How They Decide: A case study examining the decision making process for keeping or cutting music in a K-12 public school district

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of the Ohio State University

By

Marci L. Major, B.S., M.M.

Graduate Program in Music

The Ohio State University

2010

Dissertation Committee:

Patricia J. Flowers, Advisor

Hilary Apfelstadt

Timothy Gerber

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine and understand the decision-making process for keeping or cutting music programs in one selected public school district. Berkley School District, in the Detroit suburb of Berkley, Michigan, has not made extreme cuts to the music program in over ten years, nor have they specifically targeted their music program when budgets cuts do occur. Berkley's profile shows that their numbers for school enrollment, minority student percentage, number of students receiving free and reduced lunch, and percent of English language learners are all situated in the median of these demographics for the surrounding school districts. Similarly, Berkley's budget does not exceed their neighboring districts.

The results showed that Berkley Schools District's Administrators have commitment to offering a well-rounded education to all of their students, and that music education plays a large part in that education. To achieve the district's mission, Berkley administrators rely on community support, quality teaching, and creative ways of working with a finite budget. Leaders in the district actively seek ways to generate new revenue, collaborate with other districts to save money and only make cuts to areas that do not affect programming.

Research shows that administrators, parents, teachers, and students claim to value music education. Yet, in an age of increasing accountability in core subjects such as math and reading that coincides with economic hardships such as layoffs and rising health care costs, music education faces reduced or eliminated budgets, programs, and staffing. Some schools have eliminated K-5 curricular music, while others cancelled after school programs, cut teachers, or required remaining teachers to work overloaded schedules. While some schools have made drastic cuts, however, other schools and even entire school districts have not cut music, or at least have not targeted music education specifically when trying to save revenue. Hopefully Berkley's success with a fixed budget and limited state support might encourage other music educators and administrators to understand new ways to advocate for, and keep music alive within their own schools.

Acknowledgments

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who made this study possible. I would first like to thank my advisor Dr. Patricia Flowers and committee members Dr. Hilary Apfelstadt and Dr. Timothy Gerber. I greatly appreciate your encouragement, wisdom, expertise and time spent working with my dissertation and me. Next I would like to thank the faculty and staff of the Berkley School District, especially Maryann Maiuri, who allowed me to enter the district and conduct this research. Without your cooperation, openness and faith, this study would not have been possible. Finally, I would like to thank my wonderful friend Jim Rutter for all of his time spent discussing ideas, reading and editing.

Throughout this process many people have offered emotional support, especially during the rough patches. I would like to thank my great friend Ann Hicks for helping me stick to the "22" schedule, Joe Duchi for bringing candy to the office on long work nights, my dog Pippin for reminding me that sometimes I had to stop working and take walks, and my fiancée Chris Hall for endless patience, love and trips to Ohio. Finally I would like to thank my family. Thanks for encouraging me throughout my whole life to reach for my dreams. I'm now the official "Doc Major!"

Vita

1997……Owen J. Roberts School District

2001……B.S. Music Education, West Chester University

2002-07……Choral Director 7-12, Berkley School District

2007……M.M. Choral Conducting, Michigan State University

2007-10……Graduate Teaching Associate, The Ohio State University

Fields of Study

Major Field: Music Education

Cognate: Choral Conducting

Table of Contents

Chapter 1

Introduction

Music advocates have always struggled to gain widespread support for the inclusion of music education in the public school curriculum. This struggle has continued even as advocates have adjusted their arguments to counter the opinions hindering music education in the public schools. Starting with Lowell Mason in the mid-19th century, music educators tried to find a permanent place for music among other subjects like reading and math that educators artificially sanctified as "core" disciplines. Lowell Mason fought to justify the importance of music education because educational leaders did not see enough edifying value to include it in the school day (Mark, 2007). In the 1960's, music education changed to become more inclusive of all styles and genres, and to include more students (Choate, 1968). In the 1990's music education became more standards based to fit in with a growing age of accountability (Koza, 2006). Today in the 2000's, music education must additionally fight against shrinking budgets in a tough economy.[1]

Since the dot-com bubble of 1995-2000, the current real-estate slump and related financial problems, Americans have seen the economy slow significantly since 2000 (Leonhardt, 2009). Over the past ten years, the unemployment rate has

[1] Note the word "additionally" – music education still faces issues of inclusivity, and standards and accountability.

more than doubled (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2010)[2], lowering state and local tax revenues[3], and increasing local legislator's difficulty to pass tax levies needed to support school districts. Many states report limited and diminishing funds for public schools as a result of these problems (Dillon, 2009; Martin, 2010; New Jersey School Boards Association, 2010; Stover, 2009). As the economy declines, school district officials find themselves being forced to provide quality education with less and less funding and raising costs of education[4].

Additionally, advocates for music education face challenges stemming from changes in educational policy. The *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 shifted educational priorities towards subjects on standardized achievement tests. These subjects include math, science, English and history, but do not include music or the other arts. Furthermore, the *No Child Left Behind Act* states that school districts must measure and prove that students make Adequate Yearly Process (AYP) (michigan.gov). This means that school districts not only have to prepare all students to pass one set of standardized tests, but must continue to prepare students to achieve higher scores every year. To ensure the success and continued growth of every child on these tests, school district decision makers shifted spending toward education in the subjects covered by the standardized tests, which consequently exerted a negative effect on music education.

---

[2] The Michigan unemployment rate has more than quadrupled
[3] Decreased tax revenues include property taxes, sales taxes, and use tax collection
[4] These costs include, but are not limited to, inflation, health care, retirement benefits and the cost of supplies

Many administrators reported a shift in money allocation toward unfunded mandates often affecting the amount of music education funded (Abril, 2006). Also, these educational shifts resulted in an increased amount of time spent on tested subjects and a reduced time for other subjects (McMurrer, 2007). Nationwide, school districts changed scheduling to give students more time in tested subjects. Because educators did not also lengthen the school day, however, allocating more time to tested subjects decreased the amount of time devoted to other courses of study.

In an age of increased accountability and educational standardization accompanied by tighter budgets and fewer funds, core subjects such as math and reading receive more funding and instructional time, while non-core subjects like music potentially face reductions or elimination in budgets, programs, and staffing. In spite of these changes, Americans—including school administrators and general education teachers—overwhelming support music in public education (Abril & Gault, 2006, 2008; ESC, 2006; Gallup, 2002; Gerrity, 2007; Illinois Creates, 2005; Punke, 1972; Schultz, 2006). Administrators agree, however, that budgetary, policy, and scheduling considerations continue to negatively affect music education (Abril, 2006, 2008). In this environment, educators facing a choice between arts education and other tested subjects will rank arts education lower in importance (Marzano, Kendall, & Cicchinelli 1999).

Mainstream media outlets have addressed these issues in their coverage of arts budget concerns. Moreover, the conflict between standardized testing and the

arts has received more media attention than any other topic in arts education (Education Commission of the States (ECS), 2005). In their reporting, journalists have painted a very bleak picture of the arts as a dying subject that will soon disappear from public school curriculum altogether (ECS, 2005).

Those journalists have not painted a completely inaccurate picture. In many school districts across the nation, the factors of new policy and tighter funding have taken priority and negatively affected music education. Some schools have eliminated K-5 music while others slashed after-school programs, cut teachers, reduced budgets, or demanded that the remaining teachers work overloaded schedules (Gillespie, 1997; Kavanaugh, 2009; Music For All Foundation, 2004; Preston, 2009; Scheib, 2003; Wisconsin Education Association Council, 2004; Woodworth, Gallagher & Guha, 2004). National statistics concerning music education support these findings, by showing that schools nationwide have decreased the total minutes given to music education during the school day and have also experienced declining enrollment in music classes (Gerber & Gerrity, 2007; Illinois Creates, 2005; Lehman, 1991; McMurrer, 2008; Woodworth, et. al., 2007).

While some schools have made drastic cuts, however, other schools and even whole school districts have not cut music (Coysh, 2005; Iida, 1991; Leidlig, 1983; Pittman, 2003). Some schools have even started and maintained new programs (Gillespie & Hamann, 2010) and these successes have occurred on many levels. Coysh (2005) described continued growth in enrollment in secondary music classes,

Pittman (2002) examined district-wide maintenance of music programs over a ten-year period, and Gillespie & Hamann (2010) reported that seventy-five different school districts nationwide have implemented new strings programs.

While each of these thriving situations differs in the configuration and definitions of "quality" or "thriving," research finds that their successes stem from supportive administration, quality teaching and adequate funding. National statistics from 2008 about music education also support these accounts from individual school districts, stating that administrators report 71% of eighth-graders attend schools where music is part of the state or district curriculum (National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), 2008).

While these examples offer an opposing viewpoint to the negative and doomed picture the media paints for music education, they also present an interesting question. How do some schools manage to keep music while others cannot? The dichotomy stems from a number of factors, not all of which include policy and budgetary concerns.

Need for the Study

Many school districts face the challenges of reduced overall budgets and having to implement ways for students to achieve higher scores on standardized tests, yet some find a way to keep music while others do not. This situation presents a puzzling dichotomy that has not received much attention by researchers in the field of music education. While some of the aforementioned research shows a number of thriving programs or continued success of music programming in

schools, other research only points fingers of blame at the many factors that have led to an overall decline in music education.

These studies offer the field of music education valuable information. By examining how thriving programs function, and what factors contribute to the success of those programs, music educators can learn what programs require in order to reach successful levels. The needs of a successful program include, but are not limited to, quality teachers, administrative support, and adequate funding. Furthermore, these studies offer inspiration, and advocates can use them as a great tool for showing those in need that those possibilities exist. These studies, however, do not show the mechanisms by which successful programs acquired or implemented the factors that contributed to their success, nor does this research discuss what such programs must do to sustain the current necessary level of support.

By examining the current threats to music education in the public school, music educators learn what problems exist and what kinds of solutions they require. The environment for music education does not seem to be improving, and music education advocacy efforts must try to equip teachers and parents with the tools they will need to defend music education and keep in the public schools. Currently, advocates present arguments that range from showing the utilitarian benefits of music education, to making music more standardized and sequential (Benham, 1991; Eisner, 2002; Fowler, 1996; Music For All Foundation, 2004; musicforall.org; supportmusic.com).

Some schools manage to save their programs by using these advocacy tools (Benham, 1996; Weintrauh, 1982). These arguments, however, only show why music has importance, but they do not show educators how to implement logistical solutions. Also, these arguments do not prevent the problems from recurring.

As we continue to treat the symptoms of failing music education programs, we need to find more effective and efficient ways to tackle the systemic problem by offering a more permanent solution. If administrators truly value music and want to include it in the curriculum, but are still faced with difficult decisions and competing educational mandates, what the field needs now is an understanding of how educational leaders make those decisions about music curriculum. This first step of understanding can lead music educators to advocacy efforts that can turn a few success stories into many.

Statement of the Problem and Purpose of the Study

In a time of challenging economic conditions and shifting educational policy, school districts aim to obtain the highest student achievement possible. In pursuing that goal, some schools keep a quality music education program while others reduce or eliminate it. This problem of elimination permeates the entire nation as many states report limited and diminishing funds for public schools, which often negatively affect music programs (Dillon, 2009; ECS, 2005; Kavanaugh, 2009; Martin, 2010; Music For All, 2004; New Jersey Schools Boards Association, 2010; Stover 2009).

In order to help schools keep music programs alive, researchers must examine schools that have built and maintained successful programs to determine the processes of decision-making about music education that those districts have employed. This dissertation specifically examined how the Berkley School district in Berkley, Michigan sustained its music program during economically challenging times while also continuing to meet the requirements of the *No Child Left Behind Act*. By examining schools like Berkley, and their decision-making processes, researchers can strive to:

- Enlighten teachers about district decision-making processes and outcomes relevant to music education in public schools.
- Provide information about methods and strategies that have been used successfully in sustaining music programs.
- Raise the level of teacher, community and administrative interactions and conversations
- Ameliorate hardened positions and stances between music teachers, administrators and the public.
- Provide tools and strategies for music advocacy

Research Questions

Questions that guided the research were:

1. What influences persuade Berkley School District decision makers to keep music in the curriculum?
2. What criteria do Berkley's school board and administration use in deciding the value of music education?

3. What obstacles must Berkley School District overcome to keep its music program?

4. How do non-budgetary factors play a role in determining music education's future?

5. Does Berkley target music for budget cuts more or less than any other area? When faced with a budgetary crisis, what criteria has Berkley used to make their programming decisions?

6. What can other school districts learn by looking at Berkley School District's model for music education?

Operational Definitions

Administrators – Individuals who hold decision-making power about staffing, curriculum, budget, on either the building or district level. This category includes all principals, assistant principals, the superintendent, assistant superintendents, and director of technology, curriculum, and assessment.

The Arts – The arts include visual arts, literature, and the performing arts. This dissertation specifically focuses on music, but refers to the arts literature when music specific literature was not available.

Bond Issue – Districts may choose to pass a bond issue that will generate new funds for non-general budget items. This can include, but is not limited to, new construction, technology, and repairs.

Building Consolidation – When a school district closes one building and has another absorb the students and staff. Building consolidation often results in loss of staff, but not the loss of resources.

Capital Outlay – Any non-consumable equipment bought for classes and professional organizational memberships.

Collaborative Programs – When two or more school districts work together to offer programming at a split cost. For example, Berkley participates in CASA with X other districts. This program provides advanced study in the arts courses such as AP Music theory at a fraction of the cost than if the district offered that course on their own in district. These programs often use off-campus space

Core Classes – In this dissertation core classes refers those that the state mandates for testing. The tested subjects include math, history, reading, and science.

Curricular Classes – Courses offered during the school day for credit towards graduation. Graduation requirements include math, history, English, science, foreign language, and the arts

Economic Challenge – When funding for public schools decreases or increases lower than the rate of inflation

Debt Fund/Sinking Fund – The money the school district must pay per year towards old bond issues.

Decision Makers – Any person who has authority in the school district to change staff, curriculum, or the budget. This group includes administrators and school board members.

Diseconomies of Scale – This term refers to a situation that occurs when a school district no longer experiences decreasing costs per increase of students, but rather experiences an increase in cost.

Durant Fund – A large sum of money awarded to Berkley School District as settlement against the State of Michigan. The district did not spend this money, but rather uses it as an internal bank, and also spends the interest each year on textbooks.

Economies of Scale – This term refers to the cost advantages that occur as a business expands.

Extracurricular Classes – Clubs, sporting events, and other activities that meet after school and do not receive credit.

Flight – When a mass of residents leave a school district due to unhappiness with administration, programming, cuts, or other decisions that affect a large group of students.

Foundation Grant – The basic foundation grant comprises monies that come from the State of Michigan awarded on a per pupil basis. Districts receive extra money from the state based on revenue gained from local taxes and special and categorical grants.

Full Time Equivalent – Teachers and students can partially work for or attend a school. Therefore when counting the number of teachers or students in a district, administrators refer to the full time equivalent (FTE) to refer to the sum of all the parts of teachers or students in the district. These numbers do not have to be whole.

For example, a teacher might teacher half a schedule, making them .5. This might make the teaching staff 5.5 total.

Fund Balance – This refers to the amount of money a school district has on reserve in the bank. Most districts are considered healthy if they keep a 10-20% balance. School districts need to keep a balance to deal with things such as budget surprises and cash flow.

General Fund – The general fund refers to the money Berkley spends on staff, programs, and support services.

Hold Harmless Tax – This was a one time option tax that individual school district had the option to pass in the state of Michigan after proposal A passed in 1994. It allowed districts to make up a negative difference in funding caused from switching between the two school funding systems.

Homestead Taxes – This tax comes from homestead property. In the state of Michigan school districts may not receive more than 6%.

Non-homestead Taxes – This tax comes from business property. In the state of Michigan this tax may not exceed 18%.

International Baccalaureate (IB) – An internationally organized and recognized curriculum. Berkley offers this program in a K-8 building and through a collaborative program for high school students.

Quality Program – This study refers only to the perception of quality.

School of Choice – Individual school districts may choose to enroll non-resident students

Upper Administrators – A branch of administrators who specifically work at the board office and mostly make decisions based on the district level. This category excludes principals and assistant principals.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

In an atmosphere of worsening economic conditions, where public school districts face difficult decisions mandated by constrained budgets and increased standards of accountability, music education finds itself fighting for survival. Music educators might want to simply dismiss any reductions and eliminations in music programs on decreased funding alone. But in reality, the decision to keep or cut music programming results from a complicated combination of school and administrator values, changing educational priorities, and finite financial resources that schools must use to provide students with the best education possible. This review of literature examines some of the articles and studies that discuss how policy, funding, philosophy, economics, and attitudes towards music education shape both the amount of programming and the function of music education in public schools.

Current Factors Affecting the Decline of Music Education

Research states that the most negative factors affecting music education are the No Child Left Behind Act, budgets, standardized tests, and scheduling (Abril 2006, 2008). Both the mainstream and academic-oriented media support these findings, with "arts budget concerns" and "standardized testing versus arts in education" receiving more coverage than any other topic related to the arts role in education (Education Commission of the States (ECS), 2005). These anecdotal news

stories "portray arts education as easily traded off in an era of cash-strapped school districts and an increasing focus on standardized testing" (ECS, 2005, p. 1). Furthermore, the media paints a bleak picture of a "frame that sets up an 'either/or' scenario in which arts education is pitted against core education priorities during budget shortfalls" (ECS, 2005, p. 1). These budgetary, scheduling, and policy issues are not new to music education, but have appeared throughout the history of music advocacy in a manner that seems "as if music educators have always struggled with the problem of justifying their programs in the public schools through the best and worst of times" (Elliott, 1983, p. 36). Music educators and advocates have indeed engaged in this struggle, especially when changes in policy and budget appear to or actually do favor some academic subjects over others.

Policy and Philosophy Issues

United States educational leaders know that "educational investments are important to the welfare of this country's citizens and economy" (Tychsen, 1999, p. 12). Parents and employers alike want high school graduates ready to contribute to society and also view education as "a means of weakening or breaking cycles of poverty that result from illiteracy or poor work skills" (Tychsen, 1999, p.12). To keep up with current trends, secure prominent positions and to offer the best education to all children, educational leaders in the United States closely monitor, analyze, and often change or make amendments to public education policy.

Since the inclusion of music in the public schools, arts advocates have fought for music's place and purpose within changing policies, and advocates have often

rethought, recast, or modified their philosophy of music education as a way to justify the inclusion and the importance of the arts in a multi-subject curriculum among other curricular subjects. For example, the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium tried to determine the role of the arts in a changing society, potentials for the arts in the community, and a vision for the future of arts education by specifically focusing on "better music for young people and the inclusion of music of varied cultures and genres in the school curriculum" (Hinckley, 2000, para. 1). After this symposium, some prominent leaders in music education urged advocates to reach out to community members, acquire new sources of patronage, and keep music in schools alive by showing how the arts can enrich the quality of life in their respective communities (Choate, 1968).

After the Tanglewood Symposium, music educators embarked on a new path of advocacy, but once again, educational policy and economic conditions changed. A nationwide recession in the 1970's forced music advocates to change focus from public relations to government relations in order to secure scarce funding (Mark, 2002). In the 1990's, the language of standards and accountability became ubiquitous and as such, began to govern educational choices and decisions (Benedict, 2007). Music advocates realized that institutional and societal changes had also shifted priorities away from music and towards standardized testing and advanced curricular studies. Music educators aligned advocacy efforts with these new educational goals and fought against the elimination of music education by changing programming to appear more serious and sequential like other subjects.

In response, "moving music to a more secure place in the curriculum was cited as a rationale for the development of national music standards in 1994" (Koza, 2006, para. 1).

Advocacy efforts to develop standards for music education originated with organizations such as Music Educators National Conference (MENC), first chartered officially in 1910 as the Music Supervisors National conference (MSNC), and changed in 1934 to MENC. This organization devoted a large portion of its efforts towards developing curriculum and instruction, and published dozens of curriculum-related guides including *Standard Course of Study in Music* (1921), *Outline of a Program for Music Education* (1940, 1951), and *The School Music Program: Description and Standards* (1974).

In 1986, MENC and thirty-one leaders of arts and arts education met in Philadelphia and formed the Ad Hoc National Arts Education Working Group (Mark, 2000, p. 15). That group became the National Coalition for Education in the Arts (NCEA) in 1988 and, "successfully advocated the inclusion of arts education in the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act* (Public Law 103-227) of 1994" (Mark, 2000, pp. 14-15). In an interview conducted by Lisa Renfro, Paul Lehman discussed the origins for the 1994 publication of the National Standards, which were written in response to the *Goals 2000 Act* of 1994:

> Since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983, music and the other arts had been struggling to survive in the curriculum . . . . In late 1991, the nation's governors met in Williamsburg, Virginia, and issued a major policy statement setting forth what they proposed to do to reform education,

> but pointedly omitting the arts from the list of essential disciplines.

In response, a group comprising "executive directors and presidents of the four major professional arts education associations in dance, art, music and theater (DAMT)" met in 1992 to begin work on national voluntary standards (Renfro 2004, pg. 38). Later, the National Council on Education Standards and Testing "issued a report calling for the development of content standards in the various disciplines and, unlike that of the National Governors' Association, this report mentioned the visual and performing arts" (Renfro 2004, pg.38). Shortly after, the George W. Bush administration sent its plan for educational reform to Congress, and federal funds became available for standards development. In response, the DAMT group changed its name to the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations, sought funding from the Department of Education and National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities and began developing standards for the arts.

Many of the ideas presented in The *National Standards for Arts Education* (1994) come from earlier publications. For example, the 1974 standards called for a comprehensive music program, establishing "a solid and permanent relationship with music" for every student, and was "written in response to the national demand for higher education quality and accountability" (Mark, 2000, p. 15). The 1994 Standards contain almost this exact wording. The National Standards specifically differed from earlier publications, however, because "the earlier standards were

established for a profession that was still trying very hard to convince the American people that music should be a curricular subject. Now, with the passage of the *Goals 2000 Act*, national goals were written to satisfy a congressional mandate" (Mark, 2000, p. 15).

The National Standards certainly gave music education focus and accountability but, "being more intellectual and demanding about the way we teach the arts will not alone succeed in winning them basic status, because the arts were not excluded for only those reasons" (Fowler, 1996, p. 9). Even after all of these efforts to standardize music education, "arts electives are being replaced by computer science, more math, more English, more history, exactly what economic interests dictate" (Fowler, 1996, p. 9).

In support of this claim, today one of the most pressing policy changes comes from The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 Public Law 107-110, 107th Congress, which took effect on January 8, 2002. This act's stated purpose "is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high-quality education and reach, at a minimum, proficiency on challenging State academic achievement standards and state academic assessments" (p. 15). This act manifested from a shift in societal and educational priorities that moved towards helping students achieve on standardized testing. Tested subjects included math, history, English, and science, but not music. Just five years after the act, research showed that the NCLB act had indeed influenced music education decision makers (Abril & Gault 2006, 2008; Gerrity 2007), and that tested subjects received

increased time while non-tested subjects got reduced both at the elementary and secondary level (McMurrer 2007, 2008).

Current Impacts of Policy on Advocacy

Current music advocates have once again shifted the manner in which they justify the inclusion of music. In order to convince administrators, policy makers, and communities to view music education as a fundamental part of public education, advocates now try to show what music education can exclusively offer students. Many educators advocate utilitarian benefits of their current music education courses, and argue that a musical education can increase intelligence and guarantee success in school, life, and society. These beliefs hold that music education aids in supporting programs such as No Child Left Behind by bringing up student test scores and supporting core subjects such as math and reading. In support of these claims websites such MENC.org, musicforall.org, americansforthearts.org and supportmusic.com, point to higher graduation rates and higher SAT scores for those students involved in music. Many music advocates also publish anecdotal articles about their personal experiences with advocacy (Elpus, 2008; Foster, 2002; Phillips ,2009).

While these advocacy efforts have made an impact on current music education, the actual research supporting these utilitarian claims remains uncertain. In their desire to find ways to advocate for music education, "researchers have long been interested in the nonmusical outcomes of music education" (Kinney, 2008, para. 2). Some studies support a causal relationship between music education and

non-musical outcomes (Ruppert, 2006; Wallick, 1998). Specifically, Ruppert (2006) summarizes dozens of studies claiming that students involved in music have higher SAT scores, better motivation to learn, more developed social and thinking skills, and make stronger connection with general reading and math. Challenging those assertions, other researchers claim that a correlational relationship exists between participation and/or achievement in music education and other subjects, but that music does not necessarily cause students to do better in school (Fitzpatrick, 2006; Kinney, 2008). These studies examine testing scores of students before and after music education, showing that the students who already perform better academically are also the ones who enroll in music classes.

Other advocacy efforts forego making drastic claims about the power of music education to raise SAT test scores, but instead take a more holistic approach, and fight for the continued support and inclusion of music education from every possible angle. These advocates know that "there is likely to be a mix of these visions in any school or classroom" (Eisner, 2002, p. 25). Buzz words such as utilitarian purposes, intrinsic value, and aesthetic education permeate philosophical statements about music education (Eisner 2002; Elliot, 1983; Fowler, 1996; Reimer 2003) and encourage music teachers to use these arguments as advocacy tools for their programs.

Fowler (1996) suggested five ways of thinking which would show the arts as having a "unique connection with the deeper purposes of education" (p. 9). These five methods of thinking—receptively, aesthetically, creatively, communicatively,

and culturally—provide the means to producing "better-educated human beings" (1996, p. 13). While all five of these arguments hold some merit, none of them is exhaustive or complete in showing the value of music or justifying its inclusion in schools. Instead, each offers a guide that can help inform and shape an individual's position. One teacher might convince a school board of the necessity of arts through the argument that the arts can support the other subjects, while another teacher could promote the idea that part of educating the whole child requires developing musical intelligence.

