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The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

The survey used for the current descriptive study was a modification of the quantitative survey used in Fitzpatrick's (2008) study, *A Mixed Methods Portrait of Urban Instrumental Music Teaching*. Four research questions were included in the study: (1) What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?; (2) What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within this setting?; (3) What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?; and (4) What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

Data were collected in the current study across three phases. The modification of the survey used by Fitzpatrick (2008) was reviewed by a focus group of North Carolina secondary instrumental rural teachers during Phase 1. Focus group participants provided

feedback on the content and structure of the drafted survey. This feedback was used to further modify the survey before Phase 2. In Phase 2, a pilot group of secondary rural instrumental music educators in Georgia, completed the modified survey and suggested further improvements. Further modifications were made to the survey before Phase 3: Survey Administration.

A Cronbach's Alpha measure of internal consistency was calculated to establish reliability of the survey instrument. A raw alpha score of .88 and a standardized alpha score of .90 were found, indicating a high level of internal consistency. The survey instrument was considered valid because it was a modification of Fitzpatrick's (2008) valid survey tool, which was presented to a focus group, modified, presented to a pilot group, then modified again for further content validity.

The results for research question one revealed that rural music students were typically of a low socioeconomic status and primarily Caucasian. In research question two, participants believed skills related to developing relationships with students and advocating for their programs were more important than those related to music when given a specific set of skills from which to choose. For research question three, rural secondary instrumental music educators reported moderately high levels of job satisfaction and success. In general, they reported that their students were intelligent, well behaved, and musically talented. In addition, teachers conveyed that indicators of success in their program were associated with student growth and experiences more so than their musical performance abilities. Finally, participants indicated that their three greatest challenges were lack of support, limited funding or resources, and limited student

involvement. Their three greatest rewards were having musical experiences with students, witnessing students' musical growth, and witnessing students' personal growth. A discussion of the implications for music education and music teacher education along with recommendations for future research are presented.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION  
IN RURAL NORTH CAROLINA:  
A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

by

Melody C. Causby

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Approved by

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For Adelynn and Lydia.

APPROVAL PAGE

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xiii
CHAPTER	
I. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Problem .....	1
Need for the Study .....	6
Purpose and Research Questions .....	6
Summary .....	7
II. RELATED LITERATURE.....	8
Urban Setting .....	8
Urban Communities and Schools.....	8
Urban Music Education .....	12
Summary of Urban Setting .....	15
Suburban Setting.....	16
Suburban Communities and Schools .....	16
Suburban Music Education .....	18
Summary of Suburban Setting .....	19
Rural Setting .....	19
Rural Communities and Schools.....	20
Rural Music Education .....	26
Summary of Rural Setting .....	32
Preparing Rural Music Educators .....	32
Summary .....	35
III. METHOD .....	37
Study Design.....	38
Fitzpatrick’s Tool.....	39
Survey Development.....	39
Phase 1: Focus Group .....	39
Changes Made Before Phase 2: Pilot.....	41
Phase 2: Pilot.....	43

Changes Made Before Phase 3: Survey Administration.....	43
Phase 3: Survey Administration.....	45
Final Design of Survey and Statistical Treatment of Data .....	46
Securing Permissions .....	47
Participants.....	48
Establishing Validity and Reliability .....	49
IV. RESULTS .....	51
Participants.....	52
Research Question 1: Contextual Knowledge .....	57
Research Question 2: Specialized Skills.....	60
Research Question 3: Attitudes and Beliefs.....	67
Attitudes.....	68
Beliefs about Themselves, Their Program, Their Students, and Their Schools .....	69
Research Question 4: Challenges and Rewards.....	71
Challenges.....	71
Rewards.....	75
Summary.....	76
V. DISCUSSION.....	79
Research Question 1: Contextual Knowledge .....	80
Research Question 2: Specialized Skills.....	80
Research Question 3: Attitudes and Beliefs.....	85
Research Question 4: Challenges and Rewards.....	86
Challenges.....	86
Rewards.....	90
Summary.....	91
Implications for Music Education and Music Teacher Education.....	91
Further Research .....	94
Limitations of the Study.....	96
REFERENCES .....	97
APPENDIX A. INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN RURAL NC SURVEY .....	106
APPENDIX B. SURVEY ITEM STATISTICAL TREATMENT .....	136
APPENDIX C. SURVEY DRAFT .....	146

APPENDIX D. SURVEY RECRUITMENT LETTER .....157

APPENDIX E. CONSENT FORM.....158

## LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1. Definitions of City, Suburb, Town, and Rural (NCES, 2006) .....	2
Table 2. Survey Question Groupings and Research Questions Addressed .....	45
Table 3. Participant Demographics ( <i>N</i> =62).....	53
Table 4. Grade Levels and Courses Taught by Participants with Enrollment.....	55
Table 5. Student Instrumental Music Participation after Leaving Participants’ Program .....	57
Table 6. Violence, Drugs, and Gangs in Participants’ School Communities.....	58
Table 7. Frequencies and Percentages of Level of Challenge Presented When Teachers’ Race Differed from Majority Student Race .....	59
Table 8. Importance of Skills in the Given Teaching Context.....	61
Table 9. Rural Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance ( <i>N</i> = 49).....	63
Table 10. Suburban Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance ( <i>N</i> = 45) .....	64
Table 11. Urban Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance ( <i>N</i> =45).....	65
Table 12. Means and Standard Deviations of the Degree to Which Rural Instrumental Teaching Skills Were Perceived as Specialized ( <i>N</i> =49).....	67
Table 13. Means and Standard Deviations of the Extent to Which Traits Indicated Success in a Rural Program ( <i>N</i> =48).....	68
Table 14. Means and Standard Deviations of Participant Beliefs about Themselves ( <i>N</i> =49).....	69
Table 15. Means and Standard Deviations of Participant Beliefs About Program ( <i>N</i> =49).....	70
Table 16. Means and Standard Deviations of Beliefs about Students ( <i>N</i> =49).....	71

Table 17. Means and Standard Deviations of Beliefs about Schools ( <i>N</i> =49) .....	71
Table 18. Means and Standard Deviations of Potential Challenges.....	72
Table 19. Frequencies and Percentages of Emerging Themes .....	76
Table 20. Comparison of Each Skill Ranking in Rural, Urban, Suburban Areas .....	84

## LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1. North Carolina Counties.....	5
Figure 2. Minority Student Enrollments at Different Locales, 1987-2003.....	10
Figure 3. White Student Enrollments at Different Locales, 1987-2003 .....	11

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### Problem

Research literature related to rural music education is limited. The majority of extant literature describes the experiences of urban and suburban music teachers. The rural music education literature that exists is largely ethnographical or auto-ethnographical, making it difficult to describe rural music education broadly (Prendergrast, 2017). In addition, what remains unknown is how rural music educators' experiences are similar to or different from their urban and suburban counterparts. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2013), 29.8% of American elementary and secondary students attended schools outside of cities or suburban areas in either town or rural areas. The NCES (2006) offered definitions of city,

suburb, town, and rural based on population size, and distance from the nearest metropolitan center (see Table 1). As of fall 2018, there were 56.6 million students in American elementary and secondary schools, with 50.7 million being in public schools and 5.9 million in private schools (NCES, 2018). If approximately 30% of students were being educated in a rural school, then about 17 million American students currently attend schools in small towns or other rural areas.

Table 1

Definitions of City, Suburb, Town, and Rural (NCES, 2006)

<b>Locale</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>City</b>	
Large	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population of 250,000 or more
Midsize	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000
Small	Territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000
<b>Suburb</b>	
Large	Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more
Midsize	Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000
Small	Territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population less than 100,000
<b>Town</b>	
Fringe	Territory inside an urban cluster that is less than or equal to 10 miles from an urbanized area
Distant	Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an urbanized area

Table 1

Cont.

<b>Locale</b>	<b>Definition</b>
<b>Town (cont.)</b>	
Remote	Territory inside an urban cluster that is more than 35 miles from an urbanized
<b>Rural</b>	
Fringe	Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an urban cluster
Distant	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an urbanized area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an urban cluster
Remote	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster

*Note.* Source: National Center for Education Statistics (2006)

Rural communities and schools have often been plagued by a lack of resources, a shortage of early childhood programs, and low teacher recruitment and retention (Showalter, Klein, Johnson, & Hartman, 2017). The National School Board Association Center for Public Education's Rural School Full Report (Lavalley, 2018) stated that rural counties have higher poverty rates (64%) than urban counties (47%). Not only have more students in rural areas lived in poverty than those in urban areas, they have generally been further below the poverty line (Farrigan, 2017). Furthermore, Graham and Teague (2011) suggested that there is an achievement gap between rural and urban students due to higher poverty rates and fewer advanced courses being offered in rural schools. Rural

students (49%) were also less likely to attend college than urban students (62%) (Farrigan, 2017).

Despite the nearly 17 million rural students in America, research about rural schools was limited, as “the rural American researcher appears to be something of an ‘endangered species’” (Sherwood, 2000, p. 159). Rural education research conducted by federal education research and development centers were located primarily near large metropolitan universities, where researchers have been unaware of their urban biases, and viewed rural schools through a deficit lens (Sherwood, 2000).

Rural poverty has been on the rise, and although it was becoming more widespread, the largest concentration of counties with persistent poverty were clustered in the Southern region of United States (Fermanich, 2012). North Carolina, the home state of the researcher, is included in the geographic region with consistent poverty issues, so was an appropriate region for the focus of this study. It is important to note that rural areas of North Carolina may differ from rural areas of other states because what fuels the economy may be different, the population diversity may differ, or school systems could be structured differently.

Of North Carolina’s 100 counties, 80 are considered rural, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, meaning that the county has an average population density of 250 people or less per square mile (Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016). The North Carolina Rural Center (2014) constructed a map that depicted the following regarding population: (a) 80 rural counties that were indicative of 250 people per square mile or less, (b) 14 suburban counties that were indicative of an average population density between 250 and

750 people per square mile, and (c) six urban counties that were indicative of an average population density that exceeded 750 people per square mile (see Figure 1).

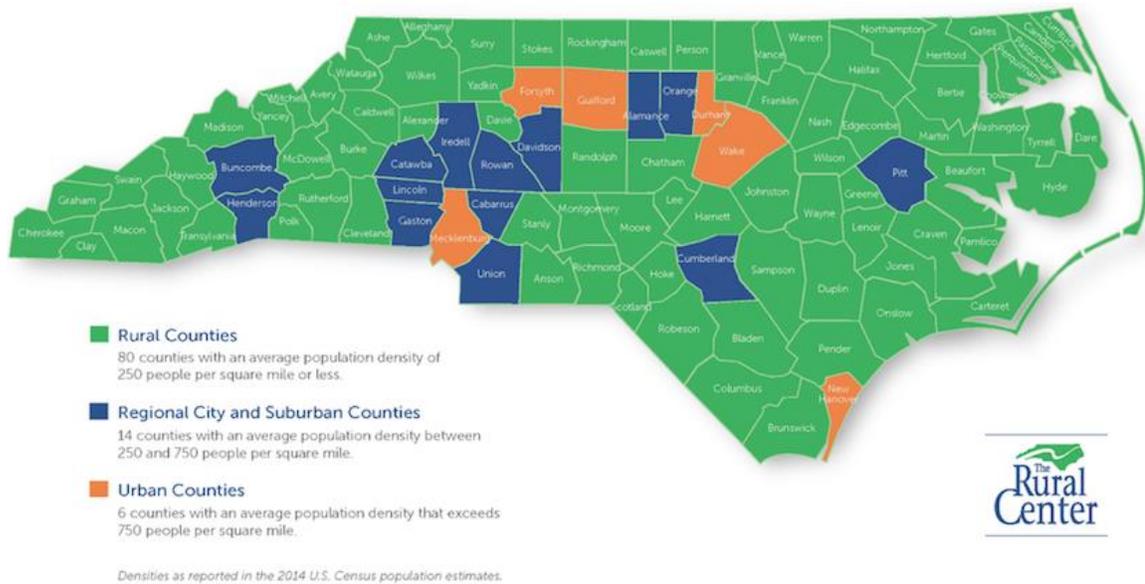


Figure 1. North Carolina Counties. Source: NC Rural Center (2014).

Within North Carolina’s 100 counties, there are 115 school districts (Ballotpedia, 2013a). In most instances, there is one school district per county, and it is typically called “[Name of County] County Schools.” In some cases, there are two districts per county; one that is a city school system and one that is the county school system. In 2013, there were approximately 1.5 million students in North Carolina public schools (Ballotpedia, 2013b). While approximately 30% of students in America attended schools in town or rural areas, the rate in North Carolina was much higher with nearly half (47.5%) of elementary and secondary students attending schools in town or rural areas (NCES, 2013).

### **Need for the Study**

There is a significant base of literature studying schools and instrumental music programs in urban and suburban areas. However, literature regarding rural areas is limited (Sherwood, 2000), and research related to rural music education is even more limited (Prendergrast, 2017; Prest, 2016). This study will describe the experiences, attitudes, and beliefs that rural instrumental music educators hold about their communities, schools, and students, as well as describe the challenges and rewards that they experience in their positions. By bringing awareness to this subject, this study will add to the limited body of literature and provide much needed information about rural music educators' environments. The information gathered in this study will also inform the education field at large about the specialized skill sets used in teaching music in a rural setting.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms. The four research questions were as follows:

1. What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?

2. What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?
3. What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?
4. What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

### **Summary**

Approximately 30% of American students are enrolled in rural schools, yet the majority of research in education has been conducted in urban and suburban environments. Rural schools have unique challenges that need to be investigated. The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **RELATED LITERATURE**

The base of literature related to rural music education is very limited, so this review of literature will evaluate extant research in general education and music education in urban, suburban, and rural contexts. Although the focus of this study is on rural music education, for a better understanding of the broader American context and how rural communities fit into that context, it is important to compare and contrast the urban and suburban settings as well. In this review of literature, the following discussions will occur: (a) Urban Setting, (b) Urban Communities and Schools, (c) Urban Music Education, (d) Urban Summary, (e) Suburban Setting, (f) Suburban Communities and Schools, (g) Suburban Music Education, (h) Suburban Summary, (i) Rural Setting, (j) Rural Communities and Schools, (k) Rural Music Education, (l) Rural Summary, (m) Preparing Rural Music Educators, and (n) Summary.

#### **Urban Setting**

The United States Census Bureau defined urbanized areas as having 50,000 or more people. In 2010, there were 486 urbanized areas in the United States, which contained 71.2% of the population (Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016).

#### **Urban Communities and Schools**

While many people have often thought of urban areas as diverse, it has been common for local neighborhoods within urban areas to be homogeneous in terms of race,

ethnicity, and socioeconomic status, leaving urban schools essentially segregated, even after the 1954 Supreme Court ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* that mandated desegregation (Rubel & Chu, 2012). In an effort to desegregate schools, many urban school systems began busing programs so that students were assigned to schools based on a desired racial, ethnic, and economic diversity rather than on geographic location or close proximity to a school alone. Many Caucasian families opposed the desegregation busing programs, citing unsafe schools and increased travel time to and from schools as barriers to their children's education and participation in extra curricular activities (DeWitt, 2016). This led to the phenomenon known as White flight, where White families chose to move to the suburbs in order for their children to attend suburban schools, or put their children into private schools (Zhang, 2009). This White flight phenomenon effectively re-segregated urban schools and left urban students "unable to access social and economic resources that Whites and middle-class families traditionally bring to urban school settings" (Lewis & Moore, 2008, p. 4). The departure of White middle-class families from urban areas lowered the tax base [from which school funds are acquired] in urban areas, further limiting educational resources in urban school systems, such as small class size, access to technology, and highly-qualified teachers, among others (Lewis & Moore, 2008).

More recently, some families have used school choice initiatives to attend private schools or charter schools with a specialized curriculum rather than go to the assigned neighborhood school. Theoretically, school choice allows better access to quality schools for students of color or low socioeconomic status; however, it has further segregated

urban schools as families of a racial minority or of a low-income household are less likely to take advantage of school choice (Zhang, 2009). Families of low socioeconomic status or families of color in urban areas have often not had the financial means to relocate, so they have continually and generationally been limited to these urban areas with low property values and poorly funded schools (Ostrander, 2015).

Although enrollment of students of color increased in urban, suburban, and rural schools in South Carolina between 1987-2003, (Figure 2), white student enrollment increased in rural and suburban areas while declining significantly in urban areas of South Carolina during the same time (see Figure 3) (Zhang, 2009).

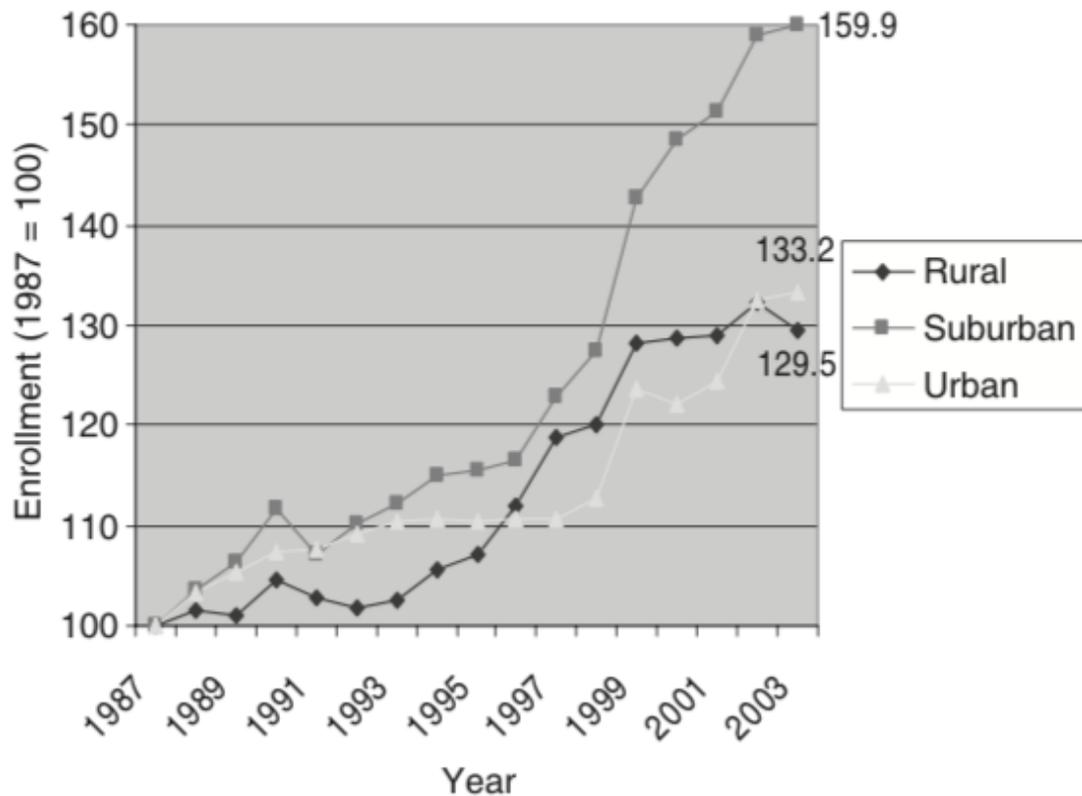


Figure 2. Minority Student Enrollments at Different Locales, 1987-2003. Source: Zhang (2009).

