2013 National In-Service Conference:

Building Your Instrumental Music Program in Urban and Rural Schools

Session Presenter:
Kevin Mixon

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Accommodating Band Students with Visual Impairments

Rick Lee Coates

Three Learning Styles ... Four Steps to Reach Them

Kevin Mixon

More than a Living:
Teaching in an Urban School

Ella Wilcox

Engaging and Educating Students with Culturally Responsive Performing Ensembles

Kevin Mixon

Building Your Instrumental Music Program in an Urban School

Kevin Mixon

Music Education in Rural Areas:
A few Keys to Success

Daniel Isbell

A Mixed Methods Portrait of Urban Instrumental Music Teaching

Kate R. Fitzpatrick

The Young Musicians of Motown:
A Success Story of Urban Music Education

Marie McCarthy

Social Class and School Music

Vincent C. Bates

Clarifying the Terms "Multicultural," "Multiethnic," and "World Music Education through a Review of Literature

Yiannis Miralis
Accommodating Band Students with Visual Impairments
Rick Lee Coates

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What is This?
Accommodating Band Students with Visual Impairments

AbSTRACT: This article offers a discussion about some of the accommodations and modifications used in music instruction. The focus here is on the musical tasks and challenges faced by band students with visual impairments. Research and literature reveal an interest in the topic but a lack of accessible materials for immediate use in the classroom and rehearsal. The author seeks to broaden the discussion.

KEYWORDS: advocacy, band, blind, high school, low vision, middle school, visually impaired

A major educational goal for the visually-impaired student is attaining a level of independence and self-assurance in all tasks, such as playing a band instrument. As a band teacher at a residential school for the blind, I have learned that success toward this goal occurs through the use of accommodations or modifications appropriate to the learning style of each student. Many types of music instruction involve visual presentations that challenge the visually-impaired band student. Overcoming these challenges requires the band teacher to be responsible for providing the necessary accommodations or modifications.

Each year, schools develop Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for all students with special needs. The IEP contains information about the student’s current educational needs and goals, special support services, and appropriate accommodations or modifications essential for the student’s education. One such IEP goal requires that the visually-impaired band student be provided musical parts and materials in braille. An accommodation for the IEP goal requires that the band teacher use the services of a professional or specially trained braille music transcriber. The band teacher can also purchase braille music-transcribing software that allows the production of braille music on-site.

This article focuses on how the band teacher can address accommodations or modifications concerning methods, materials, and technologies that can assist the visually-impaired band student with musical tasks and challenges. The discussion about musical tasks deals with the skills needed for reading music and playing a band instrument. Discussion of challenges features issues raised by teachers, students, and parents involving sight-reading, working with conductors, and participating in marching band.

With some simple modifications, your band students with visual impairments can share in many of the musical experiences of others in the ensemble.

by Rick Lee Coates

Rick Lee Coates is the band director at The Governor Morehead School for the Blind in Raleigh, North Carolina. He can be contacted at rick.coates@esdb.nc.gov.
Learning/Reading Styles

An important goal for band teachers involves helping all band students become independent learners by teaching them how to read music notation. Accommodating for reading music requires the band teacher to determine the learning/reading style of each student. For visual impairment, learning and reading styles focus on skills of visual, tactual (touch), or auditory abilities.

Visual learning uses print as the chosen reading medium, with accommodations focusing on visual clarity based on aspects of light, distance, or contrast. Distance refers to how close the music document is to the user’s eyes. Often, users must move closer to the document being read; use optical aids, such as magnifiers or scopes; or get access to large-size printed material. Contrast involves the reflection of light off of two adjacent colors or surfaces, with the clearest being black against white. Enlargement of staff notation benefits students with issues involving distance; however, challenges can occur with enlarged documents when students are learning about differences between note stems and bar lines, staff lines and ledger lines, and note heads versus note stems. An accommodation for the visual learner who reads staff notation allows for writing letters under each note value or replacing staff notation with and alternative letter notation system, such as ABC notation or the VI music notation method.²

The tactual (touch) learner uses a system called braille that involves reading raised patterns presented individually or in combinations. For music notation, the braille music code represents all symbols used in music. The performer begins the learning process with a tactual reading of the musical score and commits the information to memory. The final step is to sing the passage or play it on an instrument. Accommodation for this reading method requires creating all documents in the braille format, providing an extension of time on task, dividing large sections into subsections to focus learning, and providing audio files to support rehearsals. Gradually, subsections are merged back together to create a larger musical passage. Comprehension and retention of all passages requires a process of review and repetition.

To facilitate this first accommodation, the band teacher can develop an understanding of the braille music code using
A Challenge for Sighted Teachers

One way to help sighted teachers learn about the needs of the special learner with vision impairments is through a “blindfold challenge.” This activity allows the blindfolded teacher to do a set of activities commonly done by the student throughout the instructional period. These include walking into and around the classroom, practicing instrument and mouthpiece assembly/care/maintenance and playing technique, reading music materials, and undergoing assessment methods. A trip to and around a performance space can also be enlightening.

The sighted teacher must also determine how to provide appropriate communication of both visual and verbal information, such as specific fingerings, walking to and from a rehearsal or performance, and conducting signals. An occasional repeat of the blindfold challenge can remind the music educator of some of the accommodations and modifications a visually-impaired student needs for success.

Bettye Krolick’s book How to Read Braille Music as a resource. The braille music code is a letter notation method based on solfège, with the braille letter D representing the syllable do. The braille letters E through J represent a sequential pattern of the remaining solfège symbols. The conversion of syllables to music pitch changes do to musical pitch C but continues to be represented by the braille letter D. (This is a fixed-do system.)

Instructional options focus the braille music code on performance and nonperformance. Under the performance format, instruction aligns with the curriculum of the music method book being studied. The nonperformance format offers an independent course of study using a comprehensive curriculum, such as the one created by music educator Richard Taesch. A book of exercises written by braille music specialist Edward Jenkins provides reinforcement for both instructional options.

Braille music curriculum features five levels of instruction. The first level is a primer designed to introduce preband students to the practice of reading simple music symbols and performing them with syllables, numbers, or letters. The second introduces the beginning band student to the basic concepts of pitch (first octave) and rhythm (four basic rhythm patterns/rests) and general format (meters, key signatures, bar lines, and tempo). Level 3 provides performers with fewer than three years’ playing experience a reinforcement of material at the first two skill levels, expands concepts of pitch beyond the first octave and accidentals, teaches some new rhythm (dotted and subdivisions), and introduces format (repeat symbols, ties/slurs) and expression (dynamics). The fourth level, for students with three or more years’ experience, reinforces material learned at previous levels and introduces advanced concepts in rhythm, articulation, dynamics, music markings, and tempos. The fifth and final level continues to reinforce learning at previous levels, addresses advanced levels of performance, and concludes with concepts involving instrument specials, special effects, and multiple staff formats (as are used with keyboard, organ, and vocal improvisation). All levels of instruction focus on single-staff formats, but the learning can also be applied to multiple-staff formats.

The auditory learner has no reading medium but uses sound sources (human or recorded) for learning. Tasks require the learner to memorize materials through imitation and repetition. Accommodation for this learning style requires the learner to listen to the sound sample first and then repeat back the sound sample by playing it on a band instrument. Additional accommodations involved extending time on task, dividing large passages into subsections, and providing appropriate sound recordings.

Band Instrument Accommodations

Each band instrument requires a unique set of skills to be mastered by the performer to demonstrate success on the instrument. Tasks common to both visually-impaired and sighted band students include assembly/maintenance, tone production, and technique; however, certain situations require accommodations.

Instrument assembly generally involves connecting specially designed parts to their appropriate counterparts, followed by an appropriate alignment of these parts to allow for proper operation of the instrument. The clarinet represents a good example of assembly challenges in which separate assemblies of the body and mouthpiece are required. The body of the clarinet divides into five different parts, but only the middle key sections and mouthpiece require alignment. Accommodations for alignment involved placing Velcro dots on the back of the key barrel to serve as tactual reference points. Mouthpiece assembly requires teaching the student to place the flat side of the reed on the flat side of mouthpiece, align the reed using the index finger as a guide along the edge of the mouthpiece, and secure the reed to the mouthpiece with the ligature.

Tone production involves a visual or auditory demonstration. Often, the band teacher produces an appropriate sound on the instrument. For the visually-impaired band student, a verbal description combined with the visual presentation (for the rest of the class) serves as an accommodation and reinforces the visual presentation. One challenging presentation involves teaching the student the “buzzing” used with brass instruments. The first step would involve teaching the student to relax the embouchure by doing a playful “fluttering” of the lips without using the mouth-
piece. The next step repeats the process but adds the mouthpiece. Finally, once confidence is apparent in these two steps, the actual buzzing process begins.

Technique requires the visually-impaired band student to demonstrate fingering and hand skills required for a particular instrument. The level of difficulty varies between instruments. Some instruments are more challenging than others. An accommodation involves placing Velcro dots on finger keys to indicate specific placement of the fingers or spacing between fingers. In the brass family, playing the trombone requires moving a slide to specific unmarked positions. Accommodation for this requires use of the fingers of the slide hand, which are positioned in relation to the trombone bell. The outer two positions require extending the arm to two positions, one longer and one shorter. In the percussion family, playing a drumhead or mallet keyboard raises an issue of orientation. Accommodating orientation requires that the student receive physical assistance from a second person; this individual would teach orientation by positioning one hand on the instrument head or bar while the other hand strikes. (The helper might also combine both of these as a single accommodation.) Finally, secure a label to the keyboard in a way that avoids damage to the instrument’s color or sound quality. Many of these tasks require additional accommodations, such as extended learning time and repetition of the task to reinforce learning.

**Technology**

Creating accommodations for the visually-impaired band student requires the use of both standard and adaptive technologies. These technologies include both software and hardware, and they often require special funding toward the student’s education. Software programs may encompass braille transcription, music notation, music recording, optical character recognition (OCR) scanning, screen magnification, and screen reading. Hardware may include closed-circuit television, braille embossers, and large-print printers. Dancing Dots and Opus Technologies are two major vendors of adaptive music technologies.

Audio recording programs, such as Sonar, Studio Recorder, and Audacity, are examples of technology that can help provide a primary accommodation for the band student. These programs can produce audio files for assistance in developing reading and playing skills, recording and evaluating individual
performances, or general listening to understand the overall performance of a musical work. These programs create or allow downloading of files in MIDI, WAV, or MP3 formats.

Music notation programs, such as Sibelius or Finale, can be used to create both audio and document files. The program saves the audio portion of the file and exports it in an audio format, allowing transfer and saving of the final to compact disc or tape. The document file creates a large-print document by modifying the properties of the document. Compatibility issues exist may arise between screen-reading and notation programs; however, a program called Sibelius Speaking 3 has demonstrated success on a limited basis.

Accommodations involving large-print music documents can create the challenge of excessive page turning. A new screen technology called the music reader presents a digital image on a large screen and allows pages to be turned using a foot pedal. The technology begins with a computer program creating the music file and continues with saving the music file to a memory/flash drive, and finally uploading the music file into the reader. Dancing Dots and Music Reader are two of the current vendors of this technology.

Braille music transcription software, such as Goodfeel and Toccata, can be used to help teachers and students create braille music documents as needed. Both programs come with an OCR scanning program called SharpEye, which scans, edits, and converts the music document into a notation interchange format (NIFF) file or extensible markup language (XML) format. Although these programs provide for uploading MIDI files, the synchronized accuracy creates conflicts in the transcribing process.

Challenges

Each year, my work as a band director for students who are visually impaired results in inquiries from teachers, students, and families around the United States about sight-reading, working with conductors, and participation in marching band. Here are some of the things I have learned.

Sight-Reading

Professional flutist and psychologist Thomas Wolf defines musical sight-reading as the ability to perform music from a printed score or part for the first time. The process involves simultaneous reading and performance skills, and it is often used for evaluation and assessment. In this situation, a challenge develops for the visually-impaired band student, who will require accommodations or modifications similar to those used for standardized tests.

The type of accommodation required for sight-reading depends on the individual student's needs. All musical passages used must conform to the learning/reading style of the student, be that visual, tactual, or auditory. The visual learner requires enlargement of documents to large-print format. For the nonvisual learner, the use of alternative methods of musical notation requires memorizing music for performance. Accommodations for memorization use a division of the musical passage into subsections for reading and performance and require extra time to allow the student to complete the task. Additional accommodations addressing the auditory learner require the presence of a second person to read or perform the passage in question before any performance by the student.

As an advocate for the student, the band teacher needs to support the participation of the visually-impaired band student in activities that provide the student an opportunity to be challenged and evaluated equally with sighted peers.

Working with Conductors

A primary duty in conducting involves providing appropriate communications using visual cues and signals. For the visually-impaired band student, the visual system of cuing and signaling creates a challenge that requires the conductor to make simple accommodations or modifications. Prior to any rehearsals, the conductor needs to be informed of the special needs of all performers, including the visually-impaired band student, to determine necessary preparations and possible alterations to conducting and rehearsal techniques. A first accommodation is a meeting between the conductor and each student with unique challenges to determine the strengths and needs of each.

Next, a system of verbal cues needs to be created to communicate starts/stops, countdowns, cutoffs, and restarts. The need for verbal cuing will be greatest during the initial rehearsals and decreases as the performer gains a greater awareness of the conductor's technique and timing. If required during a performance, verbal cues or signals should be used in mini-segments. A third accommodation encourages placing the student in a special seating arrangement, such as the middle of the first row, where all verbal cues can easily be given by the conductor and received by the performer.

The performer's knowledge of the music literature and level of musicianship determine the level of assistance required by the conductor. My conducting experiences working with visually-impaired band students involve the combination of students from various schools for the blind in a unified festival ensemble as well as in school concerts. The results suggest that rehearsal periods focus on general starting and stopping of sections in the music as well as sections representing unison rhythm patterns. The motivation of these students to perform well usually produces excellent results.

For purposes of advocacy, the band teacher and conductor need to encourage participation in special activities, such as festivals and multischool concerts, since these events provide the student with an opportunity for equal participation with sighted peers along with expanded knowledge of conducting and interpretation of musical literature.
Participation in Marching Band

Marching band represents a major activity for all band students, but it also creates some musical and nonmusical challenges for those with visual impairment. Many of the musical challenges encountered have already been discussed here; however, the nonmusical challenges touch on skills involving awareness of surroundings and travel, known to the visually-impaired community as orientation and mobility. The primary goal of orientation and mobility instruction is to make the student an independent, self-sufficient traveler, which at first glance might seem to conflict with the marching band goal of unifying all performers into a single ensemble. Resolving issues and providing appropriate accommodations requires collaboration between the band teacher and the student’s orientation and mobility specialist to determine the best options for all involved.

For the visually-impaired band student, marching band participation offers passive and active options. Passive participation involves the student as a nonmarcher who performs with a band instrument on the sidelines with the drum pit group. Active participation places the student on the field, marching with sighted peers. For help in molding the student into an active participant, I recommend an article written by Iowa Braille and Sight Saving School band director John Best called “Marching Band for the Visually Handicapped.” In this article, Best discusses the step-by-step process for developing the visually-impaired marcher. The article begins with an introduction to basic marching skills and progresses to squad-level participation.

Standard accommodations for this activity include sight-guided assistance, dividing instruction into smaller segments, and extending learning time. The most effective accommodation involves sighted-guide assistance. The traditional sighted guide serves as the eyes of the student and provides travel assistance. For marching band, the guide positions himself or herself alongside the student and slightly behind, providing directional assistance with shoulder holds. Changing to the opposite shoulder requires the guide to use the opposite hand, move that hand across the back of the student, and reposition the hand on the student’s opposite shoulder.

For many years, school marching bands have allowed the participation of students with various levels of visual impairment. In recent years, news media have increasingly featured
visually-impaired musicians. A significant story involved The Ohio State School for the Blind Marching Band, whose members marched in the 2010 Rose Parade in Pasadena, California. Band teachers face many challenges, but seeing a band student with a visual impairment succeed in a challenging activity, such as a marching band performance, provides reinforcement and confirms many of the reasons these educators entered the music teaching profession in the first place. I highly encourage band teachers to demonstrate advocacy for all their students by actively involving them in marching band.

Musical tasks that sighted band students perform can be performed equally well by visually-impaired band students with the assistance of accommodations and modifications. The band teacher plays a key role in advocating for the visually-impaired student by supporting this individual and providing the appropriate modifications and accommodations so the student can succeed. When successful, the visually-impaired band student demonstrates a high level of independent learning, which leads to a level of completion toward the major educational goal of independence and self-assurance.

**Notes**

11. Sibelius (www.sibelius.com); and Finale (www.finalemusic.com).
15. SharpEye (www.visiv.co.uk).
Have you ever wondered why you often have to repeat yourself several times with your band students? Of course, there may be more than one reason, but it's possible that you're accommodating only one learning style with your teaching. After I did a bit of study, I thought this might have been happening to me. I now use a teaching sequence in band rehearsals and lessons that maximizes my teaching effectiveness by accommodating the auditory, visual, and tactile/tactile/aesthetic learners in my classes.

First, an explanation of these three learning styles is in order. There are several models that explain individual learning styles. I have found that Lynne C. Coli-Sanasi's auditory-visual-tactile/aesthetic model easily and adequately...
The teaching sequence I use when first introducing new information accounts for all three types of learners. Although each step addresses a different learning style, all students benefit from all the steps. Each step explains the concept in a different way and helps learners process information via modes they may not use naturally. Furthermore, the second and third steps offer visual and kinesthetic interaction, which has been shown in research to reinforce understanding and memory retrieval more than techniques focused only on the auditory mode. See Teaching Sequence for Proper Articulation on page 51 and Teaching Sequence for Beginning Tuning Concepts on page 52 for examples using four simple steps that address all three learning styles.

I accommodate auditory learners in the first step because verbal direction and group discussion techniques are ways to generate meaning...
Teaching Sequence for Proper Articulation

Step 1: Hear what it sounds like. Engage auditory learners through verbal direction, analogy, or class discussion. For example, explain to beginning students that the proper articulation and note length should sound as if the notes are almost touching, with the tongue separating each note. Be sure to demonstrate the skill or concept with your voice or instrument.

Step 2: See what it sounds like. Draw a diagram or model. If you're teaching beginners, a visual example of proper articulation and note length could look like this on the chalkboard:

![Figure 1](image)

(tongue)

"Taaaaaaaaa Taaaaaaaaa Taaaaaaaaa Taaaaaaaaa"

Step 3: Show what it sounds like away from the instrument, but with the body. Students could demonstrate the above example by "air playing"—fingering the desired note on the instrument, but tonguing quarter notes while forming the embouchure away from the mouthpiece. Brass players can do the same, but buzz on the mouthpiece.

Step 4: Do it on the instrument. Monitor progress, and repeat steps above if necessary.

for all students. This step also includes a demonstration of the desired behavior or sound. A graphic representation, used in step 2, can follow or be introduced along with the verbal explanation or discussion. The third step accommodates tactile/kinesthetic learners. In this step, I demonstrate a new skill and then have students simulate the skill away from their instruments. This is especially important for beginning students whose playing skills are not yet second nature. Once students can show that they understand the skill, it's time for step 4—to try it while playing.

If you observe that students need more help understanding a concept, move through the sequence again, but try a different explanation that includes an assessment of what you're seeing or hearing from your students along with what they need to change. Then try either another graphic representation or a review of the original,
**Beginning Tuning Concepts**

**Step 1: Hear what it sounds like.** Explain that a pleasing sound on wind instruments will not occur by simply pressing keys or valves. Play a note for the students, then bend the pitch sharp and flat to show them how to control tuning. Next, demonstrate “out of tune” by playing a unison pitch with one student and then bending the pitch sharp and flat relative to the student’s pitch. Guide students’ perception of the “wobbles” (beats) that occur when one person is playing sharp or flat. Conclude by playing in tune with the student (as shown by the absence of beats).

**Step 2: See what it sounds like.** Play a pitch in tune as indicated by an electronic tuner. (Make sure that all students can see the tuner.) Then play pitches out of tune while having students note the sharpness and flatness indicated by the electronic tuner. Draw a graphic like the one below to further aid the beginner. (I continue to use this graphic as a visual reminder to students even after they have grasped the basic concept of playing in tune.)

![Pitch Target](image)

**Step 3: Show what it sounds like.** Away from the instrument. Have students sing pitches “in the bulls-eye” (in tune) as indicated by an electronic tuner. Next, have them sing intentionally sharp and flat as indicated by the tuner. Conclude by having them sing pitches “in the bulls-eye” (in tune).

**Step 4: Do it on the instrument.** Have two students play a unison pitch on like instruments and try to get rid of the “wobbles” (beats) in the air by asking one student to adjust the embouchure or the length of the instrument. Also, have individual students play pitches in tune using the tuner. After they’ve accurately played a pitch in tune, have them try to bend the pitch sharp and flat as indicated by the tuner. Conclude by having them play pitches in tune.

followed by a new means of demonstrating away from the instrument. I’ve found that reviewing the visual aid and moving away from the instrument usually suffice, but sometimes I also need to slow down when students first try new skills on their instruments. This sequence should prove effective as long as the verbal explanation, visual aid, and movement are appropriate for the new knowledge, and the new knowledge is aligned with the development of the students.

It may be difficult to discover or create materials and techniques that do not use your learning style. As an auditory learner, I’m interested in new verbal techniques, but I’m especially interested in new visual and movement techniques. I’ve found new techniques in method books, in professional journals, and by attending clinics at professional conferences. With experience, this teaching sequence will become easier as you build up an arsenal of techniques that can reach auditory, visual, and tactile/kinesthetic learners. The extra effort to accommodate these learning styles may mean saving valuable rehearsal time. And your students may actually get it right the first time! 🌟
A Real-Life Look at Music Teaching

More than Teaching in an Urban School

"We make a living from what we get. We make a life with what we give."

on a poster in the office of Birney Elementary School, Washington, D.C.

On an unseasonably warm Tuesday morning in November, Claudine Nash, the music teacher at Birney Elementary School in the southeast Washington, D.C. neighborhood of Anacostia, came into her classroom early to get her ducks in a row. A few minutes into her preparation, an upset girl of about six came tearing into the classroom to tell her favorite teacher, "Ms. Nash, there's been a death in my family yesterday." Nash hugged and reassured the child. After the girl, comforted, had gone to her classroom, Nash reflected, "This job isn't just about music."

This article is one of an occasional series examining what school music teachers do and why, and offering an inside look at a stimulating, challenging, and rewarding career. Claudine Nash was born and educated in the District of Columbia. Part of a large and musically active family for whom the church was critical, she played bass in the D.C. Youth Orchestra, then, encouraged by teachers who saw great musicality and talent in her, trained to be a music teacher, earning a bachelor's degree at the Catholic University of America. Nash is a twenty-eight-year veteran of teaching, an active bassist, and the president of the District of Columbia Music Educators Association. She's currently the sole music teacher (general music, vocal music, strings) at Birney Elementary School in Anacostia, a neighborhood in southeast Washington, D.C.
She's taught at Birney for the past five years after twenty-three years of teaching in several better-funded schools. Birney draws its students primarily from a housing project within walking distance and the surrounding low-income neighborhood. At Birney, half the students have general music in the fall and the other half in spring. But during each semester, Nash teaches seven classes a day. Like other teachers at Birney, she doesn't have to be here. But she's never regretted her choice. Motivated by music teaching, she says her supportive colleagues, administrators, and fellow staff members at the school keep her coming back to these children. It's what gets her up in the morning.

"No one can do it alone—we teachers form a team that works together every day," says Nash. Her students' family situations are varied, and Nash says that "many of my kids here participate in the free breakfast program." But she and other teachers at Birney offer children an extra source of moral support and adult role models. Nash arrives well before her first class at 9:15 a.m., and on some day doesn't leave the school until 6:30 p.m., because she also works as a facilitator for Project Excite, an after school academic and arts program. Her students often come into her classroom before and after school to say hello and share what they've learned that day. She's always glad to see another teacher pop into the room and back her up in discussions with students about what it takes to make it in life.

Nash's educational philosophy drives her approach to teaching:

I believe that every child can achieve academic success if given the opportunity, skills, and most important, encouragement. It is rewarding to see children receive knowledge, grasp it, and take flight! The excitement in their eyes when learning something new says it all. They know that they have in their possession valuable skills, tools that can be transferred into helping them reach their goals. Then, as a teacher, I can say, "Mission accomplished."

Another great joy of her teaching career, says Nash, is "seeing students who have graduated who come back to the area and tell us how happy they are to be working." She recalls a very excited student who "came in last year to ask whether I'd seen the movie Drumline (a film in which a student who plays well by ear slips through a college audition and then is asked to leave school when he can't decipher the band score). She told me, 'Now I understand why it's important to read music!'"

*There are many challenges in any teaching job, but urban settings are especially complicated. Nash states unequivocally that 'it's critical to know your situation and make something of it.' Not all the students will graduate from high school.*
Many will experience alcohol or drug addiction in their families. There will be pressure to join gangs. Nash and her fellow teachers are the counter-culture in these surroundings.

