed music teaching and learning. “I didn’t ever see a classroom teacher that I could relate to in the model that they taught children. . . . [but in this class] I thought, ‘This makes sense, complete and utter sense, to me.’” What Joan discovered in this early childhood music class was a model for music teaching and learning that was unlike anything she had seen before. “Just seeing that young children have the potential and the knowledge, just innate musicality in them, and that you could communicate that” caused Joan to consider going into music teaching. Joan decided not to pursue a masters degree in performance but instead chose to enter a teacher certification program.

When you see that you could communicate musically and intelligently and in an intelligent way with two-year-olds and get musical responses. . . . It just was so powerful to me that I couldn’t turn away from it. I had to teach that way, and I had to learn how to how to do it and how to engage kids in that kind of learning.

Joan decided to teach elementary general music in the public schools, but she didn’t have a pre-existing schema for teaching music to elementary school children. Joan did not experience music classes in her own elementary school experience. For kindergarten through third grade she attended a parochial school where music time consisted of singing hymns, and then when she moved on to public school in fourth grade, the elementary music program was cut due to financial struggles. Unlike teachers who teach as they were taught, Joan did not experience
elementary school music as a student and so did not have a preconceived idea about what elementary music should look like.

In addition to one’s own school music experiences, a music teacher’s schema for music teaching is often influenced by his or her student teaching experience. Joan was offered an elementary music teaching job just months after receiving her degree in performance, so she received an emergency teaching certificate and did not have to student teach as part of her certification program because she was already teaching. “And so not only did I not have a model for teaching [from being] in an elementary as a child, I didn’t have that model as an adult either because I didn’t ever have that student teaching experience.” Joan feels that this may have hindered her in some ways because she had to learn on her own through trial and error in her classroom.

But in other ways it also really helped me because I didn’t come with any baggage about how I was supposed to teach or how kids were supposed to learn. And so I kept a really open mind about how to create an experience that I thought would be appropriate for kids.

*What does it mean to be musical? and other musical definitions.* Not only have Joan’s views of music teaching and learning changed, Joan’s definition of what it means to be musical has changed, as well.

If you had asked me 15 or 20 years ago when I was more instrumentally-focused, to me musical was to be educated in music, to play a variety of styles of music, to be proficient on your instrument. But now that I deal primarily with working with children, I feel like to be musical could be so many things.
For Joan these things may include engaging in music-making through singing or playing an instrument or engaging in music listening. No matter how one engages with music, Joan clearly believes that all children can be musical. “I believe everybody is musical in their own way.” “Every human being has music within them.” “Everyone is musical, and everyone has the potential to achieve in music.” Joan does not relate being musical to a level of expertise or skill, but rather being musical is a way of interacting with music and gaining satisfaction through such interactions.

Joan’s view of what it means to be a musician has also changed. “The way I would answer this 20 years ago is different than now.” Just as Joan believes that everyone is musical, she believes that everyone can be a musician. “I think to be a musician is anybody who ‘musicks,’ who is engaged in any musical activity.” Just as Joan believes that musicality does not relate to expertise, she also does not believe that a musician is strictly someone with considerable expertise or skill in music. “I don’t think it’s about a level of professionalism. I think it’s about being a musician for yourself and being musical for yourself.” Joan clearly believes that even her elementary students are musicians. She refers to engaging her students in improvisation as a way of getting a “window into the mind of that little musician.”

Joan does believe that some people may be born with more aptitude or talent to achieve in music than others. “I think that there are kids or people for whom [music] just comes. . . . It’s so natural and so a part of who they are that it isn’t taught. . . . I don’t know if that is aptitude or. . . . talent.” However, Joan does not believe that special aptitude or talent are necessary to achieve in music but that all human beings have musical potential that can be cultivated.
This cultivating of musical potential is what Joan refers to as musicianship. “To me musicianship is, it’s your skill set.” For Joan this skill set refers to one’s understanding and aural sense of music. “It’s that skill set of your ability to process a variety of things. . . . your tonal understanding, your rhythm understanding, your ability to express yourself in a musical way, being sensitive to the stylistic elements of music.”

In Joan’s view music comprehension is related to musicianship in that music comprehension is a part of one’s musicianship. Joan conceives music comprehension as “how one listens to and understands what they’re hearing.” Music comprehension can be evident in students’ musical skills, which Joan feels she may define differently than instrumental teachers might.

I look at their skills in terms of their development and so I’m looking at their ability to hear music or to hear patterns within music and to process them, understand them, manipulate them, to improvise them, to apply them in composition. I just feel that I’m not looking at their ability to play something well. It’s can they construct something well because they understand it.

All of these skills are ways in which Joan develops a sense of music comprehension in her students.

Joan’s definition of music literacy is very similar to her definition of music comprehension. Unlike music teachers who equate music literacy strictly with reading music notation, Joan views music literacy more broadly as an understanding of music.

I think it’s the ability to process and understand music and not necessarily tied to notation. Because I know many musicians who are extremely musically literate but yet
can’t read a note on a piece of paper. So to me it’s more about the understanding of music versus necessarily the reading of notation.

For this reason Joan chooses to focus on helping students develop their aural skills before teaching them to read music “If they don’t have an aural sense of what it is that they’re decoding [in notation], then it really has no meaning to them.” Once students develop that aural sense of music, then “the reading should become a natural outcome of everything else that we’re working on.”

Nuts and bolts of the music classroom. Like many other music teachers, Joan has a routine for her classes. However, Joan frequently changes her routine when new needs or opportunities present themselves. “It’s changed this year. . . . in the sense that I have additional technology that had not been available to me.” Joan now uses an interactive white-board in her teaching routine. Joan’s older classes begin with practicing tonal or rhythm reading skills through a “pattern of the day” presented on the interactive white-board. After students have read the pattern, Joan then has them improvise a new one. “It’s just a neat way to incorporate improvisation into every lesson.” This is typically followed by a a five-minute period of “pattern instruction based on the individual music aptitude scores of children, so it’s a way to differentiate instruction.” The remaining thirty minutes are spent on a variety of classroom activities, including singing, chanting, moving, playing instruments, folk dances, improvising, and composing.

It is evident in Joan’s descriptions of classroom activities that she covers many, if not all, of the National Standards for Music Education in her teaching. When asked how she feels about the standards, Joan states that “they’re there for a purpose, but I don’t feel they’re very strong in
guiding people” in terms of implementation. When asked which standards she covers most frequently, Joan responded with singing, followed by improvisation and composition.

We spend a lot of time improvising because it’s a wonderful way to really understand what the kids are taking in and how they’re processing it. . . . And then composition is such a wonderful way to see their expression of that and just taking it one step further. Joan spends the least amount of time on talking about the historical perspective of music. Joan adds that while she does engage her students in music listening, “that’s not the basis of what I teach.” “When I did go out and do field work in my undergraduate class, that’s all they did was music listening. . . . it was just just such passive learning, and for me I would rather have [students] actively engaged.”

Music-centered or student-centered? When listening to Joan’s descriptions of her classroom, it is clear that she focuses on her students. Joan plans and implements her instruction based on what her students need. “I consider always where the kids are. I consider where they are in their musical development.” When asked to describe how she views her role in the music classroom, Joan replies, “I view myself as a guide. I’m someone there to provide structure and some guidance. . . but really the kids are the ones that drive everything that goes on.” It does not appear that “the music” is a driving force in Joan’s classroom, as she does not spend much time focusing on repertoire choice or performances.

Performances are not a priority in Joan’s music program. “I just don’t let [performances] drive [my planning]. . . . I just don’t believe in ‘horse and pony show.’” Joan priority is the learning process. “I much more value the process and the journey that the kids took to get to the product than I do about a final, finished performance.” Process is very important to Joan because
“the process is where the learning occurs and where the growth occurs, and performances you don’t see that.” While Joan acknowledges that aesthetic experience may happen in a performance and that may be valuable, “the learning and the growth that happens [in the process] is so much more valuable than the aesthetic experience.”

Throughout the learning process Joan tries to keep her students actively engaged. Rather than engaging students in passive activities, “I would rather have them actively engaged in everything that we’re doing. And so I find that when we are composing and improvising and singing and dancing and moving, that that is an active engagement of learning.” Joan also acknowledges that “engagement is different for every child.” Some children may not appear to be paying attention or may appear disinterested, but they may be “processing what you’re doing in a way that’s different. It just comes down to learning style.”

I’m always surprised that some of my kids who seem the least interested in what I’m doing either have the highest aptitudes or when we do composition or improvisation, they have the most interesting responses. . . . And to me at times that lack of interest is really just that they’re processing in a different way.

Through this active engagement, Joan hopes to help her students develop musical independence.  

*Goals and purpose of music education.* Joan’s goals for her music classroom focus on her students and what they take with them when they leave her program. “I hope that, first and foremost, that all of my children have a love and enjoyment of music. And a love and enjoyment as they define it, and that hopefully I’m incorporating that personal definition into our classroom experience.” This incorporation of students’ personal definitions clearly suggest a student-centered view. In addition to enjoyment, Joan wants all of her students to leave with the ability to
use their singing voices so that they can make music in their every-day lives. “I hope that every child knows and believes that they have an instrument in them, in their singing voice.” Joan also wants all of her students to develop their musicianship, or basic musical skill set, so that “they’re taking it home and making it their own.”

When asked what the purpose of music education is, Joan cites primarily musical reasons. In Joan’s view the purpose of music education is to enable students to express themselves through music and to provide a way for students to be creative. Joan also believes that music is an intelligence, one that may be stronger for some people than any other intelligence. “And so many kids who aren’t perhaps academically gifted find their strengths in other places,” such as music. Most importantly Joan believes that the purpose of music education is to help all individuals to develop their musicianship so that they can engage in music in their lives. “It just comes down to the fact that everyone is musical and everyone has the potential to achieve in music, and so we have to give them that opportunity to nurture and grow that.”

*Awareness of beliefs.* Joan appears to be very aware of her deep beliefs about music, music teaching, and music learning. When posed with philosophical questions, Joan is able to articulate her thoughts with little hesitation. Joan is also very direct and concise in her responses. Her conciseness and lack of hesitation suggest an awareness of her beliefs, which may be due to frequent reflection. This may be related to her lack of a preconceived schema about music teaching and learning prior to teaching. In developing her own conception of what an elementary music program should look like, Joan most likely did a considerable amount of reflecting on what she believed the purpose of her class should be and how it should serve her students.
Discussion of Interview Findings

The interview profiles reveal interesting commonalities and differences among the participants. These commonalities and differences can be found within each of the common themes identified.

