Factors Influencing the Teaching of Instrumental Music in Rural Ohio School Districts

DISSERTATION

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By

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate factors involved in and influencing the teaching of instrumental music in rural school districts in Ohio. Five overarching research questions guided the study: 1) what do instrumental music teachers cite as factors that influenced their choice to teach in a rural setting, 2) do teachers report that their undergraduate teacher licensure programs prepared them to teach in a rural school environment, 3) how do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices, 4) what are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts, and 5) what are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts? The study was broken into two phases: Phase I consisted of interviews of teachers who were teaching or had taught instrumental music in rural school districts; Phase II consisted of a grounded survey, based on themes derived from Phase I analysis, that was sent to a random sample of Ohio instrumental music teachers. Results indicated that teachers with personal backgrounds in rural schools were more likely to desire to teach and obtain employment in rural school districts. Also, teachers who moved out of rural school districts altogether were more likely to move to suburban districts rather than urban districts. Respondents who taught in rural districts reported they remained in their first rural school teaching position for
three to ten years. No significant difference was found between teachers with and without rural teaching experience in their opinions of teacher licensure preparation as pertained to rural school instrumental music issues. Phase I participants and Phase II respondents agreed that teachers need to be versatile in rural districts, as a portion reported having their job descriptions modified after beginning employment in rural schools. Participants and respondents also lamented a lack of resources affecting the teaching of instrumental music in rural school districts.
This document is dedicated to Thomas R. and Janis M. Hicks.
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Chapter 1: Introduction

It has long been recognized that a school’s setting directly impacts educational efforts. Whether the setting is urban, suburban, or rural, a school’s success largely depends on teachers understanding and negotiating the juncture of setting on the teacher-student-parent relationship. Each educational setting is unique. To be sure, even within the commonly employed global definitions of urban, suburban, and rural, subtle distinctions exist that teachers must consider when focusing educational efforts. Researchers, too, must be cognizant of these distinctions when designing studies that hope to generalize to various school situations. Understanding this, much educational research has considered the idea of place as connected to educational efforts.

In recent years, urban teaching has been a popular area for educational research. Issues in this area have included student achievement, student transience/mobility, graduation rates, attendance, school structure/facilities, and student-peer relationships. These same topics in rural education, which have not received the same widespread attention by researchers, are just as vital to well-rounded educational investigation as their urban counterparts. This paucity of research in rural education does not take into account the 23.2% of children in United States, who obtain their K-12 education in rural school districts (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010305/tables/table_06.asp). When this
number is combined with the 12.7% of students who attend school in districts designated as “towns,” according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES), the total population of students attending school in districts other than those classified as suburban or urban rises to over 35% of our nation’s school-age children (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010305/tables/table_06.asp). In 2006, almost 10 million students attended over 26,000 rural schools in communities of less than 2,500 residents (Johnson & Strange, 2007). With the number of students who are educated in rural districts, it is appropriate that educational researchers examine in detail the issues facing these students and their respective school districts. Obviously, investigation into this area would be welcomed by teachers and teacher educators charged with working with students attending rural schools or the teachers who teach them.

Some facets of rural education are beginning to be examined. Recent investigations specific to rural districts have considered the issue of teaching multiple grade levels (Barley, 2009; Barley & Brigham, 2008), planning to teach an array of classes (Barley, 2009; Barrow & Burchett, 2005), and teacher retention in difficult-to-fill positions (Haar, 2007; Huysman, 2008; Lowe, 2006; Monk, 2007). Many of these studies focus on providing environments in which teachers desire to teach (i.e., support networks and appreciation); others on preparing teachers for the varied teaching assignments in these unique school environments (i.e., teaching multiple grade levels or multiple classes require separation preparation). While these findings have begun to inform our understanding of some of the issues facing rural school education, the amount
of research in this area continues to pale in comparison to other areas (e.g., urban education, English as second language, utilizing technology in the classroom).

One factor that may contribute to the lack of research in rural education is that there is no standard used when classifying what constitutes a rural area. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), suggests a formula to decide what rural is for its own agency’s measurement purposes. Using an urban-centric measurement based on densely settled core populations, the organization began to utilize geospatial elements, or more specifically, the distance of populations from urban areas, as a method to define urban, suburban, town, and rural school districts rather than through population only (http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/Rural_Locales.asp). For the purposes of this study, teachers from schools defined as rural and town were selected as possible participants for Phase I. For Phase II, it was anticipated that teachers from schools with rural and town designations would be the majority of the survey respondents. These geospatial elements may influence area residents in ways very different than when only population density is considered. Based on the NCES definition, three more precise rural classifications emerged as a result of incorporating these geospatial elements: rural/fringe (less than or equal to five miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to two and a half miles from an urban cluster), rural/distant (more than five miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than two and a half miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster), and rural/remote (more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10
miles from an urban cluster).\(^1\) For example, it is understood that a small bedroom community within driving distance of a relatively large metropolitan area has access to a much larger assortment of resources than a small town of a similar size 100 miles from the nearest mid-size city. Understanding these differences in what is considered rural is one step in further understanding the complexities of interpreting and conducting research in rural areas.

**Background and Research in General Rural Education**

While there is an ever-growing body of research for general education, research specific to rural education appears significantly less in journals not strictly devoted to rural topics. Despite this noticeable deficiency in academic research, journals such as *Rural Educator, Journal of Research in Rural Education, Rural Sociology, Rural Special Education Quarterly, Journal of Rural Community Psychology* and organizations including the National Rural Education Association, The Rural School and Community Trust, Center for Rural Education, Foundation for Rural Education and Development, the American Education Research Association Rural Education Special Interest Group, and Rural Policy Research Institute disseminate research relevant to rural education.

The comparative paucity of research specific to rural education is curious considering that there is a relatively large aggregate of students who receive their entire K-12 education in rural school districts. Johnson and Strange, in *Why Rural Matters* (2007), analyzed rural education throughout the nation. The authors concluded that rural

\(^1\) Taken from [http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp#tables](http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/rural_locales.asp#tables)
student populations which exist in areas of the United States that are considered to be more urban, including Ohio, tend to be overlooked as an educational priority (Johnson & Strange, 2007), which, in turn, equates to sparse research devoted strictly to rural school issues as compared to other educational settings.

Extant inquiry has shown that from social issues to academic issues, the environments of rural schools are noticeably dissimilar to schools in other locales and populations (RUPRI-RPRC conference summary, 1994). The unique environment of rural schools represents yet another aspect of rural education with limited research available. Complicating matters, clear distinctions exist from one rural school district to another, making overarching assumptions extremely problematic (Anshutz, 1987; Arnold, 2005; Belsie, 2003; Eppley, 2009). One could posit that while some generalizations can be made among school types, it is difficult to explicitly identify a substantial number of similarities across the board.

One line of research pertinent to rural education considers rurality and the strong connection of social and cultural relationships as important factors to understanding place (Eppley, 2009). Teaching in a rural district necessitates an appreciation for the interwoven community relationships present in a rural locale, as understood through the idea of place-consciousness (White & Reid, 2008) and place within the community (Ilvento, 1988; Lyson, 2002). Oftentimes, schools in rural communities are the center of activities as well as of community influence and, therefore, may be the measure of a community's success. Schools are community hubs, both economically and socially, as well as major employers within small communities (Lyson, 2002; Miller, 1995). Thus,
the influence and importance of a school in a rural community reaches beyond what may be true in other school setting types.

As research lines progress from general to specific, teacher issues related to rural education come to the fore. One such area of research is focused on attracting and maintaining qualified teachers in rural school environments. Due to the place-based economy of rural communities, the act of recruiting and retaining teachers becomes more of a challenge in rural school districts (Monk, 2007). Potential deterrents for job applicants may possibly be lack of services available for students, small community size, sparse population, and aging residents. According to Monk, rural schools must find ways to offset these deterrents and emphasize attractants, such as land value and scenic tranquility often associated with these districts.

Research Specific to Rural Instrumental Music Education

The lack of research specifically geared for instrumental music education in rural districts mirrors the sparseness of inquiry dedicated to rural issues in general educational research. Although it may be argued that teaching instrumental music in schools encompasses similar issues despite educational setting (i.e., rural, suburban, urban), teaching environment has been shown to have concomitant influence on educational practice and outcomes (Bouck, 2004). Hence, it is appropriate to examine topics in instrumental music education through this lens.

Oftentimes, new instrumental music teachers may apply to and acquire jobs for which they are not truly equipped when administrators view music teaching positions
only in terms of state licensure titles. For instance, many states, such as Ohio, license music teachers for grades K-12 in all music education specialties (i.e., choral, general, and instrumental). Thus, many instrumental music teachers teaching in small, rural districts find themselves responsible for multiple grade levels and specialty areas, which are sometimes removed from their area of expertise (Ballantyne, 2007; Bauer, Forsythe, & Kinney, 2009; Rosenthal, 2009). Moreover, these same teachers are oftentimes asked to carry workloads far greater than other academic areas (Ballantyne, 2007). It appears that in many cases rural instrumental music teachers are responsible for teaching a wider variety of ensembles and/or types of music classes than instrumental teachers in other school settings. In addition to these responsibilities, rural instrumental music teachers may have travel expectations among school buildings and include in their daily schedules a substantial amount of teaching before and after the school contract day in order to accommodate all that is expected of them and the program (e.g., a diversity of ensembles, concerts, teaching private lessons, booster organization meetings, etc.).

Researchers have shown that undergraduate music majors often bring with them into a teacher education program a vision of their ideal school situation in which to teach. Kelly (2003), for instance, surveyed undergraduate music education majors in regard to their desired future teaching positions. Results showed that most of these students attended suburban public school programs during their K-12 years and desired their future jobs to be in similar situations. These desired schools also tended to be culturally similar to the students' own schools of attendance. Kelly’s results supported a previous study by Moultry (1988) of seniors in the College of Education at The Ohio State
University. Here, results showed that students in the university's teacher education program would benefit from at least one course educating students in how to work with cultural groups different from their own, illustrating the suggestion by both researchers of the strong influence of past experiences on prospective teachers' preferences of location and setting of the schools in which they ultimately gain employment.

Understanding the teaching aspirations of preservice teachers is but one component of a music education licensure program. Also important is how these licensure programs prepare preservice teachers for work in various settings. Bonney (1985) addressed teacher education programs by examining in-service teachers' perceived preparation to teach in some small school districts of Oregon and Washington (schools with less than 800 students). Bonney's teacher participants felt that their own teacher preparation programs had little correlation between their undergraduate experiences and the conditions in a small district. Hunt's (2009) research on contextual awareness in rural and urban music education, which suggests placing more emphasis by teacher educators on the perspectives of music teachers in these settings, may offer clearer connections between teacher preparation programs and rural school teaching, counteracting some of the problems faced by Bonney's (1985) participants.

Just as in general education literature, rural instrumental music education is tied to the context of place (Hunt, 2009; Kelly, 2003; Pohland, 1995). Relevant articles in practitioner journals suggest methods of instruction for use in instrumental music classrooms or provide means to cope with difficult situations within the same setting (Isbell, 2005). Having an understanding of the rural school district's locale and knowing
how to find resources for students within the corresponding music program may prove to be a key to success (Ballantyne, 2007; Isbell, 2005), and may be a factor contributing to longevity in rural school instrumental music teaching positions.

Need for the Study

Given the lack of research associated with rural instrumental music education, studies related to this topic will help to create a better understanding of the teaching expectations and responsibilities in this setting, as well as benefit the profession of music education as a whole. Not only would this information provide a more complete picture of what teaching in these settings entails, but it would also allow teacher education programs to appropriately tailor relevant instruction geared toward successful teaching in these environments. Furthermore, research in this area could also prove to be a valuable resource, not just for educators, but also for rural school systems at large, as research literature has shown that when teachers feel successful in a given teaching position, they are more likely to remain in that particular position (Malloy & Allen, 2007). When applied to an instrumental music teaching appointment, this leads to more consistency and continuity for the students, individually, and for the instrumental music program as a whole.

Researchers have shown that the first few years of teaching are critical to teacher retention (Gardner, 2010; Madsen & Hancock, 2002; Scheib, 2004). Moreover, the turnover effect that occurs as teachers move in and out of certain school districts or teaching positions can be detrimental to maintenance of consistency for the students within
instrumental music programs and respective school districts. As this consistency wanes, so does student participation and accomplishment. More information concerning rural teaching success, especially in the first few years of a teacher’s career, could assist future teachers in replicating this success, as well as inform teacher preparation programs.

**Statement of the Problem**

No extant research has sought to examine the issues impacting rural instrumental music teaching directly. Although a few studies have provided some ancillary evidence of the factors associated with success in rural teaching, preservice teachers' desire to teach in this location, and reported turnover rates of music teachers in this setting, no study was found that investigated these topics with instrumental music teachers who were currently teaching or who had once taught in rural schools. Consequently, the present investigation sought to add to the empirical-based knowledge in this field by investigating the influence of various factors on teaching instrumental music in a rural school setting. Moreover, teachers’ opinions about the preparation they received in their teacher licensure programs specific to rural education have been underinvestigated. Understanding this is crucial to the continued success of teacher licensure programs, and will provide insight into how certain aspects of the licensure program align with the reality of teaching instrumental music in the rural school setting.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate in-service instrumental music teachers' opinions and experiences regarding teaching instrumental music in rural school districts. Specifically, the study examined the issues that these teachers viewed as important and the attributes they report as necessary for instrumental music teachers to possess when teaching instrumental music in a rural school setting.

Phase I

The purpose of phase I of the study was to elicit descriptive responses through one on one interviews of teachers who were currently teaching or had taught instrumental music in rural school districts. The interviews served as a means to seek similarities and differences between teaching situations, as well as to solicit information relevant to teachers' longevity in those teaching positions or reasons cited as incentive to leave for another teaching position in a different district, particularly if the new district was suburban or urban.

School districts were chosen by their rural classification as defined by the Ohio Department of Education Typology report. Teachers from various stages in their careers (early, mid, experienced) were selected as interview participants in order to gain personal perspectives from their individual standpoints as related to career experience. After initial contact with a pool of participants, snowball sampling techniques served to augment the preliminary interview set.
Phase II

The purpose of Phase II was to expand on the findings in Phase I by distributing a grounded survey instrument to a larger population of Ohio teachers. The survey instrument included questions derived from common themes that emerged in Phase I and included items centering on teacher preparation programs, job descriptions, and factors influencing choices involved in selecting teaching positions. Both teachers with rural instrumental music teaching experience and those without were surveyed for a wider berth of inquiry in anticipation of examining the disparity among responses.

Overarching research questions guiding both phases of the study were as follows:

1. What do instrumental music educators cite as factors that influence their choice to teach in a rural setting or to leave that setting for another (i.e., suburban or urban)?
2. Do teachers report that their teacher licensure programs prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?
3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices?
4. What are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?
5. What are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts?
Definition of Terms

1. Instrumental music teacher: A full-time, licensed music teacher employed by a school district who teaches wind or percussion instruments in a school setting.

2. Rural school district: For this study, a school district designated by the National Center for Education Statistics or the Ohio Department of Education as rural. The Ohio Department of Education Typology classification for rural districts (http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=3&ContentID=12833&Content=78585) is as follows:

   **Rural/agricultural – high poverty, low median income**
   These districts are rural agricultural districts and tend to be located in the Appalachian area of Ohio. As a group they have higher-than-average poverty, the lowest average median income level, and the lowest percent of population with college degree or higher compared to all of the groups.

   **Rural/agricultural – small student population, low poverty, low to moderate median income.**
   These tend to be small, very rural districts outside of Appalachia. They have an adult population that is similar to districts in the previous group in terms of education level, but their median income level is higher and their poverty rates are much lower. The majority of Ohio rural schools fall into this category.
Rural/small town – moderate to high income

These districts tend to be small towns located in rural areas of the state outside of Appalachia. The districts tend to have median income levels similar to some suburban/urban districts but with lower rates of both college attendance and managerial/professional occupations among adults. Their poverty percentage is also below average.

Delimitations

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) classify rural districts through different methods. According to the NCES, a district is classified as rural dependent on its geographic location, focusing on urban-centric rather than metro-centric measurements. As of a 2006 revision, the NCES transferred to this urban-centric system with the intent to be more specific in terms of school district isolation, counteracting the previous metro-centric criteria which employed metro county boundaries. As a result, more school addresses are now located in town locales as opposed to suburban or urban locales. Additionally, the school address is no longer determined by the central office address but rather, the address(es) of the school(s) within the district. For example, if at least one-half of the schools are located in a town locale, then the school's address will also be located in the same town locale.

The ODE classifies school districts by demographics comparisons in order to produce stratified samples. Demographic characteristics include: average daily membership (ADM, or the number of days a student is in membership as part of a
school's student body divided by the number of days in a school year), poverty as a percentage of ADM, percentage of population in administrative or professional occupations, median income, percentage of population with a college degree or more, percentage value of agricultural property, population density, non-residential and non-agricultural valuation per student, and percentage of minority students (http://webapp2.ode.state.oh.us/similar_districts/raw_data.asp).

Because of the differing classifications, one must be aware of what taxonomy serves as the basis for measurement and discussion in particular cases when categorizing rural school districts.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Instrumental music education has long been included in rural public schools of the United States (Birge, 1937; Keene, 1982; Mark & Gary, 1992). Despite the fact that 23.2% of children in the United States obtain their K-12 education in rural school districts (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010305/tables/table_06.asp), rural education issues have, historically, not been examined in academic research to the same extent as many other educational matters (e.g., urban issues, preparing teachers for a global society, macro- and micro- level funding, student achievement). The total population of students who attend school in districts other than those classified as suburban or urban rises to over 35% of our nation's school-aged children (http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2010/2010305/tables/table_06.asp) when combined with the almost 13% of students who attend school in districts designated as “towns” by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES). This is a large population to be so neglected by researchers.

While the scope of research is limited, a number of important studies have been completed. Topics include teacher preparation (Barley & Brigham, 2008; Barker & Beckner, 1985; Ingersoll, 2005), recruitment and retention (Ingersoll, 2005; Lowe, 2006; Malloy & Allen, 2007; Monk, 2007), job satisfaction (Collins, 1999; Huysman, 2008;
Jimerson, 2003), enrollment (Bouck, 2004; Monk, 2007), and the hiring of highly qualified teachers (Eppley, 2009). Other research specific to rural districts considered teaching multiple grade levels (Barley, 2009; Barley & Brigham, 2008), planning to teach an array of classes (Barley, 2009; Barrow & Burchett, 2005), and teacher retention in difficult to fill positions (Haar, 2007; Huysman, 2008; Lowe, 2006; Monk, 2007). The present study addresses the lack of research explicitly dedicated to issues involved in teaching instrumental music education in rural school districts. The review of literature begins with a discussion of research on general issues in rural education and concludes with studies more directly pertaining to music education and instrumental music programs.

**Rural Education**

Due to the paucity of educational research in rural areas and the lack of research aimed specifically at improving rural education, it is difficult for educators to identify what needs to be done to improve K-12 education in rural school district settings (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, 2005; DeYoung, 1987; Sherwood, 2000). Methodological limitations apparent in all school settings may be exacerbated in rural schools. It is difficult to incorporate certain research techniques (e.g., randomized field trials) since locating comparison groups and control groups in those locales may pose problems for researchers (Khattri, Riley, & Kane, 1997). According to Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean (2005) challenges such as "increasingly diverse student backgrounds, learning styles, and needs" (p.1) combined with "new federal and state accountability
requirements and debates about the allocation and availability of education funding" (p.1) are compounded when a rural school's geographic isolation is factored into the equation.

**Defining rural**

Defining what rural means in regard to school district classifications is often inconsistent among researchers. Differing classifications abound, depending on which agency or author serves as the data source (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, 2005; Sherwood, 2000). In 2006, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) revised its code system for educational data collection, moving away from population size only to employ geospatial elements, or more specifically, the distance of populations from urban areas, as a method to define urban, suburban, town, and rural school districts (http://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/commissioner/remarks2006/6_12_2006.asp). Previously, classification centered on proximity to metropolitan area, whereas the new NCES system now accounts for small cities, suburbs, the lack of differentiation between rural schools located in remote areas versus those located closer to an urban core population, and the distance of towns to urban centers (for a complete directory of the updated NCES codes, please see Appendix A). Moreover, this classification modification was important because these geospatial elements may impact area residents in ways very differently than when one merely considers population density (http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/Rural_Locales.asp). For example, a small bedroom community within driving distance of a relatively large metropolitan area has access to a much larger assortment of resources than a small town of a similar size 100 miles from the nearest mid-size city. Using the 2006 NCES classification revision, almost 10 million students...
attended over 26,000 rural schools in communities of less than 2,500 residents (Johnson & Strange, 2007).

In Ohio, where the current study was conducted, the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) classifies school districts by selected demographic factors (http://education.ohio.gov/GD/Templates/Pages/ODE/ODEDetail.aspx?page=3&TopicRelationID=3&ContentID=12833&Content=78585). Demographic characteristics include: average daily membership (ADM), poverty as a percentage of ADM, percentage of population in administrative or professional occupations, median income, percentage of population with a college degree or more, percentage value of agricultural property, population density, non-residential and non-agricultural valuation per student, and percentage of minority students (http://webapp2.ode.state.oh.us/similar_districts/raw_data.asp). The focus of the Ohio school district classification falls mainly on socio-economic status as opposed to population density only.

In areas of the United States which may appear to have an urban student majority, such as Ohio, educational issues facing rural student populations may be overshadowed as a priority (Arnold, Newman, Gaddy, & Dean, 2005; Johnson & Strange, 2007; Sherwood, 2000). In Why Rural Matters (2007), Johnson & Strange analyzed rural education throughout the nation and explained how rural education problems in more urbanized states may go unnoticed, despite the fact that these urbanized states have a greater overall enrollment of rural students as compared to other states considered to be rural with less total population. These researchers found that in the United States
between the academic years 2002-2003 and 2004-2005, rural school enrollment rose whereas non-rural school enrollment fell (Johnson & Strange, 2007). As a result, while the overall enrollment of students in public schools during those years increased by 1%, of that percentage, rural enrollment grew by 15%, whereas non-rural fell by 2% (Johnson & Strange, 2007). That is, rural enrollment grew by a larger margin than did non-rural enrollment (i.e., suburban and urban). While only speculation, this may be due to the observed trend of population sprawl, as people move away from urban centers toward suburban areas and beyond in search of jobs and housing opportunities.