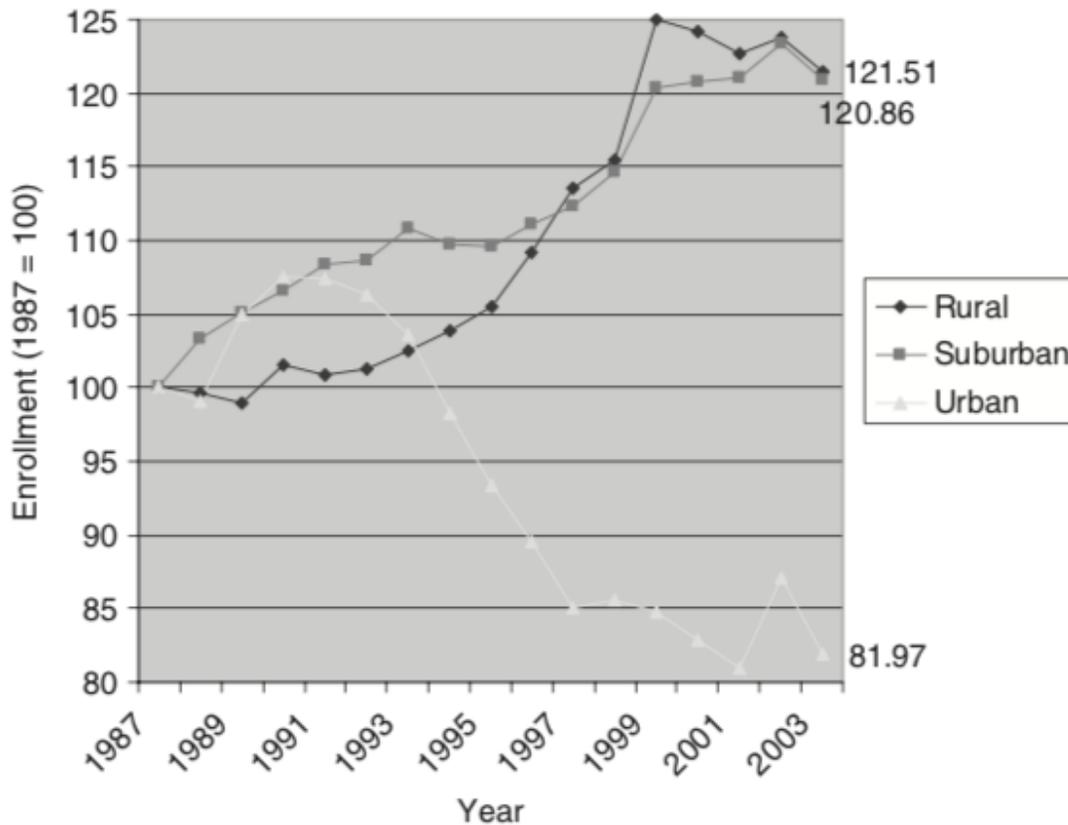


Figure 3. White Student Enrollments at Different Locales, 1987-2003. Source: Zhang (2009).

Many people have associated the phrase “urban school” with “poor” or “at-risk,” as American urban students have predominantly been students of color, and urban school systems have often had “low test scores, high dropout rates, run-down facilities . . . and excessive crime” (Lewis & Moore, 2008, p. 3). Although urban students were at least as likely as suburban and rural students to have a parent who completed college, urban students were also more likely to have changed schools frequently, and less likely to have two-parent families. Student absenteeism, classroom discipline, student pregnancy rates, and incidences of student weapon possession were more prevalent in urban schools than

suburban or rural schools, however alcohol use was a larger issue in rural schools (NCES, 1996).

Lewis and Moore (2008) also reported high teacher turnover rates in urban schools. According to Ouellette et al. (2018), urban teachers experienced high levels of stress in their workplace due to overcrowding, limited resources, high stakes accountability policies and disruptive student behavior. A possible indicator of low morale, teacher absences were more prevalent in urban schools than in suburban or rural schools (NCES, 1996). Rubel and Chu (2012) indicated that in addition to high teacher turnover rates, urban teachers often had varied levels of training, mentoring, and certification, and that urban schools focused heavily on standardized testing.

While urban areas were frequently racially, economically, and socioeconomically diverse, individual communities, neighborhoods, and schools were homogeneous (Rubel & Chu, 2012). Urban schools often reported high teacher turnover rates, low test scores, increased student absences, poor student discipline, high dropout rates, and poor facilities (Lewis & Moore, 2008; NCES, 1996). Urban students were more likely to come from a single parent household and experience school changes than urban or rural students (NCES, 1996).

### **Urban Music Education**

Urban music programs have been impacted by issues of socioeconomic status, and often had fewer resources than music programs in more affluent areas. Urban music educators have had to be more sensitive to issues of cultural relevancy and the needs of at-risk students. Although there were some challenges associated with teaching music in

urban areas, urban music educators reported high levels of job satisfaction (Fitzpatrick, 2008).

In a 2013 study, Fitzpatrick surveyed and compared the characteristics and the perceptions of 20 randomly selected urban and suburban secondary instrumental music teachers from the Chicago area. She found that urban music educators were more racially and ethnically diverse than suburban music educators, had less education than suburban music educators, were younger and less experienced than suburban music educators, and were more likely to be female than suburban music educators. When compared to suburban participants, urban participants also reported lower job satisfaction, that the number of students they taught was unmanageable, felt that their careers were less rewarding, felt that they gained less from professional development, felt that they had less parental support, and felt that they spent more time on discipline.

Fitzpatrick's (2008) mixed methods study used a survey and participant interviews to investigate how instrumental music teachers navigated the urban landscape, in Chicago, specifically. Fitzpatrick's (2008) study revealed that teachers knew a great deal about the neighborhood, community, and schools in which they were teaching. They also believed that their specialized skill sets of "being creative with resources, . . . showing concern and care for students' lives outside of school, . . . [and] spending personal funds to help your students," were necessary (p. 266). Participants also indicated that a different set of challenges were presented in the urban teaching context when compared to the suburban, the greatest of which were the need for equipment, repair, funding, and administrative support. Participants revealed that showing care and concern

for students was extremely important, and that they defined success in their programs by the musical and personal growth of their students rather than their personal or program recognition (Fitzpatrick, 2008).

The urban music educators in Fitzpatrick's (2008) study believed that high expectations must be maintained, that often their classroom is a haven for students who may be avoiding struggles at home, and that the personal and musical success of their students was more important than their own recognition. Participants perceived the unique challenges of teaching in an urban setting to be the heightened need for funding, equipment, recruitment, and administrative support, particularly with class scheduling. Community struggles such as gangs, drugs, and violence often impacted their school and classroom environment as well. Of 22 areas investigated, 11 data points were found as important to urban music educators in both the qualitative and quantitative results:

1. Knowledge of urban students and their lives
2. Knowledge of students: English as a second language
3. Knowledge of community: Neighborhood history
4. Philosophy (focusing on the basics)
5. Creativity
6. Developing Relationships
7. Planning/Preparation (pedagogical skills)
8. Motivational Skills
9. Differences between urban and suburban contexts

10. Belief in students (regarding their potential for success)

11. Belief about the program as a haven

Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007) studied 25 secondary band programs in a large, urban Texas school district. Even among an entirely urban district, when grouping schools according to the proportion of students of color and socioeconomic status, there were some noticeable differences between the schools. For instance, 6.8% of band students in high economic schools were enrolled in private lessons, while only 0.52% of students in low economic schools were enrolled in private lessons. Schools with fewer economically disadvantaged students and/or a lower enrollment rate of students of color reported more financial resources, better facilities and equipment, more performance and travel opportunities, and more supportive and engaged parents than schools with more economically disadvantaged students and/or higher enrollment of students of color.

### **Summary of Urban Setting**

Urban students were more likely to come from lower income families and have difficulty speaking English than were suburban students (NCES, 1996). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1996), “urban educators report[ed] the growing challenges of educating urban youth who are increasingly presenting problems such as poverty, limited English proficiency, family instability, and poor health” (p. v). These issues also affected urban music programs that needed adequate funding and resources in addition to administrative support in order to be successful (Fitzpatrick, 2008).

## **Suburban Setting**

The United States Census Bureau defined suburban areas as urbanized clusters, with at least 2,500 people but less than 50,000 people. In 2010, there were 3,087 urban clusters in the United States, which contained 9.5% of the population (Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016).

### **Suburban Communities and Schools**

In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled in the *Brown vs. Board of Education* case that school segregation was unconstitutional. As schools became integrated, the phenomenon of White flight began as White families across America moved out of urban areas to the suburbs where schools had a less racially diverse population (Wolters, 2008). In recent years, suburban populations have continued to grow, but have slowly become more racially diverse (Duke, 2005; Welton, Diem, & Holme, 2015). Between 1999 and 2008, the number of low-income people living in the suburbs grew by 25%, and over half of racial minority groups resided in suburban areas, according to the 2010 Census. This increase of diversity also occurred in the public school systems (Welton et al., 2015).

Despite these changes, although suburban areas contained more students (13.5 million) than urban and rural areas combined (12.2 million), suburban schools were still primarily made up of White, middle to upper class students, and had fewer students eligible for free and reduced lunch (43%) than urban (63%) or rural (58%) schools. (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). Because schools are funded by taxes and property taxes and suburban residents were primarily of an upper-middle class to upper class socioeconomic status paying higher taxes, suburban schools have been better funded than

urban or rural schools where families are often from a lower socioeconomic status (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017).

There has been a perception that suburban schools are “better” than urban or rural schools, which has contributed to many teachers leaving urban schools to teach in suburban schools “. . . because of higher salaries, better working conditions, and smaller class sizes” (Lestch, 2014, p. 1). Reading test scores have also been higher in suburban schools than in urban or rural schools (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). Despite the seemingly “picture-perfect” state of suburban schools, Andrews (2011) suggested that perhaps the quality of suburban education is not what one would think, as indicated by the nearly \$4 billion tutoring industry centered in suburban areas. Although suburban schools were perceived to be better than urban or rural schools, Howard and Reynolds (2008) suggested that the benefits of a suburban education may not be afforded to all, as students of racial minorities were likely to “underachieve in comparison to their White counterparts” (p. 85).

In summary, after school integration occurred, many affluent White families moved to suburban areas, where the schools were less racially diverse and better funded. Although suburban schools have experienced an increase in enrollment of students who were racially, ethnically, and economically diverse, suburban schools were still primarily comprised of White middle to upper class students. Suburban schools reported higher reading test scores and higher teacher salaries than urban or rural areas (Lestch, 2014; Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017).

### **Suburban Music Education**

Fermanich (2011) investigated the available resources for music education in a large suburban school district, where resources referred to funds allocated by the district as well as funds raised by the schools through fundraising, fees, grants, and donations. Data were collected through administrative records, an online survey of principals and music teachers, and interviews. This school system reported that 25% of its students are of a racial or ethnic minority, and 25% of its students were eligible for free and reduced lunch. In 2008-2009, with over 70,000 students enrolled in the district and a budget of \$900 million, per student spending was almost \$9,000. Within that budget, \$13.9 million was spent on music programs; approximately 1.6% of the total operating budget of \$853 million. Based on district total student enrollment (not music course enrollment), the per student spending in music averaged \$187. In the same year, in addition to elementary students participating in mandatory general music courses, almost 22,000 students participated in secondary elective music courses, and 4,300 participated in elective elementary courses, employing 177 full time music educators including a music coordinator position at the central office. The salaries of these faculty members accounted for 85% of the music budget expenditures. Other spending categories (in order from largest amount spent to least amount spent) were instructional materials/supplies, miscellaneous, student transportation, contracted services, travel and mileage, other instruction, administration, instructional equipment, professional development, and instructional equipment maintenance and repair. The district in which this study was conducted had a low enrollment of students of racial or ethnic minorities and a low

enrollment of students from low socioeconomic families. While the study did not display comparative results from urban or rural environments, the categories of spending such as contracted services, professional development, and travel and mileage that went above and beyond the basics of music instruction indicated that the school system was well-funded and valued music education.

Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007) compared 25 band programs in Texas according to the enrollment of students of color and students of low socioeconomic status. Students with a higher socioeconomic status were more likely to study their instrument privately than students of a lower socioeconomic status. Directors in more affluent communities reported more parents being supportive and active in booster clubs, more access to technology, and better financial aid for students.

### **Summary of Suburban Setting**

In summary, racial diversity of suburban communities and schools have increased slowly in recent years, but the population in most suburban schools has remained predominantly White. The relationship between socioeconomic stability in the community and tax base support in the schools can be seen in the funding reported by Fermanich (2011), as well as the financial support reported by Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007). These studies indicated that suburban music education programs had similar demographics and availability of funds as their school and community settings.

### **Rural Setting**

“Rural settings are uniquely different from urban and suburban settings [due to] agrarian lifestyles, geographic isolation, the close-knit nature of the community,

homogeneous cultures, and fewer social complexities” (Burton, Brown, & Johnson, 2013, p. 5). The United States Census Bureau defined rural as “all population, housing, and territory not included within an urbanized area or urban cluster” (Ratcliffe, Burd, Holder, & Fields, 2016, p. 3). Rural areas made up 97% of the land area of the country, but only contained 19.3% of the population (Ratcliff et al., 2016).

### **Rural Communities and Schools**

Wuthnow (2013) interviewed more than 700 residents of American rural communities over a 5-year period, asking them about their experiences of living in a rural area. One of the themes found among the participants was that of community. Rural residents valued the sense of community that they shared with their neighbors, and often found identity in that community. They enjoyed knowing “everyone” and a slower pace of life (Wuthnow, 2013). Prendergrast (2018) indicated that rural schools had a strong sense of community and that teachers knew their students well.

Buckner (2010) examined the issues in rural K-12 public school districts in Missouri by surveying 135 superintendents in these school districts. The superintendents indicated the main issues their school systems face, ranked as follows:

1. District Funding
2. Student Achievement
3. Governmental Mandates
4. Socio-Economic Factors
5. Technology (Needs, Requirements, and Maintenance)
6. Facilities

7. Transportation
8. Community/Parental Involvement
9. Certified Staff
10. Curriculum
11. Board of Education
12. Principal(s)
13. Support Staff

District funding was overwhelmingly ranked as the biggest issue facing rural public school systems in Missouri (87%). Showalter et al. (2017) reported that nearly half (48.2%) of American rural students were eligible for free or reduced meals. Buckner (2010) noted that funding for school districts was primarily based on property and sales tax income, which was typically lower in rural areas than in urban and suburban areas. This idea was supported by Strange (2011), who stated, “The local property tax is the bane of most rural schools, especially those in low-wealth regions” (p. 10). Strange (2011) indicated that

in the 10% of rural and small-town districts with the highest rates of disadvantaged students, over 37% of the students live in poverty (about the same rate as the Bronx). Moreover, 59% of the 1.3 million students in those high-poverty rural districts are children of color—28% black, 23% Hispanic, and 8% Native American. If these high-poverty rural and small-town districts were one school district, it would be the largest, most racially diverse district in the nation. But they are not one district. They are a dispersed group of generally small districts (three-fourths have fewer than 2,000 students) mostly south of a line running roughly from Washington, D.C., through Cincinnati, Kansas City, Denver, and Sacramento. (p. 9)

The Lake View School District in Arkansas also had significant funding issues. In 1992, they had fewer than 200 students enrolled in grades K-12 with one math teacher instructing all high school math courses. This uncertified instructor only earned \$10,000 per year for teaching, plus an additional \$5,000 for driving a bus. In this particular teacher's classroom, there was no chalkboard, too few calculators and compasses, not enough electrical outlets, and inadequate computer and printing capabilities. The Lake View School District filed a claim that Arkansas's school funding processes were unconstitutional. Ten years later, the Arkansas Supreme Court ruled that the state's school funding system was inequitable, and since then the funding system has been overhauled, with high-needs districts receiving more funding. However, as part of the reform, the Governor of Arkansas and the Arkansas General Assembly mandated that any school districts with fewer than 350 students had to be closed, forcing the Lake View School District along with 56 others in the state to consolidate with larger districts (Strange, 2011).

Also impacting the amount of funding that rural school districts received were the federal policies governing the distribution of Title I funds. The purpose of Title I funds has been to provide additional money to districts and schools with the most students from low-income families. In order to determine which districts and schools to which these funds have been distributed, Congress looked at areas that have "higher concentrations" of students living in poverty. The term "higher concentration," however, could be meant as either a high percentage of low-income students or a high number of low-income students. For instance, a district may have had a seemingly high number of impoverished

students even if it was a low percentage of their overall student enrollment, and they would be allowed to report the higher of the two numbers. This means that smaller, more impoverished districts could have lost funding to districts that are larger and better-funded due to property taxes (Strange, 2011). According to Virginia's Fairfax County Public Schools (2018), their 2018-2019 enrollment was 188,018 students, with 11,281 (6%) of the students living in poverty. According to the Public School Review (2019), the Lee County, Virginia public schools' 2018-2019 enrollment was 3,297 students, with 1,088 (33%) of the students living in poverty. While the Lee County poverty rate was higher than the Fairfax County poverty rate (33% versus 6%), the number of students living in poverty in Fairfax County was much greater than that of Lee County (11,281 versus 1,088), thus illustrating that schools may choose to report the higher of the two numbers (poverty percentage or poverty population enrollment) in order to gain funds. Although Lee County had a higher percentage, Fairfax County had a higher enrollment number. This distribution process does not take into consideration, however that due to property tax rates, the Fairfax County school system was already better funded than the Lee County school system, so while the purpose of Title I funds were to help bridge the financial gap for schools serving students of a low socioeconomic status, the majority of funds may not have gone to the most impoverished schools.

Although Strange (2011) found that 59% of students living in high poverty rural areas were children of color, Showalter et al. (2017) indicated that rural schools as a whole were disproportionately White, as only 25.2% of American rural students were children of color. Tieken and Scruggs (2014) proposed that because many rural

communities, particularly in the south, were still divided by race, and because the schools were often the social center of the community, the school and the interactions that have taken place there can either cause further division or bridge the gap and bring communities together. Tieken and Scruggs (2014) stated that

rural schools can build bridges or walls. Schools matter to urban and suburban communities, too, but in rural communities across the country, they may matter more. (p. 138)

Many teachers in rural schools had pre-service teaching experience in urban and suburban schools, and unless they grew up in a rural area, they had little to no experience with the unique culture of rural communities and schools (McCracken & Miller, 1988). Burton and Johnson (2010) described the experiences of two novice elementary school teachers in the rural south. In addition to observing struggles that any beginning teacher would have, the subjects indicated that beginning their careers in a rural area made them feel like “outsiders” in a community where many close-knit relationships had already been formed. This contributed to feelings of isolation, both socially and professionally. Burton, Brown, and Johnson’s (2013) study also indicated that rural teachers were professionally isolated, due to geographical isolation and simply being far removed from resources, colleagues, and professional development. Although both teachers grew up in rural areas, they struggled to develop an identity as a rural educator because their pre-service education programs focused on urban and suburban settings (Burton & Johnson, 2010).