Motivation and schema for teaching. One commonality between the interview participants’ motivation for teaching is a love or passion for music. When discussing why he decided to become a music teacher, Perry mentions he “was always around music” and “just liked singing,” and for Perry “music, it was really a passion.” For Scott music was a source of enjoyment and satisfaction because “Music was something. It was my forte.” A love of music was the reason Paul went into performance and then later went into teaching. In addition to entering the music teaching profession in order to “find something a little more steady,” Paul “went into music because I loved to play. I loved music.” Having also originally intended to pursue a performance career, Joan was clearly motivated by a passion for music as well.

Some interesting differences in motivation for teaching were found in the profiles of Scott and Joan. Scott mentions that he struggled as a student and that music gave him “something I could attach to. . . and it just made me have something that I was good at.” The confidence Scott gained through success in music carried over to his work in other subjects and made him “a better student overall,” and the desire to instill that confidence and success in other students motivated Scott to enter the music teaching profession. Unlike Scott’s motivation to use music to help students become more successful in general, Joan’s motivation for entering the music teaching profession was focused on music learning. Observing a new approach to music teaching and learning caused Joan to abandon her plans for a performing career and pursue
music teaching in order to “engage kids in that kind of learning” which enables children to learn music in order to “communicate musically and intelligently.”

While only two interview participants specifically talked about schema for teaching, interesting differences were found in this area. Joan mentions not having a pre-existing schema for teaching elementary music due to a lack of elementary music experience as a student and the absence of student teaching experience. This lack of pre-existing schema for teaching caused Joan to experiment in her classroom and keep “a really open mind about how to create an experience [for music learning] that I thought would be appropriate for kids.” In contrast to Joan’s lack of pre-existing schema, Scott’s schema for teaching is almost entirely based on his own school music experiences. When discussing planning for his classes, Scott says, “that’s what I learned. That’s all my other band directors did.” Unlike Joan, Scott seems to feel that experimenting and trying new ideas in the classroom are unnecessary because the way he was taught music was sufficient. “That’s the one thing about band: It hasn’t changed much in a hundred years. We’re still doing the same things just about the way we did back when Sousa bands started” (Scott).

*What does it mean to be musical? and other musical definitions.* The four interview participants each expressed different beliefs about what it means to be musical. When asked to define what it means to be musical, Perry says, “The ear, I think, is crucial,” stressing aural perception, which may be due to “nature” or talent rather than “nurture.” Paul defines being musical as having expression and good technique, which may be due to being “innately musical.” “To be truly musical I think is a gift” (Paul). Like Paul, Scott also defines being musical as having “mastery of [one’s] instrument” and performing expressively “stuff that’s not
written on the page.” Joan mentioned that 15 or 20 years ago her definition of being musical
would have meant “to be educated in music, to play a variety of styles of music, to be proficient
on your instrument,” but Joan’s views have since changed. “Now that I deal primarily with
working with children, I feel like to be musical could be so many things” (Joan). Joan’s current
definition of being musical involves any engagement with music is not limited by talent.
“Everyone is musical, and everyone has the potential to achieve in music” (Joan).

The four interview participants also expressed different beliefs about what it means to be
a musician. Similar to her definition of being musical, Joan believes that a musician is anyone
“who is engaged in any musical activity.” Paul also believes there are many ways to define what
a musician is, ranging from professionals to the students in his classes. Paul’s words imply that
being a musician involves “developing individual skills” in music. Perry also mentions “learned
skills” as something a musician has, combined with a passion for music. Unlike Joan’s view that
anyone can be a musician, Scott feels that being a musician “takes a lot of training and exercise
and work” and involves being “good at music,” which will happen if one has a talent for music.
Scott doesn’t consider his students to be musicians. “I think that most of them are too young to
be considered ‘a musician’. . . . [but eventually some of them may become musicians] if they
have that innate talent” (Scott).

Musicianship is another word that the interview participants define differently. For Scott,
musicianship “encompasses the technicality of your instrument. It encompasses your intonation.
Just everything as a whole.” While acknowledging that there are “several layers” of
musicianship, Paul feels that musicianship implies “commitment to presenting a musical
performance to the best of your possibility” and involves “definite work. . . to come to a final product.” Perry believes musicianship involves the ability to “hear” and to adjust and improve one’s performance, which can be done through repetition, study, and practice. Unlike Scott, Perry, and Paul, Joan does not feel that musicianship pertains to technique, performance, or practice. Joan believes that musicianship refers to one’s aural musical understanding and processing. “It’s that skill set of your ability to process a variety of things. . . . your tonal understanding, your rhythm understanding, your ability to express yourself in a musical way, being sensitive to the stylistic elements of music” (Joan).

Joan also references aural understanding when defining music comprehension and literacy. According to Joan, music comprehension is “how one listens to and understands what they’re hearing” musically, and music literacy is “the ability to process and understand music and not necessarily tied to notation.” Like Joan, Perry defines music comprehension as “understanding. Not necessarily written,” but he defines music literacy as one’s ability to read music, including “know[ing] meter signatures, [and clapping] basic rhythms.” While Paul expresses belief that music comprehension encompasses many things, he specifically mentions that it “could be knowledge about music, talent on an instrument, an understanding of the major components of music, or knowledge of music theory,” while music “literacy would imply notes, rhythms. . . being able to sight-read a piece, values, tempos, tone. . . . Just the basic components that go into performing on [an] instrument.” Similarly, Scott defines music literacy as understanding music, specifically understanding how to read music by counting rhythms, knowing letter-names of pitches and fingerings, and being able to play a piece of music from notation.
**Nuts and bolts of the music classroom.** Each interview participant clearly has a routine that is used regularly to organize their classes. All four teachers begin their classes with an activity that is intended to get students focused. For Scott and Paul, this was a warm-up. Perry precedes the warm-up with a “challenge” activity, which usually pertains to music reading, writing, and/or theory. Joan begins her classes with a “pattern of the day” activity, followed by individualized pattern instruction. After the focus or warm-up activity, Scott, Perry, and Paul spend the rest of their classes focusing on “the music.” After the warm-up, Paul says, “Then we sit down and we really work on music. It’s just a really tight, intense, great rehearsal of music from stem to stern.” Scott states that after the warm-up, “We get straight into the music and rehearse almost until the bell rings.” Rather than focusing strictly on “the music,” Joan spends the bulk of her class time on a variety of classroom activities, including singing, chanting, moving, playing instruments, folk dances, improvising, and composing.

When describing classroom activities, Scott, Perry, and Paul most frequently mention traditional ensemble activities such as performing (singing/playing), reading music notation, and learning music theory. While Paul mentions an occasional composition unit, Joan is the only teacher who talks about improvisation and composition as focal points of the class, referring to improvising and composing as “a wonderful way to really understand what the kids are taking in and how they’re processing it.” All four teachers seem either ambivalent or averse to the National Standards for Music Education. Joan is aware of the standards and acknowledges that they serve a purpose but feels they are not “very strong in guiding people.” Perry seems unsure of what all the standards are and says, “I really don’t read them, but I know
I’m doing that stuff.” Scott admits that he does not know much about the standards but feels they cannot be adequately covered in a band class due to time and performance constraints. When asked about the National Standards, Paul states, “I don’t even look at them” and that “for me to look at a set of standards set by some arbitrary board is absurd.” Paul feels that trying to cover all of the standards would be unrealistic and that “rather than touching on all these things, [teachers should] find a few things that are really important [such as tone quality and technique] and build from there.”

Music-centered or student-centered? Based on their statements and inferred beliefs, each of the four participants can be classified as music-centered, student-centered, or a combination of both. Scott could be considered music-centered. Much of his discussion focuses on “the music.” Scott refers to repertoire as the curriculum, describes spending class time on “what [piece] needs the most work,” and defines instructing as “helping them [the students] sound better.”

Performances are a focal point in Scott’s music program. The high priority Scott places on performances is shown when he mentions that students should develop proficiency on their instrument parts “because you have to learn it anyway for the concert.” Scott also refers to himself as a “director” and describes his competitiveness with other band directors and their programs, saying “I want to be the best band wherever we go.”

In contrast to Scott’s music-centeredness is Joan’s student-centeredness. Rather than planning instruction around “the music” and performances, Joan plans her instruction based on the needs of her students. “I consider always where the kids are. . . . in their musical development” (Joan). Rather than viewing herself as a “director,” Joan views herself as a guide. She views her role as “[providing] structure and some guidance. . . but really the kids are the
ones that drive everything that goes on.” Performances are not a priority for Joan, as she much more values the learning process because “the process is where the learning occurs and where the growth occurs, and performances you don’t see that.”

Unlike Scott and Joan, Perry and Paul show signs of being both student-centered and music-centered. Perry seems student-centered when he discusses the importance of considering the music learning process in order to sequence instruction appropriately. “You have to go in the order in which they [students] learn” (Perry). Paul also seems student-centered when he discusses the importance of developing each individual’s musical skills and helping students become “more successful as individual musicians.” Paul also states, “Bottom line is the kid. . . [Kids] should really be the focus.” However, Paul also shows signs of being music-centered. The focus of his rehearsals is to “really work on music,” and he feels it is necessary to develop students’ technique in order to “start to pursue the music more deeply.” Paul also places emphasis on performances, saying that planning for his classes is “always music driven. In other words, we’re trying to get the best possible performance that we possibly can.” Perry’s focus on performances also indicates his music-centeredness. He admits to not covering a variety of activities, “especially when you’re getting pushed for the concert.” Perry’s words also imply that the concert is the impetus for learning and developing skills when he says “until the concert you’re working.”

**Goals and purpose of music education.** The four interview participants discussed a variety of goals for their music programs, both musical and non-musical. Perry’s goals are to help students be successful in life and to help them learn traits such as honesty and work ethic. Paul’s goals are to encourage a love of music, lead students to feel a sense of accomplishment,
and help students develop basic skills on their instrument. Developing basic skills is also one of Scott’s goals, along with appreciation for music and learning the value of hard work and responsibility. Joan’s goals are to encourage a love and enjoyment of music, enable all students to use their singing voices, and to develop musicianship so that students can “[take] it home and [make] it their own.”

The participants also had varied beliefs about the purpose of music education. Scott believes the purpose of music education is to teach discipline, encourage higher level thinking, provide an outlet for students not doing well in other subjects, and to help make students better students in general. Paul believes the purpose of music education is to teach discipline, teamwork and a sense of community, develop social skills, teach life lessons, and develop a sense of artistic pursuit. Perry believes the purpose of music education is to develop intelligence, creativity, discipline, increased focus, and citizenship. Joan believes the purpose of music education is to enable students to be creative and express themselves through music, provide an opportunity for students for whom music is a strength, and to develop the musicianship of all students because “everyone is musical and everyone has the potential to achieve in music.”

