A COMPARISON OF A SCHOOL DISTRICT'S MUSIC CURRICULUM AND

ENSEMBLE DIRECTORS' EXPECTATIONS OF PREPAREDNESS

WITHIN A FEEDER PATTERN

A THESIS

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BY

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DEDICATION

To the glory of God and for my loving and supportive family, friends, colleagues, and students.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this study was to compare the level of ensemble directors' expectations of musical knowledge and skills of their students entering 5th, 7th, and 9th grade in schools within a district feeder pattern. The researcher-designed survey was based on the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills for the grade level students had completed the previous year. Participants ($N = 51$) included elementary music specialists and intermediate, middle, and high school band and choir directors employed by a large suburban school district. Band and choir directors and elementary specialists had similar expectations for 3 out of 15 (20%) musical concepts for incoming 5th graders. Band and choir directors had similar expectations for 6 out of 17 (35%) musical concepts for incoming 7th graders and 4 out of 11 (36%) musical concepts for incoming 9th graders. These results suggest that the district could benefit from greater vertical collaboration.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The elementary music classroom is where the foundation of musical knowledge is laid. As students leave elementary school for intermediate school or middle school, they ideally possess a broad range of musical skills and understanding. This disparate training is also evident as students move from middle school to high school. An integral part of the educational process is preparing students to make a smooth transition from one grade level to another. Some of the larger school districts arrange their campuses into a feeder pattern to provide greater consistency as students progress through the various grade levels. However, in spite of vertical alignment of campuses, some students have gaps in their musical knowledge, while others excel. The unequal musical training is partially attributed to variability of curriculum and instructional techniques among music teachers. While it is virtually impossible to provide equal training for all students moving to the next educational level, providing music teachers with standardized benchmarks and having mandatory pre- and post testing on each grade level could contribute greater consistency in musical comprehension and skill.

Definition of Terms

Several terms are used in association with vertical alignment. *Curriculum alignment* refers to the "conscious congruence of the three education elements of curriculum, instruction, and assessment" (Bergman, Calzada, LaPointe, Lee, & Sullivan, 1998, p. 19). This is an overarching term that addresses course content, instructional

strategies, and measurement of student mastery. *Aligned curriculum* is a closely-related term that makes reference to "an academic program that is (1) well organized and purposefully designed to facilitate learning, (2) free of academic gaps and needless repetitions, and (3) aligned across lessons, courses, subject areas, and grade levels" (Glossary of Education Reform, 2014, p. 1).

   Vertical alignment is defined as "the practice of purposely designing the curriculum for a particular academic area so objectives and learning activities are coordinated and lead to the accomplishment of a set of mutual goals" (Chandler & Mizener, 2011, p. 3)**.** *Vertical collaboration* involves "planning and implementing the curriculum sequence from one grade level to the next in grades Pre-Kindergarten to grade twelve" (p. 20). This integral part of the educational process points to the use of a collaborative approach of sequential instruction to enable students to make a smooth transition from one grade level to the next.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The underlying principle of vertical alignment is to organize "the curriculum sequentially into focused and manageable content that can be mastered within the time provided" (Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2009, p. 2). Logically and purposefully structured teaching allows for more coherent sequencing, thus enabling students to learn the knowledge and skills needed to "progressively prepare them for more challenging, higher-level work" (Glossary of Education Reform, 2014, para. 5). Vertical coherence or vertical alignment was developed in reaction to the misalignment of curriculum in schools, and, in extreme circumstances, curricular offerings that were "random, disordered, and potentially detrimental to students" (Glossary of Education Reform, 2014, para. 5). The design and practice of vertical alignment is due, in part, to the decades of governmental policy reforms that have encouraged or required more standardization in student education among districts.

Vertical alignment has two components—alignment across grades within a single school and alignment across schools that serve successive grades (Huie, Buttram, Deviney, Murphy, & Ramos, 2004). According to the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009), vertical alignment mandates that the "content of curriculum is articulated at each grade or course level, which allows teachers to focus on building skills and knowledge while reducing the need for excess review and repetition" (p. 2). Despite the push towards standardization, there remains an inconsistency of

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training among students in various grade levels, which has been a source of concern for many generations of educators. This irregularity exists not only in the general education classroom, but also in the fine arts classrooms and ensembles.

One of the problems associated with the vertical curriculum construct is that not all educators understand the principle of alignment. A survey of 863 educators in 30 low-performing schools in a five-state area revealed that only 36.9% of participants understood that vertical alignment referred to curriculum coordination across campuses (Huie et al., 2004). The faculty of one of the schools included in the study described their position on vertical alignment as follows:

> This is very important in transitional years. Students need to be prepared with a base of knowledge so that the teachers do not have to re-teach things that have already been taught. The schools need to meet together by subject area and review the content standards for each grade, so they know what is being taught in each grade and so that the progression is smooth. There needs to be meetings at the beginning of the year when the teachers plan so they know where to start in terms of content and what they need to do to prepare the students for the next grade.
>
> (Huie et al., 2004, p. 36)

The survey also included the administrators in the 30 school districts. When asked about their stance on vertical alignment, one administrator responded:

> Alignment among the schools is a non-negotiable mandatory objective in our schools. Hopefully everyone leaving sixth grade going to the junior high schools will have been exposed to the same material no matter what school they are

coming from. There is vertical teaming in staff development where, for example,

the fifth and sixth grade teachers meet with the junior high school teachers, so that

all of the teachers will understand the requirements. Everyone should be on the

same page no matter what grade you are in and that is national trend. It has to be

to meet the standards. Every teacher needs to be meeting the scope and sequence

within the recommended time line no matter what school or grade the teachers are

teaching. This helps as students move from one school to the other. (Huie et al.,

2004, p. 37)

In the state of Texas, specific areas of knowledge and skills are outlined for

districts and fine arts educators to implement in their curricula. According to the Center

for Educator Development in Fine Arts (CEDFA) (2013), the Texas Essential Knowledge

and Skills (TEKS) for Fine Arts were established to include a "broad range of expertise

in arts education," to aid in establishing curricula according to each district's needs (p.

11). The Fine Arts TEKS are organized into four strands: "Perception, Creative

expression/performance, Historical and cultural heritage, and Response/evaluation." The

Music Curriculum Framework states:

The design of the Music TEKS scaffolds learning, creating both horizontal and

vertical alignment of knowledge and skills. With each advancement in grade or

course level, student achievement increases and is demonstrated by the: degree of

sophistication of knowledge and skills, scope of skills and knowledge to be

taught, and depth of understanding required in students' evaluation and response.

(CEDFA, 2013, p. 12)

Each grade level has Fine Arts TEKS specifically tailored to the needs of the typical stages of child and adolescent growth, thus encouraging expectations of learning to be developmentally appropriate.

History

The roots of our current curriculum date back to educational reforms launched by Plato in Greece in the 5th century B.C. Plato disapproved of the Greek methods of learning and teaching that included apprenticeship and rote memorization, and thus led a movement to reform the educational systems of European schools. Eventually, leadership of educational reform fell until the authority of Christian churches (Bergman et al., 1998).

In the 18th century, Pestalozzi championed a broad field of reform efforts as the idea of his "educationalisation" became popular. Pestalozzi implemented two philosophies in his teaching: (1) to tailor teaching towards "the nature of the child's mind," meaning the students' cognitive development and (2) adjusting the setting of teaching into the circumstances and situation of the "future adult's situation" (Horlacher, 2011, p. 68). Pestalozzi believed that the children from poor families constituted the majority of students and they needed more educational resources than children from rich families. This was the beginning of popular education, whereby the responsibility of education became "one of the state's great tasks" (Horlacher, 2011, p. 69). In the years subsequent to Pestalozzi's educationalisation, what subjects should be taught and what teaching methodology is most effective continues to be a matter of debate (Bergman et al., 1998).

The TEKS standards were implemented in 1998, after being adopted by the Texas State Board of Education. The Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS) was used in conjunction with the TEKS to provide a framework for instruction. Bergman et al. (1998) pointed out that if the organization of the Texas curriculum was sufficient, then all schools under the same program would, logically, be performing at a similar level. Bergman et al. (1998) went on to explain that a successful curriculum is dependent on two key components–relevance and collaboration and that the first step towards effective vertical alignment is agreeing upon what information is relevant. According to the Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2009), "Vertical alignment is conducted as a multistep process that requires substantial time and input from district staff" (p. 2).

No Child Left Behind

In 2001, US federal legislators felt that an act should be passed emphasizing literacy, improving teacher qualifications, and encouraging the learning of English for every child that attends school within the United States, resulting in the passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. The goals of the NCLB Act were to effect:

> (1) greater accountability for results; (2) more flexibility for schools, school
> districts, and   states in how they use federal funds; (3) a wider range of education
> choices for families from disadvantaged backgrounds; and (4) an emphasis on
> research-based teaching methods. (Aldridge, 2003, p. 46)

Linn, Baker, and Betebenner (2002) explained that NCLB led to a substantial increase in state testing requirements, as well as "demanding accountability standards for schools,

districts, and states with measurable adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives for all students" (p. 3). They went on to explain that "states' content standards, the rigor of their tests, and the stringency of their performance standard" were inconsistent, resulting in a wide-ranging percentage of students who acquired a proficient level score or higher on the state assessments (Linn, Baker, & Betebenner, 2002, p. 3).

As a reaction to NCLB, state policymakers have sought to align state standards with state assessments as a means to clarify academic expectations. Case and Zucker (2005) argued that "alignment to the standards also ensures that the assessment is a trustworthy source of data" (p. 4). The use of vertical alignment in curricular design encourages common goals with corresponding objectives and learning activities (Chandler & Mizener, 2011). However, Wise and Alt (2005) pointed out that in school districts where the curriculum for a variety of subjects is aligned vertically from elementary level to secondary level, there is often a gap that exists between the grade levels. The inconsistency in students' levels of knowledge and skills when they arrive at the next academic grade level can be partially attributed to teaching styles and curricular preferences.