Eisner (2002) stated that the arts in education should achieve five goals: give pride to the place to arts in education; foster the growth of artistic intelligence; aid students in understanding the role the arts play in culture; help students recognize what is personal, distinctive, and unique about themselves; and enable students to secure aesthetic forms of experience in everyday life. These are broad categories which Eisner states "will have different degrees of prominence in different settings" (p. 45). He does not dismiss the national standards for arts education in trying to achieve these goals, but believes the standards can make a contribution to arts education only if they "represent in a meaningful and non-rigid way the values we embrace and the general goals we seek to attain" (p. 173).

Bennett Reimer (2003) argued that "the advent of the content standards, and their overwhelming acceptance by music educators in America and around the world as being a valid delineation of important ways music can be experienced, calls all of us to at least begin to reconsider our traditional stance and its unfortunate

limitations" (p 252). In Reimer's view, the traditional historical format of training students as if they will become future musicians does not meet the ultimate goals of the Standards because it does not provide a comprehensive music education for all students. According to Reimer, "we have tried to encompass the nine standards within our existing structure of general music classes and performance electives, but we have taken only the first tentative steps toward genuine comprehensiveness" (2004, p. 33).

Reimer (2004) calls for all music teachers to act on the standards by completely restructuring music education and the National Standards into a "format in which each content area is identified with the musical role that actualizes it" (p. 34). In his theory he uses all nine standards, but in new categories of listenership and musicianship roles. He proposes that groups should focus less on the potential professional performer, and more on the amateurs and 'aficionados,' or enjoyers of music. Ultimately, this reorganization would lead to a reconstruction of the profession "so it can function effectively in today's and tomorrow's musical worlds rather than yesterday's" (2004, p. 35). By operating in this manner, not only would enrollment of music classes increase, and thereby show administrators a more widespread support for music, but also students would emerge from music education classes with a greater palette of skills that would appeal to a wider spectrum of administrators.

In order to restructure, Reimer argues that programs must have the funds to develop and implement secondary general music classes. General music classes

often run through middle school, but cease at the high school level. High school music programs do not receive adequate funding because not enough students enroll or show interest, but teachers cannot develop student interest without proper funding and support. This slippery slope continues, and many school programs do not change from their traditional performance offerings at the high school level. Obviously "the standards cannot be met without a sufficient commitment of time, staff, materials, and equipment on the part of the school" (Lehman, 2008).

Advocates fight for music education under the umbrella of many philosophies, but these arguments, when taken individually, combine to make it seem as if "music educators are chronic bandwagon jumpers, and more often than not the arguments we offer to justify public school music are based on expediency and wishful thinking" (Elliot, 1983, p. 37). Using arguments from both the aesthetic values and utilitarian purposes, music educators hope to somehow show that music education can and does meet the demands of evolving educational goals as set forth through policy.

Ultimately, this aesthetic versus utilitarian argument does not really matter "it's one's perspective that matters" (Eisner, 2002, p. 30). Reimer suggests that philosophy and advocacy complement each other and "the ongoing debate within music education as to whether we should make the case for our value on aesthetic/artistic bases or utilitarian bases is fruitless and self-defeating" (2003, p.

65). In the end, music educators need administrators to value music education programs enough to fund them.

Budgetary Issues

In public schools, music education started as a trial curricular subject in 1837. Although the Boston school committee approved a report that argued three key components stating the importance of music education in public schools, "the Boston Common Council refused to appropriate funds for the experiment" (Mark, 2007, p. 162). Because of the council's refusal to provide funding, Lowell Mason, the nation's first curricular public school music teacher, had to work without salary. Eventually, the council saw the merits of Mason's success in huge numbers and growing interest in his program, and music teachers earned salaries in public schools. Still, funding problems continued to plague music educators, and from the start of American music education, teachers needed to fight for proper staffing, equipment, and training.

Public schools often find themselves in a time of economic challenge, and these early budgetary problems continue to frustrate the goals of music education in America (MENC Today, 2004). Since the 1930's, articles discussing budget issues and crises have appeared in the Music Educators Journal, expressing the continual refrain that music never seems to receive enough funding (Elliott, 1983; Hill, 1939; Kratus, 2007; Prescott, 1981; Stoll, 1968; Warrener, 1984). Although these articles addressed why funding for music decreases and offer some solutions, music programs continue to face downsizing or elimination as a result of budget cuts.

In 1972, the superintendent of schools in Chicago proposed to solve his district's funding problems by eliminating music, art, and physical education (Mark, 2007, p. 404). While advocates saved music in Chicago, other schools did not fare as well. From 1999-2004, California public schools saw a 50% decrease in music education courses, resulting in a 27% loss of music teachers, and affecting over half a million students and educators total (Music for All Foundation, 2004). This loss partially resulted from changes in educational priorities driven by the No Child Left Behind Act, but ultimately, "an inadequate budget drove the trend away from music in schools" (Mark, 2007, p. 405).

Budgetary shortfalls continue to threaten music education, and "the music department's success in getting a budget supported by the principal largely determines the future of music education programs" (Vaughan, 1996, 37). Some schools cut music because of a failed tax levy (Preston, 2009), while failing state economies and concomitant lower tax revenues have cost other schools their programs and teachers (Kavanaugh, 2009). In addition to the elimination of teachers and programs, funding for instrument repair, maintenance, and purchasing remains inadequate (Gillespie, 1997; Scheib, 2003). All of these cuts and reductions stem from budgetary issues which seem to target music education and result in overloaded teachers who constantly deal with "resource inadequacy issues, particularly inadequate staffing" (Scheib, 2003, p. 132).

In fairness, districts have cut budgets for subjects other than music. A report from the Wisconsin Education Association Council in 2004 found that many

Wisconsin districts cut foreign language, vocational education, business education, family and consumer education, art, band, and physical education in addition to music. The Wisconsin report also showed that while 53% of schools had cut courses in art, music, and theater, 68% also increased class sizes, 55% reduced programs for the gifted and talented, 51% reduced extra curricular programs, and 49% reduced programs for at-risk students. The cuts made in other subjects, school funding crises, and No Child Left Behind (which changed some priorities in where funds are allocated) "do not explain the disproportionate hit that music has taken when compared to other school subjects" (Kratus, 2007, para. 12).

Whether it is a failed tax levy or budget cuts made to save money for academic areas, finances seem to play a role in the status of music education. Many music advocates support the argument that "a failure of will is masquerading as a failure of resources" (Lehman, 1990, p.7), however, and that schools that cut music as a way to save finances have a very shortsighted approach to budgetary issues (Benham 1991, 1992).

Ultimately, cutting music department budgets can cost more than maintaining current programs (Benham, 1991). Benham argues that cutting music at the elementary level might seem like a way to save money since classroom teachers can absorb the affected students. In reality, however, "if elementary school music programs are eliminated or significantly changed, junior and senior high school music enrollment will drop by a minimum of 65%" (Benham, 1991, p.15). Benham continues to explain that a drop in enrollment at the secondary level might

cause administrators to cut music teaching positions, not realizing that even with lower enrollment, these cuts would force most music teachers to carry a heavier teaching load. Cutting a music teacher position means the students affected must get absorbed by other classes whose teachers often have much smaller classroom caps. This can then result in school districts needing to hire a greater number of teachers than they would need if they had just preserved the music program. In other words, "the students have to be assigned somewhere, and there can be no savings unless other classes are increased in size" (Lehman, 1990, p.8).

Another argument against the validity of using budgetary woes to justify cuts in music education comes from a study that demonstrated that there was no significant relationship between budget limitations and the reduction or elimination of instrumental music in California pubic schools (Fields, 1982). These findings showed that schools with and without budgetary shortfalls both cut and saved music programs, thus eliminating budget as sole determining factor for the inclusion or cuts of music education.

Even when districts have provided adequate funding "music education has primarily existed low on the hierarchical ladder of the knowledge that counts" (Benedict, 2007, para. 20). This attitude toward music's educational value can diminish the amount of funding music programs receive. Arts advocate Charles Fowler (1931-1995) further recognized this when he wrote, "Never a truly flourishing enterprise, the arts in American schools have become increasingly downtrodden, slighted, and compromised, and there is little excuse for how they

have been mishandled and ignored at the expense of American youth and American education" (p. viii). Ultimately, budget cuts only partially explain why schools cut music education.

Support for Music Education

All types of advocacy efforts, whether addressing policy or funding, have raised awareness of the value of music education. Whether Americans value music for aesthetic or utilitarian reasons, perceived or real, surveys and polls from the Gallup Organization (2003) have found that a 95% majority of US residents support and value a well-rounded education that includes music.

Studies also show that school administrators and teachers, including general education teachers, express similarly favorable attitudes towards music education in public schools (Abril & Gault 2006, 2008; ECS 2006; Gerrity 2007; Illinois Creates 2005; Punke 1972; Schultz 2006). Schultz's dissertation (2006) specifically stated that "educational leaders specializing in curriculum, whether general or arts specific, recognized the contribution that exposure and instruction in the arts can provide for children" (p. 135). Most people do not debate the value of having the arts in public education.

Music teachers and administrators usually hold parallel attitudes regarding the role of music in the school curriculum, and "when there are significant differences in their views, the difference most frequently lies in the intensity in which they agree or disagree with a certain notion and not that they hold opposite views" (Punke1972, p. 63). In other words, educationalists no longer debate the

value of arts education, but substantial disagreements still divides them on the quantity of arts education that students should receive. In the end "Support for music education is a mile wide, but it's only an inch deep" (Lehman, 1992).

Just because educators and the public value music education, however, their support does not translate into making music a priority over other subjects. A study comparing arts education with 14 other subjects (health, work skills, language arts, technology, mathematics, thinking and reasoning, science, civics, behavioral studies, physical education, economics, history, geography and foreign language) found that the arts ranked lowest among subjects deemed "definitely necessary" by a sample of the US general public (Marzano, Kendall, & Cicchinelli, 1999). Furthermore, this research provided a 'cut-point' for selecting the standards that would be included (and not included) in a K-12 curriculum "indicating that both foreign language and music standards would not make the cut (p. 29). While the general public want the arts and foreign language included in public school curriculum, if forced to make a choice, those are they first subjects that would go.

Administrators also display a non-committal attitude when asked to decide between music and another subject (Abril & Gault 2006, 2008; Gerrity 2007; Punke 1972;). Specifically, Gerrity (2007) showed that "principals' attitudes are philosophical in nature and remain independent of their operational support for music education" (p. 70). In practice, this support was only hypothetical, and Gerrity found that "despite favorable attitudes, respondents consistently ranked music as the least important subject in the general education of students" (2007, p.

67). Work by Krehbiel (1990) supports these findings by showing that the attitudes toward music held by administrators continues through the ranks of school district employees. His study shows that Illinois classroom teachers also ranked the fine arts last in importance when compared with other subjects.

Overall, despite a widespread support for music education, the general public, classroom teachers, and especially those administrators faced with difficult decisions of keeping music or other programs continue to view music education as "Nice but not necessary" (Schultz, 2006). Music education has not lost a place in the public schools, but rather has become a subject on the periphery, and "when the realities of time constraints, personnel, and funding are weighed in, these niceties become expendable frivolities" (Abril, 2009, p. 50). Moreover, the Gallup findings showed that "despite American's clear support for music education and participation, budget cuts and shifting priorities have placed those programs in more danger than ever" (2003).

Parent support and valuing of music education might draw attention in the media, but one study found that it does not bear any significant relationship to the reduction or elimination of music (Fields, 1982). By contrast, that same study showed that administrator values and support exerted the largest significant correlation to reductions and cuts in music education. Put simply, this finding means that if administrators value a program, they have the most influence in ensuring its survival.

Status of Music Education

When combined with the research that shows administrators willing to value other subjects over music, the media's image that the arts in public schools "are losing ground against core urgent educational priorities," (ECS, 2006, p.1) reinforces "a sense of the inevitability of their [the arts] disappearance" (ECS, 2006, p.1). Statistics, however, portray a more complex picture of the status of music education in the United States. This more accurate understanding shows the continuance of music programming in many districts, with some schools and districts displaying growth and others experiencing cuts and reductions.

Lehman (1991) found that while the percentage of schools that offer music in elementary schools from 1962 to 1989 stayed about the same, the number of minutes allotted to music education decreased by about 25%. At the secondary level, junior high and middle schools have seen a 24% decrease in music courses offered, and a 22% decrease at the high school level. A more recent study found that 16% of all elementary schools sampled reported a decrease of minutes spent on art and music (McMurrer, 2008).

IN 2008 "71% of eighth-graders attended schools where administrators reported that their state or district had a curriculum in music" (NCES, 2008. p. 12). This number had increased from a prior study in 1997, even though "the apparent increase between 1997 and 2008 in the percentage of students attending schools where music was available at least three or four times a week was not statistically

significant, nor were there any significant changes in the percentages of students attending schools where music was offered once or twice a week, less than once a week, or not at all" (p. 12). While this study did not examine the amount of time each student received, it at least showed that the number of students in middle school public school music education programs did not decrease.

In addition to looking at music curriculum as a whole, researchers have also examined specific music programs such as orchestra. Gillespie and Hamann (1998) reported that "the trend of increasing orchestra student enrollment identified by Leonhard in the middle to late 1980's has continued in the 1990's" (para. 11). And, in their most recent study, Gillespie and Hamann (2010) identified 150 new string programs in the United States public schools.

Researchers have also studied enrollment as a way to examine and understand the status of music education in the United States. In the 1998 study mentioned above, Gillespie and Hamann found that "over two-thirds of students who elect to play string instruments continue enrolling in string or orchestra classes throughout their high school years" (para. 38). Gillespie (2002) also reported that orchestral enrollment increased each year, while the number of string teachers actually declined, thereby creating a need for over 5000 teachers; however not all enrollment statistics look as positive.

Between 2000-01 and 2005-06, California schools experienced a 37% drop in student enrollment in music classes, even though "music remained the most common arts programming delivered to students between 2000-01 and 2004-05,"

(Woodworth, Gallagher, & Guha, 2007, p. 29). Moreover, "this decline in student enrollment in music courses occurred over a span of years in which overall student enrollment in California increased" (Woodworth, et. al. 2007, p. 29). Also, Illinois reported low music class enrollment, with one-third of students receiving no instruction in the arts. At the secondary level, only half of the middle school students and less and one-third of the high school students enrolled in music courses (Illinois Creates, 2005).

Thriving Programs

Despite findings that detail cuts to music education due to budgetary shortfalls or changing educational priorities, literature also shows the growth and survival of music programs. By studying schools that have successful and thriving music programs, researchers have found that despite economic hardship and reallocated school minutes, music can and does survive. By taking on a different perspective and showing what is possible within music education at this time "perhaps we can start to view music education in a much needed positive light" (Coysh, 2005, p. 192).

Coysh (2005) examined two secondary Canadian schools with thriving music programs during harsh economics times. She defined thriving by the percentage of student enrolled and music, and found that both school programs exhibited common qualities, which she attributed to their success. Notably, both schools possessed effective leadership, appropriate music repertoire, reliable feeder systems, sufficient funding, adequate community and school support, student

enjoyment, quality program management, varied concert programs, creative and aggressive scheduling, educational goals of providing a social education for students. Moreover, neither program was strictly curriculum driven.

Similarly, Pittman (2003) examined four district-wide music programs to compensate for research on successful programs that "has been limited to one setting—elementary or secondary, instrumental or vocal" (p. 120). In her study, she identified four districts having exemplary district-wide music programs as defined and honored by MENC in 1986. In 1996, ten years after receiving the recognition from MENC, all four districts reported maintenance of their music program in spite of the threat of reduced funding. Pittman attributed the success of these programs to competent staff of adequate size, high student enrollment, adequate funding, wide-ranging curriculum, and strong community support.

In a recent survey study, Gillespie and Hamann (2010) "identified 150 new string programs in 33 states that represented 75 different school districts" (p. 6); 72% of those surveyed believed strongly that their program would exist five years from now. Their study found that "a change in school funding was the most frequently cited reason by respondents (57%) who predicted their program might be discontinued within the next five years" (p. 10). Similar to the findings of Coysh and Pittman, respondents considered competent teachers, parent support, available funding, and superintendent support as the most import factors in establishing a program.

More dated literature (Iida, 1991; Leidlig, 1983) shows that past researchers have explored the topic of what characteristics constitute a successful music program. All of these studies examine fewer than 100 school districts, and as such, do not provide sufficient evidence to draw any concrete conclusions. This research does, however, show the potential for music education's survival under differing sets of economic and policy conditions, some of which either still persist or possess the potential to reoccur. Coysh (2005) and Pittmann (2003) investigated what criteria and conditions help create an outstanding music program and the specific characteristics that contributed to a program's success. Gillespie and Hamann (2010) found that school districts can implement new string programs and identified the characteristics that contributed to the success of these programs.

This valuable information offers a starting point, but now research must examine how public school district officials decide what music programs to support, fund, and schedule. Pittman (2003) recommends "more descriptive research be made on exemplary district-wide programs in our public schools" (p. 120) and Abril (2008) calls for more in-depth studies "to determine how elements both in and outside of a given school setting contribute to the viability of music programs" (para. 22).

Economic Influences Affecting Schools

Cross-comparative analyses of school districts reveal vast differences in the amount of music education students receive, specifically showing a wide variability "in program characteristics, enrollment, participation rate, and performance

activity" (Schmidt, 2006, para. 1). The same Center on Education Policy (CEP) survey that showed a decrease in the percentage of art and music minutes across the nation also portrayed a wide disparity regarding the number of over-all minutes individual school districts give to art and music combined (McMurrer, 2008). This inconsistency did not occur as much in any other subject, including physical education. Students across school districts received about the same number of minutes in social studies, science, physical education, lunch and recess. In music and art (combined), however, there was a greater variability among districts with minutes of instruction distributed equally across all categories from 0-25 through 150+ minutes (McMurrer, 2008).

Why do these ranges of music education curriculum occur? The question has a complicated answer, but one that stems from the understanding that "Education is an enormous enterprise in the United States. It constitutes the largest portion of most state and local governmental budgets; engages more than 100,000 local board members in important policymaking activities; employs millions of individual as teachers, administrators, and support staff; and educates tens of millions of children" (Odden & Picus, 1992, p. 3). In such a huge endeavor, schools are bound to have discrepancies.

School districts are fundamentally businesses making business decisions, and each model may look different when given options. For example, although automotive manufacturers must all meet certain industry-wide safety regulations, the styles and amenities between companies and product lines may vary. Education

in America follows an analogous pattern, where state and national testing mandates may dictate at what level each graduating child must test while allowing each school or district the liberty to individualize its product for competitive reasons, such as attracting new students. Some schools might choose to do this with programming in the arts, while other schools might choose to focus on athletics. Each school works with its individual budgets, mandates, and values to offer what they consider the best education they can provide for children.

In his book *Basic Economics*, Thomas Sowell (2007) shows how economic decisions involve trade-offs. For instance, a car manufacturer can improve a vehicle's safety, but only by lowering its performance or increasing the price. Similar trade-offs occur in economic decisions related to education. Tychsen (1999) examined five school districts that wanted to implement changes to increase student achievement. She found that in all five school districts it was possible to reallocate funds to achieve this goal, but at a cost. Some schools asked the regular classroom teachers to take on more responsibilities or workloads, some cut back on aides, and one school reduced the art program. Tychsen's study illustrates the idea that school districts can find ways to keep music, but might often have to make another sacrifice. These implicit trade-offs in education beg the question of whether or not any district operating under a finite budget—which is to say, all districts—can achieve multiple goals while still performing any or all of them effectively.

Any alterations to programming can affect the overall effectiveness of a school district. The Baldrige Education Criteria for Performance Excellence (ECPE)

offers a framework that advises schools on how to run more efficiently with the goal of obtaining higher student achievement (Baldridge National Quality Program, 2009-2010). Adapted from a business model specifically for education, these criteria embody seven categories: Leadership, strategic planning, customer focus, measurement/analysis/knowledge, workforce focus, process management, and results, as a way to focus "on results, not on procedures, tools, or organizational structure" (p. 57). For each category, assessment comes through the answering of several questions:

1. Senior Leadership – How do your senior leaders lead? How do you govern and fulfill your societal responsibilities?
2. Strategic Planning – How do you develop your strategy? How do you deploy your strategy?
3. Customer Focus – How do you engage students and stakeholders to serve their needs and build relationships? How do you obtain and use information from your students and stakeholders?
4. Measurement, Analysis, and Knowledge Management – How do you measure, analyze, and then improve organizational performance? How do you manage your information, organizational knowledge, and information technology?
5. Workforce Focus – How do you engage your workforce to achieve organizational and personal success? How do you build an effective and supportive workforce environment?

6. Process Management – How do you design your work systems? How do you design, manage, and improve your key organizational work processes?
7. Results – What are your student learning results? What are your student- and stakeholder-focused performance results? What are your budgetary, financial, and market performance results? What are your workforce-focused performance results? What are your process effectiveness results? What are your leadership results?

By having knowledge of an organization's strengths, vulnerabilities, and opportunities, school districts have a chance for improvement and growth, "essential to the success and sustainability of the organization" (BNQP, 2009-2010, p. 57). School districts must execute their core competencies to obtain a market differentiator, keep core competencies current with strategic directions to provide a strategic advantage, and understand who the competitors are, how many they have, and their key characteristics to determine what the competitive advantage is in the education sector or markets served (BNQP, 2009-2010). This means that school districts must have the core basics, but must also move beyond simply providing the basics in order to be successful and thrive.

Thriving in this sense does not necessarily refer to a monetary outcome, as "economics does not say that you should make the most money possible" (Sowell, 2007, p. 518). Instead, school districts make investment in human capital, trying to get the most return on their investment. If a student graduates from a public school program and goes on to further successes, the school district receives a way to

perpetuate more business. By producing better graduates or higher rates of graduates, the district can rise above their competition, differentiate themselves via programming, and acquire a reputation that will enable them to implement or try programming that will bring them more success in the future.

According to ECPE, school districts wanting this kind of success must understand today's competitive educational environment, and must face strategic challenges that can affect the district's ability to sustain performance and maintain advantages such as academic program leadership, unique services, or an optimal student-to-faculty ratio (BNQP, 2009-2010). Given the importance of these factors, especially for parents who want to give their children a competitive academic advantage, music advocates and educators should consider the role that music programming can play in a district's economic success in developing human capital and advocate for music education from that perspective.

Summary

The status of music education in today's public schools varies greatly among individual school districts. Even though administrators, teachers and community members value music education, they value other subjects on a similar or greater level. This requires school district officials to make tough decisions regarding the degree and quality of the music programming their district will offer. Some schools continue to have thriving music programs while others have chosen to cut it in order to pursue other educational goals. Yet research shows that improving student achievement and keeping music programs are both simultaneously possible. All of

these factors prompt a number of questions: How then do school districts make the decision to keep or cut programs? What factors exert the largest influence in the decision making process? Can other school districts model themselves after those districts that are able to both keep student achievement high and sustain music programs?

Chapter 3

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

For this study, I chose to examine Berkley School District in the Detroit suburb of Berkley, Michigan, precisely because they have not experienced extreme cuts in music education in over ten years, nor has their music program been specifically targeted when budgets cuts do occur. Questions that guided the research were:

1. What influences persuade Berkley School District decision makers to keep music in the curriculum?

2. What criteria do Berkley's school board members and administrators use in deciding the value of music education?

3. What obstacles must Berkley School District overcome to keep its music program?

4. How do non-budgetary factors play a role in determining music education's future?

5. Do Berkley's decision makers target music for budget cuts more or less than any other area? When faced with a budgetary crisis, what criteria has Berkley used to make their programming decisions?

6. What can other school districts learn by looking at this model for music education?

Research Paradigm

Michael Quinn Patton suggests in his book *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods* (2009) that the best way to choose a research paradigm is to

think about the intended purpose and targeted audience. The nature of the research questions posed for this study more closely relate to qualitative research whose "data describe" (Patton, 2002, p. 47). My goal was to examine the procedures and characteristics of the decision makers within a school district and report the findings "in depth and detail" (Patton, 2002, p. 14).

Within qualitative research there are many paradigms, and I conducted this research as a case study. A case study is defined as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident" (Yin, 2009, p.18). A specific case can study people, events, programs, organizations, critical incidents or communities. Researchers have flexibility to choose the number of cases examined. For this study, I chose a single case study because "the case represents an extreme case or a unique case" (Yin, 2009, p.40). By only choosing one district, I was able to go into more depth, finding deeper meanings and relationships among the data.

Participant Selection/Study Setting

Patton states that **"**qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, even single cases, selected purposefully" (Patton, 2002, p.230). Within the purposeful sampling design, I specifically used an intensity sample, which "consists of information-rich cases that manifest the phenomenon of interest intensely (but not extremely)" (Patton, 2002, p.234). According to Patton researchers should not use cases that exhibit extreme success or unusual failures

because they "may be discredited as being too extreme or unusual to yield useful information" (Patton, 2002, p.234).

For this reason, I selected to study Berkley School District in Berkley, Michigan. Despite economic difficulties, Berkley has keep its music program, but has not done so through resources so unique that other school districts would dismiss their situation as an anomaly. Within the purposeful selection of Berkley School District as an information-rich case, I purposefully sampled current and retired music staff, current and former administrators, board members, and community members.

Berkley Profile (Study Setting)

During the 2009/2010 school year, the Berkley School District encompassed seven schools—four elementary, one K-8, one middle school, and one high school, with several off-campus options for specialty programs—in a region sixteen miles northwest of Detroit, Michigan. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) considers the district a large suburb of Detroit. Property in the district extends only one square mile from the high school, and because students can theoretically walk to all buildings in the district, Berkley does not offer any busing services.

Berkley reports a graduation rate of 96%, with 90% matriculating to post high school studies. All schools in the district achieved accreditation through the North Central Accreditation (NCA). Additionally Norup, their K-8 school, also earned status as an International Baccalaureate World School (IB). This specialized

accreditation makes Norup one of only 2,539 schools worldwide authorized to teach primary and middle school programs.