Ranked sixth in Buckner's (2010) list were facilities. Valvo (2015) conducted case study interviews with school board members about their decision-making process regarding building projects in a rural school district in New York. They noted that many rural school districts were plagued with buildings that were deteriorating or are otherwise inadequate, and there was limited funding for repairs, energy efficient upgrades, modifications for technology, or new facilities. Certified staff were ninth on Buckner's (2010) list, and Strange (2011) stated it simply: "the challenge of luring a teacher to a small, low-wealth rural community with limited amenities, poor housing, and few college-educated peers, and keeping that teacher there beyond the first beckoning from a better situated district, is simply daunting" (p. 14).

Strange (2011) stated that the high school dropout rate in rural areas (11%) was slightly higher than that in suburbs (9%), but lower than urban areas (13%). Jordan, Kostandini, and Mykerezi (2012) found that the dropout rates for high school students were similar in all regions, however the reasons given by students for dropping out in urban and rural areas were different. For example, students dropping out of rural high schools reported less isolation than those dropping out of urban schools. Additionally, students dropping out of rural schools often indicated that they chose to enter the work force rather than finish school, as rural areas often had industrial and/or agricultural jobs available to low-skilled workers.

In summary, the geographic isolation and homogeneous cultures of rural areas have often led to a strong sense of community in both the general population and the schools (Ratcliff et al. 2016; Winthrow, 2013). For rural teachers, however, this has led

to feelings of social and professional isolation when they are new to their communities (Burton & Johnson, 2010, 2013). Rural communities reported high poverty rates, pointing to funding as one of the biggest challenges for rural schools (Buckner, 2010; Strange, 2011;).

### **Rural Music Education**

Differing from urban and suburban music education, the role of community was essential in rural settings. Isbell (2005) indicated that “community dynamics play a major role in determining the duties of music educators” (p. 30) and that in many instances, rural music educators were asked to travel between multiple schools and/or teach subjects other than music. He suggested that the challenges that instrumental music programs often faced were insufficient resources, limited access to instruments, geographic isolation, low enrollment (which created instrumentation, repertoire, and scheduling problems), and inadequate rehearsal and/or performance space. These contributed to teacher burn-out and high teacher turnover rates, and the cycle continued. Isbell (2005) also pointed out that although challenging, teaching music in a rural area can be extremely rewarding because smaller programs allow one to develop relationships with students, and that many times, teaching in a rural school has less political red tape than larger school systems. These rewards were echoed in Prendergrast’s (2017) multiple case study of six rural music educators.

Isbell (2005) further reported that “rather than lamenting these difficult conditions, effective rural music teachers find ways to make small-town life work in their favor” (p. 30). For example, when enrollment was low, it could have been more

beneficial to have students perform chamber music according to their instrumentation or combine multiple classes or groups together to form one large ensemble rather than try to force a performance with too few students. If this created a wide range of ages, experiences, and/or ability levels, the more advanced students could remain engaged by helping mentor less experienced students. It may also be necessary to ask students to switch instruments in order to achieve appropriate instrumentation. Bates (2011b) and Corbett (2016) propose that the music of the culture of the community should be valued and offered in the school setting as opposed to just traditional large ensembles.

Understanding the community in which one teaches was also crucial to rural music teaching (Isbell, 2005). For students of farming families, “work on the farm sometimes takes priority over school” (Isbell, 2005, p. 34), which may be a foreign concept to a teacher with an urban or suburban background. In Wilcox’s (2005) ethnography of Stan Johnson’s experiences, Johnson indicated that students have “many irons in the fire . . . [as] most students are participating in all activities—speech, drama, Future Farmers of America, Future Business Leaders of America, athletics and music” (p. 28).

While not specific to rural music teaching, Albert (2006) outlined strategies for recruiting and retaining band students in low socioeconomic areas. Participants included three middle school band directors from low-income schools (more than 50% receiving free or reduced lunch) with high enrollment (25-30% of the school) in their programs, school administrators, and parents of children in their programs. Through observations, interviews, and field notes, Albert sought to answer three questions: (a) What strategies

do the teachers employ to recruit students?; (b) What strategies do the teachers employ to retain students?; and (c) Which of the strategies as identified in Research Questions 1 and 2 are suggested for teachers in similar low SES districts? Albert found that students needed early exposure to the band program, access to instruments, a culturally relevant ensemble, student ownership and a teacher with a clear understanding of student perceptions of their band program. Teacher personality, philosophical values, being proactive with planning and scheduling, a sense of family in the band, and affording unique activities and opportunities all played a role in student retention. Bates (2011b) echoed the need for culturally relevant ensembles, not only for recruitment and retention but for creating life long music makers. Participants believed that teacher quality, their expectations for their students, classroom management, and positive interactions with students also play a large role in the recruitment and retention of students. It was also determined that many teachers hold negative stereotypes about teaching in low income areas, and that they have strived to enter these teaching positions with an open mind (Albert, 2006).

Prendergrast (2017) conducted a multiple case study of six rural music educators, and the findings indicated that the participants' greatest challenges were low population density and isolation and the oppression of their students, many of whom lived in poverty. The participants had attended suburban schools themselves and felt that their undergraduate university experiences did not prepare them for rural teaching where they deal with limited resources and must know how to teach the whole student. Despite these challenges, the participants found their positions rewarding and enjoyed a strong sense of

community, strong relationships with students and their families, autonomy, and less red tape and easier access to administrators than in urban settings.

VanDeusen (2016) stated, “schools are often connected to their communities, and are often deeply cherished in rural communities. School music programs hold the potential to influence a small community’s identity” (p. 56). In her intrinsic case study of a rural school music program, VanDeusen (2016) explored the value of a rural school music program to its community, how the community and school administration supported this program, and how the music teacher perceived they were valued and supported. VanDeusen (2016) observed that “despite its rural location, susceptibility to economic disadvantage, and teacher transience, the secondary school music program was thriving” (p. 60). Through the coding of interviews with school administrators, teachers, music program parents, and music students as well as classroom observations, VanDeusen (2016) discovered three themes:

- (a) the presence of a music program tradition within the greater community, (b) the school district’s commitment to providing a comprehensive education to students, and (c) the music teacher’s interest in and openness to the community. (p. 63)

Members of the community and school were not only close knit because of deep roots in the area, but they were proud of the school’s historically strong music program. Participants reflected fondly on memories of being in or observing the program over the years. Recently, however, program enrollment has dwindled, which participants attributed to frequent music teacher turnover. One administrator stated “we’re averaging

about a three year stay since I've been here" (VanDeusen, 2016, p. 64), and further speculated that this was due to the isolation of their rural community.

If you're not from here, this is a difficult place to settle in. I think if you're not engaged or married, the pool is very small and there's not a lot here to do. So it lends itself to people starting here and then moving on, which hurts your program. (VanDeusen, 2016, p. 64)

A different administrator said that "bigger is viewed as better, I guess" (VanDeusen, 2016, p. 65), and that some teachers view their small, rural school as a stepping stone to a larger program.

The second theme revealed by VanDeusen (2016) was the commitment to providing students with a comprehensive education. Community members, school staff, and school administrators demonstrated their support of the music program by frequently attending performances and providing financial assistance, through both personal donations and allotment of school funds. School administrators also demonstrated their commitment to the music program by providing the curricular structure and advocacy that the program needed. The superintendent said,

You have to make sure . . . that the opportunities exist first and foremost. If we cut the music program, there's no opportunities there . . . We have to make sure the experiences are there for the students, and then you support it by speaking highly of it. (p. 67)

Another administrator noted the lack of opportunities in their area, and that music provided an outlet for kids, something to identify with, and travel opportunities that they otherwise would not have.

The music teacher in VanDeusen's (2016) study was noted by teachers, administrators, students, and parents as being a strong leader who was "energetic, enthusiastic, positive, and inclusive" (p. 70), focused on developing relationships with those around him. This helped him garner the trust and support of all parties involved, because

who wants a new guy who acts like he knows the place better than people who've been here for 40 years? I think Mr. Sanbar did a great job of easing his way into it and showing that he's a go-getter and that he wants this little town of Ellensburg to thrive. He sees the potential in all of us and wants us to push ourselves as far as we can go. (p. 69)

Music education has been noted as challenging due to geographic isolation, limited financial resources, and sometimes poor instrumentation; however, creative solutions to these challenges have been presented. Student recruitment and retention have benefitted from the establishment of culturally relevant ensembles (Bates, 2011a), and rearranging musical parts as well as the establishment of student mentors have aided in ensembles with poor instrumentation and/or varying ability levels (Isbell, 2005). Despite these challenges, rural music educators noted that they have had easier access to their administrators and have dealt with less red tape than in rural settings than in urban settings. Being part of a community and having developed close relationships with students and their families were also noted as being crucial for success (VanDeusen, 2016) as well as rewards (Isbell, 2005; Prendergrast, 2017, 2018).

### **Summary of Rural Setting**

Rural communities and schools were disproportionately White, and rural students often came from families of a lower socioeconomic status (Showalter et al., 2017). Teachers have noted geographic isolation and limited financial resources as challenges (Isbell, 2005; Prendergrast, 2018), which can lead to frequent teacher turnover (VanDeusen, 2016), but these challenges have not been insurmountable. The sense of community in rural areas and the ability to develop close relationships with students have been extremely rewarding to rural music educators, and helped them find success in their programs (Isbell, 2005; Prendergrast, 2018; VanDeusen, 2016).

### **Preparing Rural Music Educators**

Very little has been written about teaching instrumental music in rural areas, or more specifically about training rural music educators, but much of what exists has been authored by Vincent Bates. Bates attended rural schools throughout his K-12 education, then spent 12 years teaching in rural Utah before moving into higher education. In some of his articles he shared his opinions based on his experiences and proposed that the standard of having traditional performance ensembles (band, orchestra, choir) as the sole opportunity for students to participate in music education was based on a suburban ideal and may be in fact doing a disservice to rural students (Bates, 2011a).

In Bates's (2011a) experience, urban and suburban schools were larger than rural schools with more students to serve as potential ensemble members. Suburban students were likely to come from homes with higher incomes than students in rural areas, which granted them more access to instruments and private lessons. Music educators in rural

areas were often asked to teach outside of their subject area in order to fill their schedule, or to teach in multiple schools. These teachers also likely felt isolated if they were the only music teacher in their schools. The expectation that they had for their performing ensembles to perform on par with those of suburban areas although there were more limitations may not be appropriate.

Because of these circumstances, there was a perceived hierarchy in the profession where rural schools were considered an entry level job, and a “bigger and better” school was supposed to be a music educator’s ultimate goal (Bates, 2011a; VanDeusen, 2016). Bates (2016) proposes that both music education and society at large are urbanormative; in that the urban way of life is the best way of life, and is the “ideal of sophistication, cosmopolitanism, and refinement” (p. 161), setting the standard for which rural communities should aspire to be. He adds that “there is nothing inherently superior about the cultural values and practices of the privileged” (p. 165). A participant in Prendergrast’s (2018) study echoed these sentiments:

Universities should do a better job of explaining the BENEFITS of teaching in rural schools . . . I wish that university advisors would stop telling music education students that “you get a job in a small school to get some experience and then go get the job you really want.” What’s wrong with blooming where you’re planted? (p. 1)

Pre-service music educators needed to be empowered to know the school and community in which they taught, and the music ensembles most culturally appropriate for their students. For instance, a guitar class may have been more accessible and interesting to students, thereby providing more students with a music education than the traditional

ensemble performance model. Certainly students in rural areas were capable of meeting and should be held to high standards, but those standards needed to be attainable and relevant to them (Bates, 2011a, 2016). Prest (2013) agrees:

[an] aesthetic music education philosophy, which undergirds many current music teacher education programs, textbooks, practices, and networks, fosters assumptions that are not applicable to rural settings . . . [and] suggest[ed] that music teacher education curricula adopt a paraxial music education orientation that will assist music teacher candidates to comprehend . . . the importance of developing relationships and networks, and the vital role of community in rural education. (p. 1)

Although this article contained valuable information on rural education in British Columbia, it is unknown how similar rural communities in British Columbia were to rural communities in the United States.

Hunt (2009) stated that “the higher education community should accept the responsibility to better prepare pre-service music teachers for the realities of urban and rural music programs by understanding the perspectives of music teachers, administrators, and parents from those environments” (p. 35). Prendergrast (2017) indicated that many music educators come from a suburban K-12 school experience themselves, and Kelly (2003) found that pre-service music educators were more likely to enter teaching positions similar to music programs that they experienced rather than unfamiliar situations. Emmanuel (2003) suggested that music education students should have field experiences in various settings in order to develop “intercultural competence” (p. 33). Prendergrast’s (2018) findings summed up some of the changes needed in rural music teacher preparation nicely:

Many participants wish their teacher education programs had better prepared them for budget constraints, teaching many different types of music classes and wearing many hats, finding literature for ensemble with limited instrumentation and/or mixed abilities in the same room, and the interpersonal realities of rural education (p. 1).

### **Summary**

When examining rural, urban, and suburban areas and school systems, suburban communities and schools are an entity of their own. However, there were some similarities between the rural and urban communities and schools, such as serving student populations typically of a low socioeconomic status, limited resources within the school system, and lower test scores than suburban students (Logan & Burdick-Will, 2017). Howard and Reynolds (2008) stated that “under-qualified teachers, deteriorating and overcrowded schools, inadequate learning materials, high administrator and teacher turnover . . . have become far too commonplace in many urban and rural schools” (p. 81). Lichter and Brown (2011) also reported that both rural and urban students often experienced high poverty rates, but that rural schools were disproportionately White, while urban schools disproportionately served students of color (Rubel & Chu, 2012). Regardless of location, students in high poverty schools were less likely to feel safe or complete homework than students in low poverty schools (NCES 1996). Although “American public schools remain highly segregated despite major changes in the 1970s” (Logan & Burdick, 2017, p. 2), Lichter, Parisi, and Taquino (2018) indicated that in the last 30 years, rural America has become more diverse.

Both urban and rural music educators indicated that their teaching positions required specialized skills and that their undergraduate university experiences largely did

not prepare them for the urban and rural settings (Fitzpatrick, 2008; Prendergrast, 2017, 2018). Urban and rural music educators cited limited funding as one of their largest challenges (Fitzpatrick, 2008; Prendergrast, 2017), but suburban music programs appeared to be better funded (Fermanich, 2011).

Although there were challenges in rural music education, those challenges can be overcome through appropriate curricular offerings (Bates, 2011a) and building relationships with teachers, students, parents, and administrators to garner support (VanDeusen, 2016).

### CHAPTER III

#### METHOD

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

Four research questions were included in the study: (1) What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach? (2) What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting? (3) What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools? (4) What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment? The survey used for the current descriptive study was a modification of the quantitative survey that was used in Fitzpatrick's (2008) study, *A Mixed Methods Portrait of Urban Instrumental Music Teaching*. Henceforth, the survey will be referred to as Fitzpatrick's Tool.

What follows are descriptions of the study design, Fitzpatrick's Tool, and the development of each phase of the current study and its execution. For the purposes of this study and for clarity, each of these three phases will be referred to as Phase 1: Focus Group, Phase 2: Pilot, and Phase 3: Survey Administration. Although Phase 1: Focus Group and Phase 2: Pilot were necessary in order to modify Fitzpatrick's Tool, Phase 3: Survey Administration is the primary focus of this study.

### **Study Design**

This is a descriptive research study. "The goal of descriptive research is to describe a phenomenon and its characteristics. This research is more concerned with what rather than the how or why something has happened" (Nassaji, 2015, p. 129). Because the literature related to music education in rural areas was so limited, I used a survey in order to describe the setting and experiences of rural instrumental music educators in North Carolina.

By limiting the study to North Carolina, more focused results were yielded, as rural communities, schools, and instrumental music education programs in North Carolina varied from those in other states and regions of the country. In order to produce results related specifically to instrumental music education, general music and choral programs were not part of this study. Instrumental programs require much more equipment to operate than choral or general music programs do, such as instruments, music stands, and marching band uniforms in some cases. This makes the operational budgets and logistical management of instrumental programs very different than those of general music and choral programs.

### **Fitzpatrick's Tool**

The survey in the current study was modified from the survey portion of Fitzpatrick's (2008) study *A Mixed Methods Portrait of Urban Instrumental Music Teaching*. Fitzpatrick's (2008) quantitative survey provided "a broad portrait of the experiences of Chicago Public School instrumental music teachers as a whole" (p. 113). Fitzpatrick followed up with qualitative research in order to enhance the findings from the survey, resulting in a mixed methods study. Fitzpatrick's Tool was 99 questions, grouped by type of response, such as open ended or multiple-choice.

### **Survey Development**

#### **Phase 1: Focus Group**

Phase one of the current study was a focus group virtual meeting of rural instrumental music teachers. Because there was a shortage of data regarding instrumental music education in rural areas and no extant survey instrument developed exploring this subject, a focus group was needed to refine and modify Fitzpatrick's Tool for use in the rural context. The focus group members were eight (five males, three females) rural instrumental music educators from across North Carolina whose overall teaching experience ranged from 5 to 21 years, and their rural teaching experience ranged from 2 to 13 years. The survey draft for the current study was an adaptation of Fitzpatrick's Tool, in that all instances of the word "urban" were changed to "rural," and it was presented in Word™ document form (see Appendix C). Participants were asked to provide feedback on the drafted survey itself and complete a Google™ form responding to the following:

- Name
- Age
- Total Number of Years of Teaching Experience
- Total Number of Years of Teaching Experiences in a Rural Area
- Courses Taught
- Self Perception Rating of Their Success as a Teacher in a Rural Area
- Self Perception Rating of the Success of the Instrumental Music Program
- Extent to Which They Are Satisfied with Teaching in a Rural Setting
- Description of the Community in Which They Teach
- What Styles of Music Their Students Prefer
- What Musical Experiences Their Students Participate in Outside of School
- How They Feel About Teaching Instrumental Music in a Rural School
- If They Had it To Do Again, Would They Elect to Teach in a Rural Area or Elsewhere
- What are the Most Challenging Parts of Teaching in a Rural School
- What are the Most Rewarding Parts of Teaching in a Rural School
- What They Hope Their Students Will Gain from Their School Music Experiences
- If Teaching in an Urban or Suburban School, What They Might Do Differently
- Their Opinion of the Survey Draft

The themes that emerged from focus group participants' responses were used to further shape the survey instrument for use in Phase 2: Pilot and Phase 3: Survey Administration, as were their comments about the survey draft.