_Awareness of beliefs._ Scott, Perry, and Paul each show signs of being unaware of some of their deep beliefs. In their discussions, both Scott and Perry make statements that contradict other statements. These contradictory statements may indicate contradictory beliefs that have not been examined due to lack of reflection on beliefs. Scott and Paul show possible unawareness of beliefs in their pauses and hesitations in answering philosophical questions, also indicating lack of reflection. Throughout his interview, Paul begins to show signs that he is reflecting on his beliefs after he expresses them, commenting “Well, this is kind of neat actually, because I really
know what I think about some of these things until the words start coming out of my mouth, and I’m going ‘Do I really believe this?’” At the end of his interview, Paul even admits that he is beginning to question some of his beliefs after verbalizing them, saying,

I’ve never really thought about a lot of this stuff. . . . you’re so busy every day, and then all of a sudden someone says, ‘Well how do you really think about, feel about this?’ And I go, ‘Do I really feel this way?’ [laughs] I’m not sure I like that!

In the present study, the results of the quantitative analysis were presented in Chapter Four, and findings of the qualitative analysis were presented in Chapter Five. Chapter Six will present a mixed methods analysis through a merging of the quantitative and qualitative data sets.
Chapter Six: Mixed Methods Analysis

In a triangulation-convergence mixed methods design the quantitative and qualitative data sets are first analyzed separately and then are merged so that “a complete picture is developed from both data sets” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007, p.136). Chapter Six will present the merging of quantitative and qualitative data sets through discussion of how the survey results reported in Chapter Four are confirmed or disconfirmed by the interview findings in Chapter Five. This discussion will answer the mixed methods research question “How do quantitative and qualitative analyses of music teachers’ beliefs and practice complement or contradict each other?” and will be organized by research questions one, two, and three.

Research Question 1: What Are Music Teachers’ Stated Beliefs about the Nature of Music and Music Education

What is music? Survey results found that all of the music teachers surveyed believe that music is a form of expression and an art form, and most also believe that music is a skill and a way of thinking. Teachers varied most in the belief that music is a talent. When asked to respond to the statement “Music is a talent,” 11 (31.4%) participants answered “Strongly Agree,” 9 (25.7%) answered “Agree,” 11 (31.4%) answered “Somewhat Agree,” 1 (2.9%) answered “Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “Somewhat Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “Strongly Disagree.” On a scale of one to seven, the mean score was 2.37.

The interview participants also show variance in the belief that music is a talent. All of them refer to talent as a factor in musical ability but to varying degrees and with different values placed on talent. On the survey Scott responded “Strongly Agree” to the statement “Music is a talent,” and this belief was reinforced in his interview. Furthermore, Scott revealed the belief that
musical talent is something that only some people have and that this musical talent is necessary for one to be successful in music. Says Scott, “Some people can’t be quote-unquote ‘a musician’ because they might not have that talent.”

Paul also believes that music is a talent, responding “Strongly Agree” on the survey, which was reinforced in his interview. Paul stated that while “everyone can get a good musical experience out of playing an instrument, whether they’re innately musical or not,” he believes that “to be innately musical is a little beyond the norm” and that “to be truly musical is a gift.”

Perry also responded “Strongly Agree” to the statement “Music is a talent.” Perry refers to musicianship as something that is due to “nature” rather than “nurture.” However, Perry’s interview showed belief that while music is a talent, it is not the only major influence on success in music. Says Perry, “I think part of it you might be born with, and I think the other part you learn.”

Unlike Scott, Perry, and Paul, Joan responded “Strongly Disagree” to the statement “Music is a talent.” While Joan mentions that music may come more easily to some people, possibly due to aptitude or talent, she does not believe that special talent is necessary to be successful in music. Says Joan, “Everyone is musical, and everyone has the potential to achieve in music.”

*What is the purpose of music education?* Survey results found that all of the music teachers surveyed believe that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, provide a means for self-expression, develop aesthetic awareness, and enhance creativity. While the survey shows that all teachers surveyed agree with these statements, they were not
mentioned by all interview participants when asked to state the purpose of music education in their own words during the interviews.

Perry and Joan reference creativity in their description of the purpose of music education, Perry mentioning that music education “focuses on the creative” and Joan that music education is “a way for children to be creative.” Neither Scott nor Paul mentions creativity in their belief about the purpose of music education. Scott and Joan reference self-expression in their description of the purpose of music education, Scott mentioning that music education gives students “an outlet” and Joan that music education provides “a way for people to express themselves.” Neither Perry nor Paul mentions self-expression in their belief about the purpose of music education. Paul is the only teacher who references aesthetic awareness in his description of the purpose of music education, saying that music education puts people in touch with “something inside them artistic.” Only one teacher, Joan, specified musical understanding when asked the purpose of music education, stating that “we have to give [everyone] the opportunity to nurture and grow that [potential for musical understanding].” This is in agreement with Joan’s open-ended survey response to the question “What do you want students to get out of your class?” Joan’s response includes “I want them to leave with the musical skills to understand and make intelligent decisions about. . . music.”

It is interesting that the general music teacher was the only one of the four interview participants to reference musical understanding as a purpose for music education. While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the survey data seems to show a difference between these general music and ensemble music teachers’ agreement with the statement “The purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music,” which
may suggest that general music teachers may have a stronger belief than ensemble music teachers that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music.

Survey results found that only some of the music teachers surveyed believe that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence, prepare interested students for a career in music, or enhance ability in other subject areas. This was supported by interview findings. Scott and Perry, referenced improving general intelligence as a purpose for music education. Scott says that music education “makes you a better student and makes you think at a higher level” and that it is like a “mental aerobics class” for your brain. Perry states that music education “keeps you young” and “it’s good for you cognitively.”

While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the survey data seems to show a difference between these ensemble and general music teachers’ agreement with the statement “The purpose of music education is to improve intelligence.” This may suggest that ensemble music teachers may have a stronger belief than general music teachers that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence. It is interesting that two of the three interview participants who are ensemble teachers mention improving intelligence as a purpose of music education while the participant who is a general music teacher does not.

All of the interview participants except for Joan also referred to character-related outcomes when discussing the purpose of music education. Scott says that music education “makes you be a responsible person” and “you just have to be so disciplined if you’re in music.” Perry states that music education teaches discipline, focus, “getting kids to work together,” and “it helps you become a better citizen.” Paul feels music education teaches “just a lot of things that are important to kids’ personal development,” such as discipline, social skills, sense of
community, and teamwork. Unfortunately, these findings cannot be supported or contradicted by survey findings as the survey included no item pertaining to character-related outcomes as the purpose of music education.

Research Question 2: What Are Music Teachers’ Stated Beliefs about the Nature of Music Teaching?

Value of product and process. Survey results indicate that most of the music teachers surveyed believe that process is as important as product in the music classroom, if not more important. When responding to the statement “As a music teacher, what is more important to you: Product or process,” 12 (34.3%) participants answered “Product and process equally,” 11 (31.4%) answered “Process somewhat more than product,” and 10 (28.6%) answered “Process.” Only 2 (5.7) participants answered “Product somewhat more than process,” and zero chose “Product.” One a scale of one to five, with one being product and five being process, the mean score was 3.83.

Interview findings show a slightly different picture. When asked whether he values product or process more, Scott replies, “The ultimate goal is the product. It’s the process that it takes to get there.” Although Scott chose “Product and process equally” as his survey response, his words indicate that he may value product more strongly, viewing process as a way of getting to the product. When asked whether he values product or process more, Perry initially answers “both process and product” and then “I would say more process,” but he follows this by saying, “Let’s face it. As music teachers you’re judged pretty much by the concerts.” Like Scott, Perry seems to value process as a way of getting to the final product. This is in agreement with Perry’s survey response of “Product somewhat more than process.”
Paul’s survey response of “Product and process equally” does seem to be in accordance with his beliefs as stated in his interview. Though Paul talks quite a bit about performances, he acknowledges that “the product in and of itself could be successful without the process being very thorough.” For Paul, quality in process means that students are “developing individual musicianship” and becoming “better musicians individually.”

Joan’s survey response of “Process” being more important is in complete agreement with beliefs expressed in her interview. Says Joan, “product is really not important to me. . . . I much more value the process and the journey that the kids took to get to the product than I do about a final, finished performance.” In explaining why she values process rather than product, Joan clarifies, “Process is where the learning occurs and where the growth occurs, and performances you don’t see that.” While survey analysis revealed no significant differences between these ensemble and general music teachers’ or elementary and secondary teachers’ valuing of process or product, results suggest that further investigation of this topic is needed.

Focus on students or music. Just as music teachers may value process and product differently, music teachers may vary in whether their focus is on students and learning or on music and performing. This can be referred to as being student-centered or subject-centered, in this case music-centered.

While the survey did not specifically ask teachers if they focus on students and learning or on music and performing, it did ask participants for their agreement with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.” One could assume that the 11 (31.4%) participants who answered “Strongly Disagree” and the 14 (40.0%) who responded “Disagree” are likely to be more student-centered rather than music-
centered. Conversely, one could assume that the 5 (14.3%) who answered “Agree,” and possibly the 5 (14.3%) who answered “Undecided,” are likely to be more music-centered.

The interview findings paint a similar picture. Joan, who responded “Strongly Disagree” to the performance-as-ultimate-goal survey item, appears very student-centered in her interview. Joan rarely speaks about “the music” in her interview, making almost no references to repertoire choice or concerts. Instead Joan speaks frequently about student needs and learning, making statements such as “I consider always where the kids are. I consider where they are in their musical development.” Joan’s open-ended response to the survey question “What factors influence the planning of your lessons?” also indicates she is student-centered:

Everything I do is based on a highly sequential approach to music teaching. I also test and use music aptitude scores to inform my teaching practice and to ensure I am teaching to and meeting the needs of my individual students.

On the other hand, Scott, Perry, and Paul, who all responded “Agree” to the performance-as-ultimate-goal survey item, appear very music-centered in their interviews. Paul describes the need to develop basic proficiency on one’s instrument as a necessary step in order to “start to pursue the music more deeply.” Scott describes his instruction as “helping them [the band] sound better,” and Paul mentions the focus of his rehearsals is to “really work on music.” Scott talks quite a bit about music-related things, such as doubling of parts and key signatures in which students should play scales. Scott also focuses on planning repertoire around concerts, playing advanced literature, and his competitive desire to “be the best band wherever we go.” Perry mentions being judged by his concerts, and also implies that concerts are the motivation for what goes on in his classroom by saying “until the concert you’re working.” Paul chooses repertoire
around themed concerts and describes his planning as “always music driven. In other words, we’re trying to get the best possible performance that we possibly can.” When expressing views on the National Standards for Music Education, Perry says he may not cover them all enough, “especially when you’re getting pushed for the concert.” When asked “What factors influence you to spend time on your most frequent activities?” Perry answered, “Performances which require that students are ready to present themselves well to an audience,” and Scott replied, “Improving the music.” All of these comments suggest a music-centered focus.

