

MCKNIGHT, SETH N. Ph.D. A Descriptive Analysis of Elementary Music Teachers' Planning Time.(2022)  
Directed by Dr. Tami Draves. 125 pp.

The purpose of this descriptive study was to examine elementary music teachers' planning times. The existing literature on planning time is scarce and the literature on elementary music teachers' planning time is nearly nonexistent. The following research questions guided the study: (a) How many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? (b) What type(s) of planning do elementary music teachers participate in? (c) What do elementary music teachers do during their planning time? The researcher modified an existing survey (Hixon et al., 2013), which underwent two piloting phases to establish content validity and statistical reliability. The participants ( $N = 246$ ) in this study were randomly selected from across the United States via the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) survey research assistance program. The survey items relating to planning time were based on the participants' teaching rotations. All but one participant reported having individual planning time and most participants did not participate in common planning time (85.8%,  $n = 211$ ) or in a Professional Learning Community for music teachers (54.1%,  $n = 133$ ). Elementary music teachers planned lessons ( $n = 240$ , 97.6%), called students' parents ( $n = 132$ , 53.7%), graded student work ( $n = 131$ , 73.6%), attended meetings ( $n = 131$ , 53.3%), cleaned their rooms between classes ( $n = 18$ , 20.1%), repaired instruments ( $n = 6$ , 6.8%), and composed and arranged music ( $n = 3$ , 3.4%) during their planning times. The results of this study will lay the foundation for future studies on elementary music teachers' planning time and impact future education policy regarding planning time.

*Keywords: planning time, elementary music, professional learning communities*

A DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS OF ELEMENTARY MUSIC TEACHERS' PLANNING TIME

by

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Approved by

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## DEDICATION

*To Brandy Mulkey and Linda Zarick.*

## APPROVAL PAGE

This dissertation written by Seth N. McKnight has been approved by the following committee of the Faculty of The Graduate School at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

*During the 2017/2018 school year, eight classes were added to my teaching schedule and nearly all my planning time was taken from me. I was told that I would be planning before and after school and as a compromise, I would not be required to perform any duties. In November of that school year, I lost my singing voice for the first time in my career because I did not have time during the school day without students. I provided planning time for every grade-level teacher in the two schools I taught in, but I did not receive an equitable amount of planning time.*

Although planning time has been written about in the past (Carey, 1952), it continues to be a problem for all teachers because there were so few researchers (Conrad, 1993; Hixon et al., 2013) who specifically targeted planning time as the central focus of their studies. The existing literature presented the tasks teachers completed daily, including planning time. Planning time activities were also documented in the literature. However, how often and how long teachers planned remained a mystery until Conrad (1993) investigated planning time. Twenty years later, planning time was investigated again by Hixon et al. (2013).

Planning time could be one of the most important activities teachers did during the school day because they used it to reflect on their practice, grade and evaluate students, and plan lessons. Elementary music teachers also needed planning time because they taught nearly every student in their schools and completed many of the same planning activities as grade-level teachers. In addition to planning activities, music teachers also practiced instruments, repaired instruments, and composed or arranged music. Knowing what grade-level and music teachers did during their planning times would help school schedulers know how much planning teachers needed.

Eleven states had laws governing teaching planning time as a time set aside during the school day, but the phrase *school day* was not specifically defined (Education Commission of the States, 2019). The school day could be contracted working hours or student-contact hours, or in other words, when students were at school. If the school day meant contracted working hours, then planning time might be any time during the school day or after school. However, if teachers had planning time while students were at school, then when they had planning depended on when they did not have their class. Rettig and Canady (1995) recommended that grade-level teachers had planning every day of the week when their class went to a different content specialist, like art, music, or physical education, and the amount of planning depended on how long their class was with another teacher.

Likewise, elementary general music teachers' planning schedules were dependent on when the grade-level teachers had their classes. The National Association for Music Education (NAfME, 2020) recommended that K-5 music teachers have the same amount of planning time as grade-level teachers, however, that language seemed ambiguous.

### **Types of Planning**

Knowing the type of planning time teachers needed was also important. The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE, 1977) mentioned that the type of planning teachers needed should be considered when creating teachers' schedules. Elementary grade-level teachers engaged in individual and common planning. Common planning time happened when teachers from the same subject area or grade level met to plan. Individual planning time occurred without other teachers. A Professional Learning Community (PLC) was also when teachers planned, but the planning was specific, and lessons were based on testing data, such as benchmarks or End-of-Grade tests (Battersby, 2019). Curricular decisions and student academic interventions were also

decided during PLCs. PLC planning periods were dependent on each school's schedule. Some teachers may have had just one type of planning period or have had up to all three types of planning periods.

As previously mentioned, elementary music teachers participated in individual planning time when all grade-level teachers had their classes. However, the frequency in which they participated in common planning is in question. A music teacher would no doubt benefit from common planning. For the elementary music teacher, common planning time might happen with a special education. Collaboratively planning with a special education teacher would afford the music teacher to study their students' Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) and learn about the unique ways in which those students learned. An elementary music teacher might also collaboratively plan with grade-level teachers. Occasionally, the researcher of the present study planned units on fractions with fourth and fifth-grade teachers in hopes that the students would make meaningful transfers of knowledge from music notation reading to math class. The best-case scenario for the elementary music teacher would be having the opportunity to plan with another music teacher in their school.

Professional Learning Communities were a crucial type of common planning for grade-level teachers and elementary music teachers. A PLC was "a group of connected and engaged professionals who were responsible for driving change and improvement within, between, and across schools that will directly benefit learners" (Harris & Jones, 2010, p. 173). Elementary music teachers would also benefit from attending a music PLC for the same reasons Harris and Jones (2010) mentioned. Elementary music teachers could meet and plan for their students' musical education, connect the National Standards for Music Education directly to their lessons, align their curriculum across their district, and plan events. Music teachers indicated that PLCs

offered them meaningful professional development and opportunities to watch their peers teach (Sindberg, 2016).

### **Problem Statement**

Individual and common planning times were critical times in a teacher's professional life. Inadequate amounts of planning time during student-contact hours could lead to teachers planning before and after school and at home. Planning time was necessary so that teachers could choose the best materials to teach and plan for the best way to meet their students' needs. Teachers' availability to during the school day occurred when they were not teaching their students. Grade-level teachers planned when other teachers, like music teachers, taught their students. Likewise, music teachers could plan their lessons when all the grade-level teachers had their classes.

The existing literature on elementary teachers' planning time is scarce, and the research on elementary music teachers' planning times is nearly non-existent. Conrad (1993) stated that "it would be appropriate to assume that because little effort has been given to the study of elementary planning time, planning time is not important or a high priority" (p. 96). However, elementary teachers, administrators, and district superintendents identify planning as a high-priority issue (Conrad, 1993). In this study I am interested in learning what elementary music teachers did during their planning periods, which type of planning periods they had, and the number of minutes of planning music teachers had.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. The following research questions guided the study: (a) How many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? (b) What type(s) of planning do elementary

music teachers participate in? (c) What do elementary music teachers do during their planning time?

## CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. There is little extant research literature on this topic, particularly with regards to elementary music teachers. I chose to focus on research related to how teachers spend their time during the school day. In this chapter the researcher reviewed the literature on what teachers did during the school day, how they used their planning time, when and how long they planned, and further explained individual and common planning.

Several researchers have documented how teachers spend their day (Hixon et. al., 2013; Merritt, 2016). The “school workday” consisted of many tasks for teachers and teaching and planning were just two of those tasks. Teachers were responsible for meetings, contacting parents, administrative tasks, grading, interacting with students, and covering other school areas, among other things (Hixon et al., 2013; Merritt, 2016). Hixon et al. (2013) defined the different types of meetings as parent-teacher conferences, IEP meetings, or administrative meetings. Contacting parents either required teachers to call the guardians, email them, or hand-write notes to them. Parent/teacher conferences took place during the teacher's planning time or after school; often, meeting with parents and guardians after school took several weeks to meet with every parent (NCTE Committee, 1977; Swiderek, 1997).

Administrative tasks included making copies and completing paperwork. Many elementary teachers had “take-home” folders for their students, which Hixon et al. (2013) considered part of grading duties, along with keeping student records up-to-date and ensuring absent students received their missed work. Time to sit and focus on grading and evaluation were crucial for the teacher, as accurate records were essential for the planning process (NCTE

Committee, 1977). Interacting with the students outside of teaching time included tutoring, managing behavioral problems, and attending to sick students. Some teachers reported filling in for other absent teachers and monitoring lunchtime, hallways, and buses. Hixon et al. (2013) reported that many of these tasks took place during the teachers' planning time, which diminished their time to plan for instruction.

Elementary music teachers were also responsible for non-teaching activities. Martin (2015) asked an elementary music teacher to track the amount of time they spent on instructional activities and non-instructional activities. Examples of non-instructional activities included "arrival procedures, transitional time, bathroom breaks, errands to the office, room clean up, and substitute planning" (p. 47). Elementary music teachers spent time grading and evaluating their students, often grading for an entire school student body (Martin, 2015). In addition to grading and evaluating, Martin (2015) found that elementary music teachers also call parents, work on projects, and complete reports.

### **Planning Time Use**

Hixon et al. (2013) found that 39.98% ( $n = 443$ ) of teachers engaged in activities other than planning during their planning periods. Some of those other activities included taking breaks, and engaged in other activities such as addressing student behavior, supervising other classes, and making phone calls. Many of these tasks could only be done when students were not with them (Hixon et al., 2013).

In their survey of teachers, Conrad (1993) found that the top five planning tasks for grade-level teachers were "complete daily lesson plans; continue work on unit plans; mentally reflect on past or future instruction; prepare student materials; and student assessment activities" (p. 51). Grade-level teachers graded student work, planned for upcoming tasks, took personal



breaks, supervised other classes, and called students' homes during their planning periods.

Conrad (1993) reported that:

Curriculum specialists who taught music, physical education, art, library/media, etc., did not include student assessment tasks as being one of the top five most frequent planning time tasks. [These teachers reported] that mental reflection on past and future instruction was one of the top five most frequent planning tasks. (p. 64, 69)

## **Grading**

Researchers have found that teachers spend a portion of their planning periods grading and evaluating student work (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Bruno et al., 2012; Chandler, 2018; Conrad, 1993, Hixon et al., 2013; Martin, 2015). Grading and evaluating were crucial to lesson planning. Without grading work, teachers would not know what their students know and what they need help understanding. Chandler (2018) believed “music teachers were usually responsible for grading and evaluating many more students than classroom teachers and often worked with students during lunch, during recess, or after school,” and suggested that these responsibilities led to higher music teacher burnout (p. 37). Music teachers may burn out more quickly grading their students' work. If music teachers did not have adequate time to grade during their planning time, then their schedule was not appropriate to meet their needs.

Bruno et al. (2012) found that of the nearly nine hours that Chicago public school teachers ( $n = 983$ ) spent at work, they assessed students work an average of 31 minutes per day at the elementary level, 37 minutes at the middle school level, and 45 minutes at the high school level. However, an average of 37 minutes (across all grade levels) was spent assessing students' work when teachers were at home. Most teachers indicated that they graded some student work

during their planning periods. Overall, a lack of time to grade student work during the school day may have led some to experience teacher burnout (Bruno et al., 2012).

### **Planning for Instruction**

In addition to lesson planning, teachers worked on future lessons and unit plans during their planning periods. Every planned lesson also needed materials such as worksheets, manipulatives, associated websites, writing prompts, and other materials (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Conrad, 1993; Hixon et al., 2013). Barney and Deutsch (2012) stated that a teacher's planning period was between 30 and 60 minutes. Bruno et al. (2012) found that teachers (K-12) spent an average of 40 minutes planning lessons at home, but only an average of 26 minutes planning lessons during the school day. Teachers spent time choosing or creating worksheets, flashcards, games, or art activities for their students to use to help them synthesize lesson material. Music teachers decided which instruments or musical arrangements were needed to fit their lesson best. If a lesson required students to visit websites or engage with the World Wide Web in any way, the websites needed to be examined and approved for student use by an administrator.

### **Personal Time**

When asked about what they did during their planning time, teachers often mentioned personal breaks when researchers asked what they did during their planning periods (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Conrad, 1993). Teaching, classroom management, and helping students, could be mentally and physically exhausting. For example, Barney and Deutsch (2012) found that grade-level teachers enjoyed time to go to the restroom, eat snacks, and "sit down and relax" when their classes were in a physical education class with another teacher (p. 373). Conrad (1993) found that "teachers with 100 minutes or more" of planning spent more time taking care of

personal needs (p. 77), such as taking bathroom breaks and getting coffee. A music teacher might spend part of their planning period resting their vocal cords, listening to music, or practicing.

### **Additional Tasks**

Teachers most often reported lesson planning, grading, and spending some time to themselves as activities accomplished done during planning (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Bruno et al., 2012; Chandler, 2018; Conrad, 1993, Hixon et al., 2013; Martin, 2015). They also reported, however, doing other things during their planning periods such as covering other classes, dealing with student behaviors, diagnosing technology problems, or attending school-wide assemblies (Hixon et al., 2013). Some teachers spent part of their planning periods trying to fix technology problems or found someone who could fix their problem (Hixon et al., 2013). Abdullah (2017) tried to learn why some teachers used technology in their lessons more than others. “Exemplar teachers” utilized more technology in their instruction than “typical teachers,” who cited a lack of necessary time to plan for its utilization, and for “fear of losing instructional time if something went wrong with the technology integration” (p. 1814). Technology utilization required teachers to spend time planning for it, and some teachers believed that the planning time spent on it enhanced their lessons. Other teachers did not agree.

### **Planning Time: When and How**

Teachers’ planning periods occurred during student-contact hours. Carey (1952) wrote that “teachers’ planning periods must be on school time if its accomplishments are to come largely from cooperative activities” (p. 176). At school, a teacher has access to their files, teaching materials, colleagues, and other resources. Some teachers, however, could not complete all of their instructional planning while at school, either during student-contact hours or when students were not at school, and some teachers completed instructional planning outside of

school. "Teachers can do some planning away from the school but much of it must be done at school, where materials and resources are available. " (NCCTE Committee, 1977, p. 834).

Merritt (2016), citing the National Center for Education Statistics, reported that “elementary teachers in the United States spend about 32 hours a week with students and are paid to work 38 hours weekly on average.” One could assume that the six-hour difference between those averages is before and after school and instructional planning time. Ladd (2011) found that only 38% of elementary school teachers reported having three hours of planning time per week in the 2006 North Carolina Working Conditions survey. Ladd (2011) also discovered that 81 to 83% of teachers spent more than three hours per week on school-related work outside of school.

Grade-level teachers reported that planning time was an essential part of their day, and without students attending a physical education class, teachers would not have time to plan and complete other school-related tasks (Barney & Deutsch, 2012). Absent from that study was information about the physical educators’ planning time and the activities physical education teachers completed during planning time. Physical education teachers, like art teachers, typically shared the same schedules, and would need planning time, too.

The more specialist teachers a school had, the more planning time grade-level teachers had (Conrad, 1993; Missouri Dept. of Education, n.d.). The Missouri Department of Education (MDOE) recommended that elementary students “receive instruction in art, music, and physical education for 50 minutes in each area each week” (p. 1). Art, music, and physical education classes provided grade-level teachers with a minimum of three planning periods a week. The MDOE also suggested that schools offer teachers more time with other teachers or specialists to provide teachers with the recommended 250 minutes of planning time.