### **Changes Made Before Phase 2: Pilot**

Before implementing Phase 2: Pilot, the survey draft was transferred to an online format using the Internet software Survey Monkey™. Using online surveys to conduct research has gained popularity because online surveys allow researchers to collect more information and reduce costs when compared to paper surveys sent via mail (Koerner, 2017). Although using mailed surveys can elicit a better response rate, an electronic format was used for the current study to reduce costs and allow for faster distribution of surveys (Kroener, 2017).

In addition to transferring the assessment tool to an online format, the comments and feedback from the focus group participants were used to make further adjustments. One of the changes made to the survey based on focus group participant feedback was related to how courses were listed. When focus group participants were asked about which courses they taught, the band courses were organized by grade into sixth-grade band, seventh-grade band, eighth-grade band, and high school, while “orchestra” was not broken into grade level. When converting the survey to digital format, the orchestra grade categories reflected those of the band. A participant suggested that chorus be included in the list of courses potentially taught because music educators in rural areas often teach both instrumental music and chorus, but that change was not made because the focus of this study was instrumental music.

Two questions were added to the survey. The first question asked participants to indicate the percentage of students who attended college after high school. In the second question participants were asked for the percentage of students who continued playing

their instrument in college, regardless of major. These questions were added because when participants were asked, “What are the most important things you hope your students will gain from their school music experiences?” four of the eight participants expressed a desire to see students continue in music beyond their programs.

After further review and reflection, I elected to make additional changes to add clarity to the instrument. Question 88 was rephrased from “During an average year approximately how many rehearsals will you lose due to district testing and test preparation?” to “During an average year approximately what percentage of rehearsals will you lose due to district testing and test preparation?” Due to varying school schedules, the number of rehearsals an ensemble held each year varied widely, therefore determining the number of rehearsals missed due to testing and test preparation would not have been informative. A similar change was made to question 92, such that the survey item was modified to ask what percent of graduating seniors major in music in college rather than a specific quantity.

Lastly, I chose to add a third independent variable related to research question two. Research question two was “What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?” Participants were asked to rate the importance of each skill on a given list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) using a Likert-type scale, where 1 = *extremely unimportant*, 2 = *unimportant*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *important*, and 5 = *extremely important*. In Fitzpatrick’s (2008) study, all participants were music educators in an urban context, the Chicago Public Schools, and they were asked to rate the importance of the skills in both urban and suburban contexts, but not rural. In the current study, rural music

educators were asked to rate the skills according to rural, urban, and suburban contexts. Because pre-service teachers need to be prepared to teach in any context, a comparison of the importance of the given skills in all three teaching contexts was desired.

### **Phase 2: Pilot**

Phase two was a pilot administration of the newly revised survey in an online format using Survey Monkey™. Of the 23 rural instrumental music educators in Georgia that received the survey, 13 responded. In addition to completing the survey, they were asked to provide feedback on the survey via email, indicating questions that needed rewording or errors that were found.

### **Changes Made Before Phase 3: Survey Administration**

Based on the feedback from Phase 2: Pilot participants, several changes were made to the survey before Phase 3: Survey Administration. Two different questions, 16 and 51 were deleted because they had been mistakenly duplicated. For the questions related to student participation after high school, the phrase “If you teach high school ...” was added to the beginning of those questions, and “not applicable” was added to the list of possible responses for those who taught middle school. Also, a question was added that asked middle school directors what percent of their students continued instrumental ensemble participation in high school. This question was designed to examine student participation levels in band in high school.

A question was added about whether participants were required to teach at multiple schools. Some participants indicated that they taught at more than one school but were not asked about it in the previous iteration of the survey. After further consideration,

a question was added about the distance from the participants' school to the nearest university that offered a music degree. It was hoped that the results would provide further context and description of the settings of the participants' schools. Also, the proximity of nearby universities could be related to other existing survey questions about participant relationships with area university professors and university music education professors' understanding of the rural setting.

At the recommendation of my colleagues and mentors, Qualtrics™ was utilized for the administration of the survey rather than Survey Monkey™. Access to Qualtrics™ was made available through my university and the software also seemed to be a better fit for data analysis. To make the survey more user friendly, questions were grouped in sections (or “blocks” as Qualtrics™ referred to them), according to similarity in question topic rather than by which research question was being addressed. For example, all of the questions dealing with school and community demographics and information were grouped together. In the case of research question one (contextual knowledge), there were several questions regarding teacher demographics that were grouped together in one block, while questions regarding the contextual knowledge of the music program itself were grouped together in a different block. Each block was contained on one “page” of the website, at the bottom of which the participant had to click “next” in order to proceed to the next page/block. There were ten blocks in all. Table 2 shows the block categories and which research questions were addressed in each.

Table 2

## Survey Question Groupings and Research Questions Addressed

<b>Block</b>	<b>Topic of Grouping</b>	<b>Research Question(s) Addressed</b>
1	Teacher Demographics	Descriptive Information, 1, 3
2	School, Community, Program Demographics	1, 4
3	Music Program and Undergraduate Experience	Descriptive, 3, 4
4	Necessary Skills - Rural	2
5	Necessary Skills - Suburban	2
6	Necessary Skills - Urban	2
7	Beliefs About School, Program, Self, and Students	2, 3
8	Attitudes About Program, Self, and Students	3
9	Music Program Participation	Descriptive Information, 1
10	Challenges and Rewards	4

**Phase 3: Survey Administration**

Finally, in Phase 3: Survey Administration, necessary permissions were obtained from the Institutional Review Board of The University of North Carolina at Greensboro and from rural school districts in North Carolina whose teachers were surveyed. The Internet was used to find the email addresses of potential participants. The websites for each of the school systems that granted permission to solicit responses from their secondary music educators were searched to find the band and/or orchestra director's name(s) and school system email address(es). Finally, the updated survey was administered. What follows is a complete description of Phase 3: Survey Administration.

### **Final Design of Survey and Statistical Treatment of Data**

The anonymous survey (Appendix A) consisted of 68 questions that took approximately 20 minutes to complete online via Qualtrics™. There were 25 multiple-choice questions, 38 Likert-type questions, and 5 open-ended questions. Each survey question was used to gain an understanding of one of the four research questions:

1. What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?
2. What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?
3. What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?
4. What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

Appendix B shows how each research question and each survey item are related, along with how the data from each item were statistically treated.

For open-ended questions, content analysis was used to find emergent themes in the responses. According to Drisko and Maschi (2017), “researchers can use content analysis to identify and document the attitudes, views, and interests of individuals, small groups, or large and diverse cultural groups” (p. 3). Basic content analysis uses word counts or other quantitative analytic techniques to determine the importance of the subject (Drisko & Maschi, 2015; Neuendorf, 2017). After printing the open-ended responses, each response was read, and the main idea(s) within each statement was

circled. In some cases, one-word responses were given, such as “funding,” which made identifying key words very clear. When phrases or sentences were given, the main subject of the phrase was used as the key word. Key words repeated by participants emerged as themes. After themes/categories were established, all responses were read again in order to tally the number of responses that pertained to each category. This process was completed three times to ensure consistent results (Drisko & Maschi, 2015).

### **Securing Permissions**

Permission was requested from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at The University of North Carolina Greensboro to conduct all three phases of the study. The IRB determined that seeking school system permissions to conduct Phase 1: Focus Group and Phase 2: Pilot was unnecessary because participation was voluntary and personal email addresses were used to contact teachers directly rather than school system email accounts. Phase 3: Survey Administration was also optional, however, the IRB required written consent from each school district prior to contacting potential participants because it was necessary to use school resources to contact potential participants.

The Internet was used to collect email addresses for each of the superintendents of school systems in the 80 rural North Carolina counties. The superintendent of each school system was then contacted, and permission was requested to contact the secondary instrumental music teachers in their district in order to solicit participation in the study. In some cases, superintendents remained the point of contact for that school system, and in other cases, a superintendent appointed a designee (e.g., assistant superintendent, arts coordinator, research program coordinator). Superintendents or their designees were

made aware of the survey purpose and process through a Survey Recruitment Form (Appendix D) and a Consent Form (Appendix E) that would be sent to secondary instrumental music teachers upon their approval. Superintendents or their designees were asked to respond, expressing their permission to proceed with soliciting participation from secondary instrumental music teachers in their school system.

### **Participants**

Initially, all of the approximately 450 secondary band or orchestra teachers in the 80 rural North Carolina counties were considered to be the potential participant pool. This pool became increasingly limited, however, as only 37 counties granted permission for me to contact their secondary instrumental music teachers. In some cases, permission was granted immediately while others asked follow-up questions or required that additional paperwork specific to their school system be completed. Of the 43 who did not grant permission, one responded to deny permission, while the others simply did not respond.

The Internet was employed to find the school system email addresses of band and orchestra teachers at each of the secondary schools in the 37 school systems that granted permission. The Survey Recruitment Form, Consent Form, and link to the survey were then sent to 201 eligible participants on Monday, April 16, 2018 with a requested completion date of Monday, May 7, 2018. A reminder email was sent to all eligible participants again one week before the deadline, on Monday, April 30, 2018. The survey was sent in April because it would fall after the hectic “contest season” of February and March, but before the busy end of year concert and testing season in May. The initial

intent was to email the survey link on April 1, 2018, so that the three-week timeline would likely fall over teachers' spring breaks, with the hope that they would have more free time in order to participate. The survey invitation was delayed, however, because the process for securing permissions from school systems took longer than expected.

The survey was sent to 201 potential participants, and there were 62 respondents, ( $N = 62$ ) signifying a 31% response rate. There were eight participants who only completed the descriptive demographic information but did not go any further in the survey, so their responses were deleted. The subsequent response rate was 27% ( $N = 55$ ). Some participants chose not to respond to every question. Thus, surveys that contained responses to demographic information and any number of survey items related to research questions were kept even if the survey was not completed.

### **Establishing Validity and Reliability**

The survey instrument was a modification of Fitzpatrick's Tool, which was established as both valid and reliable (Fitzpatrick, 2008). Fitzpatrick facilitated a focus group discussion, which was then transcribed and coded. Her survey was developed from the themes that emerged from this focus group discussion, then it was pilot tested as a means of establishing validity and reliability. After revisions based on the pilot study, Fitzpatrick's Tool was administered. A Cronbach's alpha was calculated and produced an alpha coefficient of .85.

The modified survey for the current study was presented to a focus group, modified for clarity, piloted, and modified again in order to establish content validity prior to administration. To establish reliability, Cronbach's alpha was used. The raw

alpha score was 0.88 and the standardized alpha score was .90. These high alpha coefficients for both the raw and standardized variables show that the scale and questions were acceptable and internally consistent.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **RESULTS**

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

This chapter presents the results from the descriptive survey administered in Phase 3: Survey Administration. The anonymous survey (Appendix A) consisted of 68 questions that took approximately 20 minutes to complete online via Qualtrics™. There were 25 multiple-choice questions; 38 used a Likert-type scale, and five were open-ended questions. Each survey question was used to gain an understanding of one of the four research questions:

1. What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?
2. What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?

3. What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?
4. What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

Appendix B includes how each research question and each survey item were related, as well as how the data from each item were statistically treated (primarily range, mean, and standard deviation). Following a description of the survey participants, the results are presented, grouped according to the research questions.

### **Participants**

The survey was sent to 201 potential participants, and there were 62 respondents, ( $N = 62$ ) signifying a 31% response rate. There were eight participants who only completed the descriptive demographic information but did not go any further in the survey, so their responses were deleted. The subsequent response rate was 27% ( $N = 55$ ). Some participants chose not to respond to every question. Thus, surveys that contained responses to demographic information and any number of survey items related to research questions were kept even if the survey was not completed.

The participants represented a broad range of ages (18-64) and years of teaching experience (1-31+) but were not a very racially or ethnically diverse group as 90% of participants identified themselves as White or Caucasian. Other participant demographic information collected include as K-12 school attendance contexts, years of teaching experience, and whether they taught in multiple schools (Table 3).

Participants who taught in a geographically rural area were eligible to participate in this survey. To provide further context, participants were asked to indicate the distance between their school and the nearest college or university that offered a music degree. The majority of participants were 26–50 miles from a college or university that offers a music degree ( $n = 19$ ; 37.25%). Others were less than 25 miles away ( $n = 18$ ; 37.25%), 21.57% ( $n=11$ ) were 51-75 miles away, and 5.88% ( $n=3$ ) were 76-100 miles away.

Table 3

Participant Demographics ( $N=62$ )

Demographic	$n$ (%)
Gender	
Male	34 (61.82)
Female	21 (38.18)
Age	
18-24	1 (1.82)
25-34	32 (58.18)
35-44	17 (30.91)
45-54	4 (7.27)
55-64	1 (1.82)
65-74	0 (0.0)
75 +	0 (0.0)
Prefer not to answer	0 (0.0)
Race	
N/A	2 (3.64)
Asian / White	1 (1.82)
Hispanic	1 (1.82)
Latina/Middle Eastern	1 (1.82)
White or Caucasian	50 (90.91)
Type of K-12 School Attended	
Urban	6 (10.91)
Suburban	21 (38.18)
Rural	28 (50.91)

Table 3

Cont.

Demographic	<i>n</i> (%)
<b>Total Years of Teaching Experience</b>	
1-5	14 (25.45)
6-10	14 (25.45)
11-15	14 (25.45)
16-20	7 (12.73)
21-25	4 (7.27)
26-30	2 (3.64)
31+	0 (0.0)
<b>Years of Rural Teaching Experience</b>	
1-5	20 (36.36)
6-10	14 (25.45)
11-15	11 (20)
16-20	6 (10.91)
21-25	4 (7.27)
26-30	0 (0.0)
31+	0 (0.0)
<b>Years of Urban Teaching Experience</b>	
0	41 (74.55)
1-5	12 (21.82)
6-10	2 (3.64)
11-15	0 (0.0)
16-20	0 (0.0)
21-25	0 (0.0)
26-30	0 (0.0)
31+	0 (0.0)
<b>Years of Suburban Teaching Experience</b>	
0	38 (69.09)
1-5	11 (20)
6-10	4 (7.27)
11-15	1 (1.82)
16-20	1 (1.82)
21-25	0 (0.0)
26-30	0 (0.0)
31+	0 (0.0)
<b>Teach in More Than One School</b>	
Yes	6 (10.9)
No	49 (89.1)

Participants were asked about which courses they taught, and the majority reported teaching band at either the middle or high school level and 12 participants reported teaching orchestra (Table 4). It should be noted that only five of the 37 counties that granted permission to conduct this study had an orchestra program. Seven participants (11.3%) taught choir in addition to instrumental music, and several taught music courses other than performing ensembles. Only two participants (3.2%) reported teaching courses that were not related to music; Theater Technology and Successful Reading Comprehension.

Table 4

## Grade Levels and Courses Taught by Participants with Enrollment

Course Taught	Participants Teaching Course <i>n</i> (%)	Course Enrollment (Range)	Course Enrollment ( <i>M</i> )
Sixth-Grade Band	24 (38.9)	20–70	42.1
Seventh-Grade Band	23 (36.5)	14–70	39.1
Eighth-Grade Band	23 (36.5)	12–60	30.2
Advanced Concert Band (High School)	20 (31.7)	10–72	30.2
Beginner/Intermediate Concert Band (High School)	18 (28.6)	5–60	32.9
Marching Band	27 (42.9)	16–92	49.9
Jazz Band	25 (39.7)	11–50	20.6
Sixth-Grade Orchestra	8 (12.7)	10–45	26.2
Seventh-Grade Orchestra	8 (12.7)	12–36	21.2
Eighth-Grade Orchestra	8 (12.7)	5–26	15.4
Top Orchestra (High School)	4 (6.3)	31–34	32.5
Bottom Orchestra (High School)	4 (6.3)	24–26	25
General Music	8 (12.7)	15–154	60.9
Music Technology	1 (1.6)	4	4
Music Theory	8 (12.7)	5–9	7.5

Table 4

Cont.

Course Taught	Participants Teaching Course <i>n</i> (%)	Course Enrollment (Range)	Course Enrollment ( <i>M</i> )
Other (see below)			
Fifth-Grade Band	1 (1.6)	35	35
Fifth-Grade Orchestra	1 (1.6)	35	35
Choir	10 (11.3)	15-100	33.4
Color Guard	1 (1.6)	10	10
Guitar Class	2 (3.2)	30-60	45
Music Appreciation	1 (1.6)	24	24
Musical Theater	1 (1.6)	13	13
Percussion Ensemble	2 (3.2)	13-15	14
Piano Lab	1 (1.6)	15	15
Successful Reading Comprehension	1 (1.6)	25	25
Theatre Technology	1 (1.6)	35	35

For further context and description, participants were also asked to estimate the number of students that continued to study an instrument after leaving their programs, what percent attend a community college or university beyond high school, and what percentage majored in music (Table 5).

Table 5

## Student Instrumental Music Participation after Leaving Participants' Program

	Middle School Students Continue Playing in High School ( <i>n</i> )	High School Students Attend Community College or University ( <i>n</i> )	High School Students Continue Playing in College or Community Groups ( <i>n</i> )	High School Students Major in Music ( <i>n</i> )
<i>N</i>	29	25	25	25
0-10%	2	0	8	24
11-20%	1	2	5	1
21-30%	3	1	5	0
31-40%	1	4	3	0
41-50%	3	2	1	0
51-60%	6	1	1	0
61-70%	6	5	1	0
71-80%	3	5	1	0
81-90%	2	3	0	0
91-100%	2	2	0	0

**Research Question 1: Contextual Knowledge**

In addition to demographic and descriptive information, participants were asked to share the contextual knowledge they had related to their schools and communities. Likert-type scale survey items were used, and participants were asked to rate each statement on a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 = *not at all*, 3 = *somewhat*, and 5 = *to the maximum extent*. For survey questions related to research question one, the mean and standard deviation were established.

The majority of participants ( $n = 35$ ; 63.64%) reported living in a different neighborhood or community than the one in which they taught. Most ( $n = 42$ ; 76.36%),

however, reported that to some extent they knew about the history of the community in which they taught. The mean response was 3.18 with a standard deviation of .96, indicating that participants felt that they had a moderate knowledge of their school community history, although most of them lived in different communities. Participants were also asked to what extent violence, drugs, and gangs were an issue in the neighborhood in which their school was located (Table 6).

Table 6

## Violence, Drugs, and Gangs in Participants' School Communities

School Community Issues	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Violence	2.20	.88
Drugs	2.85	.84
Gangs	1.96	.85

When asked to what extent their students' use of language other than English presented a challenge to them, the mean response was 1.73 with a standard deviation of .90, revealing that most of the respondents did not believe that they struggled with English communication with their students. Sixty-seven percent of respondents reported being the same race as most of their students. Those who were of a different race than their student majority race provided varied responses as to what extent this presented a challenge for them (Table 7).