**School size and consolidation**

The impact of school district consolidation and reorganization on rural education at various intervals in the history of public education in the United States ultimately changed beliefs about rural schools (Bard, Gardener, & Wieland, 2006; DeYoung & Howley, 1990; Monk, 1991; Monk & Haller, 1986; Peshkin, 1982; Sher 1977; Sher 1988). As early as 1869, Massachusetts passed a bill to allow for free public transportation, providing a means for students to travel farther distances to attend school (Bard, Gardener, & Wieland, 2006). With the onset of the Industrial Revolution, schools were encouraged to follow a set mold; thus the larger, more economical, urban school emerged (Kay, Hargood, & Russell, 1982). By the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, it was suggested that a high school with no less than 100 students provided the best college preparatory experience possible (Conant, 1959). Conant, an educational researcher, asserted that "the number one problem is the elimination of the small high school by district
reorganization,” (Conant, 1959, p. 2). Consequently, a trend toward school consolidation (i.e., joining together small schools) began.

Consolidations again rose in the 1970's-1980's as the rural economic decline of the time produced further outward migration from rural areas, resulting in voluntary consolidations. This response was quite different than the theoretically based mandatory consolidations of the 1950's-1960's (Bard, Gardener, & Wieland, 2006). In reaction to the wave of school district consolidations of the 1970's-1980's emerged a "strength in smallness" approach (Nachtigal, 1982, p. 3), a position that provided momentum for community members whose children attended small, rural school districts. Proponents of the idea suggested that smaller districts provided more attention from teachers to students and offered a closer connection to the community for students, which resulted in higher percentages of students participating in extracurricular activities and academic courses (Nachtigal, 1982). As early as 1979, preceding Nachtigal's research, a case study by Skenes & Carlyle (1979) cited a successful example of a small, rural school that focused on community and parent involvement as a means of encouraging the return of college graduates to the district. The effort was successful and provided a model for additional districts. Other researchers have since investigated the lack of relevance of reform efforts intended for urban schools to rural schools (Bouck, 2004; Haas, 1991; DeYoung & Boyd, 1986). According to Bouck (2004), responses to issues facing urban and suburban schools do not necessarily transfer directly to rural schools.
Teaching in rural schools

Due to many factors, the act of recruiting and retaining teachers becomes an added challenge facing rural school districts (Crews, 2002; Lock, 2008; Monk, 2007; Mulvihill, 2007; Nichols, 2004). Teaching in a rural school district may not be the desired option for new teachers (Tompkins, 2003). Harris (2001) reported many of these new teachers would not have accepted teaching positions in rural schools had they known the financial status of the school. This research suggests the uphill battle faced by many rural school districts. Lowe (2006) suggested a variety of incentives to assist teachers both in accepting teaching positions in small, rural schools and remaining in those positions for an extended period of time. Financial incentives such as loan forgiveness and providing teacher housing top the list advocated by Lowe (2006). Additionally, building a marketing strategy consortium with other area rural schools and utilizing current teachers as recruiters may serve as "in-house" methods of recruiting. As cited by Malloy & Allen (2007), mentoring and rewarding effort (both of the teacher individually and of the faculty as a whole) as a method of shifting school district "ownership" to the teachers, strengthened teachers' self-value within the district. Thus, when teachers felt that they were valued in their positions, those teachers were more likely to remain in the district and strive for its overarching goals. For teachers, maintaining a sense of community was important in any setting, but its establishment in a small school district may be one of the most essential of all aspects central to sustaining a consistent education for students (Lowe, 2006).
Job satisfaction and motivation, further aspects related to recruitment and retention of rural teachers, have yet to gain sufficient consideration by researchers. Among the modest extant studies, Collins (1999) and Jimerson (2003) explained the difficulties faced by rural school districts, not only in recruiting teachers to their schools, but also in retaining them once they were employed. Recruitment and retention research in rural education has examined teachers who remain in a district, teachers who move within the district, and teachers who leave the district completely (Kersaint, Lewis, Potters, & Meisels, 2007). Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, and Meisels (2007) concluded in their research that attrition (i.e., those who leave) occurred more often in small schools (which may often be rural schools) than large schools, and that there were twice as many teachers who moved from one district to another district among teachers from relatively high poverty schools compared to those from low poverty schools. Thus, new teachers tended to have more influence in a higher poverty school than they would in low poverty schools due to the greater teacher turn-over rate seen in those situations. These schools often had less effective teachers in respect to teaching effectiveness due to the learning curve experienced by new teachers while they accrue teaching time in the classroom (Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007).

The qualifications of teachers hired in rural schools is another factor that has received some research attention. The renewal of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 2001 (ESEA), more commonly known as No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), severely impacted rural school districts through a variety of means (Eppley, 2009; Monk, 2007; McClure & Reeves, 2004). Not only is implementation of NCLB an
issue for rural and low income schools (Malloy & Allen, 2007), but potential job applicants applying to these schools may be deterred by the lack of services available for students, small community size, sparse population, and aging residents (Monk, 2007). As such, recruiting highly qualified teachers becomes a daunting task for any rural school administrator. Employing highly qualified teachers, an NCLB mandate, presents a dilemma for rural school districts, as "consistently, the most valuable and accessible resources, located within a rural school district are the teaching staff” (Huysman, 2008, p. 1). According to NCLB, highly qualified teachers have a bachelor’s degree, full state certification or licensure, and can prove that they know each subject taught (http://ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/hqtflexibility.html). In 2005-2006, modifications were enacted for rural teachers in eligible rural districts. If these teachers were highly qualified in one subject, they would have three years to become highly qualified in the other subjects they taught and should be provided professional development and supervision or mentoring in order to become highly qualified (http://ed.gov/nclb/methods/teachers/hqtflexibility.html). According to the U.S. Department of Education, rural teachers are often responsible for teaching in more than one academic subject. Therefore, the added flexibility in acquiring highly qualified status may assist in retaining teachers in these school districts.

In a qualitative study of rural teachers in the Pacific Northwest, Mulvihill (2007) investigated classroom teachers' career experiences, specifically why some teachers left their teaching positions after only a short period of time, whereas others remained much longer, some for the majority of their careers. Mulvihill discovered that the building
principal exerted a substantial amount of influence over a teacher's reaction to such things as isolation, administrative support, mandates and legislation, collegial support network, mentoring, teaching assignments, and love of teaching. Some administrators in Mulvihill's study purposely hired teachers into their districts with backgrounds similar to the schools to which they were applying. While this practice may seem to provide a better fit for the school, it severely reduces the number of possible candidates. Therefore, administrators struggle with how best to fill the applicant pool to ensure the best candidate for a teaching position. If the qualifications and expertise of the applicants are not compatible with the requirements of the teaching position, then their selection does not necessarily equate to a good fit.

In addition to the role principals play in hiring teachers, as Mulvihill's research found, they also are particularly important in retaining qualified and experienced teachers. Haar (2007) also suggested that principals are key to many factors. Through "pay[ing] attention to teachers' needs, to establishing a culture of trust and support, and providing teachers the opportunity to grow" (p. 34), a sense of community within a school district is built. In other words, when teachers are appreciated, challenged, and connected to the school and students, they may be more likely to remain in a rural teaching position, even when they originally intended to leave for a larger district.

Evidence does suggest that a teacher's background influences where he/she aspires to teach (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005). Gilbert (1995) found that, while willing, teachers with more rural backgrounds did not necessarily thrive in urban classrooms. Gilbert suggested that teacher education programs include an urban teaching
endorsement, providing all prospective teachers direct experience teaching in an urban setting. This recommendation, however, only goes one way. Until recently researchers and teacher educators have not deemed it necessary to prepare students for rural settings (Barker & Beckner, 1987; Barley, 2009; Jones, 1987). According to Jimerson (2005), because there is such a large segment of the population in rural communities, how their K-12 students are educated matters. In short, research has only begun to focus on the characteristics of teaching in rural settings as compared to urban or suburban settings.

Resources

Not surprisingly, fiscal disparities among different types of school districts are prevalent. Fiscal resources impact rural schools in a variety of ways. Socio-economic status (SES), community economics, and distribution of revenue are educational issues pertinent to rural education. According to Johnson and Strange (2007, p. 7), "socioeconomic challenges present[s] the most persistent threats to high levels of student achievement." Although there is substantial research on the effect of SES on student achievement, much of this research is directed towards urban school districts (Caldas & Bankston, 1997; Chen & Weikart, 2008; Ingersoll, Scamman, & Eckerling, 1989). While this research is both necessary and important, rural school districts may suffer from the same SES issues as urban school districts, including low incomes, unemployment, single parent families, and transience (Alspaugh, 1992; Grey, 1997). Furthermore, the income status of adults within a given community and the readiness for school of the children within that community are impacted directly by the specific community's economic health and the educational level acquired by its adults (Alspaugh, 1992). Therefore,
"rural schools cannot be considered akin to suburban schools" (Bouck, 2004, p. 38), as a school's location directly impacts educational factors and opportunities (Jimerson, 2003). According to Jimerson (2005), the remoteness of some rural schools severely hinders professional development of its teachers, and contributes to the impact of a) a declining population or b) a rapidly rising ethnic population. Both of these factors may influence the financial conditions of communities.

Financial issues in regard to school district size and student achievement have been investigated by a handful of researchers. Howley (1996) purported that small school districts held benefits for educating lower SES students, while larger districts were better fitted for educating higher SES students. In contrast, Diaz (2008) concluded that there was no significant correlation between student achievement and district enrollment. However, a district's SES was a chief predictor of student performance on math and reading tests for 4th and 7th grade students in the state of Washington for schools with enrollments of 500-2,000 students. Such contradicting results clearly suggest a great need for future investigation.

Ilvento (1990) purported that rural schools play the role of economic and social hubs within the community as schools are often their major employers. As a result, communities that have lost their schools, as occurs when schools consolidate, are often negatively affected by tax base changes (Haas, 1990; Lyson, 2002). Rural communities are in transition, trying to negotiate what some researchers have called their newly acquired "normal" (Salamon & Davie-Brown, 1990; Reid, 1990). In other words,
without a school in the community, there also exists lower economic potential in that community.

Ohio ranks among the top quarter of states in the United States with the most unbalanced school revenue among school districts, as not all districts receive comparable levels of operating revenue (Johnson & Strange, 2007). Resources invested in schools vary so widely from one district to another that a case was successfully brought and in 1997 the Ohio Supreme Court declared the state education finance system to be unconstitutional (Hunter, 2000). Additional expenditures for bussing and overall maintenance costs, no matter what the enrollment, are also issues that affect resource equity (Beeson & Strange, 2001; Chambers, 2004). A relatively recent, little-researched transformation affecting rural schools' resources may be the additional assistance programs necessary to prepare the influx of minority students for school (Jimerson, 2005). Johnson and Strange in Why Rural Matters (2007) reported a 99% increase of rural minority students in the state of Ohio during the past 10 years, as compared to the nation's 54.9% increase. Such a large fluctuation is bound to present issues never before faced by some communities and their respective schools.

**Place**

One aspect of hiring teachers that may, initially, not seem directly related to securing highly qualified teachers is having a connection to and an understanding of the place in which one is teaching. The link between social and cultural relationships becomes important to understanding place (Gruenewald, 2003). Moreover, successful teaching in a rural district, which may lead to retention, includes appreciating how to
approach and teach educational materials differently to rural students compared with teaching in urban or suburban settings (Eppley, 2009). A teacher guided by an awareness of the interwoven community relationships present in the rural locale will gain entry into the school population much more handily than one who disregards it (Eppley, 2009). Not only is there a connection of the people to each other and people to the school, there is also an association to place, or a personal identifier (Eppley, 2009). Educators teaching in rural settings must recognize that the attachment to place by an area's residents will both "inhibit and enable" (Kelly, 2009, p. 3) students and teachers. In other words, teaching in relation to rather than apart from the community in which one is employed will reap greater rewards for students, teachers, and communities, not only in student achievement but also through teachers' assumed role(s) and stature within the community.

Place-consciousness (White & Reid, 2008) and place within the community (Ilvento, 1990; Lyson, 2002) not only influence recruiting and retention of teachers, but further contribute to an educator's more complete awareness of what rural education involves. According to White and Reid (2008), schools in rural communities tend to be the center of activities, as well as of community influence. Therefore, schools are often the measure of a specific community's perceived success. These authors argued that there is a need for a better awareness in teacher education programs of the significance to understanding place within a community.

With respect to place, geographic isolation further contributes to some rural schools' difficulties in retaining teachers. Rural schools located farther from populated
areas traditionally have the most difficulty initially attracting teachers, whereas rural schools located near suburban areas, while more successful in recruiting employees, struggle to retain those teachers once they have gained "sufficient" teaching know-how (McLure & Reeves, 2004). Researchers hypothesize that often, new teachers view the rural schools near populated areas as a promising place to begin a career, but with the intention of leaving for a higher paying position at the nearby suburban school with commensurate experience (McLure & Reeves, 2004).

The unique environment of rural schools, including the limited resources of schools and their respective communities (Anshutz, 1987; Arnold, 2005; Belsie, 2003; Haas, 1990), presents another aspect of rural education with room for additional research. From social issues to academic issues, the environments of rural schools are distinctly different from schools in other locales and populations (RUPRI-RPRC conference summary, p.4). "Marked diversity" (Eppley, 2009, p.8) exists from not only rural to suburban or urban schools, but also from one rural school district to another. While some generalizations can be made among schools, it is difficult to explicitly identify a substantial number of similarities. As a result, overarching solutions are not always the best answer when applied to any given rural school district.

**Community changes**

Some ethnographers suggest that rural education is characterized by a history of loss. As early as 1940, Sanford examined the outward population migration from a rural Alabama community. He found that town residents who desired a higher education left the community, and, for the most part never returned. Sanford's hypothesis, then, was
that with each subsequent generation, the occupational level of the town would gradually lower. In his view, "the burden of educating the child falls on the community which receives little tangible return" (1940, p. 765); the town's largest export became its successful students. Decades later, Carr and Kefalas' (2009) ethnography of a rural Iowa town again highlighted the phenomenon. The researchers puzzled over why the town's educators did not seem concerned that their "best and brightest" high school students were encouraged to move away in order to attend college and find work elsewhere, most likely to return only as a visitor (Carr & Kefalas, 2009). The town's educators explained that they viewed it as their job to send those students off into the world, which left behind the average students to maintain the community. Corbett's (2009) inquiry of a small town in Newfoundland, which also suffered from outward migration of its young people, mirrored much of the same community consequences as did the Carr and Kefalas ethnography. Further connecting the two ethnographies, Kelly summarized the findings of Carr and Kefalas and Corbett by articulating that, "this loss [to the town] is often not fully articulated, but it is deep and abiding" (2009, p.1). Additionally, Kelly (2009) suggested that this type of loss also provided the opportunity for community growth through its reaction to change. Perhaps, then, the manner in which a community reacts to transformation such as this could determine its future.

A few researchers have proposed solutions to problems faced by rural school districts. One response to teacher shortages was the "grow your own teachers" strategy (Barley, 2008; Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Wyckoff, 2005; Collins, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Huysman, 2008; Johnson & Strange, 2007; Lemke, 1994; Lowe, 2006; Monk,
2007; Mulvihill, 2007). In this approach, potential teachers (including substitute teachers, paraprofessionals, and secretaries), from areas with difficult to staff schools were encouraged by administrators, colleges, and school employee peers to enroll in teacher certification programs, resulting in partnerships with universities and colleges. The premise was to provide these "hard to fill schools" with potential teachers who were more likely to stay in the community, as they are already connected to it. In other words, these teachers better understand a community's idiosyncrasies, allowing for clearer, more relevant instruction for students in the school. Future research might focus on the success of these "grow your own teachers" strategy, analyzing how small thriving communities maintain their status, and integrating better efforts to recruit and retain teachers in rural school districts (e.g., better pay, signing bonuses, and other incentives).

**Rural Instrumental Music Education**

The lack of research specifically dedicated to instrumental music education in rural school districts parallels the paucity of inquiry into rural issues in general educational research. As previously described, reform and other problem-solving measures meant for urban districts do not always successfully transfer to rural districts (Bouck, 2004; DeYoung, & Boyd, 1986; Haas, 1991). The lack of transfer to rural schools of suburban or urban research in general education holds true for music education as well.

Teacher preparation is a particularly critical issue. Kelly (2003) surveyed undergraduate music education majors in regard to their desired future teaching position.
Results showed that most of these students attended suburban programs during their public school K-12 years and desired their future jobs to be in similar suburban programs (i.e., an instrumental music program consisting of more than 120 students in a large, suburban school district) (Kelly, 2003). The desired schools tended to be culturally similar to the students' own schools of attendance, supporting a general education study by Moultry (1988) of seniors in the College of Education at The Ohio State University. Based on his results, Moultry suggested that students in the university's teacher education program would benefit from at least one course in how to teach cultural groups different from their own. Both Moultry's (1988) and Kelly's (2003) studies suggested the strong influence of a teacher's beliefs on where that particular teacher chooses to teach.

Bonney (1985) observed the conditions of music education in schools with less than 800 students by focusing on teachers in small schools in the Pacific Northwest. According to Bonney, teachers felt that in their own teacher preparation program, there was little relationship between their undergraduate experiences and the conditions in a small school district. For many rural districts, this lack of connection resulted in a continual cycling of instrumental music teachers through their schools from year to year, affecting the continuity of the instrumental music program (Bonney, 1985). These teacher participants cited advantages to teaching in a small, rural district (e.g., access to administrators, influence in the community, wider student participation opportunities, and contact with students) but went further to assert that their teacher preparatory programs' emphasis on performing did little to prepare them for the circumstances they would
encounter in a small, rural school district, different than what participants indicated in the pilot study (Bonney, 1985).

Just as in general education literature, rural instrumental music education is tied to the context of place (Pohland, 1995). According to Pohland, establishing a rapport for the purpose of better instruction affords improved learning conditions for the students. Practical suggestions exist offering methods of instruction for use in the instrumental music classroom and means of coping with difficult situations within these same classrooms (Hart, 2003; Isbell, 2005; Smar, 2002; Spring, 2007; Wilcox, 2005). Isbell (2005) recommended several keys to success for instrumental music teachers in rural school districts, one being an understanding of the locale and how to locate resources for students within a music program. Likewise, Davis and Stevens (1994) explained how a plan utilized in a Texas district provided solutions for problems faced by one specific instrumental music program in a small, rural school district, allowing for growth of the program, and ultimately, its success in the community. By first addressing the needs of the district (e.g., expand offerings of the district, slowly add more music faculty), the school's one music teacher and curriculum director wrote a plan to gradually increase music offerings in lower elementary grades, begin band students earlier, and broaden music course possibilities for the high school. Funds were re-directed from physical education positions that were reassessed as not necessary. Currently this district has completed the first stage (i.e., increasing music classes offerings in the elementary grades) while the school board considers stage two, or beginning band in an earlier grade level.
Maltas (2004) explored the socialization process of rural music teachers, asserting that it was extremely important for teachers to understand the community's fundamental culture and how one fits into that culture. Furthermore, the rural music teachers she interviewed "perceive[d] their jobs in a rural community as less prestigious than a job located in an urban or suburban school district" (2004, p. 5). Remaining in or leaving a music teaching position, moreover, was seen as the result of a number of factors, not just as decisions made by the teachers themselves (Maltas, 2004), which supported Goodstein's (1987) study of instrumental music teachers' perceptions of success.

Conflicts occurred when there was a disparity between what the teacher participants maintained as an "institutional view of what a teacher should do" (p. 143) and what they could actually accomplish with the numbers of students in and level of resources available to their music programs. Additionally, when these teacher participants took their student ensembles to perform at music contests and festivals, the inconsistencies of adjudicators exacerbated the existing disconnect between what the teachers had been taught to do and what they could do in reality with their students and resources at hand (Maltas, 2004).

An earlier study by Wohlfeil (1986) investigated the characteristics of music teachers who were considered to be successful in three North Dakota rural public schools. He found that all of his teacher participants themselves grew up in small, rural districts. Therefore, they were already familiar with the responsibilities of those types of teaching positions prior to obtaining their teaching positions. According to Wohlfeil, this familiarity of context contributed to the teachers' success, as determined by length of time
employed by the district and community response to the program and teacher (Wohlfeil, 1986).

Applying Mulvihill’s (2007) research in the general education classroom to string music educators, Russell (2007) investigated stayers, movers, and leavers (i.e., those who remain, those who move within the district, and those who leave the district). While his dissertation was not focused strictly on rural teacher migration, his study illuminated existing commonalities in regard to contributing factors. From his randomly selected pool of K-12 string teachers, over 80% of the survey respondents indicated that they planned to continue teaching in their current teaching position for one year. The rest of the participants suggested they were planning to migrate to another teaching position or leave the field of teaching completely. Retirement, work culture, subject importance, student characteristics, position characteristics, and teacher socio-economic background lead the reasons given by these teachers for leaving their teaching positions (Russell, 2007), again supporting Mulvihill (2007). Other researchers who have focused on teacher migration include Madsen and Hancock (2002), Scheib, (2004), Hancock (2008), and Gardner (2010). Addressing some of the factors that affect teacher migration in any setting may proffer solutions to recruitment and retention issues in rural settings specifically. Emphasizing teacher models may serve as a means to do so.