Ambulances frequently rush by on the street above Nash's underground classroom, a room that is clean, well-organized, and colorful. Children's artwork hangs on the walls. A recent project involved teaching "America the Beautiful" and having students draw and color a place in America they'd visited. Nash asked the children to write the place name in large letters and to use bold colors and strong lines. One child was nervous about breaking a crayon, but Nash encouraged the child to "Do it with power! If you break a crayon, don't worry about it—there are a lot more where it came from."

Posters describing both the D.C. Public Schools' music standards and the National Standards for Music Education hang in her room. One wall features pictures of composers and a bulletin board containing colorful pictures drawn by Nash with corresponding words and rhythm patterns. "I'm old school," Nash offers. "I think teachers need to be able to do their own artwork to show kids an example."

This is the first year that students at Birney have had updated music textbooks, and this "blessing," according to Nash, means that her students have a jump-start at reading music when they clap, sing, or play it: They can all look at the same song on the same page. She believes in having children read whenever possible, and asks them to read definitions and song lyrics aloud.

Two fluorescent light fixtures were out in the front half of Nash's classroom that morning, but the janitor had looked at the problem and was getting new bulbs for her. The fourth-grade students in her morning classes were learning about beat, meter, and quarter- and eighth-note rhythms. The lesson, taught in semidarkness, was built on the song "Rise and Shine." First, Nash made sure that her students knew the story of Noah and the Ark (one knowledgeable boy could even recite the names of Noah's three sons). After a series of echo-clapping exercises using the textbook, the students were partnered for some clap-and-dance opportunities in which the students created their own moves and some of their own clapping patterns.

Nash drew her students out, encouraging them, not satisfied with half-answers. If a student's answer was partially correct, she acknowledged the correct part, then asked others for help. The lesson wasn't over until everyone understood the concepts she was teaching, and there were usually only three to five of these concepts in each class.

Editor's Note

When MENC associate editor Ella Wilcox contacted music teacher Claudine Nash to set a date to get together to report this story, she got her first wake-up call: Unlike schools in the suburbs that surround Washington, D.C., Birney Elementary School in Anacostia (southeast D.C.) didn't have personal e-mail for teachers; only the principal had it. Computers were scarce. The school didn't have a Web site. The fax machine was a bit touchy. Nash had the inspiration to work with Wilcox through the e-mail of her sister Leslie Washington, who works at Howard University.

The building housing Birney Elementary went up in 1950, and the structure is scheduled for renovation. Its population of about 500 children is primarily African American, along with a number of Hispanic students. Many students at Birney come from challenging home situations, and none are wealthy. But if fountains and light fixtures don't always work, the teachers, staff, and administrators do, forming a team that makes a difference.
Claudine Nash’s Tips for New Teachers in an Urban Setting

- Start your day with some form of meditation to get yourself centered before you leave home or on the way to school, and if you have time before your classes start, at your desk. You’ll get through the day a lot better, with less stress. At the end of the school day, leave it behind you. Whatever you didn’t get to will still be there the next day.
- Develop and maintain a great relationship with your principal, administration, faculty, and especially the custodial staff. Believe me, your tour of duty will be wonderful!
- Get to know the environment in which you’re teaching. This will give you a better understanding of the children placed in your charge. Most of your and their day is spent at school, so make the best of it.
- Attend community meetings, serve on special projects if asked. By doing this, your students will know and appreciate that you care about them and what is happening around them.
  - Praise your students!
  - Listen to your students, and offer them choices.
  - Take your class on field trips to local musical events. Field trips can play an integral part in your program and reinforce what has been taught in class.
  - Remember that you are there to serve the children and the community.

Many music educators in middle-income and suburban locations spend a few hundred dollars of their own money to supplement the music budget. For Nash, that figure is “in the thousands.” Although her classroom contains a piano, she bought a set of Orff instruments. She has also sought grants, such as the one she got from VH1’s Save the Music Foundation for stringed instruments. To give students more arts experiences, Nash leads an after-school choir and often does music activities with preschoolers at a center in the school building.

Music and Her Faith Brought... Claudine Nash to the profession. As children, Nash and her five siblings knew poverty, but their Depression-era parents believed in them and wanted a better life for their children. “We were always encouraged to do our best, whether at practicing an instrument or doing our studies,” she reminisced, “but it wasn’t an easy life. Being poor meant there were a lot of things we simply didn’t have.” When she was a young girl, Nash remembers looking up at a blue sky on a clear day and praying, “God, if you get me out of here, I promise I’ll come back.”

Nash kept her promise. A hard-working and talented music student, she sang in her Washington, D.C. church choir and played string bass in the D.C. Youth Orchestra. The program’s director encouraged her to get a music education degree, and she was able to get scholarships throughout her academic career because of her grades—a fact she shares with her students today. At The Catholic University of America, she earned a bachelor’s degree in music education.

Nash enjoys seeing what she calls “up-and-coming young artists.” An active bassist herself, she plays local gigs where she encounters young players. Mentoring is a way of life for her; it may be a young teacher who needs help managing his classroom or a student who wants to develop her singing ability. As Nash says, people were there for her, and she’s returning the gift.

As the president of the District of Columbia Music Educators Association, she believes in her colleagues as well. Nash insists that “in a media-saturated world, teachers need to make their classrooms and teaching colorful and animated.” And she sees the upside of things: “As I tell new teachers who are having it rough, it’ll be easier tomorrow. But you have to start working toward your goals today.”

By Ella Wilcox, associate editor, Teaching Music.
Engaging and Educating Students with Culturally Responsive Performing Ensembles

Kevin Mixon

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What is This?
To provide meaningful and motivating connections between students and ensembles, teachers must realize that students’ prior experience profoundly affects learning. Many of these experiences are inextricably linked to cultural affiliation. Cultural affiliation is a powerful context for prior experience, and the fundamental principle framing this article is that “culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and these, in turn, affect how we teach and learn.”

Culture is not restricted to ethnicity; students also share affiliation based on age, geography, economic class, and religion. Directors seeking to develop engaging, inclusive programs should draw from students’ experiences to connect students to traditional and nontraditional ensembles.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

In the United States, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, the number of “minority” students described as black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/Alaska Native, or “more than one race” increased from 22.2 percent of total public school enrollment in 1972 to 42.4 percent in 2005. As a reflection of America’s increasingly pluralistic society, the study of multicultural music is an integral component of the National Standards for Arts Education as well as most if not all state and school district standards. But whose music should be studied? Selecting music based on the culture of the student has widespread support among multicultural music education proponents. Educator and researcher Terese Volk writes that “today it is generally recognized that students should have both a solid grounding in the music of their own culture and a general knowledge of the musics of other cultures.”

Decisions about what type of music to include should be “made on an individual or districtwide basis taking into consideration the abilities of the teacher, the local school curriculum, the school population and cultural makeup of the area, and the accessibility of community involvement.” Given the variance of these factors across locales or even individual schools, many music styles and ensembles are possible.

Student culture as a rationale for multicultural music study also has support from proponents of culturally responsive teaching. Etta Hollins of Washington State University, Pullman, observes:“Ensemble directors have the potential to open doors to their students to other cultures—and to their own.”

Kevin Mixon is an instrumental music teacher at Blodgett K–8 School in Syracuse, New York. He can be reached at kmixon1@verizon.net. The author thanks Sergio Alonso, Andy Beck, Ed LeBorgne, Cara K-B McLaughlin, Marcia Neel, Bob Phillips, George Pinchock, and Chris Tanner for their contributions to this article.
that “many teachers who are effective in culturally diverse settings have learned to . . . examine the context in which they teach, and connect the content they teach and the learning experiences they provide with their students’ daily lives and their cultural values, practices, and perceptions.”

Culturally responsive teachers account for the learning needs of students from diverse cultures and provide varied approaches to instruction and content for study. Ensemble directors can reflect these varied cultures and approaches through the music they choose for study and the types of ensembles they direct.

Traditional Ensembles

Performing groups, such as band, orchestra, and choir, are prevalent in public schools, which is why they are often called “traditional ensembles” even though they may not be traditional in many cultures. Most ensemble directors have one or more of these groups, so it is an ideal setting for directors to begin evaluating and modifying programs with respect to student culture.

Include Multiple Ethnicities

Although it is not the only consideration in music selection, you should consider recognizing as many students’ ethnicities as possible. However, in school populations that are quite diverse, it might be impossible to perform music representing all student ethnicity, particularly at every concert or even every year. Consider studying representative music using a rotation system. For example, with a string orchestra, perhaps program an African American spiritual for one concert, a Chinese string piece next, a mariachi piece the second year of study with the same group, and so on. A variety of music can be planned realistically using this system.

Some directors are concerned that studying the music representing the heritage of some students will not interest or might even alienate other students because they do not share that same heritage. In addressing these reservations, Geneva Gay points out that all students benefit because “curriculum sources and content that provide accurate presentations of ethnic and cultural diversity . . . provide those who have never had close personal contact with members of ethnic groups other than their own with opportunities to [communicate] and engage with diverse people as well as to confront themselves.”

Music representing some students will have benefits for all, particularly if the director consistently teaches that all world music, although often unfamiliar, has equal merit.

I consistently peruse music that reflects student ethnicity in my ensembles. This is because there has been a proliferation of diverse published music and new pieces emerge every year. Another reason is that student ethnicity in my bands may fluctuate from year to year and require new music searches. Finding appropriate pieces is becoming easier as music publishers and dealers are adding multicultural categories to new music list promotional materials and search options on Web sites.

Unfortunately, many so-called multicultural arrangements are not authentic and are written largely in the Western European style. You can modify arrangements by adding authentic instruments or singing technique. For example, African and Latin instruments, such as djembe, claves, and congas, can be added to traditional band percussion sections, and I have found several pieces that are enhanced by adding my Afro-Latin percussion students to the band for performances. Guitar, vihuela, and guitarrón can be added to any parts in a mariachi arrangement or mandolins or guitars added to fiddle arrangements written for traditional string orchestra. Drums and bass (whether acoustic, electric, or keyboard synthesizer) could be added to arrangements of spirituals and gospel songs, and even if not indicated, songs can be sung in the full voice used to sing some (but not all!) gospel music.

If music is unavailable at the skill level of your students, consider arranging pieces yourself. Strive to present the music as stylistically accurate as possible within the limitations of your instrumentation and students’ playing level. But keep in mind that these arrangements do not need to be complex—maybe only unison melodies with characteristic rhythm accompaniment by percussion in many cases—and, once completed, can remain in your files for future use. You will find that the time needed to write will decrease and your arranging skills will increase with each piece.
Tap into Multiple Sources

Student engagement and motivation is not exclusively dependent on ethnic culture. They also share affiliation with youth, pop, religious, and local (geographic) cultures as well as others. In my experiences in varied school environments, these affiliations are as significant to students as ethnicity. Therefore, you can consider several culture sources when selecting music for study.

There have been several initiatives to identify music of merit for performance. However, the lists compiled in an attempt to identify “quality literature” often focus on music written several years ago by prominent composers, mostly drawing from Western European musical styles. Thus, much of the more current cross-cultural music that continues to emerge is omitted, and virtually none of the music generated from popular culture is included. Playing only so-called masterworks can alienate students and audiences because it implies that other music is unimportant.

Many directors agree that music from any source that has meaning to students and presents possibilities to improve performance skills and meet other curricular goals is, in fact, “quality literature.” When trying to find music to teach 6/8 meter to band students last year, I selected an arrangement of a TV show theme, as there were as many (or more) introductory rhythm patterns in the arrangement than in any established masterworks I consulted. In addition to the targeted rhythm skills, I also considered which piece at the appropriate difficulty level would also generate interest among students. Of course, masterworks are important to perform, and they can also serve to motivate students, particularly when you plan ways to teach the piece in an engaging way. But just as with nutrition, a balanced-repertoire diet is healthful.

Specialized and Alternative Ensembles

In addition to programming music from various cultural sources within traditional ensembles, you should also consider offering more ensemble choices of interest and meaning to students. Although these ensembles should generate high student interest, you should not organize them strictly for entertainment value, as goals and objectives in your music curriculum can and should be met in all performing ensembles regardless of style or instrumentation. Terminology describing so-called nontraditional ensembles is varied. However, to make an important distinction when considering overall music program designs typical in most schools, I call these groups either specialized or alternative ensembles.

Specialized Ensembles

Specialized ensembles are groups that require fundamental skills typically acquired in traditional ensembles in beginning groups at the elementary or middle level. Examples of specialized ensembles currently in existence are gospel choirs, jazz ensembles (vocal and string in addition to “stage” band), and fiddle and mariachi groups. The music performed in these groups is “specialized,” or centered on a particular musical style or genre, and the type of group formed is often dependent on the cultures widely represented in a given school. Ideally, these groups should meet during the school day, but due to scheduling conflicts, they often meet before or after school. Many of these specialized ensembles, instrumental jazz groups in particular, are well established and supported in many schools, largely due to student and audience appeal.

Alternative Ensembles

Examples of alternative performing groups are African, Afro-Latin, or Asian percussion ensembles or choirs, steel or “pan” bands, and guitar or electronic ensembles. As with specialized ensembles, the music performed in these alternative groups is based on student culture and interest, although alternative ensembles may or may not require prerequisite training. If training is required, it is not usually provided in traditional performing ensembles. There are some exceptions, as traditional ensembles will provide training on some instruments, such as string bass, and percussion, but most alternative ensembles will require separate instruction.

Although styles may differ, alternative ensemble instruction can be modeled...
after traditional ensembles. Similarly, specialized ensembles such as gospel choir and mariachi can be developed as alternative ensembles without necessary prerequisite training in traditional ensembles. For example, the large mariachi program developed by Marcia Neel, retired music supervisor for the Clark County School District in greater Las Vegas, Nevada, actually parallels the training model of traditional ensembles by teaching incrementally with beginning and advanced classes and ensembles, so students are trained from scratch and do not need prerequisite training in band or orchestra. Clark County guitar ensemble teachers also train students in ensembles with advancing difficulty. (See the Resources sidebar for method books designed for alternative ensembles instruction.)

Participation in alternative ensembles should be open to all students, not only those typically interested in traditional ensembles. Ed LeBorgne, band director at Walnut Hills High School in Cincinnati, Ohio, describes a powerful benefit of his steel band program: “It’s a great avenue for students that may not be interested in other ensembles offered at the school; 90 percent of my students do not play or sing in other ensembles at the school, [and] 40–50 percent of my students had no musical experience before joining the ensemble.” Alternative ensembles may also encourage students who may not be interested in long-term, formal instrumental or choral study. Disenfranchised students who may not be otherwise successful or interested in school often achieve great success in alternative ensembles.

Offering ensemble participation to as many students as possible also increases the number of students enrolled in music ensembles. Enrollment numbers are scrutinized when budget allocations are considered, and the more students enrolled in ensembles, the stronger the case for funding music programs. In the current climate of music budget cuts and scheduling woes related to school funding and mandatory testing, this point cannot be emphasized enough.

Resources and Training

There are a growing number of resources to help directors develop a variety of performing groups. When considering these resources, try to assess merit using these guidelines:

- Music (“songs”) and recordings included for study are well-known exemplars with vocal parts in the native language.
- Music is stylistically authentic, evidenced by accurate melodies, rhythms, harmonies, vocal and instrumental timbres, or other germane musical elements.
- Arrangements have accurate instrumentation.
- Teaching methods and strategies suggested are consistent with those used to teach the style in the originating culture or locale.
- Established performance practice or rituals are accurately described.

For example, I have had great success with World Music Drumming: A Cross-Cultural Curriculum and Music Expressions Afro-Cuban Percussion (see the Resources sidebar) materials for my Afro-Latin percussion ensemble. These resources are inexpensive, have flexible instrumentation, include teaching suggestions congruent with the originating culture, are geared for middle or high school general music classes, are aligned with National Standards, have authentic recordings and instrumentation, and include instrumental and vocal parts as well as dances typically heard and seen at Afro-Latin (also called Afro-Cuban) percussion ensemble performances. Keep in mind that depending on the given style or genre, the degree to which these characteristics are present often increases with the difficulty level of the music.

In addition to gauging authenticity of resources, carefully planned curricular and performance goals and objectives for the ensemble along with student experience and school budget will guide your choice of instructional materials. When starting ensembles, keep in mind that students may be familiar with the music, but most are not skilled in performing it. Thus, resources designed for beginners in general music classes are suitable, such as those percussion resources described above. This enables you to learn along with your students, as I have done. Resources geared for inexperienced performers with little or no reading or playing ability also often do not require a significant investment in instruments, so these might be the most logical introductory materials for your ensemble.

Learning one step ahead of students is a common way of planning instruction for specialized or alternative ensembles, but a teacher should try to increase expertise beyond this as much as possible, particularly through hands-on and “being-there” experiences. You can learn quickly and comprehensively by immersing yourself in a musical style by attending conferences specifically devoted to that music. Additionally, state and national conferences are increasingly including introductory clinics for a variety of genres. Community members or students are often valuable resources, and directors can consult them for their own instruction as well as to assist with rehearsals.

Whatever means of training you choose, it is important to listen to as many recordings as possible, as these will provide indispensable guidance for you and students. Linda B. Walker, gospel choir director at Kent State University, emphasizes that “immersion in the . . . tradition, through listening, should be a requirement. When teachers and students listen, their ears become familiar with the sound, which results in improved performance of the style.”

As with traditional performing ensembles, specialized and alternative ensembles should be aligned with national, state, and district music standards. Rob Cutietta provides examples of how a variety of ensembles can be aligned with the National Standards in Strategies for Teaching Specialized Ensembles. (Cutietta broadens the term specialized to include alternative ensembles too.) Rather than merely entertainment, primary goals for all ensembles should be to provide engaging and meaningful experiences that provide a comprehensive music education.
Flexibility and Scheduling

Some alternative ensembles may greatly benefit when or even require that some members, such as string bass, guitar, or drum set players, acquire training in other ensembles. As described above, there are also instances where you can “authenticate” band, orchestra, and choral music with instruments and vocals studied in alternative ensembles. Unfortunately, students may not have room in their schedules to participate in multiple ensembles. One solution is to provide these students with parts to learn independently or in individual lessons and have them attend rehearsals immediately preceding performances. Although it will take flexibility and careful planning at times, ensuring that students can participate in more than one ensemble will help students pursue a breadth of music experiences as well as provide ensembles with required or authentic instrumentation.

Scheduling classes and rehearsals will also require flexibility and may change as you develop your ensemble. My Afro-Latin percussion ensemble meets during the school day. To do this, I gathered the African and Latin instruments I had on hand and converted my general music class period into one for an Afro-Latin percussion ensemble. Instead of getting random class lists from the guidance counselor for general music, I recruited students for the Afro-Latin ensemble informally during lunch periods and through morning announcements. I then submitted the list of interested students to the guidance counselor. I formulated performance goals for the ensemble and aligned those with state and district general music curricula. As a result, my Afro-Latin group meets every other day during school hours for one or two semesters as an option for students to fulfill the required general music credit.

Cara K-B McLaughlin, vocal music teacher at Homer High School in Homer, New York, schedules both her jazz and her women’s select choir (performing a varied repertoire of jazz, popular, and world music styles) after school: “The students are already so involved that it is hard enough for them to find time in their schedule to take choir or choir and band; I do not think that they could fit in another choir.” However, even with having “cocurricular” status, both groups have large enrollment and are in high demand at school and community events. In other cases, it is possible that groups meeting outside the school day can become curricular classes with increased enrollment, popularity, and exposure.

Local Support

Traditional, specialized, and alternative ensembles that draw from student culture will build secure connections to parents, local community members, and administrators. As with students, parents and other community members respond favorably to
music that is meaningful to them. This is an important consideration in the current climate of budget constraints and mandatory testing accountability, as parents, students, and other community members will convey their approval with administrators who can then, in turn, provide rehearsal space, time, and financial support. Scheduling frequent performances at school concerts and assemblies, as well as community events and venues, will help spread awareness about and support for your ensembles. Be sure to publicize these performances via outlets such as newspaper and broadcast media.

Sergio Alonso, a music teacher at San Fernando High School in San Fernando, California, garners support by encouraging community involvement. In response to parents, community leaders, and local musicians, Alonso organized the Mariachi Master Apprenticeship Program, a mariachi education program for the greater community. Many of his mariachi students acquire training at the middle and high school levels in preparation for participation in the community ensembles. The partnership he has fostered between school and community has led to strong support for his programs in addition to providing performance opportunities outside school as well as after students graduate from high school. (If you have questions about what’s legal in terms of student performances in your community, check the Music Code of Ethics at http://menc.org/about/view/the-music-code-of-ethics to help define the jurisdictions of music educators and professional musicians.)

Culture, whether from ethnic or other origins, has great power to motivate students and should be used as contexts for learning. Creating culturally responsive ensembles will increase student interest and enrollment as well as garner the support from school and community stakeholders needed to sustain musical performing groups in our schools.

NOTES
5. Ibid.
8. Edward LeBorgne, e-mail interview by author, February 6, 2008.

Specialized and Alternative Ensemble Resources

Here is an initial list to help you get started with ensembles mentioned in this article. There are other ensemble possibilities and resources available.

Percussion Ensembles

Afro-Latin (also Afro-Cuban or Afro-Caribbean)


Note: Both resources above have teacher and student editions as well as recorded sound and video examples that may available as sets or sold separately. The World Music Drumming series also has an increasing list of arrangements for several world music styles.

- Drum circle resources for introductory “icebreakers,” team-building, and other supplemental activities:
See also the follow-up publication:

Workshops

- Will Schmid organizes several summer workshops for world drumming. Information is available at www.worldmusicedrumming.com.

Workshop/Conference Announcements, Advice Forum, Newsletter

- Percussive Arts Society, 32 E. Washington, Suite 1400, Indianapolis, IN 46204; phone: 317-974-4488; fax: 317-974-4499; e-mail: percarts@pas.org; Web address: www.pas.org.

Steel Drum

Workshops
- Hillbridge, 164 Hickory Heights Drive, Bridgeville, PA 15017; phone: 412-221-0678 (East Coast) or 503-324-0326 (West Coast); e-mail: panmusic@spiritone.com; Web address: www.hillbridge.com.
- Mannette Steel Drums, 166 Dents Run Road, Morgantown, WV 26501; phone: 866-237-DRUM (866-237-3786); e-mail: mail@mannettesteeldrums.com; Web address: www.mannettesteeldrums.com.

Instrument and Supplies
- Mannette Steel Drums, 166 Dents Run Road, Morgantown, WV 26501; phone: 866-237-DRUM (866-237-3786); e-mail: mail@mannettesteeldrums.com; Web address: www.mannettesteeldrums.com.
- Panyard, 1216 California Avenue, Akron, OH 44314-1842; phone/fax: 330-745-3155; toll free: 800-377-0202; e-mail: info@panyard.com; Web address: www.panyard.com.

Music Retailers
- Hillbridge, 164 Hickory Heights Drive, Bridgeville, PA 15017; phone: 412-221-0678 (East Coast) or 503-324-0326 (West Coast); e-mail: panmusic@spiritone.com; Web address: www.hillbridge.com.
- Pan Press, P.O. Box 1126, Elgin, IL 60121-1126; phone: 630-587-3473; e-mail: info@panpress.com; Web address: www.panpress.com.
- Pan Ramajay Productions, P.O. Box 10665, Oakland CA 94610; phone: 510-451-3268; e-mail: info@ramajay.com; Web address: www.ramajay.com.

Music Retailers
- Fiddlers Crossing at Mountain Music, 206 East F Street, Tehachapi, CA 93561; e-mail: info@fiddlerscrossing.com; Web address: www.fiddlerscrossing.com.
- Shar Music, P.O. Box 1411, Ann Arbor, MI 48106; phone: 800-248-SHAR; e-mail: sharserv@sharmusic.com; Web address: www.sharmusic.com.

Workshops
- Ashokan Fiddle and Dance Camps, P.O. Box 49, Saugerties, NY 12477; phone: 845-246-2121; Web address: www.ashokan.org.
- Mark O’Connor Fiddle Camps; Web address: www.maroconnor.com.
- Fiddler Magazine (posts events periodically), P.O. Box 101; North Sydney, NS, Canada B2A 3M1; phone: 902-794-2558; e-mail: info@fiddler.com; Web address: www.fiddler.com.

Conferences, Workshop Announcements, Journal, Publications
- American String Teachers Association (ASTA), 4153 Chain Bridge Road, Fairfax, VA 22030; phone: 703-279-2113; fax: 703-279-2114; e-mail: Asta@astaweb.com; Web address: www.astaweb.com.

Mariachi

Methods for Beginning Mariachi Classes

Music for Intermediate and Advanced Groups

Music for Traditional String Orchestra (and optional trumpet)

Instructional Videos
- Mel Bay Publications (Note: most in Spanish), P.O. Box 66, Pacific, MO 63069-0066; phone: 800-8-MEL-BAY (800-863-5229); e-mail: email@melbay.com; Web address: www.melbay.com.