Teacher resistance to the implementation of vertical alignment can be ascribed to frustration from lack of teacher capacity and resources, as well as philosophical differences (Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2009; Marshall & Hargreaves, 2007). A lack of congruence between a district's curriculum and standards can cause discord, especially if programs deemed no longer essential are in conflict with teachers' ideologies. Case and Zucker (2005)

cautioned that "standards and assessments represent only one part of an education system" (p. 4).

The attention to vertical alignment and "the degree to which state standards and assessments are aligned across grades" is credited to the No Child Left Behind Act (Wise & Alt, 2005, p. 61). However, Roach, Niebling, and Kurz (2008) pointed out that although "the discussions of NCLB…do not typically focus on issues around alignment...it is nevertheless a critical feature underlying these policies" (p. 3). Wise and Alt (2005) added that a coherent measurement of student progress across grade levels is essential, along with developing scales to see if the student achievement levels are in alignment with state standards.

According to Bergman et al. (1998), among the multitude of aspects that are a part of the development of vertical (curriculum) alignment, relevance is to be considered first and foremost. Bergman et al. (1998) posited that without first identifying what is worth knowing, there cannot be fluid and effective direction. Wise, Zhang, Winter, Taylor, and Becker (2005) pointed out that the difficulties of explicit alignment are established as student standards are reviewed and assessed according to state performance standards. Wise et al.'s (2005) study revealed that educators feel confident in their ability to match expectations and standards across grade levels. On the other hand, Carter (2007) argued that teachers often feel they receive little guidance from school districts and the state on what to teach from state standards, leaving them with lower student expectations.

Collaboration

Collaboration can take a variety of forms. Bergman et al. (1998) explained that horizontal collaboration has been shown to be effective, considering teachers of the same grade level have utilized their time in professional learning communities (PLC) and cross-curricular teaching methods for years. Battersby and Verdi (2015) explained that PLCs play an important role in encouraging collaboration among teachers that are working towards a common goal. Battersby and Verdi (2015) added that art specialists, including music teachers, often find themselves isolated from fellow faculty members due to their class schedules and differing planning periods, thus making it difficult to participate in collaboration.

Bergman et al. (1998) went on to explain that vertical collaboration is essential to effective transitions and scaffolding within a "vertically-aligned sequence of instruction" (p. 14). They went on to state that mathematics is one of the most "well-collaborated" subjects, due to the reforms in the early 1980s, as well as standardized testing. Zalman Usiskin, the project director of the 1983 University of Chicago School Mathematics Project, explained the importance of vertical collaboration as follows:

> A teacher…can change a single year's experience, but for multi-year change, administrators, guidance counselors, parents, and school boards need to be involved…change cannot occur solely top-down or bottom-up. It must occur both ways at once (Usiskin, 1993, p.18).

Vertical curriculum alignment is more effectual when paired with positive teacher collaboration, thus encouraging some districts to assign special teams to ensure

successful implementation and integration of common frameworks (Center for

Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement, 2009; Marshall & Hargreaves, 2008).

In his study of the discourse between elementary and middle school programs, Martinez

(Smartmusic, 2017) found that the teachers and directors of outgoing fifth-grade students

deemed them to be better prepared than the sixth-grade directors, post-skills assessment.

Martinez (2017) went on to explain that the lack of communication and collaboration

between educators in elementary and middle school was the primary obstacle to smooth

transition and engagement.

Social Education

Social education was associated with music as far back as the 1950s. In 1954,

Jones incorporated the term pleasure in his criteria for evaluating a music textbook's

quality:

> In terms of the first aspect, three primary aims of school music were identified:
> technical, religious, and pleasure aims. Technical aims refer to the teaching of the
> elements of music, especially sight-reading and elementary principles of music
> theory. Religious aims were those meant to keep the children conscious of
> religion through hymns of praise as well as other types of religious songs.
> Pleasure aims were to provide a source of pleasure as a relief from the routines of
> the school day. (as cited in Shih, 1997, pp. 24-25)

In 1975, Axelson expressed concern about certain educational practices of alignment that

led to the devaluation of music, such as secondary school music curricula being more

concerned with students being socially educated through music, rather than educating the

student in music. Axelson (1975) continues to explain that while most music educators

agree that producing effective musicians is a goal of music programs, there does not seem

to be consensus on what specific skills and characteristics should be taught and how they

should be assessed prior to moving to the next grade level. Furthermore, he expressed

the opinion that a music student should be encouraged and "challenged to use his mind

and talents to the highest degree" (Axelson, 1975, p. 23). Social education through music

continues to be supported in the 21st century. Foster (2006) argued that music in school

should be considered more of an element of education in discovering "truths of human

nature" rather than a mere activity (p. 19).

Disparity of Pedagogical Foci

Curricular alignment can have an impact on the retention of students in music

programs. Kokotsaki's (2015) study of the transition of students from primary to

secondary level in six secondary schools in North East England revealed that students

were confident about the development of their composing and reviewing of musical

skills, but were unsure about their performing and listening skills. He recommended that

educators from the secondary school should attend classes at the primary school

regularly, teach some music lessons, and invite the primary students to come to the

secondary campus and be involved in joint performances. The wide variety of music

teaching strategies result in some secondary music teachers starting musical training from

a novice level. He added that these findings should encourage educators to better

communicate with one another to focus on the "holistic musical development" of the

student at the beginning of their transition into the new school (Kokotsaki, 2015, p. 51).

Gouzouasis, Henry, and Belliveau (2008) studied successful music programs within a district feeder pattern to discover the strategies for increasing retention rates of students into secondary music programs. They found that examining how curriculum is taught is a key factor in retaining students and encouraging a positive music education experience. Stanley (2011) argued that "curricular alignment is an elusive aim" (p. 73), but went on to say that the music teachers "within a district or county should be pushed to come together to engage in this cyclical process, and emphasis should be placed on data gathering to answer real music teaching and learning dilemmas" (p. 74).

The disparate pedagogical foci among various grade levels, music programs, and school districts is partially due to the increasing number of music series books being published with a broad range of methodologies, providing educators with more choices for effective instruction. A careful analysis of the contents of a textbook is required to determine if it is in alignment with a school district's educational goals (Shih, 1997). Bruenger (2009) posited that the majority of school music programs base success and progress upon a theoretical model of relative ability, rather than individual progress and student worth in general. According to Russell and Austin (2010), a varying pedagogical focus can also affect how educators view assessment. Russell and Austin (2010) also explicated that when following curriculum and instructional scope and sequence, assessing students' musical aptitude is a key factor in providing effective instruction. However, they warned that, due to varying beliefs on grading and assessment practices, it is often difficult to align student understanding and educational goals vertically.

CHAPTER III

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

Elementary music education plays an integral role in setting curricular goals for student preparation to enter secondary-level music ensembles. In addition to fostering basic knowledge of music skills, elementary music teachers encourage students to develop a variety of skills to ensure success in future secondary music ensembles and courses. The goal is to find a common list of indicators of success for use among music educators of all levels and ensembles to encourage fluidity in music knowledge through vertical alignment. Previous studies do not provide a specific list of characteristics leading to success or of lack of knowledge upon entering a new grade level or ensemble, nor do they accentuate the expectations of preparedness or success from choral, band, and general music educators. Permission to conduct the study was granted with an exempt status from the university's Institution Review Board (see Appendix A). Approval fro the study completion and content was accepted by the thesis committee members and department chair for the university (see Appendix D).

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to compare the level of student preparation and ensemble directors' expectations of musical knowledge and skills among students entering 5th, 7th, and 9th grade in schools within a district feeder pattern. In addition, teachers were asked what musical characteristics and methods were most important for students to possess when entering a new grade level or music ensemble and how those

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expectations aligned with the students' preparation. Music educators were divided into three groups: band, choir, and general music. This study addressed the following research questions:

1. Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness among choral, band, and general elementary music teachers for students entering 5th grade?

2. Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness among choral and band directors for incoming 7th and 9th graders?

3. What musical skills do music educators deem as most important to student success?

This descriptive quantitative study investigated the expectations of elementary music specialists and intermediate school, middle school, and high school band and choir directors regarding the musical knowledge and skills of students entering 5th, 7th, and 9th grades. Participants were further asked to identify the most critical learning targets for incoming 5th, 7th, and 9th grade band and choir students.

Participants and Data Collection

Potential participants in this study included the entire population of full-time music teachers employed by a large, suburban independent school district in North Texas. Names and email addresses of the music educators were gathered from the school district's website. The district employed 84 general music teachers and choir and band directors assigned to elementary, intermediate, middle, and/or high school campuses.

The school district was selected because it has a definitive vertical feeder pattern (see Appendix B). Within this district there are four high schools, three of which have

two middle schools within their alignment, and the fourth high school has one feeder middle school. Each high school's vertical alignment has one intermediate campus (Grades 5-6) that feeds into a middle school (Grades 7-8). The district has 3 middle schools (Grades 5-8), 4 middle schools (Grades 7-8), 4 intermediate schools (Grades 5-6), and 24 elementary schools (Grades K-4). The middle schools (Grades 5-8) are each fed by two elementary schools. The number of elementary schools feeding the middle schools (Grades 7-8) range from 4 to 5, with two elementaries divided between two intermediate schools.

Upon receiving IRB approval, invitations to participate in an online survey were emailed to the district's 84 music educators. In all, 51 respondents completed the survey, resulting in a robust overall response rate of 61%.

Survey Design and Method

Full-time music teachers employed by a large North Texas school district ($N = 84$) were sent an email message inviting them to participate in the study. The recruitment email included the title of the study, rationale for the research, a statement about anonymity, and a link to the study.