Individual teachers served as exemplars, both for other teachers in similar teaching situations and, at times, as a leader within a community. Through an interview, Wilcox (2005) illustrated how one music teacher in Nebraska managed his position within the rural public school as the only music instructor, teaching both instrumental
music and vocal/general music for the entire school grades K-12. Support, full days, and the suggestion that success builds on success appeared as themes throughout Wilcox's interview of the Nebraska teacher. Similarly, Pohland (1995) examined the community role of instrumental music teachers in rural Minnesota high schools. His research was based on the premise that often band directors in rural settings are also expected to fill the role of community leader. Through a research questionnaire, Pohland discovered that principals, school board members, and band directors all were significantly different in how they viewed the role of the band director within a community. Moreover, band directors with less experience scored the highest in predisposition to leave a rural instrumental teaching position (Pohland, 1995). Additionally, in comparable Minnesota school district settings, topics such as role ambiguity and conflict, inclination to leave these positions, and overall community satisfaction served as commonalities from one instrumental music teacher to another (Pohland, 1995).

According to Goodstein (1987), the perceived success of an instrumental music teacher was related to the size of the school and overall SES of the school district. For example, the closer a school was located to an urban center (i.e., a larger school district), the higher band directors scored themselves on a self-evaluative questionnaire rating their own success. Age of the director was also a factor in evaluation of "success," correlating not only with size of the band program but also numbers of students involved in solo/small ensemble contests/festivals and prosperity of a given school district (Goodstein, 1987). In general, the more experienced the director, the larger the enrollment of the band program. As rural school districts often have smaller enrollments
and a lower SES, respondents from these districts rated themselves less "successful" overall (Goodstein, 1987). The self-evaluation of these band directors may present useful insight as to how these teachers view their positions.

This review of literature highlighted many aspects related to rural education in general and more specifically, rural music education. Issues impacting rural education have only recently gained the attention of educational researchers, which is remarkable due to the large number of students educated in schools considered to be rural. Teacher recruitment and retention, resources available, and having an understanding of the interconnectedness of a place and its people are all topics lately addressed by researchers. Little investigation exists, however, regarding the association of these aspects to rural instrumental music education, opening an array of research possibilities.
Chapter 3: Design and Method

The purpose of this study was to investigate in-service instrumental music teachers' experiences regarding teaching instrumental music in rural school districts. Through the initial use of case study inquiry in Phase I of the research study, I investigated issues involved in and influencing the act of teaching instrumental music in rural school districts. Examination of interviews and transcripts from Phase I of the study revealed instrumental music teachers' perceptions of factors involved in their teaching experiences and job longevity in their rural school instrumental music teaching positions. During Phase II, emergent themes from Phase I focused grounded survey instrument questions for a broader population of instrumental music teachers in Ohio schools, including urban, suburban and rural. The remainder of this chapter further details the method used to complete the study.

Overarching questions guiding each phase of the study were as follows:

1. What do instrumental music teachers cite as factors that influence their choice to teach in a rural setting or to leave that setting for another (i.e., suburban or urban)?
2. Do teachers report that their teacher licensure programs prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?
3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices?
4. What are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?

5. What are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts?

**Overview**

This research study was divided into two phases, employing a mixed method format of naturalistic inquiry (i.e., qualitative data), quantitative data, and statistical analysis, described by Patton in *Qualitative Research & Evaluation Methods, 3rd Edition* (2002) as methodological triangulation. IRB approval was gained under a separate protocol number for each phase of the research study. During Phase I, I conducted, transcribed, and coded all data gathered during semi-structured interviews with in-service teachers. While coding and analyzing the material, I sought constructs and themes to guide further inquiry as it pertained to teaching instrumental music in a rural school district. In Phase II, I used information garnered from the interviews in Phase I to create a grounded survey instrument, directing inquiry toward a larger sample of teachers from Ohio, who had taught or were currently teaching any grade combination of instrumental music in rural school districts. Phase II of the study required survey data analysis once the surveys were completed and returned, which allowed for further generalizability of findings.
Research Design

As previously stated, I used a mixed method design to collect data. In Phase I, I employed one-on-one, digitally recorded interviews of instrumental music teachers who currently taught or had taught in rural school districts, in order to identify themes prevalent among these instrumental music programs. While I used interviews and recorded information to make connections, all information was kept strictly confidential. Pseudonyms were used throughout coding, analyzing, and subsequent data reporting. The participants were able to, at any time, request review of the information I was collecting, or leave the study without penalty.

During Phase I analysis of transcripts, I identified patterns from each interview, then compiled these patterns and coded resultant themes. Upon transcription completion and initial interview analysis, I used member checks to ensure appropriate representation of the interview participants within the analysis and discussion. Comparison and contrast of interview responses served as an additional method of triangulation. A point of diminishing returns materialized as responses eventually began to repeat similar themes without the inclusion of new themes. For further triangulation, I employed a graduate student colleague as a research assistant to read and compare common ideas to verify emergent themes I had identified.

In Phase II, I constructed a grounded survey instrument based upon emergent themes generated from Phase I. The ensuing survey was confidential by the nature of the instrument itself, and served as a means to generalize to a larger population of Ohio teachers. Beyond the initial face and content validity established by grounding the survey
instrument in the responses from Phase I, further validity of the survey instrument was established by employing a panel of experts to review and critique survey drafts. After several revisions based upon expert comments, I piloted the study on a small group of Ohio instrumental music educators and university graduate student colleagues for further scrutiny. Survey items were amended and corrected upon review of the pilot instrument. The final version of the grounded survey instrument was distributed to a sample of 337 Ohio teachers through the use of surveygizmo (http://www.surveygizmo.com/). Data gathered from this phase were entered into SPSS v.17 where descriptive and inferential statistics were used, when appropriate, to summarize findings.

Phase I Method

Participants

I contacted potential participants about volunteering for Phase I of the study via email or phone. These participants were either teaching or had previously taught in a rural school district instrumental music teaching position. I divided the state into east and west halves to secure a wider range of school geographic locations, and I identified participants as belonging to one of three career stages: novice, mid, or veteran. Novice stage teachers were defined as those who were in their first year of teaching instrumental music, mid stage teachers were defined as having two to ten years of teaching experience, and veteran teachers were defined as having more than ten years of experience. It was my attempt to interview equal numbers of teachers from each career experience category, from each half of the state of Ohio, and representing both genders. Of the interview
participants, four were from the west half of Ohio and five from the east half. Participants from the west half of the state included two early stage teachers, one mid stage teacher, and one veteran teacher. Participants from the east half of the state included two early stage teachers, one mid stage teacher, and two veteran teachers. Four of the participants were female and five were male. All participants were volunteers and able to withdraw from the study at any time; none did.

Snowball sampling techniques were employed to identify participants for Phase I of the study. These snowball sampling techniques, a type of purposeful sampling, utilized well-situated individuals in information-rich settings to serve as illuminative cases for deeper investigation (Patton, 2002). I made initial contact with potential participants (n = 4) based on suggestions from experts in the field, who recognized these teachers as data rich sources for the study. I then contacted additional interview participants (n = 5) from other areas of Ohio, because they were suggested by original interview contacts or through conversations with other experts in the field. The snowball sampling techniques proved useful in identifying data rich sources for Phase I. In each instance, initial rapport was built with interview participants through email and phone conversations. This allowed the participants the opportunity to ask questions about my own background experiences and direction for future study regarding this topic prior to the study's formal interview.

**Interview Questions**

Application of the overarching interview questions to more real-world scenarios served as the foundation for composing interview questions. The semi-structured format
of the interview allowed all parties involved the opportunity to explore related avenues that might not have transpired through a more rigid, scripted response technique. This configuration was both more comfortable for the participants and for me, the investigator, as the participants were able to include anecdotes and other connections for which I might not have prepared questions, leading to a more natural conversation as opposed to an inflexible response format. Questions utilized in Phase I included the following:

1. In what setting(s) were your various educational experiences?
   - K-12
   - College/university field experience
   - College/university student teaching experience
   - Other public/private school teaching experience

2. What are your future teaching goals? In what type of setting/situation/placement do you see yourself in 5 years? 10 years? 15 years? Something else within the profession? Something outside of the profession?

3. Prior to and during your collegiate career, what type of setting/situation/placement was your goal in which to teach? Was that placement different as a freshman than as a senior? If so, what caused the change? How did field experience, coursework, and student teaching influence your thinking?

4. What instruction did you receive while an undergraduate music major that prepared you for teaching in a small district? To what size district was most of the preparation geared? In what size district did most of your practicum work occur?
5. How, if at all, does your relationship with your community affect what you do as a teacher? How do you see your relationship within your community (i.e., high profile, low profile)? Can you have a private social life? What do you think of this?

6. Did you seek guidance from college instructors for help in selecting teaching positions? In what ways did you receive guidance from college instructors in selecting teaching positions that fit your abilities?

7. In what ways, if any, has your teaching changed since you began teaching in a rural district?

8. What factors affect your teaching that you think might not be issues in a large, more suburban/urban setting?

9. If you could change things about your setting, what would you change?

10. For the experienced teacher: How, if at all, have the demographics of students in your program changed since you have been in your small, rural district teaching position? Have expectations (administration, community, parents, students, yours) changed during the same time span?

11. What are the overall demographics of your school? Your program?

12. Why did you take a position teaching in a rural school district? What prior ideas did you have about what it would be like to teach in a rural school district? In what ways have your prior ideas changed at all through your teaching experience?

13. What type of teacher would you recommend teaching in a rural district or in your personal teaching situation? Would they be new teachers or experienced? Would
that make a difference in the teaching situation to the students, parents, and administrators?

14. If you could go back through your decision-making process of deciding to take a job in a rural school district again, what factors would influence that decision? Would the outcome be the same or different, knowing what you know now?

15. Why did you take your current teaching position (if it is different than your rural teaching position)? In what other situations have you had experience teaching? Would you go back to any of them if possible? Why did you leave those situations?

16. What other music/musician roles do you or did you play in the rural community in which you taught (private teacher, church musician/director, lead a local group)? Were you actively recruited for those roles? Were they unofficially connected to the school position in some way? Did you expect to be called upon for these community positions?

17. Where or how does your program fit into your school's overall curriculum? Where or how does it fit into the music curriculum?

18. Are you the only music teacher in your district? If not, how many of you are there? Do you and your colleagues work closely together or keep programs separate? Is there a feeling of support and collegiality?

19. What support structures do you have professionally, personally, and in the community?

20. How are you getting your graduate schooling/continuing education credits?
21. What resources do you have for your students? Is a private lesson program available or a partnership with a university?

**Interview Method, Transcript Coding, and Data Analysis**

Interviews ranged from 25 minutes to 90 minutes in length, depending on the amount of time available by the teacher participant, and were conducted in teacher participants' band rooms, offices, or at mutually agreed upon outside locations (e.g., restaurants). All interviews were recorded on a Zoom H2 digital recorder and transcribed on a laptop computer using Audacity 1.3 Beta, a free, downloadable program that allows for adjustment of rate of speech during playback. I analyzed and coded interview recordings while the data collection was still in process, as well as after data collection concluded, as a means to guide and shape future questions, member checks, and subsequent analysis.

Data, generated from interview transcriptions, were interpreted, coded, and categorized according to emergent themes and constructs that surfaced over the course of the study. I employed interpretive and structural analyses when classifying data obtained from the various teacher participants. As is the case when utilizing emergent analysis of data, themes and their supporting patterns materialized as the study progressed, with the intent to understand relationships on their own merit, rather than a priori. Following the interview process, I then used themes obtained from the interviews to develop a grounded survey instrument intended for a target sample of instrumental music teachers within Ohio, further explained in Phase II.
The interviews in Phase I served as both an opportunity to investigate specific cases and to look for commonalities among cases. This study encompassed a multiple case method to investigate similarities and differences among experiences of rural instrumental music teachers. Case studies may be conducted for a variety of purposes, one of those purposes being "the desire to arrive at broad generalizations based on the case study evidence but without presenting any of the individual case studies separately," (Yin, 2009, p. 20). These generalizations provided impetus for the Phase II grounded survey, discussed later in this chapter.

**Trustworthiness**

As Phase I of the study was qualitative, I corroborated the data generated from the participants in order to further clarify and correctly represent the participants’ responses. By triangulating the data from the multiple interviews within the study and through corroboration with the participants themselves in the form of member checks, I was able to evaluate information to acquire a more comprehensive view of each participant's exclusive situation and verify its accuracy in representing participants’ experiences. According to Yin (2009), despite researchers' attempts to "deal with phenomenon and context,…their ability to investigate the context is extremely limited," (p. 18). Therefore, relying on member checks helped to establish greater data trustworthiness.

Trustworthiness and credibility were addressed through the multiple case structure of the interview phase, as the various interviews provided data by which I was able to develop congruent themes to contrast the idiosyncrasies of each specific school situation. Interviews were conducted until a point of diminishing returns was reached.
regarding the identified common patterns and resultant themes. Participant feedback through member checks supported interpretation of the data once completion of transcriptions and initial drafting of the results occurred. Transcriptions of each participant's interview and sections of the results, specific to the corresponding interview, were sent to each individual participant so he/she would have the opportunity to amend or further clarify his/her statements, enhancing trustworthiness of conclusions. Furthermore, extensive field notes provided a means to roughly analyze collected data. Thick descriptions of each teacher participant's experience (provided in Chapter 4) enhanced transferability among similar settings. Finally, a graduate student colleague research assistant reviewed the main emergent themes for further triangulation. Thus, peer examination of transcripts and emergent themes further enhanced credibility and dependability of results through the comparison of emergent themes.

**Phase II Method**

**Site Selection**

The target population for Phase II was Ohio instrumental music teachers who had taught or were currently teaching in K-12 school districts. Participants, who voluntarily chose to complete the emailed survey, were randomly selected from a list of Ohio schools with instrumental music programs. This list of schools was secured from the Ohio Department of Education (ODE) website (www.ode.ohio.gov) "ODE interactive: Extract Ohio Educational Information." Data were delimited through the following choices on the interactive ODE webpage:
As illustrated on the ODE website, city schools were those based in metropolitan areas, local schools were commonly smaller than city schools, and exempted villages were the smallest classification of the three. Private schools were any school classified as nonpublic. Other school choices on the ODE website not chosen for this survey were Educational Service Centers, Community School Districts (Charter or Academy Schools), Joint Vocational Schools, and Special Schools, as it was assumed that there would be few, if any, instrumental music programs in these types of schools.

**Participant Selection**

The ODE website database supplied the names of 628 schools that met the requirements for rural school classification as defined in chapter 1. From the halves used in the interviews to divide the state of Ohio, I partitioned the state into four quadrants: northwest, southwest, northeast, and southeast. Each of the school districts in Ohio was positioned within one of the four quadrants. I then calculated percentages of schools in each of the quadrants as compared to the total number of schools in the state of Ohio as indicated by the ODE list. School districts were then randomly chosen proportionally from the list of schools for each quadrant (i.e., northeast 38%, northwest 26%, southwest 25%, and southeast 11%).

In total, 480 survey addresses (northeast \( n = 181 \), northwest \( n = 128 \), southwest
$n = 119$, southeast $n = 52$) were compiled into an Excel spreadsheet through online searches of each school district in order to take into account survey invitations that might have bounced back or been undeliverable.\(^2\) If a randomly selected school did not have teacher email addresses readily available on the website, that school was eliminated and another was randomly selected from the same quadrant. Addresses were imported into the online survey program surveygizmo and subsequently emailed to instrumental music teachers around the state of Ohio. Three hundred thirty-seven surveys reached their online destination with the remaining surveys classified as undeliverable, possibly due to various schools' email screening protocol or invalid email addresses. All survey participants were volunteers to the study and able to withdraw at any time.

**Development of the Survey Instrument, Pilot, and Survey Distribution**

Items on the Phase II grounded survey instrument were derived from Phase I interviews. Both common themes as well as incongruities among Phase I teachers' experiences served as catalysts for survey questions and section headings (see Appendix B for complete survey). For example, the noteworthy emergent themes of place and time became the focus of questions in which Phase II respondents rated their value or impact. Some of the activities that interfered with instrumental music programs were not congruent among the interview participants, so the varied list was included for respondents to rate in terms of its interference with the instrumental music program. Modifications in instrumental music positions post-hire was also a pattern not initially investigated during Phase I interviews. As the interview schedule progressed, however, it

\(^2\) In order to have a confidence level of 95% and a 5% margin of error, the recommended sample size was 239 ([http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html](http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html)).
became apparent that modifications in job description appeared to be more rule than exception, warranting survey inclusion.

A panel of experts, comprised of music education professors at The Ohio State University critiqued several drafts of the initial survey instrument for clarity, form, and content, as a means of further establishing face and content validity of survey items.

After revisions, volunteers from a small pool of Ohio instrumental music teachers and university music education graduate students completed a pilot survey instrument, attending to content, length, time necessary for completion, and clarity of survey instructions. This group was chosen in order to preserve the largest number of K-12 instrumental music teacher survey participants as possible. As a result of the pilot, one question was moved from page three to page two, as it was directed to rural instrumental teachers as opposed to instrumental music teachers without rural experience. Teachers who did not have rural instrumental music teaching experience were responsible only for completing page one and page three of the survey instrument. Page two was omitted for these teachers with no rural experience through use of the "jump logic" feature of the surveygizmo program.

For all survey participants, an introductory letter was included within the body of the email, prior to the survey link, explaining the purpose of the survey and inviting instrumental music teachers both with and without rural teaching experience to complete the survey. The letter read as follows:
Dear Instrumental Music Teacher,

The following survey functions as a data-gathering instrument for my doctoral dissertation at The Ohio State University. The questions serve to gather information about your experiences teaching instrumental music, especially in rural school districts. While each teaching situation is unique, there may be challenges specific to rural districts, presenting special requirements for those circumstances. Included in the survey are questions about your current instrumental music teaching position, as well as past teaching positions in a variety of school settings. References in the survey regarding instrumental music teacher education programs refer to undergraduate music education teacher training courses and post baccalaureate licensure programs, such as methods courses and techniques courses.

The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete and your participation is voluntary. You may refuse to answer any question and may elect to withdraw from this study at any point.

As a teacher, I understand that teaching instrumental music is a time consuming endeavor and I do appreciate your responses. Thank you in advance for your thought and effort put into completing the survey instrument. I wish you continued success with the remainder of your school year.

Participants who did not complete the survey within seven days were sent an email reminder about the survey. The survey was closed after 12 days. Surveygizmo
compiled and saved all responses online, with the option of reporting a summary of collected data in a variety of forms: Excel, Word, or PDF. Of the 337 successfully sent to email addresses, 127 were completed with the given time frame and 14 were abandoned once they were started for a 37.7% response rate. The margin of error with the actual sample size of 127 was 7.77%.

All Phase II survey responses remained anonymous and were registered upon return with a specific code number only to chart the response rate. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS V.17 for Windows). Findings are reported in full in Chapter 4, followed by a discussion of the conclusions and implications for future research in Chapter 5.
Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to investigate in-service instrumental music teachers' opinions and experiences regarding teaching instrumental music in rural school districts. Specifically, the study examined the issues that these teachers viewed as important and attributes necessary for instrumental music teachers to possess when teaching instrumental music in a rural setting.

Phase I

The purpose of Phase I of the study was to elicit descriptive responses through one on one interviews of teachers who were currently teaching in or had taught instrumental music in rural school districts. The interviews served as a means to seek similarities and differences among teaching situations, as well as to solicit information relevant to teachers’ longevity in their rural instrumental music teaching positions. Teacher participants were selected from school districts defined as rural by the current Ohio Department of Education Typology report.

Teachers from various stages in their careers (early, mid, experienced) were selected as interview participants in order to gain specific personal perspectives from their individual standpoints as related to career experience. After initial contact with a pool of participants, snowball sampling techniques served to augment the preliminary interview set.
Phase II

The purpose of Phase II was to expand on the findings in Phase I by distributing a grounded survey instrument to a larger population of Ohio teachers. The survey instrument included questions derived from common themes that emerged in Phase I and included items centering on teacher preparation programs, job descriptions, and factors influencing choices involved in selecting teaching positions. Both teachers with rural instrumental music teaching experience and those without were surveyed for a wider berth of inquiry in anticipation of examining the disparity among responses.

Overarching research questions guiding both phases of the study were as follows:

1. What do instrumental music teachers cite as factors that influence their decision to teach in a rural setting or leave to teach in another setting (i.e., suburban or urban)?
2. Do teachers report that their undergraduate teacher licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?
3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their choice of future teaching locales?
4. What are common factors that instrumental music teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?
5. What are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts?
Phase I Results

Participant Profiles

All of the interview participants in this phase of the study were full-time, public school instrumental music teachers, holding a Multi-age Music teaching license in the state of Ohio. The names of participants and their respective school districts have been changed, as well as any other identifying information in order ensure their anonymity.

Brad.

Brad was in his third year of teaching instrumental music in a small, rural district within an hour's drive from a large metropolitan area. His position included teaching band in grades 5-12, general music in grades 7-8, and a high school music theory course. His own K-12 experience consisted of attending school in a large, highly-respected suburban district in Ohio, where he participated in the band program throughout middle and high school. Brad's high school director was well-known throughout the state and nation, having received high honors for his teaching. When it was time to choose a college, Brad attended a large, public university. While at this university, Brad's field experience opportunities came in the form of other large, successful, suburban school districts with large, well-established music programs. To augment his field experiences, Brad also served as the low brass instructor at another of these large, successful suburban districts. When choosing his field experience placements, Brad purposely decided to request these suburban districts, as he believed them to be quality instrumental music programs with superior mentors.
Maggie.

Maggie was in her first year of teaching instrumental music grades 5-12 and 3rd grade general music in a small, rural district. The nearest movie theatre to her school was approximately 20 miles away and the nearest shopping mall 40 miles. Maggie also grew up in a large, highly-respected suburban school district and earned her music education degree at a large, public university. Maggie completed her field experience in other large, well-respected school districts near the public university, as well as in area metropolitan city schools. During her summers, Maggie worked at several band camps around the state of Ohio. These camps were in her home school district and large suburbs of another metropolitan area of the state.