NCES reports that the district educated 4,499 students during the 2006/2007 school year. The Michigan Education Association (MEA) website reports declining enrollment across the state of Michigan, which has possibly lowered Berkley's attendance since the 2006/2007 official count. During the 2006/2008 school year, NCES reported that the student populations of the six neighboring school districts ranged from 1,650 to 9,426 students, which places Berkley's student population exactly at the median.

Two percent of Berkley students fall into the category of English language learners (ELL), 10% have Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), 13% receive free or reduced lunch, and 22% are ethnic minorities. Compared with the six neighboring school districts, Berkley once again sits in the middle, as the student populations of neighboring districts range from 1% to 7% of ELL students, 8% to 15% of students with IEPs, 2% to 40% receiving free or reduced lunch, and 8% to 97% ethnic minorities (see Appendix A for complete district comparison).

Berkley's proposed 2009/2010 budget puts the total tax levy at 22.2167 mills, 18.00 mills levied from the taxable value of the non-homestead property, and 4.2167 mills levied on the taxable values of all property in the school district. These taxes provide $3,716,166 in revenue for the school district. Total state contributions amount to $33,516,612 and federal funding contributes $3,279,847. The district also receives income from other transfers and transactions equaling

$2,107,022, and a fund balance of $1,946,304. Collectively, these sources of revenue put the total school district budget at $44,566,951 for the 2009/2010 school year, $2,468,049 less than the NCES reported 2006/2007 budget of $47,035,000.

According to NCES, Berkley spent $10,469 per pupil during the 2006/2007 school year. Compared with the neighboring districts, Berkley spends/receives far less per student. The district closest in size (300 fewer students than Berkley) spent $12,185 per student, and other districts spent up to $16,747 per student. This difference could result from any combination of fiscal capacity and/or fiscal effort set forth by each individual school district[5] (see Appendix A for complete district comparison).

In 2006/2007 Berkley received 71% of its total funding from the state of Michigan, while other districts received between 34% and 62%. Even though Berkley's percentage appears higher, they actually received less total dollar funding than five of the other school districts, receiving only $40 more per student than the district closest in size. The figures for the 2009/2010 school year indicate that the amount of Berkley's budget dependent on state funding will rise to 79%.

Of these funds, Berkley spends 59% on instructional expenses (including teaching personnel), 12% on student and staff support, 13% on administration, and 15% on operations.[6] In 2006/2007 these figures translated into 262.2 full time equivalent (FTE) teachers, 42.8 instructional aides, 11.3 instructional coordinators

[5] Capacity measures wealth of a district and effort measures the financial exertion put forth by the community (2006, Owings & Kaplan).
[6] This does not add up to 100% due to rounding.

and supervisors, 8.9 guidance counselors, 7.0 librarians/media specialists, 2.9 library/media support staff, 6.6 district administrators, 4.0 district administrative support, 12.0 school administrators, 29.1 school administrative support staff, 7.0 student support services, and 152.7 other support staff.

Of this staff, Berkley employs 10.2 FTE music teachers. In elementary school grades K-4, students receive two 45-minute sessions of music a week. During 5th grade, all students take band, orchestra, or choir, meeting twice a week for 45-minutes each time. Both of Berkley's middle schools offer 6th, 7th, and 8th grade band, orchestra, and choir, where classes meet every day for 49 minutes. High school students can receive curricular credit for concert band, symphonic band, marching band, jazz band, concert orchestra, symphony orchestra, a cappella choir, concert choir, girls' choir, and show choir.[7] Most of these classes meet regularly on the high school's modified block schedule, and some meet after school.[8] Music teachers receive an extra stipend for duties outside of the school day, including concerts, musicals, festival, and other activities.

The music department has a budget of $13,423 for the 2009/2010 school year. Of these monies, the school district allocates $5,629 to instrumental repairs, $2,085 to transportation, and $5,704 to capital outlay. Although the school district has not changed the music department budgets since 2005/2006, the rate of

[7] The Center for Advanced Studies in the Arts (CASA) offers music theory for Berkley students in the afternoon.
[8] These classes still earn regular curricular credit, and teachers add this to their workload either as hours or for extra pay.

inflation over the past four years has caused the purchasing power of this same amount of funding to decline. In 2002/2003 the music department had almost $8,000 in capital outlay, but in 2003/2004 all budgets were reduced 2.50% district wide. In 2004/2005 school year, the district kept the funding the same, but moved $2,000 from repairs to transportation to balance the spending of the music department.

The music staff also receives support funding from an active booster organization. This organization does not contribute to salaries, but rather pays for things not covered by the district such as funding for trips, private lessons, summer camps, instrument repairs not covered in the music budget, and new instruments. Finally, music teachers financially contribute, bringing in their own materials, paying for gas to transport students, and instrument repairs.

Funding for public schools in Michigan

Not all states fund their public schools the same way. In some states, such as Pennsylvania and Ohio, a large share of the individual district funding comes from local taxes. In other states, such as Wisconsin and Oregon, a larger share of individual district funding comes from the state. Both systems have advantages and disadvantages, and allow or prevent school districts from using certain financial tactics when trying to be creative about budgeting issues. Because Berkley School District made financial decisions that directly reflect how the state of Michigan allocates money, this section explains Michigan school finance.

In 1994, voters in the State of Michigan passed Proposal A, which allowed the state government to completely restructure the financing for public schools grades K-12. Prior to this proposal, local property taxes had exceeded the national average by 35%, and there was a large discrepancy in spending per pupil between wealthier and poorer districts (Michigan In Brief, 2002; Kearney & Addonizio, 2002). In an effort to lower property taxes and make school funding more equitable among all districts, Proposal A allowed changes to occur in sales, cigarette, property, and business taxes (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002). The state changed the following (Michigan in Brief, 2002; Kearney & Addonizio, 2002):

- Increased the state's sales tax from four to six percent
- Created new revenue sources for schools, including a 6-mill state education property tax on all property with an additional 18-mills on non-homestead property, and a 75-cent per pack cigarette tax
- Limited annual property tax increases on each parcel of property to the lower of (1) the inflation rate or (2) 5 percent
- Stipulated that school districts on the low end of the funding spectrum would receive bigger annual funding increases than those on the higher end
- Eliminated a number of categorical (special) grants and rolled the funds into the foundation allowance
- Placed tight limits on local revenue supplementation to allocated district foundations

In essence, the new structure took away local control and moved to a state regulated Foundation Program in which all schools get a foundation allowance based on per pupil amount. In 1994-1995 this amount was set at $5,000 per pupil

in all districts, and was set to increase at a determined amount each year. For some of the wealthier districts, this amount was less than they had spent prior to Proposal A. Those districts were allowed to levy a one-time "hold harmless" tax (or extra voted millage) to make up the difference. Because Berkley School District received more money from the foundation grant than they had received previously with local property taxes, they did not pass an extra voted millage.

Proposal A tried to make funding for Michigan school districts more fair and equitable, but has not come without problems. When the proposal passed, questions rose about "whether, over time—in a good and bad economy—the new system would provide sufficient revenue to support schools" (Michigan in Brief, 2002, p.170). While property taxes have lowered, "Michigan continues to use the property tax as one of the major sources of public school revenues" (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p.7). With a declining state population and a growing unemployment rate, the collected revenue from properties continues to decrease the amount of income contributing to the state's School Aid Fund.

In December 2009 Governor Jennifer Granholm announced a mid-year $127-per pupil proration. Cuts like this leave districts helpless, for under the new proposal they cannot levy additional mills to increase operating funds. At the time of this dissertation, the state is proposing over $600 per pupil cuts to come in the 2010-2011 school year. For Berkley School district, this would mean almost a five million dollar reduction district wide.

Along this same vein, school districts are also seeing an enrollment decline. Under the new funding system, this means less money. When schools have less money, they cut programming, which often results in students leaving to attend charter and private schools. This starts a dangerous slippery slope where students leave because public schools do not have proper funding, and public school lose more and more funding because students continue to leave.

Also, Proposal A does not address all needs for a school district. It was targeted towards the general operating needs of school districts, and "was not intended to address capital needs such as building, expanding, or improving school buildings" (Michigan In Brief, 2002, p.169). For capital needs districts must levy voter-approved debt millage. With aging buildings and the growing necessity of technology improvements, demands for capital campaigns are growing. While Proposal A tries to offer a more equitable distribution of funds to all districts, it does not prevent wealthier districts from obtaining better buildings and equipment. Property value in a district "affects the amount of money per mill that a district can raise for capital expense—for example, in Northport one mill raises about $816 per pupil, but in Highland Park it raises only about $32 per pupil" (Michigan in Brief, 2002, p.169).

Proposal A changed the entire funding system for public schools in Michigan. Under this system, school districts are given a per pupil rate, which means attendance is paramount. The more students a district has, the more money they receive. Also, this proposal prevents districts from remedying any cuts or

prorations made at the state level. At this point in time, the only way for school districts to make up lost revenue caused by a state-level cut is to ask community members to write personal checks.

Data Collection and Analysis

Yin defines the case study as a "research strategy that comprises an all-encompassing method—covering the logic of design, data collection techniques, and specific approaches to data analysis" (Yin, 2003, p.14). Data collection for qualitative studies can come from many sources such as documentation, archival records, interviews, direction observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2009). Each data source has strengths and weaknesses, but "various sources are highly complementary, and a good case study will therefore want to use as may sources as possible using these collection methods"(Yin, 2003, p.85). To make this research as thorough as possible, and to help with the reliability and credibility of information, I collected data from three major sources, including interviews, documents, and participant-observation.

Yin (2009) considers interviews to be "one of the most important sources of case study information" (p.106). Realizing interviews would provide the bulk of information for this case study, I conducted two in-depth interviews, one focus group interview, eleven focused interviews, two phone interviews, and one informal conversational interview. The in-depth interviews occurred over several meetings where each interviewee not only responded to questions with their own input, but also acted as an informant who discussed whom else to interview and where to find

other sources of information. Focus groups interviews are typically small groups of people "with similar backgrounds who participate in the interview for one to two hours" (Patton, 2002, p. 385). The focus group for this study had eight participants who are all music teachers for Berkley School District. The eleven focused interviews occurred with one parent, one school board member, two teachers, and seven administrators. Finally I held a phone interview with one teacher and one school board member. I purposefully selected potential participants who are or have been involved in Berkley's music program and/or decision-making process about keeping or cutting that program. Although I used Berkley School District's name in this study, I provided confidentiality by using pseudonyms for each individual participant's name, or identifying them by the role they hold in the Berkley school system.

Each interviewee received a letter (Appendix B) asking for their participation on a voluntary basis and signed a consent form (Appendix C) before participation began. For each interview I used a guided list of questions (Appendix D), took extensive field notes and digitally recorded the discussion on a ZOOM Handy Recorder H2. This information was later personally transcribed and submitted to each person for a member check. After member approvals I coded the transcriptions, marking common themes and looking for recurring regularities. Next I worked "back and forth between the data and the classification system to verify the meaningfulness and accuracy of the categories and the placement of data

into categories" (Patton, 2002, p.466). This process yielded four primary themes and fifteen secondary themes:

- Berkley's Educational Philosophy
- Valuing Music Education
  - Teacher Role
  - Administrator Role
  - Community Role
  - Student Role
- Other Considerations and Influences
  - Political Considerations
  - Fiscal Considerations
  - Educational Considerations
- Making Decisions
  - Finding New Sources of Revenue
  - Trimming the Periphery
  - Consolidations and Attrition
  - Concessions
  - Trimming Programs
  - Cuts
  - Creative Thinkers
  - Additional Cuts

Documentation provides specific information about an organization that might not get mentioned during interviews, offers specific details to corroborate information from other sources, and provokes news ideas, questions, or discrepancies that a researcher might not find elsewhere (Yin, 2009). I collected documentation from public records (such as the school budget and demographic statistics), administrative documents (such as power point presentations and letters to the community) and written reports of school events (such as board meeting minutes and newsletters). For each document, I carefully read and reread the

information, looking for support or discrepancies to each of the common themes found in the coding of the interviews.

Finally I used my role as participant-observer to collect data. Yin states that "such a perspective is invaluable in producing an "accurate" portrayal of case study phenomenon" (2009, p.112). Because I worked in the Berkley School district, Berkley, Michigan from 2002-2007, I knew this district would provide a wealth of information regarding the decision making process for programming. I also knew that because of my work in the district I would have access to information an outsider might not, and would have a rapport with the teachers and administrators I knew from my tenure there. I kept track of my thoughts through journaling and compared my personal experiences with the themes found through the interviews and data collection.

Personal Statement

The first three years I spent as a full-time high school choir director, and the last two years, I added two middle school choirs to my full-time load.[9] During this time I never felt threatened by cuts, and always had financial support for music, trips, and festivals. Some of this support came from the booster's organization, but I also received money from the school district. For example, in the 2006/2007 school year I wanted to take 35 singers to New York to sing in Carnegie Hall. Not only did the school district approve this trip, but also they helped with funding.

[9] This made my job 1.5 FTE and I received compensation for the extra time.

While the district did not approve every submission (for example, I was not allowed to attend the national ACDA conference in 2007), I always knew the district supported the arts. Administrators not only attended concerts, but often stopped by rehearsals and wrote supporting letters. In 2003 our local chapter of the Michigan School Vocal Music Association (MSVMA) lost its venue to hold a choral festival. Berkley stepped up and not only hosted in 2003, but for the next three years. This came at an extra cost to the district, which funding substitute teachers, extra custodial staff, and utilities.

After leaving Berkley to earn my PhD in music education at The Ohio State University, I started spending time in other schools. Through these observations I quickly realized that not all districts received as much support (either financially or morally) as Berkley's music teachers. I knew Berkley was not a terribly wealthy district, and I began wondering how they kept such a strong music program. After hearing of the severe budget cuts in music in several districts for the 2009/2010 school year, I called a friend at Berkley and asked how they were affected. As it had been when I worked there, Berkley did not cut their program or staff. After some preliminary research, I came up with the idea for my study. I contacted the assistant superintendant in Berkley, and went to propose my research. Berkley school district approved this research in June 2009.

Reliability and Credibility of Data Collection

No matter how objectively I approached this research, limitations of observations include the possibility that "the selective perception of the observer

may distort that data" (Patton, 2002, p.306). Yin (2009) also warns against the potential biases produced related to the participant-observer role. To avoid this, I collected interview data from four different populations: parents, music teachers, administrators, and school board members, both with people I knew from my tenure and people who were new to the district since my departure. Using these different populations created triangulation through "the consistency of different data sources within the same method" (Patton, 2002, p 556). Within these different populations, I used four data collection methods: informal observations, focus groups, interviews, and document analysis checking triangulation through "the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods" (Patton, 2002, p. 556). Themes consistently appeared to the point of redundancy among the familiar and unfamiliar interviewees, the data collected from different documents, the focus groups, and the informal observations.

Time Frame

I officially began interviews in November 2009 and concluded the collection of data in January 2010. Prior to this I spoke with music teachers in the district, both current and retired, to refamiliarize myself with the district and to build rapport. I also communicated with the current assistant superintendent proposing the research agenda and getting official district approval to conduct the study. Additionally, throughout the entire analysis process I kept in contact with several of the interviewees, asking for clarification and more information when needed. All together, this study has taken one year to complete.

Communicating the Findings

In the following chapter I organized the data according to the themes that emerged through the analysis process. To support these findings, I incorporated quotes and specific examples given by either the interviewees or from personal experiences. While these topics are divided into categories, it is important for the reader to remember that all the areas relate to each other and play an interdependent role in the decision making process.

This triangulated and reported data has limited generalizability, but certainly offers extrapolations that "are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situation under similar, but not identical, conditions" (Patton, 2002, 584). Specific suggestions for the application of this are discussed in chapter five.

Chapter 4: Results

Understanding the decision-making process used by administrators in the Berkley school district to determine whether to keep or cut programs involves looking at many different factors. Before the school board takes the final step of approving a budget—the sole determining factor for programming funds and cuts—administrators undertake a complicated process to determine their recommendations of the budget as a whole to the board. This process involves determining, understanding, and implementing administrative and district philosophies and values, considering the political, educational, and fiscal ramifications of each budget item, and working with complex formulas to determine the best means by which to fund student programming for the district. By using these formulas, administrators try to achieve balance among programming mandated by the state, programs the district and its community would like to offer, what the budget will permit financially, how many students would benefit from each program funded, and which students would potentially leave the district if the program were not offered.

Administrators look at what the teachers, parents, community members, fellow administrators, and school board members' value, both in general education and in specific programming like music education. They also evaluate other fiscal,

political, and educational considerations, because they realize that simply valuing a program will not suffice to sustain it in a school. Finally, based on all these factors, administrators make their decisions regarding programming. These decisions do not always translate into cuts of budgetary support. Instead, the administration looks for ways to trim or consolidate existing programs and/or departments. They might achieve these specific reductions by securing faculty and/or staff concessions, by implementing collaborations with other districts, or by finding ways to generate new revenue. In all cases, the Berkley school district prides itself on finding creative solutions to keep valued programming both funded and sustained.

Part 1: Berkley's Educational Philosophy

In order to understand the value Berkley places on music education "you have to come from a philosophical approach" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Berkley School District's educational philosophy sets up the parameters for the entire curriculum, in which music education plays an important role. On their website, part of Berkley's mission statement holds that "Student achievement and success are at the center of all we do. Our mission is to guide, encourage, and support each and every learner in the quest to realize his or her full potential" (Berkley School District).

This full potential includes considering "priorities and what should make up the life of a well-rounded student" (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009). Berkley school district values exposing students to a wide variety of

subjects, including music, with the goal of offering students a "small town feel with big city results" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Administrators seek to build a district where people want to stay and raise their families, and where their children can receive a "quality education, with a broad range of programs" (NL personal communication, January 15, 2010).

In order for students to get this kind of education, families need to care about their children's education as well as the educational environment, the school board needs to support these educational ideals, administrators must offer attractive programs, and teachers must to teach quality materials. The school board upholds the district philosophy with its own philosophical statement:

> Partnering with our parents and community, we believe in:
> - Academically, culturally, and socially preparing students to be citizens of the world.
> - A vibrant, dynamic, engaging learning experience in every classroom.
> - Responsibility - to self, others, and community.
> - Constant, systemic improvement.
> - Cultivating problem solving skills, innovation, and creativity. (Berkley School District)

Also, the district looks to offer as wide a variety in programming as possible according to the principle of "what's going to benefit the most number of kids" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Finally, according to one administrator, the parents and other community members operate upon a, "can do attitude" where "everybody always says, 'how do we figure it out?'" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010).

The Berkley School District tries to achieve these goals in spite of the tough economic times, understanding that "A money crisis really does help you hone in on what your values are" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). By continuing to focus on a wide range of programming, Berkley hopes to offer its students educational opportunities that help them rise above the quality of education and variety of educational programming in other districts. As of the 2009/2010 school year, administrators feel they have succeeded at distinguishing themselves in this manner. Newsweek Magazine notably corroborated this success in their 2009 "America's Top Public High Schools" issue, which ranked Berkley 6th in the state of Michigan.

Part 2: Valuing Music Education

Berkley's overarching philosophy of education places strong value on music education. Interviewees clearly saw music as an integral part of achieving the goal of developing each child's potential to the fullest. Additionally, they all viewed music as part of a total educational package that seeks to provide each student with as many educational opportunities and experiences as possible. The district values music's aesthetic and utilitarian functions, recognizing that by learning the life-long skill of appreciation and by instilling crossover skills for other subjects, a music program helps each individual student to achieve over-arching educational goals.

Interviewees provided a variety of responses to the question of "what does it mean to value music education?" Music educators immediately and unanimously said that financial support indicated value. Administrators reported that value

meant more than having an appreciation for music, that it also included making time for it, supporting it financially, personally attending events, prioritizing it in scheduling, and finally, sustaining it over time. In response to the question of whether, according to the definition they supplied, Berkley values its music program, they all overwhelmingly responded, "yes" but indicated that each group plays distinctive roles and exerts differing degrees of influence in determining the over-all value placed on music education within the district.

Influence of Synergistic Relationships

The research interviews sought to determine the roles each group or individuals play in determining the value of music education, and the responses showed that a synergy exists between music teachers, administrators, parents and community members, and students. Within this network, each individual or group plays an important and indispensable role, and each builds upon and responds to the actions and attitudes of the others. While some teachers or administrators placed more importance on one particular influence over the others, some argued that each group contributed equally to a confluence of interactions that made the music program thrive, and that its success would not exist without all of their contributions (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Teacher Role

Many interviewees believe that the intertwining of these relationships originates in the perceived quality of the music created by the teachers. As one administrator explained, the influence of these teachers on the value of music

education started years ago with "some people who really helped [the music program] grow. They created a following. They created parents who are into it, and they had administrators into it" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Today, Berkley's music teachers continue to sustain a thriving, quality music program with the understanding that "if our music programs weren't very good I think it would be easier to cut them because there wouldn't be that value" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Although any student can receive curricular credit for taking music, the school district does not mandate that all students must elect to take a music class. When interviewed, at least one administrator expressed the necessity behind encouraging students to enroll in music courses, stating, "if you don't have a good program build from that strong teacher, based in interest and passion and quality, they're just going to work themselves out of a job" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). This study does not propose to examine by what criteria administrators and community members judge a program's quality, nor did any interviewee offer an explanation as to what Berkley music teachers specifically do that shows quality. Yet, it is important to note that everyone interviewed *perceived* the music instruction children receive at Berkley as quality instruction, and acknowledged this perceived quality as a contributing factor to the program's continued success and survival.

In addition to teaching quality material and creating a quality program, Berkley's music teachers have also shown a willingness to develop aspects of music

education according to the district's guidelines and standards for all curricular subjects. For example, every few years the district provides teachers with the time and resources to reevaluate and develop their subject's curriculum and their criteria for student assessment. During this time, teachers can also restructure the curriculum to achieve better integration across grade levels, as well as review materials and content covered in each specific class

To meet district requirements, Berkley music teachers have worked hard to ensure that music content builds at each level within a comprehensive program that spans kindergarten through twelfth grade. For instance, when I taught in Berkley, the music department responded to a district directive requiring teachers to record data on student learning. The music department staff specifically focused on common assessment and evaluation of student growth to make sure that pupils met specified curricular goals. To test student achievement, the staff designed and implemented a 4th grade exit test that quantitatively measured student knowledge and growth in music education. Here, the music department's compliance with district mandates to make their subject resemble the model of other curricular subjects illustrated the department's willingness to value what the administrators valued, and showed the administration that music can evaluate students and achieve educational goals in the same manner as core subjects. As a result, they earned greater value and respect for music programming from the administrators. Whether they are creating or maintaining quality programs, or changing current programs to fit with new district requirements, "when you have talented teachers

who are running great programs, it makes everything else fall in place" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010).

Administrator Role: Value from the top

In the Berkley School District, administrators fall into two categories: building-specific administrators (such as principals), and upper administrators (such as superintendent and assistant superintendent). Some interviewees suggested that building-specific principals play the largest role in determining the value of music programs because these administrators support the importance of music education to the upper administrators who make the budget proposals to the school board. The building principals "are very good speakers and promoters of the [music] program because of having the face-time with the actual parents and other colleagues" (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009). Because they see the value of the music education programs first hand, these administrators can authoritatively lobby for its existence in their schools.

Conversely, some interviewees thought that the upper administration plays a larger role because their constituents view them as leaders, who as such "have a lot of influence on their communities" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). One former superintendent said, "that the superintendent is the lead instructor in the community, and the lead instructor for the board of education. And, I think if you're an effective teacher, part of your goal is to educate and help" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). She argued that without this upper-administrative leadership, no school district could ever truly support a strong

music program. Not only can a superintendent lobby for inclusions or changes in the budget, but also as the public face of the district, superintendents provide much if not all of the material and information that the community receives about the district's operations. As such, a superintendent who publicly voices support for music can help generate public backing that may influence the school board and their budgetary decisions.

Both levels of administration felt they could exercise a detrimental influence over the fate of the music program because "the buck stops here, so to speak, at the administrative level. If we didn't have the same type of commitment to support the teachers and the community, we could easily be the demise of that program, but we see value" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Administrators see value in music education not only because of its educational importance, but because most of them can recall positive experiences with music, both at Berkley and in their own lives. Almost every interviewee shared some kind of personal story, ranging from childhood lessons to being involved with their own children who have become engaged in music. Because they see the value in a music education program, Berkley administrators help unite the district with a shared vision to work together toward common educational goals. The administrators further acknowledged that they show this level of consistent, personal support for *all* programs (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009).

Administrators at Berkley show this support and commitment to a shared vision to music education in a number of ways. The first involves scheduling. One

administrator reported that music "drives the whole master schedule" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Initially, administrators look at what courses students need and how music teacher schedules can work to accommodate those needs. Then they "maximize the minutes that you have to provide for specials" and "minimize the number of buildings somebody's in" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Once they know when the music teachers will be in each building, they can then develop the rest of the master schedule.

Administrators also support programs through turnout at events. In Berkley, at least one administrator attends every music concert. One former upper administrator commented that she thought this was rare in other districts, and that the students in her new school district expressed surprise when she said she would attend a concert. By attending concerts, administrators not only show their support for the music students and staff, but they also "start a ripple effect," (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2010) that directly affects other groups.

Berkley's administrators also show how much they value the music program by funding the staff and the program as a curricular subject. In Berkley the entire K-12 music program costs about $950,000, while the entire middle and high school extra-curricular athletic program costs only $550,000 (Appendix H). If the district wanted to, they could offer music as part of an extracurricular before or after school program, and save money on teacher salaries and benefits. When asked if Berkley spends an adequate amount of money to support the music program, administrators agreed that they do. And while the music teachers agreed that they wished for

increased funding, at least one expressed agreement with the administration. "I think considering the budget, that we did spend the appropriate amount of money for it" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Overall, administrators believe that they set the tone for the district regarding the music program's values through their actions of offering financial and physical support, making it a priority in scheduling, and personally holding music in high regard. One administrator stated, "If programs don't have a high degree of support I fear that they will be eliminated. People won't value them unless the value comes from the top" (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009).