Only one interview participant is a general music teacher, which prevents generalization to the whole population of general music teachers. However, it is interesting that that the interview participants who are secondary music teachers tend to be more music-centered while the participant who is a general music teacher tends to be more student-centered. While no statistically significant difference was found, visual observation of the survey data seems to show that these secondary music teachers may be more likely to agree that performance is the goal while these elementary teachers are likely to disagree more strongly, which suggests that elementary music teachers may tend to be more student-centered while secondary teachers may tend to be more subject-centered.

There appears to be a connection between the valuing of process or product and the belief that performance is the goal. Survey results showed a significant difference between these music teachers who believe performance is the goal and those who do not. Teachers who agreed with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished piece of music” were more likely to value product over process, while teachers who strongly disagreed with the performance statement were more likely to value process over product. This is supported by
interview findings. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Joan’s interview and survey responses reveal that she values process much more than product, and Joan does not focus on performance but rather on student needs and learning. As also mentioned earlier in this chapter, Scott, Perry, and Paul’s interview and survey responses reveal that they value product more than process, and they tend to focus on performances and “the music” rather than student needs and learning, all three responding “Agree” to the survey item “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.”

Interview findings also support findings that the influence of performances may be related to exclusion of other musical activities not necessarily related to performance. Although no significant differences were found, survey results suggest that teachers who listed performances or concerts when answering the survey question “What factors influence the planning of your lessons?” may be less likely to engage their students in improvisation or composition. This is supported by Perry’s comment that he may not cover all of the National Standards enough, “especially when you’re getting pushed for the concert.”

Perception of self as teacher or director/conductor. Just as music teachers may be more student-centered or more subject-centered, some teachers perceive themselves more as “teacher,” while others perceive themselves more as “director” or “conductor.” Responses to the survey item “Where do you feel your job falls on the following continuum?” indicate that the music teachers surveyed view themselves completely as teachers (32.4%), more teacher than conductor (50.0%), or teacher and conductor equally (17.6%). Of the interview participants, Scott, Perry, and Paul responded “more teacher than conductor,” and Joan responded “teacher.” This difference may be due to the fact that Joan only has one ensemble class (fourth and fifth grade
choir) while Scott, Perry, and Paul have all or almost all ensemble classes. The difference also may be connected to Joan’s student-centeredness and Scott, Perry, and Paul’s music-centeredness, which is suggested by survey findings. Survey results indicate a significant relationship between valuing of process or product and how these music teachers identify themselves as teachers or conductors. Survey results suggest that participants who identified themselves as “teacher” (not at all conductor), like Joan, were more likely to value process (not at all product) and were more likely to strongly disagree with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.” This is supported by Joan’s statement in her interview that “product is really not important to me. . . . I much more value the process and the journey that the kids took to get to the product than I do about a final, finished performance.”

Although no survey participants felt their job was more conductor than teacher, 8 (21.6%) survey participants used the word “director” rather than teacher when asked to provide an open-ended response for their job title. Paul and Scott were two of the participants who described themselves as “director.” Survey results indicate a significant difference in the valuing of performance between participants who described themselves as “teacher” and those who described themselves as “director.” Participants who labeled themselves as “director” showed more agreement with the statement “The ultimate goal in a music class is to produce a polished performance of a piece of music.” This is supported by interview findings. Scott, who refers to himself as a “band director” in both the survey and interview, expresses in his interview the belief that “the ultimate goal is the product [performance]” and that students practicing and perfecting their parts is important because they “have to learn it anyway for the concert.” Paul,
who also described his job title as “director” on the survey, expressed in his interview the belief that what happens in his classroom is “always music driven. In other words, we’re trying to get the best possible performance that we possibly can.”

Survey results also indicate relationships between description of self as “teacher” or “director” and inclusion of improvisation and composition. A significant relationship was found suggesting that participants who described their job as “teacher” engaged their students in improvisation more frequently than those who described their job as “director.” A significant relationship was also found suggesting that those who described their job as “teacher” engaged their students in composition more frequently than those who described their job as “director.” This is supported by interview findings. Joan, who describes herself as “teacher,” says, “I do feel the next two most [important activities after singing] are improvisation and composition” and states that her classes spend a lot of time on improvising and composing. This is in contrast to Scott, who describes himself as “director” and explains in his interview that “we don’t do much improvisation.” When explaining why he doesn’t incorporate these activities more, Scott says, “We’re so busy with everything else. We got concerts. We got publicity stuff. We have fund raisers.” Scott goes on to mention after-school rehearsals, solo and ensemble, festival, and “all that other stuff” that is typically associated with being a “director.”

**Research Question 3: What Are Music Teachers’ Stated Beliefs about the Nature of Music Learning?**

*Can anyone learn music? Can anyone be good at music?* Survey results indicate that all music teachers surveyed believe that anyone can learn music. When responding to the survey item “Anyone can learn music,” 20 (57.1%) participants answered “Strongly Agree,” 12 (34.3%)
answered “Agree,” and 3 (8.6%) answered “Somewhat Agree.” On a scale of one to seven, the mean score was 1.51. This is supported by interview findings. Paul feels that “everyone can get a good musical experience out of playing an instrument.” Perry believes that all of his students can improve their musical skills and that he “[expects] everybody to go one step higher than where they were.” Joan states that “everyone is musical, and everyone has the potential to achieve in music.”

While all teachers surveyed believe that anyone can learn music, there was less belief that anyone can be good at music. When responding to the survey item “Anyone can be good at music,” 9 participants (25.7%) answered “Strongly Agree,” 10 (28.6%) answered “Agree,” and 10 (28.6%) answered “Somewhat Agree,” while 3 (8.6%) answered “Undecided,” 2 (5.7%) answered “Somewhat Disagree,” and 1 (2.9%) answered “Disagree.” The mean score was 2.49 on a scale of one to seven.

Interview findings support the survey findings that teachers surveyed believe less strongly that anyone can be good at music. Paul responded “Strongly Agree” to the survey item “Anyone can learn music.” However, when responding to the survey item “Anyone can be good at music,” Paul replied “Somewhat Agree.” This is also supported by Paul’s interview. When describing another musician, Paul says “I could practice ten lifetimes and not play like this guy” and that “to be truly musical I think is a gift.” Paul’s comments also support the survey finding suggest that elementary and middle school teachers may have a stronger belief than high school teachers that anyone can be good at music.

Perry also showed less belief that anyone can be good at music. Perry responded “Agree” to the survey item “Anyone can learn music.” However, Perry agreed less strongly with the
survey item “Anyone can be good at music,” responding “Somewhat Agree.” In his interview Perry expressed belief that he doesn’t play as well as his brother because “I don’t have that gift.” Perry also refers to musicianship as being a result of “nature” rather than “nurture.”

Scott showed only a slight belief that anyone can learn music, responding “Somewhat Agree” to the survey item “Anyone can learn music,” and he was the only interview participant who didn’t agree at all with the statement “Anyone can be good at music,” responding “Somewhat Disagree.” This is supported by Scott’s beliefs as expressed in his interview. Scott refers to “innate talent” and states that “some people can’t be quote-unquote ‘a musician’ because they might not have that talent.” This clearly shows Scott’s belief that only some people can be good at music.

Joan was the only interview participant who believed with equal strength that anyone can learn music and anyone can be good at music. Joan responded “Strongly Agree” to both survey items “Anyone can learn music” and “Anyone can be good at music.” This is in accordance with beliefs expressed in her interview. Joan states, “I believe everybody is musical in their own way” and does not refer to talent or special ability as a necessity for success in music.

Joan was the only interview participant who does not focus on talent and strongly believes that anyone can be good at music, while Paul, Perry, and Scott each discuss talent and the belief that being good at music is not something all can achieve. The observation that Joan, the elementary music teacher, was the only interview participant to not refer to talent or special ability as a prerequisite for musical achievement is in agreement with survey findings that suggest that secondary teachers may be more likely than elementary teachers to believe that talent is necessary for a person to be good or successful at music.
What determines success in music? Survey results show that almost all music teachers surveyed believe that a person needs to develop musical skills and be exposed to a good musical environment to be good at music. While no interview participants mention musical environment in their interviews, all four talk about the importance of developing musical skills. Perry believes that part of being a musician is “learned skills.” Joan explains that musicianship is one’s “skill set of your ability to process a variety of things.” Scott believes that “technicality of your instrument” is part of musicianship and someone who is musical has a “mastery of their instrument.” Paul mentions tone production, proper technique, learning how to play in tune, and developing a sense of rhythm as important goals.

Many teachers surveyed also believe that a person needs to have an interest in music, have a good “ear,” or have a basic knowledge of music theory to be good at music. While these factors were not mentioned by all of the interview participants, each was mentioned by at least one. Perry indicates that interest in music is important when he states that a musician must have “passion.” Joan’s belief that having a good “ear” is important is apparent when she says that she spends time building students’ “aural capacity.” Perry states that having a “good ear” is part of being musical and that a big part of musicianship is that “you can hear.” Paul believes that both aural skills and theoretical knowledge are important so that students “understand some of the basic components” of music. Teachers surveyed varied most in their belief that a person needs to have a “musical mind,” have a talent for music, or learn how to read music notation to be good at music. Variance in beliefs about the importance of reading notation were also seen in the interview findings. Paul believes that to be musically literate, one must know “notes, rhythms... being able to sight-read a piece” and “those kinds of things.” Scott explains that to be successful
in band “you have to know exact countings” and for rhythms and “note names” for pitches, and he feels that students are comprehending music “if I could give them a piece of music, and they could play it on their own” from notation. Meanwhile, Joan does not feel it is necessary to read music notation to be good at music. Says Joan, “I know many musicians who are extremely musically literate but yet can’t read a note on a piece of paper.”

Only one interview participant is a general music teacher, which prevents generalization to the whole population of general music teachers. However, it is interesting that Joan does not believe reading music notation is as important as the other interview participants. Survey data revealed a significant difference was found between these ensemble and general music teachers’ agreement with the statement “To be good at music, a person needs to learn how to read music notation,” suggesting that ensemble teachers are likely to believe reading notation is more important than general music teachers.

*Mixed Method Conclusions*

In most cases, results of the survey were confirmed and supported by findings from the interviews. Both survey results and interview findings suggest that these general music teachers may believe more strongly than ensemble music teachers that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, while these ensemble teachers may believe more strongly than general music teachers that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence.

That these elementary music teachers may tend to be more student-centered while secondary music teachers may tend to be more subject-centered is suggested by both survey results and interview findings. Survey results and interview findings also both suggest that those
who label themselves as “teacher” may tend to be more process-oriented and less concerned with performance, while those who label themselves as “conductor” or “director” may tend to be more product-oriented and more focused on performance. Those who label themselves as “conductor” or “director” may also tend to be less likely to provide experiences for their students in composition and improvisation than those who label themselves as “teacher,” which is suggested by both survey results and interview findings.