Ellen.

Ellen is in her 8th year of teaching in the same rural district in which she took her first job, located approximately 50 miles from the nearest shopping center and 30 miles from the nearest chain restaurants. Ellen taught instrumental music grades 5-12, with no general music and no choir responsibilities. Included in the position was marching band, pep band, and a percussion ensemble, to which she and her students volunteered their time. Ellen grew up in the opposite part of the state in which she taught, attending a country school with approximately 200 graduates per class. Her musical background included numerous marching band competitions and no piano experience or private instrumental lessons. Not until her senior year did Ellen decide she wanted to teach instrumental music. As a result, she played her music school audition on a student model instrument. Ellen's field experience was in a general education classroom (non-music)
urban setting. A visit or two to watch and listen to the bands in a successful larger district in the area served as her music field experience. At Ellen's request, she was placed with a successful female director an hour and a half away from her university for her student teaching experience. During her summers, Ellen also worked as an instructor at various band camps, concentrated mainly near her home area of the state.

Jane.

A veteran teacher, Jane began her teaching career in a rural school district, holding a teaching position that included instrumental music grades 5-12 and vocal music grades 9-12, with a graduating class size of 40-60 per class. This initial teaching job was in an area within an hour of two small colleges and two universities. In her second teaching position, she still taught in a rural district, but this one was somewhat larger and much closer to a large metropolitan area (i.e., approximately 25 miles). Her teaching load included instrumental music grades 9-12, assisting with instrumental music grades 6-8, team teaching 5th grade instrumental music and leading a high school music theory course. Jane grew up in a rural school in the north central part of Ohio, near a small college. Her student teaching experience was in a larger, city school district in a growing community, following her own undergraduate college experience in a large, public institution in a large, metropolitan area.

Patrick.

Patrick was in his first year of teaching public school instrumental music in a rural district, near a more populated area. He grew up in a musically talented family living in a growing suburb near a large metropolitan area. Patrick joined band in the 5th grade and
participated from junior high to high school. His route to music education took a slightly
different path than the other participants. He first attended a conservatory of music in a
large metropolitan area to earn a degree in music industry. After working for three years
in this city, in a role that included a great deal of contact with youth, Patrick decided to
gain his licensure in music education at a large public university in the same city.
Throughout his initial college career, subsequent employment, and licensure process, he
also worked at various schools' band camps, even through his first month of employment
at his first public school teaching position. In this position, Patrick was responsible for
instrumental music grades 5-12.

John.

John's musical career began in a suburb of a large metropolitan area, in a
moderately successful instrumental music program. His undergraduate experience was at
a medium-sized public institution on the other side of the state, in an area with a much
smaller population. The scope of John's field experience was limited. That aspect of his
education was bound by the time of year in which he took his teaching methods courses –
summer. These courses were also not music-specific; rather, they were geared for all
education majors, not matter in each specialty area. As a result, his contact with students
occurred in a daycare setting, with his first full field experience occurring during student
teaching, in a district on the opposite side of the county from the school that would
eventually hire him. In his second year of teaching but first at this school, John taught
last year in a charter school in a large metropolitan center, responsible for K-8 general
music in contrast to his current assignment of grades 7-12 music (instrumental and
vocal). John also had experience working at band camps in various parts of the state, with most of these schools being suburban and able to employ multiple staff members.

**Kay.**

A veteran teacher of almost 30 years, Kay began her public school teaching career as an elementary general music teacher in the northern part of Ohio. In her second year in that position, vocal music grades 6-12 was added to her load, as well as 6th grade band. Eventually, at her suggestion, multiple job positions were created, with Kay having the pick of the three possibilities. She chose to teach band in grades 5-12. Kay did not move to her second teaching position until after her 17th year of teaching in total. The second school district was a larger township school on the opposite side of a mid-sized city, complete with an assistant band director. Initially, Kay did have some similar duties (e.g., assisting with choirs), as she had when she began her teaching career. Her own K-12 public school years were spent in a school near where she earned her first teaching job.

**Peter.**

Another veteran teacher, Peter, has lived in the same house throughout his teaching career, which spans three schools, all rural districts, in the southern portion of the state. He grew up in the same area and commuted to a mid-sized public university in the same region for his undergraduate and graduate school experiences. Now at his third rural school instrumental music teaching post, Peter was in his 34th year of teaching overall, 19 of them in his most recent position. At this school, Peter was responsible for instrumental music grades 6-12 and 5th grade general music. He was the only band
director in the county, as the junior high band director position in his school was
eliminated a few years earlier. His own public schooling experience was in a district
much like where he currently teaches, though slightly larger.

Dan.

Dan was in his inaugural year as an instrumental music teacher, teaching in the
northern part of Ohio. He grew up in a suburb of a large metropolitan area and attended a
large, successful high school. Despite beginning his university career as a major in
another field, Dan changed majors during his second year at a mid-sized public
university. He also spent time during the summers working at numerous schools' band
camps in various parts of the state, both large and medium sized districts with multiple
staff members. His field experience was similar in scope to that of John's: most of the
music perspective was addressed during student teaching as opposed to smaller episodes
during the undergraduate career. In his first teaching position, Dan was responsible for
instrumental music grades 5-12, as well as two classes of 4th grade general music.

Emergent Themes from Personal Interviews

Through these interviews, four common themes emerged: place, time, support,
and character traits. While the settings were all from diverse areas of Ohio, the patterns
leading to these themes were quite similar. Teachers spoke to the importance of
understanding the community in which they were teaching, how full all of their days
were (not only weekdays, but weekends also), the value of accessing some type of
support network, and how certain character traits served them well as instrumental music
teachers in a rural school district. The following paragraphs explore more thoroughly these emergent themes.

Place

The issue of place was one of the most prominent themes present from one interview participant to another. Not only was the idea of community a contributing factor, but also were individual teachers' educational histories and experiences as related to how each participant interacted with place. For Ellen, becoming part of the community was a breakthrough from struggling to convince parents of her abilities to being accepted as a contributing member of the population. When recounting this transition, Ellen described the experience as follows:

They hated me. I was [doing] everything wrong. They had a band director here for 15 years that they worshipped…I would never do things like that [i.e., him]. And there was the fact that I wasn't Catholic. I wasn't married. I was this young woman that looked like I was still in high school, nobody really respected me…It was about my 4\textsuperscript{th} year [when she began to feel accepted]. And it really all comes down to the kids because it doesn't matter how much you try to appease the parents, they're going to listen to the kids. If you build the rapport with the students, the students are going to go home and tell good things and it's going to change the parents' minds.

For the veteran teachers who stayed in a position for multiple years, becoming part of the community resulted in the growth and maturation of strong friendships, many of which have lasted through moves to other school districts. Jane stated about her connection to the rural community in which she first taught, "I had a lot of parents and many of them I am still in contact with. When I go back, I'll stop and see them.” Likewise, Kay explained her connection to place even after she left her first rural school district teaching position by stating, "As a matter of fact, I'm still really good friends with some band
booster people. When I built my new home, they took me in. We vacation [together] and are still good friends." Community members may associate connection to place with longevity in the school district. Retaining teachers in a school weighs on the minds of not only the students and administrators in a rural district, but the parents of those students as well. Shared Peter:

There was a rumor that I was going to leave…they (parents) were all worried…I was up for a permanent certificate, a continuing contract. Somebody heard that they weren't going to give it to me and the question went around and came to me. I asked around and what happened was they had me on the list and took me off…[he was on the wrong list]…I had parents coming up and saying that they would go to the school board and make sure I stayed. I found out it was all a clerical error.

For the younger teachers, community manifested itself somewhat differently. While the veterans had proven themselves to the community through their longevity, the new teachers were still in their "trial phase." First year teacher Maggie described a different means by which the community was trying to help her connect. "They are very preoccupied with hooking me up with someone in the community…I feel like as of right now I am [very visible]." Another young teacher in his second year, John, remarked about his reception by the community. "I think their reaction to me…as cautiously optimistic. They've heard somebody say they'll be back next year and they are not."

Another form of place discussed by participants was where they chose to live. One of the most important decisions made by any person beginning a new job in a different locale is where to reside. For teachers, this may have unique implications, as their visibility is oftentimes much greater within a rural community than the general public's. "I like living outside of the district, as I'm sure most teachers do. I live about 20
minutes away…in more like the suburb I came from," shared Dan, in his first year of teaching in the northern part of the state. He further explained how there is not the housing available for a single person to rent within the district where he teaches.

Other teachers were influenced by significant others in their lives. "It [the school district in which Patrick teaches] was very similar to the town where my wife grew up and she does not want to go back either," remarked Patrick when asked about living in his school district. Furthermore, he pointed out:

I'm glad that I would never run into my students at the grocery store or see their parents…Plus I like having the drive to decompress and be like, alright, what do I need to do for tomorrow? I can leave work at work so when I get home I can just be at home."

However, just because he did not want to live in the school district where he taught did not mean that community members were aware of this information. Teachers and administrators commonly alluded to the possibility of finding a teaching position for Patrick's wife, who taught in a larger, suburban school closer to where they live, in hopes of providing impetus for the couple to move into and become active members of the school district and community.

Third year teacher Brad transitioned from not wanting to live in the same community in which he taught to buying a house just blocks from the school. Brad acknowledged:

I'd heard people tell me that [I didn't want to live in the same community where I taught] and that made sense to me…After a year I felt like people knew me for who I was and they weren't judging me any longer for what I said there or who said they saw me with last weekend.
When commenting on how the community now received him, Brad affirmed, "he's living here, he's paying taxes, he lives across the street from this person, that person. I think they trusted me a little more. This was somebody who had a longer term investment here. He bought a house."

The decision of where to live became life altering rather than just something quickly chosen. Of the interview participants, over half of them decided to live in the district (or town) in which they taught, one of which moved into town after a couple years of teaching in the district. The three participants who did not live in town each had similar reasons for why they chose to do so. First year teachers Patrick and Dan wanted to live somewhere that was more similar to the setting of their own childhoods; both Dan and John cited lack of living accommodations for single persons. John further clarified that he "wanted to keep a little bit of distance...keep the spheres separate to a certain degree." Prior familiarity to living in this type of setting (i.e. small, inter-connected community) seemed to play a role in comfort level with visibility and privacy. Of the nine teacher interview participants, six of them specifically commented on the interconnectedness of the community itself. "I guess I grew up in a country school, which I think was probably a benefit to me. So I knew the expectations," rationalized Jane. Expounded Patrick, "It's a town where...you can't burn any bridges. However, this year, when you're good, everyone knows it" (speaking of his success during the current school year).

Trust was a key factor in acceptance into the community. As the focus of the interview phase of this study was to consider teacher turn-over that sometimes occurs in
rural districts, trust came into play frequently. Trust between teacher and students, between teacher and students' parents, between teacher and administrators, between teacher and colleagues. From administrators blatantly asking teachers about their intentions to stay in the district to inquisitive parents, the idea of remaining in the community was reported by participants to be at the forefront of community members' minds. Explained John, "When I was hired here, one of the things that was probed around was what are your goals and plans. How long would you stay here essentially. I am the 4th band director in 4 years." Likewise, Brad revealed that once the band under his direction began "tasting success," a small contingent of parents started directly asking him how long he was planning to stay in his teaching position. According to Brad, forward-thinking parents remarked, "The last guy was here for seven years and you're here for two months and you're already taking them to state contests. What are you going to do? You know you are not going to stay here much longer, are you?" His response was, "I will stay until I just can't do it anymore myself."

Once the community accepted a teacher, an understanding between the two parties materialized. The community would trust the teacher if the teacher accepted them. This held true in other situations as well. Kay began her rural school music teaching career as a general music teacher. After her third year and ensuing "trial" period (following the addition of 6-12 choir and 6th grade band and imminent retirement of the band director), Kay's schedule became more than one person could successfully negotiate. In one night's time, she wrote curriculum for three teaching positions: elementary general music, 5-12 band, and 6-12 choir. After presenting the curriculum to
her administrators, Kay was promptly asked which one of the positions she wanted for her own. After choosing the band position, Kay also made the stipulation that the administration could not fire her after only two years, which had been the school's protocol for several past music teachers. Her goal was to see one class complete the program from 5th grade to 12th grade so that those students could finally experience some consistency. The deal held for the duration and at the conclusion of those eight years, Kay was awarded Teacher of the Year at her school. Jane shared a similar experience. After years of telling people, "I'll get these seniors through," someone finally reminded her that there would always be a senior class so deciding to stay or leave could not only be about "getting the seniors through." Seeing the 5th grade beginning band students as future seniors had become second nature to Jane.

Visibility within the community was another issue that appeared throughout interviews, both in novice and veteran teachers. For the novice teachers, the idea of teaching a majority of the school district's children, as happens when responsible for several elementary general music classes, was a novel idea. Having people recognize them as they walked down the street or in the store became the rule as opposed to the exception. For teachers who grew up in larger school districts where the school was not the center of the town's activities, this was a foreign occurrence. Lack of privacy as connected with visibility was a new experience, too. "Wherever I go, whatever I do, everybody knows. I was subbing for a handbell choir one night. The next day I had a couple kids say to me, 'I heard you were doing the handbell choir,'" explained Maggie. Further, she shared, "I can't go to the mall or to Walmart [both several miles away]
without seeing three kids." For someone who grew up in a large suburb of an even larger urban area, this visibility was unlike anything she had experienced prior.

Previous teaching experience in rural districts aided in these participants’ understandings of the relationship between school and community. Of the teacher participants, two grew up in rural school districts, took their first instrumental music teaching positions in rural schools, and remained in those teaching positions for several years. Ellen, who grew up in a school district she did not consider to be rural, nor did she have field experience in a rural district, remained in her first rural teaching position long enough for the students in the school to transition from thinking of themselves as the previous director's students to her students, thus enabling her complete entrance into the community. However, after the first two years of teaching in that district, she did, in fact, search for a new instrumental music teaching position. According to Ellen, none that she found were “upward” moves, so rather than move laterally, she chose to remain in her rural school teaching position.

Working for other instrumental music teachers and various band camps around Ohio during the summers seemed to help many of the younger teachers better understand teaching situations yet to come. "The more I worked the different programs [as a summer marching band clinician], the more I liked doing it all [or directing all aspects of a band program]," stated Maggie when asked if her "ideal" teaching situation changed as she progressed through her undergraduate music teacher education program.

Place manifested itself in understanding local culture as well. While there can be some overarching commonalities woven throughout the overall public school culture, the
ethos of each individual school district, no matter the setting, is unique. For example,
every school had its own hierarchy of respect as applied to academic courses, school
programs, and teachers. School culture in regard to instrumental music seemed to be
closely tied to the band director. "I feel like the connection with the instructor is very
important in this sort of setting. I noticed it when I was student teaching and when I
came here," clarified John. He further explained how students dropped out of a nearby
program when their instrumental music teacher left the district. As a result, the new
teacher in that position was having difficulty recruiting students to the instrumental music
program. Differing completely was John's own experience from high school when his
instrumental music teacher left the larger, suburban district. While there was a slight
shift in instrumental music program numbers, the shift was not nearly as drastic as
experienced in the rural school district.

If the director had stature and longevity in the community, there was a greater
chance that the instrumental music program would have higher status within the school
district. Three teachers interviewed in their first or second year of teaching related stories
of the long-time directors, who, from possibly decades past, brought their respective
instrumental music programs to their pinnacle. Students of these legendary teachers were
now the parents of students in the new teachers' ensembles. Consequently, anecdotes
were commonly shared with the new teachers, both to provide impetus to keep them
striving and to boast of past accomplishments. Luckily, the interviewed teachers, more
specifically the younger teachers, took in stride the "band director folklore" and in some
cases, were able to tap into the wealth of knowledge, as some of these former directors
had retired in the communities and gave assistance to the band program from time to
time. Instrumental music program student participation numbers also related to place and
community. If a history of success existed in the instrumental music program,
community members remembered that success and used it to measure current and
potential success.

On the other hand, some new teachers experienced situations without those
"legendary" former teachers, and found them challenging. For new teachers coming into
the district, these programs did not have a privileged status in the school’s or
community’s culture. This lack of status meant that these teachers and band programs
oftentimes lost in conflicts regarding time and students. As with any other program,
activity, or academic course, the teacher or sponsor with the greater seniority tended to
have the most influence within a school. From year one in the rural school district and
hence, Ellen struggled with her instrumental music schedule and various sports
schedules; meanwhile, Brad brought success of his own to the instrumental music
program and felt that he was gaining more clout within the school. School environment
appeared to play a role in how these schools responded to success. In Ellen's school,
multiple sports were consistently ranked at the top of their respective classifications. In
Brad's school the sports teams improved in the past few years, as did the instrumental
music program, which earned the respect of colleagues in the school. Unfortunately, the
school climate was not similar in Ellen's school, so the result was much different in her
district.
Part of an awareness of a school district's culture is an understanding of the hierarchy that students assign to programs as well. With a limited number of students in the student body, there are bound to be a variety of time conflicts (e.g., sports practices, music rehearsals, club meetings, and student's jobs). Many participants continued to stress the importance of learning how to share students, both within the music program and outside of the music program. A crucial point made by multiple veteran teacher interview participants was that forcing students to choose one activity over another in a setting where students are encouraged to do as much as possible was counter-productive and could result in students choosing something other than the instrumental music program – an outcome that none of the instrumental music teacher participants wanted.

The goal of expanding the instrumental music program was on everyone's mind; therefore, fighting over students' time was not a viable option in any case. "In the past," explained Peter, "I had the whole cheerleading squad in the [marching] band. When I had that, the cheerleading sponsor and I worked things out. If she needed the kids for something, she took them. If I needed them, I took them." Added Jane, "I never extended anything. No extra rehearsals, unless the kids requested it. Just to keep the peace and so the kids didn't think band took all this time. They needed to be kids." Now in her second teaching position, Jane's school hosts an open house for the 8th grade students so that they see how many activities they may participate in during their high school career; multiple activities are strongly encouraged. In contrast, new teacher Dan's students do have after school marching band rehearsals and concert band dress rehearsals. As noted in his handbook, these rehearsals are mandatory and students understand from
the beginning of the school year that they are required to attend, with grade consequences if they do not. According to Dan, the implementation has been successful.

Related to numbers in an instrumental music program was student involvement in outside musical activities to augment the program. If a culture of private lessons existed in a school district or instrumental music program or the resources were available for such a plan, it was more likely that this culture would continue, despite teacher turnover. If there was no such extant culture, then it was more of a struggle for instrumental music teachers to spark the interest in their students. More than half of the teachers interviewed explained that in their rural school districts, there was not a history of taking private instrumental music lessons or attending other related opportunities (e.g., honor bands, masterclasses, etc.) "Everything we do, we do pretty much on our own. Sadly, I wish there was more. But, the more really involves a lot of travel….Parents don't want to drive their kids that far away when they're already in so many other things," shared Ellen when asked about other opportunities for her instrumental music students. In an attempt to counteract the indifference to private lessons at his school, Brad was working on a plan to gradually introduce the idea to the community. By teaching lessons to brass students on his own time for free, any money that the parents or students could afford to pay him went directly to a scholarship fund so that other woodwind and percussion students could have the opportunity to receive financial assistance for private lessons. Money was an issue in other districts as well. Said veteran teacher Peter: "I have talked to the kids about going there [a nearby college] to get lessons, but most of them can't afford it, really. That's the main problem. They are close enough by; there is just not enough
money." However, the sheer variety of opportunity reflected the diversity of rural school districts. In the northern part of the state, Jane explained that her students were fortunate to be involved in a partnership with a local university. This agreement allowed university music education students the opportunity to observe and work with public school students for observation hours and field experiences. These university students were able to sit in with public school students, lead sectionals, and taught private lessons that allowed the public school students the opportunity to get one-on-one interaction and hear more mature musicians perform on their own instruments. In this case, location made all the difference.

Place and the socio-economic status of each individual school district seemed closely related. In this case, geography played a dominant role in the resources available to students. There was a difference between a rural school district located near a university town and a rural school district located an hour from the nearest densely populated area. Having the financial ability to take advantage of various resources involved much more than simply following through on a suggestion by the instrumental music teacher. For students living a distance away from resources, having the funds to fill up a car's gas tank was imperative, as was simply having a vehicle to get to where the resources were located. Drive times became important, as time spent in a car also meant time spent away from a possible jobs or other responsibilities held by students and/or their parents.

Having enough money to merely participate in instrumental music at the school was also an issue. Discussed novice teacher, Dan:
I remember how hard it hit me the first time I realized that some of my kids didn't have $2.00 to buy a reed. Or $2.50 to buy a recorder. I remember that somebody told me the reason they haven't bought it yet was that they can't. I just sat in my office for a while and thought about it.

First year teacher Patrick was determined to not let financial issues preclude his prospective students' involvement in the instrumental music program. "I basically told the 5th graders that I wasn't going to let money be the reason you [they] don't do band."

As a result, Patrick gave two of his personal instruments to beginning students to use and was hoping that eventually they would be able to buy their own. "If not," said Patrick, "I'll have to buy another one." Consequently, of the approximately 100 fifth grade students in his school, Patrick started 75 of them on instruments.

Each community had its own idiosyncrasies. Two of the teacher participants involved in this study taught in the far west central/northwest quadrant of the state. A strong sense of family existed in these two communities, both having a large percentage of Catholic families in the towns in which the schools are located. As a result, many of the families were large when compared to the current average. "I have four students from a family of 11. In my own family, I have one sibling. I'm an alien to them," shared Maggie. Several miles down the road but in the same general area of the state, Ellen's school reserved Wednesday evenings as "dark night," meaning that there were absolutely no activities after 6pm so that families could attend church services and organizational meetings.