Table 7

Frequencies and Percentages of Level of Challenge Presented When Teachers' Race Differed from Majority Student Race

Level of Challenge	<i>n</i> (%)
No challenge	5 (9.4)
Not much of a challenge	9 (16.9)
Neutral	4 (7.5)
Somewhat of a challenge	8 (15.1)
A great challenge	2 (3.8)
Does not apply to me	25 (47.2)

Seventy percent of participants ( $n = 38$ ) reported that more than half of the students in their schools were eligible for free and reduced lunch. Participants compared the socioeconomic levels of the students in their music programs to the socioeconomic status of their schools and communities using a Likert-type Scale with 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *to the maximum extent*. The socioeconomic levels of the students in their music programs somewhat mirror those of the school ( $M = 3.55$ ,  $SD = .85$ ) and the community at large ( $M = 3.49$ ,  $SD = .85$ ).

Participants were asked about the amount of parental involvement in their music program; the majority ( $n = 41$ ; 85.42%) responded that less than 20% of parents were regularly involved. When asked to select all that apply from a list of possible reasons that parents were not involved in the program, "working several jobs" was the most commonly selected reason ( $n = 41$ ; 24.4%). This was followed closely by "they are taking care of several other children" ( $n = 37$ ; 22.02%). "Experiencing personal

difficulties” ( $n = 29$ ; 17.26%), “they do not understand the value of the music program” ( $n = 28$ ; 16.67%), and “they do not speak English” ( $n = 20$ ; 11.9%) were also selected. Twelve participants listed “other” as a response, and gave specific reasons such as laziness, over-commitment elsewhere, not being involved in their children’s lives, and disinterest.

### **Research Question 2: Specialized Skills**

To understand which of the 15 skills investigated by Fitzpatrick (2008) were perceived as most important for rural music teachers, urban music teachers, and suburban music teachers, participants rated these skills using a Likert-type scale from one to five, where 1 = *extremely unimportant*, 2 = *unimportant*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *important*, and 5 = *extremely important* (Table 8). It is important to note that while all of the survey participants had rural teaching experience, only 20 participants (36%) had urban and/or suburban experience. In addition to rural teaching experience, four participants (7%) had urban experience, eight (14.5%) had suburban experience, and eight (14.5%) had urban and suburban experience. For the 35 participants who completed the urban/suburban skill rating questions that only had rural teaching experience, their responses were largely speculative and based on their perception only.

To determine if there was any statistically significant difference between the perceived skills necessary in urban, suburban, and rural areas, a Kruskal-Wallis test was performed. Fitzpatrick (2008) performed a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test; however, she was comparing two samples: urban to suburban areas. Because a Wilcoxon test would not allow for three data sets with a varying number of respondents in each set, the Kruskal-

Wallis test was used to analyze the teachers' ratings of the skills necessary in urban, suburban, and rural settings to determine if statistical differences existed. An alpha level of .05 was determined *a priori*. Seven of the 15 indicators were significantly different: (1) being creative with the resources you are given, (2) developing relationships with your students, (3) demonstrating love for your students, (4) showing concern and care for students' lives outside of school, (5) demonstrating respect for students, (6) spending personal funds to help students, and (7) getting students to buy into your program (see Table 8).

Table 8

## Importance of Skills in the Given Teaching Context

Importance of Skill	Area	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>
Strong work ethic	Rural	49	4.63	.48	.2187
	Suburban	45	4.29	.91	
	Urban	45	4.60	.65	
Providing a sufficient challenge	Rural	49	4.16	.58	1.000
	Suburban	44	4.45	.75	
	Urban	45	4.20	.72	
Focusing on the basics	Rural	49	4.55	.57	.1081
	Suburban	55	4.16	.84	
	Urban	55	4.36	.70	
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing instruments	Rural	49	4.37	.60	.4916
	Suburban	55	4.13	.93	
	Urban	55	4.38	.77	
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	Rural	49	4.49	.70	.3135
	Suburban	55	4.27	.88	
	Urban	55	4.53	.78	

Table 8

Cont.

Importance of Skill	Area	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	Rural	49	4.16	.71	.2155
	Suburban	44	4.30	.84	
	Urban	45	4.42	.75	
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with needs of the program	Rural	49	3.86	.83	.1818
	Suburban	45	4.09	.89	
	Urban	45	4.18	.77	
Being creative with resources that you are given	Rural	49	4.59	.60	.0005*
	Suburban	45	3.78	.99	
	Urban	44	4.25	.93	
Developing relationships with your students	Rural	49	4.88	.33	.0176*
	Suburban	45	4.42	.71	
	Urban	45	4.60	.65	
Demonstrating love for your students	Rural	49	4.65	.56	.0146*
	Suburban	45	4.16	.79	
	Urban	45	4.50	.75	
Showing concern and care for students' lives outside of school	Rural	49	4.59	.60	.0166*
	Suburban	45	4.13	.83	
	Urban	45	4.56	.68	
Demonstrating respect for students	Rural	49	4.84	.42	.0225*
	Suburban	45	4.42	.68	
	Urban	45	4.67	.63	
Spending personal funds to help your students	Rural	49	3.33	1.06	.0195*
	Suburban	45	2.71	1.17	
	Urban	45	3.36	1.30	
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	Rural	49	4.37	.72	.075
	Suburban	45	3.93	.90	
	Urban	45	4.24	.92	

Table 8

Cont.

Importance of Skill	Area	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>p</i>
Getting students to “buy into” your program	Rural	49	4.63	.52	
	Suburban	45	3.93	.93	
	Urban	44	4.32	.85	
					.0023*

Note. \*statistical difference indicated by p value of less than .05

When comparing the means between rural and urban areas, participants tended to rate the necessity of the given skills similarly (Table 8). For 13 of the 15 skills (all except “walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan” and “balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of the program”), the rural and urban means were more closely related to each other than to the suburban context with mean differences ranging from .01 to .34. In all instances where the Kruskal-Wallis test proved a statistically significant difference, the difference was between rural to suburban but not urban, as the rural and urban means were similar. The rank order of the means in rural, suburban, and urban contexts were listed separately (Tables 9-11).

Table 9

Rural Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance (*N* = 49)

Music Teacher Skill	<i>M</i> ( <i>SD</i> )
Developing relationships with your students	4.88 (.33)
Demonstrating respect for students	4.84 (.42)
Demonstrating love for your students	4.65 (.56)
Strong work ethic	4.63 (.48)

Table 9

Cont.

Music Teacher Skill	<i>M (SD)</i>
Getting students to “buy into” your program	4.63 (.52)
Showing concern and care for students’ lives outside of school	4.59 (.60)
Being creative with resources that you are given	4.59 (.60)
Focusing on the basics	4.55 (.57)
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	4.49 (.70)
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	4.37 (.72)
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing instruments	4.37 (.60)
Providing a sufficient challenge	4.16 (.58)
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	4.16 (.71)
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with needs of the program	3.86 (.83)
Spending personal funds to help your students	3.33 (1.06)

Table 10

Suburban Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance (*N* = 45)

<b>Suburban Music Teacher Skill</b>	<b><i>M (SD)</i></b>
Providing a Sufficient Level of Challenge	4.45 (.75)
Demonstrating respect for students	4.42 (.68)
Developing relationships with your students	4.42 (.71)
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	4.30 (.84)

Table 10

Cont.

<b>Suburban Music Teacher Skill</b>	<b><i>M (SD)</i></b>
Strong Work Ethic	4.29 (.91)
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	4.27 (.88)
Demonstrating love for your students	4.16 (.79)
Focusing on the basics	4.16 (.84)
Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school	4.13 (.83)
Having a deep knowledge base of the	4.13 (.93)
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	4.09 (.89)
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	3.93 (.90)
Getting students to "buy into" the program	3.93 (.93)
Being creative with the resources that you are given	3.78 (.99)
Spending personal funds to help your students	2.71 (1.17)

Table 11

Urban Instrumental Music Teacher Skills in Order of Importance ( $N=45$ )

<b>Urban Music Teacher Skill</b>	<b><i>M (SD)</i></b>
Demonstrating respect for students	4.67 (.63)
A strong work ethic	4.60 (.65)
Developing relationships with your students	4.60 (.65)
Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school	4.56 (.68)
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	4.53 (.78)
Demonstrating love for your students	4.50 (.75)

Table 11

Cont.

<b>Urban Music Teacher Skill</b>	<b><i>M (SD)</i></b>
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	4.42 (.75)
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	4.38 (.77)
Focusing on the basics	4.36 (.70)
Getting students to “buy into” the program	4.32 (.85)
Being creative with the resources that you are given	4.25 (.93)
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	4.24 (.92)
Providing a sufficient level of challenge	4.20 (.72)
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	4.18 (.77)
Spending personal funds to help your students	3.36 (1.3)

The standard deviations of the urban data set were higher than the rural context but lower than the suburban context. The largest standard deviation in all three data sets was related to “spending personal funds to help your students,” indicating that participants rating of the necessity of this varied widely.

Participants were asked questions related to how easily the skills they valued as rural instrumental music teachers were transferrable to urban and suburban areas, or vice versa. Additionally, participants were asked if being successful meant the same thing for rural instrumental programs as it did for urban and suburban instrumental programs (see

Table 12). The responses were moderate with wide standard deviations, so no clear inferences were made.

Table 12

Means and Standard Deviations of the Degree to Which Rural Instrumental Teaching Skills Were Perceived as Specialized ( $N=49$ )

Skills Perceived as Specialized	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
To what extent do you believe that very few people could successfully teach band or orchestra in a rural area	2.86	1.09
If I took a position in urban or suburban school next year, I could easily succeed with the skills I have developed teaching in a rural area	3.59	1.07
If an urban or suburban instrumental music teacher took a position in a rural school next year, they could easily succeed with the skills developed in their urban/suburban school	3.02	.91
I believe the definition of success for my program is the same as an urban or suburban director's definition of success	3.27	1.31

### Research Question 3: Attitudes and Beliefs

Survey items related to research question three explored the attitudes and beliefs of participants, including attitudes about their schools, their teaching circumstances, success, and beliefs about schools, themselves, their programs, and their students. For the questions that used a Likert-type scale, participants were asked to indicate to what extent they agreed with the given statement, with 1 = *not at all*, 3 = *somewhat*, and 5 = *to the maximum extent*. For these survey items, the mean and standard deviations were reported. A content analysis was performed on the open-ended responses and the emergent themes are presented.

## Attitudes

Participants shared their attitudes towards their teaching position, including their reason for accepting the position, and their measures of success for their program. The majority of respondents ( $n = 18$ ; 29.51%), reported that they accepted the position because they wanted to help people. Nearly as many ( $n = 17$ ; 27.95%) said that they accepted the position because it was the only job available to them at that time. Twenty-three percent ( $n = 14$ ) stated that they attended that school themselves, or a similar school in the same area, and they wanted to continue living in the community where they attended school. Lastly, 19.7% ( $n = 12$ ) expressed “other” reasons, such as wanting to move closer to family, simply preferring a rural lifestyle, the school and/or instrumental program was reputable and was a good opportunity, or wanting the opportunity to build a program. Given a list of indicators of success, participants rated the importance of each indicator of success in their program (Table 13).

Table 13

Means and Standard Deviations of the Extent to Which Traits Indicated Success in a Rural Program ( $N=48$ )

Traits	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
That I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students	4.52	.58
That my students learn to work together	4.50	.54
That my students become productive citizens	4.50	.58
That my students develop leadership skills	4.33	.62
That I cultivate a sense of pride within my students	4.29	.64
The students have fun in my classroom	4.02	.66

Table 13

Cont.

Traits	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
That my students successfully perform high quality music	4.00	.79
That my program is well respected by my colleagues in music education	3.52	.89
That my students receive good ratings at festivals and contests	3.15	1.24
That my students will go into music as a career	2.08	1.0

### **Beliefs about Themselves, Their Program, Their Students, and Their Schools**

Participants reported moderately high levels of satisfaction ( $M = 3.91$ ,  $SD = .76$ ) as a rural instrumental music educator and felt that they are moderately to highly successful ( $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ). Participants believed that they hold their students to high standards and that they have better discipline in their classrooms than other faculty at their school (Table 14).

Table 14

Means and Standard Deviations of Participant Beliefs about Themselves ( $N=49$ )

Participant Beliefs about Themselves	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
I have better disciplinary control over my classroom than other teachers at my school	4.18	.80
I maintain very high expectations for my students	4.55	.57
I was more motivated to do my best when I started teaching than I am now	2.43	1.43
To what degree have you been successful teaching music in a rural context?	3.92	.54
To what degree are you satisfied with teaching in a rural school?	3.91	.76

Popular music and music of the students' cultures were incorporated into their programs only moderately. Just as participants felt that they have been moderately to highly successful, they also believed their programs to be moderately to highly successful. Their programs are also havens for their students and problems they may have in their personal life (see Table 15). While participants believed that their students valued music and were musically capable (Table 16), they felt that their students were not particularly self-motivated (Table 17).

Table 15

Means and Standard Deviations of Participant Beliefs About Program ( $N=49$ )

Beliefs about Program	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
To what degree do you incorporate popular music in the classroom?	3.15	.86
To what degree do you incorporate music of the students' culture in the classroom?	2.92	.84
My program provides a haven for students away from problems in the rest of the school	4.42	.75
My program provides a haven for students away from problems they face at home or in the community	4.37	.77
To what degree is your band/orchestra program successful?	3.77	.57

Table 16

Means and Standard Deviations of Beliefs about Students ( $N=49$ )

Beliefs about Students	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The students in my program are academically more successful than other students in the school	3.68	.90
Students' attitude and work ethic is more important than musical talent	4.27	.78
Being able to make music is very valuable to my students	4.18	.59
My students are better behaved than other students in the school	4.33	.71
My students are very dedicated to my program	4.10	.79
My students need more help getting motivated than urban or suburban students might	3.06	1.17
My students are just as musically talented as urban and suburban students, if not more so	3.78	.97

Table 17

Means and Standard Deviations of Beliefs about Schools ( $N=49$ )

Beliefs about Schools	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
The reputation a school has is usually representative of what actually happens in the school	3.18	1.14
My school is a clean, orderly, and safe space	3.78	.93

#### **Research Question 4: Challenges and Rewards**

##### **Challenges**

To examine the biggest challenges that rural instrumental music teachers face, participants were asked to respond to the statements (see in Table 18) using a Likert-type

scale where 1 = *not at all*, 3 = *somewhat*, and 5 = *to the maximum extent*. Most items represented a moderate level of challenge.

Table 18

## Means and Standard Deviations of Potential Challenges

Potential Challenges Participants Face	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
To what degree did your undergraduate teacher education program prepare you to teach in a rural area?	2.92	.95
To what degree is it a challenge to recruit quality students for your music program?	3.30	1.02
To what degree do you receive support from your administration?	3.72	.98
To what degree do you receive support from other teachers in your school?	3.17	.82
To what degree do you receive support from the parents of your students?	3.17	.88
To what degree are you asked to teach subjects other than music?	1.70	.90
To what degree do you feel safe when walking in your school neighborhood?	4.02	.84
To what degree is lack of funding a challenge to the success of your program?	3.35	1.03
To what degree is disrepair or lack of instruments a challenge to the success of your program?	3.27	1.17
To what degree are the facilities in which you teach adequate for your needs	3.06	1.04
To what degree do you have positive relationships with area university music education programs/professors?	2.71	1.09
To what degree do you believe university professors understand the issues you face as a rural teacher?	2.20	.95

Table 18

Cont.

Potential Challenges Participants Face	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
What effect have private schools had on your recruiting efforts?	2.67	.55
What effect have magnet/selective enrollment/charter schools had on recruiting?	2.24	.78
What effect have school counselors had on your recruiting efforts?	2.90	.91
What effect have special programs (AP/IB) had on your recruiting efforts?	2.45	.77
What effect have parents' perceptions of problems in neighborhood had on your recruiting efforts?	3.00	.63
In an average year, approximately what percentage of your rehearsals are lost to testing or test preparations?	1.45	.69

Participants were asked about the funding they receive from their school system and/or fundraising efforts, and what, if any participation fees they charge to students. Respondents reported receiving a range of \$0.00–\$20,000.00 from their schools and/or school systems, with a mean of \$3,275.82, and a median of \$2,000. Participants indicated the amount that their programs fundraised each year, ranging from \$0.00 to \$65,000, with a mean of \$9,463.60, and a median of \$5,000. The majority of participants ( $n = 51$ ; 64.71%), charged their students some sort of participation fee. Thirty-three participants specified the amounts, which ranged from \$5.00 to \$450.00 with a mean of \$148.39 and a median of \$150. Twelve of these respondents (23.53%) stated that their fee was not charged to every student, but only to students in specific ensembles such as marching band members, or students who played a specific instrument, such as cello and bass.

Participants were asked to list three things most needed in order for their program to succeed. Of 44 respondents to this question, 43 gave three responses, and one participant gave two responses, meaning that in total, 131 individual response statements were given. Upon content analysis of the responses, the following themes were revealed: support, funding, student involvement, facilities/equipment, scheduling, teacher commitment, teacher philosophy, and teacher musical skills.

There were 48 responses (36.7%) that mentioned needing various types of support. Administrative support was referenced 21 times, including two instances that specifically mentioned discipline. Parent support was specified 17 times, and community support was listed eight times. Only twice did a respondent write “support” without specifying from whom the support was needed.

The second most frequently reported need was money/funding/resources, with 28 total responses (21.4%) falling into this category. Twenty-three responses directly expressed a need for money, funding, or resources in a broad sense, while four specifically listed money for staff/private lessons. One stated “ideas for fundraisers that will work.”

Student involvement was the third most common response to what was needed for success in teaching instrumental music in a rural area, indicated a total of 21 times (16%). In eight instances, this was described with simply “students,” or “more students,” however there were 10 instances that specified “motivated students,” or “students willing to work hard,” or other similar responses. There were three responses that mentioned recruiting or a feeder program, and those responses were included in this category.

Facilities and/or equipment were listed 16 times (12.2%). Equipment was primarily listed as “equipment,” but in some instances, respondents specified music or instruments. More time with students or resolving/preventing scheduling issues was mentioned 10 times (7.6%). In one instance, a respondent specified that losing students to AP classes was an issue. Initially, responses that related to equipment were included in the money/resources category. However, in seven instances, participants listed funding and equipment separately as two of their three responses, which indicated that to some extent, participants thought of these as different things.

Perseverance and possession of a strong work ethic by the teacher were mentioned nine times (6.9%) as important characteristics of a rural instrumental music educator. The need for a solid philosophy for music teaching and showing care for students were mentioned three times (2.3%). Lastly, a good working knowledge of the instruments and musical skills were specified twice (1.5%).

### **Rewards**

Participants were asked to list the three things they found to be most rewarding as an instrumental music educator in a rural area. Forty-four respondents made three statements each, meaning that in total, 132 individual response statements were made. These responses were analyzed, and the themes that emerged were recorded along with how many times that theme appeared (Table 19).