Some principals and superintendents reported that teachers could plan at other times when teachers were at school. Conrad (1993) found that those administrators “considered before and after school time and duty-free recess time as planning time for teachers. Many teachers reported that those times were often used to attend meetings or work with students” (p. 104). In some Nebraska schools, “parent volunteers were used to increase planning time for elementary teachers” (Conrad, 1993, p. 14).

The use of specialist teachers provided planning time for grade-level teachers (Conrad, 1993). This finding suggests that some administrators might have misused or misunderstood planning time and referred to planning time as any time the grade-level teacher did not have students in the room. This finding might also have suggested that music teachers’ planning times could have been before or after school too; however, music teachers’ planning times were not the principal focus of the article (Conrad, 1993).

Many teachers took work with them when leaving school because either planning time was short, or tasks could not be completed while at school. Instead of taking work home, some teachers elected to stay at school past the normal workday to complete work. Baker (2011) surveyed 357 members of the Texas Music Educators Association and found that “47% of respondents reported spending 1 to 2 non-required hours at their school each day, 40% reported 3 to 4 hours daily, and 10% reported spending 5 to 6 additional hours each day” (Baker, 2011, p. 6).

The Labor Education Program of the School of Labor and Employment Relations at the University of Illinois surveyed nearly 1,000 public school teachers in the Chicago Public Schools to learn how long teachers worked every day (Bruno et al, 2012). Researchers discovered that teachers worked 52 hours a week on average. Primarily, teachers worked nearly an 11-hour

workday (on average) and typically worked an additional two hours at home (on average). Furthermore, teachers spent nearly four hours on school-related work for nearly four hours on the weekends. Of the teachers who responded to the survey, 22% were from the category “other,” representing teachers from “gym, health, arts, performing arts, foreign language, library, etc.” (p. 8).

The amount of planning time teachers had varied dramatically, and individual and common planning could be completed during the same planning block or scheduled separately during the school day (Monterosso, 2014). Merritt (2016) stated that “a productive day of teaching [required] substantial planning time to choose effective strategies, design lessons, prepare materials, and collaborate with others” (p. 33). Merritt (2016) found that most teachers had 45 minutes of planning every day. The Missouri Department of Education’s (n.d.) website recommended that all elementary classroom teachers have a minimum of 250 minutes of planning time each week, with at least 50 minutes of planning every day “between the official start and close of the school day and not include[ing] travel time, lunchtime, or time before or after school (p. 6). The National Council on Teacher Quality (2012) study stated that most teachers had around 45 minutes of planning time every day during contracted work hours, “with a range from 12-80 minutes [per day] for elementary teachers and 30 to 96 minutes for secondary teachers” (p. 33). Monterosso (2014) found a range of collaborative planning time (from 0 to 265 minutes per week) was utilized in the West Virginia public schools for eighth-grade teachers; teachers’ “individual planning times ranged from 150 to 450 minutes per week” (p. 59). Of the schools surveyed in that study, all teachers had some individual planning time each week, but not all teachers had collaborative planning each week.

To increase planning time for classroom teachers, Hixon et al. (2013) recommended that students attend more elective courses “with skilled professionals” (p. 6). School staff who did not meet the “classroom teacher” title were administrators, counselors, or librarians. Merritt (2016) also recommended that schools hire more physical education teachers to offer grade-level teachers more planning but did not suggest when physical education teachers would plan.

Gerretson et al. (2008) explored factors associated with more specialists being used in elementary schools. More specialist teachers allowed grade-level teachers more planning time, as the specialists were primarily math teachers and other core-subject areas. The result of more planning time allowed the grade-level teachers to “create more focused, creative lessons using more resources” (p. 312). “A direct result of the focused planning time was reported as a reduction in the everyday stress placed on teachers” (p. 312).

Schools using block schedules, as opposed to traditional schedules, also offered teachers more planning time. Conrad (1993) explained that blocks of common planning were needed so that teachers could plan units and amend curriculum. Hixon et al. (2013) found high school teachers who worked on a block schedule had more planning time (86.31 minutes) than high school teachers who worked on a traditional schedule (46.57 minutes).

Ninety-two percent of teachers in school districts who had 100-200 minutes of planning per week desired more planning time (Conrad, 1993). The teachers (36%) reported that if they had more than 200 minutes of planning each week, they would have participated in more long-term and collaborative planning.

Planning time was most effective for teachers when their planning was during the school day. However, many teachers needed to take their planning tasks home every day to complete their lessons or grading. In North Carolina, only 38% of teachers reported having three or more

hours of planning every week during the school day, with an average of 82% of teachers spending at least three hours planning outside of school (Ladd, 2011). For classroom teachers to receive more planning time, many recommended that their classes attend more specialist classes (Conrad, 1993). No recommendations were made for how to increase the amount of planning time for elementary music teachers.

### **Individual**

The most common type of planning period was individual planning. Individual planning periods were when teachers worked alone, in their classrooms, or somewhere secluded. Some of those periods were short and frequent, while others were blocked out (e.g., one three-hour planning block per week) and less frequent. Merritt (2016) suggested that individual planning periods should be at least 45 minutes every day so that teachers could prepare their lessons and associated materials, and so they could contact other teachers in the school to help with differentiated instruction. Miles and Darling-Hammond (1998) found that most elementary school teachers received an individual 45-minute planning period four to five days every week, while their classes were with other teachers in music or art. Those two studies were conducted almost two decades apart, but the individual planning periods were the same length as the Merritt (2016) study. While Merritt (2016) did not specifically say where grade-level teachers' classes were during their planning, one can assume their classes were with other teachers.

According to researchers, individual planning times for music teachers depended on scheduling. Elementary music teachers have had individual planning periods when all the grade-level teachers had their classes. In a qualitative dissertation investigating elementary music teacher attrition in Title I schools, Chandler (2018) interviewed five music teachers at varying career stages. Planning time, or a lack of planning, was a problem for one of the study's



participants, Lydia. On paper, Lydia had a planning period every day of the school week. She had an uninterrupted planning period three days a week. On the other two days, she had four 15-minute planning periods, but those times were spent doing “gym or hallway duties, [or] supervising students before or after school” (p. 108). Lydia reported that she used to have a 45-minute planning period every day prior to Chandler’s (2018) study, and with the two days of 15-minute planning periods and the non-teaching duties, she felt that she needed more time to adequately plan and prepare for her classes.

Additionally, Scheib (2004) found that one factor leading to band director burnout was not having enough time to prepare for performances. Gardner (2010) reported that “11.2% of music teachers’ regular school time was allotted for planning,” which was slightly higher than other teachers (10.2%) (p. 115).

### **Common Planning**

Common, or collaborative planning time happened when groups of teachers gathered in a shared space to plan. Antonucci and Reville (1995) realized the power of common planning time when they wrote that the need for common planning time would not be temporary but would “be ongoing if we are to sustain our capacity for collaboration (p. 7). The Montgomery County Public Schools (2009) suggested that art, music, and P.E. teachers provide collaborative planning time for classroom teachers. Teachers who had common planning could be from the same grade level or from the same subject area (Carey, 1952; Flowers et al., 1999; Haverback & Mee, 2013; MacIver, 1990; Miles & Darling-Hammond, 2014; Merritt, 2016).

Common planning time has been considered a more powerful tool than individual planning because teachers who worked together had greater outcomes, such as stronger lesson plans and teaching practices (Carey, 1952). Carey (1952) wrote that “groups of teachers need to

work together in planning for total groups of the same grade level, or the same area in subject fields” (p. 176). Álvarez (2020) stated that common planning allowed teachers to reflect on their practice and to decide what their students needed most. Haverback and Mee (2013) examined teachers’ ( $N = 50$ ) perspectives of what happened during common planning periods and found three main benefits in a suburban middle school “in a Mid-Atlantic state” (p. 10). First, teachers enjoyed the “open lines of communications with their team leader” (p. 14). Second, the teachers worked well together. Third, every teacher had high expectations for student achievement. The one downside to common planning time was simply not having enough of it (Haverback & Mee, 2013).

In a nation-wide survey to teachers ( $N = 3,328$ ), Rentner (2016) found that 80% of teachers ( $n = 2,662$ ) who collaborated with other teachers during student contact hours did so informally, such as when they passed each other in the hall. Renter (2016) also found that of those who collaborated with other teachers, 66% ( $n = 1,757$ ) reported they collaborated during designated collaboration times, such as “professional development sessions, email, online forums, or other information networks” (p. 27). In addition, about 58% ( $n = 1,544$ ) of teachers who collaborated with other teachers did so “during their planning time, while 44%” ( $n = 1,171$ ) collaborated outside of the school day (p. 27). Merritt (2016) suggested that some school districts encouraged teachers to plan together, while others designated a specific time for collaborative planning.

Teachers who planned together got more accomplished (Kaplan et al., 2015). Teachers who worked to implement the Common Core State Standards spent time beyond structured professional development sessions in collaborative planning to “agree on lesson plans, assessments, and selected texts,” which helped all teachers’ productivity and consistency in

teaching (Kaplan et al., p. 18). School administrators played a role in ensuring successful collaborative planning times by intervening when groups of teachers did not work well as a team. For a successful collaborative planning time, teachers needed to create the culture of collaboration to reach their desired level of productivity.

Teachers who met from different subject areas to plan collaboratively participated in “interdisciplinary teaming,” defined by Flowers et al. (1999) as “a group of teachers from different subject areas who plan and work together and who share the same students for a significant portion of the school day” (p. 57). Middle school teachers who shared the same students typically formed teams of two or more teachers. For common planning time to be effective, teachers needed to meet regularly to work on curriculum and individual student needs (Flowers et al., 1999). The teams of teachers worked together to differentiate instruction since they shared the same students. Elementary teachers also participated in common planning when their classes were in music; however, team teaching in elementary school typically happened in the upper grades to prepare students for middle school. Fourth- and fifth-grade teachers shared the same students because each teacher taught one or two subjects. Like common planning time, Bridgers (2020) suggested that teachers from the same subject areas meet to discuss their teaching methods in depth; however, Bridgers (2020) also suggested that teachers who taught the same grade levels should meet.

When groups of teachers gathered to plan, their students benefited, too. Douglass (2008) discovered that when teachers planned together, their communication skills improved, and their expectations for student achievement and behavior improved, also. Those teachers participated in a Small Learning Community (SLC), where the teachers shared the same students and observed each other teach. The teachers noted that their students knew that their teachers worked together,

shared the same expectations, and enjoyed seeing other teachers visiting classes other than theirs. The SLC created a stable environment for the teachers and their students as the teachers shared the same expectations for academics and student behavior, and those consistent expectations helped the students transition to different classes most of the time (Douglas, 2008).

Bretz (2012) examined how common planning time within PLCs increased student achievement. They interviewed principals ( $n = 10$ ) and organized a focus group for teachers ( $n = 29$ ). The teachers were able to share instructional strategies and teaching resources and align their curriculum to learn the same material across different classes. Special education teachers were also able to attend the common planning time meetings to help plan tailored learning strategies for special learners. The teachers also spent their common planning time creating expectations for their students' achievement and checking certain students' behavioral trends across classes. The school administrators reported that overall test scores increased due to their teachers planning collaboratively.

Researchers from several different studies examined common planning time. Common planning time occurred with teachers from the same subject area and teachers from different subject areas (Carey, 1952; Flowers et al., 1999; McIver, 1990; Haring & Kelner, 2015). Generally, Bretz (2012) indicated that teachers from the same subject area enjoyed working together and taking advantage of brainstorming with their colleagues. The teachers also felt more accomplished than when they just participated in individual planning (Kaplan et al., 2015). Teachers from different subject areas shared the same group of students, which allowed them to plan differentiated instruction and helped the teachers share the same expectations for their students (Bretz, 2012). The teachers who shared the same students also reported that their

communication skills increased (Bretz, 2012). Both forms of collaborative planning were beneficial to teachers.

### **Professional Learning Communities**

The Professional Learning Community (PLC) seen in school settings was borrowed from the private sector and implemented in the 1980s (Hord, 1997). PLCs were comprised of groups of teachers who met regularly and worked together to create common goals for student learning and ways to implement those goals in the classroom (Bridgers, 2020; DuFour et al., 2010; Greer, 2020; Provini, 2012; Vescio, 2008). Professional Learning Community members:

Work together to clarify exactly what each student must learn, monitor each student's learning on a timely basis, provide systematic interventions that ensure students receive additional time and support for learning when they struggle, and extend and enrich learning when students have already mastered the intended outcomes. (DuFour et al., 2010, p. 11)

Baselines of students' performance on standardized tests and teacher-made tests were required so that teachers could make plans for student learning (Provini, 2012). PLCs required teachers to meet and work on lesson plans and differentiate instruction (Merritt, 2016). DeFour (2004) proposed three questions for each PLC to consider: "a) What do we want each student to learn? b) How will we know when each student has learned it" and c) How will we respond when a student experiences difficulty in learning" (p. 8).

PLCs were "organized, collaborative structures among educators" (Bridgers, 2020, para. 1). Greer (2020) defined the organizational structure as a "design that [met] regularly, [shared] expertise, and [worked] to collaboratively improve teaching skills and the academic performance of students" (para. 1). Bridgers (2020) summed up PLCs as "a professional think tank," where

teachers and other staff worked together to improve teaching and learning (para. 4). PLCs also helped teachers and other school staff enhance pupil learning as the aligned school-wide goals (Sindberg, 2016). Teachers needed to evaluate the effectiveness of the lesson plans and delivery effectiveness by going back to review data collected from their students' performance.

Sanderson (2017) concluded that "the culminating characteristic of a PLC is that all actions and efforts are assessed based on their results rather than their intentions" (p. 53). Sanderson (2017) further concluded that without those data, PLCs would result in "disconnected actions," without considering the original PLC intentions (p. 54).

Battersby and Verdi (2015) believed that many music educators planned in isolation at school, particularly at the elementary level, because there were no other music teachers with whom to collaborate. Music teacher PLCs tended to be after school and held in a central location, so more music teachers could attend and not travel long distances; however, the need for travel presented issues for PLC schedulers (Battersby & Verdi, 2015). Still, music teachers found meeting together in a PLC beneficial (Battersby, 2019; Sindberg, 2016). Battersby (2019) suggested that music teachers utilize online meeting platforms to eliminate the need for travel.

Beginning music teachers and experienced music teachers in a large suburban school district in New Jersey found working together in a PLC setting helpful (Battersby, 2019). Beginning music teachers gained valuable skills working with experienced music teachers, while experienced music teachers benefited from the novice teachers' energy. Because most music teachers worked in isolation, gathering to share lessons and design curriculum helped alleviate the burdens of working alone (Battersby, 2019). An elementary music teacher told Sindberg (2016) in an interview that working with other music teachers offered them meaningful professional development and opportunities to watch their peers teach.

Sanderson (2017) investigated how an existing PLC impacted music teachers' classroom practices. Sanderson (2017) interviewed and spent time in the field with three middle school band teachers. Each band director enjoyed the time spent with their colleagues, as the PLC provided them with time to express "their frustrations and anxieties with understanding colleagues for catharsis or to find support" (p. 180). The band directors also shared their enjoyment of bouncing ideas and teaching techniques off each other, which helped to improve their teaching. Sanderson (2017) also discovered that the band directors desired to meet with non-middle school band directors to align the band curriculum vertically.