On the opposite side of the state, the southeast quadrant, teacher participants discussed the difficulty of travelling through the area's terrain and the large amount of
acreage covered by the districts, which made after school rehearsals somewhat problematic. Stated Peter:

Some of the kids actually travel two hours on the bus with all the stops. That's a lot of time on a bus for these kids. They are not going to stick around after school. I'm kind of limited to the ones that live closer to the school," stated Peter.

As a result, Peter worked after school with students only if they requested it. John addressed travelling from a different perspective – that of the music teacher who travelled among schools. According to John, one of the reasons the previous director in his school district left was because of a rumor about turning the instrumental position at the school into a travelling one. Including 5th grade band at the elementary school several miles down the road was undesirable, since much of the driving was through narrow, winding, hilly roads. Up to this point, 6th grade beginning band was included in the responsibilities of the elementary general music teacher. Therefore, beginning band in 5th grade would more than overload that teacher's schedule, leaving the responsibility to John.

In the rural district near the central part of the state, Brad's district did not hold classes during the week of the county fair, held in the autumn, rather during summer months. Initially, Brad thought this to be quite strange but now after some time in the district, he too, looked forward to time off for the fair, which allowed him to watch his band students exhibit animals and other projects.

Place was also addressed in the form of advice given to the younger teachers involved in Phase I interviews. For example, Brad received guidance from one of his mentors in regard to building versus maintaining an instrumental music program.

According to Brad, his mentor advised him to:
Start someplace that doesn't have a strong program and build it, to be a hero in the town and get lots of respect from colleagues in professional circles, get your name well-known, and then if you want to move on someplace else, that's an easy transition.

Such statements guided Brad as he searched for job positions, applying for anything and everything (much like the other new and mid career teachers involved in these interviews). Maggie, in her first year of teaching, decided that her first goal would be to find a "builder band" so that she could do much the same thing. This "builder band" idea resonated through the interviews in each of the early career stage instrumental music teachers.

**Time**

The theme of time appeared from two distinct perspectives: teacher and student. Time for the teacher in a small, rural school district was a valuable commodity, not to be taken for granted. Consistently, participants spoke to the amount of time necessary to do their jobs effectively in their rural instrumental music situation. From novice to veteran, time was a commonly reported an issue affecting why teachers do what they do and why they remained in a district or left it completely.

In each of the interviews and without prompting, the participants involved in Phase I of this study almost immediately began to address the subject of time. From time involved in travel between schools to the amount of preps needed to be organized for each teaching day, time was of paramount importance to these teachers. None of these teachers had study halls to monitor, and if they did at any time previously in their teaching career, they requested permission to offer a course in its place. Such was the case for Brad: "I had one period free and my first year I monitored a study hall which
wasn’t good for anybody, so I decided to fill with a music theory class." If the teaching position required the teachers’ time to be split between buildings in the district, the time spent travelling between buildings often accounted for any planning time that these participants had. While there were teachers who did not travel because all of their ensemble and course responsibilities were in the same building, these were not the majority. All of Dan's teaching responsibilities were in one building (grades K-12), as were John's (7-12). The difference was in the job description: Dan was responsible for grades 5-12 band and 4th grade general music, whereas John was responsible for band and choir grades 7-12.

Time also was also a factor for these teachers preparing for the multiple courses they were responsible for teaching. It was not uncommon for these instrumental music teachers to be accountable for not only instrumental music, but also elementary general music or choir, or a combination of all three types of music courses. Only three (Patrick, Jane, and Ellen) were solely responsible for instrumental music in their respective schools. Kay eventually was assigned only instrumental music, but that did not occur until after her third year of teaching in the school district (and after her curriculum presentation and request for more music faculty to her school administrators). As a result, these teachers had to fill a variety of roles over the course of just one day, let alone one week or month. Similar to other states, the Ohio Department of Education grants all-inclusive teaching licenses for music grades K-12, but the license is not content specific. Therefore, according to licensure conditions, these teachers were teaching within their licensure area, however, they reported that some of their assignments were not
necessarily in their comfort zone or optimum ability area. One veteran teacher spoke to
the problems this can raise in a music program, either vocal or instrumental. In Kay's
first school district, historically, the administration kept the position as a high school
music position teaching both vocal music and instrumental music for several years. As a
result, music teachers (who were teaching both choral and instrumental music in this
position) would either stay only for a short time or be fired for various reasons. During
these times, one specialty would achieve, whereas the other specialty would falter. For
example, if an instrumental music specialist accepted the position, the band would
flourish, relatively speaking, for a couple years. When that teacher moved on to another
district, the administrators would hire a vocal music specialist, who would then improve
the vocal music program in the school, but the band would wither. This cycle continued
from one teacher to the next for several years. Similarly, John, an instrumental music
specialist, was solely responsible for K-8 music in a small charter school, prior to his hire
at a rural school. While the choir was only part of the job description, John shared that
while he was in the position, the choir element "didn't really blossom very much." In
John's second teaching position, which involved instrumental and vocal music for junior
high through high school, the building principal approached him about moving high
school choir to an after school activity, as there were class conflicts and low enrollment
in the course. Despite the declining choir numbers, John did not want to be the one
responsible for taking choir out of the school day because he knew it would be next to
impossible to work it back into the master schedule once removed.
Teachers reported time was precious when considering students’ schedules as well. In the rural schools involved in Phase I, students themselves were important commodities to keeping the various clubs, programs (such as music), and sports alive. With a critical operating number specific to each activity, program, or club in these school districts, and a limited number of students available, sharing students among activities and teachers or coaches became a necessity. "It's hard to be flexible and demanding because you want the best for them (students) and you want all of their attention, but at the same time I have to be understanding," said Ellen, who often explained to her students that in sharing situations (when students must split time), if she appeared upset, it was not with the students but with the colleague unwilling to accommodate the students' schedule needs. Sharing students also became an issue within the music program as a whole. Oftentimes, these teachers found their ensemble roster(s) to mirror that of their vocal music teacher colleague, as students tried to fill their school days with as much "school music experience" as possible. Jane's main suggestion to improve her initial rural instrumental music teaching position was to find a larger student body from which to pull members; Dan spoke to the same issue after just one semester of teaching in a rural district in the far north central part of the state.

Another aspect of time important to these teachers was the idea of time needed to complete their own graduate studies. Days filled with teaching, combined with nights of rehearsals or performance responsibilities left little time for their own personal and professional development. For many Phase I teacher participants, earning graduate credits or continuing education credits became a secondary job in itself. The first
problem for these teachers was to decide how to earn these credits: leave school and go to graduate school full time or teach and take classes simultaneously. None of the veteran teachers interviewed chose the former method of completely leaving their teaching position in order to go to graduate school full time. One of the veteran teachers was able to make a graduate program with no evening music education classes work to his benefit. Said Peter of his graduate course experience, "I approached them [professors] and asked if there would be a chance to move some classes to the evenings." Thus, he asked the professor of each course and every student enrolled if they would move the specified class to evenings. In this manner, Peter was able to complete his entire master's degree program in one that was not expressly geared for full-time public school teachers.

Another veteran teacher in Phase I of the study, Jane, relocated from her initial teaching job on one side of the state to help her move closer to an area where she could take graduate classes. Prior to her move, Jane exhausted all of her graduate credit/continuing education credit possibilities from other area colleges within driving distance by attending as many workshops as possible until the workshop sequences began repeating themselves. It was at that point she decided to address the issue from a different direction. Jane's move from one side of the state to the other allowed her the opportunity to begin taking graduate courses from a nearby university that offered graduate program classes in the evenings and during the summer. Prior to this, the same university offered her an assistantship to attend graduate school full-time but leaving teaching completely was not a choice that Jane wanted to make.
Online courses have recently become another option for teachers busy with school and life obligations. Due to no reason of her own, Ellen's foray into graduate school, which originally began as a class on a university branch campus, turned into an online cohort experience in which she was able to complete her coursework, despite her irregular school activity schedule. "I wasn't willing to give up my job and I'd have to because I wasn't close enough [to drive to a university offering graduate music courses]."

As a result, the university's cohort experiment proved to be an eye-opening experience for Ellen, who chose to take graduate courses in curriculum and instruction. "I got music education from my undergraduate degree, I continued to play [my instrument], and I continued to go to OMEA and clinics. But now this [curriculum and instruction master's degree] gave me this other aspect of teaching. Just of teaching," explained Ellen.

One last element of time that was addressed was stage of career and gender. One female veteran teacher participant who began her teaching career in the early 1980's described her entry into teaching instrumental music. Kay earned her first position teaching instrumental music in grades 5-12 after she had taught three years of general music and proven to her administrators that: a) she could do the job and do it well and b) she needed additional colleagues in order for the music program to grow to its full potential. One stereotype Kay experienced when she began her teaching career was that she was told women did not get head instrumental teaching positions – they taught choir or general music. Therefore, Kay waited patiently until the opportunity presented itself and was offered the instrumental music teaching position in the rural school where she had been teaching general music. From that event and the subsequent years of
experience gained in that teaching position, she eventually was offered and accepted a head instrumental music teaching job at a larger, nearby school, where she currently remains.

Time as related to a teacher's stage in life appeared as a pattern with some of the participants. Ellen, a mid-career female teacher, discovered that her career stage, when she arrived at her first teaching job, was an issue during the early years of her rural school teaching experience. Comments expressed to Ellen concerned her marital and child status – the fact that she was not married and had no children was seen as a problem since she was teaching children. Hearing comments such as, "You don't have a family, you don't know," were not uncommon during Ellen's first two to three years of teaching in her rural district. This trend did not diminish until approximately the fourth year of her tenure at the school, when the majority of the high school students who had instrumental music instruction from other teachers had graduated. Once the students began to accept Ellen, the parents soon followed. Interestingly, none of the male instrumental music teachers involved in the interview process spoke to anything resembling comments received in regard to family or marital status, as related to time (i.e., stage) of life.

Support

Support was the third common thread binding the interviews together, from early stage to experienced career teachers. Administrators, teacher colleagues within the same school district and outside of the district, college mentors, parents, and even music store road representatives all were counted in the support system networks of the rural instrumental music teachers in the Phase I interviews. While all of the instrumental
music teachers had at least one other music colleague somewhere within their school district, there was little to no opportunity for the teachers to meet or work together. If the elementary grades were housed in a building separate from the junior high and high school, the chances of music teachers collaborating were reduced even more. Additionally, there was only one instrumental music teacher in all but one of the rural districts so working in partnership with another teacher in the same specialty was completely out of the question. Because of this, the teachers interviewed in this study learned to find other sources of support.

Other area instrumental music teachers were the most commonly utilized support networks. The instrumental music teacher in the town down the road from new teacher Dan became a sounding board, a role that he reciprocated. In veteran teacher Peter's first job, he was one of two other new instrumental music teachers and four experienced teachers in other rural school districts in the county. At their all-county band event, these directors came together to collaborate, problem solve, and discuss similarities between the districts, offering guidance and encouragement to Peter. Brad also expounded on the benefits of all-county band opportunities, though, he added, "I don't use that [resource] enough." Utilizing area networks, these teachers were able to create a place in which they could collaborate and find support. Oftentimes, these directors would also call upon college mentors and college friends and acquaintances to act as guides and lend a familiar ear and sounding board.

In some situations, music colleagues in the same district as the teacher interview participants were able to provide support for each other. This occurred most often when
a room or office was either shared or in close proximity. Illustrated Ellen, "That is our office [pointing to the room off the band room]. We're in here all the time together which is both good and bad….It’s nice because we can vent," thought she admits that there are times when they would like to vent about each other as well.

One teacher shared an example of when this within-school network went awry. When there are only two music teachers – one vocal/general, one instrumental – it is doubly important to work together. If this relationship disintegrates, dire straits result.

When discussing her first rural school job, Jane explained how important collegiality was to a department of two people. "One of the reasons for the revolving door [in that district's instrumental music program] before me and after me was the lack of cooperation and working together [between faculty members]." According to Jane, having the ability to "dig in" and trust herself to do what was educationally sound for her students was one contributing factor to her relative longevity in that rural instrumental music teaching position, despite the lack of collegial support.

Most of the interviewees identified parents and their booster groups as a form of support for both themselves and the instrumental music program. "They are always supportive and will do anything I need," said Brad. "The booster president is a fifth grade teacher…it’s good because I can not only talk to her about booster stuff but I can talk to her about fifth grade stuff or general teacher stuff," continued Brad. Veteran teacher Peter's booster group was ready to go to the school board on his account when a rumor about the possibility of Peter not being offered a continuing contract began to creep around the community. Parents also served as social networks for some of these
teachers who moved into their new community as a single person. Said Maggie, "I am the only single female/no kids employee [in her school]. I hang out with my band parents and that sort of thing. It’s not like there are 20-something singles…because they all have houses, husbands, and wives.” Some parents remain close friends with these teachers, even after the teacher has moved out of the district. Veteran teachers Kay and Jane both still keep in contact with band parents/boosters through personal visits and other types of communication.

Administrators and other teachers within their school districts form another branch of support for these lone instrumental music teachers. Through monetary support and time set aside for classes, administrators can make a strong point as to what they view as important. Dan's elementary music concert was so well-attended that the week after the concert, his school's superintendent rented out the Performing Arts Center in the nearby larger town for the following year's concert, as all the parents and community members in attendance could not fit in the facility available at the school.

When new teacher Patrick accepted his new job, he was told that a donor had given $10,000 to the band. Therefore, he bought new marching band equipment, a widely-visible demonstration of the instrumental music program, so the community could see how the money was spent. He has since asked administrators if there would be another large sum available to the band and was told to go ahead and assume it would be; thus, new piccolos, a sousaphone, and a marimba were in the works. He was even told by the superintendent "You messed up! You didn't ask for enough!" and that everyone in
the school and community wanted to see him and his instrumental music program succeed.

Support from administrators was also shown through scheduling. In Jane's second rural school, in closer proximity to a large urban/suburban area, the jazz band, a new ensemble to the school, was given a full academic period during the day to rehearse, as opposed to being relegated to before or after school. "We have a large [program], in relation to all the programs, probably the largest organization at our school [speaking of instrumental music as a whole]," said Jane, whose administrators thought jazz band to be important enough to earn its own class period to rehearse during the school day. Jane shared, "I thought that was a nice gesture on their part and it works out well [for all parties involved]."

Fellow non-music teachers have also provided support through creative means. In Ellen's rural school, middle school teacher colleagues decorate the band room for the high school students when contest season rolls around, providing similar reinforcement for the band students as what the sports teams receive if they earn the right to advance in tournaments and contests.

Retired teachers in the area provide another component of support for these rural teachers, especially those early in their teaching careers. Involvement ranged from coming in to school to help coach ensembles preparing for contests to a somewhat sporadic presence affording support for the program, if only from a distance. Of the teacher participants interviewed, the new teachers expressed gratitude for the assistance they received from the retired teachers in their area. For instance, the retired instrumental
music teacher from the community in which Maggie taught had been donating two hours a week to come to school and work with her brass players prior to solo/small ensemble contests. The long-retired band director still living in Patrick's community volunteered to walk through the instrument room at Patrick's school to help sort, find, and identify instruments. Consequently, they found two bassoons that Patrick did not know the school owned.

Many of the younger teachers also utilized their relationships with their own former high school band directors and college mentors. These teachers often shared an abundance of knowledge upon request for advice. Brad, who grew up in a large, successful suburban school district, occasionally called his former high school band director for assistance. Stated Brad:

During marching band season, I took my video over to his [former teacher's] house after he judged us once and he and his wife watch[ed] it with me. They are in the living room showing me moves that I can add….I can see the sparkle in their eyes because they started out there, too. They remember the fond memories of that, how different it is, and because it’s so great for the kids.

Brad also played in a community band with several other instrumental teachers. The rehearsals serve to not only keep his ears "fresh," but to also allow him the opportunity to ask veteran teachers about relevant and problematic issues he faced, as well as listen to these teachers talk about their own programs and issues they have encountered. The wife of Dan's former college advisor was the superintendent at the school in which Dan now works. His college mentor continued to be a sounding board; Dan attributed much of the current year's success to that relationship.
Finally, music store road representatives provided support for some of the new and mid career teachers. Often these road reps were retired instrumental music teachers themselves, with decades of experience to impart. In the northwest part of the state, Ellen's most experienced support system was rooted in her music store road representative. On Tuesday afternoons, the road representative stopped at Ellen's school to pick up instrument repairs, make quick fixes, and fill Ellen in on what was happening with various instrumental music programs and teachers in the rest of his territory. Her road representative was a retired band director who served as an instrument repair teacher, a guide for score study, and all-around problem-solver. He has even assisted as a guest conductor with her band. "He just comes in here and takes care of everything…He is definitely the number one person I relied on [early in my career]," disclosed Ellen. Dan shared a similar story. He has also enlisted the aid of his music store road representative in listening to and working with his band prior to large group adjudicated events.

Character Traits.

A final theme prevalent throughout the interviews was of the character traits perceived as vital to the success of someone teaching in a rural school district. Flexibility, sense of humor, ability to take charge, and being marketable were commonly reported as necessary attributes for success by these interviewees.

Flexibility was addressed by all but one of the interview participants – volunteered even before they were specifically asked about traits helpful in their personal success as a teacher in a rural district. Teachers from all levels of experience (novice,
mid, veteran) spoke to the importance of being flexible when necessary. Flexibility with regard to time, students, and facilities all were addressed. Explained Peter in respect to adaptability, "The administration comes up and asks if you can play this or that or perform here or there. Or they forget to tell you and change the dates of concerts. You kind of roll with the punches." Having the ability to see beyond the present and understand that giving up something now may result in getting something back later was a common statement from one teacher participant to another. "I have had to learn to change on a dime," added first year teacher Patrick.

Sense of humor was also seen as a building block to success in a rural teaching situation. Being able to laugh with one's students became an important means for connecting and developing rapport, essential to any job that involves working with people. According to John, "You do have to have a bit of a sense of humor to really develop the connection with some of the kids…just your approach to some of the things that happen in the classroom." He continued to explain how this was important to any teacher but due to the uniqueness of each rural community, some of the humor was related to cultural traits and school-specific episodes.

The ability to take control of a situation also rose to the top of categories essential for teaching success in a rural district. Multiple interviewees described themselves as take charge people; not afraid to be responsible for an entire program. Descriptive words, such as "control freak" and "total control," were used by teacher participants from all career stages. As their job descriptions included all instrumental music for each individual school district, sometimes in addition to other courses including choir and
general music, the ability to take charge and manage one's time, resources, and most of all students, became paramount to success for both students and teacher. This common opinion shared by many of the teachers was summarized most clearly by Ellen, who affirmed, "Sometimes I wish I had more help, even though I will admit I am 100% bona fide control freak. I like to do it all myself and I don't know how I'd deal with extra help." Unmistakably, the interviewed teachers were quite willing to lead their charges through whatever appeared on the horizon.

Lastly, teacher participants suggested that marketability, or being well-versed in all areas of music, was extremely important. For the majority of these teachers, instrumental music was only a portion of their teaching day. Often other classes, including elementary general music, music theory or appreciation, and choir rounded out their daily schedules. Both Brad and Ellen taught music theory/music appreciation courses at their respective high schools. John also had choir grades 7-12 as part of his regular teaching schedule. Maggie, Dan, and Peter all had various elementary general music courses to teach during the week. Kay, who began her teaching career as an elementary general music teacher in order to get her foot in the school door, shared that just prior to her interview for this study, she was, in fact, speaking to a first year rural school music teacher whose responsibilities included band and choir. This new teacher was an instrumental music specialist who spent the majority of her day at the state music conference (Ohio Music Education Association) attending choir-related clinics to hone her skills. Recommended Kay:

You have to be versatile….My first job was elementary, and when I graduated I wasn't going to do elementary. But I liked it because I got to do the grassroots. I
knew where my kids would be coming from when I was eventually the high school band director.

To these teachers, being marketable not only included being able to teach a variety of classes, it also incorporated proficient piano playing and facility on a variety of instruments, as private teachers were not readily available in all locales. Patrick, Brad, and Peter all taught private lessons if requested by students, which meant that they had to be experts on all the instruments in their school ensembles. In Jane's early career, she accompanied her own students at solo/small ensemble contests. "We want you to be marketable," was advice she received in her own undergraduate career, which she passed on to preservice teachers who visited and observed her classroom. "I tell them to do as many things as they can. You just have to be honest with them. It's going to be tough for them," said Jane in regard to new teachers looking for employment.

Furthermore, the younger teachers interviewed addressed the idea of staying for a short time, then leaving for another teaching post or graduate school. The experienced teachers did not speak to the desire to leave early in their career. As previously stated, veteran teacher Kay requested her administration allow her time to expand her program, rather than continue the school's trend of firing music teachers, instrumental or vocal, every couple of years only to hire another teacher of the opposite specialty. These veteran teachers were more likely to stay in a position once they had become part of the community. A trial period existed not only for the community with the teacher but also the teacher within the community, as was experienced by Ellen and her 4th year "turn-around," Kay and her desire to see her first group of 5th graders graduate as seniors, and Brad after purchasing his own home five minutes away from the school. Said Brad:
Last year and this year, especially, I have noticed people coming up to me and mentioning things in the community. We had a tree lighting here in town this year and one of the teachers...got a group together of students and various people around the community. I ended up playing. I remember thinking at that point, I’m part of the community now because they announced the group as [put together by community members] and they didn't even mention my name. I was great with that. I was just a trombone player playing for a community event. I'm here in my town. I live here. I didn't organize, I wasn't in charge. I just played.

Once these teachers received the "okay" from the community, both students and parents, they reported that the road became much smoother and questions of credibility became fewer, thus alleviating the community's worries of the teacher leaving the district prematurely. Clarified Ellen:

"Now they [community members] see me out all the time and...tell me the band did great yesterday. I don't always have a name but I am the band director. I can be out...and am totally accepted as the band director and I get far more people that are complimentary now..."

It appeared that for the mid career and veteran teachers who were willing to be patient and persevere, the reward of entrée into the community outweighed the negatives they experienced early in the process.