Instrument and Supplies Retailers
- Candelas Guitars, 2724 East Cesar Chavez Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90033; phone: 323-261-2011; e-mail: info@candelas.com; Web address: www.candelas.com.
- The Mariachi Connection #1, 2106 W. Commerce, San Antonio, TX 78207; phone: 210-271-3655 or 877-565-5222; Web address: www.mariachiconnection.com; also The Mariachi Connection #2, 6615 Menual Boulevard NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110; phone: 877-883-0067.

Workshops
Workshop/Conference Announcements, Advice Forum, Newsletter

- MENC Mariachi; Web address: www.menc.org/mariachi.
- See also ASTA entry under Fiddling; search for mariachi.

Guitar Ensembles

Methods

- Class Guitar Resources (complete series of classroom guitar materials), P.O. Box 10828, Tallahassee, FL 32302; phone: 800-440-1914; e-mail: prasse@aol.com; Web address: www.classguitar.com.

Workshops

- Teaching Guitar Workshops (sponsored by the Guitar and Accessories Marketing Association, the National Association of Music Merchants, Duquesne University, and MENC; several scheduled nationally). For more info, see www.guitaredunet.org.

Vocal Ensembles

Gospel Choir

Article


Music

- GIA Publications (full line of music and recordings), 7404 South Mason Avenue, Chicago, IL 60638; phone: 800-GIA-1358 (800-442-1358) or 708-496-3800; fax: 708-496-3828; Web address: www.giamusic.com (e-mail inquiries available on site).
- Hope Publishing Company, 380 South Main Place, Carol Stream, IL 60188; phone: 800-523-1049; fax: 630-665-2552; e-mail: hope@hopepublishing.com; Web address: www.hopepublishing.com.

Professional Meetings and Conferences, Newsletter

- National Association for the Study and Performance of African American Music (NASPAM); e-mail: webmaster@naspaam.org; Web address: www.naspam.org.
- National Association of Negro Musicians, P.O. Box 43053, 11551 S. Lofling St., Chicago, IL 60643; phone: 773-568-3818; Web address: www.nanm.org (e-mail contact available on site).

Jazz Choir

Books


Instructional Video


Music

- Pop Choral Series (several titles available). Alfred Publishing, P.O. Box 10003, Van Nuys, CA 91410-0003; phone: 818-892-2452; fax: 818-830-6252; e-mail: customerservice@alfred.com; Web address: www.alfred.com.
- Jazz Chorals Series (several titles available). Hal Leonard Corporation, P.O. Box 7777 W. Bluemound Road, Milwaukee, WI 53213; phone: 414-774-3630; fax: 414-774-3259; Web address: www.halleonard.com or www.musicdispatch.com.

Journal/Newsletter, Conferences, Discussion Forum, Reviews

- American Choral Directors Association (ACDA), P.O. Box 2720, Oklahoma City, OK 73101; phone: 405-232-8161; fax: 405-232-8162; Web address: www.acdaonline.org.

Workshops

- Jazz Vocal Workshop, University of North Texas, 1155 Union Circle #305040, Denton, TX 76203-5017; phone: 940-565-3743; e-mail: jazz@unt.edu; Web address: www.jazz.unt.edu.
- Phil Mattson Vocal Jazz Workshops, 804 N. Sycamore, Creston, IA 50801; phone: 641-782-2470; e-mail: phil@philmattson.com; Web address: www.philmattson.com.
- Stanford Jazz Workshop, P.O. Box 20454 Stanford, CA 94309; phone: 650-736-0324; e-mail: info@stanfordjazz.org; Web address: www.stanfordjazz.org.
Building Your Instrumental Music Program in an Urban School
Kevin Mixon
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What is This?
Demonstrating a commitment to quality music education for all children, MENC: The National Association for Music Education introduced “The Child’s Bill of Rights in Music” in 1950. A revision adopted in 1991 stated that “the quality and quantity of children’s music instruction must not depend upon their geographical location, social status, racial or ethnic status, urban/suburban/rural residence, or parental or community wealth.” Instrumental music has consistently been an integral component of comprehensive music instruction, and “The Child’s Bill of Rights” accounted for this by stating that every child must “receive extensive opportunities to … play at least one instrument.”

Shortly after the revised version of “The Child’s Bill of Rights” was published in 1992, the National Standards for Arts Education were introduced and widely accepted. The successful implementation of the K–12 music components of these Standards is heavily predicated on a number of factors, including the availability of sufficient instruction time and space, the appropriation of substantive funding, and the facilitation of qualified music teachers, including those for instrumental music. Sadly, these requisite conditions are presently inadequate in most urban schools.

Participating in an instrumental music class can motivate at-risk urban students to come to school.

With some extra effort and sensitivity to students’ needs, teachers in urban schools can guide their students to success in instrumental music studies.

Kevin Mixon is an instrumental music teacher at Blodgett K–8 School in Syracuse, NY. He can be reached at mixoka@usadatanet.net.
MENC has recently recapitulated its vision of “Music for All” in its strategic plan, which warns that “30 to 50 percent of new teachers who work in urban areas leave the field in their first three years of service.” This undoubtedly affects instrumental music instruction for urban children. Collegial sharing is one solution to problems confronting educators and the principle behind the mentoring programs that are so crucial in retaining teachers. As a way to participate in this collegial sharing, I offer the following advice resulting from my quest to develop quality instrumental music programs for my urban students.

Teaching instrumental music may present some extraordinary challenges in urban schools, but urban instrumental music directors can build successful programs. Though the following discussion applies to some extent to all instrumental music programs, it has particular relevance for schools with limited funding, high levels of poverty, and high ethnic minority enrollments. And although these conditions are prevalent in many rural and even some suburban areas, I focus here on my experiences and professional study into how these conditions influence instrumental music programs in urban schools. These conditions affect three areas that are crucial to a program’s success: selection, recruitment, and retention of students; parental support; and funding and administrative support. In this article, I will share what has worked for me and other urban teachers, and the Annotated List of Resources for Teaching Music in Urban Schools sidebar gives you places to go for more information on each of these topics.

Selection, Recruitment, and Retention of Students

Selecting Students. Because of high poverty levels, large urban school districts often need to provide musical instruments for students. The problem is that there are almost never enough instruments for interested students. How do we decide who will participate? For middle or high school teachers, the likely first choices are students who learned to play instruments in the earlier grades. However, many urban schools do not have feed-

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**Annotated List of Resources for Teaching Music in Urban Schools**

**Teaching and Reaching Students**
- *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* by Gloria Ladson-Billings (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1994) is a combination of research interpretation and personal narrative that will help readers understand and emulate excellent teaching for African American students. The title specifies one ethnicity, but the book applies to diverse populations of students in any setting.
- *A Framework for Understanding Poverty* by Ruby Payne (Highlands, TX: aha! Process, Inc., 2001) will help readers, particularly those from different social classes, understand conditions of poverty.
- *Listening to Urban Kids: School Reform and the Teachers They Want* by Bruce L. Wilson and H. Dickson Corbett (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2001) is an analysis of interviews of urban middle school students. The direct quotes and interpretation are illuminating and helpful for teaching urban children.
- *Readings on Diversity, Inclusion, and Music for All* (Reston, VA: MENC, 2003) is a compendium of articles and policy statements from MENC. Several articles specifically address music teaching with urban and ethnically diverse students.
- *Savage Inequalities* by Jonathan Kozol (New York: Harper Perennial, 1992) is an inside look at some of the worst conditions in urban schools. Even though the accounts are scathingly honest, readers will recognize inspiring qualities of excellent urban teachers and administrators.
- *Teach Our Children Well: Essential Strategies for the Urban Classroom* by Helen Maniates and Betty Doerr with Margaret Golden (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2001) will help elementary teachers but also has relevance for upper grades.

**Parental Involvement**
- *Building Communities of Learners: A Collaboration among Teachers, Students, Families, and Community* by Sudia Paloma McCaleb (Mahweh, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1997) emphasizes literacy in the early grades, but it will benefit all urban teachers in providing activities to meaningfully engage and empower parents and students.
- *Developing Home-School Partnerships: From Concepts to Practice* by Susan McAllister Swap (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1993) analyzes existing partnerships and provides models for effective parental communication and involvement that can apply to a district, a school, or an individual teacher.
- *A Path to Follow: Learning to Listen to Parents* by Patricia A. Edwards with Heather M. Pleasant and Sarah H. Franklin (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 1999) details the use of parent stories to help teachers understand diverse perceptions of the role of school and what parents want for their children.
- *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Preparing Educators and Improving Schools* by Joyce L. Epstein (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2001) is a comprehensive reference for designing parent-involvement programs at the district or school level, and it provides information on how individual teachers can engage parents.

**Funding**
- *Handbook for Music Supervision* by Dee Hansen (Reston, VA: MENC, 2002) includes information on standards, assessment, evaluating teachers, public relations, financing, and effective communication relevant to building your program, particularly when developing productive and positive relationships with administrators, parents, and other community members.
Music Booster Manual (Reston, VA: MENC, 1989) has a section on fund-raising that can help you plan your project. There is also practical information on organizing and maintaining a booster group. The possibility of fund-raising or booster groups will vary in urban schools. An excerpt of this publication is available at http://www.musicfriends.org/booster.html.

"Shaking the Money Tree: Fundraising and Grants" by Carol A. Jones (Teaching Music 8, no. 4 [February 2001]: 25–31) covers fund-raising and grant-writing basics and includes resource lists to help you begin your project.

Administrative Support

Guide to Evaluating Teachers of Music Performance Groups by David P. Doerkson (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1990) introduces preservice teachers to performance evaluations and provides models to structure music teacher evaluations. Doerkson analyzes some of the common approaches administrators use to assess teacher competence. This knowledge may help you build the positive relationships you need to secure administrative support for music programs.

Scheduling and Teaching Music by Larry R. Blocher and Richard B. Miles (Springfield, IL: Focus On Excellence, Inc., 1999) will help you teach effectively with limited rehearsal time, and it provides several models and advice on alternate scheduling that may help you work with administrators on scheduling issues.

er programs, and you may need to start beginners in the higher grades.

When instruments are in short supply and you must decide who will play, give older students the opportunity first. For instance, in a K–5 elementary school where fourth- and fifth-grade students may join, fifth-grade students should be given a higher priority because they will leave for middle school before other students. Students who already play an instrument when entering middle school will likely be the first chosen to play in the new school because school-owned instruments there are probably also in short supply. Many instrumental music programs require study over several years, and starting the oldest students first will allow more students to participate when they leave for the upper grades.

Urban schools typically have a higher number of students who are described as at-risk, meaning that their living environment or behavior indicates a greater possibility of dropping out of school, criminal activity, pregnancy, or other behaviors that can prevent a desirable future. Selecting older students who are about to move up to a new school may be crucial for the success of at-risk students:

Successful intervention programs pay special attention to the at-risk student during school transitions (the student's first year of school at a new campus, for example). In these instances, music educators can be of great assistance. Music classes are a perfect venue for building self-esteem and social skills. Prior to school transitions (from elementary school to middle school and from middle school to high school), music teachers at each school can collaborate in encouraging students to continue music participation.2

For several of my students, instrumental music motivated them to come to school and gave them something to look forward to in middle and high school.

An active waiting list will allow more students to try an instrument. If an instrument shortage prevents some students from joining an ensemble at the beginning of the school year, some students will probably get an opportunity to begin playing in the near future when other students leave the program. It may be difficult for students to catch up enough to participate in the ensemble three or four months after the school year has begun, but these students may still participate in lessons in preparation for the following year. I sometimes start students late and gradually work them into the ensemble by having them play all or part of the easiest piece at the next concert, then increasing performance demands as they gain the necessary skills.

When issuing school-owned instruments to students, keep in mind that an irreparable, lost, or stolen instrument may mean that several students cannot participate in your program in subsequent years because budgets are usually small and replacing instruments is not easy. If students need to take instruments home to practice, you should make decisions in favor of students who have demonstrated reliability with school property.

Even for reliable students, theft may be likely in some neighborhoods, and some instruments are too large to transport safely to and from school. Further, some urban children live in chaotic and unstable homes and are not able to practice regularly. In these cases, it might be possible to schedule times at school when students can practice. Allowing students a time and place to practice at school for as little as twenty minutes every other day can make a big difference in their success.

I have cleared a safe practice space in a storage area within earshot of the room I use for lessons. I am then able to monitor both the group lesson and the concurrent practice sessions of individual students at the same time.

Recruiting. You may find that there is initially not enough interest in your ensemble, and you will need to recruit members. Whenever you are in contact with students, be friendly, enthusiastic, and a good listener. If students perceive you favorably, they are more likely to join your program. George Paris, an urban instrumental music teacher, explains his relationship with students:

I take time to communicate with students during non-teaching periods. Sometimes it is more important to talk to students than only worrying about correct fingerings. My students are from the Cabrini-Green projects, the affluent Lincoln Park area, and from the entire city. They all have the common desire to be treated with respect, encouragement, and understanding.6

I N V E N T O R Y  M E T H O D S
Though Paris is referring to students who are already in his ensemble, students—particularly those who live in poverty—are often initially motivated more by a teacher they like than the task involved, and students who like you are more likely to want to be in your ensemble.  

When instruments are in short supply and you must decide who will play, give older students the opportunity first.

Relationships are important to people who live in poverty, and active involvement in areas outside your classroom and specialty will help in your recruiting efforts, as students will get to know you and will be more comfortable with joining your group. Your presence in another classroom may be as simple as helping with a fire drill or coming in to teach a folk song tied to the curriculum. You might also chaperone a field trip or sponsor an after-school activity. If you have the necessary skills, teaching general music or leading a vocal group is a good way to recruit students for your instrumental ensemble.

I have found that building collegial relationships by getting involved in other classrooms and activities is also invaluable in securing time for my program. Contact time with students is a coveted commodity, especially in urban schools where added pressure is put on teachers to help students raise low scores on mandated tests. If your colleagues like you personally and respect you professionally, they will often help generate student interest in your group and accommodate students needing to leave their classes for lessons and rehearsals, giving you more of that precious contact time.

Retention. Once students have begun playing, you must find ways keep them interested. As with recruiting, you will help retention by being consistently encouraging and persistent. This is important because playing an instrument is hard work, and participation, though rewarding and fun at times, will still take a good deal of student effort. Although this is true in all teaching environments, urban students in particular may more readily make the required effort if they see you as a committed teacher who sincerely cares about them and will do everything you can to keep them from failing.

Another consideration, though certainly not specific to urban children, is that many students living in poverty need to be motivated by immediate goals and rewards because they are not concerned about consequences—both good and bad—that occur too far in the future. Rewarding achievement often helps me keep students in my ensemble. I find that the most effective form of encouragement is frequent praise that specifically describes desired behavior. This also builds self-esteem, which is so often low with urban students. My approach is to set one or more achievable goals that can be met at the end of the lesson or rehearsal, and I make sure that students recognize their successes. I also provide performance opportunities whenever possible. This may be as simple as playing a piece for another student, teacher, or administrator during a lesson.

In addition to being motivating to students, celebrating and publicizing achievements can compensate for the unfavorable publicity urban schools often receive. You may not be able to post the typical announcements about group or individual awards from festivals or honor bands. However, you can enjoy similar benefits by displaying and publicizing student writing samples and compositions. I publicly reward students by posting achievement posters outside the rehearsal room that children sign when they have fulfilled predetermined requirements such as learning a song satisfactorily or attending a performance. At the end of the year, most students have made it through all ten requirements, and the names on the posters serve as public recognition of their accomplishment.

Cultural Relevancy. Because, as an urban teacher, you probably work with students representing ethnic minorities, you must strive to keep experiences culturally relevant. This may mean considering instrumental ensembles other than the traditional band or orchestra. Nontraditional percussion, rock, mariachi, and other specialized ensembles are particularly powerful, as these groups originated in many of the cultures represented in large urban schools. When asked about serving at-risk students, Danny Lopez, an urban instrumental music teacher in Texas, underscores the importance of his culturally relevant ensembles:

All my kids have probably seen mariachi from the time they were small. In San Antonio, it's traditional at every wedding to have a mariachi. You really don't see bands that often unless you go to a high school football game or a college football game—and my kids ordinarily don't go to college football games or concerts.

My kids don't know a lot of the folk songs in the beginning band books. They're inner-city people and they don't know "Go Tell Aunt Rhody." [Y]ou've got to start with "their" music. You've got to find out what kids are listening to, and then use that music in class.

Although not all urban students are at-risk, most will be more motivated to join and remain in ensembles that represent their cultures.

These nontraditional ensembles can form as smaller components of the traditional band or orchestra, in the same manner as string quartets or jazz bands, or they can serve as the larger ensemble itself. Of course, the ensemble you develop will depend on available instruments, as well as geographic location and demographics that contribute to the shared culture of the student body.

It is important that the quality of these nontraditional ensembles remain
as high as possible. Many nontraditional ensembles, such as mariachi, require at least intermediate skill from players before they can be assembled. However, I have seen several culturally inauthentic groups—percussion ensembles in particular—that merely meet once or twice a week after school, are taught by directors not certified to teach music and unqualified to teach the given ensemble, and require little or no requisite skills from the players. The instructors are well intentioned, often volunteering their time, and the low cost provides an alternative to having no music ensemble after budget cuts or when no qualified music teacher is available. However, the students are being sold short because of lax performance standards and because they are engaging in recreation rather than music education.

This should not be the case if an urban school district has qualified instrumental music teachers. Not only should nontraditional instrumental ensembles reflect the same performance quality expected of fine wind bands and orchestras, they should also be aligned with state and national standards. MENC's Strategies for Teaching Specialized Ensembles offers examples of how to realize the National Standards through several nontraditional instrumental groups.11

To maintain performance quality as well as authenticity, instrumental music teachers who decide to build nontraditional ensembles that are unfamiliar to them must learn as much as they can about the style of music they are preparing to teach. There are several resources available for specific ensembles, and I have listed a few in the Resources for Specialized Ensembles sidebar. You can also gain firsthand experience through conferences. Laura Sobrino, spokesperson for the Mariachi Publishing Company and musical director of Mariachi Mujer 2000, offers this advice:

Teachers should attend any of the mariachi conference workshops around the nation so that they can see how kids are being taught. The conferences sometimes have classes for those who are looking to start up an

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**Resources for Specialized Ensembles**

**Multicultural Ensemble**
- *Making Connections* by William A. Anderson and Maravelene C. Moore (Reston, VA: MENC, 1998) covers African American, Asian, Mexican American and Native American music traditions. The companion CD provides aural examples of music covered in the text. The background information on cultures will serve as an introduction for instrumental music teachers, and the lesson plans, though designed primarily for general music classes, can be adapted for beginning ensembles.
- *Multicultural Perspectives in Music Education, 2nd edition* by William Anderson and Patricia Shehan Campbell (Reston, VA: MENC, 1996) covers several cultures: Native American, African American, Anglo-American, Latin American and Caribbean, European, Sub-Saharan African, Middle Eastern, Indian, East Asian, Southeast Asian, and Oceanian. The book is primarily for general music classes, but the lesson plans can be adapted for use with beginning ensembles. The companion recording includes aural examples of the music covered.
- *Strategies for Teaching Specialized Ensembles* compiled and edited by Robert A. Cutietta (Reston, VA: MENC, 1999) provides suggestions for aligning culturally relevant ensembles with the National Standards. Lesson plans are provided for small groups originating from all over the world, including mariachi, traditional Asian string and percussion, and steel band. Lessons for modern ensembles, such as electronic instruments and folk rock bands, are also included.

**Percussion Ensemble**
- *Beat It! African Dances: Group Percussion for Beginners* by Evelyn Glennie and Paul Cameron (London: Faber Music Ltd., 1997) presents ensemble music with flexible instrumentation and parts with varying levels of difficulty to challenge both strong and less-skilled players within the group. The book comes with piano score, reproducible parts, and demonstration CD.
- *Beginning Steel Drum* by Othello Molinieux, *Play Bongos and Hand Percussion Now: The Basics and Beyond* by Richie Gajate-Garcia, and *Play Congas Now: The Basics and Beyond* by Richie Gajate-Garcia (all Warner Brothers Publications) will serve as introductions to methods and individual instruments of Latin and steel drum music. All three come with demonstration CDs, and the latter two books have text in English and Spanish.
- *Hillbridge Steel Drum Resources* (http://www.hillbridge.com) has music and three manuals for starting steel bands.
- *Panyard, Inc.* (http://panyard.com) has a full line of steel drum instruments, music, and educational resources.
- *World Music Drumming* by Will Schmid (Milwaukee, WI: Hal Leonard, 1998) provides all the necessary information to get started with African and Latin American drumming. The percussion and vocal music included is intended for middle school students. Extensions for elementary and high school classes are included. You will need a few percussion instruments (e.g., hand drums, claves, guiro). The complete package is made up of a teacher’s manual, reproducible student booklet, and videotape.

**Mariachi Ensemble**
- *Hal Leonard Mariachi Series* (http://www.halleonard.com) are printed music (score and parts) and CD packages designed for beginning to intermediate ensembles. The packages allow for flexible instrumentation and optional vocalists.
- ""Mariachi: Ethnic Music as a Teaching Tool"" by Keith R. Ballard and C. Rene Benavidez (Teaching Music 9, no. 4 [February 2002]: 22–27) includes information on mariachi and several resources to help start mariachi programs. This article is reprinted in Readings on Diversity, Inclusion, and Music For All (Reston, VA: 2003).
- *Mariachi Music Publishing* (http://www.mariachipublishing.com) has a wealth of information that includes sheet music, articles about mariachi instruments and performance practices, and lists of resources and consultants.
Nontraditional Ensemble. Though the above refers to mariachi, the same advice is applicable to any nontraditional ensemble.

Allowing students a time and place to practice at school for as little as twenty minutes every other day can make a big difference in their success.

Even with traditional ensembles such as band and orchestra, you must maintain cultural relevancy if you are to maximize student interest. Performing jazz or mariachi music arranged for concert band or orchestra is a possibility. Programming music arrangements such as winter holiday medleys that include music of several cultures is another.

Directors need to be careful when selecting culturally relevant music because a good deal of the so-called multicultural music published for band and orchestra merely draws from different geographic locations in Europe—hardly an accurate representation of students in most large urban districts. However, there has been a recent emergence of quality music for band and orchestra that adequately represents a variety of cultures. Because of funding issues, though, you may need to write your own arrangements. Keep in mind that these arrangements do not need to be complex and once you have devoted the time you will have them for future use.

Retention beyond Your Program. Your goal should not be just to keep students in your program, but to help them continue with their musical development after they leave. If your program feeds into another, be sure to partner with all of your colleagues who will direct ensembles with your students as they grow older. In most school districts, attrition in music ensembles is high between schools, but in large urban districts it is probably higher, often because students will transition to several different schools (e.g., students from one elementary school may transition to several possible middle schools). Many students will drop instrumental music without support from directors in the new schools.

Another factor to consider with urban schools is that some students may move several times throughout their experience in the district. To help keep track of students, as well as to provide a consistent, sequential learning experience, as many ensemble directors as realistically possible should work together to keep students in the program as they grow older.

Parental Involvement
A research study designed to help determine what qualities urban students felt their teachers needed included comments from students that supported what successful teachers know about the role of parents:

Researcher: What do your best teachers do to help you the most?
Student [#3]: [Teacher’s name], she knows my mom real good. She stays on my back. She says she’ll call my mom.

As noted by these urban middle school students, support at home is critical to student success in urban schools, so gain the support of parents by building bridges. Remember that most parents, regardless of socioeconomic status, love their children and want them to do well academically. Some parents, however, may have had different experiences in school and see the importance or role of school differently from you. If these parents harbor an animosity toward school, they may not feel that your performing group is important. You may be able to change this with frequent, positive communication.

Publicizing and celebrating any and all achievements can compensate for the often unfavorable publicity urban schools receive.

To help open the lines of communication, try to meet the parents or guardians of every student in your group at the beginning of the school year. It is seldom possible to easily reach all parents, but I usually have success with a little tenacity. After the initial contact where I outline goals and expectations for the instrumental music program, I try to contact all parents every couple of months with good news about their children. Sometimes I have to speak with some parents more frequently with concerns about behavior and poor progress, but parents are more willing
to help with these unpleasant situations if they receive positive communication too.

Phone numbers and availability change often with some parents, and I keep an active phone list that may be frequently updated throughout the year. I call during evening hours when parents are more likely to be home and able to talk. And because so many of our performances are outside normal school hours, I give out my home phone number. When there is no phone available, I write notes and send them home with students or mail them. I also occasionally visit homes to meet with families.

Most parents, regardless of socioeconomic status, love their children and want them to do well academically.

Performances outside the school day can be difficult in urban schools, but parental contact may afford a solution in some cases. For example, transportation is often a problem when no school buses are available. I usually contact parents prior to a performance to make sure students and parents can attend. I then help set up carpools with parents with cars. I also transport parents and students myself, although this is a dangerous practice if insurance and liability issues are not clear. My district allows teachers to register as volunteer drivers at the beginning of the school year, but you should use your own judgment and consult your own district policy.

Many parents of urban children do not speak English, and communication can be difficult. Students can often translate for you, and, when teaching very young students, I have used older siblings or other relatives as interpreters for parents. Bilingual colleagues can also help, and schools may have software available for translating written correspondence to Spanish and other common languages. However, the software still requires someone fluent in the language to proofread, and other colleagues, parents, or other community members can help.