The survey was adapted from two existing studies–Wesolowski (2014) and Macleod and Walter (2011) (see Appendix C). The rating scale for assessing content areas and the degrees of student proficiency was patterned using a four-category Likert response scale system (0-not applicable, 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree, 4-strongly agree) after Wesolowski's study (2014). Macleod and Walter's study (2011),

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which examined cooperating teachers' perception of the musical skills that needed the greatest attention from university faculty, provided the model for music teachers selecting the musical skills that were most vital for students to possess in Grades 5, 7, and 9.

The district's music educators were asked to complete surveys regarding their expectations of band, choir, and general music students' skills as they enter grade 5, seven, and nine. The survey was based on the students' skill set during the first six weeks of teaching to provide an accurate comparison between the skills acquired at the end of one grade level and the beginning of the next grade level. The skills listed on the surveys were based on the TEKS of the previously completed grade level, including content from four basic strands–foundations: music literacy; creative expression; historical and cultural relevance; and critical evaluation and response.

The first portion of each survey focused on demographic information of the participants, including grade level and area of music taught. Questions were divided into two categories: "terms and methods students should be able to identify" and "terms and methods students should be able to demonstrate." Participants were asked to rank their expectations of student achievement for specific music identification and performance skills using a four-point Likert-scale, (0-not applicable, 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-agree, 4-strongly agree). At the end of the survey, participants were asked to answer two free-response questions: "Which of the above learning targets do you believe to be most critical and why?" and "If you could add a learning target [to the survey] what would it be and why?"

Survey 1 was constructed from the 4th grade TEKS and was completed by 4th-grade general music teachers and 5th grade band and choir directors. The survey included questions related to rhythm identification, note identification, simple meter identification, treble clef staff note identification, and identification of crescendo and decrescendo. Participants were then asked to rate their expectations based on student performance of specific TEKS: pitch matching, proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone. The survey concluded with the free-response questions regarding the most critical learning target.

Survey 2 included questions related to the 6th grade TEKS and was sent to intermediate and middle school band and choir directors. Participants were asked to rate their expectations of student knowledge of rhythm identification, note identification, identification of articulation symbol, treble clef staff, note identification, identification of crescendo and decrescendo, and interpretation of musical forms. The survey then requested participants to rate their expectations based on student performance of specific TEKS: pitch matching, proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, tone, and aural skills. The final portion of the survey contained the free-response questions regarding the most critical learning target.

Survey 3 included questions related to the 8th grade TEKS and was sent to middle school and high school band and choir directors. Participants were asked to rate their expectations of student knowledge of music theory content identification; rhythm patterns in simple, compound, and asymmetric meters; music symbols and expressive terms; intervals and chord structures; music literacy identification; melodic and harmonic parts,

texture, and timbre identification. Participants were then asked to rate their expectations based on student performance of specific TEKS: correct intonation, proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone. The survey ended with two free-response questions regarding the most critical learning target.

The survey was sent to participants electronically via SurveyMonkey. Elementary teachers were asked to only complete the "Students Entering 5th Grade" survey (Survey 1). Intermediate and middle school directors (band and choir) were asked to complete the "Students Entering 5th Grade" survey (Survey 1), "Students Entering 7th Grade" survey (Survey 2), and the "Students Entering 9th Grade" survey (Survey 3) (when applicable). High school directors (band and choir) were asked to complete the "Students Entering 9th Grade" survey (Survey 3).

The only survey question that asked participants to disclose identifying information was the request for the name of the campus on which the teacher was employed. This information was required to align teachers' responses in accordance with their vertical feeder pattern. Additionally, it allowed the author to screen responses to ensure the respondents only completed the surveys applicable to their grade level. Respondents were provided email contact information to request a copy of the results once the study was completed.

Data Analysis

The data were analyzed utilizing the statistical tools available on the SurveyMonkey website. Descriptive statistical analyses were used to examine the primary focus of the study, which was to determine if vertical alignment of schools in a

school district results in consistent expectations of students' musical preparation as they travel from elementary school to intermediate school and/or middle school, and high school.

The analysis of Survey 1 data included the comparison of the average rank scores provided by elementary music teachers (who teach K-4 in the district) regarding their expectations of what their graduating 4th graders' musical knowledge and skills should be with the average rank scores of the band and choir directors who taught those same students as they entered 5th grade in either intermediate or middle school. Survey 2 data were analyzed by comparing intermediate and middle school band directors' and the corresponding choir directors' average rank scores of expected musical knowledge and skills of 7th-grade ensemble members. Analysis of Survey 3 data, provided solely by high school band and choir directors, required a comparison of their average rank scores of expected musical knowledge and entering 9th-grade ensemble members.

The skills or traits that participants listed in the free response section were categorized and coded, then reported in terms of frequency of response. The lists of skills and traits were then compared to determine if similarities or differences existed among the 5th, 7th, and 9th grade levels of expectations.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to compare the level of student preparation and

ensemble directors' expectations of musical knowledge and skills among students

entering 5th, 7th, and 9th grade in schools within a district feeder pattern. A descriptive

design was used to investigate what musical characteristics and methods were most

important for students to possess when entering a new grade level or music ensemble and

how those expectations aligned with the students' preparation. This study addressed the

following research questions:

1. Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness among choral, band,
   and general elementary music teachers for students entering 5th grade?

2. Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness among choral and band
   directors for incoming 7th and 9th graders?

3. What musical skills do music educators deem as most important to student
   success?

Demographic Profile of Teachers

The surveys were emailed to the 84 elementary and secondary music educators

employed by the school district. Of those who were sent the survey, fifty-two music

teachers completed the survey, resulting in a response rate of 62%. Participants included

representatives from elementary music, intermediate and middle school band and choir,

and high school band and choir. Elementary music specialists comprised the largest

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percentage of respondents, while high school choir and band directors had the smallest response rate.

Participants included 14 (27%) elementary music teachers, 19 (37%) choir directors, and 18 (35%) band directors (see Table 1). Of these teachers and directors, 13 (25%) were intermediate (IS) or middle school (MS) choir directors, 11 (22%) were intermediate or middle school band, 6 (12%) were high school (HS) choir directors, and 7 (14%) were high school band directors (see Table 2).

Table 1

Teaching Area of Participants

Job Title	No. of Participants	Percentage
Elementary Music Teachers	14	27%
Choir Directors	19	37%
Band Directors	18	35%

Table 2

Participating Teachers and Directors by Grade Level

Job Title	No. of Participants	Percentage
Elementary Music Teachers	14	27%
IS or MS Choir Directors	13	37%
IS or MS Band Directors	11	35%
High School Choir Directors	6	12%
High School Band Directors	7	34%

Expectations for Entering 5th Grade Music

Survey 1 focused on teacher's expectations of musical knowledge and skills of students entering 5th grade. Respondents included intermediate and middle school choir directors, band directors, and elementary general music teachers. Survey data were comprised of average rank scores (1-Strongly Disagree to 4-Strongly Agree) and free responses to two open-ended questions about critical learning targets.

Rhythm

Students would know the average ranking for the expectation that students will know 8th note pairs upon entering 5th grade was 3.75 for choir directors, 2.66 for band directors, and 3.85 for elementary music teachers (see Figure 1). Expectation of 5th grade students' knowledge of single 8th notes indicated an average ranking of 3.00 for choir directors, 2.66 for band directors, and 3.71 for elementary music teachers. Students' expected knowledge of 16th note pairs indicated an average ranked response of 4.00 from choir directors, while both intermediate and middle school band directors' average rank score was 1.66, positioned at the opposite end of the scale. Elementary music teachers' average ranking for 16th note pairs was 3.29.

Responses for dotted half notes revealed average rank scores with a range of .61: choir-2.75, band-2.33, and elementary music-3.36 (see Figure 2). Average rank scores for expectation of 5th graders' knowledge of syncopation included 2.50 for choir, 2.33 for band, and 3.07 for elementary music. Lastly, the expectation of familiarity with triplets

showed an average rank score of 2.50 for choir, 3.00 for band, and 3.14 for elementary music.
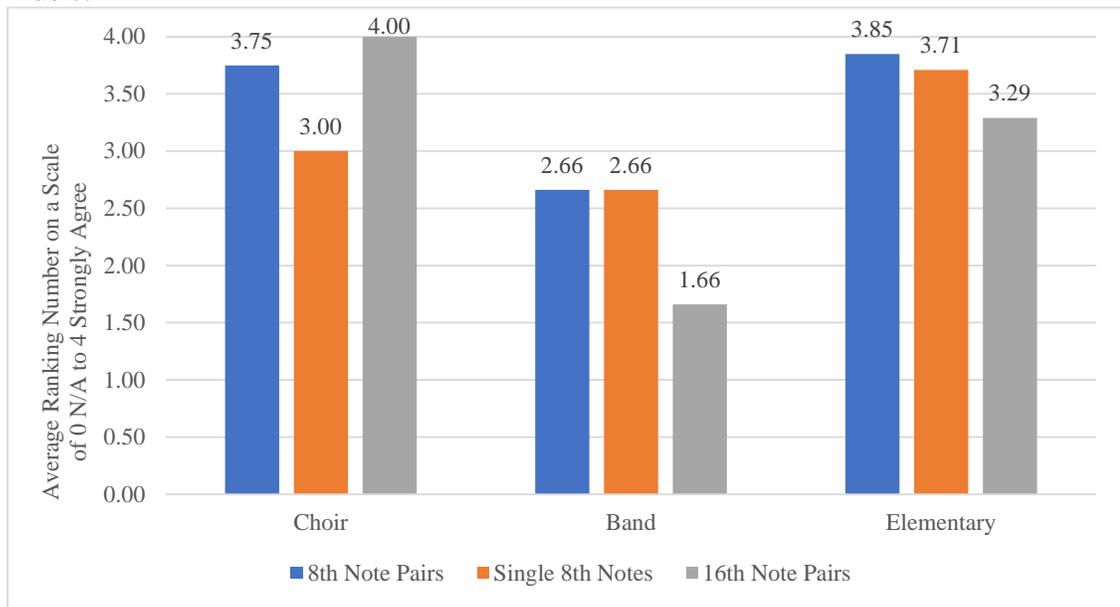