**Summary**

While there were many emergent thematic patterns prevalent among the interview participants, four rose to the forefront as common to all nine participants. Place, time, support, and character traits surfaced as themes vital to recognizing the complexities involved in teaching instrumental music in rural school settings. Teaching experience appeared to bring with it an awareness of the interconnectedness of these themes and an insight into how the teacher participants could better consider them in their careers and
the communities. In other words, the influence of these themes on the participants changed over time and with teaching experience. Mid career and veteran teachers were able to identify where these themes occurred in their own lives. As teachers transformed from novice to veteran, they more easily recognized how to negotiate their role within their respective communities in relationship to these four emergent themes.

Phase II Results

Demographics

Of the 127 completed surveys, respondents’ total years of teaching experience ranged from 1 to 43 years as a licensed teacher in a public/private school setting. While most respondents fell into the least experience category (i.e., 29 respondents with <1-5 years experience), the mean number of years teaching music was 14.88 ($SD = 10.05$), with the median being 13 years (see Table 1). Respondents’ number of years in their current teaching position ranged from 1 to 39 years, with a mean of 10.17 ($SD = 8.65$), median of 7, and mode of 2 (see Table 2).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years Teaching</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>27.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>18.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2

*Frequency and Percentage of Number of Years in Current Teaching Position as a Licensed Instrumental Music Teacher*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No. of Years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;1-5</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>25.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thirty-six (28.6%) of the respondents completed their student teaching in rural settings, 77 (61.1%) in suburban settings, and 13 (10.3%) in urban settings. Although the majority of respondents student taught in a suburban setting, 78 (61.4%) taught in a rural position for their first teaching job, while 30 (23.6%) taught first in a suburban setting and 19 (15.0%) in an urban setting. The mean for number of years that respondents remained in the school in which they first taught was 4.90 (SD = 5.78), with a median of 3.00. The number of years taught in this location ranged from 0.44 to 33 years. Of the respondents who knew the number of teachers who taught in the rural school during the
10 years prior to the respondents’ arrival in the district \((n = 24)\), the average number reported was 3, with a median and mode of 2, and a range from 1 to 8.

The average school enrollment reported by respondents for the rural schools in which they taught for grades five through six was 226 \((SD = 144)\), 220 for grades seven through eight, \((SD = 134)\), and 436 for grades nine through twelve \((SD = 274)\).

Average instrumental music program enrollment for the respondents’ rural schools in grades five through six was 73 \((SD = 57.40)\), with a median of 60 and mode of 50. The smallest level of enrollment was five and the largest was 400. As the enrollment numbers were so disparate, perhaps the respondent who entered the maximum included general music, for which he/she may also have been responsible to teach, whereby misreading the survey question. The mean enrollment for grades seven through eight was 61 \((SD = 40.77)\). The median was 50, mode was 40, and the range was from five to 275. For grades nine through twelve, the mean was calculated as 66 \((SD = 37.51)\), median was 60, mode was 40, and range fell between eight and 200.

In regard to teaching load (see Table 3), a majority of respondents reported teaching instrumental music in grades five through twelve \((63\%)\), while teaching instrumental music strictly in grades nine through twelve was the least common \((8.6\%)\). Several other music courses were indicated as responsibilities in addition to the respondents’ instrumental music teaching duties, including but not limited to: elementary general music, middle school general music, vocal music, music theory, and music appreciation. These "extra" duties are included at the bottom of Table 3 as a percentage of the total number of responses from all instrumental music teaching combinations.
Several respondents \((n = 12)\) indicated that they were the only music teacher in their school by selecting every option available.

Table 3

*Percentage of Teaching Responsibilities for a "Typical Load" in Rural Districts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsibility</th>
<th>% of teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-12 instrumental music</td>
<td>63.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-12 instrumental music</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-12 instrumental music</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 instrumental music</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary/general music(^a)</td>
<td>25.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle school general music(^b)</td>
<td>30.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vocal music(^c)</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music theory, history, or related courses(^d)</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a n = 17. \(^b n = 20. \(^c n = 14. \(^d n = 15.\)

Of the respondents who taught instrumental music in a rural school district \((n = 89)\), 48 (37.5\%) had taught only in one district. Twenty-eight (21.9\%) had taught in two and 13 (10.2\%) had taught in three or more rural school districts. It should be noted,
however, that respondents might have considered a wide range of school types as rural because no formal definition of rural was provided on the survey.

In order to address the role instrumental music played in students’ rural school careers, respondents were asked to rate the overlap, if any, of various activities and instrumental music participation. Table 4 displays mean ratings of activity overlap in rural schools (on a Likert scale of 4 = highest, 1 = lowest), with sports rating highest ($M = 3.35, SD = .87$) and orchestra the lowest ($M = 1.69, SD = 1.08$). That orchestra was reported as lowest might reflect the lack of this offering in many of the rural schools surveyed. In fact, some respondents indicated as such ($n = 16$). This finding would confirm research by Gillespie and Hamann (1998), who have reported a lack of orchestral offerings in smaller school districts. Interestingly, the standard deviations for activity overlap encompassed a comparatively wide range of almost one and a half points. "Students’ responsibilities with families" exhibited the smallest $SD$ (.83), while "student involvement in religious activities" was the largest ($SD = 2.27$), emphasizing differences in activity participation from one school district to another.
Table 4

*Mean Ratings of Activity Overlap in Rural School District Instrumental Music Programs*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td>3.35</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school jobs</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement in religious activities</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>2.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' responsibilities with families</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 1**

1. What do instrumental music teachers cite as factors that influence their choice to teach in a rural setting or to leave that setting for another (i.e., suburban or urban)?

   Respondents rated factors related to choosing to teach in a rural school district on a Likert scale of 1 (not true) through 4 (true), corresponding to survey question 32. Means and standard deviations for these factors appear in Table 5. Interestingly, all means clustered together for this question, ranging only one-half point from 2.24 to 2.74. The highest mean of 2.74 (SD = 1.16) was for “more comfortable setting.” The lowest mean of 2.24 (SD = 1.24) was for "colleague recommended the position."
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More comfortable setting</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Was the only job offer</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>1.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher thought it would be a challenge</td>
<td>2.49</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good reputation of program</td>
<td>2.47</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More relaxed/less pressure</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher wanted to live in that geographical area</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher was better suited to teach in that setting</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wanted the position but did not intend to remain</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colleague recommended the position</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked to indicate if they left a rural teaching position to move to another teaching position at some point in their career. Those who had \((n = 88)\) rated reasons related to why they chose to move to another school district on a Likert scale of \(1\) (not true) through \(4\) (true), corresponding to survey question 35. The highest mean rating for reasons to move from a rural district to another district was for "teacher's desired
geographical area" ($M = 3.41$, $SD = 1.18$); the lowest mean was for "teacher becoming bored with the rural school setting" ($M = 1.77$, $SD = 1.15$) (see Table 6). Of the 88 respondents who reported leaving their teaching position in a rural school district, 67 (76.1%) took their next job in another rural school district, whereas 21 (23.9%) left rural teaching altogether. Of these 21, 18 (86.4%) moved to suburban districts, while three moved to urban districts (13.6%).
### Table 6

*Mean Ratings of Factors Related to Moving out of a Rural School District into a Non-rural School District*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Geographical area</td>
<td>3.41</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More potential for teacher's success</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better facilities</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better pay</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>1.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More potential for teacher's musical gratification</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better teaching schedule</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's spouse/family connected to area</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher connected to area</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher needed a change</td>
<td>2.59</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More community support</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher needed a new challenge</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher never intended to stay in rural district</td>
<td>2.50</td>
<td>1.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural program had made as much progress as possible</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>1.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More comfortable setting for teacher</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher was bored with rural school environment</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Research Question 2

2. Do teachers report that their teacher licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?

In order to answer research question two, the question was subdivided further for clarity, based on survey items: a) to what extent do teachers report that their licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school setting overall, b) to what extent do teachers' licensure program field experiences include teaching in a rural school setting, c) to what extent do teachers' licensure program methods courses include issues related to teaching in a rural school setting, d) to what extent do teachers’ licensure program advising sessions discuss teaching in a rural school setting and e) to what extent do student teaching influence the type of school setting in which teachers first teach?

Survey respondents were divided into those who had taught at some point in their career in a rural school setting (n = 88) and those who had not (n = 39) in order to discern if respondents' answers to these questions were affected by the area in which they currently teach or had taught. Because those who had never taught in a rural school would be speculating as to the nature of their preparation to teach in a rural setting, the comparison of these teachers to those who were actually teaching in a rural area was thought to provide greater insight into the phenomenon. For further clarity, responses about rural school teaching preparation were compared to respondents’ reported preparation to teach in suburban and urban school settings. These comparisons provided a reference point for respondents' general opinions regarding the preparation they received in their licensure program across all teaching settings. All sub-questions (i.e.,
2a-2e) followed the same format: comparisons of respondents' general opinions across all settings.

2a: To what extent do teachers report that their licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school setting overall?

Respondents indicated the degree to which their teacher licensure programs prepared them to teach in various school settings on a Likert scale of 1 (not at all prepared) to 4 (very prepared) (see Table 7, survey item ten). Suburban schools resulted in the highest calculated means for respondents in both groups (i.e., teachers with and without rural teaching experience). Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures revealed no significant differences between those who had taught or were currently teaching in a rural school and those who had never taught in a rural school on perceived preparation to teach in a rural school setting \([F(1,120) = 3.04, p > .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .025]\), a suburban setting \([F(1,123) = .702, p > .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .006]\), or an urban setting \([F(1,122) = 3.274, p > .05, \text{partial } \eta^2 = .003]\).
Table 7

*Mean Ratings of Perceived Preparation to Teach in Specific Settings by Instrumental Music Teachers during Preservice Training*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers without Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2b: To what extent do teachers' licensure program field experiences include teaching in a rural school setting?

Respondents reported the extent to which specific settings were included in their preservice field experiences on a Likert scale of 1 (not at all) to 4 (very often) (Table 8, survey item eight). For teachers without experience in rural school districts, the highest mean was for suburban school settings ($M = 2.97, SD = .87$), whereas the lowest mean for this group was for rural school settings ($M = 1.86, SD = .89$). Likewise, respondents
with teaching experience in rural settings collectively had more suburban teaching field experiences in their licensure programs (M = 2.98, SD = .86), with rural again calculated as the least frequent (M = 2.26, SD = 1.09). Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures revealed no significant differences between those who had taught or were currently teaching in a rural school and those who had never taught in a rural school on estimated inclusion of field experience in a rural school setting during preservice teacher training \( F(1,119) = 5.00, p > .05, \text{ partial } \eta^2 = .026 \), no significant difference for field experience in a suburban school setting \( F(1,123) = .337, p > .05, \text{ partial } \eta^2 = .000 \), and no significant difference for field experience in an urban setting \( F(1,120) = 1.615, p > .05, \text{ partial } \eta^2 = .000 \).
Table 8

*Mean Ratings of Extent of Specific Settings' Inclusion into Instrumental Music Teacher Preservice Field Experiences*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers without Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.69</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2c: To what extent do teachers' undergraduate methods courses include issues related to teaching in a rural school setting?

Respondents reported the degree to which licensure program methods courses included instruction specific to rural, suburban, and urban settings on a Likert scale of 1 (never) to 4 (very often). Table 9 displays means and standard deviations for this item (survey item 11). The highest mean was evidenced for suburban ($M = 2.93, SD = .94$) and the lowest mean was for rural ($M = 2.28, SD = .88$) for teachers without rural
teaching experience. Similarly, for teachers with rural teaching experience, the highest mean was evidenced for suburban (M = 2.63, SD = 1.00), while the lowest mean was for rural (M = 2.26, SD = .98). Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures revealed no significant differences between those who had taught or were currently teaching in a rural school and those who had never taught in a rural school on estimated inclusion in methods courses of issues related to teaching in a rural school setting \([F(1,123) = .589, p > .05, partial \eta^2 = .000]\), a suburban school setting \([F(1,123) = 2.123, p > .05, partial \eta^2 = .016]\), or an urban school setting \([F(1,124) = .027, p > .05, partial \eta^2 = .001]\).
Table 9

*Mean Ratings of Specific School Settings Topics’ Inclusion into Instrumental Music Teacher Preservice Training Methods Courses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Preservice Training Methods Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers without Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.62</td>
<td>1.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.55</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.63</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2d: To what extent do teachers discuss teaching in a rural setting in advising sessions?

Respondents reported the degree to which their licensure program advising sessions included discussion specific to rural, suburban, and urban settings (see Table 10 for survey item 12). Using a Likert scale of 1 (never) to 4 (very often), the highest calculated mean was for suburban settings ($M = 2.57, SD = .92$), and the lowest mean was evidenced for rural settings ($M = 2.00, SD = .85$) for teachers without rural teaching.
experience. Likewise, for teachers with rural teaching experience, the highest mean was evidenced for suburban settings ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 1.04$), whereas the lowest mean was for rural settings ($M = 2.09$, $SD = .96$). As with the previously reported opinions of preparation for teaching in various school settings, suburban setting means were higher as compared to urban or rural school settings in both groups of teachers. Univariate Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) procedures revealed no significant difference between those who had taught or were currently teaching in a rural school and those who had never taught in a rural school on estimated inclusion in advising sessions of issues related to teaching in a rural school setting [$F(1,122) = 1.341$, $p > .05$, $partial \eta^2 = .002$], a suburban setting [$F(1,122) = 1.699$, $p > .05$, $partial \eta^2 = .007$], or an urban setting [$F(1,123) = .279$, $p > .05$, $partial \eta^2 = .009$].
Table 10

*Mean Ratings of Specific School Settings Topics’ Inclusion into Instrumental Music Teacher Preservice Training Advising*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Setting</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers without Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers with Rural Teaching Experience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2e: To what extent does student teaching influence the type of school setting in which teachers first teach?

In order to answer this question, respondents’ student teaching setting was compared to that of their first teaching position. A chi-square analysis revealed significant differences, \( \chi^2 (4, N = 126) = 12.31, p < .05 \). As seen in Table 11, respondents were significantly more likely to teach in a rural school if their student teaching had been in a rural school. Likewise a greater proportion than expected by
chance was apparent for those who took jobs in suburban or urban areas after these teachers completed their student teaching in these respective settings.

Table 11

*Chi-square Analysis of Relationship Between Student Teaching Setting and First Job Setting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Job Setting</th>
<th>Rural</th>
<th>Suburban</th>
<th>Urban</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>41.0</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected count</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>47.7</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected count</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>17.7</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>18.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expected count</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of total</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Research Question 3**

3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices?

Respondents' own public school experience was considered to determine if this influenced teachers’ desire to teach in a rural school. Respondents were divided into those who attended rural ($n = 50$), suburban ($n = 45$), and urban ($n = 14$) schools exclusively. Transient populations (those who attended a combination of schools) were eliminated from this analysis for clarity. Table 12 displays means and standard deviations for respondents' own K-12 schooling experiences and their desire to teach in a rural school setting (survey item seven on a Likert scale of 4 = definitely to 1 = not at all). Those who attended a rural school for their K-12 schooling had the highest mean and least variability ($M = 3.16$, $SD = .79$) for wanting to teach in a rural school setting. The lowest mean was for respondents who attended an urban school and wanted to teach in a rural school setting ($M = 2.43$, $SD = .85$). Univariate Analysis of Variance procedures revealed significant differences among group means [$F(2, 106) = .460$, $p < .05$]. Follow up Tukey HSD post hoc procedures revealed that those attending rural schools reported a significantly ($p < .05$) greater desire to teach in a rural school setting than those attending suburban or urban schools.
Table 12

*Mean Ratings of Respondents’ Rural K-12 Attendance and Desire to Teach in a Rural School Setting*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Setting</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>2.43</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Question 4**

4. What are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?

In order to answer this research question, it was subdivided further for clarity, based on survey items: a) factors positively and negatively impacting teaching in rural schools, b) support networks, c) ways rural school teachers remain current in the profession, d) cocurricular enhancements to rural instrumental music programs, and e) program size or modifications.

**4a: Factors Negatively and Positively Impacting Teaching in Rural Schools.**

Factors impacting teaching in a rural school district were rated on a scale of 1 (negative) to 4 (positive), with means and standard deviations exhibited in Table 13
"Teaching load" exhibited the highest (i.e., most positive) mean of 2.94 ($SD = .90$), while the lowest mean was for "cost of living" ($M = 1.53, SD = .67$).

Table 13

Mean Ratings of Factors Related to Teaching in a Rural School District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teaching load</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching schedule</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for program</td>
<td>2.54</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to larger city</td>
<td>2.72</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for developing a quality program</td>
<td>2.10</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior/attitude of students</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost of living (if lived in district)</td>
<td>1.53</td>
<td>.67</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4b. Support Networks.

Respondents rated level of support received from various people with which they came in contact while teaching instrumental music in a rural district on a scale of 1 (low support) to 4 (high support). Descriptive statistics (Table 14) corresponding with survey item 24 indicated that respondents viewed non-music colleagues as the greatest area of
support, with a mean of 2.27 ($SD = .96$), and music store representatives as the lowest ($M = 1.47, SD = .73$). The mean for music colleagues was also low ($M = 1.52, SD = .80$) in comparison to other areas of support. It is important to note, however, that all means were relatively low for this item.

Table 14

*Mean Ratings of Level of Support Network for Instrumental Music Teachers in a Rural School District*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Network</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Non-music colleagues</td>
<td>2.27</td>
<td>.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td>1.76</td>
<td>.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music colleagues</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representative</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>.73</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Slightly different than the level of support these teachers perceived was their access to support, rated on a scale of 1 (low support) to 4 (high support), corresponding to survey item 26. The highest mean for access to support networks while teaching in a
rural district was 3.25 ($SD = .97$) for music teachers in the district, while the lowest mean was 1.96 ($SD = .99$) for cooperating teachers (see Table 15).

Table 15

*Mean Ratings of Access to Support Networks for Instrumental Music Teachers in a Rural School District*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Network</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Music teachers in my district</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representative</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music teachers outside my district</td>
<td>2.66</td>
<td>.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my district</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College teachers</td>
<td>2.20</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>1.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating teachers</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4c: Ways Rural School Teachers Remain Current in the Profession.

Ways in which rural school teachers stay current in the field of instrumental music education may oftentimes be challenging because of the remote nature of the areas in which they teach. Survey item 28 was devised to determine the strategies teachers use to continue their professional growth. Respondents rated these strategies both for the frequency of engagement in these activities and the value respondents placed on them on
a scale of 1 (no/low participation or value) to 4 (high participation or value). Means and standard deviations for the frequency in which respondents engaged in these strategies are displayed in Table 16. State professional music conferences had the highest participation mean ($M = 3.23$, $SD = 1.02$), while participating in district-level music workshops was the lowest ($M = 1.54$, $SD = .89$). In terms of the value respondents placed on these strategies, state professional music conferences also received the highest mean ($M = 3.10$, $SD = 1.03$), whereas the lowest mean was again evidenced for district level workshops ($M = 1.33$, $SD = .61$) (see Table 17).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Participation</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State professional music conferences</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>1.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers in the district</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representatives</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-level workshops (non-music)</td>
<td>2.76</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers outside the district</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>1.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer university courses</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>1.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-music teachers in the district</td>
<td>2.09</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/university mentors</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National professional music conferences</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time university coursework (held on campus)</td>
<td>1.75</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time university coursework (held on campus)</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating teachers</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line university courses</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-level workshops (music)</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 17

*Mean Ratings of Value of Factors Related to Teaching Instrumental Music in a Rural School District*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State professional music conferences</td>
<td>3.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers outside the district</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers in the district</td>
<td>2.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representatives</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer university courses</td>
<td>2.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/university mentors</td>
<td>2.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National professional music conferences</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time university coursework</td>
<td>2.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(held on campus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-music teachers in the district</td>
<td>2.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time university coursework</td>
<td>2.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(held on campus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating teachers</td>
<td>2.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-level workshops (music)</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line university courses</td>
<td>1.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District-level workshops (non-music)</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4d: Cocurricular Enhancements to Rural Instrumental Music Programs.

Respondents indicated the degree to which students in their instrumental music programs were engaged in cocurricular band activities (survey item 19). Specifically, respondents were asked to rate on a Likert scale of 1 (no involvement) to 4 (high involvement) the degree to which their students participated in activities such as honor bands, private lessons, etc. Means and standard deviations for this question are displayed in Table 18. Solo and ensemble participation exhibited the greatest amount of collective participation ($M = 3.42, SD = .88$), while master classes were utilized the least among the rated activities ($M = 1.60, SD = .76$).
### Table 18

*Mean Ratings of Student Involvement in Related Instrumental Music Program Activities in Rural School Districts*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solo/small ensemble contests</td>
<td>3.42</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor bands</td>
<td>3.16</td>
<td>.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school rehearsals</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large group adjudicated events</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>1.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sponsored band trips</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private lessons</td>
<td>2.38</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble festivals</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group lessons</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University outreach</td>
<td>1.88</td>
<td>.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(university students visiting/observing/coaching/assisting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master classes</td>
<td>1.60</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**4e: Program size or modifications.**

Of the teachers ($n = 88$) who had experience teaching instrumental music in a rural school district, 42 (49.4%) responded that there had been other music teachers hired during their time spent teaching in a rural school district, while 43 (50.6%) indicated that there were no other music teachers hired (survey item 18). Thirty-five (41.7%) stated that music teaching positions had been combined or lost while they taught in a rural
school district, while 49 (58.3%) did not. Teaching positions were eliminated for six (7.3%) of these teachers with 76 (92.7%) of the respondents secure in their jobs in a rural school districts. For the teachers who responded, job descriptions were modified after they had begun teaching in a rural school district for 46 (54.1%) of the teachers. Meanwhile, 39 (45.9%) did not have their position modified. (This percentage was of the rural subset, or those who had taught in a rural district.) Although there was not the opportunity to write in text an explanation of how the positions were modified, one may assume that when music teaching positions were lost or combined, the instrumental music teacher might consequently be responsible for general music classes and/or vocal music classes in addition to his/her instrumental music responsibilities.
Chapter Five: Summary and Discussion

Restatement of the Purpose and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to investigate in-service instrumental music teachers' opinions and experiences regarding teaching instrumental music in rural school districts. Specifically, the study examined the issues that these teachers viewed as important and the attributes necessary for instrumental music teachers to possess when teaching instrumental music in a rural school setting.