Parents and the Community

As one administrator remarked, "Parents are huge!" (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009). The Berkley music teachers believe that the parents and community comprise the largest influence on the district valuing a music program. While some administrators regarded parents as possessing less influence, most administrator, school board member and community member interviews reflected the important role parents and the community play in supporting and sustaining the music program.

Of all the subjects interviewed, none could state with any certainty why the community values music. Some thought the community's support stemmed from the history and traditions of music in the Berkley School District, some thought the professional musicians in the community who perform with the Detroit Symphony Orchestra (DSO) played a large role, and others believed that the community's

strong traditional support for the arts in education formed the primary reason. Whether the community values music because of outside influences such as school administrators or teachers, or personal values defined by religion, personal experiences, or profession, Berkley's community clearly and strongly supports music education.

First of all, parents and community members attend musical activities. Several interviewees mentioned the indoor marching band concert and the high school musicals as examples of "standing room only" events. Also, parents "make their kids sign up for it when it's a class" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009) which shows a strong commitment as learning music does not simply occur in a 45-minute class that meets twice a week. Instead, parents must set aside time to become actively involved in their children's music education, whether that involves driving them to concerts and other functions outside of the school day, paying for instruments and lessons, or finding time to schedule all of the extra concerts, competition, practices, and social events involved in music. As one administrator acknowledged, the value for music education comes from students who enjoy doing it "along with the parents who value it and make a priority of it in their children's lives" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009).

The community also voiced its strong support for the music programs. Most of the community members and administrators interviewed agreed that if the school board or district proposed negative changes to music education, "the board meeting would be pretty full" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

One administrator remarked, "I think to get a tangible sense for their influence, the best way to do that would be to put out in public, 'we're going to cut the music program,' and then see what would happen. I think you would get a very good sense for how much people valued it." (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). While speculative, this administrator's remarks indicate the fear of a potential public backlash from a proposed cut of or to the music program.

Additionally, the school board—which comprises community members—strongly supports music education. One board member said, "It would be very difficult to ever support a cut of the music program" (NL, personal communication, January 15, 2010), and all board members interviewed agreed that music programs were off the table when it comes to discussing cuts. Certainly, these words speak strongly about the value they place on music, but "you can tell what a board values by what they spend money on" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). The board's primary purpose is to approve the budget each year, and they always approve a budget that funds music education.

Students

Students exert influence over how the district values music by taking the classes offered. Whether they do so because of quality teachers and programs, parents who encourage participation, administrators who value and fund the programs, or a combination of all these factors, without interested students enrolling in classes, Berkley would have no reason to value music.

As students progress through each grade level, the curriculum offers them more choices to make "and they can't do everything" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). In order to participate in music, they must often sacrifice other interests, such as sitting with the band at football games instead of with friends, or taking choir over an additional Advanced Placement (AP) class. The choice to take music "speaks to their level of commitment to a program" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009), and without this commitment, music would not exist as strongly in Berkley.

Utilitarian Purposes

Parents, administrators, and community members also explained that they value music because of its utilitarian benefits. One interviewee commented, "the research I've read said there's a correlation between kids who are in music and kids who do well academically" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Another added, "All of the research says that students who are involved in music do better in math, they do better in English, and they score better on the standardized exams. So, it's not just, 'can I play an instrument,' it's the other knowledge that you get from being involved in music that transfers over into so many different subjects" (NL, personal communication, January 15, 2010).

Administrators and parents mentioned music as means for developing language, memory, and mental functioning, improving creativity and problem solving, building teamwork skills and camaraderie, as well as functioning as a social activity that helps foster a stronger sense of community amongst students who

might not otherwise have become friends. Additionally, they think that music can play a role in learning other classroom subjects, such as math and history. One respondent offered that "if you get more kids who are struggling into those program, perhaps they'll have better role models, spend time with other kids who are on the upper ends of academic achievement, and that pulls them up as well" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). The district also values other non-educational utilitarian benefits, including music's ability to provide an emotional outlet during the day for kids or inexpensive entertainment for the community.

Putting it all together

In addition to valuing music's utilitarian benefits, administrators, parents, and community members also consider music "a life-long skill that children can appreciate" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). They think "if a child has a propensity towards that [music] you really do want to develop that" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Each of the varying groups enlist these reasons in how they support music within the Berkley School District, and within the over-arching framework of the district's philosophy of education. Each group and their reasons for valuing music combine synergistically to create the infrastructure of a strongly supported, unaltered music program. Over time, each group has exerted the work, time, and commitment that today has made music in Berkley a "sacred cow," or something that nobody would "want to see go to the wayside, for any reason, financial or otherwise" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Berkley has

preserved its music programs by often choosing "to discontinue other programs and/or not to fund certain things along the way. But [music has] been preserved" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). In the eyes of most administrators, this preservation means that they "do value music and to a very high degree" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009).

Part 3: Other Considerations and Influences

Although Berkley values a well-rounded education and the role music plays in that type of education, other important considerations and influences determine what types of programs receive funding and in what amounts. In other words, just because Berkley values a program, that alone will not suffice to sustain any particular part of it. Schools try to produce a good product, keep the community happy, operate efficiently, and outperform the competition. A number of monetary, political, and educational considerations play a role in the realization of programs and their funding. Like any school district, Berkley must balance the community's wants with both the obligation to low income students and courses that the school must have in order to grant a diploma. Furthermore, they must achieve this balance while working with a finite amount of money (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Political Considerations

Like a corporation building a brand, the district carefully constructs, maintains, and modifies its image. A district creates an image through its heritage, physical spaces, test scores, college acceptance rates, and programs offered, and the

community's perception and opinion of those things. A positive image not only keeps currently enrolled families pleased with administrators and their children's educations, but also helps attract new students and their families to the district. For the specific reason of attracting new families, Berkley administrators look at how their programs differentiate them from other districts, and they continually strive to offer programs that students cannot find elsewhere.

In interviews, Berkley staff, administrators, and parents shared the sentiment that music helps contribute to a positive image for the district. The music program's strong heritage started from "some very smart people who helped it grow…and they created a following" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). This following of people then built upon that initial groundwork to create more music-based opportunities for students, which in turn created something that the district now takes pride in. One current school board member commented on the power of this tradition as he recalled one of his first experiences as a new board member: "When I got elected to the board, one of the first things that an outgoing board member said to me was, 'change anything you want in the curriculum, but don't mess around with the music program.'" (NL, personal communication, January 15, 2010).

Not only does the music program have an incredibly strong community support system, the music programs also act as a way for the district to differentiate itself from other area districts. Specifically, Berkley administrators believe they accomplish this by offering a strings program starting in the fifth grade. During the

interviews, almost every administrator mentioned the uniqueness of this strings programs, and the superintendent even made a comment about how he would not interview in school districts that did not have an orchestra program.

In 2007, the Berkley high school choir students were invited to join with other high school choral students to join with other choirs and sing Beethoven's Mass in C in Carnegie Hall, New York. The school supported the trip, both educationally and financially, and continues to use this accomplishment to highlight the district's offerings for students. Berkley advertises this accomplishment of the music department on its websites and other internet services where prospective families and students can locate information about the districts music program.

All groups interviewed acknowledged that if Berkley administrators and the board decided to cut music, the community would express outrage. Many speculated that concerned community members would flood board meetings, and parents would rally in support of music. In addition to fearing the community's initial backlash, however, Berkley administrators also expressed another, more volatile source of concern. Administrators would be reluctant to cut music because they fear that such cuts would cause families and their students to leave the district. Such a flight would negatively impact the district's image, and could potentially initiate a downward spiral of people leaving the district.

Fiscal Considerations

This fear of student flight also raises monetary concerns. Under Michigan's system of funding schools, the loss of students means the loss of money. While

Berkley might wish that they could offer all the programs that would meet the needs and desires of every family, Berkley administrators work with a limited budget and therefore they must keep in mind fiscal considerations when deciding on the quantity of programs. Many administrators explained the finances of education as trying to find the best "bang for the buck" (EN, UA & WH, personal communications, December 4, 8, 2009 & January 22, 2010). They want programs that offer the best education to the most number of students, for the least amount of cost. According to their point of view, music easily gives great value.

Music, especially at the secondary level, saves money. The school must be able to account for each student's activity at all times during the school day, and as one administrator said, "they cannot be in history all day" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). Music provides a learning environment where over 100 students can participate at one time. Additionally, the music classes achieve cost efficiency because the district needs only one teacher to manage the class. This high student-to-teacher ratio can accrue huge savings for a district. If Berkley cut music, not only would those students still require a classroom and a teacher to monitor or instruct them, but they would likely enroll in other electives with a much less cost-effective class cap.

The district understands that numbers are important in maintaining a program. With few exceptions (such as the AP courses discussed below), the secondary schools will not continue to schedule an elective course unless a certain number of students enroll. While administrators made it very clear that they do not

put students in music just for the sake of filling classes, at the secondary level where music is an elective, they recognize that "students vote with their feet" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). As such, the district supports music by encouraging students to enroll in these courses, attempting to thereby boost enrollment to the point of sustainability.

By contrast, at Berkley High School, the administrators and staff all expressed their support for the foreign language program, whose completed coursework the state of Michigan mandates for graduation. Yet, because of the decreasing interest manifested by smaller student numbers, Berkley has reduced the teacher FTE in the French program. A former principal explained this further:

> Last year we had a French teacher who taught .8, meaning that she took one class off. That was because we could not find enough kids to fill that last class, so she became less than a full-time teacher. So, as a high school we say that we should offer a comprehensive foreign language program. I would like to offer German, Chinese, maybe Japanese, and we offer some of that through CASA, but at the high school itself we only offer Spanish and French. That teacher has since retired, and we now have a teacher who is only a ½ time teacher. So, he has half-time French, and his numbers have dwindled. Part of what we talked to him about when we hired him is about being able to build a program. So, what does that mean? We're not really sure, but essentially what it means is get more numbers in the French classes!" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Some programs in Berkley have seen their numbers diminish, but for the most part, music has not experienced a decline. One former high school principal pointed to the show choir as an example of where they might cut music, because that class

currently enrolls fewer than 20 students. He did not suggest eliminating the course, however, but thought the school could convert it into a club instead of a curricular subject. He added that his example was only hypothetical, and would only happen if the district needed to choose between funding show choir versus funding a program with greater student enrollment.

Educational Considerations

In some cases, small enrollment numbers can indicate a program's failure to achieve all its stated educational objectives. One administrator used a high school business program as an example:

> Over time, we looked at the number of kids who were signing up for those business classes, which had been dwindling and dwindling. We talked to the teacher and said, 'Look, this is an elective, you've got to make kids want this class. If kids don't want this class, we're not going to offer it." And so the old mentality [says], instead of creating a class because that's what everyone wants, you HAVE to have the class, whatever it is, because we're a high school. You say, "nope, if our kids don't want it, we're not going to offer it." Now, you can't do that with your core subjects, you know, math, science, English and social studies, but you can do it with your electives…And when we cut the business classes, one teacher's classes, the decision was based on how many kids wanted it. And, we honestly thought if we cut these classes how are we impacting kids? What are we doing to impact them? Are they going to be less prepared for college? Are they going to be less prepared for the next phase of their life? And we came to the decision that given everything else we knew, we didn't think so. (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009)

In this case, the low enrollment numbers showed the symptom of a problem but not its cause. The administrators realized that they could eliminate this course without affecting the overall educational value these students received, and so they cut it.

A program's overall educational worth also plays a role in how the district decides to create and fund new programming. The high school currently runs on block scheduling, and administrators considered switching to trimesters as "an attempt to reduce the budget because when you have trimesters you need fewer teachers" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). But the community raised a lot of questions and concerns about the long-term educational value of the program, viewing the educational benefits of block scheduling as more important than the monetary savings that a switch to trimesters would yield. Ultimately, the board and administration decided not to switch to trimesters.

Looking at a big picture

Berkley administrators apply a complex formula to determine which programs provide the most value and which are "the low hanging fruit" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). They consider monetary, political and educational factors, and also look at how certain programs differentiate the district from other schools. Through the interviews, several programs stood out as points of pride for the district, each of which possessed a different combination of benefits for the district.

For example, Berkley schedules 20 Advanced Placement (AP) classes that often enroll less than twenty students each, and in some cases, less than a dozen.

But, these classes provide tremendous educational value for the students, the community wants them, and Berkley can use them to set itself apart from other districts. Currently, Berkley offers more AP classes than any other public school in the county, and has only one less course than two of the best private schools in the county. Offering AP classes may not be the wisest decision monetarily, but politically and educationally it makes sense.

Berkley administrators think the music education program meets the ideal for political, educational, and fiscal considerations. As mentioned, music programs save the district money, the community strongly supports them, and they help differentiate the district. Moreover, the administrators value the perceived quality that results from the music educational curriculum, which builds in a spiral method from kindergarten to 12th grade. This curricular model of building on what the students know each year makes it very difficult to remove any one piece from the program, because it could potentially fragment or damage the program as a whole. For all of these reasons, music has not faced severe cuts in the Berkley School District to date.

Part 4: Making Decisions

Berkley school district decides whether to keep or cut programs based on the considerations made from their philosophy of education, the place music has within that philosophy, and political and monetary concerns. Although Berkley has made cuts and concessions over the past ten years, administrators agree that their number one priority is to protect programs from reductions and eliminations (EN,

NL, NG, NT, UA & WH). These programs include core subjects such as math, science, English, and social studies, and they also include a comprehensive music program. To date, their music program has never faced cuts, trims, or consolidations that stemmed from financial concerns. Yet, as financial situations continue to worsen, music staff fear heading to the chopping block. Therefore, a crucial component of my research involves analyzing a successful program like Berkley arrives at their budgetary decisions.

Berkley's goals include staying out of debt (and if possible, in the black), while still offering a wide variety of programs that can both attract and keep people in the district. For them, this process becomes a difficult balancing act filled with calculated expenditures, cuts, and risks. During economically challenging times "a simpler decision in some people's eye would be to just cut a big-ticket item" (NG personal communication, December 15, 2009). This means completely preserving every other program except for one. Often these kinds of deep cut targets music programs. According to upper administrators, it seems that "everybody is going to try to cut their way to success, and you can't do it" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). One upper administrator even commented, "I am very confident that there are going to be winners and losers in this budget crisis, and my job is to everything I can to make Berkley a winner. So what does that look like? It looks like doing a bunch of really unconventional stuff" (NT, December 4, 2009).

For Berkley, this "unconventional stuff" means avoiding making any cuts for as long as possible. One of their biggest worries about extreme budget cuts such as

the elimination of the entire music program is that "we will reduce our budget to the point where we become less desirable, and less desirable means a death spiral for the district" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). To avoid any cuts that result in flight—which would inevitably lead to a reduced budget and more cuts in the future—Berkley tries to avoid conventional thinking "because when everybody's going in one direction there is opportunity in doing something different." (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). For Berkley, that "something different" often means looking for new sources of revenue.

Finding New Sources of Revenue

As mentioned in Chapter 1, public schools in Michigan receive a large percentage of their funding from the state, given as a per-pupil amount. For this reason, one of the best ways for schools to generate new revenue is to attract and retain students. Currently, Berkley actively pursues a number of ways to bring new students into the district. These methods include sustaining current programming, implementing new and creative programming, advertising, and other expenditures, that take "a whole bunch of calculated attempts to bolster our income" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

In other words, Berkley spends money to make money. Some of these expenditures include redesigning the website, advertising in targeted newspapers, and purchasing radio airtime. In Fall 2009, Berkley paid $25,000 to participate in a television special called "The Best Schools in Michigan." In this program, WXYZ Detroit ran a highlighted, six-minute feature of the Berkley School district that aired

during prime-time television hours. Did they get their money's worth? Well, Berkley needed approximately three new fulltime equivalent (FTE) students to recoup their investment on the new website. Since the airing, website traffic greatly increased, *and* sixteen new students registered to attend school in Berkley fulltime starting January 2010 (TH, personal communication, February 15, 2010).

Berkley also helps to market their district by coordinating with local realtors through a home improvement fair with the goal of convincing current residents to upgrade or improve their home in Berkley rather than move out of district. Berkley school district also rents out their facilities to local organizations and individuals, which not only generates revenue, but exposes groups and their members to the great spaces and resources their district provides for students.

Another source for generating new revenue comes from Berkley's participation in share-time partnerships with area private schools. These programs place a certified public school teacher into a private school to provide instruction in non state-required courses such as music, art, language, physical education, and library. Private schools benefit from this partnership because they can offer these programs without using valuable tuition dollars, and the public school benefits because current state regulations allow them to count the students as part of their FTE. One former administrator explained "The teacher wins because we pay better than the private schools. We get a portion of the foundation grant so we make money, and the private school itself makes money because it's still collecting the same tuition." (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009). Building these

relationships only requires administrative resources and effort (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009), and through this outlay, Berkley now provides instruction in three local private schools.

Berkley also generates revenue through creative staffing decisions. Recently, one of Berkley's upper administrators left for a new position. The superintendent commented, "one of the things that people will say is, 'hey Corinne Foxwell left, why did you replace that position?' Well, if you're not looking at the bigger picture it makes sense to not replace Corinne. If you're looking at the bigger picture, Corinne's work in Shrine [a local Catholic school in which Berkley has built a share-time program] last year alone resulted in over 300,000 dollars for the district after only a month or two of work. Now, how much money does Corinne make? Not 300,000 dollars!" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Moreover, the money from these schools is residual, meaning that Berkley will receive it again next year, freeing the person in charge of building these relationships to work with other schools and build more share-time programs.

While share-time programs provide benefits for both Berkley and the private school, these relationships can be hard to build because the private school teacher may not meet the qualifications required by the state's public school teaching standards. This poses a problem for share-time programs because, "some people like the people they have already and they're not a high-qualified person. So we have to say to them, 'you can keep your person, but we can't have a share-time with them. You might want to talk to us again when that person retires. There's not a

partnership there." (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009). Yet even with these difficulties, just within three area private schools, Berkley now offers computer class, Spanish, physical education, library, and music, counting over 70 students towards their FTE.

The alternative education program also contributes to Berkley's FTE. This program offers a second-chance education to sixteen to nineteen-year-olds wanting to earn a high school diploma. Berkley used to host this program in one of their buildings, but in the 2006/2007 school year, they sold the land for 1.8 million dollars (the sale itself providing a sizable chunk of revenue) and moved the program to a rented building that Southfield schools was about to close. Now they "put about 225 kids over there, and are able to offer a program to kids that would maybe be on the streets. In the mean time, we get some revenue for it. You know, more than what it costs us. So, that's a good thing as well." (MH, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

While Berkley can count FTE from students at these private school and alternative education programs, they can generate even more revenue if a student chooses to attend Berkley School district fulltime. To obtain more permanent students, Berkley opens its door to non-resident students. They can do this because of the recently enacted Michigan Choice Schools Program.

In June of 1996 Governor Engler signed into law P.A. 300, of which Section 105 created Michigan's "schools of choice" program (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002). This law "requires all school districts to determine whether or not they will accept

nonresident students within their schools." (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p. 60). Under section 105 legislation, students and their associated revenue may leave any resident district to enter a choice school without the written release consent that previous regulations required (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002). Schools choosing to open their doors to nonresidents must advertise the schools, grades, and programs they will make available, and "if the number of applicants exceeds available space" they must then randomly select which students can attend in the district. (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p. 60).

Each year Berkley carefully decides on the number of students for which they can open their doors as a "limited choice school." In other words "We don't just say that we'll admit '40 kids in the 3rd grade and we're going to open two new classrooms.' Instead, Berkley decides, 'well, some of the numbers in this one graduating group of 2017 are small. We could afford more per section in classes.' So we still [strive to] keep our class size low, but they're a low attended group anyway, so we could bring in six new students." (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). Usually Berkley only opens this program to students during fall enrollment, but January 2010 marked the first time they opened enrollment for second semester as a way to bolster income.

Berkley's upper administrators continue to invent ideas for new programs in hope that any increased offerings will attract new students to the district. Currently, Berkley only takes elementary students into the schools of choice program. As a way to open the "school choice" opportunity to middle and high school students, and

to capitalize on a potential need for secondary schooling created by "surrounding districts that are going to be eliminating programming," Berkley is now in the planning stages of an "AP Scholars Program" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

The AP Scholars program would offer a high number of Advanced Placement courses to any student who passed an entrance exam. This program "would do nothing more than make our district a place of choice for parents that really care about school…What that means is if you're a high achieving kid in a surrounding district and you come here, we have a program for you." (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Not only would Berkley benefit from the FTE this program would generate, but over time, attracting these high-achieving students would, in turn, further elevate Berkley's profile in the district and surrounding areas and help them attract even more new students—both in the AP Program and in general.

Another program in development involves moving a local Jewish Day School into a Berkley public building as a Jewish Day Academy to create a partnership that would offer secular classes in the morning and a private sacred curriculum in the afternoon. This program, taken from a 1950's model, benefits the community by fulfilling a local need, and provides financial returns to Berkley schools, which can count the Jewish Day Academy students towards their FTE. Three local areas feed Berkley School district, and one of them has a very high Jewish population. Berkley's program could provide Jewish Day schools facing their own budgetary

dilemmas another way to keep their schools open, and by offering a collaborative program, both schools could reap the benefits.

Like any other school district, Berkley retains students and attracts new ones by advertising a product in which people want to invest their funds and their children's futures. For Berkley, this currently means building a new state-of-the-art facility equipped with the latest technology. To fund this project, Berkley in January 2010 proposed a bond "the sum of not to exceed One Hundred Sixty-Seven Million Six Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars ($167,665,000) and issued its general obligation unlimited tax bonds in one or more series therefore, for the purpose of: constructing, furnishing and equipping a new middle school; constructing, furnishing and equipping additions to school buildings; remodeling, furnishing and refurnishing and equipping and re-equipping school facilities; acquiring and installing educational technology in school buildings; acquiring land; and developing and improving playgrounds, play fields and sites" (Berkley School District). On February 23, 2010, this bond failed to pass, as voters felt they could not support such a large sum during tough economic times. The school district leaders are currently trying to plan their next step.

Collaborative Programs

In addition to their efforts to generate new revenue, Berkley also looks for ways to save money by participating in collaborative programs. As a smaller school with limited resources, Berkley can offer broad opportunities to students by working with other districts. Berkley currently participates in three collaborative

programs: The Center for Advanced Study in the Arts (CASA) and the International Academy (IA) (to which they contribute their own funds); and one program, Oakland School Technical Campus Southeast (OSTC), funded by separate tax dollars.

Because Berkley has always operated on a smaller budget than area school districts and wants to offer the very best education for its students, they were always interested in collaborative programs. CASA began in 1983 as a collaboration between Berkley and two other area public schools that offered "a larger variety of high level courses by high schools with limited funding" (CASA). Since 1983 the program has grown to include six participating school districts and over 350 students offer over 40 classes, including 19 Advanced Placement (AP) courses. Additionally, CASA offers AP music theory, music history and courses in the other arts, such as advanced ballet.

Opening in 1996, the IA provides "a public, tuition-free high school of choice for students of 20 Oakland County school districts collaborating in consortium with university and business partners. Commencing with 9th grade, it provides a unique blend of rigorous academic standards, practical and career-related learning as well as personal development opportunities" (International Academy). Students graduate with an International Baccalaureate degree, which is held in high regard around the world.

Both of these programs offer full benefits to Berkley students at only a fraction of the cost. One former upper administrator explained the financial advantages for the district: "Some of the teachers are actually under contract as

Berkley employees, but they don't have to travel because the school has enough children there to educate. Obviously we contribute some money for the operation of the IA, but what is kind of neat is that every 20th [teacher] position that comes up is a Berkley position." (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Berkley could not find a better "bang for the buck" than to get 100% of the benefit in student programming at only 1/20th of the total cost. These collaborative programs allow Berkley to offer a variety programming for a diverse student body. Through these programs, students of all abilities and interests have a place to go and learn, while still being counted as students in the Berkley school system.

Besides collaborating with other districts, Berkley schools also collaborate within their own district. Whereas in past years, the district might have sent all of its music teachers to a conference, now, "instead of sending a dozen teachers to a workshop, you send two and then you provide an opportunity back in district for training so that the two can train the other ten" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). This type of intra-district collaboration still gives teachers training opportunities, but cuts down on the cost for the district, saving funds that can help them avoid reducing or cutting programs in the future.

As budgets tighten, more schools have started expressing interest in similar collaborations. Berkley is part of Oakland County, where an Intermediate School District (ISD) can help aid in district collaborations. Funded by a separate tax levy, the ISD started in the 1960's as an agency for special education and career focused education. Today, regulations such as No Child Left Behind mandate certain

responsibilities in the area of special education, but the ISD can also branch out to help districts in other ways.

Ten years ago, the financial security of many school districts did not prompt them to seek extra help from the ISD; however, today even the biggest school districts are finding they need some extra help. One former Berkley employee, who now works for the ISD, explained the role the ISD plays in helping districts collaborate:

> We have a lot of cohort meetings with all the superintendents. We meet once a month and we do a lot of sharing. We ask them what they need, we survey them, and we do everything in our power to help them. Right now we have an accounting group, which focuses on the learning/achievement gap and how to reduce that. We also have a group studying transportation and how to save money with that. And, since 80% of school budgets are employees, the two big things we are working on in the long term are health insurance and retirement costs (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

While the ISD does not directly affect music education in Berkley, the resources used and problems solved by the ISD free up general budget funding for local school districts, allowing them to keep programs such as music.