Another point to consider is that, in the absence of material wealth and often as a condition of survival, those in poverty place a high value on personal relationships. As often as possible, I have a camera handy to chronicle and celebrate these relationships. After the annual open house, a Band Families display goes up in the music room with pictures not of instrument groups, but of children and their families. Many parents cannot attend the open house, so I will get a snapshot of them in the coming weeks. Sometimes I may have to contact other relatives instead of frequently absent parents, but usually by midyear, every student is represented with a family member or close friend in the display.

Anything that you can do to make your school more family-like will have a welcoming effect on students and their families. As a result, many of your students’ homes will become a little more school-like as families place more importance on requirements for participation in music ensembles, such as daily practice or arranging for transportation to performances outside the school day. Even though it is time-consuming and fruitless with some parents, diligently demonstrating proper care and maintaining instruments with oil and grease during lessons myself so that nothing is wasted. Students help by adding reeds and other accessories so that these costly items last as long as possible. In spite of my frugality, like most urban teachers, I spend a good deal more of my own money than is allowed as a deduction on my income taxes.

Funding and Administrative Support

Funding. Funding is critical to instrumental music programs in urban schools because instruments and other necessary materials are often provided for students, and to build your program, you will need more instruments and related supplies. However, urban schools are plagued with inadequate funding and often have older instruments—probably too few in number and too many in disrepair. There may be a silver lining here because, like cars, those older instruments were probably built to last, and it is less expensive to fix existing instruments than to purchase new ones, especially if you can repair them yourself. Budgets for equipment repair in your district may be separate from allocations for new equipment and supplies, allowing you to maintain existing instruments when there is no money to buy new. Two old E-flat tubas and a set of timpani were donated to my program, and they all play satisfactorily after a few repairs—most of which I did myself. I also had a colleague donate a like-new snare drum that she used as a tax write-off.

With a little searching, you can find and apply for appropriate grants for instruments and supplies.

Many students will not have the money for method books or equipment supplies such as reeds and oils, and, if you receive any money towards these purchases, it will probably not be enough. I help method books last many years by not writing in them, and I use plenty of clear tape for frequent binding and page repairs. I also maintain instruments with oil and grease during lessons myself so that nothing is wasted. Students help by diligently demonstrating proper care of reeds and other accessories so that these costly items last as long as possible. In spite of my frugality, like most urban teachers, I spend a good deal more of my own money than is allowed as a deduction on my income taxes.

Fund-raising is a common remedy for many directors. However, because
Helpful Web Sites

Sources of Grant Information
- The Children's Music Workshop: http://www.childrensmusicworkshop.com
  (Click on the link to grants information.)
- Foundation Center: http://www.fdncenter.org
- MENC: The National Association for Music Education: http://www.mENC.org
- Mr. Holland's Opus Foundation: http://www.mhopus.org
- National Endowment for the Arts: http://www.nea.gov

Researching and Writing Grants
- “Basic Elements of Grant Writing,” Corporation for Public Broadcasting: http://www.cpb.org/grants/grantwriting.html
- “Writing Winning Grant Proposals,” Polaris: http://www.polarisgrantscentral.net/tips.html

Current Urban Issues
- Council of the Great City Schools: http://www.cgcs.org
- Educators Reference Desk, formerly Ask ERIC: http://www.eduref.org/
  (Searchable database with information on a variety of educational topics)
- The Institute for Urban and Minority Education: http://iume.tc.columbia.edu
- Perspectives on Urban Education: http://www.urbanedjournal.org
- The Urban Institute: http://www.urban.org

of economic conditions, I do not organize fund-raisers for my program. A parent group in my school has some success with fund-raising, and they have made small donations to my program in the past. Though fund-raising is possible in some urban schools, it is not as widespread as in more affluent communities, and it may not be an option in your situation.

However, there are large and small grants available for instruments and supplies. (See the Helpful Web Sites sidebar and the funding section of the Annotated List of Resources.) Connect with grant writers in your district, or learn how to write grants yourself. With a little searching, you can find and apply for appropriate grants for instruments and supplies. If grant writing appears too daunting, consider partnering with a colleague or two. It may even improve your chances of securing funding because a group of teachers will serve a larger number of students, a consideration in many grant awards. The fine arts coordinator in my district, together with several instrumental music teachers, secured a large grant for new instruments this way a few years ago. We also periodically receive small grants for supplies such as reeds and method books.

Administrative Support. Principals in urban schools have the overwhelming job of balancing the needs of teachers and students with the top-down demands and mandates of a bureaucracy. The school principal(s) may or may not be able to secure funds for your program, although, in my experience, they can usually provide at least a little help. Many larger districts have fine arts administrators who may be a source of funding. In any case, knowing how budget monies are disbursed and by whom will help you pursue funds for your ensemble.

Regardless of immediate funding availability, if you build a quality program with what you have, a committed principal will usually try to assist with funding in the future. However, as Kenneth Jerrigan, a veteran urban band director, warns: “You never know when your department will be severely changed due to budget cuts, administrative ignorance, or whim.” Keeping your principal informed about the importance of your program may help you avoid such unexpected changes. Realize, though, that while impressing your principal, you should also be impressing parents, other teachers, and possibly other administrators higher up in the power structure. Even if your school principal does not personally support instrumental music, if other stakeholders recognize the importance of your program, a savvy principal will join your cause.

Experienced music teachers know that administrative support can crush or cultivate music programs in other ways, and urban settings are no exception. Administrators can help you secure rehearsal and lesson time, as well as adequate rehearsal space. A situation certainly not specific to urban schools is the scheduling of rehearsals outside the school day. You may need to work diligently with school principals to change this detrimental condition, which is often a result of lack of support, possibly due to a weak or nonexistent program in the past. As you increase enrollment, build the quality of your program by aligning it with existing district, state, and national standards. Be sure to publicize all of your successful efforts and resultant student achievement, and your program’s status should improve in the eyes of all—particularly your principal. This, in time, may lead to increased rehearsal time and space.

Conclusion: Changing Grooves

Urban schools present some different challenges from other schools, and you may need to work harder to secure funding and other support to keep your program growing. You may also need to modify your perceptions of and relationships with students, parents, and administrators. But a plan that realistically accounts for these challenges and your tenacity in overcoming them will help you build a noteworthy ensemble. Quality programs are most often not inherited; they are made. And instrumental music programs should be made for the benefit of the deserving children in them—especially the often-forgotten children in urban schools.

Notes
2. Ibid.

22


10. Taylor, Barry, and Walls, Music and Students at Risk, 69–70.


12. Laura Sobrino, e-mail communication with author, November 23, 2003.


18. Special thanks goes to Carol Terry, fine arts coordinator for Syracuse City Schools, New York; Tim Pletkovich and Barbara McCoy of Peoria City Schools, Illinois; Brenda Biernat, membership coordinator for Grantmakers in the Arts; and Sue Rarus, research director at MENC: The National Association for Music Education, for their contributions in preparing this article.

MENC Resources

The MENC Web site offers resources that can help teachers provide culturally relevant lessons for the diverse student populations in urban schools. Though the materials were developed in conjunction with specific yearly celebrations, many of the resources can be used all year.


- Hispanic Heritage Month resources are available at http://www.menc.org/guides/hhmonth/hhmain.html.

- You can find lists of organizations that provide funding and other assistance to music programs in need at http://www.menc.org/information/infoserv/Aid.html.

The following articles from Music Educators Journal offer insight and specific ideas for working with the types of students you might encounter in an urban school:


Music Education in Rural Areas: A Few Keys to Success
Daniel Isbell

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What is This?
Music Education in Rural Areas: A Few Keys to Success

By Daniel Isbell

Community dynamics play a major role in determining the duties of music educators. What music educators do each day can vary greatly depending on their location. A middle school band director's job description in suburban New York is likely to look nothing like that of a music educator in rural Iowa.

The typical rural music teacher is just that, a music teacher. These teachers are often required to teach many areas of music, not just band, choir, or orchestra. Rural music teachers may also have other responsibilities that are unrelated to music. After teaching a variety of music classes each day, they can often be seen driving school buses, coaching sports teams, or advising student clubs.

Rural music educators may also be required to travel among several schools and teach a wide range of grade levels, which often means teaching the same students year after year. There is nothing as rewarding as watching a senior graduate whom you can remember starting out on the clarinet several years earlier. The opportunity to get to know students over many years, coupled with the often quiet and scenic surroundings, can make a rural community a special place to guide and influence the lives of students.

There is a substantial lack of literature to help teachers who choose to work in rural schools. This is surprising, since two-thirds of all public schools in this country are, by some definitions, considered rural and are responsible for educating one-quarter to one-third of all school-age children.

Insufficient resources, geographic isolation from other music teachers, and other specific challenges of a rural setting can overwhelm even the most experienced music teacher. Low enrollment can place strains on the performance abilities of instrumental and choral groups and force rural teachers to be creative with instrumentation, repertoire choices, and scheduling conflicts. The problem of low enrollment is often exacerbated by frequent teacher turnover, which typically results in students leaving the program.

Instruments are often in disrepair, and there are no funds to fix them. Performance spaces and rehearsal facilities, if they exist, may be inadequate or out-of-date.

While the above conditions certainly do not apply to all rural locations, they are common. The presence of one or more of these situations requires a music teacher with immense talents and creativity, not to mention a strong sense of humor. Rather than lamenting these difficult conditions, effective rural music teachers find ways to make small-town life work in their favor.

Overcoming Low Enrollment

Combining Groups. The first challenge facing many rural music teachers will probably be low enrollment. They may wonder how they can possibly put on a good band concert with only nine students in the high school band. Locating other musicians in the district and combining groups is one solution to this common problem. For example, if there are more middle school students than high school students in a band program, consolidating the two groups can often create a more ideal ensemble. Scheduling issues and geographic separation may prevent a combined music group from being a daily class, so it may be necessary to meet periodically after school. If student conflicts make this difficult, a few rehearsals before the concert may be all that the group requires or can afford.
Combining music students of varying ages and experience into one group provides an opportunity for older students to mentor the younger students. Experienced performers can model appropriate tone, phrasing, and articulations quite readily. Trustworthy juniors and seniors can offer private instruction in available practice rooms or offices. Experienced students generally respond well to this added responsibility and appreciate the respect they receive from it. The younger students will also enjoy getting feedback and assistance from someone closer to their own age.

Combining music groups is likely to create a few problems when assigning musical parts, so it may be necessary to encourage students to switch instruments or voice parts. Many students actually look forward to this new challenge. When assigning parts for the band, it’s a good idea to have beginning percussionists (of which there are often several) learn an additional instrument. If a score only has a snare or cymbal part, the extra percussionists can provide support in the other sections, such as woodwinds or brass. This will also greatly benefit the percussionists’ overall musicianship.

Regardless of whether a music group has an adequate number of students, the selection of appropriate repertoire is always important. After doing some substantial sight-reading at the beginning of the year, the director should select music of high quality in a variety of styles, textures, and difficulty levels. The ensemble should work on several pieces: some that meet the needs of the advanced students and some that can develop confidence in the younger musicians. Inexperienced musicians enjoy working on difficult music occasionally, even if it is a little over their heads.

In turn, older musicians working on easier pieces will be given the opportunity to learn that hitting the right notes or having the correct rhythms under their fingers doesn’t necessarily mean that they’ve “got it.” When playing music written for beginners, these more experienced students can focus on...
When the older students understand more advanced and abstract concepts, such as phrasing, pitch, and tone. mentors to the younger students, they are likely to become more willing to work on music that doesn’t challenge them technically. If the expectations of the teacher and students continue to rise each year, the advanced repertoire will come as the program develops.

Small Ensembles. Ensembles that are traditionally small are a perfect fit for small rural music programs because they only require a limited number of people to function as they were intended. Chamber groups, drum ensembles, brass quintets, barbershop groups, quartets, duets, and trios all provide students opportunities to explore different genres of music.

For these smaller groups, the director can assume the role of coach, letting the students enjoy the added responsibility of running their own rehearsals. Some students may need instruction on how to run an effective rehearsal. For a few brief guidelines, see the Effective Student-Led Rehearsal Tips.

Students also benefit from the more independent form of musical performance that small music groups provide. The music program need not be limited to standard classical ensembles. Small jazz, rock, and pop ensembles can be just as beneficial and have the added potential to make the school music program more relevant to many students.

Rewriting Music. Even when instrumental and vocal parts have been assigned and small ensembles have been created, the rural music teacher may have to rewrite parts to fit the groups’ abilities and the distribution of instruments and voice parts. Altering the key signature, bringing notes down an octave, simplifying a rhythm, giving euphoniums a trombone melody, or substituting a baritone saxophone for a bassoon are all ways of helping ensure that a performance is musical and pleasing for the audience and the performers. Rewriting parts in this way requires a willingness to experiment, as well as a knowledge of theory and of secondary instruments.

It is of prime importance that rural music teachers keep up with their knowledge of secondary instrument techniques. Private teachers are often nonexistent or very far away from rural communities, so students need a teacher who is capable of modeling an appropriate tone and technique on a variety of instruments. Rural music teachers should keep a resource file containing detailed information on performance and pedagogy for each instrument. It is necessary (and often difficult) to find the practice time needed to keep secondary instrument performance skills at an adequate level.

Traveling. Traveling is an activity that need not be reserved for large programs. Directors from small music programs may think that limited funds or low enrollment in their program limits opportunities for taking trips, but this does not always have to be the case.

Music festivals and competitions have triple benefits for music students: (1) they allow group members to get to know fellow members they normally do not spend time with, (2) they involve a level of performance that motivates many players, and (3) they are opportunities to receive feedback from someone other than the director students see every day.

Trips don’t have to be of the performance variety to reap large benefits. It’s amazing what even the simplest trip will do for the morale of a small music group. Arranging trips to see a guest artist in a big city or to visit a vacation destination on spring break can also bring musicians in a group closer together.

Obviously, fund-raising becomes an issue when planning trips, and rural music teachers need to be willing to add one more thing to their already overflowing plate. One solution is to call on supportive parents to assist with this extra task. Fund-raising can be difficult in rural communities, which may necessitate less expensive, but still memorable, educational trips.

Finding Support

Administration. Research has shown that support from administration is crucial to the success of a music program. Rural music programs are no exception. Fortunately, one of the benefits of teaching in a rural school is that there is a limited amount of red tape, and administrators are generally more easily accessible than in larger school systems.

It’s important that music teachers be seen by the administration as team players and part of the school “family.” Having the administration’s support is vital in a number of situations, including seeking funding, working with parents, and having a voice in the creation of the school’s master schedule. Gaining or keeping the support of administrators may mean attending committee meetings when something else seems more important, arranging performances for pep assemblies when the school’s music groups have already agreed to an appropriate number of performances in support of athletics, or participating in schoolwide community cleanup projects and similar school events.

Student Body and Fellow Teachers. It isn’t necessary to parade around the school extolling the virtues of music education to the student body and the teachers not directly involved with the music program. However, frequent informal performances around the
school may convince others that the music program is more than just a group of kids who occasionally dress up and present evening concerts. School assemblies or the lobby at lunchtime are examples of good places to make appearances. If the band, choir, or smaller “cool” ensembles perform music that is accessible to the general public, then the image of and support for the music program are likely to improve.

Students can organize these kinds of performances themselves, perform popular music, and wear casual attire. They will benefit from more performance opportunities, and the members of the school community will start to understand that there is much more to the music program than they thought.

Parents and Community. Many studies have linked student success with parental support. These studies often define parental support as encouragement of student practice or attendance at student performances. Parental support increases student motivation and is, without question, very helpful in student learning and development.

Parents can also assist with routine school responsibilities. Many parents offer their time and energy to help music directors, only to be politely turned away because the directors either do not know what duties to assign or may be nervous about having someone else do a job that reflects on them. But when the concert night arrives and there are two or more performing groups on the program, the director will appreciate having someone else handle chairs, lighting, and cleanup. Parents can also chaperone trips and manage fund-raisers. If the director is fortunate enough, parents may also be able to act as private teachers, accompanists, or music coaches.

Change and improvement are much easier if the rural music program has the support of the parents and the community. Community support has been deemed essential in the development of rural music programs. Small ensembles that perform holiday music, Memorial Day programs, and outdoor concerts in the park will give students valuable experiences and help spread the word that the school music program is thriving. More often than not, the group can use the same music for multiple programs, reducing the need for added rehearsal time.

The local high school in small towns is very often the hub of activity. The culture of the community and culture of the high school often blend as one. Pep-band and athletic-event performances are low-cost, high-benefit activities that increase the visibility of the music program. The music certainly adds to the excitement of a game, but the real benefits of performing at athletic events, even with a smaller ensemble, are in establishing the music program as an integral part of the school and community.

Even though outside performances are important public relations activities, it’s extremely important for the rural music teacher to make sure there is balance in the program. For example, the pep-band program should not negatively affect the band by taking precious time away from the rehearsal and performance of concert music. The development of student musicianship is always of paramount importance, and pep-band performances can take over a program and stunt musical growth if a teacher is not careful. In addition, because students in rural communities are often involved in many different activities, pep-band commitments and over-scheduling have the potential to wear everybody out.

**Rural Music Educators’ Checklist**

These hints can help you improve your rural music program:

- Combine two or more existing music groups.
- Encourage experienced students to mentor, direct rehearsals, and give private lessons.
- Suggest students try different instruments and vocal parts.
- Form small ensembles to perform traditional and nontraditional music.
- Provide both simple and challenging music pieces.
- Rewrite music to fit the needs of a particular group.
- Arrange trips for your ensembles.
- Ask parents to help with fund-raising, chaperoning, concert duties, and other tasks.
- Foster a good relationship with school administration.
- Encourage music students to give extra performances for the school and community.
- Learn about the school’s master schedule and how you can influence its structure and contents.

**Master Schedule Participation**

Because students from smaller schools are more likely to be involved with extracurricular activities than students from larger schools, it may be difficult for a rural music educator to have everyone attend after-school activities. While larger schools may offer more choices for after-school activities, students from smaller schools will often make more out of the opportunities that exist for them. Conflicts of all kinds are more likely in rural schools, and an effective rural music teacher needs to be understanding and flexible.

In rural schools, conflicts related to the master schedule of classes are often seen as an inevitable part of teaching. Small schools, by their very nature, cannot offer many time slots for a particular class. Often there is only one time slot for a required class, and that class may unfortunately meet at the same time as the only section of band or choir. Conflicts in the schedule have the potential to devastate a music group. This is why rural music educators must get involved with the creation of the school’s master schedule. At the very least, they should go to great lengths to educate themselves about how master schedules are made and what options are available. It’s impossible to improve a music program if the students can’t get into the classroom.

WWW.MENC.ORG
Understanding Rural Contexts

Not every rural music teacher has grown up in a rural community. Rural teachers need to be sensitive to the concerns of their communities. This means that work on the farm sometimes takes priority over school. When it's calving season, the family may need extra hands at home. The livelihood of a family could depend on it. A new teacher from the suburbs may have difficulty understanding this rural concept.

In addition to the day-to-day activities that are a part of rural life, the culture of the students needs to be taken into consideration. A first-year teacher should not expect to immediately change the perspectives of students in a rural community. It's important to meet them where they are and gradually introduce them to new musical worlds. The merits of learning multicultural and avant-garde music are certain, but rural students and their families may not be immediately receptive to learning about such topics. They are likely to resist an immediate authoritarian approach, so it's wise to begin by teaching familiar music and then slowly expand the repertoire.

Conclusion

Inevitably, after all of the preparation and careful attention to detail has taken place, teachers will find that some things do not turn out as expected. The Rural Music Educators Checklist provides a list of several ways to improve a rural music program.

It's always important to maintain a sense of humor and remain patient. It not only takes a long time to build a reputable rural music program; it also takes a constant flame of energy to sustain it. A rural music teacher's willingness to take risks and try new approaches in organization and pedagogy, even if those changes seem radical at first, will keep the music program fresh and engaging year after year. Combining this with empathy and respect, while gradually increasing expectations, will help ensure that students in rural communities receive a rich music education.

Notes

6. Ibid.; and Mullins, "Joys of Teaching in Small Schools."
10. Ibid.; and Isbell, "Factors that Promote and Limit Success."
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What is This?
A Mixed Methods Portrait of Urban Instrumental Music Teaching

Kate R. Fitzpatrick

Abstract
The purpose of this mixed methods study was to learn about the ways that instrumental music teachers in Chicago navigated the urban landscape. The design of the study most closely resembles Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2007) two-part Triangulation Convergence Mixed Methods Design, with the addition of an initial exploratory focus group component. Research questions focused on the contextual knowledge that the teachers held regarding their students and communities, the specialized skills they relied upon to be successful, the attitudes and beliefs they held toward teaching instrumental music in an urban school, and the challenges and rewards that they perceived from teaching in this context. The results suggest that the instrumental music teachers utilized their knowledge of the urban context to modify their general pedagogical approach, that they believed a specialized set of skills was required for success in the urban context, that they had relatively positive levels of job satisfaction and believed strongly in the development of their students’ potential, and that they faced serious challenges to the success of their programs but also perceived great reward from the personal and musical improvement of their students.

Keywords
urban, mixed methods, music education, instrumental music, teaching

Research confirms that schools located in urban areas offer opportunities and face challenges unique to their context (Gordon, 2003; Kozol, 1991; Talbert-Johnson, 2004; Voltz, 1998; Zhou, 2003). Because the majority of schools in America (57%) are in large or midsize cities or their accompanying urban fringe areas, these schools serve...
more than two thirds of all public school students (Department of Education, 2004). Urban educational issues, then, are American educational issues.

Music education programs within such contexts are not isolated from their surroundings and communities and, therefore, also have specific needs. Extant literature on the status of urban music programs demonstrates the inequities found between music programs located in urban contexts and those located within better-resourced areas (Calloway, 2009; Costa-Giomi, 2008; Costa-Giomi & Chappell, 2007; Department of Education, 2002; Iken, 2006; C. Smith, 1997). These inequities challenge the profession to consider the complex socioeconomic and cultural reasons that urban music programs might be under-researched, under-resourced, and under-served.

Research within the field of music education1 that directly addresses the urban context has been severely lacking until the past decade, when a variety of researchers began examining the urban music education context specifically (Carlos, 2005; Emmanuel, 2005; Eros, 2009; Isaac-Johnson, 2007; Kinney, 2010; N. Robinson, 2004; Schmidt, 2007; Shields, 2001). This recent emphasis on research within the urban music context has been propelled by MENC’s publication of two books on urban music teaching (Frierson-Campbell, 2006a, 2006b). Research regarding the specific context of urban instrumental music education provides an understanding that this particular context may be particularly affected by issues of socioeconomic status (Albert, 2006; Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Klinedinst, 1991; McCarthy, 1980) and an elevated amount of teacher responsibilities (Friedrichs, 2001).

In-service teachers within urban music education settings have been found to demonstrate relatively positive attitudes toward teaching in the urban context (Ausmann, 1991). This finding is notable, as the challenges of teaching within urban schools have been well documented (Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995; Flowers, 2003; Gardner, 2006; Mixon, 2005; J. Smith, 2006; Whitener et al., 1997), while the rewards offered by this setting have not (Bernard, 2010; Yee, 1988). The literature offers many suggestions on specific strategies that urban music teachers can use to achieve success within their programs (Albert, 2006; Allsup, 1997; Carlow, 2006; Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995; Hinckley, 1995; Mixon, 2006; Porcino Dolamore, 2006).

Teachers working with students within urban schools should be careful to consider issues of cultural relevancy (Ensign, 2003; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Marshall, 2006; Morrell & Duncan-Andrade, 2002; Nieto, 2004) and should be sensitive to the needs of at-risk students (Chipman, 2004; N. Robinson, 2004; Shields, 2001; Taylor, Barry, & Walls, 1997). To best support and serve urban music teachers, issues of teacher preparation and recruitment are of the utmost importance (Bruenger, 2009; Emmanuel, 2005; Hunt, 2009; Lehmbarg, 2008; Renfro, 2003), as are issues of professional development and mentoring (Conway, Hibbard, Albert, & Hourigan, 2005; Friedrichs, 2001; Hazelette, 2006; Kindall-Smith, 2004; M. Robinson, 1999), which may be especially important to the success of young teachers.

This review of the extant literature on urban music education provides a limited understanding of an extremely dynamic teaching context. The current foundation of research is inadequate to effect any significant change or progress in the quality of
urban music education, as has been noted by other researchers in the field (Ausmann, 1991; Schmidt, 2007). Little is known about the experiences of urban music teachers and the ways that they think about and connect to the urban context that surrounds them. Studies are needed that specifically examine how music teachers navigate the urban landscape, that is, how the specific demands of the urban context mesh with a teacher’s knowledge of that context as demonstrated through music teaching. As Smith (2006) said, “The voices of practitioners need to be part of the ongoing conversation about music education in urban schools” (p. 73).