Interestingly, the band directors could not recall how their PLC impacted their teaching, but Sanderson (2017) observed how they helped each other solve teaching concerns. The PLC did create common assessments and rubrics, which enabled middle school band students across their school district to learn the same material and take the same tests. A PLC specifically for middle school band directors helped the teachers in Sanderson's (2017) study deal with frustrations related to teaching and working and helped with sharing teaching techniques. The band directors also created common assessments and rubrics to accompany their teaching.

Most music PLCs took place after school, which required some music teachers to travel to other locations. Beginning music teachers found their PLC environment helpful as they could seek advice from their more experienced colleagues. The music teachers were able to share instructional ideas, create common assessments, and solve teaching concerns.

### **Importance of Planning**

Planning time was found to be a reason teachers remained in the teaching profession. Ladd (2011) found that more collaborative planning time was one reason teachers stayed at their

schools. In a nationwide study ( $n = 3,328$ ), 49% ( $n = 1631$ ) of teachers indicated that more planning time during the day would positively affect their workday (Renter et al., 2016).

Across all three samples (i.e., 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 first year teachers, and 2007-2008 second year teachers), most beginning teachers identified preparation time during the school day and support from family/friends as very important supports during their first years of teaching. More specifically, preparation time was identified as very important for all survey sets, at 81.9%, 69.9% and 66.2% respectively. (Prtyula et al., 2010, p. 38)

Teachers cited a lack of planning time as a contributor to teachers' increased stress levels at school (Barney & Deutsch, 2012). Gerretson et al. (2008) explored factors associated with more specialists being used in elementary schools; most of the specialists were math teachers. The result of more planning time allowed the grade-level teachers to "create more focused, creative lessons using more resources" (p. 312). "A direct result of the focused planning time was reported as a reduction in the everyday stress placed on teachers" (p. 312). The positive effects for teachers in common planning or PLC planning were the alignment of the curriculum, common student expectations, and allowing all students to learn at the same pace as their peers in other classes.

### **Music Teachers Schedules**

Elementary music teachers' schedules are varied. Snyder (1959) defined the word *schedule* as "an organization of time, facilities, and personnel, to meet the education needs of the children from whom the school is responsible" (p. 160). Over the last few decades, The National Association for Music Education (NAfME), has consistently updated standards for music teachers' schedules in the United States' public schools. The standards for music teachers'



schedules were outlined in *The 1986 School Music Program* (Hoffer et al., 1986) for basic music programs and quality music programs, and the 1994 *Opportunity-to-Learn Standards for Music Instruction* (Lehman, 1994) simplified those outlined standards. The NAFME (2020) *Opportunity to Learn Standards* were updates of two previous editions.

For basic music programs *The 1986 School Music Program* (Hoffer et al., 1986), a minimum of 7% of students' total instructional time (or 100 minutes) needed to be devoted to music, and students should attend music class three times weekly. The music teacher was not to teach more than 24 hours per week and not to teach more than eight 30-35-minute classes per day, with no more students in their classes than the grade-level teachers had. Music teachers in the basic music program needed to have at least 45 minutes of daily planning time.

For quality music programs (1986 edition), a minimum of 9% of students' total instructional time (or 150 minutes) needed to be devoted to music instructional time. Each student in a quality program had music instruction daily. The music teachers' schedule in a quality program also recommended no more than 24 contact hours of teaching per week, no more than eight 30-35-minute classes per week, and a minimum of 60 minutes of daily planning time.

Lehman (1994) suggested in *The Opportunity to Learn Standards for Music Instruction* that every elementary-aged student receive "general music instruction each week for at least 90 minutes, excluding time devoted to elective instrumental or choral instruction" (p. 3). The standards also recommended first- and second- graders not attend music more than 20-30 minutes of music instruction at a time, and third through sixth graders receive no more than 45 minutes of music instruction at a time. Music classes also needed to be no larger than other academic classes. The music teacher-to-student ratio was 1:400. The standards recommended

that music teachers have at least 30 minutes of daily preparation time, excluding travel (between classes) and lunch, to plan lessons and evaluate their students' work.

The purpose of the *2020 Opportunity to Learn Standards* was to “identify the resources that needed to be in place so that teachers, schools, and school districts [could] give students a meaningful chance to achieve” the 2014 National Music Standards (p. 2). In 2020, the “basic” and “quality” music programs were reduced to one standard for music programs. The recommended amount of weekly musical instruction time was 90 minutes, and that there be one music teacher for every 400 students. Planning time and preparation time were two separate times. The OLS recommended that music teachers have a minimum of 30 minutes of preparation time, a separate time for lunch, and the same amount of planning time as grade-level teachers in their schools, which was also unchanged from 1994.

Matthews and Koner (2017) surveyed music teachers ( $N = 7,463$ ) in the United States about their professional backgrounds, classroom teaching responsibilities, and their job satisfaction rates. The results of their study indicated that 36.2% of music teachers' schools had one permanent music teacher, 30.2% had two permanent music teachers, 17.5% had three permanent music teachers, and 16% had four permanent music teachers. Of the number of students music teachers taught, 21.7% taught 0-100, 34% taught 101-200, 15.4% taught 201-300, 8.7% taught 301-400, 8% taught 401-500, 5.2% taught 501-600, 6.9% taught more than 601.

Gardner (2010) found that music teachers were more likely to teach in more than one school than other teachers, adding that teaching at multiple schools meant that music teachers needed to work with multiple school administrators, travel during the school day, and attend more staff meetings than teachers who taught at one school.

Elementary general music teachers' teaching rotations are not standardized. Chandler (2018) found that specialists teachers taught on a five-day rotation. One of Chandler's (2018) participants taught K-2 classes "twice a week each week for 45 minutes, while [3-5 classes] had music once each week for 45 minutes" (p. 113). Rettig (n.d.) suggested that if an elementary school had an art, music, and a P.E. teacher, the school should operate on a three-day rotation. Rettig (n.d.) added that if an elementary school had a library teacher in addition to the other three teachers, then the school should operate on a six-day rotation, with students going to P.E. three times during the rotation. A NAFME message forum (2014, April 16) contained multiple elementary music teachers who reported the number of classes they taught, how long their classes were, and which teaching rotation they had. The range of classes the music teachers taught every week was between 43 and 49 classes. Most of the music teachers had 30-35 minutes long classes. One music teacher taught on a five-day rotation, one taught on a ten-day rotation for kindergarten, a nine-day rotation for first through third grade, and a seven-day rotation for fourth and fifth grade.

### **Summary**

Researchers (Conrad, 1993; Hixon et al., 2013) have only explicitly examined planning time twice prior to the current study. Researchers have identified specific planning time activities such as grading, completing administrative tasks, instructional planning, and taking personal breaks (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Bruno et al., 2012; Chandler, 2018; Conrad, 1993; Hixon et al., 2013; Martin, 2016). Many teachers resorted to planning after school and on weekends due to a lack of adequate time to plan during the school day (Baker, 2011; Ladd, 2011). Two types of planning time were identified in the literature, individual and common planning. During individual planning, teachers graded and took personal breaks (Merritt, 2016). Common planning

took place with other teachers, either from the same grade level or subject area or from different subject areas (Monterosso, 2014). Álvarez (2020) reported common planning time allowed teachers to reflect on their practice. Teachers who participated in PLCs were able to review data, plan curriculum, and create common goals (Bretz, 2012; Sindberg, 2016). Music teachers also found PLCs helpful as they could share lesson plans, watch each other teach, and align curriculum (Battersby, 2019; Sanderson, 2017). A lack of planning time increased the likelihood of burnout (Chandler, 2018; Bruno et al., 2012; Scheib, 2004). Music teachers were more likely than other teachers to teach in more than one school. To increase planning time for grade-level teachers, Gerretson et al. (2008) recommended schools hire more specialist teachers but failed to acknowledge the importance of music teachers' planning time. With the lack of literature on planning time for music teachers, policy makers and school administrators may not understand the importance of planning time.

## CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. There is little extant literature on this topic, particularly with regards to elementary music teachers. I chose to focus on research related to how teachers spend their time during the school day. In this chapter I review the literature on what teachers do during the school day, how they use their planning time, when and how long they plan, and further explain individual and common planning. The planning time survey, based on an instrument by Hixon et al. (2013), was administered to elementary music teachers across the United States using the online survey platform, Qualtrics® (See Appendix A). In the following sections, descriptive studies, survey research, design of the survey, and data collection will be discussed.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

This was a descriptive research study in that the researcher sought to describe elementary music teachers' planning and activities. Descriptive research is a necessary form of inquiry when there is little to no literature on a specific topic. Researchers conduct descriptive research studies when a phenomenon of interest has not been documented before to build the foundation for creating hypotheses for future testing by reporting what is happening in the field (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Fireman Kramer, 1985; Russell, 2018). Russell (2018) writes "without knowing what *is*, it can be difficult to know what questions we need to ask the next time around" (p. 35). Bhattacharjee (2012) described descriptive research as "directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of a phenomenon of interest. These observations must be based on the scientific method, and therefore, are more reliable than casual observations by untrained people" (p. 6). Descriptive statistics were foundational to research studies with hypotheses and

were necessary components of research studies using inferential statistics to analyze data (Brown, 2010). Music education researchers primarily used the indicators of central tendency (i.e., mean, median, and mode) and the indicators of variance (i.e., standard deviation and standard error) (Russell, 2018). Descriptive researchers used the raw scores from an instrument (i.e., a survey) to calculate the measures of central tendency and the indicators of variance. Reporting the raw scores helped readers “better understand the appropriateness of any inferential statistical procedure used later in the study or as the primary means of analysis” (Russell, 2018, p. 31).

## **Survey Research**

The phenomenon of interest in the current study was elementary music teachers’ planning time. To answer the research questions, an existing survey (Hixon et al., 2013) was modified (see Appendix A). “The survey method can be used for descriptive...research. Survey research is...ideally suited for remotely collecting data about a population that is too large to observe directly” (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 73). Fowler (2009) stated that “the purpose of the survey is to produce statistics, that is, quantitative or numerical descriptions about some aspects of the study population” (p. 1). Bhattacharjee (2012) also recommended survey research because participants could respond at their leisure. Researchers wishing to establish a baseline of raw data on large scales often adapted or designed survey instruments to collect data (Mrug, 2010; Russell, 2018). Surveys helped researchers understand specific phenomena through “a variety of formats and response options” (Mrug, 2010, p. 1476). Researchers could collect survey data through phone calls, mailed hardcopy surveys, or internet survey platforms. Survey questions could ask respondents to answer dichotomous responses, nominal responses, ordinal responses, Likert-style responses, or continuous responses (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

Survey questions needed be clear and easy to understand. Poorly worded questions produced ambiguity for respondents, which could skew data. Clear survey questions were written in the active voice, with simply vocabulary, and without jargon (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Fowler, 2009). Surveys measured two different types of information – subjective states and objective facts. Examples of objective facts were a person’s weight and their employment status (Fowler, 2009). Examples of subjective states were levels of pain tolerance and the color of their car. There were errors associated with both types of information, which could be caused by question wording, not knowing exact information, rounding numbers, or respondents’ fatigue level (Fowler, 2009).

The survey instrument used in this study was a questionnaire survey, which was “a research instrument consisting of a set of questions intended to capture responses from respondents in a standardized manner. Questions may be structured or unstructured” (Bhattacharjee , 2012, p. 74). Unstructured questions asked respondents to provide their answers, and structured responses asked respondents to choose one or more answers. Surveys could contain multiple response formats including dichotomous (choose one of two choices), nominal (unordered responses), ordinal (ordered responses), interval (responses measured on a scale; could be a ratio scale with a true zero), or continuous (varied responses).

### **Survey Design Limitations**

One of the primary threats of survey research was how respondents read and interpreted the items (Mrug, 2010). The survey items needed to be clearly worded so as not confuse the respondents. The clearer the questions were, the less likely the respondents would misinterpret the items. Mrug (2010) also stated that “participants might not be motivated or willing to give true answers...[and they] might fail to provide valid answers because of inaccurate self-

perceptions or biased recall of past events” (p. 1476). Another threat to survey research was low response rates (Bhattacharjee, 2012). In worse-case scenarios, the survey respondents might not be from the targeted population (Boughner, 2010).

To overcome those limitations, the survey underwent multiple peer reviews and two reliability checks. The results from the first and second pilot helped to identify confusing questions by rewording them or deleting some. All piloting volunteers ( $N = 34$ ) were elementary music teachers with the exception of two (one from the first reliability check and one from the second reliability check). The volunteer in the second survey pilot who was not an elementary music teacher was a high school music teacher. One volunteer from the first survey pilot was an elementary art teacher.

During the piloting phases, finding a large sample to take each survey to achieve statistical power was difficult. Sixteen people volunteered to participate in the first pilot and the correlated items regarding weekly planning time were not significant ( $p > .05$ ). After revising the survey, 17 people volunteered to participate, however only eight usable “retests” were returned. Items that were not included in the original survey were found to be significant ( $p < .05$ ).

A power analysis allows researchers to calculate the sample size needed for achieving statistical significance in their study (Coffey, 2010). Due to the small sample size in the pilot studies, a power analysis was warranted. “If the sample size is too small, the study will be underpowered and may lead to discarding a potentially useful treatment” (Coffee, 2010, p. 1067). An a priori power analysis was conducted using G\*Power version 3.1 (Faul et al., 2007) to test the significance of the survey items on the second pilot using a two-tailed correlation test, with medium effect ( $d = .50$ ), with the alpha level set at .05. The result indicated that a total sample size of  $n = 37$  was needed to achieve a power of .90.



## **Survey Error**

Survey research was prone to human error on both the researcher's part and on the part of the survey-respondents'. Davis (2010) explained that "all measuring instruments are flawed, regardless of whether they are in the physical or social sciences [because] everyone makes errors" (p. 326). Most errors in the social sciences were self-reported errors (Davis, 2010). Causes of respondent error included a lack of motivation to take the survey or poorly worded questions (Bhattacharjee, 2012; Davis, 2010). The survey used for the current study underwent multiple validity and grammar checks, and two piloting phases to search for question ambiguity.

## **Ethical Issues in Survey Research**

Researchers from any discipline need to be aware of the ethical considerations of collecting and storing their data. Czaja and Blair (2005) recommended that researchers conducting survey research provide their participants with an informed consent form and "protection of confidentiality" statement (p. 239). The online survey platform used for this research (i.e., Qualtrics®) can include the consent form at the beginning of the survey. If respondents answered "Yes, I consent to participate," they were directed to complete the survey. The respondents could not access the survey if they answered "No." Protecting participants' responses was an important value, such that the UNCG Qualtrics account has been kept secured and required two-factor authentication to access. The survey data were also stored on a password-protected Box® account, which also required two-factor authentication.

## **Initial Survey Development**

To begin survey development for this study, two survey instruments were found that related to planning time (Conrad, 1993; Hixson et al., 2013). Both were examined by the

researcher to determine whether the measurement instruments would serve the purpose and answer the research questions of the current study.

Conrad (1993) asked superintendents, elementary school principals, and elementary school teachers about the planning time elementary teachers received. Conrad (1993) compared elementary teachers' and secondary teachers' amount of planning, asked about how often teachers received planning time, how teachers used their planning time, who provided teachers planning time, and if their planning time was monitored by school administrators.

The purpose of the Hixon et al. (2013) study was to review planning time literature and to learn about the "current instructional planning practices and perceptions...of instructional planning time" in the West Virginia Schools (p. 92). Respondents were required to recall the planning time they had previously. Teachers were asked about the grade levels that they taught, the planning/scheduling model employed by their school, the shortest and longest planning periods teachers received each week, how long teachers planned outside of school, and if their planning times differed each school day (see Appendix A).