While both survey results and interview findings suggest that most of these music teachers believe that anyone can learn music, both also suggest that most of these music teachers may tend to believe less strongly that anyone can be good at music. Survey results and interview findings both suggest that most of these music teachers believe that one must develop musical skills, be exposed to a good musical environment, and have a good “ear” to be good at music. However, these ensemble music teachers may tend to believe more strongly than general music teachers that one must learn to read music notation to be good at music, which both survey results and interview findings suggest.

This chapter has presented a mixed methods analysis of the two data sets collected in this study, following the quantitative analysis in Chapter Four and the qualitative analysis in Chapter Five. Chapter Seven will next provide a summary of the entire study, along with connections to past research, implications for teaching practice, suggestions for future research, and conclusions.
Chapter Seven: Summary and Conclusions

Review of Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate music teacher beliefs and the ways in which beliefs relate to teaching practice. The specific research questions for this study were:

Quantitative and Qualitative Research Questions

1. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music and music education?
2. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music teaching?
3. What are music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music learning?
4. What relationships exist between music teachers’ stated beliefs about the nature of music, music teaching, and music learning?
5. How do stated beliefs relate to teachers’ descriptions of their teaching practice?

Mixed Methods Research Question

6. How do quantitative and qualitative analyses of music teachers’ beliefs and practice complement or contradict each other?

Review of Methodology

This study implemented a triangulation convergence mixed methods design in which quantitative data was collected through a survey and qualitative data was gathered through interviews. Each data set was first analyzed separately, and then both data sets were merged in mixed methods analysis through discussion to compare quantitative survey results and qualitative interview findings.

A survey was used to collect quantitative data on music teacher beliefs and teaching practice of 37 music teachers in one southeast Michigan school district. SPSS was used to
calculate survey response frequencies and mean scores, as well as cross tabulations to examine relationships between items. Maximal variation purposeful sampling was used through preliminary analysis of survey responses to identify four participants for the qualitative interviews. Broad categories of interview findings were developed, and then specific descriptors were developed, which were used to code the interview transcripts. These categories and codes were then used to create a narrative profile for each interview participant, organized by common themes discovered. The quantitative and qualitative data sets were then merged through discussion to arrive at a mixed methods analysis.

**Key Results of Quantitative Analysis**

Analysis of the survey data revealed many commonalities and differences in these music teachers’ beliefs. Differences were discovered in comparing beliefs of elementary and secondary teachers, ensemble and general music teachers, and teachers with varying years of experience.

**Beliefs about the nature of music and music education.** All music teachers surveyed believe that music is an art-form and a form of expression, and many believe it is a skill and a way of thinking. Some teachers surveyed believe music is a talent, while others do not. All music teachers surveyed believe that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, provide a means for self-expression, develop aesthetic awareness, and promote creativity. Many teachers surveyed believe the purpose of music education is also to improve quality of life, but only some believe it is to improve general intelligence, prepare students for a career in music, or enhance ability in other subject areas. Instrumental and general music teachers surveyed showed stronger belief than choral teachers surveyed that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, and the general music teachers surveyed believed this more
strongly than the instrumental teachers. Ensemble (choral and instrumental) music teachers
surveyed were more likely than general music teachers to believe that the purpose of music
education is to improve general intelligence. Elementary and middle school teachers expressed
stronger belief that the purpose of music education is to understand music than high school
teachers, and teachers with less teaching experience expressed this belief more strongly than
teachers with 25 or more years of experience.

Beliefs about the nature of music teaching. The teachers surveyed believe that the most
important part of their job is developing understanding of and appreciation for music. Teachers
also believe that developing knowledge about music, developing musical independence, and
developing performance skills are also important parts of their jobs. Teachers surveyed believe
the least important parts of their jobs are encouraging students to think and question the world
around them and transmitting values of the mainstream culture. Most, if not all, teachers
surveyed believe that the purpose of assessment is to determine what students know and
understand, improve and guide instruction, and determine how/when to proceed, while only
some believe the purpose of assessment is to assign grades, assign ensemble parts, or determine
placement in ensembles. While no significant differences were found, results suggest that
elementary music teachers surveyed may value process more and product less than secondary
music teachers surveyed. Very few teachers surveyed expressed belief that the ultimate goal in a
music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music, and all of those who did
were secondary teachers. Those teachers who believe the ultimate goal is to prepare performance
were also likely to value product more than other teachers. While all teachers surveyed identified
themselves as “teacher” rather “conductor” or both equally, over 20 percent described
themselves as “director” in an open-ended response and were more likely to believe that the ultimate goal in a music class is performance. Those who identified themselves as only “teacher” disagreed more strongly with the belief that the ultimate goal of a music class is performance and tend to value process much more than product.

*Beliefs about the nature of music learning.* All teachers surveyed believe that anyone can learn music, but many believe less strongly that anyone can be good at music. While no significant differences were found, results suggest that the high school teachers surveyed may believe less strongly than the elementary and middle school teachers that anyone can be good at music. Most teachers surveyed believe that one does not have to have musical parents or take lessons at an early age to be good at music, but rather that one must develop musical skills, be exposed to a good musical environment, be interested in music, and have a good ‘ear.’ Only some of the teachers surveyed believe that one must have a good teacher, have a “musical mind,” have a talent, or learn how to read music notation to be good at music. No differences were found between elementary and secondary music teachers’ beliefs about what makes a person good at music, but ensemble (choral and instrumental) music teachers were more likely than general music teachers to believe that one must learn to read music notation to be good at music, while teachers with 25 or more years of experience were more likely to believe that one must have musical parents to be good at music. The teachers surveyed believe that the most powerful determinants of student success in music are student interest, teacher use of effective teaching methods, teacher enthusiasm, and teacher attention to student interests and abilities, while knowledge about music, student home background, and talent were identified as the least powerful determinants of success. High school teachers surveyed were more likely than
elementary and middle school teachers to believe that home background is an important 
determinant of success, and choral and general music teachers surveyed were more likely than 
instrumental music teachers to believe that teacher use of effective teaching methods and teacher 
attention to student interests and abilities are important determinants of success. While no 
significant differences were found, results suggest that secondary teachers surveyed may be more 
likely to believe that talent is necessary to be good at music.

*Relationships between beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music 
teaching, and music learning.* Few significant relationships were found between beliefs about 
music and music education, beliefs about music teaching, and beliefs about music learning. 
Teachers surveyed who believe the purpose of music education is to enable students to 
understand music were also likely to believe that the most important part of a music teacher’s job 
is to develop musical independence and possibly also enabling students to understand music. 
Results also suggest that teachers who believe the purpose of music education is to develop 
aesthetic awareness also believe that developing appreciation is the most important part of their 
job.

*Relationships between beliefs and teaching practice.* Teachers surveyed who assess more 
often through participation/effort tend to believe more strongly that one needs to have a talent to 
be good at music. Results also suggest that teachers surveyed who assess through practice 
records may be more likely to believe that the purpose of assessment is to assign grades. 
Teachers surveyed who identify themselves as “teacher” engage their students in improvisation, 
composition, and examining relationships between music and other arts/disciplines more 
frequently than those who describe themselves as “director.” Teachers surveyed who listed
performances or time as a factor that impacts their planning were also less likely to engage
students in improvisation and composition.

**Key Findings of Qualitative Analysis**

Analysis of the interview data revealed many commonalities and differences among the
participants’ beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music
learning, which can be found within each of the common themes identified.

Commonalities and differences were found among the participants’ motivation to become a
teacher and schema for teaching. All four interview participants were motivated to enter the
music teaching profession by a love or passion for music. Scott also cites wanting to go into
music teaching because music helped him to be “a better student overall,” while Joan was
motivated to become a music teacher by a desire to “engage kids in that kind of [music]
learning” that will help them to “communicate musically and intelligently.” Scott and Joan also
differ in their schema for teaching. Scott’s schema for teaching is almost entirely based on his
own school music experiences, and thus he tends to teach the way he was taught, saying “that’s
what I learned. That’s all my other band directors did.” Meanwhile Joan’s schema for teaching
was not at all based in preconceived ideas about music teaching and learning due to her lack of
elementary school music experience as a child and absence of a student teaching experience,
which Joan feels helped her to “a really open mind about how to create an experience [for music
learning] that I thought would be appropriate for kids.”

Commonalities and differences were also found among the ways participants’ defined
concepts such as what it means to be musical, what it means to be a musician, musicianship, and
music comprehension and literacy. Joan believes that being musical involves any engagement
with music and is not limited by talent. Both Perry and Paul refer to talent when defining what it
tools is musical, referring to “nature” rather than “nurture” (Perry) and the innate “gift” of
being musical (Paul). Scott and Paul believe being musical specifically pertains to having good
technique and expression, while Perry believes that “the ear . . . is crucial.” Joan, Perry, and Paul
define being a musican as anyone “who is engaged in a musical activity” (Joan) or develops
musical skills (Perry and Paul), while Scott believes a musician is someone who has an “innate
talent” for music and has done a great deal of “training and exercise and work.” Perry, Paul, and
Scott believe musicianship means “technicality of your instrument” (Scott), “commitment to
presenting a musical performance” involving “work . . . to come to a final product” (Paul), and
the ability to “hear,” adjust, and improve (Perry). Meanwhile, Joan believes that musicianship
refers to one’s aural musical understanding and processing, involving “that skill set of your
ability to process a variety of things . . . [and] your ability to express yourself in a musical way.”
Joan also refers to aural understanding when defining music comprehension and literacy, while
Perry, Scott, and Paul focus on ability to read music, count rhythms, know letter-names of
pitches and fingerings, and knowledge of music theory and “the major components of
music” (Paul).

Commonalities and differences were also found among participants’ descriptions of their
daily teaching practice. While all four describe using a routine to organize their classes, Joan’s
classes encompass a variety of activities with a focus on improvising and composing, while Paul,
Perry, and Scott spend the majority of their classes on performing (singing or playing) and
reading music notation.
Participants’ descriptions of their beliefs and teaching practices indicated whether each participant tends to be subject-centered or student-centered. Scott appears to be more music-centered. He refers to himself as “director” and his instructing as “helping them [the students] sound better,” focuses on performances, and mentions his competitiveness with other band programs, wanting “to be the best band,” making little or no reference to student needs. Joan appears to be more student-centered. She views herself as a guide, plans her instruction based on “where the kids are. . . . in their musical development,” and values process over performances because “the process is where the learning occurs and where the growth occurs.” Paul and Perry show signs of being both music-centered and student centered. They each focus at times on individual student needs and learning, stating that “you have to go in the order in which they [students] learn” (Perry) and that the “bottom line is the kid” (Paul). However, at other times they each focus on “the music” and performances, referring to neglect of certain activities or learning experiences “when you’re getting pushed for the concert” (Perry) and describing their planning as “music driven” and “trying to get the best possible performance” (Paul).