Phase I

The purpose of Phase I of the study was to elicit descriptive responses through one on one interviews of teachers who were currently teaching or had taught instrumental music in rural school districts. The interviews served as a means to seek similarities and differences among teaching situations, as well as to solicit information relevant to teachers' longevity in rural teaching positions or reasons cited as incentive to leave for another teaching position in a different district, particularly if the new district was suburban or urban. School districts were chosen by their rural classification as defined by the Ohio Department of Education Typology report.

Teachers from various stages in their careers (early, mid, experienced) were selected as interview participants in order to gain specific personal perspectives from their individual standpoints as related to career experience. After initial contact with a
pool of participants, snowball sampling techniques served to augment the preliminary interview set.

**Phase II**

The purpose of Phase II was to expand upon the findings in Phase I by distributing a grounded survey instrument to a larger population of Ohio teachers. The survey instrument included questions derived from common themes that emerged in Phase I and included items centering on teacher preparation programs, job descriptions, and factors influencing choices involved in selecting teaching positions. Both teachers with rural instrumental music teaching experience and those without were surveyed for a wider berth of inquiry in anticipation of examining the disparity among responses.

Overarching research questions guiding both phases of the study were as follows:

1. What do instrumental music teachers cite as factors that influence their choice to teach in a rural setting or to leave that setting for another (i.e., suburban or urban)?
2. Do teachers report that their teacher licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?
3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices?
4. What are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?
5. What are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts?
Summary of Findings

Research Question One

1. What do instrumental music educators cite as factors that influence their choice to teach in a rural setting or to leave that setting for another (i.e., suburban or urban)?

Rural instrumental music educators cited a variety of reasons they chose to teach in a rural setting. One theme from Phase I was the teacher's background and personal experience during their own K-12 schooling. As one veteran teacher stated in her interview, "I grew up in a rural school so I knew what to expect." Another, more surprising response, was that it was the only position available or offered to the teacher participant. One novice teacher, however, affirmed that when she was searching for teaching jobs, she purposely sought rural schools, or what she called "builder bands." In light of this, perhaps students graduating from music teacher education programs are, in fact, looking for challenges in order to stretch their new teaching wings.

Survey responses for reasons respondents chose to teach in a rural setting resulted in middle-of-the-road ratings for the listed factors. None of the factors elicited strong responses from any of the respondents. The challenge factor ("teacher thought it would be a challenge") was relatively high in relation to the remaining factors on the list. The largest percentage of the respondents (27.2%) had been teaching in the field for five years or less. As a result, it may be assumed that these are also the teachers searching for a challenge in order to test their mettle. "Teaching load" was collectively rated highest (i.e., positively) on the list of factors affecting teaching in a rural school district, though again, none of the items on this list drew strong responses. This finding is in contrast to
the veteran interview participants from Phase I who moved to another teaching position from a rural school because of teaching load. Perhaps the survey participants enjoy the variety of their teaching schedule and therefore, felt the load was not extreme. Again, however, while rated highest on that list of factors, it was not overwhelmingly rated as such. In the words of one survey respondent, "Be prepared to do more than your specific area."

**Research Question Two**

2. Do teachers report that their teacher licensure program prepared them to teach in a rural school environment?

The teacher participants in Phase I understood that while teacher education programs might try to prepare future teachers for most of the circumstances they may face in the field, it is impossible to prepare them for every situation. More important was to provide these future teachers with the tools they need to seek assistance if necessary, or to figure out a solution on their own. What was interesting to note was how the teacher participants classified certain things as helpful from their teacher education programs and things that were not. The mixed reviews of teacher education programs could reflect the disparity in how different licensure programs approach teacher training. Some of the teachers interviewed thought that their teacher training programs did well in preparing them for what they might encounter in real world situations (i.e., their current rural school district). Patrick, for example, expounded upon how much he used what he learned in his rehearsal methods courses, conducting courses, and secondary instrument courses. Conversely, John's field experience prior to student teaching was during a
summer teaching methods course in which the only interaction he had with children was a day spent observing at a daycare - not quite what he would expect to encounter as a middle/high school instrumental music teacher in any school setting.

In Phase II, suburban settings earned the highest means above rural or urban settings for all teachers in regard to their opinions of preparation to teach in that setting, inclusion of that setting in field experiences and methods courses, and inclusion of that setting in advising during their teacher licensure program. Since a goal of many music teacher educators is to search for what may be considered the "best" instrumental music programs for their students to observe and participate in during field experiences, many of these "best" situations are, indeed, in suburban schools with abundant resources, faculty, and students. Again, in these situations, students experience part of the spectrum that they may not encounter in the field for many years to come. While successful rural school district instrumental music programs exist, it may be more difficult for students to access these districts (i.e., university mileage restrictions), limiting their exposure to exemplars more similar to what they encountered in their past. Universities and colleges located in smaller cities and towns clearly have more accessibility to rural locations and possibly to successful rural models.

Survey respondents who moved from a rural school teaching position into another setting clearly preferred suburban over urban settings; however the majority of those leaving a rural district took their next job in a similar setting. Of the teachers leaving rural teaching altogether, 86.4% moved to a suburban district, while only 13.6% moved into an urban setting. The distinct inclination for teachers to select suburban districts
over urban districts may be linked to their field experiences, methods courses, and their own backgrounds, supporting Kelly's (2003) investigation, or may point to teachers seeking better, more established instrumental music programs. The trend may also support Goodstein's (1987) findings of instrumental teachers who scored higher on a self-evaluative questionnaire when the teacher was employed by a suburban, higher SES school district. In these cases, the suburban programs exhibited larger instrumental music program enrollment, higher ratings at solo/small ensemble contests, and more experienced teachers. If these situations are perceived to be more successful programs, then it may be assumed that teachers would desire to teach in these positions and therefore, move to one of these jobs if given the opportunity.

**Research Question Three**

3. How do the background experiences of instrumental music teachers influence their future teaching setting choices?

The teachers' backgrounds and personal experiences during their own K-12 schooling seemed to prepare them for what they were going to encounter in their rural school teaching position. One veteran teacher stated in her interview, "I grew up in a rural school so I knew what to expect," the most direct answer given by any participant in regard to the influence of a teachers' background on his/her teaching position, supporting Wohlfeil's (1986) findings in his research on effective rural teaching. Peter's experience throughout his own K-12 schooling and teaching career was completely in rural districts. In his interview, Peter even mentioned that he was so comfortable in that type of school situation that he was certain he would not want to teach anywhere else.
Similarly, highest means from Phase II were evidenced for desire to teach in a rural school if the respondent attended a rural school during his/her own K-12 schooling. This emphasized the effect of preservice teachers' backgrounds and their potential employment prerequisites. When extended to respondents' first teaching positions, those who student taught in a rural school district were significantly more likely to obtain employment in a rural school district. Likewise, respondents who student taught in a suburban school setting were significantly more likely to acquire their first teaching position in a suburban school. Again, implications of personal circumstances appear to affect the choices made by teachers in regard to not only accepting a teaching position, but the requisite job search.

**Research Question Four**

4. What are common factors that teachers report as affecting their work in rural school districts?

**Program size or modifications.**

Veteran teachers in Phase I who discussed school size and instrumental program size explained that if they could add more students to their programs, they would (but, obviously from where the students would come, they did not know). These teachers understood the time management necessary for many of their students to participate in all their desired activities. One Phase II survey respondent repeated the concern for more students by sharing that it would be a major way to improve his/her instrumental music program. Teachers identified student recruitment, in a setting where there are few students to be found, as a difficult task. Often creative sharing agreements resulted
between teachers and programs, as the adults in the situation attempted to do what was best for the students and the programs in question.

According to Brad, when he was looking for his first job, most of the positions listed seemed to be jobs similar to the one he accepted. His mentor even advised him to take a small school instrumental music position first so that he could successfully establish his name in the field within Ohio. The idea that maintaining a program was more difficult than building a program served to guide him in his job search. For this participant, starting his career with a small band in a rural district afforded the opportunity to learn on the job with a more limited number of variables (e.g., students) and less pressure.

**Support.**

As the majority of the Phase I interview participants were one of only two or three music teachers in their district (unlike some of the survey respondents who were the only music teacher in the district), collegiality became extremely important and could seemingly make or break the teaching situation. Often offices and rehearsal rooms were shared and one teacher served as an assistant to the other during his/her prep time. On the other hand, if the instrumental music teacher was the only one in the building, merely seeing music colleagues was a feat. For example, John, responsible for instrumental and vocal music grades 7-12 in a building which housed the same grade levels, revealed that he had seen his general music counterparts from the elementary buildings only a couple times during the current school year (and his interview was held five months into the academic year).
Veteran teacher, Jane, shared a less than perfect support scenario. Her first rural school teaching experience included a difficult colleague with many years of experience as compared to Jane. Jane credits her longevity in that position (thirteen years) to the process of learning how to remain "educationally sound" for her students, despite her colleague's overbearing and destructive interaction with the instrumental music program. The survey results, which showed middle of the road responses for music colleagues, supported this dichotomy of experiences.

Collegiality also extended to non-music colleagues. Just as the teacher interview participants stressed the importance of being flexible and learning how to give and take, survey respondents shared similar comments. Again, as with the interviewees, these respondents often indicated that while the school policy was to share students (as previously mentioned), oftentimes they were the teachers required give up the student and find another way for the student to make up the time. Interview participants and respondents reported that activity overlap overwhelmingly involved sports, often with schedule modifications made on the part of the instrumental music program as opposed to sports. Similarly, most interview participants did not hold after school rehearsals (though other factors, such as bussing, influenced that decision as well).

The highest mean reported on the survey for level of support from selected networks was colleague support, albeit non-music colleagues. It may be said that, like the interview participants, music colleagues did not rate higher on the scale because there were either no other music colleagues in the district or if there were, they were not readily available (e.g., in another building, another town, etc.).
Survey results showed that the support networks to which teachers had access were music teachers within the district, with music store representatives rated as second highest, even though teachers felt that overall, music store representatives were not a major source of support (Table 14 as compared to Table 15). Music colleagues would obviously be a first choice of support networks to access, if available, but as Jane experienced, may not always prove to be fruitful. Music store reps may have rated relatively high on accessed support because of their regular contact with instrumental music teachers (they generally call on schools once a week at an appointed time) and vast knowledge base (many of these reps are retired instrumental music teachers who are now working their second career). This result supports Phase I comments from new and mid-career participants regarding music store representatives' regularly-scheduled weekly visits and subsequent assistance, further solidifying their place in the teacher's agenda.

Level of support network open-ended survey responses included one response for each of the following: athletic boosters, custodians and secretaries, and the uniform company. It may be expected that school staff (custodians and secretaries) provide other channels of support for instrumental music teachers. The responsibilities of these teachers to the school staff result in a much different relationship than what teachers of other subjects may have. Reserving busses, completing requisition forms, managing music program budgets, moving equipment, and reserving rehearsal/concert spaces all require the assistance of these staff members. As new instrumental music teachers commence employment and realize how many components are included in the job, the relationship between teacher and school staff becomes extremely important. The
response of "uniform company" was not expected, however. Perhaps this respondent worked with a uniform company representative who also had other connections helpful to the teacher. Additionally, raising money for and purchasing uniforms is a major endeavor for any school district, no matter the setting. When that responsibility rests on one person (or two if the rural school is fortunate), the job is magnified. As such, the uniform company representative, who has gone through the process many times over, may, apparently, become an invaluable resource for the instrumental music teacher.

**Teachers' professional development.**

Teachers' personal goals in regard to professional development impacted how teacher participants and respondents approached their jobs and their own professional growth in a variety of means. For veteran teacher Jane, personal goals (i.e. graduate courses) became a contributing factor to her decision to move to another school. Having exhausted her graduate credit opportunities in her geographical area, she began to look for an open position in schools within a certain radius of the university she desired to attend. Peter, the veteran with teaching experience in three different rural schools in the same part of the state, took a more creative approach to earning his graduate credit by contacting each professor and class member personally. His story illuminated the creativity and ingenuity possessed by instrumental music teachers with the ability to get the job done when necessary. Ellen decided to take her professional development in a completely different direction when she chose an online program in curriculum and instruction. The decision to hone her overall teaching skills, as well as participate in a
cohort online experience, supplemented her undergraduate and subsequent musical experience. In her opinion, she had the best of both worlds.

Most survey respondents did not choose to complete their graduate degree work full-time. Instead, summer university courses had the highest means in regard to the method by which teachers earned graduate credit (for both the frequency of activity sought and the value of the experience). Full-time university coursework held on campus fell much lower in both frequency and value, which suggests that few teachers earned graduate credit by that method and will not choose to do so in the future.

Attending conferences and workshops was not a topic directly addressed by interview participants, though three of the interviews took place at a state conference. In the survey results, the highest means evidenced for both respondents' participation in (i.e. attendance) and reported value of were state professional music conferences. Not only do these outlets provide intellectual and musical nourishment for teachers in the field, they also provide networking and problem-solving opportunities for teachers who may be the only music expert in his/her school district or building. District-level workshops (non-music) means were almost two points lower than state professional conferences. The lower means associated with these workshops underlines the low status in which they are held by instrumental music teachers, who may feel this type of workshop is most often designed for classroom teachers or for completing state education department administrative requirements.

Reasons cited by Phase I veteran teachers for leaving or remaining in a district include wanting to grow professionally (i.e., leaving) and feeling comfortable (i.e.,
remaining). Phase II open-ended survey responses echoed the desire to grow professionally. Phase I mid-career and novice teachers' responses to the question of longevity mainly focused on their idea of taking the students "as far as they could" and then finding a new position, though having the opportunity to teach in their "home" school trumped program growth in their current positions. It appeared that the connection to the familiar again, in that case, similar to Kelly's (2003) results, pulled more strongly on teachers than other factors, such as establishing a program or making a name for oneself. Yet, one may assume that other reasons would impact the decision to leave, such as moving into a better program.

**Research Question Five**

5. What are some of the characteristics that teachers report as necessary to be successful instrumental music teachers in rural school districts?

**Versatility.**

Phase I veteran teachers expounded upon being a versatile teacher; versatility not only within the specialty of instrumental music, but also able to teach choral and general music as well. During their tenure in a rural school, teaching assignments were altered for many of the Phase I teachers. Changes such as these may now be more rule than exception as school budgets are trimmed and open teaching positions are purposely not filled, making versatility even more important for new teachers who are searching for instrumental music teaching jobs. Phase II survey responses further supported the need for versatility in these instrumental music positions. As previously stated, the variety of teaching responsibilities almost matched the number of interview respondents. Not only
were music classes included, but other classes and non-teaching responsibilities as well, which supports research examination of rural schools' propensity to require one teacher to be responsible for several preps during a regular teaching day (Barley, 2009; Barley & Brigham, 2008; Barrow & Burchett, 2005).

Moving into a district as the new teacher both to live and to work may be problematic. For teachers who moved into their rural district subsequent to a chain of directors, such as Maggie and many of the survey respondents, the transition was smoother than for teachers who moved into a rural district after a teacher left who had been there for a number of years. Ellen's experience evidenced the latter. While there was one teacher between Ellen and the longtime director, that interim teacher was only there a short time, not long enough for the town or the students in the school to have adequately progressed through the instrumental music program so that they considered themselves another teacher's students.

Phase I interview participants lamented both the lack of private teachers in their areas and the deficit of funds by families in their areas to afford lessons for students enrolled in their instrumental music programs. In several cases, lesson opportunities were available if the students wanted and were able to take advantage of them. The issue of time and money necessary to engage in private lessons often surfaced as a problem. There was not a culture of private lessons in the community, so it was not a priority for families. According to survey respondents, private lessons fell quite low on the list of activities in their instrumental music programs, too, supporting the viewpoints illustrated in Phase I. Any number of accessibility hindrances, such as time necessary for travel to
private teachers/lesson opportunities, need for working vehicles to travel, other school conflicts, and deficit of qualified private area teachers may all may account for the minimal participation, which maintains comments made by interview participants and educational researchers (Bouck, 2004; Jimerson, 2003).

**Flexibility.**

Phase I participants from all levels of experience spoke to the need for flexibility in their positions. Changes that included moving concerts, making class schedule adjustments for assemblies, and fulfilling requests to perform for community special events were only some of modifications made by these teachers. In addition to flexibility, Phase I participants were also adept at leading or taking control of a situation. Obviously, if participants were the only instrumental music specialists in the school building or district, they must be able to make decisions, meet and mingle, complete business items, lead ensembles, and any handle number of other issues that may surface during the course of a school year.

Not addressed by interview participants, but included on the survey was student involvement in solo and small ensemble contests, the most utilized type of instrumental music outlet for students in these rural school districts according to results. Many rural school districts, due to limited overall school enrollment, have very limited (and irregular) large ensemble membership. For example, the reported minimum number of students involved in instrumental music was five for grades five/six and for grades seven/eight. For the high school grades, the minimum number of students involved was eight, which illustrated how far outside of the realm of possibilities a large ensemble
would be in this situation. Employing chamber ensembles as a staple in rural instrumental music programs may offer a means for students to make music together, exploiting the strong points of small numbers rather than focusing on the limitations (Jones, 2001; Latten, 2001; Snyder, 2009). This type of approach may also provide for much more independence on the part of the students in preparing and rehearsing the pieces, stretching their abilities perhaps more quickly than normal.

At the conclusion of the survey, respondents were able to compose general, open-ended comments in regard to their thoughts about teaching instrumental music in a rural school district. Many focused on the combinations of classes for which they were required to teach and how those responsibilities changed over the course of their careers. Moreover, differing resources were referenced, not only between types of school settings (i.e., urban, suburban, or rural) but within each type of school setting. Changing priorities of communities and students enrolled in the instrumental music programs also warranted a small number of comments.

While not addressed in the surveys, the topic of socioeconomic status (SES) appeared to be at the forefront of Phase I novice teachers' thought processes in regard to implications related to teaching in their respective rural districts. SES did not necessarily play a role in Phase I veteran teacher interview participants' decisions to stay or leave so much as it affected their approach to teaching and recruiting. In his review of literature, Albert (2006) outlined current research involving instrumental music and SES, reinforced through some of the issues faced by the novice rural teachers. According to Howley (1996), it may be in these cases that the school setting for these students had everything
to do with their participation in the instrumental music program, as he found that small, rural district more successfully served lower SES students than did higher SES schools.

**Discussion/Implications**

Although rural instrumental music education research is still rather limited in comparison to other areas of educational investigation, such as urban education or assessment, some progress has been made in addressing issues concerning rural districts. As budgets become tighter, even in financially secure districts, many of the adaptations that have been made by teachers in rural school districts may now have to be made in other districts (e.g., utilizing chamber ensembles more frequently due to lower memberships and cutting back of instrumental budgets due to school fiscal concerns). As a result, investigation may turn to topics more applicable to rural districts or districts with limited enrollment. This study may perhaps serve as a springboard for researchers to examine more closely some of the issues faced by instrumental music teachers in rural school settings.

**Discussion**

Phase I participants and Phase II respondents articulated the need for preservice preparation in as many areas as possible within teacher licensure programs through the description of the varied responsibility combinations included in their instrumental music positions. Despite accreditation institution requirements and university/college attempts to be all-encompassing in their preparation of teachers, it is oftentimes difficult to provide both the depth and the breadth of what might be necessary for these teachers to be
completely prepared when they enter the field. Preparation must encompass not only the setting in which one teaches but the specialty or specialties for which these teachers might be responsible. While rural education experts emphasize the merits of including some type of rural education-oriented courses in teacher training programs whose graduates serve in rural areas (Barley, 2009; Barley & Brigham, 2008; Barker & Beckner, 1985; Ingersoll, 2005), only a limited number of course credits are usually available in any licensure degree program. It may suffice in instrumental music education preparation to provide opportunities for university students to work with public school students in rural settings, to specifically discuss and hypothetically apply issues appropriate to rural instrumental music education in university coursework, and to encourage students to observe successful instrumental music models in rural schools. In doing so, it may be possible to avoid future conversations in which graduates of a particular teacher training program report little connection between what they encountered in their teacher training programs and what they actually experienced while teaching in a rural setting, as was reported by John in his interview. The lack of connection (both in music and setting) from preservice field experience to his current teaching duties exemplified the findings of Bonney (1985) and Maltas (2004), who found teachers in rural districts frustrated at the disparity between what they learned while in a teacher licensure program and what they could actually put into practice in the field.

The personal background a preservice teacher brings with him/her may become a predominant issue when he/she begins a job search. As shown by Phase II survey results, teachers in this study desired to teach in situations comparable to their own K-12
experiences, and often took their first job in a district similar to where they completed their student teaching or attended school themselves, underscoring previous research on teacher job selection (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Gilbert, 1995; Kelly, 2003; Moultry, 1985; Wohlfeil, 1986). Therefore, teacher educators should work with students and use their backgrounds and knowledge as a basis from which to plan teacher education programs.

This background knowledge may also influence student recruiting and retention appropriate for rural school settings. Both interview participants and survey respondents suggested that one way to better their rural school ensembles was to enroll more students, supporting Goodstein's results (1987) in which an instrumental music program was perceived as being successful if it had a larger enrollment. Perhaps finding ways to incorporate more size-appropriate means of music-making would offer the feeling of success to instrumental music teachers in these situations (Jones, 2001; Latten, 2001; Snyder, 2009). Through creative integration of recruiting and retention techniques in rural school districts, increasing enrollments may indeed help establish a firm foundation in these schools. Future studies investigating successful student recruiting techniques for rural instrumental music programs with large memberships may prove useful in not only rural districts, but other settings as well.