Figure 1. Teacher's expectations of knowledge of 8th and 16th notes for students entering 5th grade.
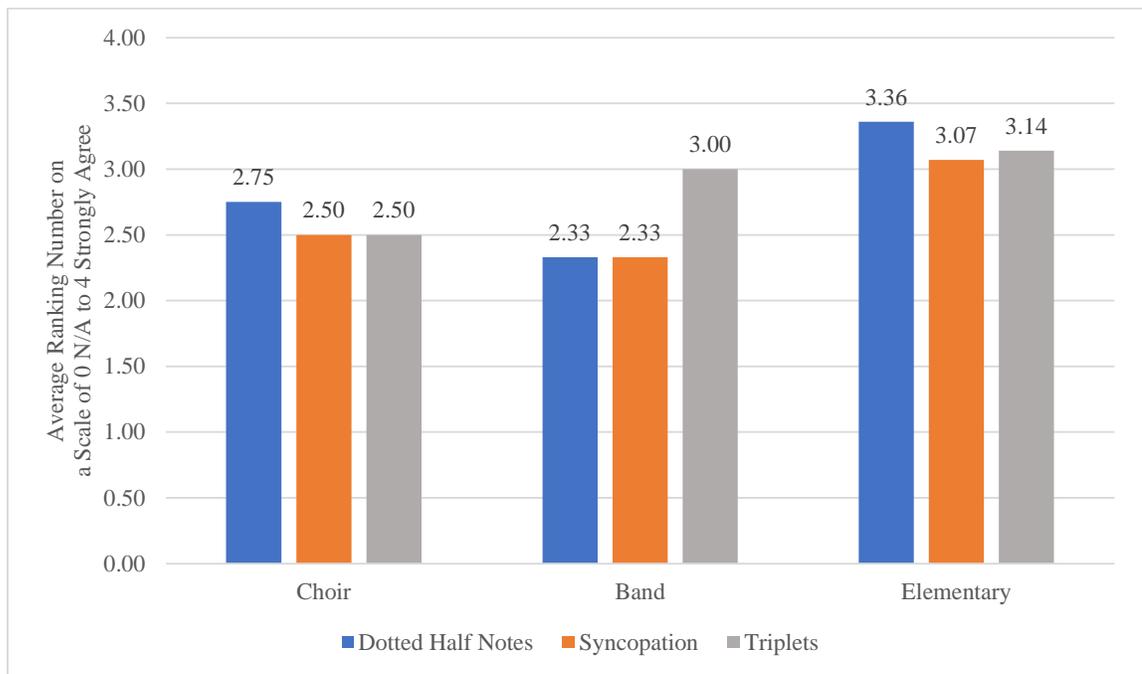
Figure 2. Teacher's expectations of knowledge of rhythmic concepts for students entering 5th grade.

With the exception of the paired 16th note response, elementary music teachers ranked the majority of rhythmic concepts higher than that of band and choir directors. Band directors ranked the majority of rhythmic concepts lower than the choir directors and elementary music teachers, with triplets being the exception.

Meter

Participants' average ranked scores for 5th graders' simple meter identification skills were more closely related than the scores for rhythmic figures (see Figure 3). Average ranked scores for 2/4 meter had a range of .17: choir directors–3.50, band directors–3.67, and elementary music teachers–3.64. The largest range in average ranked scores (.42) occurred in response to expectation of knowledge of 3/4 meter: choir directors–3.25, band directors–3.67, and elementary teachers–3.64. Respondents' average rank scores were most closely aligned in regard to expectation of 4/4 meter: choir directors–3.75, band directors–3.67, and elementary teachers–3.79.
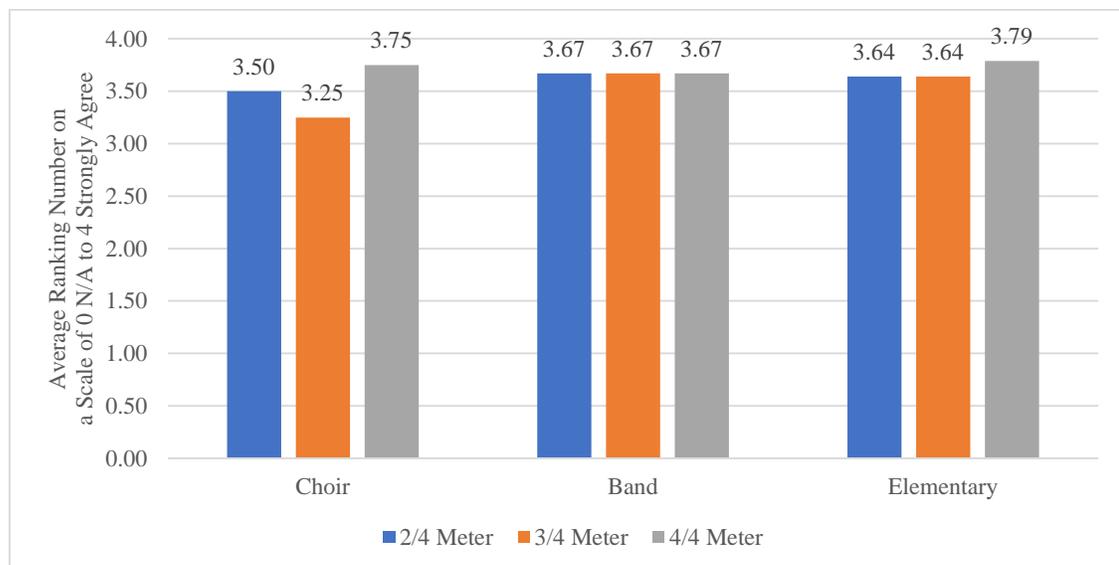
Figure 3. Teacher's expectations of simple-meter identification skills for students entering 5th grade.

Identification of Musical Terminology

When asked to rank the expectation of 5th grade students identifying the treble clef, choir directors' average scores were 3.75, band directors' scores were 4.00, and elementary teachers' scores were 3.86, with the largest gap in scores (.25) between choir and band directors (see Figure 4). Expectation of students' knowledge of the terms, crescendo and decrescendo, revealed slightly lower average rank scores, with choir directors (3.00) reporting the lowest average, elementary teachers (3.64) reporting the highest, and band directors' ranking in the middle with a 3.33 average score.
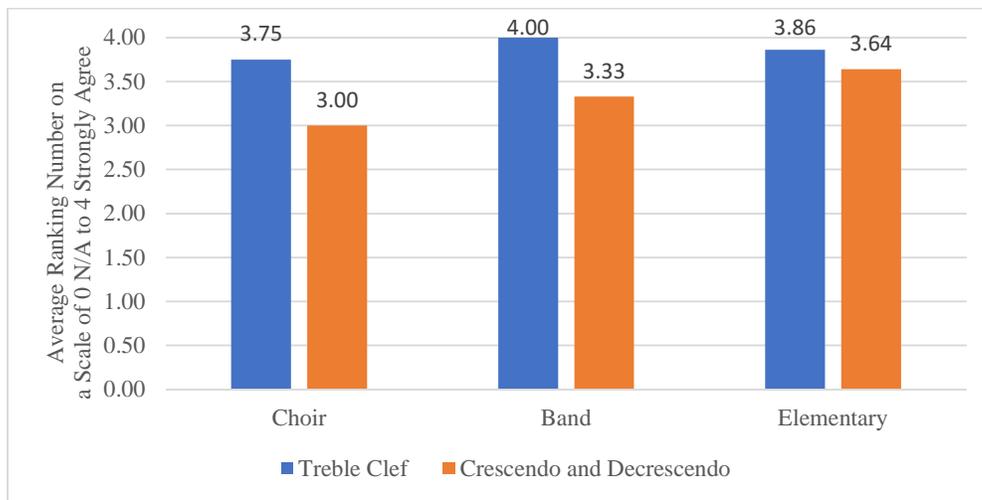
Figure 4. Teacher's expectations of terminology identification skills for students entering 5th grade.