Every area of formal urban music education—general music, instrumental music, and choral music—is deserving of serious study. However, because the monetary investment required to purchase an instrument and other fees associated with participation in instrumental music courses may constrain the ability of students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds to participate (Albert, 2006), and because student socioeconomic status is associated with participation and subsequent retention in an instrumental music program (Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Klinedinst, 1991; McCarthy, 1980), I found the specific genre of urban instrumental music teaching (the teaching of bands and orchestras and other instrumental ensembles) especially compelling to investigate.

**Purpose and Research Questions**

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to learn about the ways that instrumental music teachers navigate the urban landscape. Because this study was designed to view one phenomenon from two different methodological perspectives, the research questions for both the quantitative and qualitative components were the same.

**Quantitative and Qualitative Research Questions**

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

**Mixed Methods Research Question**

5. In what ways do the survey and interview/observation data align with one another?
Methodological Overview

Mixed methods research allows the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to emerge (Creswell, 2003; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, 2003). In combining these methodologies, the mixed methods researcher hopes to lessen the weaknesses of either approach and view the problem from several vantage points. For the purposes of this study, both the quantitative approach, which provides a broader view of the urban teaching context, and the qualitative approach, which provides an understanding of the particularities of the urban music teaching context, offered insightful perspectives on this understudied phenomenon.

A three-phase mixed methods design with both sequential and concurrent components was employed for this study. The design most closely resembles Creswell and Plano Clark’s (2007) Triangulation Convergence Mixed Methods Design, with the addition of an initial exploratory focus group component (see Figure 1). Phase 1 of the

![Figure 1. Triangulation Convergence Mixed Methods Design with exploratory focus group component](https://example.com/figure1.png)

Note: In mixed methods nomenclature, capitalization denotes the relative emphasis of the study phases. In this study, the exploratory Phase 1 is represented as qual while Phase 2 is represented as QUAN and Phase 3 as QUAL.
study included a focus group composed of urban instrumental music teachers ($N = 7$) that informed the development of the survey questionnaire. Phase 2 of the study involved a survey of instrumental music teachers in the Chicago Public Schools ($N = 90$). Phase 3 of this study was based on interviews with and observations of four selected instrumental music teachers within the Chicago Public Schools. It is important to clarify that the main emphasis of the study rests on the survey and interview/observation components, both of which were weighted equally under this design framework.

To most succinctly summarize the findings of this study and to best honor the integrity of the mixed methods framework, this article focuses on the presentation of the converged mixed methods results. Complete presentations of the separate quantitative and qualitative data analyses may be found in Fitzpatrick (2008). Summary results of the survey data and a full version of the mixed methods data matrix may be found in the appendices, available at http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental.

**Design of Phase 1: Focus Group**

Because of the lack of data on urban music programs and a need to better understand the particularities of the district being examined, I conducted an initial exploratory focus group interview (Bloor, Franklans, Thomas, & Robson, 2001; Nardi, 2003; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990) in order to guide the development of the Phase 2 survey instrument. For the purposes of this study, I chose to utilize a pre-existing group of Chicago Public Schools (CPS) instrumental music teachers ($N = 7$) who served as instructors of the district All-City band (demographic descriptions of participants are available in Appendix A at http://jrm.sagepub.com/supplemental). The focus group meeting lasted 114 minutes and was video- and audio-recorded for transcription. Following transcription of the focus group interview, I coded for themes that emerged during the discussion (focus group codes also are available in Appendix A). Following this coding, I aligned the codes with the original research questions and developed survey items that would explore these same issues with the broader survey population (Nardi, 2003).

**Design of Phase 2: Survey**

A survey was used due to the need to gather data on a large population of urban instrumental teachers (Nardi, 2003). The survey questionnaire developed from the focus group codes was pilot tested with a group of instrumental music teachers ($N = 23$) from a midsize urban school district in the Midwest as a means of ensuring both validity and reliability (Fink, 2003; Nardi, 2003; Sapsford, 1999). Following the administration of the pilot survey, the instrument was revised, taking into account the respondents’ comments and suggestions according to Fink’s (2003) suggested pilot questions. Following pilot testing, the revised survey was 99 questions long and took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

This survey involved a census (Sapsford, 1999) of instrumental music teachers in the Chicago Public Schools, in that all 153 instrumental music teachers within CPS.
were surveyed. With the assistance of the CPS Music Curriculum Supervisor, surveys were sent and returned via the district mail system during May 2007. To facilitate an acceptable response rate, I sent a first mailing, a follow-up reminder postcard, an electronic version of the study via e-mail, and a second mailing. Finally, personal phone calls were made before the end of the school year to all participants who had not yet responded. Ninety of these surveys were returned, providing a response rate of 59%. Because this included a broad representation of age, racial identification, teaching experience, and school context attended, it was assumed that this sample was sufficiently diverse to represent the broader population of CPS instrumental music teachers. However, it is important to note that there may be inherent bias associated with the population of teachers who returned the survey, and therefore generalizations to the broader urban instrumental music teaching population are made cautiously.

To establish reliability of the survey instrument, the instrument was piloted as described above and modified accordingly. Once the final survey was developed and administered, Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to measure the internal consistency of the three survey item clusters that were intended to represent various underlying constructs (Nardi, 2003). The overall alpha coefficient for these three sections of the survey was .85.

### Quantitative Results Summary

Summary results of the survey data may be found in Appendix A (see http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental). Briefly, survey results revealed that participants had a varied knowledge of the urban context in which they taught, including strong knowledge of their communities, students, and schools. Participants also indicated a belief that teaching in the urban context requires a specialized set of skills that differs from the skills necessary to succeed in non-urban contexts. An examination of participants’ responses to questions concerning their attitudes and beliefs demonstrated that these teachers took jobs in urban situations for varied reasons, that they defined success in terms of student personal and musical progress rather than program or personal recognition, that they held moderately high levels of job satisfaction that correlated with several important variables, and that they held varied beliefs about their students, themselves, their programs, and their schools. Participants reported facing serious challenges to the success of their programs that resulted in their need for increased funding, repair and purchase of instruments, and administrative support. Despite these challenges, participants indicated that their greatest rewards came from student musical improvement, student personal improvement, and general student success.

### Design of Phase 3: Interviews and Observations

Collection of Phase 3 qualitative data occurred concurrently with the collection of Phase 2 quantitative data. Because the experiences of the four participants were used instrumentally to illustrate the issue of teaching instrumental music in the urban school, this phase of the study most resembles a collective instrumental case study (Creswell, 1998).
Because I considered it important to illustrate a variety of instrumental music teacher experiences within the urban setting, I utilized stratified purposeful sampling (Miles & Huberman, 1994) for Phase 3 of the study. Four teachers were chosen to represent the experiences of certain important subgroups: inexperienced (5 years of teaching experience or less) and experienced (more than 5 years) teachers, and those identified by the district coordinator of music as teaching in programs that traditionally would be identified as being either struggling or thriving according to level of student participation in ensembles, attendance at festivals and contests, and prominence within the community. The combination of experienced/inexperienced and thriving/struggling produced a four-way matrix in which one teacher was identified by the district coordinator of music to represent each category.

Ms. Erika Sanders (inexperienced teacher/thriving program) was in her 3rd year of teaching at Elmira West High School (5 years total) and directed an instrumental music program that has a storied history in the district. The school lies at the intersection of three neighborhoods of vastly differing socioeconomic status and racial makeup, and the majority of students at Elmira West were Black (93%). Mr. Antoine Michaels (experienced teacher/thriving program) of Bellerman High School was in his 14th year of teaching. Bellerman is a performing arts magnet school with 19 student music ensembles and 12 music teachers on staff, including a full-time instrument repairman. Most of the students were Latino or Black, and most did not come from the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Rodrigo Moya (inexperienced teacher/struggling program) was a 3rd-year teacher at Gerstein High School. His students were primarily Latino and Polish, and the school is located in an area plagued by gangs and violence. Mr. Moya had been rebuilding the program after it had been dismantled for a 3-year period; student enrollment in the program was small and progress slow. Finally, Mr. Jerry Sims (experienced teacher/struggling program) at Katz High School had 24 years of teaching experience. One hundred percent of Katz students were Black, and the school occupies a beautiful new building in one of the poorest areas of the city. The Katz program was struggling as student numbers were down and the administration was unsupportive.

With each of these participants, Phase 3 included three different episodes of data collection: a pre-interview, a day of observation, and a follow-up interview. The first episode of data collection included a 1-hour-long semi-structured pre-interview. Following this pre-interview, a day of observation was scheduled at each school, in which I spent a “day in the life” of the teacher, following each through the teaching day from morning bell to after-school rehearsals. During this day, I observed all teaching episodes while collecting extensive field notes and making audio recordings of ensemble rehearsals and performances. I acted as an “observer as participant” (Glesne, 2006), serving primarily as a detached observer within each classroom but having some interaction with teachers and students at each school. Immediately following the day of observation, an unstructured follow-up interview was conducted in which I probed for better understanding of the events just observed, guided by the research questions.

Following Phase 3 data collection, I utilized the steps of Creswell’s (1998) Data Analysis Spiral to guide data analysis. Identification of codes was primarily guided by the framework of the interview and research questions, although emergent codes and
themes also were noted. Following identification of codes, within-case themes were
developed, and a narrative description of each case was created from these themes that
included my interpretations of the data (see Fitzpatrick, 2008). Next, I developed
cross-case themes from comparison and contrast of all four cases, and I interpreted and
analyzed these cross-case themes, taking into account disconfirming evidence.

To establish trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), triangulation was accom-
plished through the use of several forms of data, including interviews, observations,
field notes, audio recordings of rehearsals, collected documents such as concert pro-
grams and calendars, and digital pictures of each school’s surrounding community
and classroom setup. Also, researcher bias was clarified from the outset of the study so that
my own particular assumptions and experiences were explicit. Finally, I developed
rich, thick descriptions of the participants, experiences, and contexts so that the reader
can assess to what extent the information is transferable.

Qualitative Results Summary

The full results of Phase 3 data collection, including the presentation of each case and
subsequent presentation of the cross-case themes, may be found in Fitzpatrick (2008).
To summarize, four themes emerged from this analysis: “creative solutions to urban
challenges,” “commitment to improving students’ lives,” “focus on the traditional,”
and “the struggle between frustration and reward.” Figure 2 presents these cross-case
themes and codes in graphic form.

Mixed Methods Data Analysis

In mixed methods research, qualitative and quantitative data are first analyzed sepa-
rately according to the traditions of each methodology. Subsequently, the data are
analyzed to address the mixed methods research questions, as presented in this article.
To facilitate comparison between the quantitative and qualitative data, I assembled a
mixed methods data matrix (see Appendix B at http://jrme.sagepub.com/supplemental
for the full matrix and Table 1 for a condensed version). The full matrix is organized
according to the four quantitative and qualitative research questions and presents
quantitative data plus examples from the qualitative data, while Table 1 presents only
the alignment of the quantitative and qualitative data.

For those data that are topically associated, that is, that relate to the same focus group
category or theme, the qualitative and quantitative data are presented next to one another
for easy comparison. In order to better describe the nature of the converged results, and
to more specifically address the mixing of the data, I have developed what I term data
convergence labels. In those situations where the quantitative and qualitative data directly
address the same phenomenon or topic and clearly confirm or contradict one another, the
data are labeled confirm or contradict. There may be situations in which the qualitative
and quantitative data regarding a phenomenon or topic may, in part, confirm one another

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while also, in part, contradicting one another. In these cases, the data are labeled as having mixed convergence. In those cases where the quantitative and qualitative data do not directly confirm or contrast but instead provide different perspectives on the same phenomenon or add a richness of understanding to the other, the data are labeled as enhance. Thus, there are four possible researcher-designed data convergence labels: confirm, contradict, mixed, and enhance. These labels are intended to specifically and succinctly describe the nature of the convergence of the quantitative and qualitative results.

Figure 2. Cross-case coding framework
Note: Although most codes were easily collapsed into themes, three codes stood on their own as more unique categories of data that did not naturally fit with the others. These codes are described within the figure as “floating codes.”
Table 1. Condensed Data Convergence Matrix by Research Question

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<th>Quantitative Survey Themes</th>
<th>Qualitative Codes</th>
<th>Alignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What knowledge do urban instrumental music teachers hold about their students and communities?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge of students</td>
<td>Insider perspectives</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Knowing the boundaries of the system</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a second language</td>
<td>Knowing the boundaries of the system</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood history</td>
<td>Knowing the boundaries of the system</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What specialized skills do these teachers rely upon to be successful within the urban setting?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophy</td>
<td>Creative solutions to urban challenges</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity and developing relationships</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning/preparation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivational skills</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differences: Urban and suburban contexts</td>
<td>Thinking outside the box</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What attitudes and beliefs do teachers hold towards teaching instrumental music in urban schools?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs: About themselves</td>
<td>Commitment to improving student lives</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal investment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs: About students</td>
<td>Belief in students</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs: About programs</td>
<td>The program as a haven</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs: About programs</td>
<td>Focus on the traditional</td>
<td>Contradict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beliefs: Definitions of success</td>
<td>Definitions of success</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes: Rationale for taking positions</td>
<td>Reasons for becoming a teacher</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job satisfaction</td>
<td>The balance of frustration and reward Job satisfaction</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What challenges and rewards do urban instrumental music teachers perceive?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Perception of support</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: District testing</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Comm. social issues</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Funding</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Instruments</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Student musical prep.</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Enhance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Facilities</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Recruiting</td>
<td>Challenges</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges: Needs</td>
<td>Challenges: Scheduling</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards: Personal</td>
<td>Rewards</td>
<td>Confirm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards: Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rewards: Professional and Student</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mixed Methods Results

What Contextual Knowledge Do Urban Instrumental Music Teachers Hold About the Students They Teach and the Communities in Which They Teach?

The convergence of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrates that participants knew a great deal about their students, their schools, and their communities. Qualitative data reveal that the Phase 3 teachers were guided in large part by the knowledge of context that they gained as former students of the Chicago Public Schools themselves. For example, Mr. Moya learned how to play percussion as a high school beginner in a CPS program and said, “Overall I think it [the experience of having started playing an instrument in high school] has given me a little perspective on how hard it is for kids, as much as somebody that’s been playing since fourth grade takes this for granted, maybe” (interview, May 16, 2007). Quantitative results confirm the benefit that this personal knowledge provided for CPS graduates, as teachers who attended a rural or suburban school themselves felt that they faced a moderate level of challenge because of this difference in background ($M = 3.79$, $SD = 1.17$). Teachers who were of a different race from the majority of their students felt that this represented a lesser degree of a challenge ($M = 2.81$, $SD = 1.29$).

Quantitative data also reveal that the participants considered the skill of “showing concern and care for students’ lives outside of school” to be significantly more important for the urban than the suburban environment, with a moderate effect size of $r = .30$. The qualitative data confirm these findings, as the case study teachers discussed how important it was to understand the life that students live outside the classroom. Mr. Moya, for example, modified his teaching style according to his knowledge of the urban context:

They want to be respected and that’s a huge inner city thing. These kids don’t get respect at home—they don’t get respect in real life, so if you give them that respect, they appreciate it. Even if they don’t always show it, they do appreciate it. And so that is sort of the way that I’ve been approaching gaining the kids. (interview, May 15, 2007)

Mr. Sims similarly found his knowledge of context and knowledge of his students to be inseparable from his job as a band director. In this way, he found that his job responsibilities extended far beyond that of administering a music program:

You have to learn who you have in your group and you really have to deal with those issues…. So you have to really get to know who’s in your group and what you can do with that group. So you’re the doctor, the lawyer, the psychologist. (interview, May 16, 2007)
Quantitative data reveal that teachers believed that they knew a good deal about the history of the neighborhood in which they taught ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.12$) and felt that the racial and socioeconomic levels ($M = 3.47$, $SD = 1.39$) of their schools were similar to those of the surrounding neighborhood. Qualitative data confirm the insight that participants had into their neighborhoods and communities. Ms. Sanders, for example, described a level of understanding of the diversity of her school neighborhood and Chicago neighborhoods in general, saying,

> And I’m not from this neighborhood, but I can see the clear divisions. Things that are on the east side of Elmira West are a lot different from the west side. In Chicago, that happens a lot. There are so many communities that can change when you walk across the street. That’s a thing that happens in Chicago. (interview, May 22, 2007)

Mr. Moya similarly demonstrated an understanding of his neighborhood and how difficult it was for his students to walk home carrying their instruments:

> They’ve all come up with their own little ways of getting around this by taking back roads, or whatever they need to do to get home and stuff like that, but unless they’re driving they’re not going to take an instrument home. Probably for one, they don’t want to be seen with the instrument; but for two, they could probably have the instrument stolen from them. If someone saw that they were walking with a saxophone, probably that’s it; that saxophone is probably gone. (interview, May 16, 2007)

Instrumental music teachers in the CPS, then, knew a great deal about the context in which they taught and utilized this information to affect their teaching. Both qualitative and quantitative data converged to provide a more complete understanding of this contextual knowledge than either method of data analysis alone.

What Specialized Skills Do Instrumental Music Teachers Rely Upon To Be Successful Within the Urban Setting?

The alignment of quantitative and qualitative data demonstrated that participants believed specialized skills were required to succeed in the urban environment. Here, the broader term skills is intended to represent a set of specialized skills, understandings, and dispositions that these teachers utilized within the classroom. Results of a Wilcoxon Signed Rank test demonstrated that participants believed that certain skills were significantly more relevant to succeeding in the urban than the suburban environment. Those skills found to have a moderate effect size are “focusing on the basics” ($r = .30$), “being creative with resources” ($r = .37$), “showing concern and care for students’ lives outside of school” ($r = .30$), and “spending personal funds to help your students” ($r = .43$). Small effect sizes were found for the following: “having a strong
What Attitudes and Beliefs Do Teachers Hold Toward Teaching Instrumental Music in Urban Schools?

With regard to beliefs about themselves, participants indicated strong agreement with the belief that teachers maintain high expectations for their students ($M = 4.46, SD = 0.73$), moderate agreement that they had better disciplinary control over their classroom than did other teachers at their school ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.18$), and low agreement that they were more motivated to do their best when they started teaching than they are now ($M = 2.10, SD = 1.28$).

Qualitative data do not directly address the same topics as the quantitative data but rather enhance the understanding of how dedicated these teachers were to their students
and programs. For instance, Ms. Sanders described the importance of holding high expectations for her students, placing posters for All-State auditions around her classroom and saying, “I just keep my expectations high, and I don’t tell them they can’t do it, and they don’t know any different” (interview, May 23, 2007). Mr. Sims stayed at his school most nights until 6:00 p.m., trying to get everything done and working with after-school ensembles for which he was not paid.

This dedication to programs merged with the participants’ beliefs that they were responsible for improving their students’ lives in personal as well as musical ways. For example, Mr. Michaels frequently discussed achieving personal success with his students:

> What I try to remind the young people is that, you know, you have to play the hand you’ve been dealt. You know, there’s just no way around that. It’s not how you start, but how you finish. And you can use the skills that you’re gaining through the music and life skills, life learning lessons, to take this and turn your life and guide it in the way you primarily want it to go. (interview, May 27, 2007)

With regard to participants’ beliefs about students, quantitative data indicate moderate agreement that students in their programs were more academically successful than others in their school ($M = 3.30, SD = 0.96$) and moderate agreement that their students were better behaved than other students in the school ($M = 3.61, SD = 1.00$). Qualitative data confirm this finding, as Mr. Moya revealed,

> I have never once in 3 years ever filled out a discipline report on a kid. I’ve never had a discipline problem. Even the worst kids that come in that are like, you can tell they’re the worst gang banger asshole, probably shoot you if they saw you on the street, will not give me a problem. (interview, May 15, 2007)

Both qualitative and quantitative data indicate that these teachers believed that their programs provided a haven from the rest of the school and community. This reinforces Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz’s (2003) finding that band programs can serve as a “home away from home.” Quantitative data revealed that the teachers had moderate agreement with the statement “My program provides a haven from the problems in the rest of the school” ($M = 3.52, SD = 1.06$) and slightly stronger moderate agreement with the statement “My program provides a haven from the problems of the neighborhood” ($M = 3.71, SD = 1.04$). This is confirmed by the qualitative findings that students spent a great deal of time in participants’ band rooms and often, as Mr. Michaels said, stay until “we have to kick them out” (interview, May 30, 2007). Mr. Sims indicated that students’ desire to remain in the band room might be attributed to their desire to avoid troubled home lives, saying, “A lot of them would rather be here than at home” (interview, May 25, 2007).

Quantitative data indicate that the teachers held a moderately positive belief in incorporating culturally relevant musics such as popular music ($M = 3.53, SD = 0.76$)
and the music of their students’ culture ($M = 3.40, SD = 0.73$) within their programs. This is contradicted by the qualitative theme of “focus on the traditional,” representing the sole instance of mixed methods data contradiction in this study. The teachers participating in the qualitative portion of the study each strongly rejected the use of popular or culturally relevant musics in their classrooms, preferring instead to focus on the performance of traditional band repertoire and the acquisition of instrument performance skills. Ms. Sanders, an African American woman who attended CPS herself, focused on these more traditional band skills in order to expose her students to musical traditions that lay outside of students’ everyday experiences:

So I really want to help urban students, to make sure that they have an appreciation for things, and that they’re not ignorant of things when they set outside their community. Because, I was trying to remember my experiences, and you’re not going to always work with people from your neighborhood. When you go to corporate America, they come from various backgrounds, different cultures. You got to be able to adapt and tolerate their culture. (interview, May 23, 2007)

Similarly, Mr. Moya, a former professional rock drummer, believed that the performance of traditional band repertoire is of greater educational value than popular music:

It’s one of those icing on the top of the cake more than the cake, which needs to be playing some varied and challenging repertoire that’s good for the kids and shows them that there’s a broader universe out there, as opposed to doing something that is something that they would get anyway if they do it on their own. (interview, May 16, 2007)

Quantitative data demonstrate that participants on average held a positive self-perception of their success as an urban music teacher ($M = 4.17, SD = 0.71$). The mean perception of program success was slightly lower but still moderately positive ($M = 3.74, SD = 0.95$). Participants also were asked to indicate the extent to which certain factors indicate program success for their students. Those success indicators that garnered a mean score of at least 4 were “My students learn to work together,” “I cultivate a sense of pride within my students,” “I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students,” “My students will become productive citizens,” and “My students develop leadership skills.” It is important to note that these particular indicators of success are primarily focused on students’ extramusical development rather than personal or program success or prestige.

For Ms. Sanders, exposing students to elements of musical culture outside their own urban experiences was a higher indicator of program success than musical achievement or notoriety: “I don’t care if they ever get to Midwest or get a Grammy or something, but—if they would come back and tell me, ‘Oh, I saw the symphony,’ I’m like, ‘yes!’ That’s what I like” (interview, May 23, 2007). Mr. Michaels, director of a very successful district fine arts magnet program, serves as a negative case, as he focused...
much more on traditional indicators of program success such as getting good ratings at large group and solo and ensemble contests. Because Mr. Michaels’ emphasis on contest ratings contrasted with the other qualitative participants’ focus on student-centered measures of success, which confirms the quantitative data, the convergence of qualitative and quantitative data on indicators of success demonstrates mixed alignment.

Quantitative data reveal that participants took positions in an urban school for a broad variety of reasons, most of which can be classified primarily into the following categories: 35.29% of participants indicated that they took a job in an urban school “because I wanted to help people,” 35.29% indicated “because I attended a CPS myself and wanted to give back,” and 16.47% indicated “because I didn’t get a job in a different setting.” Qualitative data could not directly confirm or contradict this finding because all four participants were graduates of CPS and thus tended to want to give back to their district as motivation for taking an urban position. However, the qualitative data serve to enhance the understanding of why the participants felt a greater degree of comfort in the urban setting than in any other.

For Mr. Michaels, returning to become a teacher in the CPS was a way to return the mentorship that he had been provided as a student: “That desire returned, you know, to assist them as I was assisted” (interview, May 23, 2007). None of the qualitative participants indicated any desire to ever teach in another setting or any desire to leave the CPS, although several did indicate a desire to move to more “successful” programs in the city. It seems that these graduates of the CPS were much more comfortable in the urban setting than in a non-urban setting.

Quantitative data reveal a moderately positive level of participant job satisfaction (M = 3.74, SD = 0.97). Job satisfaction was found to be correlated with several other variables. A large positive correlation was found between level of satisfaction teaching music in the urban context and the teacher’s perception of program success (r = .50, n = 83, p < .0005). Medium-size positive correlations were found between level of satisfaction teaching music in the urban context and the following variables: perception of administrative support (r = .48, n = 85, p < .0005), maintaining high expectations for students (r = .32, n = 84, p = .003), and perception of teaching in a clean, orderly, and safe school (r = .38, n = 86, p < .0005). A small positive correlation was found with perception of colleague support (r = .228, n = 85, p < .0005).