Table 19

## Frequencies and Percentages of Emerging Themes

Emerging Theme	<i>n</i> (%)
Creating/Having Musical Experiences with Students	25 (18.9)
Witness Students' Musical Growth	24 (18.2)
Witness Students' Personal Growth	18 (13.6)
Sharing Memorable/Joyous Experiences with Students	14 (10.6)
Developing Relationships with Students	11 (8.3)
Parents/Administrators/Community Members Showing Recognition/Appreciation of the Group	11 (8.3)
Creating a Safe Place/Community for Students	8 (6.1)
Student Motivation/Teamwork	7 (5.3)
Alumni Continuing Music Participation	5 (3.8)
Alumni Share that they Value the Experience in Program	3 (2.3)
Varied Daily Experiences	2 (1.5)
High Contest/Festival Scores	2 (1.5)
Alumni Success	1 (0.8)
Serving the Community	1 (0.8)

### Summary

The results of the Phase 3: Survey Administration provided a description of secondary instrumental music programs in rural North Carolina. Participants indicated that they took their positions in rural schools for a variety of reasons and that their schools and communities are largely safe, but the socioeconomic status of most of their students is low.

Of the 15 specialized skills addressed by the survey instrument, the seven deemed most important were all non-musical:

1. Developing relationships with students
2. Demonstrating respect for students
3. Demonstrating love for your students
4. Strong work ethic
5. Getting students to “buy into” your program
6. Showing concern and care for students’ lives outside of school
7. Being creative with resources given.

It is important to reiterate that the list of skills was predetermined, and only four of the skills dealt with music: (1) having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument, (2) having a strong philosophy for why you teach music, (3) providing a sufficient level of challenge, and (4) focusing on the basics. Participants did have the opportunity, however, with the open-ended questions to list the three things they most needed to succeed, and of the eight themes that emerged, only one related to music, and it was the least frequently reported need.

Similarly, participants largely defined success of their program with non-musical elements. Of 10 indicators of success, the six rated by participants as most important were not related to music: cultivating a strong work ethic in students, students becoming productive citizens, students learning to work together, students developing leadership skills, cultivating a sense of pride within my students, and students having fun in the classroom.

In summary, the skills perceived as most necessary for success by rural instrumental music educators were largely unrelated to music, but rather developing relationships with and caring for students, as well as program advocacy. Teachers perceived that the importance of these skills in rural areas closely related to the importance of these skills in urban areas, but that the necessary skill set for teaching in a suburban area was different. The skills related to music were rated as more important in suburban areas.

The most reported need of participants was support; support from administrators, parents, and community. Other needs were the lack of funding, low enrollment, and poor facilities and equipment. Despite these challenges, however, participants reported high levels of job satisfaction, and found musical experiences with students the most rewarding part of their job.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this study was to investigate secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina. In this descriptive study, the experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and perceptions that rural instrumental music educators held about their schools, students, and communities were investigated. Furthermore, the researcher examined how rural secondary instrumental music educators defined success for their programs, what challenges and rewards they experienced in their positions, and what skills from a pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) they considered to be most important in their classrooms.

This descriptive study was designed to fill the gap in literature related to instrumental music education in rural areas. A 68-question survey of rural instrumental music educators in North Carolina was used to gain an understanding the four research questions:

1. What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?
2. What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?
3. What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?

4. What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

The following discussion of results will align with each research question, then I will discuss the implications for music education and offer suggestions for future research.

### **Research Question 1: Contextual Knowledge**

Research question one was “What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?” Secondary instrumental music educators in North Carolina seem to have a good understanding of the schools and communities in which they teach. Participants indicated that their schools were safe with minimal reports of violence, drugs, and gangs, and participants did not struggle to communicate with their students using English. The majority of participants (90%) were Caucasian, and 67.3% reported that they are the same race as their students, so one can infer that their student populations are primarily Caucasian as well. This is consistent with the findings of Parker et al. (2018) who found that Whites make up the majority of rural population. The number of students eligible for free and reduced lunch was high (more than half), but this was also consistent with research that shows higher poverty rates in rural areas than in urban and suburban areas (Parker et al., 2018; Strange, 2011).

### **Research Question 2: Specialized Skills**

Research question two was “What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?” Participants were asked to rate the importance of each

skill on a given list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) using a Likert-type scale, where 1 = *extremely unimportant*, 2 = *unimportant*, 3 = *neutral*, 4 = *important*, and 5 = *extremely important*. Although the current study was a modification of Fitzpatrick's Tool, one important difference is that a third independent variable was added, as participants were asked to rate the skills according to rural, urban, and suburban contexts. In Fitzpatrick's (2008) study, all participants were music educators in an urban context, the Chicago Public Schools, and they were asked to rate the importance of the skills in both urban and suburban contexts, but not rural. While 38% of Fitzpatrick's (2008) participants had attended a K-12 school in either a rural or suburban school, it is unknown if they had suburban teaching experience, or if their responses related to the importance of the skills was based on perception.

In the current study, rural music educators were asked to rate the skills in rural, urban, and suburban contexts. In addition to rural teaching experience, 20 participants (36%) had urban and/or suburban experience; four participants (7%) had urban experience, eight (14.5%) had suburban experience, and eight (14.5%) had urban and suburban experience. For the 35 participants who completed the urban/suburban skill rating questions that only had rural teaching experience, their responses were largely speculative and based on their perception only.

The given skills were listed in rank order for each of the rural, suburban, and urban contexts (Table 9, Table 10, Table 11). While only four of the 15 skills in the pre-determined list (Fitzpatrick, 2008) were related to music (focusing on the basics, having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing instruments, having a strong

philosophy for why you teach music, and providing a sufficient level of challenge), it is important to note that in the rural context, all four skills were in the bottom half of the rank order list. The top seven skills perceived as being most important in a rural area were not music-related, but were instead related to developing relationships with students, helping them develop as people, working hard, program advocacy, and being creative with resources. The skill participants deemed most important for rural teachers was “developing relationships with your students” ( $M = 4.88$ ,  $SD = .33$ ). The low standard deviation indicated a high level of agreement among participants. Second and third on the list also dealt with the interpersonal relationships between teachers and students: “demonstrating respect for students,” and “demonstrating love for your students.” The other skill related to student relationships about which participants were surveyed, “showing concern and care for students’ lives outside of school,” was ranked sixth. Albert (2006) also reported that teacher personality and their ability to build a community culture in their band were crucial for recruitment and retention of band students in low-income schools. VanDeusen (2016) indicated that for a rural music teacher, intentional relationship building with students, parents, administrators, and community played a major role in the support and success of the program studied.

The results of the Kruskal-Wallis test indicated that the following skills were statistically different, or more necessary in rural areas than in suburban areas: “being creative with the resources you are given,” “developing relationships with your students,” “demonstrating love for your students,” “showing concern and care for your students’ lives outside of school,” “demonstrating respect for students,” “getting students to buy

into your program,” and “spending personal funds to help students.” These results were somewhat surprising because it would seem to me that developing relationships with and caring for students is important in any setting, but participants felt that those skills are significantly less important in a suburban setting than an urban or rural setting. “Being creative with resources” and “spending personal funds” made sense in that funding is a major issue in rural schools (Buckner, 2010; Strange, 2011).

When considering the importance of the same given 15 skills in a suburban context (Table 10), although skills related to developing relationships with students were near the top of this list as they were in the rural setting, a skill related to music was most important (providing a sufficient level of challenge), and the other musical skills were dispersed more evenly throughout the rank order when compared to rural. The standard deviations of this data set were higher than those of the rural context, which indicated less agreement amongst participants. It is important to note, again, that only 16 participants (29%) had previous suburban teaching experience, so these results were largely the perception of rural teachers.

As with the rural setting, the most important skill in an urban area (Table 11) was not related to music, and three of the top four skills were related to relationships with students. Unlike the rural context rank order list, one music-related skill (having a strong philosophy for why you teach music) was in the top half of the list. Again, it is important to note that only 12 participants (21.8%) had previous urban teaching experience, so these results were largely the perception of rural teachers.

The given skills were listed alphabetically and the placement of each skill on the rank order list (1-15) for the rural, suburban, and urban teaching contests were compared (Table 20).

Table 20

Comparison of Each Skill Ranking in Rural, Urban, Suburban Areas

<b>Music Teacher Skill</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Suburban</b>	<b>Urban</b>
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	14	11	15
Being creative with the resources that you are given	7	14	12
Providing a Sufficient Level of Challenge	12	1	14
Demonstrating love for your students	3	7	6
Demonstrating respect for students	2	2	1
Developing relationships with your students	1	3	2
Focusing on the basics	8	8	9
Getting students to “buy into” the program	5	13	11
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	11	10	8
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	9	6	5
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	10	12	13
Showing concern and care for your students’ lives outside of school	6	9	4
Spending personal funds to help your students	15	15	15
Strong Work Ethic	4	5	2
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	13	7	7

The only skill to fall in the same place (least important) in the rank order of all three contexts (rural, suburban, and urban) was “spending personal funds to help your students.” In most cases, the rank order of a skill was similar between two contexts with the importance of that skill being ranked differently in one context. As with the mean comparison and the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test, participants tended to relate rural and urban teaching contexts as similar to each other, with the suburban context being perceived as different in and of itself.

### **Research Question 3: Attitudes and Beliefs**

Research question three was “what attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?” Participants reported moderately high levels of job satisfaction and success as a rural instrumental music educator and believed that their students were academically successful, well behaved, and musically talented. Participants were asked what defined success for their programs, and they were listed in rank order (see Table 10). All four of the music-specific markers of success (out of 10 total) were at the bottom of the list, indicating that participants defined success by the overall development of their students as people and their students’ experiences more so than the musical product that they put forth. Similarly, when asked explicitly if students’ attitude and work ethic was more important than musical talent, the average score was 4.27 on a scale of 1-5, with 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *to the maximum extent* with a standard deviation of .58 (see Table 13).

#### **Research Question 4: Challenges and Rewards**

Research question four was “What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?”

##### **Challenges**

Participants reported moderate levels of support from administration ( $M=3.72$ ,  $SD=.98$ ), other teachers in their school ( $M=3.17$ ,  $SD=.82$ ), and parents of their students ( $M=3.17$ ,  $SD=.88$ ). In the open-ended responses, however, “support” was the most often cited challenge, including support from administration, teachers, parents, and the community at large. Howard and Reynolds (2008) claimed that parent involvement can be a contributing factor to the success of middle-class students, but Buckner (2010) indicated that community/parental involvement were among one of the greatest challenges facing rural Missouri schools.

Participants’ undergraduate preparation and local university and professor support were identified as moderate to high challenges. When asked “To what degree did your undergraduate teacher education program prepare you to teach in a rural area?” the median response was 2.92 (with 1 = *not at all* and 5 = *to the maximum extent*) with a standard deviation of .95. Participants indicated low levels of positive relationships with area university music education professors, and a belief that university professors largely do not understand the challenges that rural music educators face. While the causes of this were unknown, one contributing factor could be that most rural teachers are geographically far removed from universities. In the current study, 64.70 % ( $n = 33$ ) of participants stated that they are more than 25 miles from a college or university that

offers a music degree. This is congruent with the findings of Burton et al. (2013) that rural teachers were largely isolated due to their remote location and limited access to professional development, resources, and colleagues. Other contributing factors of poor relationships between rural music educators and university faculty could be a lack of communication; perhaps secondary teachers are not reaching out to university professors or vice versa.

Potential financial challenges were addressed separately as open-ended questions. There was a wide range of financial support (\$0.00 to \$20,000.00) from participants' schools and/or school systems. The mean of \$3,275.82 indicated that the program receiving \$20,000 was an outlier and that most programs received significantly less than that. When the outlier (\$20,000) was removed, the mean was \$2,941.34, which represented a much more realistic picture of school funding of instrumental music education programs in rural North Carolina. Similarly, although the amounts fundraised by these programs ranged from \$0.00 to \$65,000, the mean was \$9,463.60, again implying that the upper end of that range was an extreme outlier. When the outlier (\$65,000) was removed, the mean was \$8,330.20 which represented a much more realistic picture of instrumental music education fundraising in rural North Carolina.

These figures demonstrated that the majority of these programs were operating on very meager budgets when considering the cost of instruments, music, and other equipment required of instrumental music programs. When participants were asked what three things they most needed to succeed, based on the dollar figures just described I expected funding to be the most frequently cited challenge by a large margin, but it was

not; it was the second most reported (21.4%) challenge, which was supported by Isbell's (2005) findings that limited resources and access to instruments were among the biggest challenges for rural music programs. Buckner (2010) and Strange (2011) reported that school district funding is one of the biggest problems that rural school districts face, while better suburban school district funding often reflected the higher socioeconomic status of its community (Fermanich, 2011; Costa-Giomi & Chappell, 2007).

The most reported challenge was a need for support. There were 48 responses (36.7%) that mentioned needing various types of support from administrators, parents, and the school and community at large. This was surprising given the moderate levels of support from administrators, teachers and parents that were previously reported. These results aligned with Gardner's (2010) report that "administrative support had the most prominent influence on both music teacher satisfaction and retention" (p. 1).

VanDeusen's (2016) findings indicate that once administrative and community support were earned, financial support followed. In this study, the music teacher developed relationships with those around him and earned the curricular scheduling and advocacy support of administration, as well as school and community funding. It is worth noting that the participants of the current study indicated that building relationships with students was the most important skill needed for success in a rural music program.

Perhaps if that were expanded to developing relationships with students, parents, administrators, and community members, the first and second most reported challenges, support and funding, would be less challenging.

The third most reported challenge (16%) was the need for students. In some instances, participants were referring to low enrollment numbers, but in other instances they made specification such as “students willing to work hard,” referring to the level of student motivation. Buckner (2010) reported that low student enrollment is an issue for rural schools, and Isbell’s (2005) findings supported that this issue affected rural music education programs as well. Again, I pose that according to VanDeusen’s (2016) findings, establishing relationships with and gaining support of the community are crucial for success in a rural instrumental program. If these goals are met and the community is proud of their school music program, perhaps enrollment will improve as well.

Facilities and/or equipment were the fourth most reported challenge, accounting for 12.2% of responses, which could be associated with funding. Even if responses relative to facilities and/or equipment were combined, those percentages total 33.6%, which was still a lower reported need than support. Buckner (2010) reported that along with funding, facilities are one of the main issues that rural schools face. Also, Gardner (2010) found that many teachers leave their positions because they are dissatisfied with workplace conditions.

Although losing rehearsal time to testing was previously reported as a minimal issue, ten participants (7.6%) listed scheduling as a challenge. This could potentially be due to school master schedule conflicts, often caused by “singleton” classes, classes that are only offered once a day such as a specific honors or AP class. This also could have contributed to the need for more students, another challenge reported by participants (16%).

## Rewards

Participants were also asked to list the three things they find to be most rewarding as an instrumental music educator. The most reported reward was creating/having musical experiences with students, followed by witnessing students' musical growth. Other reported rewards related to having positive relationships with students and developing a community within their program. Less than one percent of respondents ( $n=2$ ) indicated that high contest or festival scores were what made their jobs rewarding, which aligned with earlier findings in the current study that the musical product of their programs are not the largest indicators of success.

It was interesting that the topics related to music making were the most rewarding thing reported, but music related items were lower in the lists of what defined success for their program and the specialized skills that were necessary for rural music educators. While reasons for entering the field of music education were not part of this study, it was assumed that participants chose this profession because of a love of music and a desire to share that passion with students (Westberg & Roberts, 2012). In that case, it would make sense that as musicians, music educators find the musical experiences to be among the most rewarding aspects of their job even though musical skills were not the most important skills, and the musical outcomes were not the most important indicators of success. The findings that positive relationships with students and being part of a community within their program were rewarding were consistent with the findings of Prendergrast (2017), Prendergrast (2018), VanDeusen (2016), and Bates (2011a).

### **Summary**

Participants had a good contextual knowledge of the schools and communities in which they teach. They largely felt that their schools were safe, that their students valued making music, and that their programs provided a haven for students to escape their personal problems. To that end, they valued student personal growth as an indicator of success more so than musical product. Similarly, the skills they found most necessary in rural instrumental music classrooms were related to developing personal relationships with their students and helping them to develop as people. While indicators of success and necessary skills were primarily non-musical, the participants found musical experiences the most rewarding aspect of their jobs. The primary challenges associated with rural instrumental music teaching were related to support, funding, the need for more students, and facilities/equipment.

### **Implications for Music Education and Music Teacher Education**

A primary implication from the result of this survey could be found in the area of pre-service music teacher training. Teachers reported a moderately low level of preparation in their undergraduate experience for teaching in a rural area ( $M=2.92$ ,  $SD=.95$ ). This could be attributed to the fact that of the 16 universities in the University of North Carolina system, seven are in urban counties, five are in suburban counties, and 4 are in rural counties. Twelve of the 16 universities offer music education degrees and/or teacher licensure programs in music, eight of which are in urban or suburban counties, with four in rural counties. This means that the majority of pre-service music teachers in North Carolina are completing their degree programs in urban or suburban areas. Unless

purposeful attempts are made to have pre-service music teachers observe or student teach in rural settings, they are likely completing these requirements in urban or suburban settings (McCracken & Miller, 1988).

Although a recently added requirement from the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction requires pre-service music teachers to have a Title I field experience, this does not guarantee a rural experience. Recognizing that getting pre-service teachers to and from rural schools presents logistical challenges due to the extended time and resources needed for extended travel, university professors could at minimum discuss with their students the differences between the schools they are in regularly and those in rural areas such as scheduling problems, lower enrollment, less support, or more limited funding, and how they might deal with these differences should they choose to teach in a rural setting. For instance, as Bates (2011a, 2016) suggested, the traditional school large ensemble offerings are based on a suburban ideal and rural music educators may need to consider that offering an ensemble or music course befitting to their school environment and students' culture could be more appropriate. Corbett (2016) also argued "that there are established vernacular music traditions in rural communities that can be productively integrated into a hybrid music education curriculum" (p. 12). Participants in the current study reported that they incorporated music of their students' culture into their programs only moderately, and that higher student enrollment was desired and needed. Perhaps if the ensembles and course offerings were more aligned with the students' culture, the enrollment would improve.

Bates (2016) proposes that the assumption that rural communities and music programs should strive to model themselves after urban (or suburban) communities and music programs stems from a phenomenon known as urbanormativity. Not only does this idea that the standard of cultural excellence is set in urban areas exist at large, Bates theorizes that this belief is perpetuated in our universities through institutional cultural capital in multiple ways. First, rural students that wish to become music educators “are typically required . . . to move to and become acculturated to the city, at least temporarily” (p. 170). Furthermore, as

the urban university serves as the prototype for school music programs across North America . . . music teachers, gaining their professional credentials in these institutions, naturally pattern their professional work after university experiences in ensembles, applied instruction, and music theory and history classes (Bates, 2016, p. 170).