Goals and beliefs about the purpose of music education are another area in which commonalities and differences were found among the participants. Helping students develop a love and appreciation for music is a common goal for Joan, Paul, and Scott, along with helping students develop their musical skills. Additionally, Joan wants to help her students to develop their musicianship and musical independence so they can “[take] it home and [make] it their own.” Perry’s goals are helping students to be successful in life and learn traits such as honesty and work ethic, and Scott also wants students to learn the value of hard work and responsibility. Just as goals pertained to musical or nonmusical outcomes, musical and nonmusical justifications
were also given by participants as the purpose of music education. Joan believes the purpose of music education is to help students be creative and express themselves through music and to develop the musicianship of all students because “everyone is musical and everyone has the potential to achieve in music.” Meanwhile, Scott, Paul, and Perry believe the purpose of music education is to develop primarily nonmusical outcomes, such as higher level thinking, intelligence, focus, life skills, social skills, discipline, citizenship, and making students better students in general.

Commonalities and differences were also found among participants’ apparent awareness of their beliefs. Scott, Perry, and Paul each show signs of being unaware of some of their deep beliefs, as evidenced through frequent pauses or hesitation in answering philosophical questions and/or contradictory statements. Paul also began to question some of his beliefs after expressing them, occasionally making comments such as “I really know what I think. . . until the words start coming out of my mouth, and I’m going, ‘Do I really believe this?’” Joan was the only participant who appeared to be very aware of her beliefs, answering directly and concisely with little hesitation. This may be a result of frequent reflection, possibly due to her lack of a preconceived schema about music teaching and learning. Joan most likely did a considerable amount of reflecting on what she believed the purpose of her class should be and how it should serve her students as she developed her own conception of what an elementary music program should be.

**Key Themes of Mixed Methods Analysis**

Survey results were confirmed and supported by interview findings in most cases. Both survey results and interview findings suggest that general music teachers may believe more
strongly than ensemble music teachers that the purpose of music education is to enable students to understand music, while ensemble teachers may believe more strongly than general music teachers that the purpose of music education is to improve general intelligence.

Both survey results and interview findings suggest that elementary music teachers may be more student-centered while secondary teachers may be more subject-centered. Those who label themselves as “teacher” may tend to be more process-oriented, while those who label themselves as “conductor” or “director” may tend to be more performance or product-oriented, which was suggested by survey results and confirmed by interview findings. Those who label themselves as “conductor” or “director” may also tend to be less likely to engage their students in improvisation and composition than those who label themselves as “teacher.”

While both survey results and interview findings suggest that most music teachers believe that anyone can learn music, both also suggest that most music teachers may tend to believe less strongly that anyone can be good at music. Most music teachers believe that one must develop musical skills, be exposed to a good musical environment, and have a good “ear” to be good at music. However, ensemble music teachers may tend to believe more strongly than general music teachers that one must learn to read music notation to be good at music, which both survey results and interview findings suggest.

Limitations of the Study

Several limitations of this study should be noted. First, the small size of the survey sample limits generalizability of the results. A larger population of music teachers should be studied in order to strengthen generalizability. Generalizability may also be limited due to the fact that the sample only represents a single school district. Generalizability would be strengthened if
participants were from many different school districts across a wide area. A further limitation of this study is the fact that descriptions of teaching practice are all as stated by the participants. In order to truly examine teaching practice, observation of actions in the classroom might be used to gauge teaching practice more accurately. Lastly, because this is a study about beliefs and how they impact actions, it is likely that the beliefs of the researcher have influenced the interpretation of the results in this study despite all attempts at neutrality.

Connections to Previous Research

Many of the findings in this study are consistent with those in previous research. This study found that music teachers hold a wide range of beliefs, which, as found by Schmidt and Kennedy (1990), may be formed in isolation and rarely challenged. Findings of this study indicate that differences in teaching practice may be connected to different beliefs about teaching and learning, similar to the findings of Enyedy, Goldberg, and Welsh (2005), and that these beliefs may influence teachers’ decisions to use or not use a new teaching approach or curriculum, as found by Crux (1998). Findings of this study indicate that some music teachers may believe that everyone can be musical, while other music teachers believe that only those with an innate talent can be musical. This is similar to the relativistic and absolute views of musicality found by Brandstrom (1999).

Differences found among the beliefs of different groups of music teachers are similar to several previous studies. The current study suggests differences between the beliefs of teachers with 25 or more years of experience and teachers with less experience. Studies by Brousseau, Book, and Byers (1988) and Schmidt and Kennedy (1990) also found differences among beliefs of teachers with varying levels of experience. The finding of the current study that elementary
music teachers may be more student-centered and secondary music teachers may be more subject-centered is consistent with results found by Book and Freeman (1986) and Grauer (1998). Book and Freeman (1986) also found that secondary teachers may value their own K-12 school experience more than elementary teachers, which is consistent with interview findings.

Similar to previous research, findings of the current study suggest that one’s own school experiences may influence teaching practice and beliefs. Scott’s satisfaction with his own school music experience and thus decision to teach as he was taught and reject new philosophies is consistent with the findings of Gupta and Saravanan (1995), who found that satisfaction with one’s own school experience resulted in less openness to change. Schmidt (1998) also found teachers “resorted to the models of music instruction they knew best,” in other words teaching as they were taught, when they lack sufficient strategies. An example of this in the current study is Scott’s statement when describing his teaching that “that’s what I learned. That’s all my other band directors did. I don’t know.”

Grauer (1998) found that one’s own school experiences influence teacher beliefs as much as teacher education programs do, if not more. Although the current study does not focus specifically on the teacher education preparation of the participants, one might assume that teacher preparation programs did not have a lasting impact on participants’ beliefs as indicated by the wide range of beliefs found in this study. Schmidt and Kennedy (1990) propose that this “scattered pattern of beliefs…suggests that teachers probably form their beliefs in isolation” rather than as a result of teacher education programs. Brousseau, Book and Byers (1988) also found that teacher education has little lasting impact on teacher beliefs, and Schmidt (1998)
found that the one’s own school music experience may outweigh any possible impact of teacher education programs on beliefs.

The current study finds that some of the participants may be unaware of their deep beliefs about music teaching and learning, which may be a result of a lack of reflection on beliefs. This is supported by several other studies. Based on findings, Van Zoest, Jones, and Thornton (1994) suggest that the opportunity for reflection may influence teacher beliefs. Gupta and Saravanan (1995) found that critical reflection on beliefs and past experiences may help teachers see a purpose for incorporating new strategies. Raymond (1997) notes that “deeply held, traditional beliefs…have the potential to perpetuate…teaching that is more traditional” (p. 574) and suggests that “early and continued reflection…may be the key to improving the quality of mathematics instruction” (p. 574).

Implications for Teaching Practice

Similar to findings of past research studies, findings in the current study suggest that music teachers hold a wide range of beliefs about the nature of music and music education, music teaching, and music learning and that these beliefs are connected to teaching practice. Also similar to results of other studies is the finding that teachers may be unaware of their deep beliefs, may hold contradictory beliefs, may have beliefs that are inconsistent with teaching practice, or may simply teach as they were taught without examining beliefs and that these issues may be results of a lack of reflection on beliefs. This is not surprising, as music educators currently have very little time or opportunity to sit down and deeply reflect on their beliefs.

Raymond (1997) suggests that “early and continued reflection. . . may be the key to improving the quality of. . . instruction and minimizing inconsistency between beliefs and
practice” (p. 574). This early reflection on beliefs about music education, music teaching, and music learning should begin in college music teacher preparation programs. Unfortunately, this type of reflection is difficult to accomplish in undergraduate music education programs. College music education majors are busy taking a vast assortment of courses in areas such as conducting, score study, primary instrument lessons, secondary instrument methods classes, and performing ensembles and are left with little time to address music education philosophy. Reflection on beliefs also may be difficult for undergraduate music students simply because they lack the real-life teaching experiences on which to base their beliefs as music teachers. However, at the undergraduate level music education students should be encouraged to reflect on their own school music experiences and the purpose they served. This can be done through asking questions such as “What was the purpose of what you experienced as a music student?” or “What did you learn or take from your own school music experiences?” These sorts of questions would hopefully encourage music education students to reflect on and question their experiences as a student, which might prevent the habit of simply “teaching as you were taught.”

Considering the myriad of skills that music education students must develop in order to be prepared to function as a music teacher after graduation and their lack of teaching experience, it is understandable that undergraduate music education programs have little impact on music teacher beliefs. Fortunately, there are many opportunities for reflection on beliefs after graduation. After music teachers enter the field, they are typically involved in some sort of professional development activities that are offered through their school districts. Professional development could (and should) provide music teachers with the time and opportunity for reflection on beliefs. Rather than requiring music teachers to sit through in-service presentations
that focus on other subject areas such as reading or math, school districts could provide professional development opportunities for their music teachers which would focus on philosophical issues and beliefs about music teaching and learning, providing teachers with the time and opportunity to truly reflect on what they believe. These professional development activities could also involve discussion and sharing of beliefs and philosophies among music teachers, which has the potential to expose teachers to new ideas, encourage teachers to question and reflect on their own beliefs, and hopefully lead to greater understanding and communication among a district’s music teaching staff. This sort of sharing and discussion of beliefs could also be a helpful tool in doing curriculum work. Differing philosophies and beliefs are often treated as an impediment to developing a common curriculum. However, if philosophies and beliefs are discussed among teachers, it could lead to greater understanding of differing viewpoints, making it easier to come to agreement in developing a curriculum document that will work for all involved.

Many music teachers also attend graduate school, which should provide opportunities for reflection on beliefs and philosophical issues, specifically in a course devoted to music education philosophy. After teachers have had several years of teaching experience, they will be more prepared to consider philosophical issues because they will have had the life experiences on which to base their beliefs. Music education graduate students should be given the opportunity and time to reflect on a number of questions that deal with beliefs, including:

Why did you become a music teacher?

Why do we teach music? Why do we learn music?

What is the purpose of music education?
What role does music education serve?

What is music?

What does it mean to be musical? To be a musician? To be musically literate?

What is necessary for one to be good at music?

What experiences are important for students to have in our music programs? Why?

What should be the role or purpose of performances in our music programs?

Reflection on these questions will surely involve reflection on beliefs about music education, music teaching, and music learning.

In addition to professional development and graduate school, professional conferences for music educators could provide another opportunity for teachers to address beliefs and philosophy. Rather than simply hosting sessions that share information and techniques or demonstrate skills, music educator conferences need to provide more opportunities for music teachers to get together and have conversations that will lead to sharing and reflection on beliefs about music education, music teaching, and music learning.