Trimming the Periphery

In addition to collaborating with area schools and within its own district, Berkley also saves money by trimming and consolidating programs and offerings within the district as much as possible. When faced with the ultimate choice of

cutting or reducing, one former administrator said, "reducing is better than eliminating" (UA, personal communication, December 4 ,2009).

To fulfill their goal of leaving programs intact, Berkley's administrators look at the periphery of the educational unit to find ways to achieve economic efficiency. This process involves first looking at the core elements needed to keep the program in place and then working outward, through support staff and unnecessary expenditures to find items on the periphery that they can cut without negatively affecting the program's ability to exist and function properly. When interviewed, all of the former and current upper administrators strongly expressed the tough decisions involved in reducing any employee's position, but all ultimately agreed that educational principles had to come first, and that it was better to cut support staff positions that do not directly affect school programs. One administrator explained this process:

> Historically, of all the things that I've been involved in, the cuts have never really been made in programs, but positions that might support other functions within the district. Often they will first go with retirements, so as not to be cutting a person. Then, they look at whether that person needs to be replaced in identical capacity or not. That's probably been most relevant with secretarial positions, custodial positions, para-professional positions – the support-type things. We used to have aides in buildings who could just come for three to four hours a morning and do jobs around the school, or aides who could come in and cover your classrooms while you went to a meeting. Well, we certainly do not have those now (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009).

In addition to trimming their support-staff, Berkley also outsourced their substitute teachers, which eliminated the costs of paying for retirement and health-care benefits. The custodial staff avoided outsourcing by agreeing to concessions that included a two-tier wage structure in which new hires make significantly less the experienced custodians. One interviewee noted, however, that while condensing or eliminating these positions this might seem like a great place to save money "there are always going to be residual effects. Obviously when we cut half a secretary at our level this year it didn't hurt the kids in the building, but it does affect how we operate. And so kids could be impacted in some way, but it's just not as tangible" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010).

Berkley also trimmed extra services. While Berkley technically considers itself a "walking campus," and does not provide daily transportation for students—saving money on daily bussing to and from school—they still incur other transportation costs, such as providing bussing for students over to CASA's campus or for student field trips. They used to provide free transportation to and from athletic events, but now Berkley uses cost saving measures such as providing transportation to sporting games, but making parents provide transportation home. By using creative measures such as trimming and cutting of viewed extras such as bussing from sporting events, Berkley has been able to save money, keeping cuts away from programs.

Consolidations and Attrition

Berkley administrators also try to achieve cost efficiency in teacher positions. One administrator reported that, "There are usually five or six teachers that retire or move each year. So, we look at the programs and try to be more efficient with a little less staff. Attrition usually absorbs that, we're more cost efficient, and we still have all of the program elements that the community thinks of as strong" (MH, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Berkley also consolidates at the administrative level, and then expands the job duties required from each retained position. One former administrator explained the varied roles of upper administrators in a smaller district:

> People had to wear more hats in a smaller district, and particularly in Berkley. While another district might be able to afford the director of technology and the director of curriculum, and the director or research and assessment, that's one person in Berkley, and it always has been (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009)

Even though Berkley has always run on a smaller upper administration than the districts surrounding them, in 2008 the district reorganized and once again consolidated administrative positions, giving everyone a raise and increased duties. Now, "titles are longer and obligations are greater – responsibilities are more intense. I go to meetings of the county and everybody introduces themselves with five jobs that they have to do" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009).

Berkley's administrators now have titles such as "Director of Curriculum, Technology, Assessment, and Grants."

While the consolidation of upper administrative positions shows the district's commitment to keeping programs intact at any cost, it does raise concerns about their ability to make informed decisions in areas outside their expertise. When asked how administrators deal with so many responsibilities, a former superintendent responded, "What I think good leaders do is really depend on experts in the area. When they don't know something, they should ask. And so, even though you might not have a director of research and assessment, at least there were people out there you could call and get advice about really important decisions on things like software for assessment." (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Consolidations also happen at a facilities-based level. In 2009, Berkley

> eliminated an entire elementary school and then we redesigned and made a K-8 program international baccalaureate program. That allowed us to deliver instruction in a more efficient way, because you only need one principal instead of two. So, we eliminated a principal. We eliminated the secretaries and we combined them on one spot so we could deliver and keep the programs that we had…In fact, when we ended up going to that K-8 building the kids got more music. And what was nice was that they had somebody who was there all day and wasn't traveling and losing time in the traveling and going to five different elementaries. It was really a cost efficiency program, but it ended up allowing us to keep programs and even expand a little bit" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

In addition to the money saved by eliminating the administrative and support positions, this consolidation also gave the district a one-time sum of money of 1.8 million dollars because they were able to sell the land.

This school's community voiced their resistance to putting kindergarten students in the same building as 8th graders, which the closed school made necessary. In this case, however, Berkley warded off community resistance, by calling the process "restructuring for success," and convinced the residents that consolidating can provide more positive effects than negative implications.

Economists employ the concept of "creative destruction" to explain how cuts in one area (and even the wholesale elimination of old business models and modes of production) can result in newer, more efficient ways of offering an even better product. When interviewed, many of Berkley's administrators expressed this need to create something better while—*and because of*—saving money through cuts or eliminations of facilities. When interviewed one former administrator reflected on the school closing by stating that, "I think what happens when people try to be more efficient is they get stuck on the numbers and trying to save X amount of dollars. So, they end up closing an elementary school and a middle school, but they never spend time saying, 'could we create something even better by closing down?' I think that was the success in Berkley because we created something even better and something new" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Embodying the familiar adage, "Necessity is the mother of invention," Berkley administrators view these tough times as an opportunity to evaluate the

way they run a school and then determine whether they can offer more efficient *and* effective programming by trimming and consolidating. By taking this proactive approach, they hope to "move in the opposite direction of everybody else, rebuild our schools, increase momentum for the district, increase the profile of the community, increase the attractiveness of our programs and our facilities, and attract families that want to be part of an energetic system" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

Currently, the new bond proposes a way to gain the necessary capital to help achieve these goals. Berkley's administrators have also proposed another consolidation that would place all of the district's 6-8th grade students in one new middle school. At the time of writing, the administrators have not begun discussions about what this exact model would entail. They have, however, stipulated that their proposal would meet or incorporate the formerly mentioned ideas of maximizing administrative efficiency through consolidation of job duties, keeping formerly itinerant teachers in one building, and offering more programs of a higher quality.

Concessions

Implemented

The budget also receives some relief from teacher concessions that have resulted from contract negotiations. In the past teachers may have received more benefits. One district employee recalled "When I was a teacher in the 80's and 90's, part of your compensation package was full coverage in benefits. Well, now we do

things like co-pay and monthly deductions from your paycheck towards your benefits" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). And with the contract under current negotiations, one administrator mentioned that he can "see that number going a lot higher than $30 a month" (MH, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Another mentioned that perhaps there would be way to prorate these concessions so those making more would have to pay more.

Under Discussion

In interviews, administrators also mentioned possible monetary concessions under discussion. For example, one administrator talked about introducing more steps into the teacher pay scale. This altered pay structure would slow down the current annual raise process and save the district money. Another administrator discussed a reduction in planning or release time, which would enable the district to lower teacher FTE without trimming programs.

Contract discussions involve the examination of block scheduling at the high school and teacher release or planning time. Some administrators voiced strong objections to the idea of removing block scheduling from the high school, while others saw it as a potential cost savings to the district. Both sides made convincing arguments to its survival and removal, but of interest here are the noted effects that block scheduling removal would have on the music department. In the absence of block scheduling at the high school level, the current cadre of teachers would teach more classes while receiving less scheduled planning time. This shift could thereby enable the high school to offer the current level of music programming with *fewer*

teachers. When asked if this would affect the existing number of music teachers, one administrator responded, "If you went from 95 minutes to 60 minutes of planning at the high school, and every teacher has 30 minutes more a day that they can teach, I think what you'd more likely see is a science teacher leave, an English teacher leave, and then the music. I think that's more likely" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009).

Conversely, all teachers losing their scheduled planning periods could negatively affect music at the elementary level. In past years, the increase of release time for classroom teachers at the elementary level helped increase the amount of time students spent in music, art, physical education, and elementary Spanish. If teachers negotiated a reduction in planning time, the time students spend in music might also get reduced. Some administrators predicted equal reductions among Spanish, gym, art, and music, while one speculated that physical education would take the cut instead, and another thought the Spanish program would get the reduction (EN, OD & UA, personal communications). Ultimately, these hypothetical reductions or cuts stemmed only from speculations about a systematic change to scheduling that may or may not happen.

Berkley has also obtained concessions from the administrative level. One principal reported that "my administrative group took a pay freeze, which is essentially a pay cut" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). While some teachers and community members have argued that administrators make more and can afford concessions such as pay freezes or cut, one administrator replied "that's

not the point. Everybody has their standard of living. Everybody has where they're at, and you become comfortable at that [level]. And when that gets changed it forces you to do things differently." (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010)

Trimming Programs

When Berkley administrators decide to trim a program, they primarily base their decision on educational quality rather than budgetary concerns. For example, until 2005, Berkley offered an introductory 4th grade string class to complement the existing 5th grade string program. Then, the administrators and the music education staff mutually agreed to discontinue the program because the project did not meet the desired expectation for the students involved. They also decided that these students would learn and retain more information if this string instruction commenced in a more intense 5th grade program. While cutting the 4th grade program may have saved the districts a few dollars in the end, all music teachers kept their full-time positions, and the music teachers believed the students were still receiving a quality music education.

More recently, and in a similar vein, the district decided in 2009 to stop Spanish instruction for grades K-2, and only offer the language in 3rd through 12th grade. Although Michigan state regulations require all students to take foreign language, parents, teachers, and other administrators have questioned the effectiveness of the language program (Appendix E). One administrator added that "I don't think they're saying it because they don't value language, I think they're just wondering if the way we've done elementary rotations where they get a half hour a

week has been effective" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010). As with the 4th grade music example, this cut yielded monetary savings, but budgetary concerns did not constitute the driving force in the decision to reduce or alter the program.

Cuts

Through the efforts mentioned above, Berkley has managed to achieve and sustain a relatively sound position of fiscal health, one that has helped them avoid cutting and/or reducing student programs. In total, between the 2000/2001 and 2008/2009 school years Berkley made 33 budget reductions and adjustments, nine of which involved consolidations to upper administration (see Appendix F for complete list). The other fourteen reductions were made without directly impacting student programming.

Despite all of these initiatives, concessions, and trimmings, Berkley still needed to cut 1.6 million dollars from its operating budget for the 2009/2010 school year. Berkley, however, insists that while the need to save money drives the choice to make a cut somewhere, they ultimately weigh the monetary, political, and educational aspects and consequences.

Berkley administrators admitted their difficulties in finding a process that satisfied all parties affected by the necessary budgetary reductions, especially those that resulted in the elimination of positions. Upper administrators pursued an inclusive approach to their decision, consulting individual building principals, teaching staff, and the community. This process helped mitigate resistance and

negative responses. Additionally, in evaluating programs under consideration for elimination, they tried to determine which areas consistently fell short of stated objectives and goals.

When faced with a decision about program cuts, administrators first compiled a list of how exactly the district spent money. They then submitted this list to teachers and through meetings and online surveys, asked instructors to prioritize each item by voting. Although one administrator summarized the process by asking "what is a budget other than a set of priorities?" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009), some of the teaching staff voiced strong opposition. In interviews, many of the music teachers recalled the discomfort the voting caused, and felt offended when the district, "asked us to pit one [subject or program] against the other." (NN, personal communication, November 17, 2009). When one music teacher said "we shouldn't be choosing each others' destiny or fate" (QL, personal communication, November 17, 2009), all of the teachers in the group nodding in agreement. As a result of teacher and staff resistance, the administrators did not receive useful information or input, yet still faced the decision of which programs and activities to cut. As the superintendent stated "that really went in the tank" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

The administrators then established a citizens' committee, and asked them to prioritize school expenditures over a 12-week period. Many teachers also opposed the formation of this committee, as it did not include their input in the decision making process. Nonetheless, the committee meetings produced a proposed list of

short and long-term potential reductions (see Appendix G for the complete document). Although very detailed and extensive, this list only included one musical item, an elimination of the $1000 fund the district annually provided for the high school musical. This minimal cut would not negatively affect the music program as a whole because the musical is an extra-curricular activity that covers all of its costs through ticket sales. The $1000 given to the musical acts as start-up money, which gets repaid at the end of the production. Because it gets repaid, cutting it from the budget does not offer any savings.

From the committee's 67 recommendations, upper administration formulated a list of 24 short and long term considerations and sent packets out to each resident family in the district asking for their input in the following areas:

- Berkley Education Foundation
- Sponsorship/Naming Rights
- Energy Management
- Durant Funds
- Alternative Learning Options
- Schools of Choice
- Outsourcing/Privatization
- IA/CASA Involvement
- Elementary School Consolidation
- Middle School Consolidation
- District Consolidation
- Spilt/Multi-age Classroom
- Bond Initiatives
- Class Size
- Partnerships with municipalities or other districts
- Change middle/high school day
- Media Specialists
- Learning Specialists
- Administrators
- All Day Free Kindergarten
- Elementary Spanish

- Other Revenue Raising Options
- New ideas for revenue generations
- Ideas for expenditure reductions

Notably, the administrators did not include the small musical cut proposed by the parent committee. The packet accompanied each item or topic with the administration's views on the pros and cons of each. The response form also allowed respondents to include hand written comments "because what happens if you allow somebody to do an e-mail thing is they will write you an epistle, and I had to read every single one and synthesize it all into one document" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

The superintendent then surveyed and analyzed each of the data sheets and reported "as you go through this stuff, themes emerge very, very quickly" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). In the end, the district decided not to raise class sizes or close school buildings, but instead decided to cut the all day free kindergarten program, and reduce the Spanish program, having it start in 3rd grade instead of Kindergarten.

The information gathered from the data sheets revealed one interesting point about the difference between the community's priorities and those voiced by residents and teachers at a town hall meeting. As the current superintendent put it "at board meeting you would think that everybody in the community was in favor of all day free kindergarten," but when the written results were in, parents overwhelming answered "no," to the question "Should we keep all day free kindergarten?" The current superintendent also remarked on the effectiveness of

this process by adding that in an open school board meeting, community members might respond negatively to *any* proposed cut, but when faced with a ballot that says "you can cut a, b, c, or d" and the voters had to respond, people clearly chose their recommendations for what the district should cut (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

The district took a huge risk in cutting this program. In 2008/2009 school year, the state legislature passed a bill requiring all Michigan schools to offer free all-day kindergarten, and Berkley immediately complied. Then the legislature reversed this decision, and unlike surrounding districts, Berkley decided to eliminate the program.

While this process succeeding in providing the administration with information by which they could make an informed decision, the process employed and the decision to cut programming at all still upset teachers. When asked which items on the school's expenditure list the district would cut if facing a similar situation again, the superintendent reported he would first look at the other options on the selected list. Notably, none of them involved music.

The Creative Thinkers

Interviewees attributed many of the creative decision making processes mentioned above to forward thinking members of the administration and board. Most administrators mentioned that they know the board will refuse to agree to program cuts and say instead "find another way." The district's use of the Durant Fund shows one way in which careful and creative thinking yielded a solution.

In 1980, seven taxpayers, including Donald Durant, filed a lawsuit in the Michigan Court of Appeals. In this suit "plaintiffs argued that state officials had violated Section 29 of the Headlee Amendment by reducing the proportion of education costs paid by the state to a level that the state paid in 1978-78, when the Amendment took effect" (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p. 63). Section 29 of the amendment "requires the state to pay in future years the same proportion of costs for services and activities required of local units of government by the state as it paid in the year in which the amendment took effect" (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p. 62). Seventeen years later in 1997, as one of the official litigants in this case, Berkley received a settlement of 2.1 million, when the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that "special education programs are a state mandate and that the state had failed to fund such programs at the level required by the State Constitution" (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p. 63).

This money, known as the Durant Fund, enabled many districts to finance a capital project, such as building a field house. Berkley, however, decided to invest and save the money. Each year, the Durant Fund continues to serve two purposes: 1) the interest from the account helps fund the purchase of new textbooks and supplies; and 2) the district treats the principal as a fund to provide money to make it through the lean months in which the school does not receive a state-aid payment. The latter offered more assistance in past years when interest rates were higher and the district received a larger dividend, but the former still gives the district financial advantages today.

Michigan school districts receive eleven monthly payments from the state. They do not receive a payment in September, which coincides with the start-up costs for a new school year. According to Berkley's Director of Finance, schools often need to take out a loan to cover their expenses during this time. Borrowing money each September not only costs the district in interest payments on the loan, but they must also pay lawyer fees for this transaction. Because of Durant monies, Berkley can borrow against itself during the lean month and avoid these expenditures.

The school board made the decision to save the Durant money. Berkley's school board takes an active and vested role in the creative expenditures of funds. In order to ensure good board decisions, each board member receives training and certification through the Michigan Association of School Boards, which offers a voluntary school board member certification program consisting of seven levels. At the end of December 2009, all board members had earned at least the first level certification, and the president had earned the seventh and final level of certification. Since December, voters elected two new members to the board, and both have started the certification process. The entire program will take each of them twenty-seven hours of training to complete.

In interviews, board members stated that they value this training because it enables them to learn about curriculum, finances, legislation, and technology. Then "when discussion are made at the table, we're able to make an intelligent decision about what's going to be best for the students in the district" (NL, personal

communication, January 15, 2010). Berkley school board members said that they really try to see a big picture that strives to avoid a single-issue mentality. One member added "we have never had a board member that you would call a single issue board member" (NL, personal communication, January 15, 2010).

In addition to utilizing a trained board that tries to make decisions in the best interests of all students, Berkley's deputy superintendent of finance also attempts to think creatively about the district's budgeting. He considers himself a conservative budgeter, explaining that this means "[budgeting] low on the revenue side and high on the expense side of a possible range" (MH, personal communication, December 8, 2009). For example, Berkley administrators intentionally choose a number on the lower end of the next school year's potential student enrollment, and budget accordingly. Then, if the district does not enroll as many choice school students at the start of the school year, this lowered enrollment will not force them to make budget adjustments.

This conservative budgeting played an important role in the recent state funding cut of $167 per pupil in December 2009 for the current school year. For the 2009/2010 school year Berkley budgeted 245 students below the actual number counted. This meant "400,000 in new revenue, and revenue above our budget" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). Berkley's superintendent said that the difference in projected versus actual revenue was "astronomical" and "unheard of to have" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). While districts much

larger in size might be off by such a large number, for a district of only 4,400 students, the number was large.

Because of Berkley's conservative budgeting regarding unexpected new choice school students, Berkley did not need to make mid-year budget adjustments. Some teachers have argued that Berkley administrators should be more aggressive with their numbers, so that they can either provide more funds during the school year or not need to alter program offerings before the school year begins. The finance director and superintendent, however, both pointed out that even with the conservative numbers "we are still on track to be $600,000 in deficit spending" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

What Would Additional Cuts Look Like?

For the 2010/2011 school year, the State of Michigan has proposed an additional $600/pupil cut. For Berkley, the total sum of all the cuts between the 2009/2010 and 2010/2011 school years would exceed 4.8 million dollars. In a letter sent to the community, the superintendent tried to explain what a cut this size would mean for Berkley saying "we could eliminate <u>all</u> K-12 music, P.E., art, elementary/middle school Spanish, and athletics, and *still* have additional reductions to make" (see Appendix H for complete letter).

These potential cuts give the district good reason to worry. One district administrator explained "We're almost at the point where people [administrators in other districts] who had to make a decision to cut music already did. Berkley [still] chose not to cut [music] with all the other creative things that we've done. But,

we're all kind of at a point now where it's over the edge. That's almost small potatoes in the grand picture of what we might have to do" (NG, personal communication, December 15, 2009). What might they have to do? Well, they might have to completely refigure how they structure education. In the end, this reconfiguration may negatively impact the music program, but it will also affect all other programs, including state mandated subjects. If Berkley decides to cut music, they will not do so as a targeted cut that seeks to save money, but because they have made across-the-board reductions of staff or facilities that may impact the music program as a result.

Will Berkley ever completely lose music? Most interviewees could not imagine such a situation. Some said they could see reductions or a reconfiguration of how music was offered, but most agreed that "if you pulled people together in Berkley in the community and all that, call me Pollyanna, but I think they would find a way to keep it, even if it meant writing a personal check" (OD, personal communication, December 7, 2009).

Summary

Berkley school district administrators have made a commitment to preserve curricular programming for as long as possible. Through their published mission statement and interview responses, administrators, teachers and community members all testified to the value of a well-rounded education for all students, and the belief that music education should have a secure place in the curriculum. But having value for music education does not alone ensure its survival. Berkley School

District's administrators take many other things into consideration when making decisions about the music education programming. The data collected showed that administrators think about the utilitarian benefits, aesthetic purposes and the political, fiscal, and educational considerations of the music program to determine overall worth.

Berkley School District administrators want to offer the best quality for the most number of students possible, and music education helps them achieve that goal. According to interviewees, music education offers fiscal security because of the number of students involved. It also attracts people to the district, acting as a differentiator from other local schools that have cut music education. Finally, all the interviewees viewed music program as quality education, providing both utilitarian and aesthetics benefits and experiences fundamental to a well-rounded education.

Based on the criterion of values, utilitarian benefits, aesthetic purposes and the political, fiscal, and educational considerations, Berkley School District administrators make decisions. These decisions include generating new revenue, collaborating to save money and making cuts and concessions. To date, administrators have not cut music education.

By generating new revenue, administrators are able to fund programs they might otherwise have to cut. Capitalizing on revenue received from the State of Michigan's current foundation grant system, Berkley administrators implemented many ideas to bring new students into the district. The revenue from new students helps with a tightening budget, but does not completely alleviate the problem.

Berkley School District officials try to collaborate with other districts whenever they want to offer a program they cannot afford to fund individually.

Even with all of the efforts to generate new revenue and collaborate with local districts, Berkley School District decision makers have cut and trimmed to save money from the general budget. They try to keep the cuts out of programming as a top priority, and as a result have trimmed custodial, secretarial and support staff positions. Also, teachers and administrators have made concessions in salary and benefits. In the 2008/2009 school year the district finally had to resort to program elimination, and removed the all-day free kindergarten program and reduced the elementary Spanish program. These cuts came after an extensive process of examining the benefits versus the costs of the programs and surveying the staff and community.

The district may experience additional cuts in the near future. Administrators continue to fight against this by trying new ideas and trimming on the periphery as much as possible. Even if program cuts do occur, interviewees seemed positive that they would not affect music education. Yet, in an extreme case, the district might need to reconfigure itself, which would have a negative affect on all subjects, including music education.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

In this research study I set out to answer the following research questions:

1. What influences persuade Berkley School District decision makers to keep music in the curriculum?

2. What criteria do Berkley's school board and administration use in deciding the value of music education?

3. What obstacles must Berkley School District overcome to keep its music program?

4. How do non-budgetary factors play a role in determining music education's future?

5. Does Berkley target music for budget cuts more or less than any other area? When faced with a budgetary crisis, what criteria has Berkley used to make their programming decisions?

6. What can other school districts learn by looking at Berkley School District's model for music education?

Through the investigation and answering of these questions I found that Berkley administrators engage in a difficult and, by their own admission, agonizing process by which they attempt to make the best educational decisions for all students. For just one program, such as music education, administrators consider their personal values and philosophies of music education, the values and demands of the community, the quality of teaching that Berkley can afford and provide, the aesthetic and utilitarian purposes of keeping music education in the curriculum, the economic

value that music adds (both financially and in terms of creating human capital) and how the program contributes to the over-all image of the school district.

In their weighing of these factors and use of a complex decision-making process, Berkley administrators have implemented many creative solutions to past and ongoing budgetary issues and have also made a number of cuts and concessions to the budget outside of music education. Although I initially sought to celebrate Berkley School District's accomplishment of keeping music education through a time of economic downturn, I have since realized that these cuts and concessions made to support staff, programming, and contracts have not come without negative effects. Furthermore, even with the tremendous support music education receives from all stakeholders in the Berkley School District, changing conditions continue to show that Berkley's music program is not immune from trickle-down negative effects from larger budgetary cuts and concessions.

Other school districts nationwide might look at Berkley School District as a model, taking positive strategies that apply to their particular situations, and also seeing in Berkley a warning for some of the potentially negative side effects that may come from decisions made during under changing conditions. In addition, music teachers and other music advocates can learn from these findings. Advocates can hone their tactics by understanding what arguments and influences have the most impact on school decision makers, and thereby offer more effective and efficient advocacy methods for those fighting for the survival or incarnation of a program.

1. What influences persuade Berkley School District decision makers to keep music in the curriculum?

Research shows that Americans say they value music education (Gallup Organization, 2002), and the members of Berkley School district's staff and community also voiced this sentiment. During interviews, music teachers, administrators, parents, and school board members all agreed without any hesitation that music plays an important part in the education of students. The interviewees did not agree, however, on the significance of each group's influence on music education. Some said administrators play the largest role, some said the community, and some believed the greatest support stemmed from the music teachers.

A study conducted in 1982 (Fields) found that of all possible influences, only the administrator values exerted significant control over whether districts in CA kept or cut instrumental music. My study only partially agreed with those findings. Administrator values in Berkley School District do exert a large influence on keeping music in the curriculum, and no matter what the community or teachers want, ultimately, the administrators decide what programs a district offers. Many Berkley administrators possess a rich background in music and a history with the school district. They have seen the importance music has played in the district over the years, perhaps contributed to that impact, and may also have formed an

understanding of the power of music either through personal experience or that of a family member.

In Berkley School District, this shared passion for music education certainly contributes to its survival. The administrators ensure that music education receives funding, priority scheduling, support via concert attendance, written publications and school board highlights. Without this support, the music program could easily face cuts. Moreover, Berkley School District administrators showed their ability to remove a program by cutting the high school's Business courses. Current music educators in all positions should not only understand the importance of this influence, but should work to make sure music department-administrator relationships stay strong and positive.