After reviewing the Conrad (1993) and Hixon et al. (2013) studies, the Hixon et al. (2013) survey best fit the current research contained herein. Hixon et al. (2013) asked more discrete questions about West Virginia teachers' planning times and planning time models. Overall, the Hixon et al. (2013) survey required fewer modifications to answer the current research questions. Once the survey was modified, it was piloted it with two groups of primarily elementary music teachers to establish validity and reliability. In the following sections, the piloting is described in more detail.

## **Survey Validity and Reliability**

Bhattacharjee (2012) defined validity as “the extent to which a measure adequately represents the underlying construct that it is supposed to measure” and “is an assessment of how well a set of scale items matches with the relevant content domain of the construct that it is trying to measure” (p. 58-59). To establish content validity, the survey was sent to peers and doctoral committee members several times to ensure content validity. In the final stages of the initial survey development, the questions were rearranged by topic and to increase the survey flow (i.e., ensuring each question logically connected into the next question). Questions were first listed regarding the type of and number of in which the participants taught, the grade levels taught, and the scheduling model used in their schools. Secondly, survey questions required information from the respondents about planning periods (i.e., when, how often, and how long), followed by common planning times and music PLC participation.

After contacting Hixon et al. (2013) and the West Virginia Department of Education, it was determined that a reliability estimate had not been calculated prior to the original survey administration. “Reliability is the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable” (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 56). A reliable survey meant that multiple administrations of the survey will yield similar results over time. To estimate the reliability of the survey, the “test-retest” method was utilized, which involved sending the same survey to the same people twice, four weeks apart. “Test-retest reliability is a measure of consistency between two measurements of the same construct administered to the same sample at two different points in time” (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 57). Willse (2010) described test-retest reliability as “the most straightforward type of reliability” because it tested whether the same group of people could answer the same questions twice (p. 150). The reliability of the survey was examined by

correlating the responses (test/retest) for each survey item (Feder, 2008; Knapp, 2008). The reliability was established at  $r = .70$  at  $\alpha = .95$ .

## **Phase 1 Survey Development**

### **Modifying the Survey**

The Hixon et al. (2013) survey was used for this study (see Appendix A). Some questions were retained and some were reworded to fit the needs of the study. All of their survey items were converted into present tense. The Hixon et al. (2013) survey items that were not altered were one (Select the grades you teach); four (How many instructional periods did you school have each day?); six (What type of planning model did you school use?); seven (What type of scheduling model was the one used by most teachers at your school?); eight (Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school...); nine (In your estimation, what would be the ideal amount of daily planning...? On average, how many additional minutes di you spend planning each day beyond regular school hours?); 11 (Does the length of your instructional planning period vary depending upon the day?); 12 (How many minutes is your longest daily instructional planning period?); and 13 (Please provide additional comments you may have about planning period times).

Some questions were added including: (a) What is the lowest and highest number of instructional periods you teach in a day? (b) How many minutes is your shortest/longest planning period? (c) Which activities do you participate in during your individual or common planning time? (d) Do you plan with other teachers? And (e) How many times a week do you plan with other teachers?

Questions regarding music PLCs were also added: (a) Do you participate in a PLC for music teachers? (b) How many times a month do you meet with your PLC? and (c) What activities do music teachers do in their PLC?

The following questions from the Hixon et al. (2013) survey were deleted because they did not serve to answer the research questions: (a) Do you co-teach with another educator? (b) For how many courses were you responsible for preparing each day? (c) How many minutes long was the shortest instructional period in your school? (d) Of the total daily planning that you reported in the previous item, how much time was uninterrupted individual planning time? For a copy of the completed initial survey draft, please see Appendix B.

### **Peer Review**

In the Spring of 2021, seven doctoral student peers were sent a link to the survey and was asked by the researcher to check for item clarity, grammar, and to use the open response question at the end of the survey to offer their feedback. Four peers responded with constructive feedback, three of which emailed their feedback to the researcher in addition to submitting the feedback in the survey. “Peer A” promptly emailed me back (personal communication, April 15, 2021), informing me that the survey was not working. The researcher logged onto my Qualtrics® account and changed a setting, which fixed the issue. Peer A asked how the term “planning” was defined. The peers asked the researcher whether planning time meant a time teachers took in scheduled planning (planning time built into their schedule) or how much time teachers planned in general (all time spent planning). Peer A also asked if the researcher wanted to add a question regarding the activities teachers completed in their planning time, such as grading, calling parents, and attending IEP meetings. Those items were added to the survey.

Peer B emailed her feedback to the researcher (personal communication, April 15, 2021) because she said the text entry box (the open-ended survey question) looked too small to type in. Peer B also mentioned that some of the questions were still written in the past tense, which were corrected. Peer B (along with Peer D) also pointed out that the “slider scale” for the survey question *How much time in minutes during regular school hours do you spend planning during a typical week?* needed a range larger than 100 minutes. Peer B pointed out that if a teacher had 30 minutes of planning each school day, the scale would not be large enough to accommodate all planning times. Peer B also mentioned deleting the “slider scale” and replace it with a “text entry” box. Peer C also emailed (personal communication, April 15, 2021) their feedback to me indicating that there were some misspelled words and to fix the past tense issue.

The survey was corrected to reflect the peers’ feedback. Once those changes were complete, the researcher (personal communication, April 19, 2021) contacted Peers A and B and asked if they would retake the survey two times, because some survey questions were Display Logic, or based on how respondents answered (i.e. “yes,” then additional questions were revealed versus “no,” where no additional questions appeared), to ensure the Display Logic survey items worked properly. The researcher emailed Peers A and B with instructions to retake the survey, and included the research questions to evaluate the survey better. Peer B responded (personal communication, April 19, 2021) and suggested that the phrase “in minutes” be italicized or bolded so future survey respondents would not confuse “minutes” with “hours.” Peer A responded (personal communication, April 19, 2021) and suggested that all survey questions that ended with prepositions be reworded and that every survey question that contained “Display Logic” worked as it should.

## **Doctoral Advisory Committee (DAC) Review**

After implementing the changes Peers A and B suggested, the survey questions to be grouped by topic, which also helped the survey's readability. The researcher emailed DAC member 1 (personal communication April 19, 2021) and asked her to take the survey to check for grammar and overall organization. DAC member 1 suggested that one survey question needed to be reworded and to make sure all the "slider tools" shared the same range. On April 23, 2021, the researcher met with DAC member 2 via Zoom, to talk through the survey questions and overall organization. As a result of that meeting, some questions were reworded, and grammatical errors were corrected. At DAC member 2's recommendation, all "slider tools" were deleted and replaced with "text entry" boxes.

## **UNCG Information Technology Qualtrics® Specialist Review**

An Internet Technology staff member at UNCG who specialized in Qualtrics was contacted and asked to review the survey. The researcher attended the *Introduction to Qualtrics* training on April 7, 2021. The researcher contacted the IT specialist (personal communication April 26, 2021) and asked them to review the survey to ensure the survey worked adequately. The IT specialist suggested that all "text-entry" responses be shortened to 100 pixels, from 580 pixels. The open response question needed to be changed to allow for "multi line" responses instead of "single line" responses, so that survey participants could see all their typed response, and perhaps lengthen the survey participants' responses. The IT specialists also suggested that some "Display Logic" questions be set to "in-page" responses to display the next question based on the answer choice automatically. "Display logic" was added to the question, "Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes four times a week and 45 minutes once per week.)." If the survey participants answered "yes," the two

questions were displayed. The two questions asked how long and how short were teachers' individual planning periods. If the survey participants answered "no," then they were asked how long their individual planning period was.

Following the multiple peer reviews, doctoral committee reviews, and the review from the UNCG IT specialist, the necessary changes were made to the survey (see Appendix C). This version was used to pilot with volunteers.

### **Piloting the Survey with Volunteers**

To find volunteers to pilot the survey, the researcher went through each contact in their cell phone to look for elementary music educators, and also contacted an art teacher because art teachers typically shared the same schedules as music teachers. Seventeen potential volunteers from the researcher's contact list were found. Those volunteers represented the target population for the study (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Each potential volunteer was asked if they would participate in the pilot. Each potential volunteer agreed to participate, and provided the researcher with their personal email address. On April 26, 2021, the survey-pilot volunteers were sent an email inviting them to take the survey.

Several volunteers contacted the researcher citing confusion surrounding one of the questions ("Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school by selecting the model that best describes your school's schedule. Self-contained or compartmentalized"). Those volunteers indicated that their school used both scheduling models. The volunteers were advised to choose the scheduling model used by most teachers at their school. A reminder email was sent to the volunteers on May 5, 2021, because only nine had taken the survey. The reminder email helped secure all 17 responses. The volunteers were sent



an email on May 25, 2021 inviting them to retake the survey, using a new survey link. Only 16 volunteers completed the second (re-test) survey.

### **Phase 1 Survey Pilot - Results**

The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation was used to analyze most of the pilot survey questions using the statistical software, SPSS®. This correlation is the most stable analysis of relationships between variables and shows the direction of the relationship between the variables (Laerd Statistics, n.d.). When a test of significance is applied, results are used to infer that a relationship found within the sample also existed within the population. The Pearson Product-Moment Correlation is the best method of analyzing the Yes/No survey questions. For the analysis, “Yes” was converted to “0” and “No” was converted to “1” so that SPSS® could analyze those data.

The results of the test/retest revealed the following survey (see Appendix C) items as extremely strong ( $r > .90$ ) significant correlations ( $p < .01$ ): one, two, three, four, five, and 14. The following items were strong ( $r = .70-.89$ ) significant correlations ( $p < .05$ ): six and 20. Survey items 11, 17, 18, 24, and 25 were moderately strong ( $r = .50-.69$ ) and significant ( $p < .05$ ). The researcher concluded that those survey items could move forward to the next survey pilot. All other items (except items 15, 16, and 26, which were qualitative data) unusable and needed to be revised or not carried over to the next piloting phase. The researcher requested that the volunteers not answer the final survey item, which asked if they wanted to share more about their planning periods. A few volunteers responded, but those data were not analyzed.

During the data analysis, many volunteers had entered text (either numbers spelled out or actual sentences) in places where they were asked to enter a numerical response. That resulted in a lengthy process of data cleaning, meaning that the researcher had to convert responses to

numbers from text (i.e. “Ten” to “10”). Some questions needed rewording, and some questions were cut.

## **Phase 2 Survey Development**

A new set of volunteers ( $n = 17$ ) were recruited for the second pilot to repilot my survey from a two-week summer course I took during the Summer of 2021. The volunteers in this pilot were elementary music teachers.

One of the major problems in the first pilot was found in the word, “week,” or “weekly.” Some of the weakest positively correlated questions had an iteration of that word. Examples of that included: (a) What is the lowest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week? (b) What is the highest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week? (c) How many minutes do you spend in planning periods during a typical week? If a music teacher teaches on a five-day rotation, then they could answer that question with some degree of accuracy, however, if they taught on a different rotation, then they did not know how to answer that question. To remedy that problem, the new volunteers were asked to select their teaching rotation from a set of options (e.g. one-day rotation, four-day rotation, etc.). The teaching rotation referred to how often music teachers taught their classes. For example, a one-day rotation meant that music teachers taught the same classes every day, a two-day rotation meant they taught their classes every other day, and a ten-day rotation meant that they taught their classes every other week. Each teaching rotation option on the survey contained a specific definition which helped the participants identify their teaching rotation. Then the volunteers were asked how many classes they taught in that rotation, the total number of planning minutes, and how long their classes were. Elementary music teachers’ schedules typically varied from school to school, and no two

schedules were alike. The questions that were significantly and positively correlated from the first survey pilot were kept.

### **Phase 2 Survey Validity**

Most of the questions in the initial pilot were reliable. However, some did not answer the research questions and others needed revising. The researcher sought input from their Doctoral Committee and the UNCG Statistical Consulting Center. The researcher needed to know about the longest and shortest planning periods elementary music teachers had each week and if their planning periods changed from day-to-day. For the second pilot, the volunteers were asked about the number of classes that they taught in their teaching rotation and the total number of minutes of planning they had in the rotation.

For the second pilot, the respondents answered some demographics questions, such as the state in which they taught, the location of their school (rural, urban, suburban), their gender, and their race. DAC members 2 and 4, and the statistician from the Statistical Consulting Center said that by collecting information about the respondents, trends could be identified in the actual data collection and a participant-profile could be developed.

### **Phase 2 Survey Pilot – Respondent Profiles**

After meeting with the statisticians, and a member of the researcher's doctoral committee, the decision to include demographic questions was made in order to better understand who took the survey. The respondents answered the following demographics questions: their geographic demographics (i.e., the state in which they taught and the location of their school), followed by their personal demographics (i.e., gender identity, race, number of years teaching, professional affiliations). A Qualtrics® certified question was used to ask respondents about their gender identity. Qualtrics® certified "questions leverage Qualtrics best

practices to generate high-quality, standardized data to accelerate time to insight” (Qualtrics, n.d., para. 11). The questions regarding race and ethnicity were from National Center for Education Statistics (n.d.). The Pew Research Center categories to ask about the respondents’ school locations (rural, urban, or suburban) were used, along with the definitions for each demographic within the survey item (Wieder, 2019). Although these demographics questions did not serve to answer the research questions, they allowed the researcher to know who took the survey and helped to identify trends in the survey data.

## Phase 2 Survey Pilot – Results

Only one section of the second survey pilot changed from the first pilot, and that was the wording used to describe elementary music teacher’s schedules. Table 1 contains only the correlated survey items that were added for the second pilot using the test/retest method.

**Table 1. Second Pilot Survey Item Analysis**

Item number	<i>r</i>	<i>df</i>
19	1.0**	7
20	.880**	7
21	.970**	7
22	1.0**	7
23	1.0**	7
24	1.0**	7
25	-.085	7
26	1.0**	7

\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$

The response rate from the second survey pilot was considerably lower as compared to the first pilot phase. The researcher only received seven usable responses from the volunteers. Questions 19-26 were new to the survey (aside from the personal and geographic demographics questions). Other survey items that were already found to be reliable ( $p < 0.5$ ) were not analyzed. Question 19 asked the volunteers about their teaching rotation (see Appendix D); a significant perfect positive correlation ( $r = 1.0, p < .01$ ) between the test and retest. Question 20 asked the volunteers how many classes they taught in their teaching rotation; there was a significant strong positive correlation was observed ( $r = .880, p < .01$ ). Question 21 asked the volunteers to add up the total minutes of individual planning during their teaching rotation. This item replaced the question from the first pilot survey regarding “weekly” planning time, because weekly planning might only exist in a traditional five-day rotation. After confirming two volunteers' responses, a significant strong positive correlation ( $r = .97, p < .01$ ) between the test and retest was found. Three volunteers' responses were drastically differently on the test/retest this item; one volunteer's responses were 40 and 200 (respectively). The researcher texted each of the three volunteers and asked them why there were discrepancies in their two answers to this question. One replied that the question was clear but answered “40” the first time because that was how much planning they had each day, which equaled 200 minutes during their teaching rotation. The second volunteer replied that “435” was a typo, that their first answer was correct and that there was nothing unclear about the question. The third volunteer indicated that they rushed through the survey the first time, and that their answer for the second response was correct. Questions 22 and 23 asked the volunteers if their individual planning times varied from week to week and from day to day (respectively). There were significant perfect positive correlations for both questions ( $r = 1.0, p < .01$ ). Question 24 was a Likert-type question (strongly agree, somewhat

agree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat disagree, strongly disagree). The volunteers provided the same answer during both administrations. Question 25 asked the volunteers to estimate their desired amount of planning (a question carried over from the first pilot). A weak negative correlation ( $r = -.085, p > .05$ ). This item was also carried over from the first pilot, where the correlation was significant, moderately strong and positive ( $r = .699, p < .05$ ). Even though that item was weak, the information gathered from it could still be useful to understand how much planning time elementary music teachers wanted/needed. Question 26 asked the volunteers to estimate the length of their classes. There was a significant perfect positive correlation ( $r = 1.0, p < .01$ ) between the test and retest.