Performance Skills

The category of performance skills focused on teacher expectations of specific skills demonstrated by students (see Figure 5). Pitch matching expectations received an average ranking of 3.50 by choir directors, 3.33 by band directors, and 3.79 by elementary teachers. Demonstration of proper performance posture had average expectation scores of

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3.00 for choir directors, 3.67 for band directors, and 3.86 for elementary teachers. Appropriate breathing showed closer average ranking scores between band directors (3.50) and elementary teachers (3.67), while choir directors had the lowest average (2.50). The average rank scores for tone demonstration were similar to responses for appropriate breathing, with choir directors having the lowest average (2.25), while band directors (3.33) and elementary teachers (3.14) having higher averages in the positive category of ranking scores.
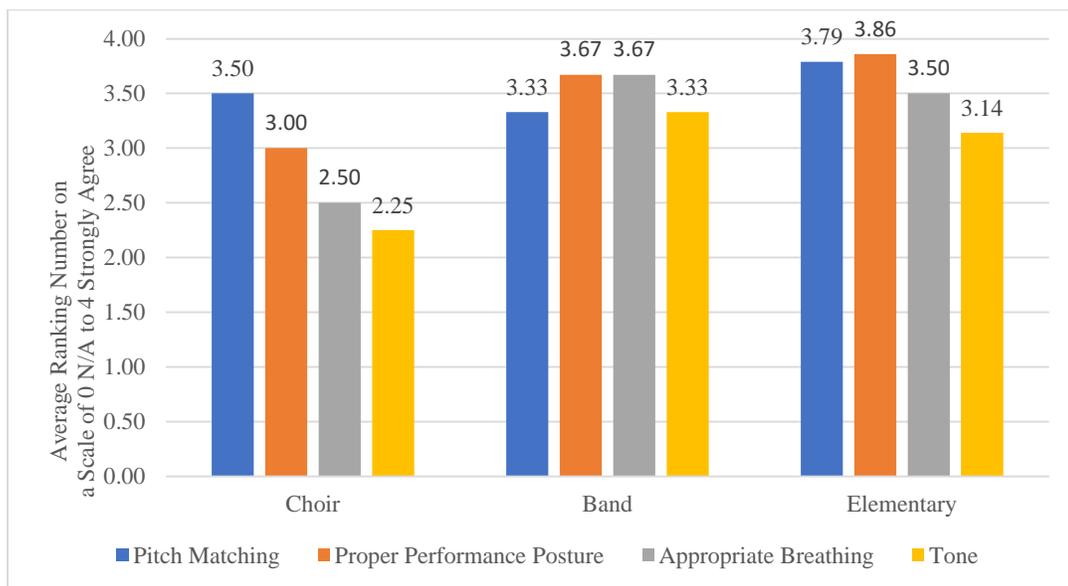
Figure 5. Teacher's expectations of performance skills for students entering 5th grade.

Throughout responses on the 5th grade survey (Survey 1), the elementary teachers showed a steady average response rate of 3.07 or higher, but not exceeding their highest average response of 3.86. With the exception of the average rank scores provided by choir directors for 16th note pairs and by band directors for treble clef, the data show that elementary music teachers had higher expectations of their former students entering 5th grade.

Critical Learning Targets

In addition to the Likert-scale questions on Survey 1, participants were asked to identify, via free-response, the learning target they deemed to be most critical learning target for students entering 5th grade from those mentioned within the survey (see Table 3). Of the 21 participants to complete the 5th grade survey (Survey 1), 20 participants (95%) answered the free-response question and provided a total of 31 concepts. Responses were then tabulated, categorized, and reported in table form.

In the free-response portion, eight participants (25.8%) chose the importance of pitch matching, making it the most frequently-named learning target. Following, listed six times each, were rhythm (19.4%) and music literacy/basic terminology (19.4%). Identification of staff letter names was referenced four times by participants (12.9%) and three participants signified that all concepts were equally important (9.7%). There were two participants surveyed to mention performance posture and technique (6.5%) as the most critical concepts, while one participant (3.2%) chose tone as the most critical, and one participant (3.2%) wrote "N/A".

Table 3

Most Critical Learning Targets for Students Entering 5th Grade

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
Pitch Matching	8	25.8%
Rhythm	6	19.4%
Music Literacy/Basic Terminology	6	19.4%
Staff Letter Names	4	12.9%
All Equally Important	3	9.7%
Posture/Technique	2	6.5%
Tone	1	3.2%
N/A	1	3.2%

A total of 20 participants provided 31 responses.

Participants were asked to complete a second free-response question on the 5th grade survey (Survey 1), "If you could add a learning target [to the survey] what would it be and why?" Of the 21 participants to complete the 5th grade survey, 18 participants (86%) responded to the free-response question and mentioned 22 learning targets (see Table 4).

The most frequent response, provided by five participants (22.7%), was "not applicable." The remaining responses were either provided by two participants (9.1%) or one participant (4.5%). A total of four categories had two responses (9.1%): execute terms, rather than naming and defining them; instrument identification; keeping a steady beat/pulse; and solfege syllables and hand-signs. The remaining categories were each

only mentioned by one participant (4.5%): accurate rhythm reading; exposure to different instruments; identify and read melodic intervals; phrasing; respond to a conductor; sight-reading; simple part-work and harmonies; simple songs and partner songs; and the overall enjoyment of music.

Table 4

Most Critical Learning Targets Added by Participants in 5th Grade Survey

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
N/A	5	22.7%
Execute terms, rather than name/define	2	9.1%
Instrument identification	2	9.1%
Keep a steady beat	2	9.1%
Solfege syllables/hand-signs	2	9.1%
Accurate rhythm reading	1	4.5%
Exposure to different instruments	1	4.5%
Identify and read melodic intervals	1	4.5%
Phrasing	1	4.5%
Respond to a conductor	1	4.5%
Sight-reading	1	4.5%
Simple part-work/harmonies	1	4.5%
Simple songs/partner songs	1	4.5%
Enjoyment of music	1	4.5%

A total of 18 participants provided 22 responses

Expectations for Entering 7th Grade Music Students

Survey 2 focused on teacher's expectations of musical knowledge and skills of students entering 7th grade. Respondents included intermediate and middle school choir directors and band directors. Survey data were comprised of average rank scores (1-Strongly Disagree to 4-Strongly Agree) and free responses to two open-ended questions about critical learning targets.

Rhythm

The first category on the survey addressed expectations of rhythmic skills (see Figure 6). The average ranking for the expectation that students would know single 8th notes upon entering 7th grade was 3.50 for choir directors and 3.57 for band directors. Expectation of 7th grade students' knowledge of 8th note pairs received an average ranking of 3.88 from choir directors and 3.71 from band directors. Students' expected knowledge of 16th note pairs received an average rank response of 2.63 from choir directors and 2.86 from band directors. Elementary music teachers' average ranking for 16th note pairs was 3.29, indicating a positive level of expectation. The final rhythmic concept to be surveyed, syncopated rhythm patterns, showed an average rating of 2.75 by choir directors and 2.57 by band directors. With the exception of syncopated rhythm patterns. the band directors ranked their expectations for the majority of rhythmic concepts higher than the expectations of choir directors.
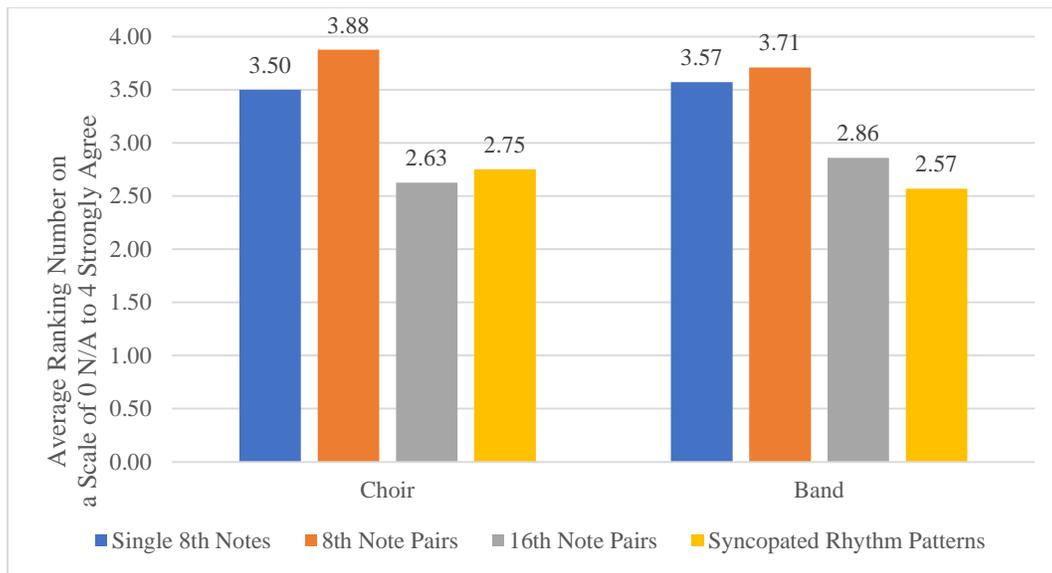
Figure 6. Teacher expectations of rhythmic concepts for students entering 7th grade.

Terminology and Theory

Terms associated with music theory were the focus in the next portion of the survey (see Figure 7). Expectations for 7th graders to be able to identify fermatas and codas received an average rank score of 3.13 from choir directors and 3.00 from band directors. The category for dynamics, ranging from pianissimo to fortissimo, revealed averages rank scores of 3.50 for choir directors and 2.57 for band directors. Identification of tempi—*andante, largo, and adagio*—was assigned an average rank score of 2.63 by choir respondents and 2.86 by band respondents. Lastly, articulations—accent and marcato—contained the smallest differentiation of average rank scores between choir directors (2.75) and band directors (2.71) with a .04 variation.
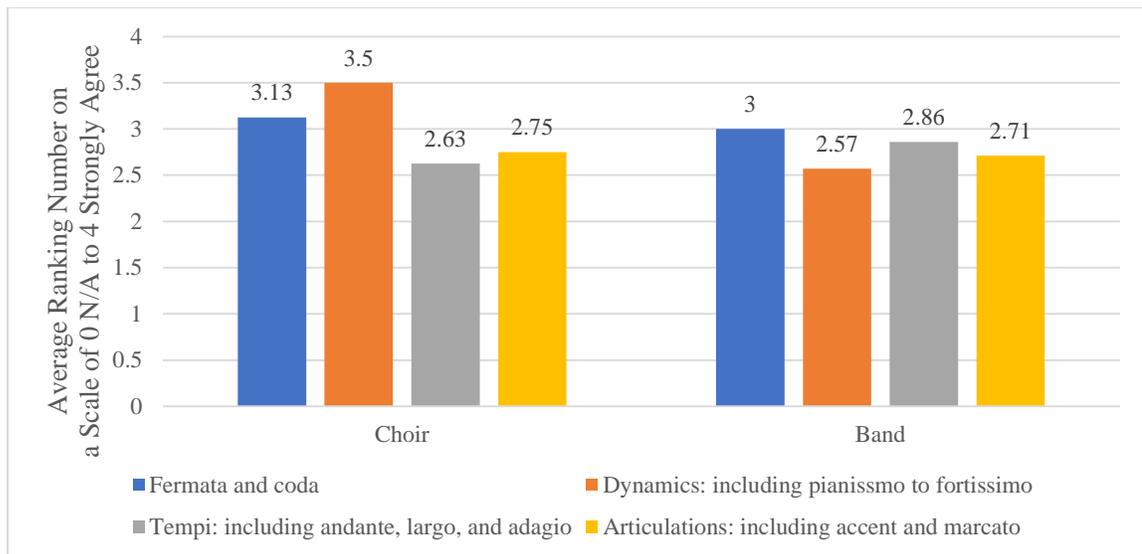
Figure 7. Teacher expectations of terminology identification skills for students entering 7th grade.