In situations where the instrumental music teacher may be the only expert in that specialization area within the district, building support networks became exceedingly important, as evidenced by both phases of the study. This conclusion reinforced Huysman's (2008) investigation of rural school teachers' job satisfaction. The
consequential relationships cultivated while working with colleagues, both within and outside of the specialty area, as well as administrators, were shown to be vital to the general well-being and educational focus of the interview participants. Colleagues played an important role in the professional lives of the rural instrumental music teachers, maintaining the findings of previous studies that demonstrated the interconnectedness apparent among teachers in general (Haar, 2007; Maltas, 2004). It may be conceivable that these relationships provided the appreciation and association necessary to encourage teachers to remain in a rural school district, turning teachers who would potentially leave a situation into those who are compelled to remain, counteracting Russell's findings (2007). Researchers could focus future inquiry on the relationship between building administration and instrumental music programs and teachers. Priorities differ from one school building to another in regard to programs and activities offered to students. Thus investigating this interaction may prove useful in terms of program support.

The importance of place, as an extension of the rural school's location, was evidenced through interviews but more difficult to ascertain from the survey due to the nature of forced responses. Items such as "proximity to larger city", "teacher's spouse/family connected to the area", and "teacher connected to the area" rated relatively high (i.e., $M = 2.72, SD = 1.03$; $M = 2.77, SD = 1.45$; $M = 2.64, SD = 1.36$, respectively on a scale of 1 to 4). There were also comments made in open-ended responses that summarized respondents’ positive and negative experiences in rural school districts relevant to place, which emphasized the impact of understanding each community on its own merit. This, then, reinforced previous research that examined the importance of
understanding the community in which one lives and works (Ilvento, 1990; Lyson, 2002; Maltas, 2004; White & Reid, 2008).

One way that rural instrumental music teaching positions may be made more attractive to potential teachers is for universities and colleges to find means to improve outreach activities for teachers and students in these school settings (Delzell & Adelson, 1990). Encouragement from higher education for these teachers to seek out means to expand their students' musical opportunities may be one way to promote instrumental music programs in rural schools, thus beginning a positive cycle of expectations and achievement as demonstrated by previous research (Buys & Bursnall, 2007; Soto, Lum, & Sheehan-Campbell, 2009). By the same token, teachers who gain employment in these districts should understand that oftentimes these programs must be approached differently from what they might have experienced in other school setting types (Wilcox, 2005). Success in these districts may be viewed through a different lens than what they personally consider, or others teaching in a different setting consider, to be success. This idea was confirmed in studies by Maltas (2004) and Pohland (1995), who examined the transition that teachers underwent and relationships fostered during their time teaching in a rural school district. These teachers revised their expectations to better meet the expectations of their communities and realities of their music programs. Future research in this area may include finding ways to offer private lesson opportunities in rural districts to contribute to success. As most instrumental music preservice teachers are anxious to apply their teaching competence, finding ways to link these students with rural
students who are equally as anxious for guidance on their instruments may offer a wealth of reciprocal teaching/learning opportunities.

The Phase II relationship found between the settings in which students completed their student teaching and subsequently obtained their first jobs exhibited a tendency for teachers to seek familiarity or opportunity. The realization that students may more than likely desire to teach in a setting that is familiar to them may be important for teacher educators to consider when scheduling field experiences, choosing focus topics in methods courses, and discussing teaching careers during advising sessions, as suggested by Fant (1997) and Wolfgang (1991). By providing varied opportunities and encouraging students to try field experiences and other music related activities in diverse situations while still under the tutelage of cooperating teachers and university mentors, teachers in training may discover the possibilities evident outside their individual teaching comfort zones. This finding, however, contradicts Phase I teachers' student teaching settings and subsequent employment. Only two of the interviewed teachers completed their student teaching experience in a rural school district and then obtained teaching jobs in similar school settings.

Despite the desire to teach in a familiar situation, the majority of the survey respondents in this study taught in a rural district for their first job (rural – 61.4%, suburban – 23.6%, urban – 15.0%). The range of years spent teaching in their first district was interesting, however, ranging less than one year to 39 years. Surprisingly, many respondents reported staying in their first position for only two to three years. The likelihood of a new teacher securing his/her first job in a rural school district appeared
relatively high. It would be beneficial to prepare preservice teachers for instrumental music positions such as these and provide opportunities for students to observe rural school district exemplars. Witnessing success stories may serve as incentive for new teachers in these rural school districts to persevere in order to build their own successful instrumental music program. In the future, researchers may wish to examine the average number of years that instrumental music teachers remain in their first teaching position, not only in rural settings, but suburban and urban as well. The impact of instrumental music teachers' continuity and longevity may supply insight into expanding memberships in instrumental music programs.

Similarly, the number of predecessors in rural school teaching positions averaged three teachers per ten years, reiterating the respondents' median and mode ratings for the length of time they remained in their first teaching position. Likewise, novice and mid career interview participants shared that in the ten years prior to their arrival in the district, instrumental music teacher turn-over was a common occurrence. John's instrumental music position was a case in point. He was the fourth teacher in four year, a circumstance that certainly would not lead to consistency of any type. Remaining in a district for less than ten years may be noteworthy due to the trend upheld by some schools to not apply all of an applicant's years of teaching experience in other districts to the new school's salary schedule. As other researchers have shown, a potential salary loss for the applicant can serve as a deterrent for seeking a new teaching position (McLain, 2009). In the present study, the majority (86.4%) of the Phase II respondents who moved out of rural settings in these first years of teaching did, in fact, move to
suburban districts. While the results of a 2004-2005 survey by NCES on teacher mobility do not speak directly to the type of district into which teachers moved (i.e., urban, suburban, rural), it did report that 15% of the total number of teachers who taught in rural school districts either moved to another district (7.3%) or left the profession completely (7.7%), evidencing similar turn-over as reported by respondents.

Of instrumental music teaching grade combinations, grades five through twelve was, by far, the most common combination of grades taught for both phases of the study. This was expected, as fifth grade is the most common grade in which to start instruments (Delzell & Doerksen, 1998). This finding highlighted the wide range of ages for which most respondents in rural school districts were responsible to teach, implying that they were the only teachers in their respective schools of that specialty. In combination with these instrumental music classes, many teachers were also responsible for some type of general music or choir class. At least 12 of the respondents seemed to be the only music teacher in the school, as all possibilities were checked on their completed survey forms. Situations like this most definitely require versatility. The sheer variety of open-ended responses that explained teaching responsibilities was remarkable. Other teaching responsibilities for instrumental music teachers in rural schools consisted of general music for various combinations of elementary and middle school students, music theory and history classes, middle school and high school choirs, handbells, and tutoring, among others, again confirming studies which show that rural teachers are often required to teach an array of classes (Barley, 2009; Barley & Brigham, 2008; Barrow & Burchett, 2005; Bauer, Forsythe, Kinney, 2009). This variety underscores that which was found in
Phase I. Of the interview participants, those teaching strictly instrumental music were in the minority. The majority had theory, general music, or choir aspects to their positions. It may prove useful to investigate how teachers whose job descriptions encompass multiple specialty areas (i.e., general, vocal, and instrumental music) structure their ensembles and class schedules in order to meet the needs of the students and the school. Additionally, research into the progression of job modifications (i.e., adding or combining positions after a teacher was hired in a school district) could offer insight into how to assist these teachers. For example, did the teacher begin the job supervising a study hall in addition to instrumental teaching duties and if so, did that teacher willingly fill that study hall with a class instead, as was the case for interview participant, Brad? Or were other duties assigned to these teachers instead?

Conclusions

1. Ohio instrumental music teachers cite teaching setting and teaching load as positive factors affecting the teaching of instrumental music in rural districts.

2. Ohio instrumental music teacher cite cost of living (if they live in the district) and the recommendation of colleagues for the position as negative factors affecting or not influencing the teaching of instrumental music in rural districts.

3. Ohio rural instrumental music teachers teach a variety of music courses beyond their area of specialization (e.g., general music, choir, etc.).

4. Teachers who exclusively attended rural schools for their own K-12 education are more likely to teach in a rural setting.
5. Teachers who student teach in a rural setting are more likely to take their first job in a rural setting.

6. A variety of factors including program size, support networks, personal goals, and job expectation, influence instrumental music teachers’ approaches to teaching in a rural school district.

**Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

This study relied on volunteer participants who elected to participate in an individual interview session or to complete an online survey. The reader is advised to interpret these results carefully since the respondents represent only a small portion of the total number of instrumental music teachers in Ohio. A different pool of interview participants, survey non-respondents, and potential respondents who were not selected to receive the online survey invitation may have had dissimilar responses. Therefore, the reader must be cautious in generalizing the results, while at the same time, attempt to draw connections to previous studies.

Most respondents in Phase II of the study were less experienced teachers, comparatively new to the profession. There is no extant research that has directly described the demographics of instrumental music teachers in the state of Ohio. However, Bauer, Forsythe, and Kinney (2009), in a study on Ohio music teachers’ opinions about professional development, reported percentages of music teachers in the state (0-5 years at 14%, 6-10 years at 16%, 11-20 years at 28%, and 21-30+ years at 42%). In the present study, the highest response rate (27.2%) was from the range of zero
to five years of experience, even though Bauer, Forsythe, and Kinney showed that this range of experience contained the smallest percentage of music teachers within the state of Ohio. This result might be indicative of the comfort level in accessing online surveys for that particular demographic, though it is difficult to generalize to that degree.

This study was limited to instrumental music teachers who had taught previously or were currently teaching in rural school districts in Ohio. While Ohio may be considered an urban state overall, it contains a large proportion of rural K-12 students as well (Johnson & Strange, 2007). The conditions of each rural school district are unique, not only within the state but outside of the state as well. For example, the rural school districts in the Appalachian area of southeast Ohio may have much different concerns than do the rural districts in the northwest part of Ohio. Both of these areas, in turn, may have quite different concerns than rural school districts in New Mexico, Alaska, or Georgia. As it stands, all-inclusive remedies to problems facing rural school districts may not effectively or appropriately address the individualities of each district (Bouck, 2004). Although the present study was limited to Ohio, researchers may find that completing a similar study in a different area of the country could provide information as to the influence of various types of rural settings to teacher turn-over in these types of districts.

Further examination of rural schools with thriving instrumental music programs may serve to provide exemplars for other districts. Illuminating the processes implemented in these school programs by their respective instrumental music teachers might not only provide a model for new teachers but for those with experience in other
settings (i.e., suburban or urban) as well. In a similar vein, investigating rural schools' involvement in solo/small ensemble events could also offer useful insight into performing opportunities for students in these schools and the focus of various instrumental music programs. Perhaps these schools and teachers are highlighting the positives that their schools offer as opposed to attempting to fit into categories not feasible in their situation.

Examination of the similarities that may exist between rural schools and urban schools may illuminate ways to approach some of the traditionally urban issues that are becoming more prevalent in rural settings, such as transience, poverty, changing family structures, and changing community expectations, as emphasized in recent rural education research (Carr & Kefalas, 2009; Grey, 1997; Vissing, 1999). Researchers may wish to investigate these phenomena further in a longitudinal study. Some of these transformations may, potentially, affect the standing of instrumental music in rural schools. If so, modifying what is traditionally thought of as school instrumental music or school band might become a necessity in the future.

One unexpected finding to be confirmed by future research was the mean rating outcome of teaching load. Multiple teacher participants from Phase I expressly stated that their teaching load was extremely heavy, even resulting health issues in one of the veteran teachers. In contrast, teacher participants placed teaching load at the top of a list of factors influencing teaching in a rural district. While positioned as the highest overall factor of the given possibilities, that status was lukewarm at best, illustrating potential for more thorough inquiry.
Future studies may also focus on university/college outreach programs to provide means of assistance to rural instrumental music teachers who need support in raising the overall quality of their school instrumental music programs. Investigating existing outreach opportunities or initiating such opportunities may not only help instrumental music programs in schools improve but also serve as a recruiting tool for the sponsoring university/college. Finding better techniques to encourage instrumental music teachers in rural districts to take an active role in providing these types of opportunities can only benefit the students in rural schools. By making the effort to do so, rural instrumental music students will have similar musical opportunities as students who may be located in a geographical area closer to a greater variety of musical resources.
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Appendix A: New Classificatory Scheme for Locale Codes
What are locale codes?

"Locale codes" are derived from a classification system originally developed by NCES in the 1980's to describe a school's location ranging from "large city" to "rural." The codes are based on the physical location represented by an address that is matched against a geographic database maintained by the Census Bureau. This database is the Topographically Integrated and Geographically Encoded Referencing system, or TIGER.

In 2005 and 2006, NCES supported work by the Census Bureau to redesign the original locale codes in light of changes in the U.S. population and the definition of key geographic concepts.

Why did NCES revise its locale code system?

Two developments following the 2000 Decennial Census led to a change in NCES's locale code system. The first was the substantial improvement in geocoding technology that made it possible to locate addresses precisely, using longitude and latitude coordinates.

The second development was a change in the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) definition of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. OMB re-examines and fine-tunes basic geographic concepts and definitions after every decennial Census. The revisions following the 2000 census were more extensive than they had been in 1990 and 1980. OMB introduced a "core based statistical area" system that relied less on population size and county boundaries and more on the proximity of an address to an urbanized area.
What are the new locale codes like?

The new locale codes are based on an address’s proximity to an urbanized area (a densely settled core with densely settled surrounding areas). This is a change from the original system based on metropolitan statistical areas. To distinguish the two systems, the new system is referred to as "urban-centric locale codes."

The urban-centric locale code system classifies territory into four major types: city, suburban, town, and rural. Each type has three subcategories. For city and suburb, these are gradations of size – large, midsize, and small. Towns and rural areas are further distinguished by their distance from an urbanized area. They can be characterized as fringe, distant, or remote.

What is the net effect of the change to an urban-centric system?

Compared to the old locale code system, the urban-centric locale codes allow more precision in describing an area. For example, there is a new category for small cities, and rural areas that are truly remote can be distinguished from those closer to an urban core. The urban-centric system places a larger number of addresses in town locales and correspondingly fewer in suburbs/urban fringe. However, the percent of schools that are in city locales does not change much with the urban-centric system. The same is true for the percent of schools in rural locales.

How accurate are urban-centric locale codes?

Geocoding technology has made it possible to know the exact latitude and longitude of about 91 percent of schools, and somewhat less precise locations for the remaining 9 percent. The TIGER database used in assigning locale codes updates information for about one-third of communities every year through the American Community Survey. These developments make today's locale codes far more accurate than was possible in the past.
How are locale codes assigned to school districts?

A school district’s locale code is not assigned on the basis of the central office address. It is derived from the locale codes of the schools in the district. If 50 percent or more of the public school students attend schools with the same locale code, that locale code is assigned to the district. For example, if 60 percent of students were enrolled in schools with a "rural - distant" locale code, and 40 percent were enrolled in schools with a "town - small" locale code, the district would be assigned a "rural - distant" locale code. If no single locale code accounts for 50 percent of the students, then the major category (city, suburb, town, or rural) with the greatest percent of students determines the locale; the locale code assigned is the smallest or most remote subcategory for that category.

(Taken from http://nces.ed.gov/whatsnew/commissioner/remarks2006/6_12_2006.asp)
Appendix B: Ohio Instrumental Music Teacher Survey
Ohio Instrumental Music Teacher Survey

Page One

I. Teaching Experience

1. How many years have you taught instrumental music as a licensed teacher in public/private schools?

2. How many years have you taught instrumental music in your current position?

3. How many years have you taught as a licensed teacher in public/private schools in each of the following types of school districts?
   - URBAN
   - SUBURBAN
   - RURAL

4. How many years did you remain in the district where you first taught?

5. In what setting was your first teaching position?
   - URBAN
   - SUBURBAN
   - RURAL

II. Personal Background

6. How many years did you spend in each of the following types of school districts during your own K-12 years of schooling?
   - URBAN
   - SUBURBAN
   - RURAL
7. During your teacher education program (undergraduate or post baccalaureate licensure), to what extent did you desire to teach in each of the following types of school districts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Definitely</th>
<th>Probably</th>
<th>Maybe</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBURBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. During your teacher education program, to what extent were each of the following types of school districts included in your field experience/practicum?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBURBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9. In what type of school district did you student teach?

- URBAN
- SUBURBAN
- RURAL

10. As a result of your teacher education program, to what extent did you feel prepared to teach in each of the following types of school districts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very prepared</th>
<th>Somewhat prepared</th>
<th>A little prepared</th>
<th>Not at all prepared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBURBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
11. In teaching methods courses during your teacher education program, how often were issues related to teaching in each of the following types of school districts addressed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat often</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBURBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12. During advising sessions in your teacher education program, how often were issues related to teaching in each of the following types of school districts addressed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat often</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>URBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUBURBAN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RURAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NOTE: If you have never taught in a rural school district, your answer on the next question will redirect you to another page. Please complete the remainder of the questions on that page to the best of your ability and submit your completed survey. Thank you!

13. I have NOT taught in a rural school district:
   True
   False
III. Teaching in Rural Schools

NOTE: This section is to be completed only by those instrumental music teachers who have taught or are currently teaching in a rural school setting. If you are currently in a rural school setting or if you have taught in a rural setting at any time during your career, even if you no longer do so, please complete this section. Thank you.

14. In how many different rural school districts have you taught?
   1
   2
   3 or more

NOTE: For the following questions, answer in reference to the rural school district that you taught in the most number of years.

15. On average, what was/is your rural school's approximate enrollment for each of the following grades in the school district where you taught/teach?

   School/grade enrollment (estimate)
   Grades 5-6
   Grades 7-8
   Grades 9-12

16. On average, what was/is your rural school's instrumental music program's approximate enrollment for each of the following grades?

   Instrumental music student enrollment (estimate)
   Grades 5-6
   Grades 7-8
   Grades 9-12

17. What were/are your teaching responsibilities in your position in the rural school district? (check all that best summarize a "typical" load)
   5-12 instrumental music
   6-12 instrumental music
   7-12 instrumental music
   9-12 instrumental music
   Elementary general music, grades:
   Middle school/Junior high general music, grades:
   Vocal music, grades:
   Other (write in):
18. Please check the appropriate box as it applies to your time spent teaching in a rural school district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers were hired</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music teaching positions were combined/lost</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My position was eliminated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My job description was modified</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

19. During your time teaching in a rural school district, how often are/were your students involved in the following in a typical year?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Once in a While</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>After school rehearsals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large group adjudicated events</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solo/small ensemble contests</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ensemble festivals</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School sponsored band trips</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honor bands</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group lessons</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University outreach (university students visiting/observing/coaching/assisting)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masterclasses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

20. If you checked “other” above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.

21. In your rural school district, to what extent did the following activities overlap with instrumental music rehearsals/practices, resulting in students splitting their time between activities?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Regularly</th>
<th>Often</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Choir</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orchestra</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>After school jobs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student involvement in religious activities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students' responsibilities with families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
22. If you checked "other" above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.

23. If a student had time conflicts, how were those conflicts resolved?

24. Please rate the level of support you have/had during your time teaching in a rural district from the following sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-music colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25. If you checked "other" above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.

26. How often did you access the following support networks while teaching in a rural school district?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Support Network</th>
<th>Very Often</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Somewhat Often</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers in my district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MUSIC teachers in my district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music teachers OUTSIDE my district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating teachers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mentors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representatives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

27. If you checked "other" above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.
NOTE: The following question concerns influences on your professional development (e.g. workshops, university courses, etc.) during your rural teaching.

28. Rate the level (frequency/amount) of your participation in or with and the value of each of the following in terms of helping improve your teaching in a rural setting (1 star = low, 4 stars = high):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation level</th>
<th>Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distinct-level workshops (non-music)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer university courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time university coursework (held on a campus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full-time university coursework (held on a campus)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-line university courses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional music conferences (NATIONAL)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional music conferences (STATE)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinct-level workshops (music)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers in my district</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other non-music teachers in my district</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other music teachers outside my district</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College/university mentors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation level</td>
<td>Value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cooperating teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music store representatives</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

29. If you checked "other" above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.

30. Rate the extent to which each of the following is a positive or negative factor related to teaching music in a rural setting (do not rate if not applicable):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>Positive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Salary</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching schedule</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching load</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior/attitude of students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for developing a quality program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you live(d) in the district, cost of living</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities for instrumental music program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proximity to larger city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

31. If you checked "other" above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.
32. Rate the extent to which the following were/are true or not true as to why you chose to teach in a rural school district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>NOT True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>More comfortable for me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More relaxed/less pressure than other districts</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A colleague recommended the position</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The position was the only offer I had at the time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am better suited to teach in this setting than other settings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The program already had a good reputation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to live in that geographical area</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I thought it would be a challenge I would learn from and enjoy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted the position but did not intend to stay for a long time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (if not applicable, please leave blank)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33. If you checked “other” above, please write in your answer. If not applicable, please leave blank.

NOTE: The following questions on this page are to be answered only if you previously taught in a rural setting but do NOT currently.

34. To what type of school district did you move?
   URBAN
   SUBURBAN

35. Rate the extent to which the following is true or not true as to why you moved from a rural district to your new district:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>True</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>NOT True</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>It was in a geographical area I wanted</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It had more potential for me to be successful</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The pay was better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The teaching schedule was better</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I felt more comfortable with those students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was in an area that my family (spouse/others) were connected to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It was in an area I was personally connected to</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was more potential in the school for my own musical gratification</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It had better facilities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It had more community support</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had taken the rural program as far as it could go</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I simply needed a change</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I needed a new challenge</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was bored with the rural school environment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never intended to stay long in the rural school district</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
IV. Concluding Thoughts and Information

36. If you know the answer, please tell the number of instrumental music teachers who were in your rural teaching position during the 10 years prior to your taking the over the position:

37. What are your general thoughts about teaching instrumental music in a rural school district?

38. Further comments or suggestions for future study?