Qualitative data do not directly parallel these quantitative findings but enhance the understanding of participants’ job satisfaction. The qualitative theme of “the balance between frustration and reward” augments our understanding of the complex nature of the participants’ level of job satisfaction. All participants discussed extremely high levels of frustration with the continuous challenges that they faced. However, all participants also described receiving tremendous rewards from their job. Mr. Moya summed up his confusion regarding whether the rewards were able to outweigh the frustrations:

As optimistic as I am and now in my 3rd year, if 2 more years go on and we don’t see a lot of improvement, you kind of also have to look at yourself and your own career and say, “Do I want to fight the rest of my life?” And even
though you’re making a difference in this type of kid’s life, what did you get into this for to begin with? Do you want to be the stand-by-me type of guy, or do you just—do you want to be a band director that actually has a successful band? And what ends up being with that is then you need to get to a better school if you want that. So, there’s a conflicting sort of ideal of what you should be doing. And I feel personally that I’m going to stick it out for as long as I can, but if it doesn’t improve within about 5, 6 years, I probably will end up looking for something else. (interview, May 16, 2007)

This constant struggle between frustration and reward identified in the qualitative findings demonstrates that the participants’ job satisfaction was a more complex issue than the quantitative data are able to demonstrate.

**What Challenges and Rewards Do Instrumental Music Teachers Perceive From Teaching Instrumental Music in an Urban Environment?**

Quantitative data reveal that teachers perceived a moderately positive degree of support from administration ($M = 3.69, SD = 1.05$) and colleagues ($M = 3.41, SD = 0.93$), while the perception of parental support was lower ($M = 2.94, SD = 0.99$). Qualitative data enhance the quantitative findings by providing insight into the significance of this support and the power structures that underlie it. For example, at Gerstein, administrative support was very high; the principal decided that she wanted to develop a fine band program and so provided tremendous financial support to Mr. Moya’s program. As Mr. Moya said,

> The school is just gung-ho for the band which is—I mean, that is the biggest thing. You need administration support in a school like this in an urban environment to be really successful. And until you get that support, you’re not going to be good because it starts with them. They call the shots. So for her to be on my side like this is—it doesn’t happen very often. (interview, May 15, 2007)

Because Mr. Moya’s principal valued band, he received assistance with scheduling and funding. When administrators do not value the development of instrumental music programs, they may have a similarly negative effect. For example, Mr. Sims taught at a school where the basketball teams had won numerous championships. Because the school had received positive attention for these achievements, Mr. Sims felt that the focus of administrative support was on athletics instead of the band program.

Quantitative data suggest that the teachers perceived a strong level of pressure on their schools to raise standardized test scores ($M = 4.08, SD = 1.13$). Despite this pressure, teachers felt that they were asked to discuss or teach these tested subjects within their music programs only to a small degree ($M = 1.91, SD = 1.21$). Participants indicated losing an average of 8.38 rehearsals ($SD = 5.81$) annually because of standardized testing...
conflicts. Teachers involved in the qualitative phase of the study did not discuss testing extensively, but Mr. Moya’s case provides an enhanced understanding of the way that district testing affected his program:

Well when they come in as freshmen, about 85% of the freshmen all come in so low-scoring in reading and math that they have to take a double period reading and math their 1st year, which immediately chops out any electives. Okay, so I can’t have any freshmen…. The rest are all seniors which is destroying the program because how can I start a program with seniors when they’re all going to graduate? (interview, May 15, 2007)

Quantitative participants indicated moderately positive feelings of safety in the neighborhood that surrounds their school ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.98$). They also believed that violence, drugs, and gangs in the neighborhood surrounding their school were concerns, with gangs ($M = 3.75$, $SD = 1.17$) being rated with a slightly higher mean than violence ($M = 3.53$, $SD = 1.17$) or drugs ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.13$). Qualitative data confirm that these issues were present in the communities surrounding participants’ schools. However, teachers spoke about the lack of safety primarily as a concern for their students, not for them as teachers. Ms. Sanders, for example, explained why she was very concerned about her students:

One young man, he lives on [an intersection close to the school]; he doesn’t want to walk, because he’s been jumped on so many times. Another young man, he got stuck up one night coming from a football game with the marching band; one of the boys was thrown in the trunk and these other guys were just joyriding around with this boy in the trunk and they let him out somewhere…. So there are those things around here that happen. (interview, May 23, 2007)

Mr. Moya agreed that these issues strongly affected his students, saying, “There are gangs in this area, actually quite a few gangs in this area…. I mean, you can’t even walk down those streets without coming across them or being threatened as a kid, I suppose” (interview, May 16, 2007). Both qualitative and quantitative data indicate that problems of gangs, drugs, and violence were present in the neighborhoods surrounding participants’ schools.

Quantitative data reveal a broad picture of the levels of funding that each program received. Participants indicated a mean funding level from all CPS-related sources of $4,951.88$ ($SD = 6621.59$). The very wide standard deviation indicates a variety of funding levels for programs within the district, with several participants indicating that they received no funding whatsoever from CPS sources and several indicating levels of funding more than $30,000 a year. Participants also indicated that they participated in fundraising, with a mean of $2,195.09$ ($SD = 5304.39$). The large standard deviation again reveals tremendous differences between district schools. Several participants wrote in the margins of the survey that they either were not allowed to do fundraising or had made a philosophical or practical decision not to do it. Fifty-one percent of
participants charged some sort of participation fee to students (many participants specified in the margins of the survey that this fee served as an instrument rental fee), and the average amount of the participation fee charged was $35.83 ($D = 20.64). Overall, participants indicated a moderate level of challenge presented by lack of funding for their programs ($M = 3.69, $D = 1.08$).

Qualitative data confirm the quantitative finding that the amount of program funding differed widely between programs. Because of the system of local school control in Chicago, each school principal was given a great deal of freedom to administer his or her own budget. Principals could decide how much or how little of their resources to allocate to instrumental music; there was no district-level funding for these programs. This resulted in disparate levels of funding throughout the district. For example, Ms. Sanders had to purchase her own copy paper out of personal funds, whereas Mr. Sims’ principal purchased a brand new state-of-the-art copier for him that folded and stapled large, sturdy paper so that his concert programs might be of higher quality.

Quantitative data reveal that the vast majority of students in the district required the use of a school-owned instrument ($M = 90.93\%, SD = 18.16$). Participants indicated that disrepair or lack of instruments presented them with a moderate level of challenge ($M = 3.64, SD = 1.11$). For most of the qualitative participants, there was great need for school-owned instruments in the participants’ programs, because no students owned their own instrument at Gerstein or Katz (although the new Katz school came with a full inventory of new school-owned instruments) and only 10% of students owned their own instrument at Elmira West. The story was different, however, at the arts-magnet Bellerman, where most students purchased their own instruments and did not need to worry about costly repairs, because Bellerman had its own full-time instrument repairman. Although the broad picture of the district’s lack of instrument inventory resources is indicated by the quantitative data, the convergence of the qualitative data indicates mixed alignment.

Quantitative data reveal that a mean of 88.89\% ($SD = 17.35$) of incoming high school students have had no previous experience playing an instrument. This is related to a long history in Chicago in which elementary instrumental music programs have been scarce to nonexistent (Podrovsky, 1978). Qualitative data demonstrate how difficult this makes life for the high school teachers. For example, Mr. Sims and Ms. Sanders both felt that finding quality literature for high school beginners was extremely difficult. As Ms. Sanders said,

> Especially with the brass players and because they’re high school students, I found that even though they start as beginners, they can do more, because they learn a little bit faster, their bodies are different, and they just get bored when they’re only playing five notes. (interview, May 23, 2007)

Despite participants having had few years to develop as musicians, qualitative data reveal that some impressive musical moments were being created in their rehearsals, such as when I heard the beginners play at Elmira West and wondered, “How do they
learn to play like this in 1 year?” (field notes, May 23, 2007). In this way, the quantitative data provide an understanding of the general picture of student musical preparation while the qualitative data enhance these findings by providing insight into the challenges that the lack of elementary feeder programs provided.

In the quantitative survey, participants revealed a slightly negative impression ($M = 2.92$, $SD = 0.99$) of the adequacy of their instrumental music facilities. Qualitative data reveal tremendous disparity between the facilities of participants and thus reveal mixed convergence of the data. Perhaps the most striking example of facility disparity is the Katz instrumental music facility, where Mr. Sims directed his program in a brand new state-of-the-art band room with every available technological capacity, such as the ability to record the group digitally and the availability of multiple sets of chairs and stands for the different school performance venues. As Mr. Sims said, “It’s nice to have stuff… I mean, it’s great. I’m not going to knock it. All this is great. It’s better than being in that old building” (interview, May 16, 2007). The Katz facility contrasted greatly with the Gerstein facility. Located on the fourth floor of the building, Mr. Moya’s students needed to haul their tubas and drums up and down these flights of stairs for rehearsals because there was no elevator. There also was no air-conditioning in the room despite the rising heat.

In the quantitative survey, participants indicated a belief that competition with district magnet and selective enrollment schools had the most negative effect on recruiting ($M = 2.53$, $SD = 1.07$), followed by the availability of specialized academic programs at their school ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.06$), competition with private schools ($M = 2.87$, $SD = 0.67$), parents’ perceptions of the problems in the neighborhood ($M = 2.89$, $SD = 0.92$), and the influence of school counselors ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.96$).

Qualitative data reveal sharp contrasts between the recruiting issues faced at the case study schools. For example, Gerstein had no selective enrollment or magnet status and thus was designated as a neighborhood school, meaning that it must accept every student from the neighborhood who chose to go there:

So we—obviously we get the local kid, but the school situation is such that most kids don’t want to go here…. Well, the thing is, when these kids are in grammar school they have all these high dreams that they’re going to go to these schools, and then the reality hits when they try to get into them that they don’t have the grades or such, and so they end up having to go to Gerstein. So we are their absolute last choice and so they’re miserable coming in. (interview, May 15, 2007)

The situation was completely different at the fine arts magnet school Bellerman, where more than 4,000 students a year applied for a spot in the freshman class. Bellerman needed to accept only 30% of its students from the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Michaels felt that this selective enrollment status greatly helped his program. Qualitative data thus confirm the quantitative finding that district magnet/selective enrollment status affected recruiting.
An open-ended section of the survey asked participants to list the top three things they most needed for their program to be successful. Overall, the three most commonly mentioned needs were financial support/increased funding (20% of all responses), repair and purchase of instruments (15%), and administrative support (13%).

Although qualitative data did reveal the importance of these three elements, the most prominent need that emerged in the four cases was the need for better scheduling of instrumental music courses, and thus the convergence of the data is mixed. All four teachers discussed at length the tremendous difficulties involved in scheduling students on a consistent basis for instrumental music classes. This seemed to affect both low- and high-achieving students especially. At Gerstein, for example, low-scoring students must take a double period of reading and math, which left no room for electives. The higher achieving students, such as the students involved in the International Baccalaureate program, had such a full schedule that they too had no room for electives. Mr. Moya estimated that, of his incoming freshman class, only two students would be able to schedule band for all 4 years. According to Ms. Sanders, the typical progression of an incoming freshman who took beginning band at Elmira West would be as follows:

And so, you know, so the 1st year will be their music requirement. During the 2nd year, they will just do it as an elective. And then that next year they take their art requirement, or wait until their senior year for that, and in their senior year they have more electives…. So right now, with all the students in my intermediate band, most of them now, they want to go ahead and take art so they can get that out of the way. They say, “Well I’ll be back my senior year to play.” (interview, May 23, 2007)

An open-ended survey question asked participants to list the top three rewards that they perceived from teaching instrumental music in an urban environment. Overall, the three most commonly mentioned rewards were student musical improvement (17% of all responses), student personal improvement (12%), and general student success/progress (7%). It is striking to note that these three rewards were focused solely on student, rather than personal, professional, or program, success.

These student-focused rewards are confirmed by qualitative data. Mr. Moya, for example, dealt with many challenges to the success of his developing but struggling program. However, he felt that it was the students who most motivated him to continue his work:

Well, I think that the only thing that keeps me doing it now is the students. And also this sort of hope that something can come, this optimism of well, we can maybe get something workable out of this, ultimately. (interview, May 16, 2007)

Mr. Sims also described that his greatest reward lay in seeing the long-term personal success of his students:
But when you have the rewards, when you have those kids that can leave here and come back and still come back, and still come back and say, “I remember when you showed me …,” or “If it wasn’t for you telling me this or showing me that …,” those are your rewards, that’s where your rewards are, that they actually got something out of it. (interview, May 16, 2007)

Both quantitative and qualitative data, therefore, confirm the same finding that participants received the most reward from the success of their students.

**Discussion of Results and Implications for the Profession**

Participants in both the Phase 2 survey and the Phase 3 qualitative interviews and observations demonstrated knowledge of their students and communities. This knowledge of context (Grossman, 1990) became inseparable from their general pedagogical knowledge, a type of knowledge cited by Shulman (1987) as relating to the way teachers conceptualize and enact general principles of instruction. This combination of general pedagogical knowledge and knowledge of context, or “pedagogical context knowledge” (Barnett & Hodson, 2001), merits further study within the field of urban music education.

Both quantitative and qualitative data demonstrate that participants believed that teaching in the urban environment requires the use of specialized skills, understandings, and dispositions (referred to here as skills). There are, of course, many strategies for instrumental music instruction that have been shown to be effective across rural, suburban, and urban contexts (Lindley, 2003). However, as each individual school has its own particularities of student, school, and community culture, it may be that the ability of a music teacher to adapt his or her teaching strategies to the needs of his or her particular teaching context is especially important.

The attitudes and beliefs that urban instrumental music teachers held were broad and complex. Teachers believed that their programs served as havens from some of the problems of the urban context and allowed students to relax and enjoy making music. Although this type of “haven effect” surely exists in all types of contexts, from suburban to rural (see Adderley et al., 2003), one wonders if the welcoming environment of the instrumental music classroom might be even more attractive to those students living in urban environments that experience high levels of violence, drugs, and gang activity.

The teachers believed that their success as urban instrumental music teachers was indicated primarily by the personal improvement of their students. Both quantitative and qualitative data reveal the student-focused nature of the teachers, who listed their own personal and professional success as being unimportant when compared to the development of their students’ personal potential. This focus on student success emerged as a major finding of this study.
Although the Phase 2 quantitative survey data reveal that the teachers held a moderately positive level of job satisfaction, this indicator does not capture the extremes of daily life experienced by the teachers. Qualitative data reveal that the teachers’ job satisfaction was a result of a constant attempt to balance both frustration and reward. Participants faced tremendous daily challenges and extremes of frustration because of the constant challenges that they faced. However, participants also perceived a high level of reward from working with their students. These two factors, rather than “averaging out” to produce a level of contentment with urban instrumental music teaching, were constant, daily, and polarizing presences in the lives of participants.

This study provides insight into many of the challenges and rewards that participants perceived as urban instrumental music teachers. The data suggest no quick and easy solutions to these challenges. Although quantitative participants indicated that increased funding was their top need, qualitative data demonstrate that the four teachers operated in complex environments in which funding was but one aspect of the complete picture. A more comprehensive approach to supporting urban instrumental music programs is needed. The provision of adequate resources does represent a start, however (Costa-Giomi, 2007). As for rewards gleaned from teaching in an urban setting, for these participants, professional and personal rewards were less important than the rewards gained from witnessing student success and improvement. These student-focused rewards were confirmed by the qualitative data and reinforce similar findings by Chipman (2004).

The use of mixed methods within this study provides implications for future research within the field of music education. Mixed methods research in the field of music education is still relatively new, although the number of doctoral dissertations that utilize such designs has been increasing steadily. Within this study, the depth of understanding that the convergence of methods provides suggests that mixed methods research may be especially well-suited to the multifaceted, complex, and multilayered endeavor of music teaching and learning.

The portrait of urban instrumental music teaching presented in this study is indeed complex, as it relies upon each teacher’s understanding of the urban culture, utilization of specialized skills, attitudes and beliefs, and perception of the challenges and rewards that abound in the urban context. The use of mixed methods to develop this comprehensive verbal representation adds another layer of complexity and richness to the portrait. To visualize urban instrumental music teaching as a phenomenon, one must imagine an intricate, multifaceted, and multilayered composite of the teacher’s knowledge and skill base with the similarly complex landscapes of the urban community context, the boundaries of a large and bureaucratic district, the restrictions of the school environment, and the ever-changing essence of student culture. Such a portrait is constantly evolving and changing.

Author’s Note

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Notes

1. For a full review of the literature on urban music education and other related subjects that pertain to this study, please see the literature review chapter of the dissertation upon which this article is based (Fitzpatrick, 2008, pp. 34–80).
2. All names of teachers and schools are pseudonyms.
3. The terms Black, White, and Latino are utilized as descriptors because they were found to be the preferred terms of the teachers interviewed in the focus group and interview/observation components of the study.
4. The majority of the quantitative data collected involved a participant rating of the proposed question or topic on a Likert-type scale of 1 to 5, where 5 represents the most positive or strong belief and 1 indicates the most negative or weak belief.
5. Participants were not asked whether they actually had experience teaching in a suburban school; this question rather was intended to gather information about which skills participants believed were context-specific to urban instrumental music teaching versus the suburban foil.

References


**Bio**

Kate R. Fitzpatrick is assistant professor of music at the University of Michigan. Her research interests include urban music education, music teacher education, and mixed methods research.

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The Young Musicians of Motown: A Success Story of Urban Music Education

Marie McCarthy

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What is This?
Marie McCarthy is a professor of music education at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. She can be contacted at mfmcc@umich.edu. The author wishes to thank George Shirley, the Joseph E. Maddy Distinguished University Emeritus Professor of Voice at the University of Michigan, for providing the inspiration for this article.

Motown musicians and singers honed their talents on the streets and through the institutions of an industrial city; public housing projects, public schools, local churches, jazz and blues clubs, and street corners all contributed to what became Motown’s sound.¹

Motown was a musical and cultural movement that developed in black urban neighborhoods in Detroit, Michigan, in the late 1950s. It expanded its reach beyond Detroit in the 1960s and thereafter to achieve global influence and popularity. Its founder, Berry Gordy Jr., derived the name Motown from the Motor City, a nickname used to describe Detroit because it was the center of the American auto industry. Motown had many faces: a record label, a music recording studio and commercial enterprise, a place called Hitsville, USA—Motown’s first headquarters, located at 2648 West Grand Boulevard—and a genre of music that came to be known as “The Sound of Young America.”²

Abstract: This article focuses on the music education and enculturation of Motown musicians who grew up in greater Detroit. The early musical lives of Motown musicians are described—in the home environment, in schools and in black urban neighborhoods. Schools are shown to be spaces of musical nurture, both in the context of the formal curriculum and in the school culture at large. The story provides a positive example of urban music education that can inform and inspire music education today. It helps identify factors that strengthen relationships between school and community; it highlights the ecological nature of school music located within a complex network of social and cultural institutions that contribute to music education; and it illustrates how schools and individual teachers can provide a space for students to perform music of popular idioms. It also provides evidence of the power of music in the lives of students as well as of the capacity of young people to generate and contribute to musical culture and to effect social change through their music-making.

Keywords: Detroit, history of music education, Motown, philosophy, rock, popular music, urban education

Strong public school music programs and community support of young people’s music-making in Detroit were two of the factors that helped produce the phenomenon known as Motown.
One of the unique features of the Motown company was its dependence on the artistic talents of young, local black musicians. They were key to its success, bringing to that small house on West Grand Boulevard their creativity, performing skills, enthusiasm, and ambition. Other features that influenced the development of Motown were the sociopolitical context of Detroit in the mid-twentieth century, the rich and diverse musical culture of the city, access to strong public school music programs, and the leadership of Berry Gordy—his genius for recognizing and providing training for musicians as well as nurturing the development of a new musical style that would appeal to young people.

How does a story of Motown artists intersect with the interests of school music educators? The intersections are many, but at the center is the synergy that grew between a city with a vibrant and diverse musical life, an urban public school system that developed exemplary music programs between 1920 and 1950, and an unprecedented musical phenomenon called Motown.

Education in urban schools has been the subject of much discussion in recent decades. Urban education is typically portrayed as a problem area in need of more administrative support, additional curriculum resources, and improved student motivation and teacher retention. However, this was not always the case. Urban school systems in the first half of the twentieth century had a reputation for administrative efficiency, innovative programs, and high educational standards. They provided an avenue for upward mobility for large numbers of poor and immigrant children. The tide turned as the demographics of inner cities changed midcentury and economic conditions deteriorated in a postindustrial age; this change was reflected in a January 1970 special issue of the *Music Educators Journal* edited by Charles Fowler and titled “Facing the Music in Urban Education.”

The story of Motown helps identify factors that strengthen relationships between school and community. It highlights the ecological nature of school music located within a complex network of social and cultural institutions that contribute to children’s music education. Furthermore, it illustrates how schools and individual teachers can provide a space for students to perform music of popular idioms, a curricular focus that was gaining significance in the 1960s and continues to be addressed today. Above all, in this story, the power of music in the lives of students is evident, as well as the capacity of young people to generate and contribute to musical culture and to effect social change through their music-making.

**Music, Education, and the Rise of Motown**

The overall success of Motown was influenced by a combination of factors that developed in Detroit in the first half of the twentieth century—economic, demographic, educational, and musical. The expansion of the auto industry in the early 1900s contributed to a strong industrial economy and attracted black and white migrant workers from southern states as well as immigrants from southern and eastern Europe. By 1920, Detroit was the fourth-largest city in the United States, a rank it held until 1950, when the population peaked at almost 2.2 million. It was a progressive city in many ways. The nation’s first urban freeway was built in Detroit in the early 1940s, and during World War II the city was the primary producer of war goods.

The black population in Detroit increased from 1.2 percent in 1910 to 9.1 percent in 1930 and 28.9 percent by 1960. Racism dominated social planning and dictated where blacks lived, the jobs they held, and the schools they attended. At the same time, it had the effect of creating a vibrant and distinct black culture within the city and spurring a powerful sense of racial solidarity. Migrant black families were able to create a life for themselves that was better than the life they left in the South and to develop a sense of pride and dignity in the culture and traditions that they brought with them. For example, Aretha Franklin grew up in Detroit in the late 1940s and 1950s, “surrounded by the people and the institutions that were giving African Americans a new sense of place and mission.” Conversely, the rapid integration of tens of thousands of immigrants and migrants intensified segregation and caused social and racial tensions, evident, for example, in the race riots of 1943.

**Musical Life in the City**

Detroit was a city with a rich musical and cultural life in the early and middle decades of the century, with influences from European immigrants, black and white migrants from the South, and its English and French heritage. A rising black middle-class population assumed values that included an appreciation for classical music. The city had a broad spectrum of centers used for musical entertainment: ballrooms, jazz clubs, blues clubs, Orchestra Hall, the Fox Theatre, and, later, the Ford Auditorium. Motown singer-songwriter Marvin Gaye said, “Detroit was jamming. Detroit was alive.” Music was alive also on the street corners, alleyways, parks, and neighborhood meeting places where young people socialized. Otis Williams of the Motown group the Temptations recalled that as he was growing up, “Detroit was a real music town. You heard it everywhere, from radios and record players, outside the doors of the clubs that kids like us were too young to enter legally, from guys and girls standing out on the street singing. It sounds like a scene out of a musical, but that’s truly how it was.” And it was in this musically vibrant town with a developed school music program that future Motown musicians discovered and developed their musical skills in formal and informal settings.

**Public School System**

The Detroit Public Schools system was renowned for its leadership and excellence beginning in the 1920s. The business interests of the city supported public education. When subjects associated with “the fads and frills” were eliminated from the curriculum during the Great Depression of the 1930s, Detroit fared better than other cities. Although racism was evident in the distribution of schools and
resources, a strong black community was vigilant and vocal about inequities in schools in black neighborhoods.14

As the Detroit Public Schools system grew to be exemplary in many ways, so also did its music programs. Several factors contributed to this development: the economic well-being of the city, strong music administrative leadership from the 1920s to the 1960s,15 a professional music teaching staff, and a unified music curriculum in the schools across the system.16

Musical Influences in Home and Community

Music in the Home and Family

Many children were under the musical influence of adults in their lives, from immediate family to neighbors, relatives, and friends. Berry Gordy grew up in a musically rich environment. He was particularly influenced early on by his “Uncle B.A.,” who had been a concert pianist and later a piano teacher in Detroit. He gave Gordy lessons and performed classical music for him. Although Gordy resisted learning scales and music theory, he later acknowledged the foundation that such training afforded him for compositions. He gradually moved away from formal music lessons and began to play everything by ear, especially what he heard on the radio.17

William “Smokey” Robinson, one of the great songwriters of the Motown era and lead singer of the Miracles, describes his home life as being like a musical:

I had such a great jazz influence in my life as a child growing up. I had two older sisters and my mom, and music was played in our house all day long—all kinds of music. There was gospel, there was classical, there was jazz, there was blues, there was everything.18

Steveland Morris (Stevie Wonder) showed strong musical interest and ability from a young age. Many individuals supported his musical development. His uncle bought him a harmonica, and he began playing and singing his own tunes. A neighbor who was moving out of her home gave him a piano, and the Detroit Lions Club donated a set of drums. He was often to be found playing drums and listening to rhythm and blues music (R&B) on his front porch, something that led to hours of joy for him as well as attracting the attention of the neighborhood.19 It was Ronnie White of the Miracles who heard Stevie perform and brought him to Hitsville to audition for Gordy. Impressed with his musical performance, Gordy called him “Little Stevie Wonder.” At Motown, resident musicians the Funk Brothers coached him20; and he spent hours playing with their drummer, Benny Benjamin, and pianist, Earl Van Dyke, who himself had studied at the Detroit Conservatory of Music. The kind of music education that Gordy, Robinson, and Stevie Wonder received in the home and family context combined formal training and informal induction into musical cultures. For other Motown musicians, their participation in church choirs laid the foundation for their music careers.21 These stories reflect the tight communal support and musical network that dominated black communities and the exposure that young musicians had to a wide variety of musical genres during their childhood.