Music Literacy

The category of music literacy addressed expectations for knowledge of various musical concepts (see Figure 8). The expectation of 7th graders understanding 6/8 meter received an average rank score of 2.00 from choir directors and 2.29 from band directors. Average rank scores for naming notes on the treble staff were high for both choir (3.88) and band (3.71). Crescendo and decrescendo were assigned an average rank score of 3.88 by choir directors and 3.71 by band directors. The lowest scores were provided for knowledge of musical forms (binary, ternary, phrasic, rondo, and theme and variations) with only a .02 differentiation between choir directors (1.88) and band directors (1.86).
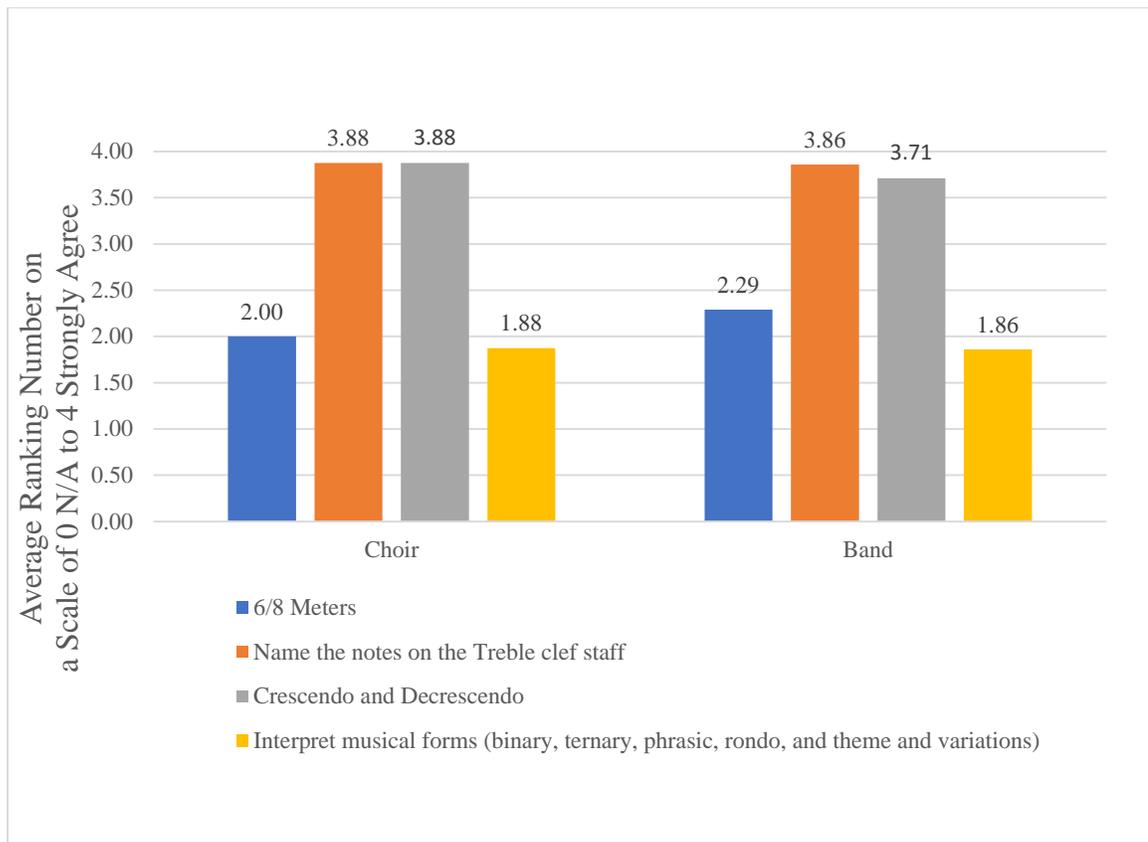
Figure 8. Teacher's expectations of music literacy for students entering 7th grade.

Performance Skills

Expectations of performance skills for students entering 7th Grade received higher average rank scores from choir and band directors than in other categories (see Figure 9). Pitch matching was assigned an average rank score of 3.88 by choir directors and 3.57 for band directors. Band directors gave an average rank score of 4.00 for proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone demonstration, while choir directors provided an average score of 3.75, 3.88, and 3.50 to those categories, respectively. Band directors assigned an average rank score of 3.57 and choir directors provided a score of 3.63 to the category of aural skills, which encompassed kinesthetic responses such as

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inner hearing, silent fingering, shadow bowing, or Curwen hand signs. Band directors gave a score of 4.00 in three of the five target areas in this category, whereas choir directors did not assign a 4.00 to any category.
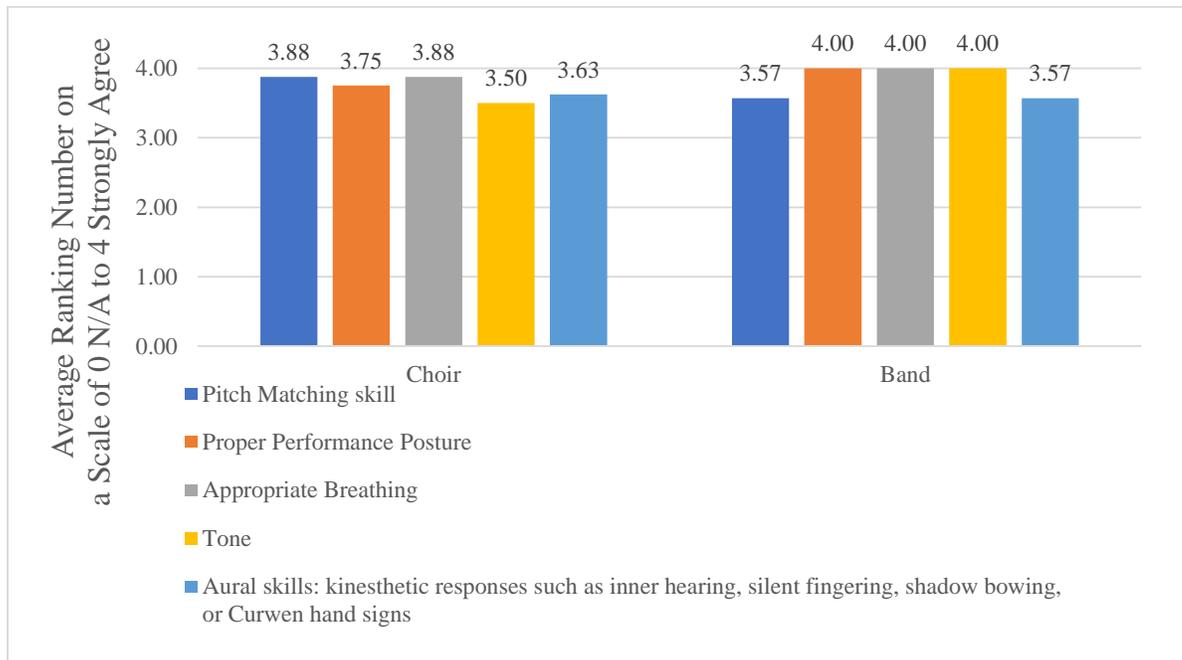
Figure 9. Teacher's expectations of performance skills for students entering 7th grade.

Critical Learning Targets

In addition to the Likert-scale questions on Survey 2, participants were asked to identify, via free-response, the learning target they deemed to be most critical learning target for students entering 7th grade from those mentioned within the survey (see Table 5). Of the 15 participants to complete the 7th grade survey (Survey 2), 12 participants (80%) answered the free-response question and provided a total of 22 concepts. Responses were then tabulated, categorized, and reported in table form.

Six participants (27.3%) chose tone in the free-response portion, making it the most frequently-selected learning target. Four participants (18.2%) identified pitch

matching as a critical learning target, followed by three participants (13.6%) who chose

to write "N/A," rather than name a musical concept. Basic terminology (9.1%) and aural

skills (9.1%) were each listed by two participants, and the remaining concepts were listed

by one participant each (4.5%): breathing, hand signs (solfege), posture, rhythm, and

steady pulse (steady beat).

Table 5

Most Critical Learning Targets for Students Entering 7th Grade

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
Tone	6	27.3%
Pitch Matching	4	18.2%
N/A	3	13.6%
Basic Terminology	2	9.1%
Aural Skills	2	9.1%
Breathing	1	4.5%
Hand Signs	1	4.5%
Posture	1	4.5%
Rhythm	1	4.5%
Steady Pulse	1	4.5%

A total of 12 participants provided 22 responses.

Participants were asked to complete a second free-response question on the 7th

grade survey (Survey 2), "If you could add a learning target [to the survey] what would it

be and why?" Of the 15 participants to complete the 7th grade survey, 9 participants

(60%) responded to the free-response question and listed 9 concepts (see Table 6). Two

concepts were mentioned by two participants each (22.2%), not applicable and sight-

reading skills. The remaining concepts were each mentioned by one participant (11.1%):

read and execute a rhythm, discipline, intonation, Kodály methods, and rhythms with

dotted quarter note.