Administrators also respond heavily to political influences, and final votes for approval of changes to school curriculum come from the school board. It would be naïve to say that the Berkley School District community does not also exert a similarly large influence over sustaining the music program. Music teachers overwhelming agreed that the community plays the largest role because collectively speaking, the community possesses the loudest voice. During my time spent in the district, I found the power of community persuasion prevailing. While my personal experiences were not necessarily all positive, I quickly learned that what a parent wants, a parent gets. A positive example illustrating this influence occurred when the district needed to cut 1.6 million from the budget. In their decision making process, one of the steps the administration took was to ask the community. The

community responded by recommending cuts to programs other than music, and the administration took the suggestions of the community. Ultimately only cut those programs with the largest community vote.

The logical question that follows would then ask "who and/or what influences the community?" Like administrators, a variety of influences affect community members, including personal experiences. But, community members also look to the school's teachers and administrators to know what they should value. By creating and sustaining a quality program, Berkley's music teachers influence the community in favor of music education. Parent and school board members filled interviews with success stories of the Berkley music program. These experiences made their value for music education stronger. When parents see the quality output of the music program, they are more likely to support its continuance. In Berkley, this support appears in the high levels of attendance at music-related events in all disciplines, from choral and orchestral to the annual high school musical. This phenomenon, however, does not merely reflect child-centered interests. When parents see that their children have developed strong skills, they in turn become appreciators of music who, by seeing its value in their own experience, are likely to ensure its continued existence in the school district.

This relationship exhibits a supportive and reinforcing property that can spiral upward along with a program's success. When teachers create quality programs, the community wants their children to experience that program's value and participate in its success, and administrators then ensure that the district offers

(or can offer) those programs. This model has worked very well for Berkley and reflects the pattern of other schools that have achieved similar success (Coysh, 2005; Pittman, 2003). The program gets financial support as students continue to enroll, and the teachers provide a program that pleases both the administration and the community.

Unfortunately in this model, it would appear that if any one part were taken away, the entire system would crumble. Some of Berkley's administrators even stated as much by talking about the equal burden of responsibility among the three influences, and how easily they could cut music if parents did not support it or music teachers did not provide a quality program. Other interviewees realized that all parts are not equal, and should not be seen as equal. They stated that in actuality, the administrators should play a greater role than that of the other two components. This belief does not imply that the other two parts are not important, but elucidates that the administrators play the primary role in overseeing the development and maintenance of this synergistic relationship.

While the community influence in Berkley currently works in favor of music education, it could as easily work against it as well. Research shows that the public at large does not value music more than they value other subjects (Marenzo, et. al., 1999). In this political climate, where students feel more and more pressure to meet standards and earn acceptances into favored colleges and universities, parents simply want whatever will give their child a competitive edge (Marzano, et al., 1999).

Most parents are not educators, and might not truly know what their child needs to get that competitive edge. More importantly, the current model of public education insists that it meet the educational needs of all students enrolled. By contrast, parents might see only what would best suit their individual child and not understand the educational system as a whole. While the community will (and perhaps should) always voice its opinions "It is important to note that the K-12 curriculum produced if one relies solely on the opinions of the general public would have some strong, unintended, negative consequences" (Marzano, et al., 1999, p.34).

Fortunately, Berkley administrators provide some protection from this effect by giving the community only limited power. For example, when asking for public opinion about the 1.6 million dollar budget cut (see Chapter 4, section 4), administrators only gave the community certain options on which to vote and left a small section where they could include other suggestions (see Appendix I for letter to the community). Also, members of the Berkley School Board—the one group of parents who have the most influence over curriculum—go through an education process. This training has taught them to take into serious consideration the recommendations of the superintendent before they make the final vote on all changes to the budget. Their training, provided by the state of Michigan, allows them to see the wider educational picture. Although the most influential act of power the community at large can exercise involves their choice to vote for potential school board members, the training provided to the school board members once elected can help mediate any potential mob mentality.

Similarly, the success and continuance of an entire music program should not rest on an already established quality program. If that were a required ingredient, then schools that do not have music programs could never hope to get them. Gillespie and Hamann (2010) showed that schools across the nation are able to implement new strings programs, verifying that districts can create successful programs in a department that previously lacked them. While this study showed that parent support, quality teachers, and administrative support are all key ingredients for success of the start-up, a program does not need to rely on prior successes to succeed.

The question for other school districts, especially those lacking a strong music program then becomes "how can we go about engendering such community support without a quality program?" Supporting Gillespie & Hamann's (2010) findings, I must acknowledge two things: one, Berkley has long benefited by sustaining the groundswell created by an initial group of music faculty who decided that Berkley would have a strong music department. Two, this nucleus formed in an atmosphere that lacked a strong music department, and both the vision of those music educators and the success they developed show that a district can overcome the inertia resulting from lack of a strong program.

Just because a school operates and supports a program does not mean that this program has achieved any measurable quality. Music educators and advocates want school districts to take music education seriously. In an effort to accomplish this goal, advocacy efforts have attempted to standardize music education, making it

appear more sequential like other subjects, and demanding higher quality and accountability (Mark, 2000). The implementation of The National Standards urges music teachers to look at and modify their music curricula in accordance with the standards.

This study accepted the premise that teachers, administrators, and parents all feel that Berkley students receive a quality music education. From my personal experience the teachers at Berkley do provide a quality music education, although I believe that future researchers could benefit from a study that sought to define what characteristics constitute "quality" in music. Through the use of national and state standards, Berkley School District's music department has attempted to find a balance between quality education and meeting popular demands. They have achieved this goal by learning how to get administrators and parents excited about the quality education they provide.

With so much of the community and administrator influence resting on the programs that music teachers create, music teachers can feel pressure to make administrators and community members happy at any expense. This could potentially take away from the quality of music education, the exact opposite goal that many leaders in music education have taken steps to avoid. Yet without attracting the requisite numbers, music classes stand to lose funding, as well as the importance of their programs in the public eye, which could itself lead into a downward self-reinforcing spiral.

In this regard, Berkley's success shows that schools seeking to build a successful and sustainable program should avoid replacing quality teaching with flashy and non-educational curricula, no matter what types of recognition or morale building those programs might otherwise offer a district. Instead, schools should try to find balance, understanding that music can serve as both an educational and auxiliary subject. The philosophical literature certainly suggests that music can and should accomplish both goals of attracting students and keeping the quality (Reimer, 2003), but also states that this cannot be done without administrative support (Folwer, 1996; Reimer, 2003).

As Berkley's continued modification of their successful program shows, school district decision makers need wisdom to recognize potential problems and dangers within a program and fix them. Or, if a music program does not exist, administrators should realize the benefit music would bring if they started a new music program. Because they must meet the demands of these tasks, administrators play a more important role in setting up and monitoring the triangulation between administrators, teachers, and community members.

With this role comes great responsibility. While many of Berkley's administrators either had a background in music education or some otherwise strong tie to music, many administrators may not share such a background in music education. Administrators looking to build or save a music program, however, should then exhibit the prudence to consult those with adequate knowledge before making important programming decisions. This does not mean they should fight

alone for music. Certainly having quality teachers and community support will make the job easier and are a necessity to keep a positive cycle moving forward, but administrators must bear the responsibility to make sure all of these elements are in place.

One Berkley principal understood this importance of the administrator role, and advised other administrators to carefully consider whom they put in the classroom:

> You need to be ultra picky about who you're going after. Don't look for your shining star right away. Look for the people you think will be your shining stars and can grow with you. I think sometimes you bring in that person and you think, "they're going to light the world on fire," but you're not ready to be where they are, and it can create some problems. So I think you have to find the right people who are willing to grow it, stick with it, and who are not just there for a job. They're there because they have a commitment to the position itself, a commitment to the district, a commitment to the kids and the community, and they see something bigger than what is in front of them. And that's not easy to find because there are a lot of people who just want a job. (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010).

During my time at Berkley I witnessed the release of two music teachers who administrators did not feel were working well with the vision of the district. Berkley subsequently replaced these teachers in full capacity by new people, showing that administrators were not trying to eliminate music through the backdoor, but instead displayed genuine interest for the well being and success of students.

Fortunately, most of Berkley's administrators seemed to have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. One woman stated that she understood the ease with which Berkley administrators could implement and sustain music programs because "in the community we had musicians and artists, who happened to live there, and it was always easy to help get support for programs like that. I think in some communities you would have to sell the importance" (UA, personal communication, December 4, 2009). But regardless of the level of difficulty, those interviewed could clearly articulate why they valued music education, including both aesthetic and utilitarian purposes that lay outside the influences of the community and teachers.

2. What criteria do Berkley's school board and administration use in deciding the value of music education?

When trying to decide the value of the music program, Berkley's school board and administrators primarily talked about the program's educational value. For these administrators, music education possesses great educational value that stems mostly from its utilitarian benefits. Those interviewed stated that music education facilitates excellent camaraderie, contributes to the schools image, allows student to learn a life long skill, develops abilities transferrable to other subjects and offers monetary value to the school district.

Overall, administrator responses agreed with much of the available advocacy literature that supports the "music makes you smarter" viewpoint (Foster, 2002; Wallick 1998; Ruppert, 2006). Administrators and educators who use these

reasons to justify the continuance of music education now create a dilemma for music educators because current research has begun to shown holes in these claims (Fitzpatrick, 2006; Kinney, 2008). If false information plays a large role in keeping music education in public schools, should music educators and advocates feel ethically/morally responsible to correct the mistake?

While I cannot justify advocating for music education with information of dubious value, this dilemma does provide an opportunity for music educators to refine their arguments. Even if enrolling in music classes may not ensure higher SAT scores, that fact does not negate any or all utilitarian benefits of music education. One Berkley administrator mentioned one of these benefits: "If you get more kids who are struggling into those [music] programs, perhaps they'll have better role models, spend time with other kids who are on the upper ends of academic achievement, and that pulls them up as well" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Since utilitarian arguments seem to carry weight with administrators, redesigning these positions might offer a way of adapting the educational philosophy of "start where the students are" to music advocacy. I do not consider utilitarian benefits as the ultimate goal of music education, but appealing to administrators on terms they understand might open them up to valuing the aesthetic purposes that many music educators strive to achieve.

Although Berkley officials cited many utilitarian benefits as criteria used for keeping music in the curriculum, this study found that numbers constituted one of

the biggest criteria used in deciding the value of all programming in the district, including music education. On the simplest level, numbers means the headcount of students actually enrolled in a program. Numbers, however, also include looking how many families would leave the district if the program were cut, how many people will come to the district because of the course and program offerings and the number and quality of statistics that increase for students involved in the program such as test scores, college admissions, awards and honors, etc.

Some might argue that it is unfair to judge music education's value by the numbers it produces. I do not propose to defend the validity of this argument, but rather to point out that whether fair or not, music education is not the only subject facing this scrutiny. Throughout the interviews, Berkley administrators made it very clear that they judge other courses, including AP, business, and foreign language classes, by the same criteria. Once music educators realize that they are not fighting just for better arts but for better education as a whole, they might see potential in joining forces with advocacy efforts for all non-core subjects to construct a more unified and stronger front.

Berkley administrators know that eliminating or reducing certain subjects would cause a decrease in these numbers across many categories. For instance, if they cut the AP courses, students whose families would otherwise move into the district would no longer relocate, thereby lowering student numbers and decreasing funds. Similarly, if administrators cut music, they might diminish the appeal of one of the district's selling points. Music educators in districts with an already strong

program can, by realizing that their own administration might consider such factors when deciding on budget and programming, use the strength and value of their program as leverage when seeking new or continued support. Moreover, these teachers can promote their program within the community as vital to the district's educational success.

Teachers in districts with struggling programs or teachers trying to establish new programs can also learn from the criteria that Berkley administrators utilize in decision making. These educators, when seeking funds or support, can point to the value that an improved music department would offer the district in terms of the numbers it would yield. Of course, in both cases, teachers must take care not to just ramp up numbers on a solely quantitative basis. They must also produce a quality program to avoid the pitfalls of just providing another elective or extra-curricular activity that, if failing to attract support for its own value, would once again wind up on the chopping block.

3. What obstacles must Berkley School District overcome to keep its music program?

When trying to understand how a school makes decisions about keeping or cutting programs, one must understand all of the monetary, political, and educational considerations that play a larger role in the realization of programs and their funding. In this regard, Berkley enjoys fortunate circumstances because the administrators, music faculty, and community already see the value in music education. But even with this support, Berkley School District administrators still

must overcome the obstacles of working with a finite budget, running efficiently, offering a better product than the competing schools around them, and keeping the staff and community happy with the district.

Like every school district, Berkley operates on a finite amount of funding, and in Berkley's particular case, the state regulations mentioned in chapters 3 and 4 prohibit them from raising levy taxes to acquire additional revenue. In order to keep music and other programs, Berkley faces two options when it comes to funding: 1. Make the existing funds work; 2. Find a way to create new revenue without raising taxes. Through the interviews it became very apparent that Berkley has aggressively pursued both of these options.

Berkley's administrators have found a number of ways to maximize the productive value of the district's existing funds. They consolidated administrator positions, contracted with a third party vendor for placement of substitute teachers, eliminated secretarial and custodial positions, eliminated and reduced support staff position (such as para-educators), and changed the staff health care coverage. These concessions have kept cuts out of the classroom, including the music classroom. Yet, even with these concessions, Berkley still found themselves in the red for the 2008/2009 school year.

Berkley also pursues creative methods for generating new revenue. The Baldridge Education Criteria for Performance Excellence states that school districts should understand their competitors, how many there are, and their key characteristics to determine what the competitive advantage is to its educational

sector or markets served (BNQP, 2009-2010, p.36). Berkley administrators embody these ideas by viewing the neighboring school districts as competition for students, and they try to find ways to bring these students into the district. With each student not only comes a potential better reputation for the district, but also a monetary sum from the state. As such, Berkley competes with these districts in programming, facilities, and class-size.

Berkley administrators want to offer programs that other schools do not. By then advertising such programs, they hope to draw those students and their families into Berkley who might be displeased with the current situation in their home district. In two interviews, administrators compared the number of AP courses offered at Berkley to the number offered in other schools. They felt that the stronger offerings in Berkley brought in enough students to justify the cost. Also, they hope that as local districts continue to cut AP programs that Berkley can hold onto those programs and bring in more students in the future.

When talking about the music program, many interviewees bragged about the amount and type of music education the students receive in Berkley. These programs set Berkley apart from other districts that have trimmed or removed large chunks of music education. In the end the superintendent knows that there "are going to be winners and losers in this budget crisis," and he wants to make sure Berkley comes out on top (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009).

This mentality of offering something that others do not does come with a potentially dangerous side effect. If every school adopted that philosophy, public

school education might move towards a specialized school model. While some already exist, such as arts magnet schools, if every district tried to capitalize on uniqueness those types of schools might then become the majority. By contrast, music education currently operates on the slogan of, "music for every child." Moving towards specialized schools would mean that while some schools provided excellent music education, others might not offer it at all. In an effort to attract more students, districts that choose to specialize might defeat the overall purpose of music education.

The desire to attract new students can create its own problems. As Sowell explains through economies and diseconomies of scale "there comes a point, in every business, beyond which the cost of producing a unit of output no longer declines as the amount of production increases" (2007, p.120). In other words, any organization involved in the production of a good or service will reach a point where an increase in a source of revenue no longer helps lower the costs associated with acquiring additional revenue. It might seem strange to view students as a "source of revenue," but in Michigan this principle holds true as each student comes with an attached dollar amount. The Berkley School district saw a clear example of this phenomenon during the 2009/2010 school year, when it avoided mid-year financial troubles when the state made a per pupil funding cut in December 2009, because Berkley possessed a surplus of students not accounted for in their budget.

For Berkley administrators looking for new funding strictly from student enrollment, this method—get more students into Berkley, receive more funding

from the state—seems essential. But, at what point will Berkley, or any district following a similar revenue-building strategy, pull in so many students that they can no longer maintain the quality of their educational output, the very tool they used to bring people to the district in the first place? One upper administrator commented on this potential problem by saying that Berkley runs on a limited open enrollment, only taking the numbers they feel the district can handle. By minimizing enrollment in this manner, they hope to not over load teachers by altering the teacher to student ratio, nor do they have to hire more staff to accommodate raising numbers.

While these precautions against enrolling more students than the district can manage keeps Berkley operating efficiently, the district currently runs on a bare bones administrative system. The significant reductions to staff and faculty Berkley has made over the past eight years has put them in a potentially dangerous situation. If Berkley accepts new students as a way to offset rising operating costs and state budget cuts, and continues to find ways to do more with less staffing jobs, they may soon find that their already stretched staff cannot handle the work load or the expectation that they will still uphold Berkley's standards. This problem would plague any district that followed Berkley's revenue-raising strategies, because any increase in the student population alters the workload demanded of teachers, administrators, and support staff. And although each student brings state dollars in revenue, each student also imposes hidden costs in the form of diminished staff effectiveness and efficiency.

Out-of-district parents send their children to Berkley based on advertisements and promises. According to the Baldridge model, schools must consider their customers, and keep them engaged while meeting their needs (BNQP, 2009-2010). By accepting these new students, Berkley opens its doors to another set of consumers, who might voice a different vision of education from what the school originally intended. A potential strategy for preventing this potential consequence might include an entrance interview or test that ensures only those families with shared vision send their students to Berkley. The state mandates on choice schools, however, specifically stipulate that schools must accept whoever applies, and randomly select students if the number exceeds the opening (Kearney & Addonizio, 2002, p.60). Berkley has found one way to potentially get around this issue through the opening of an AP Scholars program. This particular program enables selective acceptance based on scores from an entrance exam, allowing the district to choose the students who attend, while also ensuring that these students will fit and uphold the image that having these high-achieving students creates.

Berkley also used other cost saving measures such as collaborating with area schools to provide more programming at reduced cost, and share-time programs that bring in FTE from local private schools. These programs offer some financial relief to the district, but there are only so many private schools available to build relationships, and collaborative programs still have a district cost.

Through all of the influences of supportive staff and community members, quality programs, and available funding, Berkley has created and sustains a great

music program. This support self-perpetuates in an upward spiral, and will continue provided that the district continues to fund it, teachers continue to provide quality instruction, and parents continue to insist their children enroll. This spiral continues because of the positive image having music offers the district and the aesthetic and utilitarian benefits the students receive through music education.

But the real question is *what confluence of events or influences* would cause the district and board to suddenly alter or abandon their support for the music program? Those interviewed expressed the exact kind of stated verbal support that the research supports. Yet, as the research also shows, stated values and actions often differ greatly (Abril 2009). If push came to shove, would Berkley cut music? Everybody interviewed continually expressed a firm "NO!" And, in the first round of cuts made during the 2008/2009 school year, music was not even mentioned. But, what if the district could simply not afford to keep *all* of its programming? Something would have to go. Would it be music?

In defending against cuts to music education even in extreme economic conditions, many administrators supported what the literature states about budgetary issues. Both Benham (1991, 1992) and Lehman (1990) provide logical and economic rebuttals to those school districts that state that they cannot afford music. Because music teachers often have large class sizes, and students have to be somewhere at all points during the day, a district would actually have to hire more teachers if they cut the music program. Berkley administrators agreed with the logic behind this argument. Many expressed statements such as "the students have

to be somewhere" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010) and referred to music as being "money well spent because kids are engaged, they're learning, they're practicing a skill that they'll enjoy the rest of their lives presumably, and you're doing it essentially with one fewer, or maybe two or maybe three in some cases, than you would need if they were in an academic, you know a book-learning kind of class. " (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). Over-all Berkley views music education as a great "bang for the buck."

This idea of savings accrued by music education works well, but only if music teachers fill their classes by providing a quality product. Currently Berkley School district offers traditional course offerings for music education. Students grades K-4 get general music between 60 and 90 minutes per week. In 5th grade, all students choose either band, orchestra, or choir. In 6th -8th grade, students may choose to enroll in band, orchestra, or choir during the school day. In 9th-12th grade, students may also enroll in band, orchestra, or choir, but also have choices of specialty music classes like jazz band, show choir, or music theory (offered through CASA).

Also, popularity of a class does not ensure salvation from cuts. Currently Berkley teachers are under contract negotiations. One major issue on the negotiating table concerns the amount of planning or release time teachers get during the school day. By reducing the release time of teachers, the district needs fewer teachers to run the same amount of programs without raising the student-to-teacher ratio. At the high school level, one administrator hypothesized that a reduction in planning time would affect all of the subjects evenly. In the elementary

level, however, less planning time would mean less time for the "specials" of Spanish, art, physical education, and music.

While not looking to directly cut music, making changes to other parts of the budget may exert residual negative effects on music education. As mentioned earlier, a reduction in music at the elementary would spare the district from saying that they "cut" the program. But, at what point does the value of maintaining a program diminish because it has lost or started to lose its effectiveness? In other words, if students do not receive enough music at the elementary level, they might not achieve the required proficiency to meet middle or high school standards. As a result, the secondary program will lose these frustrated students, starting a downward spiral that would lead to the same results as if administrators had simply cut the program in the first place.

Research shows that over the past fifty years, the amount of minutes devoted to music classes has decreased (Lehman, 1991). At first a minute shaved here or there might not seem like a big deal, but adding that up over many years can equate to a lot of lost time. Then, once very little remains, administrators might see it as a waste to have a music specialist, and instead implement a system similar to what California public schools have – using elementary general teachers to provide art and music instruction.

While it does not seem like Berkley School district is on a path to this kind of downward spiral, administrators have put a price tag on the music education program. Recently, the superintendent sent home a letter stating that the music

program cost $950,000 (Appendix H). While he made very clear in both the letter and his interview that he simply wanted to show the magnitude of impact such a large cut from the state could have on the district, it is hard to ignore the fact that administrators chose music as the first program listed in the letter. He could have easily listed any subject to make that same point, yet he chose music. This speaks to the vulnerability of music education, even in a district that supports it so strongly.

4. How do non-budgetary factors play a role in determining music education's future?

Any school district carefully constructs, maintains, and modifies its image. This image not only helps attract new students and families (such as Berkley's quality offerings and AP classes, which draw in students from neighboring districts), but it also instills a sense of pride that makes people want to continue their investments. In school districts, this feeling of ownership becomes especially important since many community members supporting the public school do not have children directly involved. In Berkley and in any school, music can contribute greatly to this image not only through accomplishments such as scoring well at festival or traveling nationwide for performances, but also by realizing the districts mission statement.

Through their mission statement, Berkley states that they strive to produce students who are academically, culturally, and socially prepared to be citizens of the world; students who know how to engage in the learning experience through problem solving skills, innovation, and creativity; students who constantly take on

systemic improvement; and students who understand their responsibility to themselves, others and the community. Even though nobody made a direct connection between the mission statements and the goals of music education, many interviewees implied that music helps the district accomplish its goals. One administrator commented on the engaged learning and responsibility music requires:

> When you walk into a classroom where kids are learning to play any instrument, it's this cacophony of YUCK! (laughs) And it feels like in very short order they start making music. So I think part of what it teaches them is you can go from nothing to something in relatively short time. And I think the other piece of that is that to go from something to accomplished takes a great deal of work and effort (EN, Personal Communication, December 8, 2009).

This one example, of many, shows that administrators recognize the relationship between school goals and the outcomes of music education. As students develop musical skills their accomplishments perpetuate music's role in creating a positive school image. If music educators want to keep music's place in the Berkley curriculum, music programming must continue to support the goals and values of the district.

Research shows that school districts have moved towards an age of standards and accountability (ECS, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). Berkley music teachers feel that they make the effort to meet district requirements, writing common assessments and evaluations for music education. Hopefully teachers will continue to take a flexible approach and provide the district with what it wants and needs.

One music teacher in the focus group stated, "I'm trying to provide an experience that people want to be a part of…when the public starts wanting a different experience then I may change things" (KS, personal communication, November 17, 2009). This statement, and the partial agreement by the others, shows that at least they understand this concept.

5. Does Berkley target music for budget cuts more or less than any other area?

Even though most of the interview questions centered on music education, I found it very difficult to get the interviewees to discuss music. Music has not been cut, and nobody can see it getting cut in the future. Therefore, after stating support for music education, most interviewees did not feel the need to discuss it further. Instead, many talked about a much bigger picture of education, in which music plays a role. For example, if during the upcoming contract negotiations the entire school district moves to a shortened school year schedule, music might see reductions. But, the district might also lose a second grade teacher and an assistant principal.

The strongest example showing that district officials do not target music is the sheer fact that to date music had not gotten cut. But, when people start losing jobs and other groups take pay freezes, it creates tension in the district. During the music focus group, teachers commented on the stress of seeing counselors and secretaries in tears because they had lost positions, and it leaves them asking, "What's next?" Even though a cuts to the music program might not target it specifically, that does not mean the impact hurts the program any less. And,

because Berkley's music department runs on such small numbers, the elimination of just one teacher could easily be the demise of the entire program.

6. What can others learn by looking at this model for music education?

Berkley school district offers a positive model of a middle class district that while feeling the pinch of economic downturn, has still managed to keep their music program. They have retained their music program for philosophical reasons, but also have found ways to logistically make its continuance possible. Even though other school districts across the country may not find themselves in the exact same circumstances as Berkley School District, there are certainly lessons and techniques that they can take from this study.

Before cutting a music program, schools districts decision makers should truly look at the savings their music program offers. If numbers exceed the regular teacher's classroom cap, then chances are good that secondary music programs save the district money. Also, districts should realize that the strategy of saving secondary music while cutting elementary music only offers shortsighted savings. Regular classroom teachers can absorb the students from elementary music classes without extra hires, but keeping music from elementary school students prevents secondary programs from flourishing (Benham, 1991).