Music in Urban Neighborhoods

Motown musicians often spoke of the richness of music-making in the urban neighborhoods where they grew up. Smokey Robinson described the quality of street music in his neighborhood as “extremely high.”22 Abdul “Duke” Fakir of the Four Tops wrote, “In that time in our lives in Detroit [referring to high school years], singing in groups, that was the thing to do, as well as playing sports. So everybody was singing in different groups at that particular time.”23 Some Motown musicians grew up in public housing projects built for blacks in the 1930s. According to Smith, living in these environments and participating in the institutions of an industrial city, such as public housing projects, public schools, and local churches, all contributed to what became Motown’s sound.24

The Supremes grew up in the Brewster-Douglass Housing Projects, the first federally funded black public housing project in the country. The houses were
located in the middle of a concrete landscape on the east side of the city. It was there that the members of the Supremes first met and formed the doo-wop group they named the Primettes. In a black environment like Brewster-Douglass, the rhythms of Little Richard, Chuck Berry, and the doo-wop groups “provided the soundtrack of everyday life,” and this soundtrack went “wherever the kids went, on the roofs, in the stairwells, in the gymnasium of the Brewster recreation center.” Young people transformed the “empty pockets” of city buildings—whether a stairwell or hallway—into “performance sanctuaries” and, in the process, produced “a distinctly urban culture.”

Public Schools as Spaces of Musical Nurturance

Scholars who studied the lives of Motown musicians conclude that public school music programs played a key role in educating and supporting the development of Motown musicians. Gerald Early argues that Motown could not have happened without a strong public school music education program in Detroit. Suzanne Smith notes that Motown artists received their first formal training and encouragement in the schools. It is in this context that connections are made between public school music programs and the musical development of individual Motown artists.

Formal Curriculum

Biographical (and other) writings on Motown musicians make reference to elementary as well as junior and senior high school music education. Several different high schools are highlighted, among them Cass Technical, Northern, Northeastern, Northwestern, Pershing, and Sidney Miller (the first school in the city with a predominant black student population in the 1930s). Cass Technical and Northeastern offered a performing arts curriculum, and Sidney Miller was renowned for its concert and swing bands. It is noteworthy that renowned music programs were not limited to schools with a performing arts focus, such as Cass Technical.

Motown artists participated in music programs in a number of different schools across the city. Smokey Robinson began learning both his musical and songwriting skills in public school programs. His songwriting began in elementary school, encouraged by a teacher who set up a writer’s club for students. He had opportunities to have his song lyrics featured in school plays. In fifth grade, he joined the glee club and continued singing in choirs at Hutchins Intermediate and Northern High School. “We’d be chirping everywhere,” he wrote. “Even wrote our eighth-grade graduation play, a musical, about the consequences of dropping out of school too soon.” Robinson started the Five Chimes group (later the Matadors) with Ronald White and three other classmates in 1955 at Northern High School.

Raynoma Liles, first wife of Berry Gordy and influential in the quality of early Motown recordings, was a musical child prodigy who attended Cass Technical where “she majored in harmony, theory, and composition.” It was in her intensive music classes at Cass Tech that she developed an understanding of music theory that made it possible for her “to pick up almost any instrument and play.” Mary Wilson, a founding member of the Supremes, writes that her first-grade teacher, Mrs. Shufelt, encouraged her to join the glee club, and she continued singing in school glee clubs through junior high school. She recalls one early singing experience in elementary school: “When we participated in a citywide choir competition at the Ford Auditorium,” she wrote, “I felt like the luckiest six-year-old in town.” Later on, Wilson attended Northeastern High School, where choir director Abraham Silver mentored her. Another founding member of the Supremes, Florence Ballard, also attended Northeastern High and was mentored by Silver, who, like other music teachers, felt she had “considerable technical polish for one so young.”

Martha Reeves of the Vandellas recalls that as early as third grade, she was chosen from among the thirty or thirty-five students in her class to sing solos by her...
music teacher, Mrs. Wagstaff. Reeves had considerable musical training in the public schools, including study with Abraham Silver at Northeastern High. Silver, she recounts, was “very influential in the training of my voice. He taught me how to use my God-given talents and encouraged me to join various choral groups at school.” In her senior year in 1958, she had the opportunity to perform as soprano soloist when her school choir performed Handel’s Messiah for a radio broadcast before an audience of four thousand at Detroit’s Ford Auditorium.

When young vocalists began recording at Motown, the Funk Brothers were the resident musicians who provided the instrumental backing to Motown hits. The Funk Brothers included many different members over the years. One long-standing member, James Jamerson, moved to Detroit with his mother in 1953 as part of the great black migration to the North and benefited from the kind of music education unavailable to most Southern blacks. He attended Northwestern High, where he played string bass in William Helstein’s class. The choice of instrument allowed him to function in both classical and jazz worlds. While he was still attending high school, he was playing regularly in jazz clubs. Another member of the Funk Brothers, drummer Uriel Jones, credited music with saving his life. He attended Moore School for Boys, a school that functioned for Detroit public school boys with discipline problems. Moore had a strong music program, and it was there that Jones found a positive outlet for his energy and a medium for self-expression that contributed to his developing interest in music. Many Motown musicians participated in school music programs during their childhood and youth and later recognized the positive influence of music teachers on their development as artists.

Musical Culture in Schools

In addition to providing students with a strong musical foundation in theory and developing their performance skills, music teachers encouraged them in their budding professional music careers. Furthermore, there is evidence that students found a receptive space and supportive environment in some schools to rehearse their popular music, doo-wop. Many singing groups were formed and held rehearsals in high schools, including the three major early Motown groups: the Supremes, the Temptations, and the
Talent contests held in high schools afforded young musicians an opportunity to stage their musical acts and gain recognition in musical circles outside of school, including Motown.

One striking example of the close network that existed between schools and Motown is the story of the Marvelettes. Gladys Horton and Georgia Dobbins were the lead singers, with backing vocalists Georgeanna Tilman, Juanita Cowart, and Katherine Anderson. As teenagers, they attended Inkster High School, located in a suburb west of Detroit, where they sang together in the glee club and started a doo-wop group named the Casinyets (or “Can’t Sing Yets”), later the Marvels and the Marvelettes. In 1961, the quintet entered the Inkster High School talent show. The three best groups were granted an audition at Motown. Although the Casinyets finished fourth, a school administrator felt they worked too hard to miss out on the audition and declared them also as winners. The Motown audition that followed was a success, and the group was signed up as Motown artists. In the same year, they had a number-one recording with “Please, Mr. Postman” while they were still attending high school.

Other examples of Motown artists who were recognized in talent shows, albeit in settings other than school, include Berry Gordy, who won a local talent competition with one of his songs, “Berry’s Boogie”; the Four Tops, who started out singing in talent shows as teenagers; and Mary Wilson and Florence Ballard, who first met at a junior high school talent show and later sang as the Primettes, winning first prize at the 1960 Detroit/Windsor Freedom Festival talent contest. Aware of the talent show as a place for identifying potential Motown artists, Gordy sent scouts to such shows to recruit musicians.

Music, Youth, and the Making of Culture

The story of Motown is testament to the power of music in the lives of children and young people and the role that schools can play in educating and empowering students to participate in musical cultures around them. Moreover, the rise of Motown illustrates how popular music can serve to cross racial lines in its global appeal. Smokey Robinson was aware of music as a social force when he said, “I recognized the bridges we crossed, the racial problems and the barriers we broke down with music.”

Mary Wilson of the Supremes experienced the breakthroughs when she traveled south with Motown Revue on a ten-week bus tour in 1962 during the civil rights movement: “When it came to music, segregation didn’t mean a thing in some of those towns, and if it did, black and white fans would ignore the local customs to attend the shows.”

The story of Motown, “The Sound of Young America,” then, is a story of American students and American music that needs to be told in music classes across the nation. It has enormous curricular possibilities, using the music itself as a starting point. Through critical discussion of the music and its cultural and political contexts, today’s students can develop a deeper understanding of the power of music in effecting positive change. Students can identify with the hope and idealism of young musicians...
who were “calling out around the world, are you ready for a brand new beat?” (“Dancing in the Street,” 1964), sending a message of unity and harmony in place of the hatred and racism that they likely witnessed in their lives.

### Lessons of Motown

In addition to curricular implications, what insights are revealed from this historical study from the mid-twentieth century? The story of Motown helps identify factors that strengthen relationships between school and community. A strong economy, a vibrant and diverse musical culture, and the presence of communal values that supported education and the arts contributed to the quality of school music programs. When all the instances of music education—home, neighborhood, school, and community—are considered together, it is clear that the public schools were a dominant partner in the urban network that inducted many young people into musical practices and developed their musicianship. It is important for music educators to adopt a holistic view of music education and to acknowledge that there are many ways in which students participate in musical culture and music learning contexts.

The story of Motown illustrates how schools and individual teachers can provide students the freedom to perform music of popular idioms. Although popular music was not recognized in the formal curriculum, students rehearsed their music in schools and performed doo-wop in school talent shows. As Motown was gaining power and popularity during the 1960s, the music education profession was struggling to respond to radical changes in society. Leaders met on several occasions to discuss contemporary issues and future directions—in particular, at the Yale Seminar in 1963 and the Tanglewood Symposium in 1967. Furthermore, the 1967 MENC North Central Division conference was held in Detroit, and the theme of the program was “Education in Music: A Process of Cultural Growth,” focusing on the processes by which education in music contributes to cultural growth.

At the same time that these conferences highlighted the fundamental changes taking place in music, society, and education, black young people in Detroit, many of whom participated in public school music programs, were contributing to social change through their music-making and their contributions to “The Sound of Young America.” Thus, we learn from this case that it is beneficial to look beyond the confines of the school and to listen to the pulse of popular musical cultures that form the soundscapes of school neighborhoods and their greater communities.

As music educators at all levels confront the realities of music education in urban schools today, this positive story of urban music education can serve as an inspiration for educational administrators in Detroit and elsewhere to commit resources to music in education. Motown shows how a strong school music curriculum can contribute not only to the development of school culture but also to the creation of a vibrant social and cultural life in the community and to the education of artists who contribute to musical development at large. Opera singer George Shirley grew up in Detroit in the 1940s and benefited from participation in music programs in the public schools. As a passionate advocate for music education in Detroit’s schools today, he observes that “the raw talent that produced noted personalities and performers” in Detroit in the twentieth century “still percolates through the streets of the city and its suburbs waiting to be guided, shaped, and developed in positive ways in order to achieve its limitless potential and attain the stature of its illustrious predecessors.”

The musical experiences of young Motown musicians provide testimony to the power of school music to motivate students, stimulate their musical creativity, instill respect and pride for their own and others’ artistic abilities, and above all, engender hope and lead students to effect positive social change through their music-making. Motown is a story of youth and resilience intertwined with music education and empowerment. It offers today’s students and teachers valuable lessons and reflections.

### Notes


2. Hitsville USA is now home to the Motown Historical Museum. For further information, see http://www.motownmuseum.com. Interest in the impact of Motown has increased recently after Motown celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of its founding in 2009. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and Museum mounted a fiftieth-anniversary Motown exhibit (MOTOWN: The Sound of Young America Turns 50), which opened January 1, 2009, and ran through August 6, 2010. (See http://rockhall.com/pressroom/announcements/happy-anniversary-motown-exhibit). A symposium was held at the University of Michigan to mark the fiftieth anniversary, “Growing Up Motown: Stevie Wonder, Michael Jackson and the Making of Motown,” February 18 and 19, 2010. Motown musicians were honored at the White House in March 2011 as part of the In Performance at the White House series.


8. Katharine Q. Seelye, “Detroit Census Confirms a Desertion Like No Other,”


10. Ibid., 154.


13. Mirel, The Rise and Fall. Mirel supports the claim that in the 1920s, the Detroit Public Schools system was “one of the finest school systems in the world” (p. 43).

14. Ibid.

15. The music supervisors in the Detroit Public Schools from the 1920s to the 1960s were Thomas A. Chilvers, 1921–33; Fowler Smith, 1934–56 (MENC president, 1940–42); Homer LeGassay, 1957(?)–62; and Robert Klotman, 1963–69 (MENC president, 1976–78).

16. See Jerome Stasson, “Public School Music in Detroit,” unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, 1968. Interviews were conducted with several individuals who attended or taught in the Detroit Public Schools during the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s. They spoke of the excellence of the music programs, the high quality of music repertoire, and the professionalism of the instructional environment. Robert Harris, phone interview with author, August 31, 2011; Marilyn Jones, phone interview with author, September 2, 2011; Ernest Rogers, phone interview with author, September 7, 2011; and George Shirley, interview with author, March 30, 2011.


21. Jackie Hicks, phone interview with author, September 1, 2011. Hicks was a member of the Motown backup singing group the Andantes. She recalled her early singing experience in church, which led to the formation of the Andantes and contributed to her success at Motown.


24. Smith, Dancing in the Street, 155.


27. Early, One Nation.

28. Smith, Dancing in the Street.


33. Smith, Dancing in the Street, 158.


35. Abraham Silver (1916–2000) grew up in Detroit and lived all his life in the Detroit area. He studied piano from an early age, attended Central High School, and received a bachelor of music education degree from the University of Michigan and a master’s degree in music from Wayne State University. He had a long career as a choral music teacher and Fine Arts Department head at Northeastern High School and as a music teacher at Northwestern High School. He taught several Motown musicians, including vocalists Florence Ballard, Martha Reeves, Bobby Rogers, and Mary Wilson. Lisa Silver, e-mail correspondence to author, January 12, 2012.


37. Martha Reeves, quoted in Smith, Dancing in the Street, 157.


39. Smith, Dancing in the Street, 159.


41. Several sources refer to the influence of music teachers, such as Ernest Rogers at Northwestern, Claire Weimar at Northern, Louis Cabrera at Sidney Miller, Robert Luscomb at McKenzie, Kenneth Jewell at Pershing, Glenn Klepinger at Cass Tech, and Abraham Silver at Northeastern (described earlier).

42. Marilyn Jones, phone interview with author, September 2, 2011; Ernest Rogers, phone interview with author, September 7, 2011.

43. Early, One Nation, 77.

44. Ryan, Recollections, 75–78


46. Ryan, Recollections, 25.

47. George, Where Did Our Love Go?, 81.


49. Robinson, Smokey.

50. Wilson, Dreamgirl, 125.


52. George Shirley, e-mail correspondence to author, May 12, 2009.
I was in fifth grade, and we had a choice in our music class to play a stringed instrument. I told my mother that I wanted to play the violin and asked her if I could get one. We went to the music store, and my mom rented a violin for me. I loved it and decided to continue to play during middle school. Concerts were my favorite thing about it because I got to show off how hard I had been practicing. I also enjoyed listening to all of the other stringed instruments come together and the differences in sound. I took care of my violin like it was my own. I polished it once a month and was very gentle with it. My mom told me that we had to take it back to the music store because she couldn’t afford to pay the monthly rent for it anymore. I was so upset when I handed my violin back over the counter to the store clerk.

One of the students in my music appreciation class wrote this in a paper reflecting on her musical life. It caught my attention; I could empathize from my own experiences growing up in a family with few financial resources and, later, teaching students from low-income and working-class families. At a very basic level, it really is unfair that the added costs of school music inhibit full participation. Financial inequality is only part of the problem, though. Many of these same students may find that how they speak and behave at home is not acceptable in the music classroom or that the music they identify with outside of school is absent from the music curriculum. Social class—the stratification of groups of people according to financial resources, cultural practices, and social networks—is a complex issue, to say the least. In this article, I explore social class in school music under these three headings, then make suggestions for addressing class differences and inequalities. It is my sincere hope that this discussion will both increase awareness and encourage further dialogue.

### Financial Resources

Bruce Biddle writes that “one-fifth of all children who come through the school house door in America today are likely to be experiencing poverty associated problems such as substandard housing, an inadequate diet, threadbare or hand-me-down clothes, lack of health insurance, chronic dental or health problems, deprivation and violence in their communities, little or no funds for school supplies, and whose overburdened parents subsist on welfare or work long hours.”

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Vincent C. Bates is an assistant professor of music at Northwest Missouri State University, Maryville. He can be contacted at bates@mwmmissouri.edu.

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**What is your music program doing to encourage access to a music education by all students, regardless of their family’s income level and background?**
at miserably paid jobs. At the same time, other students come to school with distinct advantages: spacious homes, healthful meals, name-brand clothes, sufficient medical and dental care, and parents with secure jobs. This disparity outside of school leads to achievement gaps within school; more affluent students, because of class-related advantages, consistently outperform students living in poverty.

School music, in particular, poses an array of added expenses that could contribute to unequal access and achievement. Families may not be able to afford musical instruments and accessories, instrument repair and maintenance, performance attire, private lessons, or transportation to and from special events. Single parents or those who work evenings will have less time to monitor and encourage music practice at home or to attend concerts. Lack of dental or medical care could affect students’ abilities or desires to play wind instruments or sing in school choirs. Plus, students from low-income homes are likely to receive lower placements and fewer opportunities to demonstrate their talents than are students from more financially privileged circumstances.

Without specific interventions, opportunities and access will remain unequal; students in poverty will not be able to participate in school music as successfully or completely as middle-class or affluent students. The markers for success in music education—participation in select ensembles, first-chair placements, high scores at festival—will be reserved for middle-class and affluent students. By perpetuating the mistaken belief that students excel primarily by virtue of talent or hard work, music educators will continue to reproduce the stratified class structure of society by socializing children for predetermined class-related adult roles and circumstances.

This, of course, is not to ignore the fact that students sometimes do excel despite their poverty. Still, these students are exceptions to the rule, overcoming significant financial obstacles in a system that favors wealth.

Cultural Practices

Social class also has a cultural dimension wherein beliefs, customs, and values shared by the low-income and working classes have less currency, power, or authority than do those of the middle and upper classes. In the words of Ellen Brantlinger, “dominant groups develop standards based on their own characteristics and customs and expect others to emulate their styles and assimilate to their customs whether it is feasible for them or productive for society.” Middle-class values especially tend to be placed at the center, marginalizing lower-class customs and beliefs in superior/inferior, normal/abnormal, success/failure polarities. A surprising example of this is Ruby Payne’s popular approach to addressing poverty in schools. She claims that students from impoverished backgrounds are disorganized, dishonest, vulgar, careless, and disrespectful. This rather negative view emphasizes characteristics that are observable among all social classes, overlooks more positive traits (hard work, humility, community) that could just as easily be associated with lower classes, and fails to recognize that some behaviors, such as not respecting authority or lack of motivation, might be reactions to oppression rather than inherent character traits.

Similar cultural biases can be found in music education. For instance, American school music has included an effort to “rehabilitate” the musical tastes of those perceived as poor—to supplant “low” culture with “high” culture. This effort is evident in American high schools when emphasis is placed on large ensembles (concert bands, orchestras, and choirs) patterned after Western art music traditions or in general music classes when priority is given to listening to and learning to appreciate orchestral “masterworks.” Of course, there is nothing inherently wrong with introducing Western art music to children unless the aim is to supplant or suppress current musical preferences and identities. There also seems to be a lingering belief that by developing preferences historically associated with upper classes, students will somehow be more apt to rise above poverty culturally and that this cultural transformation will also lead to economic benefits. However, there is no reliable, research-supported connection between appreciation for Western art music and social mobility. Plus, upper-class musical preferences are no longer centered on Western art music as they once were; they include an appreciation for a wide variety of musical styles, albeit often accompanied by an aversion to country, heavy metal, and/or rap music—styles typically preferred by people with lower incomes.

Social Networks

Social class also has a lot to do with social networks—basically, the people one knows and where they live. For those attempting to move into a higher social class, there are at least three major obstacles: first, social mobility, because it often can involve a move away from familiar people and places, can lead to feelings of disconnection and alienation. For some, this is too high a price to pay for improved financial circumstances. Second, to find a place in a new social network, people need to look and act the part, so to speak, which can easily become a no-win situation, since fitting in may require a certain appearance (specific race, fashionable clothing, straight teeth, clear skin, etc.) and specific ways of interacting, thinking, and being that are virtually impossible to acquire completely. Third, to be able to enter a higher social class, it is helpful, if not essential, for individuals living in poverty to form positive relationships with those who are more affluent. Given the trend toward class-segregated neighborhoods, this sort of integration is increasingly unlikely.

Schools, like neighborhoods, have become ever more segregated by social class, a pattern that Jonathan Kozol has spent the past four decades observing and documenting. In addition to alarming financial and material inequalities, he notes that students in schools with higher concentrations of poverty are
more likely than students in middle-class schools to be subjected to rigid classroom management, harsh enforcement of rules, austere surroundings, relatively few opportunities for creativity and real-life problem solving, and significantly reduced or eliminated arts instruction. To make matters worse, experienced teachers tend to gravitate toward jobs in more affluent schools, where students are likely to achieve at higher levels. This trend is readily apparent in music education, where professional rewards are given on the basis of the size, appearance, and skill level of large ensembles. Teachers tend to gravitate toward advanced ensembles in large, middle-class, suburban schools. These schools would also likely have higher-quality resources and more creative and diversified curricular offerings than would schools with higher percentages of students living in poverty. Adding the economic advantages discussed previously, it is not surprising that students from lower-income schools tend to be less successful in school music than are students from wealthier schools.

Toward Greater Equity in School Music

Here are three suggestions for how music teachers individually and collectively might address social class in their respective classrooms, schools, districts, and communities. First, provide a free and equal music education for all students. On an even playing field, all students would have access to high-quality musical instruments, private instruction from highly qualified teachers, no fees for assigned uniforms or other concert attire, adequate funds to participate fully in music-related trips, reliable transportation to and from lessons and before- and after-school practices or performances, and anything else that either is required or will significantly increase the likelihood of success in the music program. I realize that costs and other constraints of comprehensive equalization may be prohibitive, but we need to understand that without this level of equity, achievement will always relate to privilege at least to some degree. One intervention teachers might consider that would not cost anything is simply to downplay the types of competition that create winners and losers and serve to augment class inequalities in school music programs. For instance, students could rotate parts in large ensembles, share leadership and other class or ensemble roles, and take turns being in the spotlight. Professionally, music educators could de-emphasize and look for alternatives to large-ensemble competitions and highly selective regional ensembles that draw unfair comparisons between schools and students.

Another general possibility is to avoid the unnecessary appropriation of time, money, and other resources or, in other words, to foster sustainability. Not only can sustainable practices be more accessible to students living in poverty, but they ultimately can benefit everyone. Music education researcher Julia Koza writes,

Musicking, in or out of school, does not require consumption and many kinds of musicking are consistent with the cherished mantra of sustainability: conserve, recycle, reuse. Non-consumptive musicking is prevalent throughout the world, if not in the U.S. People do not need to buy anything to sing; they can make superb music with instruments constructed from trash; they can musick without creating anything that will go into a landfill, without polluting the air and water, and without using an ounce of gasoline. Other components may be dispensable, but school music programs can manage without a computer lab or even without a tuba.

In this light, it can seem rather wasteful to expend large amounts of time and money to own and learn to play costly instruments that students will likely not play long term. It may be more sustainable to focus on more popular and less expensive instruments, such as the ukulele, guitar, or electronic keyboards. Elementary music, in particular, can be taught effectively, joyfully, and virtually free of added costs using traditional singing games and dances, body percussion, and homemade musical instruments. Finally, technology can be inviting but
can also easily become an expensive end in itself. Teachers need to think critically about whether new technologies really will improve learning or enhance musical experiences. In many cases, older technologies will serve just as well. This is not to suggest that less expensive options are primarily for lower-income students. A less expensive approach to music education might be more relevant and sustainable for all. In the process of working toward sustainability, we might also avoid some of the expenses that can tend to exclude students living in poverty.

Second, understand and respect each student’s cultural background. This includes understanding that social class is a form of cultural diversity, and it should not necessarily be our mission to “save” students from their own cultural heritage—to replace it with something “better.” Teachers whose social class is culturally dominant should not assume that theirs is also standard for everyone or is inherently superior. Respect includes acknowledging, attempting to understand, and showing appreciation for diverse musical preferences as well as examining one’s own biases. Teachers may find that there is much to value in music that they might previously have viewed with contempt. In the interest of overcoming bias, it may also be advisable to make a more secure place in the curriculum for styles most preferred by people living in poverty—rap, country, and heavy metal.