### **Dissertation Survey Distribution**

The researcher applied to the National Association of Music Education's (NAfME) Research Survey Assistance program and was accepted in the Fall of 2021. Music education researchers utilize this program when their research study requires a far-reaching audience and a random sample (NAfME, n.d.). The cost of NAfME transmitting the survey to 5,000 members was \$50, and the researcher also paid an additional \$25 for NAfME to send a reminder email one week after the initial email distribution and an additional \$50 to rush my order. The total cost of the survey transmission was \$125, and personal funds were used to pay for the order. The initial survey invitation to NAfME members was sent on January 4, 2022.

The participants represented a wide range of ages, states, and number of students taught. Ages were varied, with 62.56% ( $n = 154$ ) between the ages of 18-44. The majority (94.31%,  $n = 232$ ) of participants identified as White and most (87.40%,  $n = 215$ ) identified as female. All but five states were represented; there were no participants from Alaska, Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota, or Texas. There were also no participants from the District of Columbia or Puerto Rico.

The state with the highest number of participants was Georgia ( $n = 15$ , 6.10%), and there were participants from outside the United States ( $n = 2$ ). A majority of participants (60.16%,  $n = 148$ ) were members of a teacher union.

Participants taught in a variety of settings, including the number of schools. They taught in as few as one school ( $n = 197$ , 80.08%) and as many as five schools ( $n = 1$ , 0.41%). Almost half of the participants ( $n = 127$ , 51.63%) taught at a suburban school, with the other half of participants split nearly evenly between rural ( $n = 67$ , 27.24%) and urban ( $n = 57$ , 23.17%) schools. Five participants taught in two different geographic locations (i.e., one suburban school and one rural school). The participants taught in public ( $n = 220$ , 89.43%), private ( $n = 18$ , 7.32%), charter ( $n = 7$ , 2.85%), and “other” ( $n = 1$ , 0.41%) schools. A mistake was discovered in the survey after data analysis was begun. The study participants were supposed to enter the “other” school type in the survey, but there was no place to enter their response. Therefore, it is unknown the type of school in which that participant taught. The participants taught in a broad range of grade levels (pK-12) and taught between 0-100 to 1000+ students.

As seen in Table 2, the participants’ years of teaching also represented a broad range of experience. I asked the participants about their total years of teaching and their total years teaching music. Results indicated that the average years of total teaching was 15.89 ( $M = 15.89$ ,  $SD = 10.0$ ) and the average years of teaching music was slightly lower ( $M = 13.55$ ,  $SD = 9.33$ ).

### **Data Analysis**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers’ planning time. The two main types of descriptive statistics are the measures of central tendency (mean, median, and mode) and the measures of variance (standard deviation and standard error) (Russell, 2018). All discrete survey items were analyzed using both types of descriptive

statistics. A t-test to test for statistical significance in the amount of planning time for teachers working in union states versus non-union states if all of the assumptions of the t-test were met. Planning times, school geographic demographics, and teaching rotation types were analyzed using a one-way ANOVA to test for statistical significance, if all of the assumptions of the ANOVA were met. If the ANOVA was significant, the Scheffé test was used to find out which groups had significant differences. The Scheffé test is a post hoc test “designed for...situations in which post hoc comparisons involve more than pairwise differences” (Howell, 2010, p. 1322). The Scheffé test was best for the comparisons because the three groups did not contain the same number of comparisons (i.e., school location had three choices and teaching rotation had up to 11 different options).

The non-discrete items were analyzed by assigning codes to statements. Saldaña (2013) described coding as assigning “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). Every open-ended response was read and assigned a code to it, then counted the number of times that code was used. Some of the participants’ quotes were used to support the coded answers. The frequency of each code was counted and ordered the coded data from the most frequent used to the least. Chapter 4 contains all coded data. The results from the descriptive statistics and coded data are shared in Chapter 4.



## CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. The following research questions guided the study: (a) How many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? (b) What type(s) of planning do elementary music teachers participate in? (c) What do elementary music teachers do during their planning time? This study served as a baseline for future research studies on elementary music teachers' planning time and schedules. The results of the modified Hixon et al. (2013) survey, which was completed at the end of the second phase of reliability testing, are presented in this chapter. The anonymous survey (Appendix E) consisted of one "consent to participate" question, 22 multiple-choice questions, nine open-ended questions, and one Likert-type question. The survey took participants approximately 10 minutes to complete.

### **Participants**

The survey was distributed via the NafME Research Survey Assistance program to a maximum of 5,000 music teachers identified as being elementary music teachers. It was open for 18 days and collected 246 ( $N = 246$ ) usable responses, representing a 4.92% response rate. Each participant was required to answer each survey question except the final open-ended question, which contained 161 responses. The type of answer the participants could enter was restricted. For example, survey question 19 asked the participants to enter the number of classes they taught in their teaching rotation and the participants responses were limited to numbers (e.g., 4). That decision kept the researcher from having to "clean" data, which was a problem in the first piloting phase where some responses were not numerical (e.g., four).

### Research Question 1: Planning Minutes

The results of the first pilot revealed that “weekly planning” did not exist for teachers teaching outside a five-day teaching rotation. Therefore, the question was reworded for the second pilot study to ask music teachers how many minutes of planning they had in their “teaching rotation.” Table 2 shows that the five-day rotation and “other” were the two most frequently reported teaching rotations. If participants selected “other,” they were asked to describe their teaching rotation. One music teacher taught on a two-day rotation, but one of the days helped supervise a PE class. One music teacher taught their students a certain number of minutes every week (e.g. 120, 90, 75, or 60 minutes). One participant reported that sometimes they taught their students three times a week and other times twice a week.

**Table 2. Participants’ Teaching Rotation**

Teaching Rotation	<i>n</i> (%)	%
1-day	6	2.44
2-day	18	7.32
3-day	21	8.54
4-day	12	4.88
5-day	86	34.96
6-day	15	6.10
7-day	1	0.41
8-day	1	0.41
9-day	0	0
10-day	1	0.41

Teaching Rotation	<i>n</i> (%)	%
Other	85	34.55

Eight music teachers (9.41%) reported that they taught on a teaching rotation greater than two weeks. One (1.18%) taught on five-week rotation. One music teacher (1.18%) taught on a four-week rotation, where they saw “the same classes for a week” before students rotated to another class such as art. That teaching rotation equated to five music instructional days a month, or ten weeks of music instruction every year for each student. A different music teacher (1.18%) also taught on a four-week rotation, but prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, they taught on a five-day rotation. One music teacher (1.18%) taught on a three-week rotation, equating to five music instructional days every three weeks for each student. Another music teacher (1.18%) saw fourth through sixth grades once per teaching rotation and grades one through five twice per teaching rotation. One music teacher (1.18%) reported that while they taught on a five-day rotation, they taught half of the students at their school on a separate six-day rotation for a “music integration class.” One music teacher (1.18%) taught the same group of students five days in a row, then another group for three days in a row, then a new group for five days in a row. Finally, one music teacher (1.18%) taught on a quarterly rotation, where the students received music instruction five days a week for a quarter of the school year.

Table 3 shows the number of planning minutes participants had in their teaching rotations. Excluding the “other” teaching rotation category, where a specific teaching rotation was not reported, the teaching rotation with the highest average of planning minutes was the four-day teaching rotation. The teaching rotation with the lowest average amount of planning was the one-day teaching rotation. The average amount of planning for the five-day teaching

rotation, which was the most reported teaching rotation, was 189.35 minutes ( $SD = 135.93$ ). Before running a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to test for statistically significant differences in the amount of planning minutes based on teaching rotation, homogeneity of variance and normality of the distributions were checked. The seven-day, eight-day, and ten-day, and “other” teaching rotations were excluded because there was only one participant in those teaching rotations, and the “other” category did not specifically represent a teaching rotation. The Levene test for homogeneity of variance was met for teaching rotations 1-6 ( $p > .05$ ). The two-day and five-day teaching rotations were also excluded because the Shapiro-Wilk test for normality was significant ( $p < .05$ ), indicating that those distributions were skewed. No statistically significant difference was found between the one-day, three-day, and six-day teaching rotations ( $F = 3.19$ ,  $df = 2$ ,  $p > .05$ ) based on the amount of planning time based on teaching rotation.

**Table 3. Participants’ Total Number of Minutes of Planning in their Teaching Rotation**

Teaching Rotation	Number of Planning Minutes					
	<i>n</i> (%)	Range	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1-day	6 (2.44)	145	35	180	86.67	57.76
2-day	18 (7.32)	455	30	485	125.78	129.14
3-day	21 (8.54)	310	0	310	143.91	89.66
4-day	12 (4.88)	775	25	800	228.58	195.20
5-day	86 (34.96)	670.5	4.5	675	189.36	135.93
6-day	15 (6.10)	515	40	555	223.13	172.05
7-day	1 (0.41)	0	45	45	45	0

Teaching Rotation	Number of Planning Minutes					
8-day	1 (0.41)	0	30	30	30	0
9-day	0	0	0	0	0	0
10-day	1 (0.41)	0	25	25	25	0
Other*	85 (34.55)	1070	0	1070	250.93	222.38

*Note.* \* Data do not reflect a specific teaching rotation.

Table 4 shows the number of classes that participants planned for in their teaching rotation. The highest number of classes taught was 53 during a six-day teaching rotation. The lowest number of classes taught was five during a one-day teaching rotation.

**Table 4. Participants' Teaching Rotation Information**

Teaching Rotation	Number of Classes Taught					
	<i>n</i> (%)	Range	Min.	Max.	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1-day	6 (2.44)	35	5	40	18.5	13.13
2-day	18 (7.32)	18	6	24	13.61	5.30
3-day	21 (8.54)	27	9	36	19.95	5.63
4-day	12 (4.88)	24	6	30	23.33	6.44
5-day	86 (34.96)	42	4	46	25.06	8.85
6-day	15 (6.10)	47	6	53	32.2	9.84
7-day	1 (0.41)	0	39	39	39	0
8-day	1 (0.41)	0	30	30	30	0
9-day	0	0	0	0	0	0

Teaching Rotation	Number of Classes Taught					
10-day	1 (0.41)	0	15	15	15	0
Other*	85 (34.55)	91	5	96	23.56	13.82

*Note. \* Data do not reflect a specific teaching rotation.*

Before running an ANOVA to test for statistical differences between the number of classes based on teaching rotation, homogeneity of variance and the normality of the distributions were checked. All other assumptions for ANOVA were met. The Shapiro-Wilk test for normality was significant ( $p < .05$ ) for the three-day and five-day teaching rotations, indicating that those distributions were skewed. The Levene statistic for homogeneity of variance was met for all teaching rotations ( $p > .05$ ). Since the assumption of normality was not met for the three-day and five-day teaching rotations, those data were excluded. I also excluded the seven-, eight-, ten-day, and “other” teaching rotations. No statistically significant differences were found ( $p > .05$ ) in the number of classes taught based on teaching rotation between the one-, two-, four-, and six-day teaching rotations.

Participants were asked to report the range of minutes that best described their class length, which is seen in Table 5. Most participants reported that their classes were between 30-40 minutes in length, with the 41–50-minute range being the second most frequently reported.

**Table 5. Participants’ Music Class Length**

Class Length in Minutes	<i>n</i>	%
0-19	1	0.41
20-29	31	12.60
30-40	112	45.53

41-50	103	41.87
51+	20	8.13
Other	5	2.03

*Note. Participants could choose more than one response.*

I asked the participants if their daily planning times varied from day-to-day and 65.45% ( $n = 161$ ) reported that their planning times did vary. Most participants (75.61%,  $n = 186$ ) reported that their total planning time did not change from week-to-week. Not all the assumptions of the t-test were met. Therefore, the statistical difference between the amount of planning time between the participants who were members of a teachers' union and the participants who were not members of a teachers' union were not preformed.

Participants responded to the comment "I have enough planning time" using a five-point Likert-type scale. The responses for "somewhat disagree" and "strongly disagree" nearly received the same number of responses. Answers were as follows: strongly agree (19.12%,  $n = 47$ ); somewhat agree (29.67%,  $n = 73$ ); neither agree nor disagree (7.72%,  $n = 19$ ); somewhat disagree (21.95%,  $n = 54$ ); and strongly disagree (21.54%,  $n = 53$ ). Participants were asked how many minutes of daily individual planning time during the regular school day would be ideal for them to adequately prepare instruction for their students. The most frequently reported number was 60 minutes (39.43%,  $n = 97$ ) and 60 minutes was also the median number. One participant reported needing 600 minutes of daily planning, while one participant reported only needing three minutes of daily planning. The average number of daily planning minutes identified by the participants as ideal was 79.84 ( $SD = 60.12$ ). The assumptions of normality were not met to test for statistical difference between the amount of planning based on the schools' geographic location.

## **Research Question 2: Type of Planning**

To learn about the types of planning in which elementary music teachers engaged, questions were asked first about the scheduling models used by most teachers at their schools. The options were the “traditional schedule,” where all academic subjects were taught every day, and the “block schedule,” where all academic subjects were not taught every day but every other day. The participants could also choose other and write in their scheduling model. Nearly all participants selected the traditional scheduling model as seen in Table 10.

Some participants chose “other” when asked about their school’s scheduling model to provide information about their teaching rotations. Some answered “six-day rotation” or “A week and B Week.” These examples might reflect their teaching rotation. An A and B week represent a ten-day rotation, where the music teachers see their students every other week. One music teacher reported that they taught music to classes based on when the classroom teachers had time for their students to attend music. One participant did not understand the question; they asked, “What do you mean by academic subjects? ELA, Math, Science/Social Studies are taught every day.”

Participants were asked to provide additional details about the scheduling model used at their school, which are included in Table 6. There were three options on the survey for them to choose from: self-contained, where each teacher taught all subjects; compartmentalized, where each teacher taught one subject; and both, where some teachers taught every subject, and some taught only one subject. Most participants selected “both,” followed by “self-contained,” and then “compartmentalized.”



**Table 6. Participants' Scheduling Models**

<b>Scheduling Model</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
Scheduling Model		
Traditional Schedule	227	92.27
Block Schedule	7	2.85
Other	12	4.88
Additional Scheduling Details		
Self-contained	108	43.90
Compartmentalized	6	2.43
Both	132	53.66

Additionally, participants responded a series of questions about common planning time. As shown in Table 7, 14.23% ( $n = 35$ ) of participants did plan with other teachers throughout the school, with an average frequency of 1.19 days spent planning with other teachers. Most participants (85.77%,  $n = 211$ ) did not plan with other teachers in their building or with other arts teachers

**Table 7. How Often Music Teachers Planned with other Teachers**

	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b><i>M</i></b>	<b><i>SD</i></b>
Frequency of Planning with other Teachers	35	4.75	.25	5	1.19	.82

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) were a form of common planning documented in the literature. I asked the participants if they participated in a PLC for music teachers and how many times a month they met with their PLC, which is shown in Table 8.