If a cost benefit analysis of the music education program does not support a financial gain, this does not mean administrators should look to cut the music program. Instead, administrators should understand the value that a music program *can* provide, and look to remedy the problem. Maybe the music staff needs

training, or in some extreme cases, replacement. In other cases, perhaps the curriculum, as Elliot (1983) suggests, does not meet the current demand for music classes, and should be restructured.

Districts should also consider the less tangible, but equally real benefits of human capital development that students receive via access to a music program, and also look to numbers that represent variables other than dollar amounts. For instance, many colleges screen applicants on the basis of the student's whole picture. On this concept, students that have participated in non-core activities (such as music) appear more attractive to a university than students with less social and skill development. By cutting a music program, a district removes one more opportunity for students to develop human capital, which could potential lessen the overall college acceptance rate for the district's graduates. Such a decrease could drive away families or diminish the district's potential to attract new ones while also alienating the existing community members.

Since so much of music education's existence in the public schools rests on administrative decisions, advocacy efforts to educate and train music teachers are not enough. Advocacy efforts need to reach deeper into upper administrative course work, publications, and workshops. In Berkley, administrators play a pivotal, perhaps vital role in keeping music programming. And I do not think that I can underestimate the value that their support offers publicly, as at least one Berkley administrator attends *every* music-related event. This shows the school board and the community the strong support that music receives from the administration. If

other school districts wanted to cultivate similar support, they could make pointed invitations to administrators to attend not only events, but also rehearsals and classrooms. Teachers could also keep administrators informed and updated on the motivations and rationale behind the repertoire selections, send reports about student progress, keep administrators current on which past students have progressed on to careers in music and which of the district's ensembles have done well in festivals, etc.

The key, of course, is not only transparency, but also a marketing effort that seeks to actively enlist the administration's support. By contrast, athletic directors and football coaches (for example) do not need to provide the administration with the success of their sports programs; local newspapers and school bulletins do it for them. Music advocates and those looking to save or build music programming in their districts should adopt similar public relations tactics. If we honestly consider music and the arts as the equal of athletics, then we should treat success and programming in these subjects with the similar value that accompanies sports.

Finally, other schools should understand that although Berkley has saved their programming, that the cuts and reductions they made over the past ten years have exerted a negative impact. Uncertainty causes tension in the workplace. While laying off secretaries and janitors arguably seems better than cutting programs directly, it makes teachers realize that it is only a matter of time before administrators come after them.

Attitudes and Relationships

Despite the difficult but successful strategies implemented by Berkley School District to sustain its music program, there were interpersonal tensions that emerged from the interviews. Berkley has faced similarly lean times in the past, and teachers agreed that the approach currently favored by upper administrators differs from how the district previously managed periods of severely reduced funding. In order to successfully navigate through such tough situations, the interviewed staff agreed that they must feel supported and maintain an honest relationship with the upper administrators.

One example a music teacher gave regarding this change concerned classroom visits. Before this current upper administration, teachers felt they were treated as professionals, and that classroom visits from upper administrators were relaxed and informal. During my time at Berkley this certainly was the case. Administrators often stopped by my classroom, participated in activities, and wrote my students and me supporting letters after concerts and contests. I never once felt intruded upon, and always felt supported.

Since my departure, the staff now reports that the observation style has changed to a "walk through" type approach, where upper administrators do not stay long and write quietly on a notepad. This approach makes teachers feel like they have to act defensively, and cannot make a single mistake for fear it will then appear on their permanent record. They feel that the administrators do not trust their

professionalism, which in turn, makes the teachers distrust the upper administrators.

Additionally, teachers feel that the upper administration has taken a less-open approach then the past administration to making decisions that will affect the entire staff. One teacher gave an example about how in the past, there were years when the entire staff was give pink slips before the end of the school year (LH, personal communication, February 12, 2010). This certainly was a stressful time, but she reported that she felt okay about the situation because of the way it was handled (LH, personal communication, February 12, 2010). She said that the upper administration was open and honest in explaining the situation and how they were going to make decisions regarding programs and teacher positions. Now, she feels like those lines of communication do not exist, and that the administrators do not explain why they make certain decisions.

Expressing a similar concern, another teacher cited the "Best Schools in Michigan" television advertisement. She said that instead of telling the staff that they were going to spend funds on advertising in an attempt to make money via new student revenue, the upper administration led the staff to believe they were personally selected for the best schools program, and omitted the cost of participating in the program. Only after teachers questioned the upper administration did the latter disclose the true cost. This teacher explained that "we understand line items in the budget, and know that they have money set aside for

advertising. If they had just been honest about it from the beginning, we would have understood." (NN, personal communication, February 5, 2010)

Teachers want to feel that "we are all in this together" (NN, personal communication, February 5, 2010), and added that if they felt supported, they would be willing to do more for the district. One administrator described the interaction between faculty, staff and the district as a "love affair," calling it a relationship that people want to be a part of. Yet, based on some teacher responses, this attitude might be waning. During the music teacher focus group interview held in November 2009, most of the teachers discussed why they teach music, and what they love about their jobs. Multiple participants related one story of success after another until one teacher interrupted and said:

> I guess I take a completely different approach. I'm here to pay the bills. I'm here to feed my family and I sell my services as a teacher. I'm trying to provide an experience that people want to be a part of, because that's how I get paid. And when the public starts wanting a different experience then I may change things or lose my job. But this is my job, and I'm trying to sell my services. It's not to achieve lofty goals of changing the world, it's to send my kids to college. (KS, personal communication, November 17, 2009).

Whether this response indicates changing teacher ideals or only reflects an isolated case, it nonetheless shows some of the growing stresses and frustrations among Berkley teachers.

Upper administrators have noticed these attitudes and responded with shock and hurt. One upper administrator said "One of the hardest things for me to deal

with, in terms of all of this, is the fact that the staff is deeply concerned, and sometimes deeply suspicious of the various motives on my part. When the reality of the situation is that I am personally so unbelievably vested in the vitality of the arts program" (NT, personal communication, December 4, 2009). All of the administrators agreed that they strongly support not only the vitality of the arts, but all of Berkley's educational programs.

When asked "in a time of economic challenge that mandates, cuts, what areas do you believe should undergo cuts," one administrator responded "I don't believe any should. If you have things that are expendable, why are you doing them in the first place?" (EN, personal communication, December 8, 2009). This sentiment reflects the value that Berkley's educational philosophy has placed on every subject, and consequently, administrators feel that they agonize over each and every decision, trying to do "right by those kids" (WH, personal communication, January 22, 2010).

Whether the staff appreciates the upper administration's approach or not, teachers agreed that the administration does seem to have students best interest at heart, and that the administration continues to strongly support music education. The most favorable piece of evidence to date comes from the fact that Berkley has not altered or cut music education programming in spite of these tough economic times. Will Berkley be able to continue down that path? While administrators were optimistic, many tough decisions lie ahead.

Key Points About Decision-Making and Advocacy

The purpose of this study was not to hold up Berkley School District as a direct model for other districts per se, but to examine decision-making processes relevant to music education that might be helpful to music educators and advocates in other contexts. Music educators can learn from the decision-making processes and strategies that Berkley administrators utilized, and better equip themselves to advocate for, understand and solve issues pertaining to music education in their own districts. In practical terms, these are some of the key points that emerged from the study:

1. Administrators—at Berkley and elsewhere—value music education and what it offers students, especially if they have formed a personal relationship with the subject-through past experiences and participation as musicians and/or audience members. Music teachers and parents in Berkley find it easier to advocate for music education because their administrators already value the program, and as long as the administration continues to value music, music education will hold a higher ranking vis-à-vis other subjects if cuts are needed.

Because administrators either decide or make the recommendations for what should continue to receive funding support in the budget submitted to the school board, music advocates and educators should try to secure administrator support for their programs, especially in districts where administrators place little priority on the music program. Districts lacking such pre-existing administrator

support should directly appeal to principals and superintendents and strive to prove the value of their music programming. Music educators must find ways to offer administrators in their district a chance to experience and bond with music education. Some options might include asking a principal to perform with the choir, offering to have musical ensembles perform at events such as retirement dinners or awards banquets, or teaching elementary school children a special song that they perform for faculty and staff on the appropriate dates. In the synergistic relationship that exists between teachers, administrators, school board and community regarding support for the music program, the administration holds the most leverage for ensuring the continuance of music education in a program that is already in place. By fostering a stronger relationship with music education, music educators stand a better chance of receiving support from the administration.

2. While this study showed an important synergy existed between administrators, teachers and the community, it also made clear that some parts play a larger role, especially during the crucial stages of initiating a program. This research illustrated that success breeds success, and that administrator backing proves crucial to the thriving music program at Berkley. Educators preparing the next generation of music teachers should also see in the history of Berkley's program the important role that individual music teachers and their initiatives played in making the current level of success possible. Administrators should have a vision and support the music staff, but the evidence from this study showed that the efforts and initiatives of individuals contributed the most in starting the

synergistic relationship that perpetuated a music program forward. This finding holds consistent with other research that found strong individual teachers were needed to start music programs (Gillespie 2010). By knowing this information, collegiate teacher training programs can better prepare students to enter the music education field equipped with practical tools and motivation for building a successful program.

3. Even administrators who value music realize that music programming plays one part in the entire education of a child, and they must provide balance between instructional time for music and all subjects. By understanding this, music educators can begin looking at the larger picture of an entire school district and the role music education plays. Upsetting the balance affects everything, and even if changes do not occur in music programming, a change in something such as planning time can exert a negative effect on music education. Such outcomes do not imply that administrators target music education. Even in a strongly supported system, music education may face reductions and limitations.

Music teachers must consider the whole educational infrastructure set up by the district to meet regulations, standards and its own institutional goals and then think about how music can and should function within that system. Moreover, if music education has a place in the public school curriculum it will always need to operate within these constraints, and educators should consider the ways in which music can continue to play a vital role, both in providing children with a musical

education and also in how music can support the development of the whole child via its ability to complement other subjects.

4. Music advocates should not accept the position that music programming burdens a district's budget. On the contrary, as Berkley demonstrates, it can actually help improve a district's fiscal circumstances. By understanding a district's priorities and trying to find ways to make music one of those priorities, music educators might find stronger arguments against the reasoning that a school district simply does not have enough money to fund music education. Additionally, if advocates can find ways in which the music program can improve a district's financial situation—such as Berkley's realization that they would need to hire three FTE teachers to cover all of the students currently taking band—they can promote music's value in terms of its fiscal benefits. Furthermore, Berkley's case shows that by considering how music factors into the marketing of a district, music educators might find opportunities to improve their programming's contribution to the brand of the school district.

5. Finally, this research revealed a number of political, fiscal and legal concepts and influences that much of the current advocacy literature does not address. Terms such as "flight," "collaboration" and "economies of scale" emerged from the study as important influences affecting music education. By understanding these economic and political factors, music educators will increase their credibility and contribute greater value when they advocate for their programs.

All district leaders make decisions. By understanding the decision-making process, music educators can make their own situations better, resulting in a symbiotic relationship between administrators and music educators that will benefit the state of music education and improve its chances of remaining an integral part of the public school curriculum.

Ideas for Future Research

This study mostly focused on the members of Berkley School District's administration and the process by which they make decisions about keeping and cutting programs. Through interviews and document analysis, I found a very complicated system that cannot be completely unraveled and understood in the scope of one study. In the future, each influential element affecting administrator's decisions might be studied individually. For example, one study might look specifically at the community, their role in life of music in Berkley, and their influences on the administration.

Similarly, this study took at face value the concept of quality. Administrators, teachers, and parents all believe the Berkley music program is quality, and that served the purposes of this study. For a greater understanding, future researchers might conduct studies that examine the specific elements of the music curriculum to determine what makes it appear as quality, what defines quality as a characteristic when applied to music programs, how teachers' notions of quality shape classroom activities and their own attitudes toward a district's music program and how the

community's and administrators' perceptions of quality (as they define it) translates into support for music education.

Finally, this single case study shows the decision making process in one extraordinary situation. Comparative research could show similar and/or different characteristics of other districts that have also saved their music programs, or determine the criteria that led some districts to make cuts. Also, if possible, comparative research looking at the decision making process for districts that have cut music would prove useful to solidify those influences and characteristics which have the greatest control in situations of public school programming.

Conclusion

Arts advocate Paul Lehman says that our "nation's school system's gradually being divided into two groups with respect to music – the *have* and the *have-nots*" (1992, para. 5). Much of the related literature (both anecdotal and research based) focuses on the "have-nots" and the downtrodden status of music education in America's public schools. Other research celebrates successful programs, but does not offer a perspective on how programs can achieve or sustain this status. In an effort to understand some of the influences that effect the decision making process regarding programming, this study strove to examine one public school district that has kept their music program for the past ten years.

The decision makers of Berkley School District take pride in their accomplishment of sustaining programming during a time of economic hardship and increasing accountability. Yet the successes they have earned with programming

have not come without hard work and sacrifice. Because of a strong value system, Berkley School District's administrators have sought to keep the funding for music programs by generating new revenue, collaborating with area districts, and trimming the budget outside of programming. Though these decisions have saved music education, they have also brought about diminishing administrator/teacher relationships, the loss of support staff and a lingering feeling of "what next?"

Other school districts and music advocates can learn from the Berkley School District model, striving to stop cuts where they start—at the administrative office. This study shows that it is not enough to advocate for what music offers. Music advocacy must additionally attack the problem at the root, offering administrators solutions for the difficult dilemmas they must solve regarding public policy and a finite budget. By approaching advocacy from this angle, music education might not only be saved today, but in the future as well.

References

Abril, C. & Gault, B. (2006). The state of music in the elementary school: The Principal's perspective. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54:1, 6-20. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Abril, C. & Gault, B. (2008). The state of music in secondary schools: The Principal's perspective. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56:1, 68-81. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Abril, C. (2009). School music education in the United States. *Diskussion Musikpadogogik*, 43, 46-53.

Baldrige National Quality Program (2009-2010). *Education criteria for performance excellence*. http://www.baldrige.nist.gov/PDF_files/2009_2010_Education_Criteria.pdf.

Benedict, C. (2007). Naming our reality: Negotiating and creating meaning in the margin. *Philosophy of Music Education*, 15:1, 23-25. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Benham, J. (1991). Defending music programs with economic analysis. *The Instrumentalist,* 46:1, 15-19.

Benham, J. (1992). Forestalling budget problems. *The Instrumentalist*, 47:4, 12-17.

Benham, J. (1996). Tricks of the trade: An arts coalition wins a big battle in Georgia. *Teaching Music*, 3:5, 41.

Berkley School District. Berkley.k12.mi.us. Accessed September 1, 2009.

Center for Advanced Study and the Arts. http://www.casa-online.org/. Accessed September 1, 2009.

Chief Executive (2009). US best and worst states for business. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from

http://www.chiefexecutive.net/media/usbestandworststates/2009/default.aspx.

Choate, R., (Ed.). (1968). *Documentary report of the Tanglewood Symposium*. Music Educators National Conference.

Coysh, S. (2005). *Thriving music programs in a harsh climate: Two case studies* (master's thesis). Available ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 974437851).

Dillon, N. (2010). California Districts Face Grim Budget Times. *American School*. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from http://www.asbj.com/TopicsArchive/SchoolSpending/California-Districts-Face-Grim-Budget-Times.aspx.

Eisner, E.W. (2002). *The arts and the creation of mind*. Yale University Press: New Haven & London.

Elliott, C. (1983). Behind the budget crisis, a crisis of philosophy. *Music Educators Journal*, 70:2, 36.

Elpus, K. (2008). Organizing your parents for effective advocacy. *Music Educators Journal*, 95:2, 56-61. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Education Commission of the States (2005). Media paints arts education in a fading light. Retrieved March 11, 2010 from http://www.esc.org/clearinghouse/63/75/6375.pdf.

Education Commission of the States (2006a). State policymakers' views on the arts in education. Retrieved March 11, 2010, from http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/68/58/6858.pdf.

Education Commission of the States (2006b). Governor's commission on the arts in education: Findings and recommendations. Retrieved March 11, 2010, from http://www.ecs.org/clearinghouse/69/42/6942.pdf.

Fields, W.M. (1982). *Factors affecting the reduction or elimination of instrumental music in public schools* (Doctoral dissertation, University of San Francisco). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 751707731).

Fitzpatrick, K. (2006). The effect of instrumental music participation and socioeconomic status on Ohio fourth-, sixth-, and ninth-grade proficiency test performance. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 54:1, 73-84. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Foster, G. (2002). Tools to promote arts advocacy. *American Music Teacher*, 52:1, 87. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Fowler, C. (1996). *Strong arts, strong schools: The promising potential and shortsighted disregard of the arts in American schooling.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Gallup Organization. (2003). Americas overwhelmingly want music education in schools. Retrieved July 27, 2009 from, Http://amc-music.com/news/pressreleases/gallup2003.htm.

Gerber, T. & Gerrity, K. (2007). Principles for principals: Why music remains important in middle-schools. *General Music Today*, 21, 17-23.

Gerrity, K. (2007) *No child left behind: Determining the impact of policy on music education*. (Doctoral Dissertation, The Ohio State University). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3262133).

Gillespie, R. & Hamann, D. (1998). The status of orchestra programs in the public schools. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 46(1), 75-86.

Gillespie, Robert (2002). Wanted > 5,000 future string teachers! *American String Teacher*, 52:1, p. 72-74, 77-78

Gillespie, R. & Hamann, D. (2010). *An investigation of new string programs established in American schools between 1999 and 2009*. Unpublished Manuscript.

Hill, H. (1939). The music budget for the next 100 years. *Music Educators Journal*, 26:1, 30.

Hinckley, J. (2000). Why vision 2020? *Music Educators Journal*, 86:5, 21-24.

Iida, G. (1991). *Selected characteristics of successful high school band programs*. (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Southern California). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 744392411).

Illinois Creates: The Illinois arts education initiative. (2006). *Arts at the core: Every school, every student.* Retrieved March 17, 2010, from http://www.artsalliance.org.

International Academy. http://www.iatoday.org. Accessed September 1, 2009.

Kavanaugh, C. (2009, September 10). School budget to be cut. *Daily Tribune*. Retrieved from, http://www.dailytribune.com/articles/2009/09/10/news/srv0000006355067.txt.

Keiper, S. Sadene, B.A., Persky, H.R, & Kuang, M. (2009). *The nation's report card: Arts 2008 music and visual Arts* (NCES 2009-488). National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, US Department of Education, Washington, D.C.

Kinney, D.W. (2008). Selected demographic variables, school music participation, and achievement test scores of urban middle schools. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56:2, 145-161. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Kratus, J. (2007). Centennial series: Music education at the tipping point. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 94:2, 42-48. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Krehbiel, H.J. (1990). *Illinois fine arts: Elementary classroom teachers' perceptions of music instruction.* (Doctoral Dissertation, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign). Retrieved from Dissertation Abstracts International, 51, 778A.

Koza, J. (2006). "Save the music"? Toward culturally relevant, joyful, and sustainable school music. *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 14:1, 23-38.

Lehman, P. (2008). A vision for the future: Looking at the standards. *Music Educators Journal*, 94(4), 28-32. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Lehman, P. (1990). *Music in today's schools: A rationale and commentary*. Music Educators National Conference: Reston, VA.

Lehman, P. (1992). Winning and losing in the struggle to reform education. *Design for Arts in Education*, 93. Retrieved from *questia.com*.

Leidig, L.R.A. (1983). *A descriptive study of a successful inner-city high school instrumental music program*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Southern California.

Leonhard, C. (1991). The status of arts education in American public schools. *Report on a survey conducted by the national arts education research center at the University of Illinois*. Retrieved on March 11, 2010 from ERIC database, #ED338551.

Mark, M.L. (2002). A history of music education advocacy. *Music Educators Journal*, 89:1, 44-48.

Mark, M.L. (2000). MENC: From Tanglewood to the present. In C.K. Madsen, ed. *Vision 2020*: *The housewright symposium on the future of music education*. Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 5-22.

Mark, M.& C. Gary. (2007). *A history of American music education,* 3rd Edition. Lanham, MD: The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group.

Martin, T. (March 10, 2010). Melton wants to ask Michigan voters about school funding. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from http://www.theoaklandpress.com/articles/2010/03/10/news/doc4b9825c61c979812420670.txt.

Marzano, R.J., Kendall, J.S. & Cicchinelli. L.F. (1999). *What Americans believe students should know: A survey of U.S. adults.* Aurora, CO: Midcontinent Regional Education Laboratory.

McMurrer, J. (2007). Choices, changes, and challenges: Curriculum and instruction in the NCLB Era. A report: *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 5 of the No Child Left Behind Act.* Washington, D.C.: Center on Education Policy.

McMurrer,J. (2008). Instructional time in elementary schools: A closer look at changes for specific subjects. A report: *From the Capital to the Classroom: Year 5 of the No Child Left Behind Act*. Washington, D.C.: Center on Education Policy. Retrieved on March 11, 2010 from http://www.ecs.org/html/.

Michigan Department of Education. Adequate yearly progress. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from http://www.michigan.gov/mde/0,1607,7-140-22709_22875---,00.html.

Michigan Education Association. (2010). Legislative and political information. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from http://www.mea.org/gov/2009_budget.html.

Michigan Nonprofit Association Council of Michigan Foundation (2002/03). *Michigan in brief*, 7th edition. Public Sector Consultants, Inc.

MENC Today: Oh, say can you sing? (2003). *Music Educators Journal*, 90:5, 12. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

MENC: The National Association for Music Education (1994). *The school music program: A new vision*. Reston, VA: MENC.

Montgomery, J. (2005). Challenges to music education: Curriculum reconceptualized, *Music Educators Journal*, 91:4, 17-20. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Music for All Foundation. (2004). The sound of silence: The unprecedented decline of music education in California public schools. Retrieved September 14, 2009 from, http:www.musicforall.org/jpopup.html.

Musicforall.org. Accessed March 10, 2010.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). http://nces.ed.gov/. Accessed March 10, 2010.

New Jersey School Board Association. News release. Retrieved March 10, 2010 from http://www.njsba.org/press_releases/ase-second-questions09.htm.

No Child Left Behind Act (2002). Retrieved from: http://www2.ed.gov/policy/elsec/leg/esea02/107-110.pdf, March 19, 2010

Owings, W.A. & Kaplan, L.S. (2006). *American public school finance*. Belmont, CA: Thomson High Education.

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods*, third edition. Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Phillips, J. (2009). Principal themes: Music advocacy – A personal perspective. *Canadian Music Educator*, 50:3, 34-36.

Pittman, A.N. (2003). An analysis of selected exemplary music programs with implication for public school music education (Doctoral Dissertation,

University of Southern California). Retrieved from ProQuest Digital Dissertations database. (UMI No. 3116769).

Prescott, M. P. (1981). An overview: The crisis in music education. *Music Educators Journal*. 35-38. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Preston, P. (2009, August 18). Reynoldsburg school district to seek levy Aagain. *NBC News.* Retrieved from http://www2.nbc4i.com/cmh/news/local/article/Reynoldsburg_School_District_to_Seek_Levy_Again/21320/.

Punke, W.J. (1972). *A comparison of attitudes between Colorado school administrators and Colorado music teachers concerning music education.* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Northern Colorado). Retrieved from ProQuest digital dissertations database. (UMI No. 758301021)

Rabkin, N. & Redmond, R. (Eds.) *Putting arts in the picture: Reframing education in the 21st century.* Chicago: Columbia College Chicago.

Renfro, L. (2004). Professional Notes: Raising the bar – Paul Lehman assesses 10 years of national standards. *Teaching Music*, 12(2), 34-39. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Reimer, B. (2003). *A philosophy of music education: Advancing the vision*, Third Edition. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Reimer, B. (2004). Reconceiving the standards and the school music program. *Music Educators Journal*, 91(1), 33-37. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Ruppert, S. S. (2006). *Critical evidence: How the arts benefit student achievement*. The National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.

Scheib, J.W. (2003). Role stress in the professional life of the school music teacher: A collective case study. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51:2, 124-136. Retrieved from *International Index to Music Periodicals* database.

Schmidt, C.P. (2006). A descriptive study of public school music programs in Indiana. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 169, 25-37.

Schultz, J.R. (2006). Nice but not necessary? Educational leaders' stories of the arts in an era of accountability (Doctoral dissertation, Stephen F. Austin State

University). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 1147184711).

Stoll, S.J. (1968). The art, the humanities, and the budget. *Music Educators Journal*, 55:4, 69.

Stover, D. (2010). Florida's economy spells trouble for schools. Retrieved from *American School* on March 10, 2010, http://www.asbj.com/TopicsArchive/SchoolSpending/Floridas-Economy-Spells-Trouble-for-Schools.aspx.

Sowell, T. (2007). *Basic economics: a common sense guide to the economy*, 3rd ed. Basic Books: New York, NY.

Supportmusic.com. Accessed March 10, 2010.

Top of the Class (2009). Newsweek. http://www.newsweek.com/id/201160. Accessed April 23, 2010.

Tychsen, A. (1999) The power of the purse (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Wisconsin - Madison). Retrieved from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 9919957).

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics(April 2, 2010). *Employment situation summary*. http://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/print.pl/news.release.empsit.nr0.htm

U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Databases. http://data.bls.gov/PDQ/servlet/SurveyOutputServlet. Accessed April 4, 2010.

Vaughan, S. (1996). Insights on the budget process. *Teaching Music,* 3:5, p 36-38.

Wakeford, M. (2004). A short look at a long past. In N. Rabkin & R. Redmond (Eds.), *Putting arts in the picture* (pp. 81-106). Chicago: Columbia College Chicago.

Wallick, M.D. (1998). A comparison study of the Ohio proficiency test results between fourth-grade string pullout students and those of matched ability. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 46:2, 239-247.