This further perpetuates the perceived hierarchy of schools, “with those that are most like universities at the top and small rural schools at the bottom” (Bates, 2016, p.170). Pre-service music educators need to be made aware that although their university training was most likely rooted in the Western Classical tradition, that may not be what is culturally relevant for their students (Bates, 2011a; Bates 2016).

Lastly, although developing relationships with others cannot necessarily be taught, the importance of them can. Not only was developing relationships with students indicated as the most important skill for rural music educators in the current study, VanDeusen (2016) found that the relationships established by the music educator between students, parents, community members, and administrators were the

underpinning of the success of the program. Pre-service music educators need to be made aware that while the musical skills they develop during undergraduate training are important and necessary, they are not the only contributing factors to success.

### **Further Research**

Because the base of literature related to instrumental music education in rural areas is extremely limited, there are many avenues available for further research of this topic. Many and varying studies are needed to enhance the body of literature related to rural music education. More descriptive data is needed to further understand rural music education, and both quantitative and qualitative studies are needed to understand this phenomenon as well as provide practical applications.

Although this study describes secondary instrumental music education in rural North Carolina, it cannot be assumed that these findings would be the same in other states. This study could be replicated in other states or regions in order to describe rural instrumental music education in those areas in broad terms. Ethnographic studies and autoethnographic research that described the individual experiences of rural music educators would be useful in order to better understand teaching in the rural context.

More details regarding the challenges of rural instrumental music educators are needed, specifically practical applications on how to overcome those challenges, and this could be revealed through further research. As funding was a significant challenge presented in this study, studies similar to that of Fermanich (2011) could be conducted in a rural setting in order to understand how rural music education programs are funded; this would be an important contribution to the literature. Studies specifically related to how

music educators deal with the challenge of limited funding could also be crucial to their colleagues, music teacher educators, and pre-service music teachers alike.

More information related to the backgrounds and teaching experiences of music teacher educators is also needed. It is unknown if music teacher trainers primarily garnered their own K-12 teaching experiences in urban, suburban, or rural contexts. The results of such a study could provide further insight into why the participants of the current study felt that university professors did not understand their rural teaching context, nor that their undergraduate training prepared them for teaching in a rural context.

It is curious that the findings of the current study indicated that musical skills are not among the most important for rural music educators. Perhaps rural music programs are often not performing what is considered to be the most advanced literature available for their ensemble type. This could be one reason why the musical skills are not perceived to be as important as interpersonal and other skills. There could potentially be additional and varied reasons for this, which could be explored through further research.

Also related to the skills most necessary for music educators, the rank order of necessary skills for urban and suburban teachers in the current study were largely speculative. Having participants from urban, suburban, and rural areas rate the importance of given skills relative to their specific teaching context would provide the field with more accurate results. Similarly, it would be interesting to compare what urban, suburban and rural teachers consider as the indicators of success in their teaching context.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study examines secondary instrumental music education programs throughout rural North Carolina. While this will provide useful information for rural instrumental teachers in North Carolina and beyond, it cannot provide a complete picture of this subject. The results will likely yield descriptors of the subject without providing practical applications or solutions to challenges, however these could be provided through follow up studies.

When comparing the importance of a set of given skills among rural, suburban, and urban teachers, only 20 participants (36.4%) had previous urban and/or suburban experience, meaning that the results were largely based on the perceptions of rural teachers. Also, the response rate of the overall study was low (27%), making it hard to generalize these findings. If this study were to be replicated, allowing more time to secure permissions from school system superintendents in order to have a larger pool of potential participants would be ideal. Additionally, further refining the questions in order to make the survey shorter could potentially increase participation or decrease the number of participants who only partially completed the survey.

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## APPENDIX A

## INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN RURAL NC SURVEY

# Instrumental Music Education in Rural NC Survey

Q1 What is your age?

- 18-24 (1)
  - 25-34 (2)
  - 35-44 (3)
  - 45-54 (4)
  - 55-64 (5)
  - 65-74 (6)
  - 75 or older (7)
  - Prefer not to answer (8)
- 

Q2 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
  - Female (2)
  - Non-Identified (3)
  - Prefer not to answer (4)
- 

Q3 What is your race? (If you prefer not to answer, just type n/a)

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Q4 How many years have you been teaching, including this current year?

- 1-5 (1)
  - 6-10 (2)
  - 11-15 (3)
  - 16-20 (4)
  - 21-25 (5)
  - 26-30 (6)
  - 31+ (7)
- 

Q5 How many years have you taught in a RURAL school, including this current year?

- 1-5 (1)
  - 6-10 (2)
  - 11-15 (3)
  - 16-20 (4)
  - 21-25 (5)
  - 26-30 (6)
  - 31+ (7)
-

Q6 How many years have you previously taught in an URBAN school, including this current year?

- 0 (1)
  - 1-5 (2)
  - 6-10 (3)
  - 11-15 (4)
  - 16-20 (5)
  - 21-25 (6)
  - 26-30 (7)
  - 31+ (8)
- 

Q7 How many years have you previously taught in a SUBURBAN school, including this current year?

- 0 (1)
  - 1-5 (2)
  - 6-10 (3)
  - 11-15 (4)
  - 16-20 (5)
  - 21-25 (6)
  - 26-30 (7)
  - 31+ (8)
-

Q8 What type of school did you attend as a K-12 student? (If you attended more than one type of school, please select the one you spent the most amount of time in).

- Rural (1)
  - Urban (2)
  - Suburban (3)
- 

Q9 If you attended an urban or suburban school yourself, how much of a challenge has this presented to you as a rural teacher?

- No challenge (1)
  - Not much of a challenge (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Somewhat of a challenge (4)
  - A great challenge (5)
  - This does not apply to me (6)
- 

Q10 Are you the same race as the majority of your students?

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
  - Prefer not to answer (3)
-

Q11 If you are a different race than the majority of your students, how much of a challenge has that presented you with as you developed relationships with them?

- No challenge (1)
  - Not much of a challenge (2)
  - Neutral (3)
  - Somewhat of a challenge (4)
  - A great challenge (5)
  - This does not apply to me (6)
- 

Q13 Why did you take your current position in a rural school?

- I wanted to help people (1)
  - Because I attended this school or one in the area, and I wanted to continue living in this community (2)
  - Because I did not get a job in a different setting (3)
  - Other (please specify) (4)
- 

### **School / Community Information**

Q12 Approximately what percentage of the students in your school qualify for free or reduced lunch?

- 0-25% (1)
  - 26-50% (2)
  - 51-75% (3)
  - 76-100% (4)
-

Q14 Do you live in the neighborhood/community in which you teach?

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
- 

Q15 To what extent do you agree with the following statement "I know a lot about the history of the community in which I teach?"

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q17 To what extent is your school facing pressure to raise standardized test scores?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q18 To what degree is the racial makeup of the students in your program similar to the racial makeup of your school?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q21 To what degree is the racial makeup of the students in your program similar to the racial makeup of your surrounding community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q22 To what degree is the socioeconomic level of the students in your program similar to the socioeconomic level of your school?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q23 To what degree is the socioeconomic level of the students in your program similar to the socioeconomic level of your surrounding community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q24 To what degree does your students' use of languages other than English present a challenge to you as a teacher?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q26 To what extent is violence an issue within your school neighborhood/community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q27 To what extent are drugs an issue within your school neighborhood/community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q28 To what extent are gangs an issue within your school neighborhood/community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q40 To what degree do you feel safe when walking in your school neighborhood/community?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 - Somewhat (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 - To the maximum extent (5)

### **Music Program**

Q69 Do you teach at more than one school?

- Yes (1)
  - No (2)
-

Q16 Which classes do you teach, and how many students are enrolled in each? (Please mark all that apply).

6th grade band (1)

---

7th grade band (2)

---

8th grade band (3)

---

Advanced concert band (high school) (4)

---

Beginner/Intermediate concert band (high school) (5)

---

Marching band (6)

---

Jazz band (7)

---

6th grade orchestra (8)

---

7th grade orchestra (9)

---

8th grade orchestra (10)

---

Top orchestra (high school) (11)

---

Bottom orchestra (high school) (12)

---

General Music (13)

---

Music Technology (14)

---

Music Theory (15)

---

Other (please specify course(s) as well as enrollment) (16)

---

-----

Q25 To what degree do you feel you have been successful teaching music in a rural context?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 - Somewhat (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q29 To what degree is your band/orchestra program successful?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 - Somewhat (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q30 To what degree are you satisfied with teaching music in a rural school?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q31 To what degree did your undergraduate teacher education program prepare you to teach music in a rural context?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q32 To what degree do you incorporate popular music into the classroom?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q33 To what degree do you incorporate the music of the students' culture into the classroom?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q34 To what degree is it a challenge to recruit quality students for your music program?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q36 To what degree do you receive support from your administration?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q37 To what degree do you receive support from other teachers within your school?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q38 To what degree do you receive support from the parents of your students?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q39 To what degree are you asked to teach subjects other than music?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q41 To what degree is lack of funding a challenge to the success of your program?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q42 To what degree is disrepair or lack of instruments a challenge to the success of your program?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q43 To what degree are the facilities in which you teach adequate for your needs?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q70 From your school, what is the distance to the nearest college or university that offers a music degree?

- 1-25 miles (1)
  - 26-50 miles (2)
  - 51-75 (3)
  - 76-100 miles (4)
  - over 100 miles (5)
- 

Q44 To what degree do you have positive relationships with area university music education programs/professors?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
- 

Q45 To what degree do you believe that university professors understand the issues you face as a rural teacher?

- 1 - Not at all (1)
  - 2 (2)
  - 3 - Somewhat (3)
  - 4 (4)
  - 5 - To the maximum extent (5)
-

Q46 What effect have private schools had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- 1 - Strongly Negative (1)
  - 2 - Negative (2)
  - 3 - Neutral (3)
  - 4 - Positive (4)
  - 5 - Strongly Positive (5)
- 

Q47 What effect have district magnet, selective enrollment, and/or charter schools had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- 1 - Strongly Negative (1)
  - 2 - Negative (2)
  - 3 - Neutral (3)
  - 4 - Positive (4)
  - 5 - Strongly Positive (5)
- 

Q49 What effect have school counselors had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- 1 - Strongly Negative (1)
  - 2 - Negative (2)
  - 3 - Neutral (3)
  - 4 - Positive (4)
  - 5 - Strongly Positive (5)
-

Q50 What effect have specialized programs (such as AP or IB classes) that your school offers had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- 1 - Strongly Negative (1)
  - 2 - Negative (2)
  - 3 - Neutral (3)
  - 4 - Positive (4)
  - 5 - Strongly Positive (5)
- 

Q51 What effect have parent perceptions of problems in the neighborhood had on your effects to recruit students to your music program?

- 1 - Strongly Negative (1)
  - 2 - Negative (2)
  - 3 - Neutral (3)
  - 4 - Positive (4)
  - 5 - Strongly Positive (5)
- 

Q59 In an average year, approximately what percentage of your rehearsals will you lose to district/state testing and test preparation?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - over 50% (6)
- 

Q60 What is the approximate amount of funding that you received this year from your school/school system?

---

---

Q61 What is the approximate amount of money that you fundraised this year?

\_\_\_\_\_

---

Q62 Do you charge your students a participation fee? If yes, please list the fee amount in the text box.

Yes (1) \_\_\_\_\_

No (2)

---

Q63 Approximately what percentage of students require the use of a school/district owned instrument?

0-10% (1)

11-20% (2)

21-30% (3)

31-40% (4)

41-50% (5)

51-60% (6)

61-70% (7)

71-80% (8)

81-90% (9)

91-100% (10)

---

Q53 To what extent do you believe the following skills are important to succeeding in a RURAL environment?

	Extremely Unimportant (1)	Unimportant (2)	Neutral (3)	Important (4)	Extremely Important (5)
A strong work ethic (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing a sufficient level of challenge (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focusing on the basics (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being creative with the resources that you are given (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing relationships with your students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating love for your students (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating respect for students (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spending personal funds to help your students (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting students to "buy into" the program (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q54 To what extent do you believe the following skills are important to succeeding in a SUBURBAN environment?

	Extremely Unimportant (1)	Unimportant (2)	Neutral (3)	Important (4)	Extremely Important (5)
A strong work ethic (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing a sufficient level of challenge (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focusing on the basics (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being creative with the resources that you are given (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing relationships with your students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating love for your students (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating respect for students (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spending personal funds to help your students (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting students to "buy into" the program (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q55 To what extent do you believe the following skills are important to succeeding in an URBAN environment?

	Extremely Unimportant (1)	Unimportant (2)	Neutral (3)	Important (4)	Extremely Important (5)
A strong work ethic (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Providing a sufficient level of challenge (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Focusing on the basics (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being creative with the resources that you are given (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Developing relationships with your students (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating love for your students (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Demonstrating respect for students (12)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Spending personal funds to help your students (13)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community (14)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Getting students to "buy into" the program (15)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q56 To what extent do you believe the following statements?

	Not at all (1)	2 (2)	Somewhat (3)	4 (4)	To the maximum extent (5)
The students in my program are academically more successful than other students in the school (1)	<input type="radio"/>				
Student attitude and work ethic is more important than musical talent (2)	<input type="radio"/>				
Being able to make music is very valuable to my students (3)	<input type="radio"/>				
My students are better behaved than the other students in my school (4)	<input type="radio"/>				
My students are very dedicated to my program (5)	<input type="radio"/>				
My students need more help getting motivated than urban or suburban students might (6)	<input type="radio"/>				
My students are just as musically talented as urban and suburban students, if not more so (7)	<input type="radio"/>				
I have better disciplinary control over my classroom than other teachers at my school (8)	<input type="radio"/>				
Very few people could successfully teach band or orchestra in rural area (9)	<input type="radio"/>				
If I took a position in an urban or suburban school next year, I could easily succeed with the skills I have developed teaching in a rural school (10)	<input type="radio"/>				
If an urban or suburban instrumental music teacher took a position in a rural school, they could easily succeed with the skills developed in their urban/suburban school (11)	<input type="radio"/>				
I maintain very high expectations for my students (12)	<input type="radio"/>				
My program provides a haven for my students away from problems in the rest of the school (13)	<input type="radio"/>				
My program provides a haven for my students away from the problems they face at home or in the community (14)	<input type="radio"/>				
The reputation a school has is usually representative of what actually happens in the school (15)	<input type="radio"/>				
My school is a clean, orderly, and safe space (16)	<input type="radio"/>				
I was more motivated to do my best when I started teaching than I am now (17)	<input type="radio"/>				
I believe the definition of success for my program is the same as an urban or suburban director's definition of success (18)	<input type="radio"/>				

---

Q57 To what extent do the following indicate success within your program?

	Not at all (1)	2 (2)	Somewhat (3)	4 (4)	To the Maximum extent (5)
The students have fun within my classroom (1)	<input type="radio"/>				
That I cultivate a sense of pride within my students (2)	<input type="radio"/>				
That I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students (3)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students learn to work together (4)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students develop leadership skills (5)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students will become productive citizens (6)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students successfully perform high quality music (7)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students receive good ratings at festivals and contests (8)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my program is well respected by my colleagues in music education (9)	<input type="radio"/>				
That my students will go into music as a career (10)	<input type="radio"/>				

---

Q60 Approximately what percentage of your students enter the program with no previous experience playing an instrument?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - 51-60% (6)
  - 61-70% (7)
  - 71-80% (8)
  - 81-90% (9)
  - 91-100% (10)
- 

Q61 Approximately what percentage of your students' parents are involved with the program on a regular basis? (Involved means they participate as chaperones, assist with fundraising, etc.; more than just attending concerts).

- 0-10% (1)
- 11-20% (2)
- 21-30% (3)
- 31-40% (4)
- 41-50% (5)
- 51-60% (6)
- 61-70% (7)
- 71-80% (8)
- 81-90% (9)
- 91-100% (10)

---

Q62 For the parents of your students who are NOT very involved with your instrumental program, please check all the reasons why you think this might be the case:

- They work several jobs (1)
  - They do not speak English (2)
  - They do not understand or value the music program (3)
  - They are taking care of several other children (4)
  - They are experiencing personal difficulties (5)
  - Other (please list) (6) \_\_\_\_\_
-

Q63 If you teach middle school, in an average year, approximately what percentage of your students continue playing their instrument in high school?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - 51-60% (6)
  - 61-70% (7)
  - 71-80% (8)
  - 81-90% (9)
  - 91-100% (10)
  - This does not apply to me (11)
-

Q64 If you teach high school, in an average year, approximately what percentage of your students go on to attend community college or a four-year university?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - 51-60% (6)
  - 61-70% (7)
  - 71-80% (8)
  - 81-90% (9)
  - 91-100% (10)
  - This does not apply to me (11)
-

Q65 If you teach high school, in an average year, approximately what percentage of your students continue playing their instrument in college or community groups?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - 51-60% (6)
  - 61-70% (7)
  - 71-80% (8)
  - 81-90% (9)
  - 91-100% (10)
  - This does not apply to me (11)
-

Q66 If you teach high school, in an average year, approximately what percentage of your students go on to major in music in college?

- 0-10% (1)
  - 11-20% (2)
  - 21-30% (3)
  - 31-40% (4)
  - 41-50% (5)
  - 51-60% (6)
  - 61-70% (7)
  - 71-80% (8)
  - 81-90% (9)
  - 91-100% (10)
  - This does not apply to me (11)
- 

Q67 In order of importance, please list the top three things that you MOST NEED for your program to succeed.

- 1 (1) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 2 (2) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 3 (3) \_\_\_\_\_
- 

Q68 In order of importance, please list the top three things that are MOST REWARDING to you as an instrumental music educator.