**Table 8. Music Teacher Professional Learning Community (PLC)**

<b>PLC Participation</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	113	45.93
No	133	54.07

Table 9 shows the number of times each participant met with their music PLC. One participant reported that they met with their music PLC negative one (-1) day every month.

**Table 9. Monthly Frequency of Music PLC Participation**

<b>PLC Meeting Frequency</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
-1	1	0.88
0	2	1.78
0.2	1	0.88
0.25	1	0.88
0.3	1	0.88
0.5	4	3.54
1	69	61.06
1.5	1	0.88
2	18	15.92

<b>PLC Meeting Frequency</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
3	3	2.65
4	12	10.62

I also asked the participants what they did during their music PLC. The most frequent activity that the participants did in their music PLC was share instructional strategies (88.51%,  $n = 100$ ).

Table 10 outlines the most common music PLC activities identified by the participants.

**Table 10. Music PLC Activities**

<b>Music PLC Activity</b>	<b><i>n</i> (%)</b>	<b>%</b>
Plan Music Curriculum	59	52.21
Plan Music Lessons	25	22.21
Review Data	30	26.55
Share Instructional Ideas	100	88.51
Other	28	24.78

*Note. Participants could choose more than one response.*

I asked the participants who selected “other” to write in the activities they participated in during their music PLC. The most frequently reported “other” activity was plan district-wide events, like their All-County Chorus. Other comments included sharing behavior strategies, calendar work, complain, connect with their colleagues, have department-specific meetings, create substitute teacher resources, “learn new teaching methods,” “keep up with educational trends,” and talk. One reported that their time during the PLC was not utilized well, and another reported that they met in their PLC to socialize.

Table 11 contains the most common reasons why the participants were not in a music PLC. The reasons that were less frequently cited were a music PLC not being during the school day, choosing not to participate in a music PLC, and having never heard of a PL. One music teacher indicated that they did not have the option to be in a PLC and one reported that a music PLC was not necessary.

**Table 11. Reasons for Not Participating in a Music PLC**

<b>Reason</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
No music PLC to attend	16	12.03
Only one music teacher in school district	8	6.02
No formal music PLC	7	5.26
No time to participate	6	4.51
Required school PLC	4	3.01

*Note. Participants could write more than one answer.*

### **Research Question 3: Planning Time Tasks**

I also wanted to know about the activities that the participants did during their individual or common planning times, as shown in Table 12.

**Table 12. Planning Time Activities**

<b>Activities</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
Planning Lessons	240	98.56
Grading	131	73.58
Calling Parents	132	53.65
Attending Meetings	131	53

Activities	<i>n</i>	%
Other	88	25
Straightening up the classroom	18	20.45
Planning extracurricular activities	16	18.18
Answering emails	11	12.50
Complete administrative tasks	7	7.95
Preparing technology	6	6.82
Repairing instruments	6	6.82
Covering other classes	5	5.68
Conducting Research	4	4.54
Taking Bathroom breaks	4	4.54

*Note. Participants could choose more than one response. Percentages for “Other” are calculated out of 88.*

Other activities including coordinating with other teachers, composing and arranging, and completing graduate school homework were each reported three times. Completing arrival and dismissal duties, connecting with students, eating lunch, dealing with student discipline issues, and practicing instruments were all reported twice by the respondents. Finally, the following reported planning time activities were reported once: self-care, completing committee work, fulfilling Individualized Education Plans, completing continuing education courses, hallway duty, nursing mother activities, fine arts coordinator duties, lining up guest artists, personal business, ordering recorders, running the school news show, teaching remote lessons, and teaching orchestra and choir.

## Open Response Question Results

The final question on asked the participants to share any additional thoughts they had regarding planning time. Many participants (65.44%,  $n = 161$ ) opted to leave additional comments about their experiences with planning time in the elementary music classroom. Several trends emerged from the additional comments. Not having enough time to plan ( $n = 13$ , 8.07%), planning time being split up ( $n = 11$ , 6.83%), needing to plan outside of school hours ( $n = 17$ , 10.56%), having plenty of planning ( $n = 7$ , 4.35%), and planning and lunch being at the same time ( $n = 5$ , 3.12%) were the most frequent comments.

Multiple responses focused on the amount of time. Specifically, thirteen music teachers cited not having enough planning time. One participant stated:

There needs to be enough time for a teacher to slow cognitive processes enough to be creative in lesson planning. That cannot happen when a teacher is given 30 minutes to take care of human/personal needs, call parents, return emails, clean teaching area, set up materials, AND plan lessons.

Another participant wrote that “planning time for arts teachers requires more time because you are teaching various grade levels and skill sets.”

Required meetings and duties negatively impacted participants’ planning time. One participant explained that required meetings took away their planning time. Another participant indicated that “sometimes those meetings occur at the last minute, so I am not always given prior notice when I will not have a planning period.” Required duties also resulted in not having enough planning time. “Bus duty, car-rider duty, walkers duty, breakfast duty, lunch duty, hallway duty, dismissal duty, etc. take up planning time.” Participants cited class coverage for

other teachers as taking up their planning time. One participant wrote that they were “pulled to cover other classes” when there were no available substitute teachers.

Participants often had to complete their lesson planning outside of student contact time. Seventeen music teachers shared that they had to plan their lessons before or after school. One wrote that “dealing with emergencies, talking to students/parents, or being asked to cover other classes” impacted their planning time. Another shared that their planning time was before classes started in the morning, but that planning time coincided with morning duties. Another music teacher shared that “sometimes instead of planning, I just end up sitting and doing nothing because I need to decompress, so I do not actually get anything done. That makes more work for me to do outside of school hours.”

Eleven music teachers wrote that most of their planning time was split up into chunks throughout their day. One explained that “contract says we should get 200 prep minutes every ten days. My minutes are carved up so for example I have five minutes between some classes which counts towards those minutes.” Another wrote that while they had plenty of planning time “on paper,” their planning was “split up into fifteen-minute blocks.” Another music teacher wrote something similar:

On paper, our planning minutes are not bad. The challenge is that those minutes are split up into 20- and 15-minute increments. A lot of my planning is just enough time to go to the bathroom and check a few emails...I strongly believe that a homeroom teacher would often, if at all, not be asked to split up their planning times in such a manner.

Two other music teachers shared that their planning was split up into thirty-minute blocks, which made this difficult to “get things accomplished.”

Seven music teachers shared that they had plenty of planning time. One wrote, “I actually have far more planning than my contract technically should give me, but I keep my mouth shut and so far my principal hasn’t made me cover other classes or do other work during that time.” Another music teacher “moved school districts to have more planning time” and accepted a lower salary so they could get more planning. Another wrote that their planning time was protected and that every teacher in their school received four 40-minute planning periods a week. Another wrote that they had plenty of planning time but would “gladly trade some of the generous planning time for manageable class sizes.”

Participants identified multiple reasons that their planning was shortened. Two participants cited losing some of their planning time due to their classes not being picked up on time. “If classroom teachers do not pick up [their classes] on time, my planning is shortened.” One participant wrote that some of their planning was shortened by having to spend time cleaning their instruments between classes and disinfecting the surfaces in their room, and wrote that they needed additional planning time to complete those cleaning tasks. One participant commented, “Covid has made planning time even more necessary and has also restricted the amount of time that is given to us.” Some music teachers reported that some of their planning time was spent cleaning and sanitizing their room and musical instruments due to Covid-19, “Most of my planning now tends to focus on sanitizing my classroom and changing seating charts for contact tracing.” One participant wrote that their planning time was shortened due to being on a cart. They shared, “I am on a cart so to park it and get to my office to do any actual planning means I realistically have only about 15-20 [out of 30] at max to do anything minorly productive.” Five music teachers wrote that their planning time and lunch time were one in the



same. One shared that their “main 45-minute planning block [was] always lumped in with [their] lunch hour.” Another simply shared that they did “not have time to eat two days a week.”

There were also comments focused on planning time inequalities between the participants and other teachers in their schools. One participant shared their thoughts on unions and planning time:

Unions focus on equal planning time, but there is a difference between an elementary teacher with 20 students, teaching six subjects, and an elementary music teacher with 200 or more students teaching many subjects. IEPs take a lot of time to truly implement, let alone read.

Another participant wrote, “Regular classroom teachers have four 45-minute plans in four out of six days. However, I only have two because my schedule is so tight.”

Two participants shared what they did during their planning time. One made photocopies, created lesson plans, and multimedia presentations. The other shared that during marching band season, they gave up two of their planning periods to help with the marching band.

## CHAPTER V: SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. The following research questions guided the study: (a) How many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? (b) What type(s) of planning do elementary music teachers participate in? (c) What do elementary music teachers do during their planning time? The following discussion includes the participants' demographic information, and the results will be organized by research question, followed by suggestions for future research.

### **Participants**

The participants in the present study were primarily white (94.31%,  $n = 232$ ), which was similar to the findings of Matthews and Koner (2017) whose survey of music teachers in the United States indicated they were 90.90% white. The participants in this study were also primarily female (87.39%,  $n = 215$ ), which was higher than Matthews and Koner (2017). Their study, however, was focused on K-12 music education demographics, which might indicate that there were more males teaching in 6-12 music education and explain why only 61.30% of their participants were female. The remaining races and ethnicities (American Indian, 0.41%,  $n = 1$ ; Asian, 1.22%,  $n = 3$ ; African American, 1.62%,  $n = 4$ ; Hispanic, 2.44%,  $n = 6$ ; Pacific Islander, 0.41%,  $n = 1$ ; Two or more races, 1.22%,  $n = 3$ ) in this study nearly mimic Matthews and Koner's (2017) study. The National Center for Education Statistics (2021) reported that elementary teachers were 79% white and 76% female.

I asked the participants to report the number of years they had been a teacher and the number of years they had been a music teacher. The median number of years of music teaching

was 11 years, which was only one year off of Matthews and Koner (2017). Overall, participants' years of teaching exceeded the number of years they had taught music (15 and 11, respectively).

Regarding the type of school in which participants taught, 89.43% taught in a public school, 7.32% taught in a private school, 2.85% taught in a charter school, and 0.41% taught in a different type of school. These results nearly mirror Matthews and Koner (2017). I discovered a mistake in my survey regarding the answer choice "other." One participant selected that they worked in different type of school, but they did not have the option to enter the type of school in which they worked because I forgot to allow respondents to type in their answer. That will be corrected for future use.

The demographics of participants were consistent to those in Matthews and Koner (2017); they were primarily white and female. Years of teaching experience were also very close, and most participants indicated they taught in public schools. My participant sample could be considered typical based on these findings.

### **Research Question 1**

Research question one was "how many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? To answer that question, I asked the participants to choose the teaching rotation that best fit their schedules, the number of classes they taught in their teaching rotation, and how long their classes were. Elementary music teachers, school administrators, national education associations, and policymakers need the data collected in this study to help them know what is happening in the field. Carey (1952) wrote about the importance of planning time seven decades ago, yet the amount of research on planning time is scarce. Therefore, I propose that music education researchers, school administrators, national education associations like NAFME, and policymakers work together to learn more about planning time, how many classes elementary

music teachers should teach during their teaching rotation, and how many minutes their classes should be, to ensure planning time, the number of classes taught, and their class length is taken into consideration when creating music teachers' schedules.

There were several unanticipated findings regarding teaching rotations. One participant wrote that they taught on a four-week teaching rotation, which I did not plan for in this survey instrument. Many music teachers reported that they taught every student in their school twice or three times per week but did not specify the teaching rotation. In future investigations, researchers will need to consider how to quantify these types of responses because the design of this survey instrument hindered my ability to collect those data points.

I asked the participants about the length of their planning time during their teaching rotation. Most of the participants reported having some planning time during their teaching rotation, except for one participant who said that they did not have any planning time during their three-day teaching rotation. This was concerning because that participant is providing planning time for the other teachers in their school but was not receiving any planning time. The participants who taught on a seven-day, eight-day, and ten-day teaching rotation had extremely low amounts of planning time (45 minutes, 30 minutes, and 25 minutes respectively). This indicated that those participants taught almost all day every day without breaks. Another concerning finding was that a participant reported having one 4.5-minute block of planning during their five-day teaching rotation. That reported figure was most likely a mistake because 4.5 minutes of planning across five days seemed unlikely; that participant may have misread the question and entered 4.5 hours instead of 270 minutes of planning.

I asked the participants about the number of classes they taught in their teaching rotation. Overall, the ranges of the reported number of classes taught within each teaching rotation

seemed unlikely. One participant reported teaching 40 classes in their one-day teaching rotation, which meant they taught 40 classes every day. The minimum number of classes taught for the four-day, five-day, and six-day teaching rotations (six classes, four classes, and six classes, respectively) seems unlikely for a full-time music teacher, unless the class meeting times are longer than 45 minutes (Rettig, n.d.) or the recommended 90 minutes of music instruction per week recommended by the most recent *Opportunity to Learn Standards* (NAfME, 2020). However, I did not ask the participants if they were full-time or part-time music teachers. Those low numbers of classes might have made more sense if they were part-time music teachers, and in future research that information should be collected.

Regardless of the teaching rotation, most participants reported that their planning time did vary from day to day but did not vary from week to week. Nearly half (48.79%) of the participants either strongly agreed or somewhat agreed to the comment, “I have enough planning time,” while 43.52% responded that they strongly disagreed or somewhat disagreed with the same comment. The participants seemed to be evenly split on their opinion about their amount of planning time. This may be due to the various tasks teachers did during their planning time (Conrad, 1993; Hixon et al., 2013; Martin, 2016). If the music teachers spent a majority of their planning time planning lessons only, they might have felt that they had enough planning. However, if the music teachers had other tasks, such as copying papers, repairing instruments, or cleaning their classrooms after class, then they might have felt that they did not have enough planning. A small number of participants (7.72%) were neutral. Some participants reported that some of their planning time was also included in the transition time between classes, so future research might include asking when music teachers’ planning times are.

Most participants (65.45%) chose a teaching rotation between 1-10 days; 34.55% could not choose a specific teaching rotation. This indicates that there is no scheduling consistency spanning school districts and schedules within school districts across the United States, despite the suggestions in the *Opportunity to Learn Standards/School Music Program* (Hoffer et al., 1986; Lehman, 1994; NAFME, 2020). Those standards for school music programs do not provide the tools that elementary music teachers can use to help them advocate for a fair schedule. Scheduling is primarily up to school administrators or scheduling committees at each school (Rettig, n.d.; Rettig & Canady, 1995). For meaningful change, NAFME and other education-focused organizations (i.e., National Education Association) could work together to create toolkits for music teachers and school administrators alike. Such a toolkit would help music teachers advocate for equal planning time and to help them determine if the amount of planning time they have is equitable. A planning time toolkit would also help school administrators know how much planning time their music teacher would need to have a successful music program.

My hope is these initial data on teaching rotations, class lengths, number of classes taught, and planning time amounts will encourage other researchers and policy makers to examine current data and expound on what I started with this study. I am willing to work with all stakeholders to help bring about planning time policy.

## **Research Question 2**

The second research question was “what type of planning do elementary music teachers participate in?” The literature identified two types of planning, individual and common. Every respondent reported that they had individual planning time.