Walpole, M. & Noeth, R. (2002). The promise of Baldrige for K-12 education. *ACT policy report*. ACT, Inc. http://www.act.org/research/policymakers/pdf/baldrige.pdf

Weintrauh, E.B. (1982). Benham beats the budget game. *Music Educators Journal*, 69:1, 48.

Wisconsin Education Association Council (2004, December 17). Revenue controls force school districts to cut at heart of education. Retrieved from http://weac.org/news_and_publications/at_the_capitol/archives/2004-2005/revcapsurvey04.htm.

Woodworth, K.R., Gallagher, H.A. & Guha, R. (2007). *An unfinished canvas. Arts education in California: Taking stock of policies and practices. Summary report.* Menlo Park, CA: SRI International.

Yin, R.K. (2003). *Case study research: design and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Yin, R.K. (2009). *Case study research: design and method*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Appendix A: School District Demographic Comparison

School Name	# of Students	Student:Teacher	ELL
Berkley	4,499	17.2:1	2%
Ferndale	4,149	17.1:1	1%
Clawson	1,650	16.4:1	0%
Royal Oak	5,685	16.8:1	2%
Birmingham	8,149	15.0:1	2%
W. Bloomfield	6,896	17.4:1	7%
Southfield	9,426	14.9:1	3%

School Name	IEP	F/R Lunch	Minority
Berkley	10%	13%	22%
Ferndale	8%	34%	61%
Clawson	15%	22%	12%
Royal Oak	13%	19%	8%
Birmingham	10%	2.50%	14%
W. Bloomfield	11%	11%	
Southfield	13%	13%	97%

School Name	$/Student	$ Spent/Student	% State Funded
Berkley	10,550	10,469	71%
Ferndale	11.289	12,185	62%
Clawson	13,994	13,994	51%
Royal Oak	12,722	12,722	50%
Birmingham	16,747	16,747	38%
W. Bloomfield	12,791	12,791	34%
Southfield	14,450	14,450	34%

* Statistics provided from NCES

Appendix B: Participation Letter

<Date>

Dear <Name>:

Greetings from Ohio! I hope you had a great start to another school year. After spending some time away from Berkley School district while working on my Ph.D. in Music Education, I am now returning for my dissertation research <title>. I am writing this letter to solicit your support and participation in my research.

My dissertation study proposes to examine how Berkley sustains a high quality music program during a time of tough economic challenge. I will collect data for this study by examining documents and interviewing willing participants. The information gathered will provide insight into the decision making process that determines the funding, staffing, and programming of music education in the Berkley school district, and the role various individuals and groups play in sustaining a quality program. After working in the district for five years, and comparing your program with others throughout the last few years of my education, I believe that Berkley can serve as a model for other districts that have made extreme cuts to their programs, funding, and music teachers. It is my hope that these results can help other music educators and parents advocate for the music programs in their districts.

Interviews will last approximately 60 minutes and with your approval, will be audio recorded. These interviews will occur during October, November, and December of the 2009 school year. Please feel free to choose the time, date, and location of the interview, and know that I will stop recording at any moment you deem appropriate. I will make transcripts of your interview available to you, so you can confirm accuracy. I also promise you complete confidentiality in this study, and will use a pseudonym for each individual participant's name. There are no known risks for participating in this study and you will not be paid to participate in the study. By consenting to participation in this study, you do not give up any personal legal rights. Participation is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Also, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits.

I will contact you in a few days to determine your willingness to participate in this very important study.
You may direct any concerns or questions regarding this research to:

Marci Major, Researcher
106 Hughes Hall
1899 College Rd
Columbus, OH 43210
734.812.0348
Major.34@osu.edu

Dr. Patricia Flowers, Dissertation Chair
106 Hughes Hall
1899 College Rd
Columbus, OH 43210
614.247.6504
Flowers.1@osu.edu

Thank you for your consideration, and I cannot wait to see you again soon!
Sincerely,

Appendix C: Consent Form

The Ohio State University Consent to Participate in Research

Study Title:	**How They Decide: A Case Study Examining the Decision Making Process for Keeping or Cutting Music in a Selected K-12 Public School**
Researcher:	**Marci Major**
Sponsor:	The Ohio State University

This is a consent form for research participation. It contains important information about this study and what to expect if you decide to participate.

Your participation is voluntary.

Please consider the information carefully. Feel free to ask questions before making your decision whether or not to participate. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to sign this form and will receive a copy of the form.

Purpose: To determine how Berkley School district decided on keeping music in their curriculum.

Procedures/Tasks: Personal Interview or Focus Group

Duration: Approx 1 Hour

You may leave the study at any time. If you decide to stop participating in the study, there will be no penalty to you, and you will not lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your decision will not affect your future relationship with The Ohio State University.

Risks and Benefits: None Known

Confidentiality:

Efforts will be made to keep your study-related information confidential. All participants will be identified by their role in the school district or by pseudonym. Recorded information will be transcribed for analysis and locked in the school of music. After five years this information will be destroyed.

Incentives: None.

Participant Rights:

You may refuse to participate in this study without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you are a student or employee at Ohio State, your decision will not affect your grades or employment status.

If you choose to participate in the study, you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. By signing this form, you do not give up any personal legal rights you may have as a participant in this study.

An Institutional Review Board responsible for human subjects research at The Ohio State University reviewed this research project and found it to be acceptable, according to applicable state and federal regulations and University policies designed to protect the rights and welfare of participants in research.

Contacts and Questions:
For questions, concerns, or complaints about the study you may contact **Marci Major at Major. 34 @osu.edu or Patricia Flowers at Flowers.1@osu.edu**

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss other study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.

Signing the consent form

I have read (or someone has read to me) this form and I am aware that I am being asked to participate in a research study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have had them answered to my satisfaction. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

I am not giving up any legal rights by signing this form. I will be given a copy of this form**.**

Printed name of subject	**Signature of subject**
	AM/PM
	Date and time
Printed name of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable)	**Signature of person authorized to consent for subject (when applicable)**
	AM/PM
Relationship to the subject	**Date and time**

<u>Investigator/Research Staff</u>

I have explained the research to the participant or his/her representative before requesting the signature(s) above. There are no blanks in this document. A copy of this form has been given to the participant or his/her representative.

Printed name of person obtaining consent	**Signature of person obtaining consent**
	AM/PM
	Date and time

Appendix D: Interview Questions

Core questions for all constituencies:

1. What do you think it means to "value" the music program?

2. According to your own definition, do you believe that Berkley School District values music education, and to what degree?

3. How do you value the music program?

4. How has the district continued to sustain their current music program during a time of economic challenge?

5. In a time of economic challenge that mandates cuts, what areas do you believe should undergo budget cuts?

6. Do you think that Berkley uses an adequate amount of their budget to support the music program? Why or why not?

7. Describe some of the pivotal events the shaped the current music program.

8. What group of persons plays the largest role in determining the quantity of music programs? Quality?

Additional Questions to be drawn from:

Music Teacher Specific:

1. What role do you play in maintaining the quality of the/your music program at Berkley?
2. Berkley has not increased its budget for music education in the past X years. What specific changes have you had to make as a teacher to continue providing quality music education?

3. Describe a time you felt the least supported? Most supported?

4. What specific factors of Berkley's music program ensure its quality the most?

5. When you need funds, to whom or what group do you turn first?

6. Please describe any changes you have made in your teaching or programming over the years to make music education more appealing?

7. In what ways do you advocate for your program?

8. What area or areas of your program do you consider underfunded?
9. How do you think the School District could or should rectify these underfunded parts of the music program?

10. What do you think students should learn in music education?

11. What do you think administrators feel students should take from music education?
12. Given your answers to questions 9 and 10, which set of goals do you believe are being met the most in your school?

Administration Specific:

1. Describe the process for determining the content, organization, and funding of music programs.

2. If faced with either cutting music or cutting another program, what criteria would you use to make this choice?

3. Which financial decisions over the past ten years have most influenced changes made to the music programs?

    a. Discuss the restructuring of the upper administration
    b. Discuss the fund equity reserve
    c. Discuss the MI stimulus money

4. What changes did Berkley have to make to its musical offerings in order to satisfy the requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act?

5. If the school district's current funding situation worsens, do you see music losing its importance in Berkley?

6. What is the priority of music classes when making teacher and student schedules relevant to the core classes like math or science?

7. In the past, has Berkley sacrificed any programs to save music?

8. If faced with decision to cut music or other extra curricular activities, how would you choose?

9. What do you think students should learn from music education?

Parent Specific:

1. What role do you think parent support plays in keeping Berkley's music programs alive?

2. What do you think would happen to the music program at Berkley without the current level of parent support for these programs?

3. How much financial support does the boosters (or school board) offer the music program each year?

4. Has the current economic recession affected your willingness to continue to provide financial support at the same level before the recession began?

Appendix E: District and State Graduation Requirements

Coursework	Graduating Classes of 2011-2014 Michigan Merit Curriculum	Selective College Preparatory Program Recommendations
English	**4.0** Satisfactory completion of grade level English classes. • English 9 (1.0) • English 10 (1.0) • English 11 (1.0) • English 12 (1.0)	**4.0 Required**
Mathematics	**4.0** Students must show minimum proficiency (70% test Average) to advance to the next course • Algebra (1.0) • Geometry (1.0) • Algebra 2 (1.0) • Senior Year Math (1.0)	**4.0 Required**
Science	**3.0** • Geo-Physical Science (1.0) • Biology (1.0) • Chemistry (1.0) or Physics (1.0)	**4.0 Recommended** • 1-2 years of a lab science course.
Social Studies	**3.0** • U.S. History with geography (1.0) • World History with geography(1.0) • Economics (.5) • Government (.5)	**4.0 Recommended**
Life/Career Competencies	**3.0** • Visual, Performing, Applied Arts (1.0) • Online Learning Experience (Earned in Health) • Foreign Language (2.0) *(2 credits in grades 9-12; OR an equivalent learning experience in grades K-12 beginning with the class of 2016.)*	**3.0** • 2-3 years of a Foreign Language
Physical Education	**1.5** • Boys/Girls Gym (.5) • Boys/Girls Swim (.5) • Health	**1.0**
Electives	**9.5**	**8.0**

TOTAL REQUIRED CREDITS

28.0

(31-32 credits can be earned in 4 years)

http://www.berkleyschools.org/index.aspx?item=363&school=27

Appendix F: Cuts Made Between 2000-2009

BUDGET REDUCTIONS and ADJUSTMENTS (2000-01 THROUGH 2008-09)

Elimination of:

- Human Resources Director
- Dean of Students at BHS
- Administrative Staff Developer
- Director of Community/Adult & Vocational Education
- Board Office Curriculum Secretary
- Supervisor of Maintenance
- POHI Coordinator
- Special Education Coordinator at BHS
- Grant Coordinator
- Technology Director (now combined with curriculum, technology and assessment 2008)
- Dean of Students at Burton (returned 2008)
- Director of Curriculum (now combined with curriculum, technology and assessment 2008)

9

BUDGET REDUCTIONS and ADJUSTMENTS CONTINUED

- Teacher staff trimmed by six (6) – BHS schedule 2007-2008
- All staff members contributing toward health care costs
- Cabinet restructuring
- Contracted with third party administrator for placement of substitute teachers, non-certified substitutes
- Eliminated summer differentiation course costs
- Implemented Athletic program adjustments
- Athletic Fund budget by 6%
- Non-salary/benefit (discretionary) expenditures by 5%
- Other Capital Projects Fund transfer by $10,000
- Overtime costs for Custodial/Maintenance
- 2.5 Secretarial positions
- Ten (10) Custodial/Maintenance positions

10

BUDGET REDUCTIONS and ADJUSTMENTS CONTINUED

- Moved qualifying special education students to Early Intervention from Center programs
- Scrutinized General Fund conference and membership costs
- Eliminated General Fund portion of 5th and 9th grade camp and BHS communications retreat
- Reduced Paraeducators hours
- Nominal salary increases
- Changed to PPO Health Care
- Building/Departmental budgets
- Club sponsors
- Eliminated the support staff substitute calling position

11

Recent Central Office Reductions

[redacted] – Tech. Coordinator (to Oakland Schools)

[redacted] – H.R. (Retired)

[redacted] – Technology (Moved)

[redacted] – Grants Coordinator (Retired)

12

Appendix G: Ad Hoc Committee's Proposed Cuts

Berkley School District
Schools/Departments Potential Reductions - Ad Hoc Committee
2009-10 School Year

Please know that the individual items noted below may not be mutually exclusive or independent to other entries include within this document

Staffing	Positions	$ Savings	Comments
Teachers			
Middle School Counselors	1.00	69,217	1/2 FTE reduction at both AMS, NIS
BHS teacher	0.50	34,608	subject area tbd, dependent upon student numbers for 09-10
BHS Career Education teacher	1.00	69,217	low class sizes, assumes students will be placed within other sections without increasing staff
Special Ed - Elementary	0.50	34,608	realign resource room support
MS Department Heads	-	18,704	cover four core subjects in non-traditional manner
Alternative Education Program	-	89,479	eliminate program, students move to Tri County Educational Center, potential contractual item
Learning Specialist	1.00	69,217	reductions to portions of Burton, Pattengill and Rogers positions
District Art/Music Coordinators	-	19,000	eliminate these positions, cover duties in non-traditional manner
Administrators/Supervisors			
Supervisors/Non affiliated	-	10,800	freeze compensation, no current contract in place for 09-10
Freeze Sup't/Cabinet sal's, add'l health care $'s		-	formalized at March, 2009 mtg by BOE, freeze salaries @ 08-09 levels, add'l payment of $25/month toward health care
Custodians		-	no further recommendation, recent contract (2 tier, health care adj) absorbed two (2) fte positions in 08-09
Lunch Aides			
Lunch Aides to School Lunch		20,000	increase transfer amount
Paraeducators			
Special Education	12 hrs/day	50,996	reduction of support based on estimated needs
Secretaries			
Instructional Secretaries	9.5 hrs/day	50,366	reduce time at elementaries, current staffers reduced to 1/2 of existing hours worked
Middle Schools	1.00	53,272	reduce hours due in part to efficiencies provided by new Skylert attendance system
BHS Media Center	1.00	53,272	
Central Office	1.00	68,782	eliminate one Class 1 position, realign duties, potential contractual item
Substitutes			
Secretarial Subs		9,399	reduce budgets and only obtain sub when absolutely necessary
Subtotal - Staffing		**720,937**	

Curriculum, Supplies, Other	Positions	$ Savings	Comments
Per Pupil Allotments		11,182	reduce by 3%
Media Center Allotment		29,066	reduce budget 50% at each building
School Improvement/Teacher Enhancement Funding		27,166	eliminate and expand use of per pupil allocation for this purpose
School Sponsors		18,910	reduce to 1/2 current , self fund those that are not producing product (e.g. yearbook)
Activity Clubs		8,402	reduce to 1/2 current, self funded (ski, cooking, science, dance)
Service Squad Sponsors		8,106	eliminate at elementary (keep Safety Patrol)
Math Pentathlon Clubs		4,303	eliminate teacher stipend, solicit parent volunteers at elementaries
Communications Cable Staff		9,337	reduce budget, $5600 remains
Co-op Student - Central Office		1,500	eliminate budget no longer needed
Employee Training		4,000	reduce budget
Quality Fund Curriculum Support		14,648	reduce budget 10%
Strategic Planning		5,601	reduce budget 10%
Departmental Conferences		730	board 5,287 - super 1,101 - admin 6,609 - support 1,782 - finance 1,500 - operation 2,833 - tech 3,750 - retreat 1,468
Human Resources		143	3% supplies, advertising, misc
Finance		636	3% supplies, misc, capital outlay
Communications		1,187	3% supplies
Math Transportation		20,000	seek alternative transportation option
High School musical		1,000	
Athletic Subsidy		45,000	reduce transportation/coaches expenditures, figure represents a $15k increase from initial amount
Energy Savings		50,000	based on tighter supply costs, additional savings potentially available via consumption side
Subtotal - Curriculum, Supplies, Other		260,917	
One-time considerations:	*Impact would be felt for just one fiscal year, 2009-10*		
Transfer Hurley Field's fund balance		39,653	rely on other source to eventually replace turf
Durant Fund, defer expenditures 1 year		60,000	dollars committed to support new textbook purchases, other curriculum support could be delayed one year
Other Capital Projects allocation, defer		239,000	$239k,critical funding for tech dept, shy of tech bond, removing these dollars would dry up new tech purchases
Subtotal - One-Time Items		338,653	
Grand Total - Estimated budget Reductions		1,320,507	

Other Considerations: *Implementation requires agreement, action by entities beyond Berkley board of education*

Federal Stimulus funding		tbd	amount, timing, restrictions still unknown, state may need significant portion to stabilize school aid
Media Specialist	2.00	138,434	reduce each elementary position to 1/2 time, remaining portions are load bearing
Freeze staff comp for non-settled contracts		-	09-10 projection already includes a freeze for all remaining units w/o a contract (Secretaries & Adult Educators)
Concessions from contracts that are settled		-	requires agreement w/ bargaining units, negotiable item for administrators, teachers, CM, Paraeducators (Teachers-freeze 1.5%, freeze steps,$10+/mo toward health, Admin sal freeze)

Longer-term considerations:

District's involvement in CASA, IA	key components of the district's programming for students, contributing to the appeal/strength of BSD's reputation
Outsource options (support, non-instructional positions)	investigate options beyond traditional employment avenue to staff support and non-instructional services
School(s) consolidation internal or w/other districts	facility committee to address, economic impact tbd
Restructure middle/high schools day	requires contract language change, negotiable item
Investigate alternative classroom structures	e.g. split/multiage classroom settings
Bond issue initiative, renovation, tech	will need to gauge impact on operational budget
Class size	lower/higher class size, alternatives if so
more vigorously pursue online learning opportunities	some options in place, pursue seat time waivers to allow for non-traditional learning opportunities
Berkley Educational Foundation	BEF perhaps refocuses fundraising efforts toward significant program/operating costs
Naming rights, sponsorships, promotional revenue initiatives	ramp up efforts to raise significant revenues via these avenues
Energy Management savings	policy development, infrastructure improvements necessary, in motion
Use of some/all Durant principal	critical piece of curriculum support, serves as internal bank, saving interest and cost of issuance costs
Routine/periodic bidding of key services	e.g. audit, banking, food service, waste management, surveillance, etc
Expand Schools of Choice participation	SOC students currently comprise 18.34% of total K-12 student population (Feb, 09 count - 769/4191)

Ad Hoc Committee - Position Statements:

Tech bond/facility bond	impact on OCP reduction
Aggressive growth of TCEC program	ongoing
Aggressive growth of shared-time partnerships	e.g. LaSalette, Beth Jacob
Stance on importance of Durant principal	curriculum support, internal bank

Budget Items Recently Known/Approved:

K program move to 1/2 program w/ all-day paid options	approved by BOE in February, 2009, saving $529,000
Recognition of $87 increase to the foundation grant for 2008-09	talk still lingers out of Lansing that a proration may yet hit for 08-09, add'l $382,000 in revenue
Enrollment improvement	February 11th count up by 25 fte from September, 2008 count, revenue impact in 09-10, dependent on 9/09 count
Superintendent/ Cabinet freeze, add'l health care cost sharing	approved by BOE in March, 2009, saving $13,300

Appendix H: Superintendent Letter Explaining Magnitude of Lost Revenue

BERKLEY SCHOOLS

ENGAGE INSPIRE ACHIEVE
WWW.BERKLEYSCHOOLS.ORG

November 5, 2009

Dear Parent or Guardian,

I write to inform you of two critical issues regarding the Berkley School District - the proposed state funding cuts and the District's proposed bond election. Many parents and community members are not aware of the fact that in 1994 the way schools were funded changed dramatically. This change was from local property taxes funding schools to per pupil funding. That means that local communities no longer control their schools' funding. The Michigan Legislature determines school funding. How does this affect you and the Berkley School District? The Legislature is currently proposing to cut our school district's per pupil funding by enormous amounts. These amounts are as follows:

- $165 per pupil cut announced in September
- $127 per pupil cut effective October 21st
- $165 per pupil cut in January, 2010 (estimated)
- $600 per pupil cut in the 2010-2011 school year due to Stimulus money running out (estimated)
- Additional cuts are likely given the current inadequate school funding mechanism

Total: $1057 (proposed and likely cuts) X 4600 (number of BSD students) = $4,862,200 loss to the BSD (13% reduction)

To put these cuts into context:

- $ 950,000 - entire K-12 music program (all choir, band, and orchestra)
- $1,100,000 - entire K-12 physical education program
- $1,000,000 - entire K-12 art program
- $ 450,000 - entire elementary/middle school Spanish program
- $ 550,000 - entire athletic program (middle and high school)

Total: $4,050,000

These are examples and not actual or proposed cuts to our programs. The purpose is to illustrate the enormity of the proposed cuts - we could eliminate all K-12 music, P.E., art, elementary/middle school Spanish, and athletics *and still* have additional reductions to make. Our District cannot absorb these cuts after the past nine years of budget cuts without affecting programs and people we all care about.

[redacted]
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES - AVERY CENTER
14700 W. LINCOLN
OAK PARK, MI 48237
[redacted]

You may have also heard that the District is considering a bond proposal to update our aging facilities and technology in February. Why would we propose doing so when state funding may be cut so dramatically? In part, we believe parents and community members will force the legislature to come to its senses. Also, schools can no longer ask for millages to operate their schools as they did prior to 1994. The only method for schools to decrease expenditures is to make themselves more efficient. New facilities would do just that - reduce energy costs, the number of buildings we operate, and the operational dollars we spend on technology, etc. For example, we currently spend $239,000 per year for upgraded technology; this cost would be covered by bond dollars. This means the District would have more money to focus on classrooms. Communities lost control over their local school's funding in 1994; communities still have complete control, however, of the quality and efficiency of their own school facilities. This is a primary means of attracting new students, maintaining property values, and reducing operational dollars (e.g. energy cost reductions and consolidation of buildings).

The District is interested in maintaining the highest quality and the greatest number of programs possible by demanding stable funding from Lansing and updating our aging facilities. Look for further information on plans for a school district bond proposal. **Please call legislators immediately to support stable and sufficient funding to maintain our outstanding programs.** You can also participate in a rally at the Capitol on November 10th and visit the Save Our Students, Schools, State website at: http://www.sosmichigan.org/.

John Pappageorge	senjpappageorge@senate.michigan.gov	(517) 373-2523
Gilda Jacobs	sengjacobs@senate.michigan.gov	(517) 373-7888
Ellen Cogen Lipton	EllenLipton@house.mi.gov	(517) 373-0478
Speaker Mike Bishop	senmbishop@senate.michigan.gov	(517) 373-2417
Speaker Andy Dillon	andydillon@house.mi.gov	(517) 373-0857

Sincerely,

[redacted]

[redacted]
Superintendent

MS/las

[redacted]
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES - AVERY CENTER
14700 W. LINCOLN
OAK PARK, MI 48237
[redacted]

BERKLEY
SCHOOLS

Appendix I: Letter to Community

April 21, 2009

Dear Community Member,

On the evening of April 21st, the Budget Ad Hoc Committee will present its recommendations to the administration. The public has been invited to this presentation. The citizens of the committee have worked very long and hard to reach consensus on their recommendations. While tough budget times are seldom opportunities for optimism, let me share a few encouraging thoughts.

This committee is evidence of why the Berkley School District will weather the financial storm facing our district. If someone had said to any of us, "Seven years of budget cuts will leave you in a good place instructionally," who among us would have believed it? Still, it's true. Despite the past seven years of steady budget woes and marginal increases in per pupil funding from Lansing, our district can boast of:

- Steadily rising achievement on yearly standardized tests
- BHS being named one of the best high schools in the nation by Newsweek magazine
- An extremely strong position locally and nationally for college placement (50% of BHS applicants to U.M. are accepted - the national norm is 25%)
- Norup International School achieving I.B. World School status, one of only 28 schools in the world
- Attracting and retaining the best and brightest staff

The district likely will need to consider or make programmatic changes. We seek your input on which of those changes are most prudent. We are currently in a very good place instructionally and will continue to be so. Nonetheless, we have more difficult decisions ahead. That is the reason for this packet of materials (**see reverse of this letter for directions**) – we seek your perspectives and opinions to guide our decision-making.

Many citizens and staff have expressed interest in sharing their thoughts regarding the upcoming budget cycle. To address that need, we have prepared a packet of information and a means of communicating your thoughts. The packet of information you have received has several purposes:

- The amount of information was too large and/or complex to address in a town hall format verbally
- The type of feedback we desire is thoughtful and carefully considered responses which aren't possible to obtain in a town hall format

Included for your review are the Budget Ad Hoc Committee's recommendations, additional pages which are broader in scope and impact than the coming year's budget (i.e. should the district pursue bond proposals, consider consolidating schools, etc.) and Town Hall slides from this past year (October 27th). We are looking for your philosophical and practical direction.

Thank you for participating in this important work. We value your perspectives and hope you gain a clearer picture of the challenges the district faces and offer new insights to help us navigate the path to the future.

Sincerely,

[redacted]

Berkley School District Superintendent

Directions

We want to get the pulse of the staff and community. In the interest of thoroughness and respect for your time, we've opted to provide a significant amount of background information and ask for written feedback. We hope this format works for you.

Thank you for taking time to participate in sharing your views. You will find three important information packets:

- Synopsis of the Budget Ad Hoc Committee's Recommendations and feedback sheet (tan)
- Short-term/Longer-term Considerations Sheets (green)
- Background on the budget history of the district/state as it relates to Proposal A and the BSD Budget from the October 27, 2008 Town Hall Meeting at BHS (yellow)

The questions posed in the short-term/longer-term sheets do not presuppose that any decisions have been made. We're hoping to discover your thinking, your priorities, and why you place such value on them.

We appreciate deeply your considerations and will use them to guide our decision-making. Please return the forms to your school building office or the Superintendent's office by May 1, 2009.