- 1 (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 (2) \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 (3) \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX B**  
**SURVEY ITEM STATISTICAL TREATMENT**

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
What is your age?	Descriptive	Multiple Choice/no answer	<i>M, SD</i> , min, and max
What is your gender?	Descriptive	Multiple Choice/no answer	<i>n</i> for each male, female, non-identified
What is your race?	Descriptive	Open ended	<i>n</i> for each race listed
How many years have you been teaching, including this current year?	Descriptive	Multiple choice, 5-year ranges	<i>M, SD</i> , min, and max
How many years have you taught in a rural school, including this current year?	Descriptive	Multiple choice, 5-year ranges	<i>M, SD</i> , min, and max
How many years have you previously taught in an urban school, including this current year?	Descriptive	Multiple choice, 5-year ranges	<i>M, SD</i> , min, and max
How many years have you previously taught in a suburban school, including this current year?	Descriptive	Multiple choice, 5-year ranges	<i>M, SD</i> , min, and max
What type of school did you attend as a K-12 student?	Descriptive	multiple choice	<i>n</i> for each rural, urban, suburban
If attended an urban or suburban school, how much of a challenge has this been as rural teacher?	Descriptive	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
Are you the same race as the majority of your students?	1 - contextual knowledge	Yes/No	<i>M, SD</i>
If no, how much of a challenge has this presented in developing relationships w/ students?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
Why did you take your current position in a rural school?	3 - Attitudes	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>N</i> , % of respondents, code "others"
Approximately what percentage of your school qualifies for free and reduced lunch?	1 - contextual knowledge	multiple choice, 25% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
Do you live in neighborhood/community in which you teach?	1 - contextual knowledge	Yes/No	<i>M, SD</i>

Survey Question	Research Question	Type of Response	Data to be Run
To what extent (1-5) do you know about the history of the community in which you teach?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what extent is your school facing pressure to raise standardized test scores?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree is the racial makeup of your program similar to that of the school?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree is racial makeup of the students in your program similar to that of the community?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree is socioeconomic level of the students in your program similar to the socioeconomic level of the school?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree is socioeconomic level of your students similar to that of the community?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree does your students use of language other than English present a challenge to you?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what extent is violence an issue in your school neighborhood/community?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what extent are drugs an issue in your school neighborhood/community?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what extent are gangs an issue in your school neighborhood/community?	1 - contextual knowledge	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree do you feel safe when walking in your school neighborhood?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
Do you teach at more than one school?			
Which classes do you teach and how many students are enrolled in each?	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n, % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled</i>
Sixth-grade band	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n, % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled</i>
Seventh-grade band	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n, % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled</i>

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
Eighth-grade band	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Top concert band (HS)	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Second concert band (HS)	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Marching band	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Jazz band	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Sixth-grade orchestra	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Seventh-grade orchestra	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Eighth-grade orchestra	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Top orchestra (HS)	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Second orchestra (HS)	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
General music	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Music technology	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students

Survey Question	Research Question	Type of Response	Data to be Run
			enrolled
Music theory	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
Other - open ended	Descriptive	check all that apply, w/ other	<i>n</i> , % of respondents, mean # students enrolled, SD students enrolled
To what degree do you feel you have been successful in teaching music in rural context?	3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree is your band/orchestra program successful?	3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree are you satisfied with teaching music in a rural school?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree did your undergraduate teacher education program prepare you to teach in rural area?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree do you incorporate popular music into the classroom?	3 - Beliefs about programs	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree do you incorporate music of students' culture in classroom?	3 - Beliefs about programs	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree is it a challenge to recruit quality students for your music program?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree do you receive support from administration?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree do you receive support from other teachers within your school?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree do you receive support from the parents of your students?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree are you asked to teach subjects other than music?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree is lack of funding a challenge to the success of your program	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>
To what degree is disrepair or lack of instruments a challenge to the success of your program?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M</i> , <i>SD</i>

Survey Question	Research Question	Type of Response	Data to be Run
To what degree are the facilities in which you teach adequate for your needs?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
From your school, what is the distance to the nearest college or university that offers a music degree?	Descriptive	multiple choice	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree do you have positive relationships with area university music ed programs/professors?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
To what degree do you believe university professors understand the issues you face as a rural teacher?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
What effect have private schools had on your recruiting efforts?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
What effect have magnet/selective enrollment schools had on your recruiting efforts?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
What effect have school counselors had on your recruiting efforts?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
What effect have special programs (AP/IB) had on recruiting students to your music program?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
What effect have parents' perceptions of problems in neighborhood had on recruiting?	4 - challenges	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
In an average year, approximately what percentage of rehearsals are lost to testing/test prep?	4 - challenges	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
What is the approximate amount of funding received from school/school system?	4 - challenges	open ended	<i>M, SD</i>
What is the approximate amount of money from fundraising this year?	4 - challenges	open ended	<i>M, SD</i>
Does your program charge a participation fee? If yes, how much?	4 - challenges	open ended	<i>M, SD</i>
Approximately what percentage of students require use of school owned instrument?	4 - challenges	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
To what extent do you believe that the following skills are important to succeed in a rural area?	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
A strong work ethic	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Providing a sufficient level of challenge	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Focusing on the basics	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Being creative with the resources that you are given	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Developing relationship with your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating love for your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Showing concern and care for students lives outside of school	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating respect for students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Spending personal funds to help your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Getting students to "buy into" the program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
To what extent do you believe that the following skills are important to succeed in a suburban area	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
A strong work ethic	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Providing a sufficient level of challenge	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Focusing on the basics	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
Being creative with the resources that you are given	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Developing relationship with your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating love for your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Showing concern and care for students lives outside of school	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating respect for students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Spending personal funds to help your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Getting students to “buy into” the program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
To what extent do you believe that the following skills are important to succeed in an urban area	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
A strong work ethic	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Providing a sufficient level of challenge	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Focusing on the basics	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Being creative with the resources that you are given	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Developing relationship with your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating love for your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Showing concern and care for students lives outside of school	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Demonstrating respect for students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Spending personal funds to help your students	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
“Selling” the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
Getting students to “buy into” the program	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - Kruskal-Wallis Test
To what extent do you believe the following statements	3 - Beliefs.	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i>
The students in my program are academically more successful than other students in the school	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
Student attitude and work ethic is more important than musical talent	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
Being able to make music is very valuable to my students	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My students are better behaved than the other students in the school	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My students are very dedicated to my program	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My students need more help getting motivated than urban or suburban students	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My students are just as musically talented as urban or suburban students, if not more so	3 - Beliefs about students	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
I have better disciplinary control over my classroom than other teachers at my school	3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
Very few people could successfully teach band or orchestra in a rural area	2 - Specialized Skills/ 3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
If I took a position in an urban or suburban school next year, I could easily succeed with the skills I have developed teaching in a rural school	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
If an urban or suburban instrumental music teacher took a position in a rural school, he/she could easily succeed with the skills developed in their urban/suburban school	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
I maintain very high expectations for my students	3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My program provides a haven from the problems in the rest of the school	3 - Beliefs about programs	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
My program provides a haven from the problems my students face at home and/or in their communities	3 - Beliefs about programs	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
The reputation a school has is usually representative of what actually happens in that school	3 - Beliefs about schools	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
My school is a clean, orderly, and safe place	3 - Beliefs about schools	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
I was more motivated to do my best when I started teaching than I am now	3 - Beliefs about themselves	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
I believe that my definition of success for my program is the same as a suburban or urban director's definition of success	2 - Specialized Skills	Likert Scale	<i>N, M, SD</i>
To what extent do the following indicate success within your program	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
The students have fun within my classroom	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That a cultivate a sense of pride within my students	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my students learn to work together	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my students develop leadership skills	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my students will become productive citizens	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my students successfully perform high quality music	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my ensembles receive good ratings at festivals and contests	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my program is well-respected by my colleagues in music education	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
That my students will go into music as a career	3 - Attitudes	Likert Scale	<i>M, SD</i> - rank order
Approximately what percent of students enter program with no previous experience playing instrument	1 - contextual knowledge	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
What % of parents are involved regularly	1 - contextual knowledge	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>

<b>Survey Question</b>	<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Type of Response</b>	<b>Data to be Run</b>
For the parents that are not involved, why?	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
They do not speak English	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
They work multiple jobs	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
They do not understand or value the music program	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
They are taking care of several other children and do not have access to childcare	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
They are experiencing personal problems	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	% of participants choosing this as an option
Other (open ended)	1 - contextual knowledge	check all that apply, w/ other	coding
If you teach MS, approximately what percent continue playing in HS	Descriptive	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
If you teach HS, approximately what percent attend four-year university or community college	Descriptive	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
If you teach HS, approximately what percent continue playing their instrument in college/community groups	Descriptive	multiple choice, 10% ranges	<i>M, SD</i>
If you teach HS, approximately what percent go on to major in music?	Descriptive	multiple choice – 10% ranges?	<i>M, SD</i>
In order of importance, please list top 3 things needed for success	4 - challenges	open ended	coding
In order of importance, please list top 3 things most rewarding as instrumental music educator	4 - rewards	open ended	coding

**APPENDIX C**  
**SURVEY DRAFT**

**Rural Instrumental Music Education Survey**

**\*\*At this time, this survey is in DRAFT FORM. Please *DO NOT COMPLETE THE SURVEY*, rather consider it, and provide me with feedback on the survey itself. Are there any questions/items that are confusing? Unnecessary? Can you think of a pertinent question that is not on here?**

**There is space to provide feedback in the last question of the Google form I sent you. If you prefer to provide feedback via email or in person, please let me know.**

**It will ultimately be in an electronic format.\*\***

1. What is your gender?
2. As of today, how old are you?
3. With what ethnic/racial group do you *most* identify?
  - Black
  - White
  - Hispanic
  - Asian/Pacific Islander
  - Other:
4. Including this current year, for how many years have you taught?
5. For how many years have you taught in a rural area?

6. What type of school did you attend yourself as a K-12 student?

Rural  
Urban  
Suburban

7. If you attended a suburban or urban school yourself, how much of a challenge has this presented to you as a rural teacher?

A great challenge  
Somewhat of a challenge  
Neutral  
Not much of a challenge  
No challenge

8. Are you the same race as the majority of your students?

Yes  
No

9. If no, how much of a challenge has this presented you with as you have developed relationships with your students?

A great challenge  
Somewhat of a challenge  
Neutral  
Not much of a challenge  
No challenge

10. Approximately what percentage of your school population receives a free or reduced lunch?

0-25%  
26-50%  
50-75%  
76-100%

11. Do you live in the neighborhood/community in which you teach?

Yes

No

12. What classes do you teach and approximately how many students are enrolled in those classes?

Class	How Many Students
Sixth Grade Band	
Seventh Grade Band	
Eighth Grade Band	
Top Concert Band (High School)	
Second Concert Band (High School)	
Marching Band	
Orchestra	
General Music	
Music Technology	
Jazz Band	
Music Theory	
Other (please specify):	

To what degree...		1 Not at All	2	3	4	5 Completely
13	... is your school facing pressure to raise standardized test scores?					
14	... is the racial makeup of your program's student population similar to the racial makeup of your surrounding community?					
15	... is the racial makeup of your program's student population similar to the racial makeup of your school?					
16	... is the socioeconomic level of the students in your program similar to the socioeconomic level of your surrounding community?					

<b>To what degree...</b>		<b>1</b> Not at All	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b> Completely
17	... is the socioeconomic level of the students in your program similar to the socioeconomic level of your school?					
18	... does your students' use of languages other than English present a challenge to you as a teacher?					
19	... do you feel you have been successful in teaching music in a rural context?					
20	... do you feel your band/orchestra program is successful?					
21	... are you satisfied with teaching music in a rural school?					
22	... did your teacher education program prepare you to teach instrumental music in the rural schools?					
23	... do you incorporate popular music into the classroom?					
24	... do you incorporate the music of your students' culture into the classroom?					
25	... is it a challenge to recruit quality students for your music program?					
26	... do you receive support from your administration?					
27	... do you receive support from the other teachers within your school?					
28	... do you receive support from the parents of your students?					
29	... are you asked to teach subjects other than music?					
30	... do you feel safe when walking in your school neighborhood?					
31	... is lack of funding a challenge to the success of your program?					
32	... is disrepair or lack of instruments a challenge to the success of your program?					
33	... do you feel you have positive relationships with area university					

<b>To what degree...</b>		1 Not at All	2	3	4	5 Completely
	music education programs/professors?					
34	... do you believe university professors understand the issues that you face as a rural teacher?					
35	... are the facilities in which you teach adequate for your needs?					

<b>Indicate the type of effect the following have had on your efforts to recruit students for your music program</b>		1 Strongly Negative	2	3	4	5 Strongly Positive
36	Private Schools					
37	District Magnet/Selective Enrollment Schools					
38	The influence of school counselors					
39	Specialized programs (such as AP or IB classes that your school offers)					
40	Parents' perceptions of problems in the neighborhood					

<b>To what extent do you believe that the following skills are important to succeeding in an urban environment? In a suburban environment? In a rural environment?</b>			1 Extremely Unimportant	2	3	4	5 Extremely Important
41	Strong work ethic	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
42	Providing a sufficient level of challenge	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
43	Focusing on the basics	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
44	Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
45	Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					

<b>To what extent do you believe that the following skills are important to succeeding in an urban environment? In a suburban environment? In a rural environment?</b>			1 Extremely Unimportant	2	3	4	5 Extremely Important
46	Walking into the classroom fully prepared and with a good plan	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
47	Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
48	Being creative with the resources that you are given	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
49	Developing relationships with your students	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
50	Demonstrating love for your students	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
51	Showing concern and care for students' lives outside of school	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
52	Demonstrating respect for students	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
53	Spending personal funds to help your students	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
54	"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					
55	Getting students to "buy in" to the program	Rural					
		Suburban					
		Urban					

<b>To what extent are the following issues in your school neighborhood/community?</b>		1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the maximum extent
56	Violence					
57	Drugs					
58	Gangs					

<b>To what extent do you agree with the following statements?</b>		1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the maximum extent
59	The students in my program are academically more successful than other students in the school					
60	Student attitude and work ethic is more important than musical talent					
61	Being able to make music is very valuable to my students					
62	My students are better behaved than other students in the school					
63	My students are very dedicated to my program					
64	My students need more help getting motivated than urban or suburban students might					
65	My students are just as musically talented, if not more so, than urban or suburban students					
66	I have better disciplinary control over my classroom than do other teachers at my school					
67	Very few people could successfully teach band or orchestra in a rural area					

<b>To what extent do you agree with the following statements?</b>		1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the maximum extent
68	If I took a position in an urban or suburban school next year, I could easily succeed with the skills I have developed teaching in a rural school					
69	If an urban or suburban instrumental music teacher took a position in a rural school, he/she could easily succeed with the skills developed teaching in their urban/suburban school					
70	I maintain very high expectations for my students					
71	My program provides a haven from the problems in the rest of the school					
72	My program provides a haven from the problems my students face at home and/or in their communities					
73	The reputation that a school has is usually representative of what actually happens in that school					
74	My school is a clean, orderly, and safe place					
75	I was more motivated to do my best when I started teaching than I am now					
76	I believe that my definition of success for my program is the same as a suburban or urban director's definition of success					
77	I know a great deal about the history of the community in					

<b>To what extent do you agree with the following statements?</b>		1 Not at all	2	3	4	5 To the maximum extent
	which I teach					
78	The students have fun within my classroom					
79	That I cultivate a sense of pride within my students					
80	That I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students					
81	That my students learn to work together					
82	That my students develop leadership skills					
83	That my students will become productive citizens					
84	That my students successfully perform high quality music					
85	That my ensembles receive good ratings at festivals and contests					
86	That my program is well-respected by my colleagues in music education					
87	That my students will go into music as a career					

**Please fill in the blank:**

88	During an average year, approximately how many rehearsals will you lose due to district testing and test preparation?	
89	What is the approximate amount of funding that you received this year from your school/school system?	
90	What is the approximate amount of money that you raise through fundraising efforts each year?	
91	Approximately what percent of your students require the use of a school owned instrument?	
92	In an average year, approximately how many of your graduating seniors go on to become music	

	education majors at the university level?	
93	Approximately what percentage of your students enter your program with no previous experience playing an instrument?	
94	Does your program charge a participation fee to students?	
95	If so, how much does each student pay per year?	

**96. In order of most importance to you, please list the top 3 things that you *most need* for your program to succeed:**

1.
2.
3.

**97. In order of most importance to you, please list what is **MOST** rewarding to you as a rural instrumental music teacher.**

1.
2.
3.

**98. Why did you take a position in a rural school? Check all that apply.**

Because I wanted to help people	
Because I attended this school or one in the area and wanted to continue living in the area and give back	
Because I didn't get a job in a different setting	
Other (Please explain):	



**APPENDIX D**  
**SURVEY RECRUITMENT LETTER**

Dear North Carolina Music Educator,

I am conducting a research study on teaching instrumental music in rural NC, and am seeking your participation in this voluntary, anonymous survey that will only take about 15 minutes.

My name is Melody Causby, and I spent eleven years teaching band in rural NC. I am now a PhD student at UNC Greensboro, and hope to better prepare young teachers for teaching in rural areas, and your participation in this study can help do that. If you plan to participate, please do so by Monday, May 7, 2018.

[https://uncg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0vtfRjdxF1ST977](https://uncg.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0vtfRjdxF1ST977)

There are four research questions, and each survey question is directly tied to one of the research questions.

1. What contextual knowledge do rural instrumental music teachers hold about the students they teach and the communities in which they teach?
2. What specialized skills do rural teachers rely upon to be successful within the setting?
3. What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in rural schools?
4. What challenges and rewards do instrumental music teachers perceive from teaching instrumental music in a rural environment?

The answers to these questions will help identify and describe what rural NC instrumental music educators experience and perceive to be their biggest challenges and rewards. My ultimate goal is to better prepare pre-service music teachers. Many of our undergraduate music education students spend their time observing and student teaching in urban and suburban environments, then find themselves in a rural area for their first job. I am simply seeking to collect data in order describe the students, teaching music in the rural setting, and the challenges and rewards that go along with it so that young teachers who find themselves in this position might be better prepared.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and participation.

Sincerely,

Melody Causby

Approved IRB  
4/16/18

## APPENDIX E

### CONSENT FORM

#### Consent Form

Project Title: Rural Instrumental Music Teaching in North Carolina

Principal Investigator: Melody Causby

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jennifer Stewart Walter

#### What is this all about?

I am asking you to participate in this research study because in order to better prepare future instrumental music educators for teaching in rural areas, we need to identify and define the challenges that current rural instrumental music educators face. This research project will only take about ten minutes and will involve you responding to questions via an online survey. Your participation in this research project is voluntary.

The survey is a replica of Kate Fitzpatrick's study about Music Education in inner city Chicago. A focus group of rural music educators was used to adapt the survey to study teaching in rural areas.

#### How will this negatively affect me?

Other than the time you spend on this project there are no known or foreseeable risks involved with this study.

#### What do I get out of this research project?

You and/or society will or might benefit by having beginning instrumental music educators better informed about and prepared for the challenges they may face when teaching in a rural area.

#### Will I get paid for participating?

No, there is no compensation for participation.

#### What about my confidentiality?

We will do everything possible to make sure that your information is kept confidential. All information obtained in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. For the online survey, no identifying information will be asked for or tracked. Survey Monkey is being used to administer the survey, and data will be stored on their servers. Although you will not provide any identifying information, absolute confidentiality of data provided through the Internet cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access. Please be sure to close your browser when finished so no one will be able to see what you have been doing.

#### What if I do not want to be in this research study?

You do not have to be part of this project. This project is voluntary and it is up to you to decide to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate at any time in this project you may stop participating without penalty.

#### What if I have questions?

You can ask Melody Causby ([mschandl@uncg.edu](mailto:mschandl@uncg.edu)) or Dr. Jennifer Stewart Walter ([jlstewa@uncg.edu](mailto:jlstewa@uncg.edu)) anything about the study. If you have concerns about how you have been treated in this study call the Office of Research Integrity Director at 1-855-251-2351.

Approved IRB

3/14/18