Only 35 (14.23%) of the participants engaged in common planning time, or planned with other teachers, with a range of one-quarter of a day up to five days each week. A follow-up

question would have helped me understand if those participants planned with other music teachers or grade-level teachers as I could not find any literature documenting if specialist teachers planned collaboratively with other teachers in their schools. Common planning for specialist teachers may also be difficult because there might only be one music teacher per elementary school. I realized that I never specifically asked the participants about the amount of time they spent in common planning; I only asked about the frequency they participated in common planning. In future studies, researchers should specifically ask about how long music teachers spend in common planning periods and with whom they plan.

The most common activity for the participants who participated in a music PLC was sharing instructional ideas ( $n = 88.50\%$ , 100). Battersby (2019) and Sanderson (2017) also found that music teachers enjoyed sharing lessons, exchanging instructional ideas, and teaching techniques, which was similar to the participants in this study. Battersby (2019) also found that music teachers engaged in curriculum design, the second-highest activity reported by this study's participants.

Participating in a music PLC might be a privilege as 36 (27.07%) participants reported not having a music PLC. Sixteen participants reported not having time to meet with their music PLC members. Battersby and Verdi (2015) found that meeting together in a PLC for many music teachers meant that they had to meet after school and travel to a central location, which took time out of their day. This might explain the responses of this study's participants.

Battersby and Verdi (2015) also suggested that music teachers meet via online platforms to eliminate the need for travel. With the proliferation of virtual meeting spaces as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, this might be an effective approach. In future research on music PLC

participation, researchers should collect data on whether music teachers meet at a central location or via an online platform.

NAfME has an ongoing online professional learning community that meets periodically throughout the school year and records their meetings for members to view later (NAfME, n.d.). That could be a resource for elementary music teachers who do not have access to a music PLC. Additionally, NAfME could create a toolkit for music teachers to help them advocate for the importance of participating in a local PLC. The toolkit would help school administrators plan for and create a music PLC.

A small number of participants reported that they reviewed data during their music PLC time, but I did not ask about the data or how it was collected. I was curious to know what kind of data those participants reviewed and whether the data was school- or district-wide data, or individual music data that the music teachers collected. I did not ask the participants in the present study what kind of data they reviewed, and future research on this topic might reveal the types of data that music teachers review in a PLC.

One of my participants did not participate in a PLC because there was not one during the school day, implying that they were either not willing to travel to another location or did not have the time to travel. Planning for as many as six grade levels is time-consuming and a PLC during the school day would help alleviate the burden. For the music teachers in larger school districts, having a set time during the week where all music teachers could meet virtually might be beneficial. That also assumes that school administrators would be willing to create their school's schedule so the music teachers could work together, which also affords them the same opportunity grade-level teachers have during the school day. One participant was the only music teacher in their school district, and another taught at a charter school. These music teachers could



reach out to their neighboring school districts to help create a music PLC so they could work together. Music teachers could advocate for these PLCs, but arts coordinators could also help facilitate these PLCs, and help school administrators create the needed schedule. Arts coordinators could also ensure that these PLCs are duty-free, ensuring a meaningful time for instructional planning, learning and sharing instructional strategies, planning for county-wide events, and getting support from colleagues. A specific PLC time would help increase the amount of common planning for music teachers.

### **Research Question 3**

Research question three was “what do elementary music teachers do during their planning time?” Many of the reported planning time activities were nearly identical to the activities that were identified in the literature. The participants in this study answered emails, planned for upcoming tasks, took bathroom breaks, addressed student discipline issues, supervised other classes (Hixon et al., 2013), and graded (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Bruno et al., 2012; Chandler, 2018; Hixon et al., 2013, Martin, 2015). Some other reported tasks that were not identified in the literature were more specific to music teachers, such as practicing instruments, repairing instruments, ordering recorders, and composing and arranging music.

One music teacher reported using their planning time to take care of “nursing mom activities.” Nearly all of the participants in the current study were female (87.40%), 76% of all elementary teachers were female (NCES, 2021), and 62.59% were within childbearing age and could become biological mothers. My participant who spent her planning time completing “nursing mom activities” lost her planning time. She is likely not alone, and schools risk attrition of nursing mothers due to an unsupportive or untenable schedule. Future research on when nursing mothers complete “nursing mom activities” is warranted, particularly for music teachers.

Some respondents also reported that their planning time was split up into small amounts throughout the school day (instead of having a longer period), which were likely beneficial for cleaning the classroom and repairing instruments, but probably not beneficial for instructional planning. Elementary music teachers need time between each class to properly clean and sanitize their rooms, set up for their next class. An elementary music teacher cannot clean and reset their rooms if they have other duties during those times between classes. Music teachers also use their planning time for personal breaks (Barney & Deutsch, 2012; Conrad, 1993), a time they need to allow their minds to refresh so that they can successfully plan. Inadequate instructional planning forces elementary music teachers to plan outside of school (Ladd, 2011), leading to potential burnout (Chandler, 2018) and higher attrition rates for elementary music. An unrelenting schedule, where classes are back-to-back, also does not allow music teachers time during the day to rest their vocal cords, which could contribute to vocal damage. Music teachers need their voices to be healthy to do their jobs and inadequate amounts of planning time or time during classes to reset their rooms does not provide them with ample time to rest their voice.

The activities that music teachers did during their planning time, which were identified in the present study, would also help school administrators, NAFME, and policymakers ensure that planning time is not preparation time. Preparation time occurs in the morning before students arrive to school and during the school day when classes change. If elementary music teachers do not have time to rearrange their classrooms between teaching grade levels, their students' music education will suffer because their music teacher could not provide the students with the materials and instruments they need to learn. When a music teachers' planning time is split up into smaller blocks, those blocks serve as preparation time, not planning time. It seems unlikely that a fourth-grade teacher would have several short planning blocks throughout the school day.

Therefore, the music teacher should not have shorter planning blocks, either. With planning time preserved and preparation time built into the music teacher's schedule, then the music teacher will have time to complete actual planning time activities during their planning time.

### **Summary, Conclusion, and Recommendations**

The purpose of this descriptive study was to learn about elementary music teachers' planning time. The following research questions guided the study: (a) How many minutes of planning time do elementary music teachers have? (b) What do elementary music teachers do during their planning time? (c) What type(s) of planning do elementary music teachers participate in? The average amount of planning time was calculated for each teaching rotation category (i.e., one-day, two-day, etc.) and the participants with the greatest average amount of planning time were during the four-day rotation with 228.58 minutes. The participants with the least average planning time were during the one-day rotation with 86.67 minutes. Most (65.4%) participants reported that their planning time varied from day to day but that their planning did not vary from week to week (75.6%). Nearly half (48.8%) of participants reported having enough planning time.

Elementary music teachers completed similar activities that were identified in the literature. They planned lessons, graded, and called parents (Chandler, 2018; Martin, 2015). The unique activities to music teachers were planning extracurricular activities such as All-County Chorus events, resetting their rooms, and planning during their lunch. Also unique to music teachers' planning was composing and arranging music for their lessons, practicing instruments, and repairing instruments.

All but one music teacher reported having individual planning time, though the amount varied considerably. The participant who reported having zero planning had a three-day teaching

rotation was a concerning finding. The participants who taught on a seven-day, eight-day, and ten-day teaching rotations had extremely low amounts of planning. Regardless of the teaching rotation, the overall planning time extended from zero minutes to 800 minutes (1070 minutes was entered in the “other” teaching rotation category). Most (85.8%) of teachers did not plan with other teachers and of those who did, planned with other teachers an average of 1.19 days per week. Music PLC participation was also not the norm for the participants as 54.1% did not participate. The participants who participated in a music PLC met an average of 1.46 times a month.

The overall response rate ( $N = 246$ ) was low. Future research on planning time and music teachers’ schedules is needed to bring about policy changes that positively impact music teachers. Further research on how NAFME creates and updates the *Opportunity to Learn Standards* is needed to inform future policy and new updates to the *Opportunity to Learn Standards*. These data in this study show that over half (59.4%) participants taught more the recommended number of students (400) each week due to their schedules, meaning those students are not receiving the music education they deserve. There is still an urgent need to collect more data on music teachers’ planning time amounts. Future studies should also investigate music teachers’ awareness of the *Opportunity to Learn Standards*. Do music teachers know these standards exist? Do policymakers know these standards exist? Researchers could also investigate school districts that use the *Opportunity to Learn Standards* to create music teachers’ schedules to serve as exemplary models for schools needing to reform their schedules.

This begins to fill a gap in planning time literature, but there is still much to investigate on this topic. A primary concern is learning more about elementary music teachers’ schedules, particularly their teaching rotation. Some participants taught their students every day, most once

a week. However, one taught their students every day for a week before not teaching them again for three weeks. Some participants were assigned duties during their planning time, and this study was not designed to collect data on the frequency of duty assignments nor how long duties last. A series of smaller and more localized studies may prove to be more helpful in collecting these types of data. Such studies could be case studies, where researchers would collect multiple forms of data such as district- and school-wide schedules, music teacher schedules, complete observations, and engage in participant interviews. Smaller qualitative case studies would also allow researchers to ask follow-up questions. While I had participants from across the United States, the overall response rate was low.

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## APPENDIX A: HIXON ET AL. STUDY



## Legislative Planning Period Study: 2013



### Marking Instructions

- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- **Do not use ink, ballpoint, or felt tip pens.**
- Make solid marks that fill the response completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Make no stray marks on this form.

CORRECT: ●

INCORRECT: ☒ ☓ ☙ ☚

To complete this survey online, go to

<http://tinyurl.com/planningperiods>

Your login code is: {Code}

### Example for gridding 060

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

**code**

Please answer all items on this survey in the context of the 2012-2013 academic year. If you taught at multiple schools, please respond with the school you consider your primary location in mind.

We genuinely appreciate your participation. Thank you!

1. What grade level(s) did you teach? (select all that apply)

Pre	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
-----	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----	----	----

2. For how many different courses were you responsible for preparing instruction each day? (e.g., if you taught 4 sections of English 10, please consider them one course, if you taught 1 section of English 10 and one section of English 11, please consider them two different courses, etc.) Please grid your response following the example showing 060 above.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

3. Did you co-teach with another educator? ☒ Yes ☐ No

This section of the survey asks information about your school or about the typical experience of teachers in your school. Some of the items in this section ask for a response in minutes. Please grid your response following the example showing 060 above.

4. How many instructional periods did your school have each day? (If your school did not set specific instructional periods, please respond with how the majority of teachers divided their instructional day.)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

5. Please respond to the following questions in minutes.

How many minutes long was the shortest instructional period in your school?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

On a typical day, how many minutes long was the daily individual planning period for the majority of the teachers in your school?

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

6. What type of planning model did your school use?

- ☐ Teachers had team planning time **ONLY**.
- ☐ Teachers had independent planning time **ONLY**.
- ☐ Teachers had independent planning **AND** team planning time.

Continued on back

IRB-WVDE-015

WVDE-CIS-128



## APPENDIX B: INITIAL SURVEY

### Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Please enter your initials (this is to establish the reliability of the survey for the final dissertation survey).

---

Q2 What type of school do you teach at?

☐ Public (1)

☐ Private (2)

☐ Charter (3)

☐ Other (Please specify) (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 How many different schools do you teach at? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q4 What grade(s) do you teach? (select all that apply)

☐ Pk (1)

☐ K (2)

☐ 1 (3)

☐ 2 (4)

☐ 3 (5)

☐ 4 (6)

- ☐ 5 (7)
- ☐ 6 (8)
- ☐ 7 (9)
- ☐ 8 (10)
- ☐ 9 (11)
- ☐ 10 (12)
- ☐ 11 (13)
- ☐ 12 (14)

Q5 How many students do you teach each week? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q6 What type of scheduling model is the one used by most teachers at your school?

- ☐ Traditional schedule (all academic subjects taught everyday) (1)
- ☐ Block schedule (all academic subjects not taught everyday, taught every other day) (2)

Q7 Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school by selecting the model that best describes your school's schedule.

- ☐ Self-contained (one teacher teaches all subjects) (1)
- ☐ Compartmentalized (each teacher teaches one subject) (2)

Q8 How many instructional periods does your school have each day? (If your school does not set specific instructional periods, please respond with how the majority of teachers divide their instructional day.) Please use the slider tool to enter your response.

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20



Q9 What is the lowest number of instructional periods you teach in a day?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20



Q10 What is the highest number of instructional periods you teach in a day?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



11 What type of planning model does your school use?

- ☐ Teachers have common planning time ONLY (planning with other teachers) (1)
- ☐ Teachers have individual planning time ONLY (planning by yourself) (2)
- ☐ Teachers have individual planning AND common planning time (3)

Q12 Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts teachers, etc.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Q27 = Yes*

Q13 How many times a week do you plan with other teachers?

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20



Q14 Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Q29 = Yes*

Q15 How many times a month do you meet with your PLC?

0 2 4 6 8 10 12 14 16 18 20 22 24 26 28 30

Click to write Choice 1



*Display This Question:*

*If Q29 = Yes*

Q16 What activities do music teachers do in their PLC? (Select all that apply)



- ☐ Plan music curriculum (1)
  - ☐ Plan music lessons (2)
  - ☐ Review data (any data) (3)
  - ☐ Share instructional ideas (4)
  - ☐ Other (please specify) (5)
- 

Q17 On a typical day, how many minutes long is the daily individual planning period for the majority of the teachers in your school?

0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100



Q18 Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes four times a week and 45 minutes once per week.)

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q19 How many minutes is your shortest individual planning period?

0 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150



Q20 How many minutes is your longest individual planning period?

0 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150



Q21 How much time (in minutes) during regular school hours do you spend in planning periods each day? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable.

0 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150



Q22 How much total time (in minutes) during regular school hours do you spend in planning periods during a typical week? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable.

---

Q23 On average, how many additional minutes do you spend planning for instruction each day beyond regular school hours?

0 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150



Q24 In your estimation, what would be the ideal amount of daily individual planning time (in minutes) during the regular school day for you to adequately prepare instruction for your students?

0 15 30 45 60 75 90 105 120 135 150



Q25 Which activities do you participate in during your individual planning or common planning periods? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Plan lessons (1)
  - ☐ Call parents/guardians (2)
  - ☐ Grade (3)
  - ☐ Attend meetings (4)
  - ☐ Other (please specify) (5)
- 

Q26 Please provide any additional comments you may have about planning period times.

---

**End of Block: Default Question Block**

## APPENDIX C: FIRST PILOT SURVEY

### Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Dear Friends and Colleagues, Thank you for your willingness to participate in the pilot for my dissertation survey. The title of my dissertation is *The State of Elementary Music Teachers' Planning Times*. The purpose of piloting the survey is to establish statistical reliability. A “Test-Retest” method will be used to determine the reliability of the survey, which means you will take the same survey twice, four weeks apart. The first item on the survey asks for your initials because I will need to correlate your responses. If you wish not to use your initials, please create a “code name” that you will use (and remember) each time you take the survey. You do not need to complete the last item on the survey. If you have questions, please contact me [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. Most gratefully, Seth

Q2 Please enter your initials (this is to establish the reliability of the survey for the final dissertation survey).

---

Q3 In what type of school do you teach?