Local cultures are appropriate starting points for exploring a variety of musical styles. However, it is preferable to view this broadening process as a nonhierarchical series of concentric circles expanding outward, not spiraling upward toward something inherently superior. At the same time, current preferences can be explored and deepened as students learn about historical and social contexts and develop performance skills in their preferred music. By broadening knowledge and experience, students gain access to diverse preferences and practices. Without the first step of acknowledging and teaching students’ original cultures, however, teachers run the risk of alienating students and will likely meet opposition and resistance.

Third, it can be especially empowering for all social classes to recognize the social forces (including those within schools) that perpetuate poverty. Classist beliefs that the poor are inherently lazy, socially deviant, or intellectually inferior need to be seriously rethought in favor of more sound understandings. On the other hand, claiming that students can achieve whatever they want if they believe or work hard enough can be equally discouraging. If students from low-income families fail to achieve at the same levels as wealthier students, they might simply assume that it is because they did not work hard enough. Conversely, middle-class and upper-class students may attribute higher achievement to greater diligence or, worse, superior intelligence or genetics. In either case, harmful hierarchies and biases are perpetuated.

Exploring the realities of social class actually fits quite naturally within the music curriculum since many songs address the struggles of low-income and working classes. For example, most American students learn about Woody Guthrie and arguably his most popular song, “This Land Is Your Land.” Teachers could also help students situate Guthrie’s music within the contexts of the Dust Bowl, the Great Depression, and homelessness and perform and discuss typically overlooked verses, such as the following:

In the squares of the city, in the shadow of a steeple;

By the relief office, I’d seen my people.

As they stood there hungry, I stood there asking.

Is this land made for you and me?

These three suggestions are by no means intended as comprehensive; teachers will likely find additional ways to address social class. The main thing is to work toward social justice by reducing the negative impacts of financial, cultural, and social hierarchies. This includes recognizing societal forces within the music education profession that maintain social stratification. It includes allowing diverse musical practices, including those specifically associated with lower-income and working classes, a place in our music classrooms. It could also mean targeting time, expertise, and resources specifically to low-income schools. There are no easy solutions, but members of the music education profession can and should take steps to alleviate the impact of social class in the music classroom and work toward fair and equal access and treatment in all aspects of the music program.

Notes
1. Music appreciation student, Northwest Missouri State University, 2008; quotation used with permission.
2. In 1985, when I graduated from high school, my family’s annual income was just over $7,000. The federal poverty threshold that year for our family of nine was $24,000.
6. A summary of research that, among other things, links relatively low socioeconomic status with lower levels of participation in instrumental music is provided by

7. As someone who grew well into adulthood with crooked teeth, I can imagine students without adequate dental care having difficulty forming some consonants and vowels or, in an effort to hide their teeth, being unwilling to open their mouths as much as may be needed to sing effectively.


9. See Gilbert, The American Class Structure. Rather than stemming from innate intelligence or hard work, poverty is directly attributable to societal and economic trends, such as job scarcity, low wages, and an increase in single-parent households.

10. Ibid., 2.


14. A Harris poll in 2008 was purported to link music education with social mobility. Catherine A. Olson, “Research: Harris Poll Makes Case for Music Education,” Teaching Music 15, no. 4 (2008): 22. However, the poll did not take into account the possibility that higher-income Americans have enhanced access to formal music instruction. According to researchers at the Brookings Institution, social mobility is influenced primarily by attaining a high school diploma, working full-time, and marrying before having children; see Isabel V. Sawhill and Ron Haskins, “Five Myths about Our Land of Opportunity,” Washington Post, November 1, 2009.


24. Ana Maria Villegas and Tamara Lucas, “Preparing Culturally Responsive Teachers: Rethinking the Curriculum,” Journal of Teacher Education 53, no. 1 (January/February 2002): 20–32. They discuss that a culturally responsive pedagogy (a) is socioculturally conscious, that is, recognizes that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality and that these ways are influenced by one’s location in the social order; (b) has affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing differences as problems to be overcome; (c) sees himself or herself as both responsible for and capable of bringing about educational change that will make schools more responsive to all students; (d) understands how learners construct knowledge and is capable of promoting learners’ knowledge construction; (e) knows about the lives of his or her students; and (f) uses his or her knowledge about students’ lives to design instruction that builds on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar.

25. Brantlinger discusses this propensity of the middle class to attribute success to inherent superiority rather than to economic, cultural, or social realities. Brantlinger, Dividing Classes.

26. This verse was accessed at http://www.woodyguthrie.org, a site that also includes curriculum materials and lesson plans.

27. In challenging economic times, such as the recent Great Recession, inevitable cutbacks in government services tend to disproportionately affect low-income children and families. See the 2010 Kids Count Data Book: State Profiles for Child Well-Being (Baltimore, MD: Annie E. Casey Foundation, 2010). A current example of this reality in the field of music education is discussed by blogger Thomas J. West, “Pennsylvania Education Cuts Already Hurting Rural and Underfunded Schools” (June 30, 2011), http://www.thomasjwestmusic.com.
Clarifying the Terms "Multicultural," "Multiethnic," and "World Music Education" through a Review of Literature
Yiannis Miralis

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What is This?
Clarifying the Terms “Multicultural,” “Multiethnic,” and “World Music Education” through a Review of Literature

Yiannis Miralis
Assistant professor of music education and saxophone at Cyprus College, Nicosia, Cyprus

In the last decade of the 20th century, multicultural education infiltrated almost every area of American educational curricula and affected many areas outside the field of education. The same is true in many European countries as well. According to Campbell (1993), “multiculturalism is the power-packed word that is currently directing the course of government policy, funding agencies, popular mass-media entertainment and curricular reform. It can no longer be dismissed as an isolated or regional phenomenon” (p. 14). Numerous scholarly articles, books, and dissertations have been written in favor of multicultural education, and multicultural centers have been created in almost every institution of higher education in the country.

This article is an attempt to provide a better understanding of the complexity of multicultural education and some of the terms used to describe the implementation of multicultural perspectives and the inclusion of world musics in music education in the United States. Information about the evolution of multiculturalism is not included since this is thoroughly discussed in numerous other sources (Chin, 1996a; Miralis, 2002; O’Kun, 1998). After an initial examination of the term culture, various existing definitions and approaches are examined and their goals and assumptions are investigated. The paper concludes with suggestions for a more careful selection of the appropriate term to properly define what is happening in music education.

Gaining an Understanding of the Situation

Although scholars and music educators talk widely about multicultural education, there is much misunderstanding and disagreement about the term’s meaning and implications (Dolce, 1973; Hidalgo, Chavez-Chavez, & Ramage, 1996; Rodriguez, 1979; Sleeter, 1995; Sleeter & Grant, 1987). Specifically, Dolce (1973) stated that “there is no widely accepted explicit definition of multiculturalism which relates the term to referents in the real world” (p. 282), whereas Sleeter and Grant (1987), based on their examination of the approaches used in various K-12 multicultural books and articles, found that “the term multicultural education means different things to different people” (p. 436).

The conditions are similar in the area of music education as well (Lundquist, 1987; Miralis, 2002; O’Kun, 1998). For example, the term multicultural is found in the titles of many music education articles, books, and research studies that refer to a “multicultural approach” (Anderson, 1991a; Kosta, 1996; Skystad, 1997); a “multicultural concept” (Elliott, 1990); “multicultural curriculum” (Gamble, 1983); “a multicultural future” (Anderson, 1991b); a “multicultural impera-
tive” (Anderson, 1992); “multicultural issues” (Gonzo, 1993); “multicultural music” (Anderson & Moore, 1998; Chin, 1996a; Chin, 1996b; Goodkin, 1994; Klocko, 1989); “multicultural music education” (Elliott, 1989; Heller, 1983; Jordan, 1992; Legette, 2003; Mark, 1998; Montague, 1988; Morton, 2000; Norman, 1994; Westerlund, 1999); “multicultural music education” (Anderson & Campbell, 1989; Moore, 1993; Okun, 1998); “multicultural music resources” (Tucker, 1992); “multicultural training” (Cox, 1980); “multicultural-world music education” (Miralis, 2002); “multiculturalism” (Campbell, 1993; Campbell, 1994; Griswold, 1994; Schmidt, 1999; Volk, 1998a; Walker, 1990; Yarbrough, 1993); and “music as a multicultural education” (D’Oods, 1983).

Nevertheless, the term multicultural is used interchangeably and lacking clarification of its differences with such terms as “cross-cultural” (Campbell, 1990; Campbell, 1991; Palmer, 1994); “culturally responsive” (Hookey, 1994); “inter-cultural” (Schippers, 2000; Swanwick, 1988); and “multiethnic-multicultural” (Lundquist, 1991). Similarly, the term multicultural music is used interchangeably with terms such as “diverse cultural music” (Goeze, 2000); “ethnic music” (Meyer, 1960); “indigenous music” (Rose, 1996); “musics of the world” (Anderson, 1980); “world music” (Bieber, 1999; Nettl, 1992; O’Brien, 1980; Schippers, 1996; Schmid, 1992; Stock, 1994; Trimallos, 1983); and “world musics” (Fung, 1995; Palmer, 1992; Reimer, 2002; Seeger, 1972; Shehan, 1988; Volk, 1998b).

The use of the various definitions might signify a variety of beliefs about and approaches to the implementation of multicultural perspectives in music education. First, music educators and scholars might be using the above terms interchangeably because they believe that they bear exactly the same meaning. Second, music educators and scholars might not be aware of the minute or distinctly different approaches, philosophies, and practices associated with each of these terms, and might therefore be using a term without paying adequate attention to its specific meaning. Third, music educators and scholars might be aware of the distinctly different approaches, philosophies, and practices associated with each of these terms and might be carefully choosing their preferred term to signify different types of educational experiences in music. Whatever the real reason, it is important to examine the existing literature to gain a better understanding of the terminology in question.

**Culture**

Williams (1985) examined the historical evolution of the term culture and pointed out that

Culture is one of the two or three most complicated words in the English language. This is so partly because of its intricate historical development, in several European languages, but mainly because it has now come to be used for important concepts in several distinct intellectual disciplines and in several distinct and incompatible systems of thought. (p. 87)

Williams identified three distinct definitions of the term. In the 18th century, culture referred to “a general process of intellectual, spiritual and aesthetic development” (p. 90). Second, for some scholars from the late 18th and mid-19th centuries, it meant “a particular way of life, whether of a people, a period, a group, or humanity in general” (p. 90). Third, Williams stated that the current
most widespread use of the term was developed in the late 19th century and "describes the works and practices of intellectual and especially artistic activity . . . [such as] music, literature, painting and sculpture, theatre and film . . . sometimes with the addition of philosophy, scholarship, history" (p. 90).

In the discipline of education, the use of the term often corresponds closely to Williams' second definition. For example, Cordeiro, Reagan, and Martinez (1994) identified the following elements of culture: language, behaviors and behavioral norms, teaching and learning styles, family and kinship patterns, gender roles, views of individualism, historical awareness of cultural community, and religious beliefs and practices. These eight cultural elements were further grouped under four general components of cultural identification: gender, ability/disability, ethnicity, and religion. With the exception of gender, the components might be changed purposefully or unwillingly, thereby changing the person's cultural identification. According to the authors, "one way to think about cultural diversity is that each of us is already culturally diverse, functioning in a variety of distinctive cultural spheres" (pp. 6–7).

Based on the analysis of culture by Cordeiro et al. (1994), it is inevitable that each one of us is equally multicultural with anyone and everyone else. For example, an Asian Muslim disabled man from Indonesia is as multicultural as a Caucasian Catholic woman without disabilities from the United States. Therefore, the implied belief in the literature that Caucasian Americans or Western Europeans are not "as multicultural" or "culturally diverse" as individuals from Africa, Asia, or Latin America, is misleading.

Last, a similar but more encompassing definition of the term culture was provided by Tiedt & Tiedt (1995), who stated that it "connotes a complex integrated system of beliefs and behaviors that may be both rational and nonrational. Culture is a totality of values, beliefs, and behaviors common to a large group of people" (p. 10). Based on this definition, we might suggest that age, socioeconomic background, sexual orientation, and political affiliation, among others, are additional fundamental components of cultural identification. For example, the culture of middle school students is characteristically different from the culture of their teachers, their administrators, and even their parents. Age and socioeconomic background have received ample treatment in educational and psychological literature, whereas sexual orientation and political affiliation have only recently begun to be addressed (Leistyna, 2001; Ziegahn, 2001).

### Multicultural Education

Several scholars from the field of education provided various descriptions and definitions of multicultural education (Attinasi, 1994; Banks, 1993; Boschee, Beyer, Engelking, & Boschee, 1997; Gollnick & Chinn, 1990; Sleeter, 1995; Sleeter & Grant, 1987). Despite differences in their individual understanding of the breadth and scope of multiculturalism, all the authors in this paragraph agreed that one of the primary goals of multicultural education is to change the current structure of the educational system. Specifically, as Boschee et al. (1997) indicated, "multicultural education can be portrayed as a multifaceted, change-oriented approach that emphasizes equity and intergroup harmony. It is a belief and a process whose major goal is to transform the educational structure in our schools" (p. 217).

Moreover, most of the scholars from the field of education mentioned above further supported the idea that multicultural education is concerned with the inequalities occurring inside and outside the school envi-
According to Sleeter (1995), multicultural education is “rooted in a concern about inequality among groups” (p. 18), and educators interested in it should devote significant time addressing the historical roots of racist opportunity structures, the nature and impact of discrimination, the significance of group membership, and the nature of culture.

Banks (1993) stated that multicultural education is “an idea stating that all students, regardless of the groups to which they belong, such as those related to gender, ethnicity, race, culture, social class, religion, or exceptionality, should experience educational equality in the schools” (p. 25). He added that it is also an educational reform movement and a never-ending process aimed at the elimination of educational and social discrimination. For Banks, multicultural education is an idealistic movement whose unattainable goal is not only to reduce but also to abolish any sort of bias and inequity in schools as well as in society at large.

The social impact of multiculturalism was identified in a research study by Sleeter and Grant (1987). In an effort to clarify the meaning of multicultural education, the researchers examined a total of 89 related articles and 38 books and found that there were five ranked approaches to multicultural education, with the last two being “multicultural education” and “education that is multicultural and social reconstructionist.” They suggested that “the ‘Multicultural Education’ approach promotes cultural pluralism and social equality by reforming the school program for all students to make it reflect diversity,” whereas “‘Education That Is Multicultural and Social Reconstructionist’ prepares students to challenge social structural inequality and to promote cultural diversity” (p. 422).

Similar views were expressed by Attinasi (1994), who stated that “among the scholars in the field, the goals behind education that is multicultural and socially reconstructionist are to improve academic outcomes; promote equity among gender, ethnicity, and exceptionality; and effect change in the society beyond the school” (p. 7). According to Attinasi, “multiculturalism requires not only a change in curriculum, but a change in school climate and pedagogy” (p. 8).

Finally, Gollnick and Chinn (1990) were more specific about how to challenge and combat social inequalities. They stated that a multicultural curriculum should promote strengthening and valuing cultural diversity, human rights and respect for differences, alternative lifestyle choices, social justice and equality, and a just distribution of power and income.

**Multietnic Education**

Another term often used in educational settings is multietnic education. According to Gollnick and Chinn (1990), multietnic education is education that incorporates ethnic content in the total curriculum of the school, from preschool through adult education. Through the inclusion of the study of ethnic groups as an integral part of the entire school curriculum, ethnic groups will no longer be viewed as separate, distinct, and inferior to the dominant group. A multietnic curriculum prevents the distortion of history and contemporary conditions. Without it, the perspective of the dominant group becomes the only valid and correct curriculum to which students continually are exposed. (p. 101)

Banks (1994) further explained that multietnic education is a specific form of multicultural education. [It] is concerned with modifying the total
According to these scholars, it seems that multiethnic education is a branch of multicultural education that deals specifically with ethnicity as the prime component of cultural identification.

**Multicultural and Multiethnic Music Education**

In the area of music education, the discussion and debate over the best terminology has been limited. Even though music educators and scholars in books and articles supported the inclusion of world music in schools, debated various teaching methodologies and materials, and suggested new diverse music curricula for all levels, there have been only sporadic discussions and references related to the issue of the appropriate terminology (Campbell, 1993; Lundquist, 1991) and the nature and goals of multicultural music education (Blacking, 1985; Blacking, 1987; Cobb, 1995; Elliott, 1989, 1995; Schippers, 1996; Small, 2001; Walker, 1990).

Lundquist (1991) was the only scholar found choosing to use the composite term multiethnic-multicultural music education. Despite the fact that she did not specifically explain what this term meant, she was very clear in identifying and clarifying the differences between the terms multiethnic and multicultural. Specifically, she indicated that the term multicultural “describes a perspective that acknowledges and respects a range of cultural expression from groups distinguished by race, or ethnic origin, age, class, gender, lifestyle and exceptionality,” whereas “multiethnic refers to an environment that reflects the ethnic diversity of the society” (pp. 21–22). From the article, it is assumed that the term multiethnic-multicultural music education is used to describe music education that is both multiethnic and multicultural.

In an attempt to be more specific about what is happening in music education, Campbell (1993) stated that “multicultural music education” is the study of music from groups distinguished by race or ethnic origin, age, class, gender, religion, lifestyle and exceptionally” while “a music program that focuses in greater depth on a representative and prominent musical style of a group of people united by national or ethnic origin is a model of “multiethnic music education” (p. 15).

Walker (1990) suggested that the main focus of multicultural music education should be “the culture-specific qualities of any musical practice” (p. 81). Even though he did not directly define what he meant by the term culture, it was nevertheless apparent from his choice of musical examples that he referred to groups of people identified primarily in terms of their ethnic background. Walker’s understanding of multicultural music education was similar to that of Blacking (1985), who, even though he was critical of multiculturalism because he believed that it promoted discrimination and segregation, identified culture as referring mainly to various ethnic groups, such as those of Pakistani, Indian, or Caribbean origin.

Elliott (1989, 1995) incorporated Pratte’s (1979) definition of the term multicultural, which refers to coexistence of different groups within a society. He expanded this definition by stating that the term also “con-
notes a social ideal: a policy of support for exchange among different groups of people to enrich all while respecting and preserving the integrity of each” (p. 14). Elliott continued by clarifying that “a country can be culturally diverse, but it may not uphold the ideals of multiculturalism or pluralism” (p. 14).

Similarly, Schippers (1996) debated the nature of a multicultural society and stated that “maybe the only feasible concept of a multicultural society is one in which many cultures exist more or less independently, but interact with each other constantly” (p. 20). Cobb (1995) provided a parallel approach by indicating that “the ultimate goal of multicultural education is, not only to have students simply tolerate or understand the extreme degrees of diversity among people and their music, but to appreciate them as well” (p. 221).

Some music authors and scholars expressed their dissatisfaction with and opposition to use of the term multicultural (Blacking, 1987). Specifically, apart from the opposing opinions expressed by the majority of music education and ethnomusicology professors who were interviewed in several recent music education research studies (Miralis, 2002; Okun, 1998), Blacking indicated that music educators should avoid using the term in a tokenistic manner, and he cautioned against focusing on culture instead of the music itself. For him, “music education should not be used to emphasize culture, because as soon as that happens there arise arguments about cultural hegemony, as well as false notions of what culture is: it should emphasize human variety and ingenuity” (p. 147). Blacking further emphasized the intrinsic power of music and suggested that world music education “will never succeed if it is multicultural; it must be multimusical. It can only be successful when people are touched by the aesthetic force of music and can transcend its social and cultural analogues” (p. 149).

Additionally, Blacking (1987) questioned the goals of incorporating world musics in music education. He pointed out that, even though music education should be a reflection of our diverse societies, this should not be done in a superficial manner similar to a mere collection and presentation of folk songs from around the world. According to him, it is not just a question of What can we bring in from India or the Caribbean? but How can we combat narrow-mindedness, racism, prejudice, in school books and ethnocentrism in education? How can we teach people through music-making that there is a larger social world outside and a richer world of experience inside each individual? If British music education is to reflect a multicultural society, its task is not so much to make blacks feel at home in school, as to make sure that white children are really aware of the historical and cultural traditions of their black neighbours. (pp. 146–147)

Blacking’s (1987) criticism reveals the problematic nature of multicultural education as it is practiced in schools. Research has illustrated that there is lack of shared understanding of the term (Miralis, 2002; Okun, 1998) and that there are hardly any preparatory courses on multicultural education and world music pedagogy (Chin, 1996a; Koster & Gratto, 2001; Moore, 1993; Stellacio, 1995). Therefore, one frequently observes an absence of a solid philosophical basis for multicultural education and world music pedagogy by practitioners, which in turn leads to superficial experiences that focus more on knowledge about cultural arti-
facts and melodies rather than on the development of appropriate attitudes toward people from various cultures.

World Music Education

In addition to the two most prevalent terms discussed above—multicultural and multiethnic music—the terms world music and world music education are also used (Bieber 1999; Campbell, 1993; O’Brien, 1980; Schippers, 1996; Wade, 2004). Some authors did not provide any explicit explanation of what they meant by world music, but it was implied that they referred to non-Western art music (Bieber, 1999; O’Brien, 1980). Nevertheless, others provided a clear definition of what the term meant for them. For example, Schippers (1996) defined world music “not as a form of music, or even a wide variety of different musics, but as ‘the phenomenon of music instruments, genres, and styles establishing themselves outside their cultures of origin’” (p. 17), whereas Campbell (1993) suggested that world music education “features the study of musical components as they are treated in various musical styles across the world” (p. 16). Finally, in the recent Global Music Series, Wade (2004) explained that “the rubric ‘world music’ was first coined . . . by ethnomusicologists in the early 1960s to categorize instruction in traditions other than those of European classical music” (p. 129). Wade further suggested that, even though the term initially became a convenient term used by the music industry to label traditional musics from around the world, “in time, ‘world music’ came to include popular music produced around the world” (p. 129). Therefore, she suggested that it is now more appropriate for the profession to use the term global music rather than world music, thus illustrating, one can infer, the inclusion of various types and genres of music from around the globe.

Discussion

Based on the above review of literature, the term multicultural music education is often unsuitable and misleading, since it does not include an examination of such complex issues as culture, diversity, racism, equal distribution of income and power, or equality and equity both within the context of schooling and in society at large. The aforementioned definitions and explanations by leading scholars in the field illustrate that when music educators refer to multicultural music education, the majority of them are actually referring to some sort of multiethnic music education. This view was also supported by Campbell (1993), who stated that “the multi-ethnic task thus becomes far more reasonable and realistic than that prescribed by multicultural education” (p. 16). She further commented that “multicultural music education has certain explosive properties and images that take off on a socio-political tangent in ways that we might not really intend” (as cited in Okun, 1998, p. 87).

Research related to the focus of multicultural education in the United States illustrated that such an approach is occurring in many fields outside music education. Sleeter and Grant (1987) found that most studies in predominantly white, middle-class, and affluent districts focused primarily on diversity in terms of ethnicity and race, and ignored differences in terms of social class, gender, and disability (p. 433). Similarly, Norman (1994) found that the majority of the participants defined multicultural music education by focusing primarily on the content of instruction rather than on the process or the recipients. According to Norman, there is a “critical lack of a philosophy to support multicultural music education, and especially a philosophy that emphasizes equal opportunity in the classroom, school, community, and society at large” (p. 434). Norman’s findings were
additionally supported by Koza (1996), who suggested that “the term [multiculturalism] has a more circumscribed meaning to most music educators. It refers to the teaching of ethnic music; the multicultural movement within music education traditionally has been concerned primarily with curricular content” (p. 264).

This review of literature was conducted in the hope that it will shed some light on the complexity of describing and defining the multiple approaches, belief systems, and philosophies concerning the implementation of multicultural perspectives and inclusion of world musics in music education. Even though myriad philosophies and approaches in music education are not only expected but welcomed, it nevertheless becomes problematic when multiple terms create confusion, bewilderment, and, one might say, superficiality.

Selecting the appropriate term to define and describe what we do as music educators is crucial. The terminology we use should provide a clear understanding of our underlying philosophy and goals. One can argue that the mere collection and presentation of instruments, songs, and dances from various cultural groups can not be defined as multicultural music education. The music education profession needs to be cautious about uncritical use of terminology and should instead develop the necessary philosophical and linguistic foundation to clearly describe and define why and how to incorporate the rich diversity of world musics in the music curriculum.

To meet such a challenge, we as music educators need to re-examine the overall role and function of music and music education in our diverse communities and society in general. We need to find ways to serve a bigger pool of students, not just the ones who already participate in our bands, choirs, and orchestras. We therefore need to bridge the gap between what is happening inside the music classroom and the reality of the world outside it. As a number of music education scholars have stated (Bresler, 2002; Campbell, 2002, 2003), the time is ripe for the profession to look outside the confines of the music classroom, the school, and the academic community of music education researchers and scholars.

I believe that there needs to be more interaction, communication, and collaboration, not only between researchers and practitioners within the field of music education, but also with musicians with diverse backgrounds and researchers from such areas as sociology, social anthropology, ethnomusicology, psychology, and others. Such interactions and collaborations are necessary because they lead to a greater understanding of the universal and complex phenomenon that Small (1998) described as musicking. Maybe then it will be easier to eliminate the confusion that surrounds the terminology used to describe the inclusion of world musics in music education.

References


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