Suggestions for Future Research

Because there were few previous research studies that focused on teacher beliefs in music education, the current study attempted to look at a broad range of music teacher beliefs. However, due to the broad nature of the topic, it was difficult to come to many detailed, precise conclusions about music teacher beliefs. Future studies might attempt a more in-depth investigation of specific music teacher beliefs. Specific beliefs that might be studied could include beliefs about the purpose of music education, beliefs about the role of the music teacher, beliefs related to student-centeredness or subject-centeredness of the music teacher, beliefs about
determinants of student success in the music classroom, beliefs about musicality or what it means to be a musician, or beliefs about the role or function of performances in a music program.

Due to the small size of the survey sample, generalizability of results is limited in this study. Future researchers in the subject of music teacher beliefs might consider using purely a survey design and sampling a much larger population of teachers. Gathering a much larger sample of music teachers from diverse locations would strengthen generalizability of results. Results of the current study suggest that music teachers hold a variety of beliefs about the purpose of music education, and that these beliefs may vary among choral, instrumental, and general music teachers and among elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Future survey studies might examine these variances in more detail and with a larger sample. Also, many results of the current study show only marginally significant relationships between variables related to beliefs and practice, such as the marginally significant difference indicating that secondary music teachers surveyed may be more likely to agree that performance is the goal while elementary teachers surveyed may disagree more strongly. Surveying a larger population of music teachers might increase the likelihood of discovering statistically significant differences among beliefs of teachers.

Future research might also seek to better understand the differences in beliefs among various groups of music teachers through correlational studies. The current findings suggest that elementary music teachers may be more student-centered while secondary teachers may be more subject-centered. A correlational study might examine stated beliefs and/or teaching actions in the classroom of a group of elementary music teachers and a group of secondary music teachers,
using some measure to gauge whether the subjects tend to be subject- or student-centered. One could then calculate the correlation between teaching level and subject- or student-centeredness.

The current study investigated teacher beliefs by eliciting statements from participants. However, according to Pajares (1992), “because individuals are often unable or unwilling… to accurately represent their beliefs…, beliefs cannot be directly observed or measured but must be inferred from what people say, intend, and do” (p. 314). For this reason future research should also include an observation of teaching practice. This observation of teaching practice could be done either live or through video recording. By studying the actions of teachers in the classroom, beliefs can be inferred through those actions. Stated beliefs can also be compared to teachers’ actual teaching practice rather than teachers’ descriptions of their teaching practice, which may not be entirely accurate.

Further study of music teachers’ beliefs about the purpose of music education (or other specific beliefs) might involve a combination of interviews and classroom observation. Interviews could be used to examine the beliefs of the teacher(s) being studied. The beliefs inferred from the interviews could then be compared with classroom observations (live or recorded) of the teacher(s) in action to investigate the congruence between beliefs and practice.

Since reflection has been determined to have a significant impact on beliefs, future studies could investigate the effects of reflection on teacher beliefs and practice. An experimental study is one way in which this could be done. A pretest could be used to measure classroom actions that pertain to teacher beliefs. Then an experimental group of teachers could be involved in a period of structured reflection through discussion, journaling, etc. where they are examining and questioning their beliefs. The classroom actions of the teachers in the experimental group
could then be measured in a posttest and compared in some way with those of a control group who had not been involved in reflection on beliefs to see if reflection impacted teaching practice.

Finally, it would also be insightful to conduct case studies of teachers who, like Joan, have undergone drastic changes in their beliefs about music education, music teaching, and music learning. What were the causes of such changes? What experiences enabled the change in beliefs? Beliefs can be very resistant to change, especially when not examined, and learning about the reasons for changes in beliefs might help one to understand potential catalysts for belief change.

**Conclusion**

Beliefs clearly have a tremendous impact on music teachers’ actions in the classroom. While it is difficult to place a value on beliefs such as labeling them as “good” or “bad,” and while we cannot expect all music teachers to hold the same set of beliefs, reflection on beliefs and developing awareness of deep beliefs should be an important part of any music teacher’s professional preparation. Additionally, music teachers should be encouraged to reflect on the ways in which their beliefs about music and music education, music teaching, and music learning are connected to their actions in the classroom. It is through this self-reflection and through further research on music teacher beliefs and their relationship to teaching practice that we will be able “to provide insights into the relationship between beliefs, on the one hand, and teacher practice, teacher knowledge, and student outcomes on the other” (Pajares, 1992, p. 327).
References


Appendix A: Survey Tool

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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Background Information

1. What is your job title?

2. What level do you teach? (Check all that apply.)
- Elementary School
- Middle School
- High School
- Other (please specify)

3. What best describes the classes you teach? (Check all that apply.)
- Instrumental
- Choral
- General
- Other (please specify)

4. Please list the titles of the classes you teach.

5. How many years of music teaching experience will you have at the end of the 07-08 school year?
- 1-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26+ years
6. Please list the institution at which you earned your degree(s) in music education. (List city/state if applicable, e.g., University of Michigan-Flint.)

*If you obtained your degree in a field other than music education and then obtained certification in a separate process, please note.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bachelors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PhD</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 3. Classroom Information

For questions 1 and 2 please refer to the type of class you spend the majority of your time teaching.

If you teach more than one type of class (e.g., choir and music theory) OR if you teach different levels of a type of class (e.g., lower elementary vs. upper elementary), please refer to the class you spend the second most amount of time teaching in questions 3 and 4.

*If you teach both lower elementary (K-2nd) and upper elementary (3rd-5th) general music, please describe lower in #1-2 and upper in #3-4.

1. Please list the PRIMARY type of class you teach (i.e., the type of class you spend the majority of your time teaching), e.g., middle school band or lower elementary general music.

2. In this class, how often do your students engage in the following activities?

*If you do an activity in an isolated unit, please estimate how often it would be if spread throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>At least once each class period</th>
<th>At least once each week</th>
<th>At least once each month</th>
<th>3-5 times per school year</th>
<th>1-2 times per school year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playing Instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improvising</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composing/arranging</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading/notating</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening/analyzing/describing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluating</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining relationships between music and with other arts/disciplines</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining relationships between music and history/culture</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Please list the SECONDARY type of class you teach (i.e., the type of class you spend the second most amount of time teaching), e.g., upper elementary general music or high school music theory. (*If not applicable, please skip to question #5.)
4. In this class, how often do your students engage in the following activities?

*If you do an activity in an isolated unit, please estimate how often it would be if spread throughout the year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>At least once each class period</th>
<th>At least once each week</th>
<th>At least once each month</th>
<th>3-5 times per school year</th>
<th>1-2 times per school year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singing</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Playing Instruments</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improvising</td>
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<tr>
<td>Composing/arranging</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reading/notating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Listening/analyzing/describing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Evaluating</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examining relationships between music and with other arts/disciplines</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examining relationships between music and history/culture</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. What factors influence you to spend time on your most frequent activity(s)?

6. What factors influence you not to spend time on your least frequent activity(s)?

7. I assess student learning through:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>At least once each class period</th>
<th>At least once each week</th>
<th>At least once each month</th>
<th>3-5 times per school year</th>
<th>1-2 times per school year</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice records</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portfolio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation/effort</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Informal observation</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance tests/rating scales</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. The purpose of assessment is to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assign ensemble parts.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine placement in ensembles.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine what students know and understand.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve instruction.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine how/when to proceed.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide instruction.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assign grades.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. Allowing students to work independently in small groups is an effective and productive use of class time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

10. How often do students in your classroom participate in independent or small group work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More than once per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once per week.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice per month.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Once or twice per year.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

11. To what degree does a district curriculum impact your instruction?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significantly.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A lot.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Somewhat.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A little.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at all.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>We do not have a district curriculum for my subject.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Music

1. Rate the following statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anyone can be good at music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anyone can learn music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music is a form of expression.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Music is a skill.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music is a talent.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music is a way of thinking.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music is an art form.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. The purpose of music education is to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop aesthetic awareness.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enable students to understand music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enhance ability in other subject areas.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve general intelligence.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve quality of life.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prepare interested students for a career in music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote creativity.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide a means for self-expression.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. To be good at music, a person needs to:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly Agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Somewhat Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Somewhat Disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Strongly Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be exposed to good musical environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be interested in music.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop musical skills.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a basic knowledge of music theory.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good “ear”.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good teacher.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a kind of “musical mind”.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a talent for music.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have musical parents.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learn how to read music notation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive appropriate musical instruction.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take lessons at an early age.</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. To what degree can music teachers affect each of these factors in their students?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Completely</th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>A little</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be exposed to good musical environment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be interested in music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Develop musical skills.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a basic knowledge of music theory.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good &quot;ear&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a good teacher.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a kind of &quot;musical mind&quot;.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have a talent for music.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have musical parents.</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Learn how to read music notation.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive appropriate musical instruction.</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take lessons at an early age.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 5. Music teaching

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. As a music teacher, what is more important to you: product or process?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Product somewhat more than process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Product and process equally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process somewhat more than product</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Why do you feel this way?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. What is more important in the music classroom: to develop musical skills or cultivate music appreciation?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Developing skills is much more important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Developing skills is somewhat more important</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Developing skills and cultivating appreciation are equally important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cultivating appreciation is somewhat more important.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cultivating appreciation is much more important.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Why do you feel this way?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Where do you feel your job falls on the following continuum?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Conductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Conductor more than teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Equally conductor and teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- More teacher than conductor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Teacher</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Good music teaching depends on:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Helping students to like music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Primarily helping students to like music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helping students to like and understand music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Primarily helping students to understand music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Helping students understand music.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. The most important part(s) of a music teacher’s job is to:

(These do NOT need to be rank-ordered. You may rate each separately.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transmits values of mainstream culture.</th>
<th>1-Most important</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7-Least important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop appreciation for music.</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Develop understanding of music.</td>
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<td>Develop musical independence.</td>
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<td>Encourage students to think and question the world around them.</td>
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<td>Develop performance skills.</td>
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<td>Develop knowledge about music.</td>
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6. In ensemble settings, teachers should group students by ability or level of performance.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>All of the time</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Some of the time</th>
<th>A little of the time</th>
<th>None of the time</th>
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</table>

7. Why should/shouldn’t music teachers group students according to ability in ensemble settings?

8. In general music settings (e.g., collaborative group projects), teachers should group students by ability or level of performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>All of the time</th>
<th>Most of the time</th>
<th>Some of the time</th>
<th>A little of the time</th>
<th>None of the time</th>
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</table>

9. Why should/shouldn’t music teachers group students according to ability in general music settings?
6. Music learning

1. Who is responsible for successful learning in the music classroom?
   - Solely the student.
   - The student more than the teacher.
   - The student and teacher equally.
   - The teacher more than the student.
   - Solely the teacher.

2. Learning music depends on:
   - Talent.
   - Talent more than effort.
   - Talent and effort equally.
   - Effort more than talent.