Table 6

Most Critical Learning Targets Added by Participants in 7th Grade Survey

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
Sight-reading	2	22.2%
N/A	2	22.2%
Read and Execute a rhythm	1	11.1%
Discipline	1	11.1%
Intonation	1	11.1%
Kodaly Method	1	11.1%
Rhythms with dotted quarter note	1	11.1%

A total of 9 participants provided 9 responses.

Expectations for Entering 9th Grade Music Students

Survey 3 focused on teacher's expectations of musical knowledge and skills of

students entering 9th grade. Respondents included middle school and high school choir

directors and band directors. Survey data were comprised of average rank scores (1-

Strongly Disagree to 4-Strongly Agree) and free responses to two open-ended questions

about critical learning targets.

Music Theory

Data provided by middle school and high school band and choir directors regarding their expectations of student knowledge of music theory are provided in Figure 10. The expectation that students will know rhythmic patterns in simple, compound, and asymmetric meters upon entering 9th grade received an average rank score of 3.14 from choir directors and 3.50 from band directors. Other concepts surveyed included "music symbols and expressive terms (dynamics, tempo, articulation)," which was assigned an average rank score of 3.86 by choir directors and 4.00 by band directors. The expectation of entering 9th grade students knowing "intervals and chord structures" received an average score of 3.00 from choir directors and 2.75 from band directors.
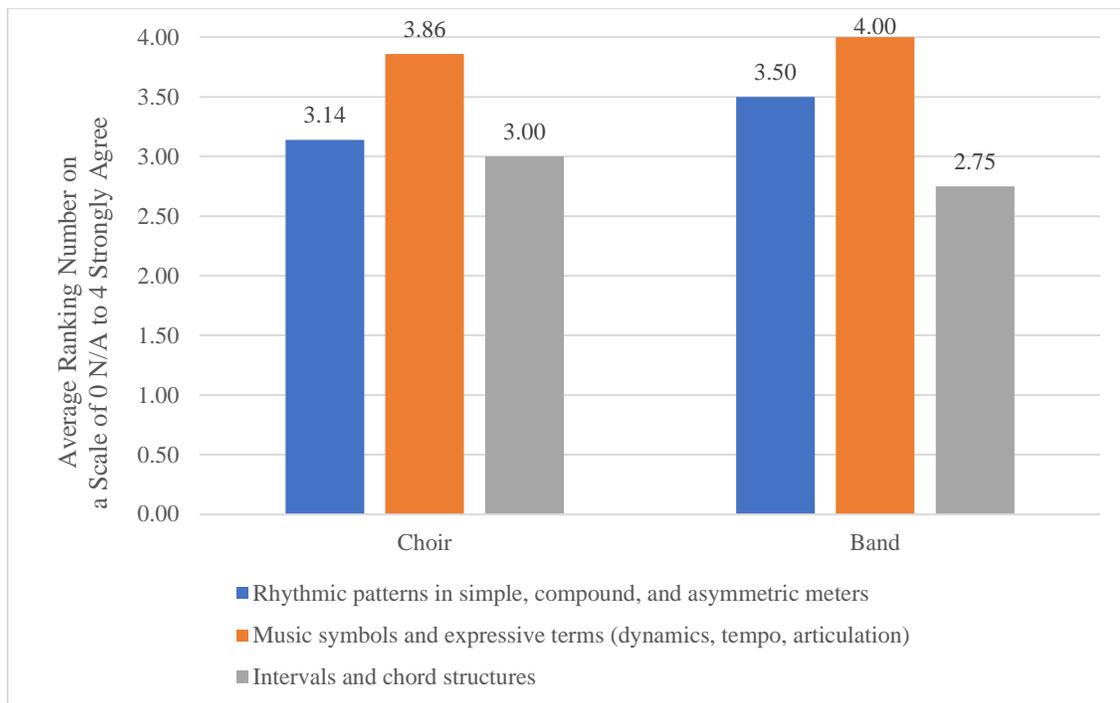
Figure 10. Teacher expectations of music theory content for students entering 9th grade.

Music Literacy

Data from choir directors' and band directors' responses in the category of expectations of music literacy for students entering 9th grade are displayed in Figure 11. The average scores for the concept, melodic and harmonic parts in performance and listening pieces, were 3.71 for choir directors and 3.75 for band directors. Knowledge of the concept of "timbre" was ranked second in expectations of both choir directors (3.00) and band directors (3.13). Both choir directors (2.50) and band directors (3.00) assigned their lowest average score in this category to the concept of "texture."
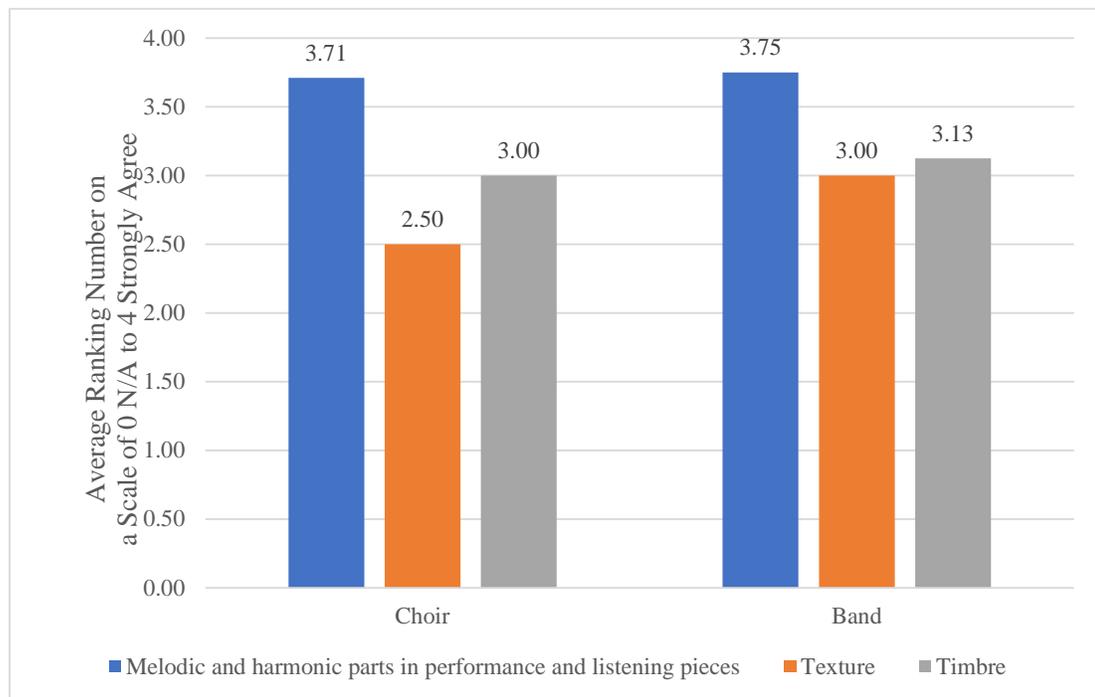

Figure 11. Teacher expectations of music literacy for students entering 9th grade.

Performance Skills

Data provided by choir directors and band directors for expectations of performance skills for students entering 9th grade are shown in Figure 12. Correct intonation received high average rank scores from choir directors (3.71) and band directors (3.75). Both band directors and choir directors assigned an average rank score of 4.00 to the category of proper performance posture. Band directors also provided an average score of 4.00 for appropriate breathing, compared to 3.86 for choir directors. The third category in which band directors assigned a 4.00 average rank score was for expectation of tone (mature and characteristic sound appropriate for the genre) demonstration, with choir directors providing a lower average score of 3.71. Both band directors (3.50) and choir directors (3.57) appropriated their lowest average rank score to the category of aural skills: kinesthetic responses such as inner hearing, silent fingering, shadow bowing, or Curwen hand signs. Band directors responded with an average response of 4.00 on three of the five targets in this category, giving them a higher response rate average than the choir directors. However, both choir directors and band directors gave the category of proper performance posture an average ranking of 4.00 for their expectation of student knowledge and demonstration.
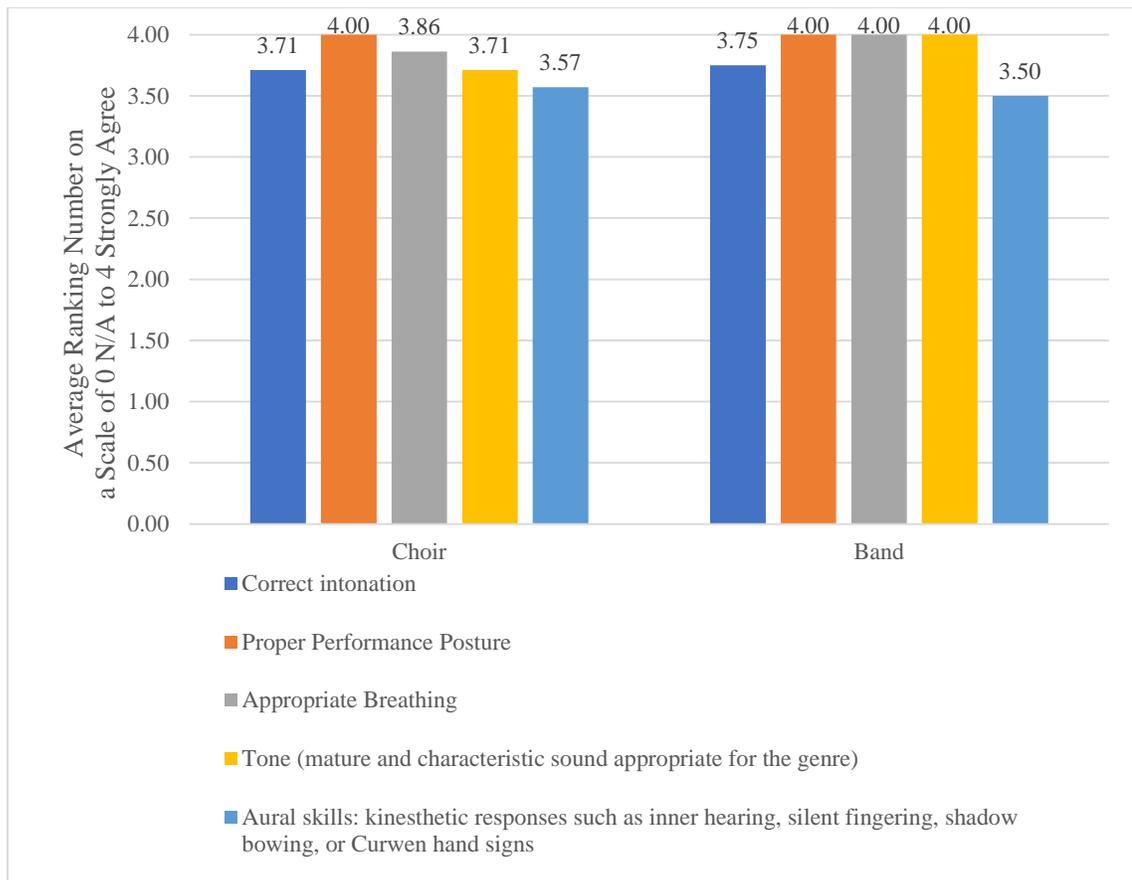
Figure 12. Teacher expectations of performance skills for students entering 9th grade.