☐ Public (1)

☐ Private (2)

☐ Charter (3)

☐ Other (Please specify) (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 In how many different schools do you teach? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q5 What grade(s) do you teach? (select all that apply)

☐ Pk (1)

☐ K (2)

☐ 1 (3)

☐ 2 (4)

☐ 3 (5)

☐ 4 (6)

☐ 5 (7)

☐ 6 (8)

☐ 7 (9)

☐ 8 (10)

☐ 9 (11)

☐ 10 (12)

☐ 11 (13)

☐ 12 (14)

Q6 How many students do you teach each week? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q7 Which type of scheduling model is used by most teachers at your school?

☐ Traditional schedule (all academic subjects taught everyday) (1)

☐ Block schedule (all academic subjects not taught everyday, taught every other day) (2)

Q8 Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school by selecting the model that best describes your school's schedule.

☐ Self-contained (each teacher teaches all subjects) (1)

☐ Compartmentalized (each teacher teaches one subject) (2)

Q9 How many instructional periods does your school have each day? (If your school does not set specific instructional periods, please respond with how the majority of teachers divide their instructional day.)

---

Q10 What is the lowest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week?

---

Q11 What is the highest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week?

---

Q12 What type of planning model does your school use?

☐ Teachers have common planning time ONLY (planning with other teachers) (1)

☐ Teachers have individual planning time ONLY (planning by yourself) (2)

☐ Teachers have individual planning AND common planning time (3)

☐ Other (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q13 Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts teachers, etc.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts  
teac... = Yes*

Q14 How many times a week do you plan with other teachers?

---

Q15 Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q16 How many times a month do you meet with your PLC? Please enter a numerical response  
(e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = No*

Q17 Please tell me why you do not participate in a PLC.

---

---

---

---

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q18 What activities do music teachers do in their PLC? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Plan music curriculum (1)
- ☐ Plan music lessons (2)
- ☐ Review data (any data) (3)
- ☐ Share instructional ideas (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5)

---

Q19 On a typical day, how many minutes long is the daily individual planning period for the majority of the teachers in your school? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q20 Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes four times a week and 45 minutes once per week.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = Yes*

Q21 How many minutes is your shortest individual planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*



*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = Yes*

Q22 How many minutes is your longest individual planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = No*

Q23 How many minutes is your daily planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q24 How many minutes during regular school hours do you spend in planning periods each day? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q25 How many minutes do you spend in planning periods during a typical week, during school hours? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q26 On average, how many additional minutes do you spend planning for instruction each day beyond regular school hours? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q27 In your estimation, how many minutes of daily individual planning time during the regular school day would be ideal for you to adequately prepare instruction for your students? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q28 Which activities do you participate in during your individual planning or common planning periods? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Plan lessons (1)
- ☐ Call parents/guardians (2)
- ☐ Grade (3)
- ☐ Attend meetings (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5)

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Q29 Please provide any additional comments you may have about planning time.

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**End of Block: Default Question Block**

## APPENDIX D: SECOND PILOT SURVEY

### Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 Dear Friends and Colleagues, Thank you for your willingness to participate in the pilot for my dissertation survey. The title of my dissertation is *The State of Elementary Music Teachers' Planning Times*. The purpose of piloting the survey is to establish statistical reliability. A "Test-Retest" method will be used to determine the reliability of the survey, which means you will take the same survey twice, four weeks apart. The first item on the survey asks for your initials because I will need to correlate your responses. If you wish not to use your initials, please create a "code name" that you will use (and remember) each time you take the survey. You do not need to complete the last item on the survey. If you have questions, please contact me [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. Most gratefully, Seth.

Q2 Please enter your initials (this is to establish the reliability of the survey for the final dissertation survey).

---

Q3 In what type of school do you teach?

☐ Public (1)

☐ Private (2)

☐ Charter (3)

☐ Other (Please specify) (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 In how many different schools do you teach? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q5 What grade(s) do you teach? (select all that apply)

☐ Pk (1)

☐ K (2)

☐ 1 (3)

☐ 2 (4)

☐ 3 (5)

☐ 4 (6)

☐ 5 (7)

☐ 6 (8)

☐ 7 (9)

☐ 8 (10)

☐ 9 (11)

☐ 10 (12)

☐ 11 (13)

☐ 12 (14)

Q6 How many students do you teach each week? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q7 Which type of scheduling model is used by most teachers at your school?

☐ Traditional schedule (all academic subjects taught everyday) (1)

☐ Block schedule (all academic subjects not taught everyday, taught every other day) (2)

Q8 Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school by selecting the model that best describes your school's schedule.

☐ Self-contained (each teacher teaches all subjects) (1)

☐ Compartmentalized (each teacher teaches one subject) (2)

Q9 How many instructional periods does your school have each day? (If your school does not set specific instructional periods, please respond with how the majority of teachers divide their instructional day.)

---

Q10 What is the lowest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week?

---

Q11 What is the highest number of daily instructional periods you teach in a week?

---

Q12 What type of planning model does your school use?

☐ Teachers have common planning time ONLY (planning with other teachers) (1)

☐ Teachers have individual planning time ONLY (planning by yourself) (2)

☐ Teachers have individual planning AND common planning time (3)

☐ Other (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q13 Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts teachers, etc.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts  
teac... = Yes*

Q14 How many times a week do you plan with other teachers?

---

Q15 Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q16 How many times a month do you meet with your PLC? Please enter a numerical response  
(e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = No*

Q17 Please tell me why you do not participate in a PLC.

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*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q18 What activities do music teachers do in their PLC? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Plan music curriculum (1)
- ☐ Plan music lessons (2)
- ☐ Review data (any data) (3)
- ☐ Share instructional ideas (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5)

---

Q19 On a typical day, how many minutes long is the daily individual planning period for the majority of the teachers in your school? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q20 Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes four times a week and 45 minutes once per week.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = Yes*

Q21 How many minutes is your shortest individual planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = Yes*

Q22 How many minutes is your longest individual planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Does the length of your individual planning period vary depending upon the day? (e.g. 30 minutes... = No*

Q23 How many minutes is your daily planning period? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q24 How many minutes during regular school hours do you spend in planning periods each day? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q25 How many minutes do you spend in planning periods during a typical week, during school hours? Include both individual and any required common planning if applicable. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4)

---

Q26 On average, how many additional minutes do you spend planning for instruction each day beyond regular school hours? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---



Q27 In your estimation, how many minutes of daily individual planning time during the regular school day would be ideal for you to adequately prepare instruction for your students? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q28 Which activities do you participate in during your individual planning or common planning periods? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Plan lessons (1)
- ☐ Call parents/guardians (2)
- ☐ Grade (3)
- ☐ Attend meetings (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5)

---

Q29 Please provide any additional comments you may have about planning time.

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**End of Block: Default Question Block**

## APPENDIX E: DISSERTATION SURVEY

### **A Descriptive Analysis of Elementary Music Teachers' Planning Time Survey**

#### **Start of Block: Survey Consent Form**

Q1

IRB Information Sheet Template

Project Title: A Descriptive Analysis of Elementary Music Teachers' Planning Time

Principal Investigator: Seth N. McKnight

Faculty Advisor: Tami Draves, Ph.D.

#### **What is this all about?**

I am asking you to participate in this research study to learn about the amount of planning time elementary music teachers have and about what kind of planning time with which they participate. This research project will only take about 10 minutes of your time and will involve you answering a 33-question survey. Your participation in this research project is voluntary.

#### **How will this negatively affect me?**

No, 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 from learning about how much time elementary music teachers spend planning their lessons. Information like this might help school administrators know how much time planning time their music teachers need every day.

#### **Will I get paid for participating?**

You will not be compensated for your 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. We will not ask for your names nor the school(s) in which you work. All survey data will be kept in my secure Box account.

**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. Alternatively, add security statement from commercial survey tool used for the study. Qualtrics uses Transport Layer Security (TLS) encryption (also known as HTTPS) for all transmitted data.**

### **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 Seth McKnight at [REDACTED] or Tami Draves, Ph.D., at [REDACTED] 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.

- ☐ Yes, I consent to participate in this Study. (4)
- ☐ No, I do not consent to participate in this Study. (5)

*Skip To: End of Survey If IRB Information Sheet Template Project Title: A Descriptive Analysis of Elementary Music Teachers'... = No, I do not consent to participate in this Study.*

**End of Block: Survey Consent Form**

**Start of Block: Teacher Demographics**

Q2 How old are you?

- ☐ Under 18 (1)
- ☐ 18-24 years old (2)
- ☐ 25-34 years old (3)
- ☐ 35-44 years old (4)
- ☐ 45-54 years old (5)
- ☐ 55-64 years old (6)
- ☐ 65+ years old (7)

Q3 How do you describe yourself?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Non-binary / third gender (3)
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Prefer not to say (5)

Q4 Please describe your race/ethnicity:

- ☐ Alaska Native (1)
- ☐ American Indian (2)
- ☐ Asian (3)

- ☐ Black or African American (4)
- ☐ Hispanic or Latino (5)
- ☐ Native Hawaiian (6)
- ☐ Pacific Islander (7)
- ☐ White (8)
- ☐ Two or more races (12)
- ☐ Some other race alone (feel free to describe) (13)

---

**End of Block: Teacher Demographics**

**Start of Block: School Demographics**

Q5 In which state do you currently teach?

▼ Alabama (1) ... I do not reside in the United States (53)

Q6 In how many schools do you teach?

- ☐ 1 (1)
- ☐ 2 (2)
- ☐ 3 (3)
- ☐ 4 (4)
- ☐ 5 (5)
- ☐ Other (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q7 Please describe the location of your school(s). If you teach at more than one school, select all that apply.

☐

**Urban** (Americans living in ZIP codes that are 12 miles or less from the center of the nearest city and have a household density of more than 1,314 households per square mile.) (1)

☐

**Suburban** (Americans living in ZIP codes that are 12 miles or less from the center of the nearest city and have a household density of 1,314 households or fewer per square mile. This group also includes people who live in ZIP codes that are more than 12 miles from the center of the city and have a household density of more than 106 households per square mile.) (2)

☐

**Rural** (Americans living in ZIP codes that are more than 12 miles from the center of the nearest city and have a household density of 106 households or fewer per square mile.) (3)

*Display This Question:*

*If In how many schools do you teach? = 2*

*Or In how many schools do you teach? = 3*

*Or In how many schools do you teach? = 4*

*Or In how many schools do you teach? = 5*

*Or In how many schools do you teach? = Other*

Q8 If you teach in more than one school, how many schools are in the locations (urban, suburban, rural) you indicated? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

☐

Urban (please enter a numerical response in the text box) (1)

---

☐

Suburban (please enter a numerical response in the text box) (2)

---

☐

Rural (please enter a numerical response in the text box) (3)

---

Q9 In what type of school do you teach?

☐ Public (1)

☐ Private (2)

☐ Charter (3)

☐ Other (please specify) (4)

Q10 What grade(s) do you teach? (select all that apply)

☐ Pk (1)

☐ K (2)

☐ 1 (3)

☐ 2 (4)

☐ 3 (5)

☐ 4 (6)

☐ 5 (7)

☐ 6 (8)

☐ 7 (9)

☐ 8 (10)

☐ 9 (11)

☐ 10 (12)

☐ 11 (13)

☐

12 (14)

Q11 How many total students do you teach?

☐ 0-100 (4)

☐ 101-200 (5)

☐ 201-300 (6)

☐ 301-400 (7)

☐ 401-500 (8)

☐ 501-600 (9)

☐ 601-700 (10)

☐ 701-800 (11)

☐ 801-900 (12)

☐ 901-1000 (13)

☐ 1001+ (14)

Q12 Do you belong to a teachers union (such as the American Federation of Teachers)?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Q13 Do you belong to a professional education association (such as the National Association of Educators)?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)



Q14 How many years have you been a teacher (include all subjects)? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q15 How many years have you been an elementary music teacher? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

**End of Block: School Demographics**

**Start of Block: Scheduling**

Q16 Which type of scheduling model is used by most teachers at your elementary school(s)?

- ☐ Traditional schedule (all academic subjects taught everyday) (1)
- ☐ Block schedule (all academic subjects not taught everyday, taught every other day) (2)
- ☐ Other (please describe) (3) \_\_\_\_\_

Q17 Please provide additional details about the scheduling model used in your school by selecting the model that best describes your school's schedule.

- ☐ Self-contained (each teacher teaches all subjects) (1)
- ☐ Compartmentalized (each teacher teaches one subject) (2)
- ☐ Both (some grade level teachers teach all subjects and some grade level teachers teach only one subject) (3)

**End of Block: Scheduling**

**Start of Block: Teaching Rotation**

Q18 I want to learn how often you teach your students, how much individual planning you have, and how long your classes are. To get started, please select your teaching rotation from the options below. For example, a five-day rotation means you teach every student once per week. If

you teach at two or more schools, and still teach every student in your rotation once per week, that is still a five-day rotation.

- ☐ 1-day rotation (you teach each student everyday of the week) (1)
- ☐ 2-day rotation (you teach each student every other school day) (2)
- ☐ 3-day rotation (you teach each student every third school day) (3)
- ☐ 4-day rotation (you teach each student every fourth school day) (4)
- ☐ 5-day rotation (you teach each student once a week; every fifth school day) (5)
- ☐ 6-day rotation (you teach each student every sixth school day) (6)
- ☐ 7-day rotation (you teach each student every seventh school day) (7)
- ☐ 8-day rotation (you teach each student every eighth school day) (8)
- ☐ 9-day rotation (you teach each student every ninth school day) (9)
- ☐ 10-day rotation (you teach each student every tenth school day OR every other week) (10)
- ☐ Other (please describe) (11) \_\_\_\_\_

Q19 Add up how many total classes you teach in your teaching rotation. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q20 Add up the total number of minutes of individual planning you have during your teaching rotation. Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q21 Does the amount of your individual planning time vary from day to day?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Q22 Does the amount your individual planning time vary from week to week?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

Q23 I have enough individual planning time.

☐ Strongly agree (1)

☐ Somewhat agree (2)

☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)

☐ Somewhat disagree (4)

☐ Strongly disagree (5)

Q24 In your estimation, how many **minutes** of **daily** individual planning time during the regular school day would be ideal for you to adequately prepare instruction for your students? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q25 Estimate the average length of your classes (select all that apply).

☐ 0-19 minutes (1)

☐ 20-29 minutes (2)

☐ 30-40 minutes (3)

☐ 41-50 minutes (4)

☐

51+ minutes (5)

☐

Other (please describe) (6)

---

**End of Block: Teaching Rotation**

**Start of Block: Common planning time**

Q26 Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts teachers, etc.)

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you plan with other teachers? (e.g. common planning with grade-level teachers, other arts teachers) = Yes*

Q27 How many times a week do you plan with other teachers? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

Q28 Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers?

☐ Yes (1)

☐ No (2)

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q29 How many times a month do you meet with your music PLC? Please enter a numerical response (e.g. 4).

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = Yes*

Q30 What activities do music teachers do in their PLC? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Plan music curriculum (1)
- ☐ Plan music lessons (2)
- ☐ Review data (any data) (3)
- ☐ Share instructional ideas (4)
- ☐ Other (please specify) (5)

---

*Display This Question:*

*If Do you participate in a Professional Learning Community (PLC) for music teachers? = No*

Q31 Please tell me why you do not participate in a music PLC.

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Q32 Which activities do you participate in during your individual planning or common planning periods? Select all that apply.

- ☐ Plan lessons (1)
- ☐ Call parents/guardians (2)

☐

Grade (3)

☐

Attend meetings (4)

☐

Other (please specify) (5)

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☐

Q33 Please provide any additional comments you may have about planning time.

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**End of Block: Common planning time**