3. Students should learn music:
   - solely through music theory/notation.
   - primarily through music theory/notation.
   - both through theory/notation and aurally.
   - primarily aurally.
   - solely aurally without music theory/notation.

4. How powerful are the following factors in determining success in music?
   (These do NOT need to be rank-ordered.)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-Most powerful</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7-Least powerful</th>
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<tr>
<td>Student home background.</td>
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<td>Student interest.</td>
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<td>Student knowledge about music.</td>
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<td>Student talent.</td>
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<td>Teacher attention to student interests/abilities.</td>
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<td>Teacher enthusiasm.</td>
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<td>Teacher use of effective teaching methods.</td>
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</table>

5. Some children just naturally have a mind for music, and some children don't.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Undecided
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree

6. Students should learn music by rote BEFORE learning to read music.
   - Strongly Agree
   - Agree
   - Undecided
   - Disagree
   - Strongly Disagree
7. The ultimate goal in a music class is to prepare a polished performance of a piece of music.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |

8. All children can learn music.

| Strongly Agree | Agree | Undecided | Disagree | Strongly Disagree |
### 7. Closing Information

1. Why did you become a music teacher?

2. Please describe how you view your role in the music classroom.

3. What is your goal for your classroom? (How do you know when you are successful?)

4. What factors influence the planning of your lessons? (What do you consider when deciding what and how to teach?)

5. What do you want students to get out of your class? (What do you want students to take with them when they leave your classroom?)

6. The researcher may want to contact you for a brief follow-up. Do you give consent to be contacted?

   - Yes, you may contact me again.
   - No, please do not contact me again.
Appendix B: Interview Protocol

1. Please tell me a little about yourself.
   How long have you been teaching?
   How long have you been in your current job?
   Have you always taught [band, choir, orchestra, general music]?

2. Why did you become a music teacher?
   Did anything from your own school music experience inspire you?

3. Describe what one of your typical class periods looks like.
   How is time broken down? What is the sequence or routine?
   How much time is spent on that?
   What are students doing? What are you doing?
   How often does that happen?

4. What are your priorities for your classroom? (to get at subject vs. student centered)

5. How do you go about deciding what you will teach on any given day?
   What influences your repertoire choice?
   What drives your day-to-day planning?
   What pressures you to get things done?

6. What is your ultimate goal in teaching music?
   Why do you do what you do?
   What do you hope students take with them when they leave your classroom?
   What should students know or be able to do when they leave your program?
7. What is your opinion of the National Standards for Music Education?
   Are they important? Why or why not?
   What National Standards do you cover the most?
      Why? What factors influence?
   What National Standards do you cover the least?
      Why? What factors influence?

8. What does it mean to be musical?
   What does being musical involve?
   When one is musical, what can they do?
   Can anyone be musical?

9. What does it mean to be a musician?
   What can a musician do?
   Can anyone be a musician?
   What accounts for the differences between good/poor musicians?

10. How would you define musicianship?
    How does one develop musicianship?

11. How would you define music comprehension?
    What does music comprehension involve?
    Is it written? Aural? Creative?

12. How would you define music literacy?
    If a person is musically literate, what can he do?

13. Music educators often debate the importance of _____. Where do you stand on this?
14. Why is music education important?

What purpose does music education serve?

What does music do for us?

What function does music serve in schools?

What would be missing from students lives if they had no music education?
Appendix C: Approval to Conduct Research

Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board (IRB) • 540 East Liberty Street, Suite 202, Ann Arbor, MI 48104-2210 • phone (734) 936-0933 • fax (734) 998-9171 • irbhssbs@umich.edu

To: Mrs. Heather Shouldice
From: James Colleen Sayer Seifert
Cc: Colleen Heather Conway Shouldice

Subject: Initial Study Approval for [HUM00020526]

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:
Study Title: An Investigation of K-12 Music Teacher Beliefs and their Relationship to Teaching Practice
Full Study Title (if applicable):
Study eResearch ID: HUM00020526
Date of this Notification from IRB: 5/29/2008
Initial IRB Approval Date: 5/23/2008
Expiration Date: Approval for this expires at 11:59 p.m. on 5/22/2009
UM Federalwide Assurance (FWA): FWA00004969 expiring on 5/10/2009
OHRP IRB Registration Number(s): IRB00000246

NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL AND CONDITIONS:
The IRB Behavioral Sciences has reviewed and approved the study referenced above. The IRB determined that the proposed research conforms with applicable guidelines, State and federal regulations, and the University of Michigan's Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). You must conduct this study in accordance with the description and information provided in the approved application and associated documents.

APPROVAL PERIOD AND EXPIRATION:
The approval period for this study is listed above. Please note the expiration date. If the approval lapses, you may not conduct work on this study until appropriate approval has been re-established, except as necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research subjects. Should the latter occur, you must notify the IRB Office as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INVESTIGATORS

APPROVED STUDY DOCUMENTS:
You must use any date-stamped versions of recruitment materials and informed consent
documents available in the eResearch workspace (referenced above). Date-stamped materials are available in the “Currently Approved Documents” section on the “Documents” tab.

RENEWAL/TERMINATION:
At least two months prior to the expiration date, you should submit a continuing review application either to renew or terminate the study. Failure to allow sufficient time for IRB review may result in a lapse of approval that may also affect any funding associated with the study.

AMENDMENTS:
All proposed changes to the study (e.g., personnel, procedures, or documents), must be approved in advance by the IRB through the amendment process, except as necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research subjects. Should the latter occur, you must notify the IRB Office as soon as possible.

AEs/ORIOs:
You must inform the IRB of all unanticipated events, adverse events (AEs), and other reportable information and occurrences (ORIOs). These include but are not limited to events and/or information that may have physical, psychological, social, legal, or economic impact on the research subjects or other.

Investigators and research staff are responsible for reporting information concerning the approved research to the IRB in a timely fashion, understanding and adhering to the reporting guidance (http://www.med.umich.edu/irbmed/ae_orio/index.htm), and not implementing any changes to the research without IRB approval of the change via an amendment submission. When changes are necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject, implement the change and report via an ORIO and/or amendment submission within 7 days after the action is taken. This includes all information with the potential to impact the risk or benefit assessments of the research.

SUBMITTING VIA eRESEARCH:
You can access the online forms for continuing review, amendments, and AEs/ORIOs in the eResearch workspace for this approved study (referenced above).

MORE INFORMATION:
You can find additional information about UM’s Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) in the Operations Manual and other documents available at: www.research.umich.edu/hrppp.

James Sayer
Co-chair, IRB Behavioral Sciences
Colleen Seifert
Co-chair, IRB Behavioral Sciences
To: Mrs. Heather Shouldice

From: James Colleen Sayer Seifert

Cc: Colleen Heather Conway Shouldice

Subject: Scheduled Continuing Review [CR00010312] Approved for [HUM00020526]--Two Year Approval

SUBMISSION INFORMATION:
Study Title: An Investigation of K-12 Music Teacher Beliefs and their Relationship to Teaching Practice
Full Study Title (if applicable):
Study eResearch ID: HUM00020526
SCR eResearch ID: CR00010312
SCR Title: HUM00020526_Continuing Review - Sun Feb 22 Investigation of K-12 Music Teacher Beliefs...
Date of this Notification from IRB: 2/26/2009
Date Approval for this SCR: 2/26/2009
Expiration Date: Approval for this expires at 11:59 p.m. on 2/25/2011
UM Federalwide Assurance:FWA00004969 expiring on 4/18/2011
OHRP IRB Registration Number(s): IRB00000246

NOTICE OF IRB APPROVAL AND CONDITIONS:
The IRB Behavioral Sciences has reviewed and approved the scheduled continuing review (SCR) submitted for the study referenced above. The IRB determined that the proposed research continues to conform with applicable guidelines, State and federal regulations, and the University of Michigan's Federalwide Assurance (FWA) with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). You must conduct this study in accordance with the description and information provided in the approved application and associated documents.

APPROVAL PERIOD AND EXPIRATION DATE:
The updated approval period for this study is listed above. Note that this study has been granted a two year approval period as the research poses no more than minimal risk to subjects and there is no federal funding associated with this research effort. If your funding source should change to include federal funding, please notify the IRB. Federally funded research must follow federal regulations, one of which is an approval period not to exceed one year. Please note the expiration date. If the approval lapses, you may not conduct work on this study until appropriate approval has been re-established, except as necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research subjects or others. Should the latter occur, you must notify the IRB Office as soon as possible.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR INVESTIGATORS
APPROVED STUDY DOCUMENTS:
You must use any date-stamped versions of recruitment materials and informed consent documents available in the eResearch workspace (referenced above). Date-stamped materials are available in the “Currently Approved Documents” section on the “Documents” tab.

In accordance with 45 CFR 46.111 and IRB practice, consent document(s) and process are considered as part of Continuing Review to ensure accuracy and completeness. The dates on the consent documents have been updated to reflect the date of Continuing Review approval.

RENEWAL/TERMINATION:
At least two months prior to the expiration date, you should submit a continuing review application either to renew or terminate the study. Failure to allow sufficient time for IRB review may result in a lapse of approval that may also affect any funding associated with the study.

AMENDMENTS:
All proposed changes to the study (e.g., personnel, procedures, or documents), must be approved in advance by the IRB through the amendment process, except as necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to research subjects or others. Should the latter occur, you must notify the IRB Office as soon as possible.

AEs/ORIOs:
You must continue to inform the IRB of all unanticipated events, adverse events (AEs), and other reportable information and occurrences (ORIOs). These include but are not limited to events and/or information that may have physical, psychological, social, legal, or economic impact on the research subjects or others.

Investigators and research staff are responsible for reporting information concerning the approved research to the IRB in a timely fashion, understanding and adhering to the reporting guidance (http://www.med.umich.edu/irbmed/ae_orio/index.htm), and not implementing any changes to the research without IRB approval of the change via an amendment submission. When changes are necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject, implement the change and report via an ORIO and/or amendment submission within 7 days after the action is taken. This includes all information with the potential to impact the risk or benefit assessments of the research.

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MORE INFORMATION:
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James Sayer
Co-chair, IRB Behavioral Sciences

Colleen Seifert
Co-chair, IRB Behavioral Sciences
Appendix D: Chart of Interview Codes

• Motivation for teaching
• Past teachers (influence of)
• Performance experience (of teacher)
• Schema for teaching
• Change (in self)
• Improvement (self)
• Like kids

• Definition of musician
• Definition of musical
• Definition of musicianship
• Talent
• Literacy and comprehension
• Reading

• Serious/push
• Participation (in program)
• Routine
• Standards
• Accountability
• Grades
• Other junk/non-musical part of job
• Pressure/busy

• Music
• Ego/competition
• Student needs
• Engagement
• Learning (process)
• Independence
• Performance

• Goals for program
• Purpose of music education

• Reflection (lack of)
• Contradiction