Critical Learning Targets

In addition to the Likert-scale questions on Survey 3, participants were also asked to identify, via free-response, the most critical learning target for students entering 9th grade, from the musical concepts listed in the survey (see Table 7). Of the 16 participants who completed the 9th grade survey (Survey 3), 15 participants (94%) answered the free-response question and listed a total of 20 concepts. Nine participants (45%) selected tone, making it the most frequently-named critical learning target. Three participants (15%) selected aural skills and three concepts–appropriate breathing, rhythm, and intervals

(identification and production) were each named by two participants (10%). Hand signs

(5%) and intonation (5%) were each named by one participant.

Table 7

Most Critical Learning Targets for Students Entering 9th Grade

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
Tone	9	45.0%
Aural Skills	3	15.0%
Appropriate Breathing	2	10.0%
Intervals	2	10.0%
Rhythm	2	10.0%
Hand Signs	1	5.0%
Intonation	1	5.0%
N/A	0	0.0%

A total of 15 participants provided 20 responses.

Participants were asked to answer a second free-response question on the 9th

grade survey (Survey 3), "If you could add a learning target [to the survey] what would it

be and why?" Of the 16 participants to complete the 9th grade survey (Survey 3), 15

participants (94%) responded to the free-response question and provided a total of 16

concepts (see Table 8). The largest category of responses was "not applicable,"

mentioned by three participants (18.8%). The three concepts mentioned by two

participants (12.5%) included proper rehearsal habits and procedures, proficient

instrument ranges and performance of such, and technique (scales and patterns). The

remaining categories, named by one participant each (6.3%), were articulation, balance

(lead lines versus supportive lines), expectation of participation in extracurricular activities, more music theory in 9th grade, rhythm reading and multimeter, sight-reading, and tempo and even subdivision of the beat.

Table 9 contains the combined data from Surveys 1, 2, and 3 for the free-response question asking participants to select the most critical learning targets from the concepts listed in the previous portion of the survey. A combined total of 71 concepts were selected. The learning targets deemed most critical were tone (22.5%) and pitch matching (16.9%).

In a second free-response question, participants were asked to list any critical learning target that was not included in the survey (see Table 10). The primary response was "not applicable" (22.2%), followed by sight-reading (8.9%) and accurate rhythm reading/meters (6.7%). The remaining concepts were either listed by 2 participants (7 concepts) or 1 participant (15 concepts).

Table 8

Most Critical Learning Targets Added by Participants in 9th Grade Survey

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
N/A	3	18.8%
Proper rehearsal habits/Procedures	2	12.5%
Proficient instrument ranges	2	12.5%
Technique	2	12.5%
Articulation	1	6.3%
Balance	1	6.3%
Expectation of participation in extra-curricular	1	6.3%
More music theory	1	6.3%
Rhythm Reading/Meters	1	6.3%
Sight-reading	1	6.3%
Tempo	1	6.3%

A total of 15 participants provided 16 responses.

Table 9

Most Critical Learning Targets Mentioned in all Surveys

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Rsponses
Tone	16	22.5%
Pitch Matching	12	16.9%
Rhythm	9	12.7%
Music Literacy/Basic Terminology	6	8.5%
Aural Skills	5	7.0%
Staff Letter Names	4	5.6%
N/A	4	5.6%
Performance Posture	3	4.2%
All Concepts Equally Important	3	4.2%
Breathing	3	4.2%
Hand Signs	2	2.8%
Intervals	2	2.8%
Steady Pulse	1	1.4%
Intonation	1	1.4%

A total of 47 participants provided 71 concepts

Table 10

Most Critical Learning Targets Added in All Surveys

Critical Learning Target	Frequency	% of Total Responses
N/A	10	22.2%
Sight-reading	4	8.9%
Accurate rhythm reading/Meters	3	6.7%
Instrument identification	2	4.4%
Keep a steady beat	2	4.4%
Proficient instrument ranges	2	4.4%
Proper rehearsal habits/Procedures	2	4.4%
Solfege syllables/hand-signs	2	4.4%
Technique	2	4.4%
Execute terms, rather than name/define	2	4.3%
Balance	1	2.2%
Discipline	1	2.2%
The enjoyment of music	1	2.2%

Exposure to different instruments	1	2.2%
Identify and read melodic intervals	1	2.2%
Intonation	1	2.2%
Kodaly Method	1	2.2%
More music theory	1	2.2%
Phrasing	1	2.2%
Respond to a conductor	1	2.2%
Rhythms with dotted quarter note	1	2.2%
Simple partwork/harmonies	1	2.2%
Simple songs/partner songs	1	2.2%
Tempo	1	2.2%

A total of 42 participants provided 47 concepts

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The relationships found in this study of the directors and teachers (N = 51) are

particular to the participants observed and the methodologies used to collect data.

However, there appear to be several findings worthy of mention and further research.

Research Question One

Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness among choral, band,

and general elementary music teachers for students entering 5th grade?

The results of this study revealed there were slight differences between choir and

band directors regarding the expectations of preparedness for students entering 5th grade,

while elementary music teachers averaged higher rankings in most categories. Survey 1

included 18 questions related to 4th grade TEKS, beginning with rhythmic concepts.

Participant feedback varied in this category with elementary teachers having the highest

average expectations for students knowing 8th note pairs, single 8th notes, dotted half

notes, syncopation, and triplets, while choir had the highest average of expectations for

students to be able to identify 16th note pairs. These results suggest that elementary

music teachers are responsible for introducing a wide range of topics and ideas to

students as they expand their musical foundation. Choir directors considered 16th note

pairs to be of higher importance than band and elementary teachers, which was

surprising, given that band repertoire typically requires more advanced rhythmic skills

than choral repertoire. The choral participants all agreed that paired 16th notes were very important for their entering 5th graders to know. Perhaps this is indicative of the inclusion of more rhythmically-complex choral literature on the 5th grade level and/or a greater emphasis on compound meter.

Teachers were also asked to rank their expectations of students' ability to identify and execute simple meter (i.e., 2/4, 3/4, and 4/4). Choir directors had the lowest average expectation of students' knowledge of 2/4 and 3/4 meter, and the second highest average (first being elementary) for understanding of 4/4 meter. Band directors had the same average response for each meter, which might be interpreted that they perform repertoire in a variety of meters and thus rank each with the same level of importance. While elementary teachers had a higher average for 4/4 meter, choir directors were closely behind by only a .04 difference. This could be due to the fact that most elementary choral music is in 4/4 time, and 5th grade choir members perform music at essentially the same level of difficulty. All participants indicated that they considered basic terminology surrounding the treble clef (note naming and identification) as more critical than identification of crescendo and decrescendo. Logically, students must first be able to read and create the notes they are reading before making them "musical" with dynamics.

Finally, participants rated expectations of performance skills, including pitch matching, proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone quality. The collected data shows varying responses from the participants regarding their expectations of their 5th graders. Similar data trends existed with regards to appropriate breathing and tone; each average response for choir, band, and elementary indicated appropriate

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breathing to be of more importance than tone. This was a surprising result, considering the importance musicians attribute to the production of a pleasing tone to the listener and performer. However, one could argue that without proper breath support, an effective tone could not be achieved. Elementary teachers had the highest rank score for proper performance posture, while band directors ranked both proper performance posture and appropriate breathing as being highly important. In order to create a sound with a woodwind or brass instrument, proper breathing is critical, and efficient breathing is directly related to proper posture. On the other hand, choir directors ranked pitch matching as most important, with a steady decline in average scores for proper performance posture, followed by appropriate breathing, and finally, tone. Pitch matching is a vital skill in choral music, because notes must be sung with accurately in order for a song to be recognizable.

The difference in the responses between elementary music teachers and secondary band and choir directors could be due to the requirements on the secondary level to implement more complex musical concepts, as prescribed by the demands of repertoire selection and skills development. Despite the TEKS mandated for 4th grade music students, the Survey 1 respondents were inconsistent in their expectations of student knowledge and skills. This study only addressed a sampling of the TEKS for 4th grade music students with a small number of respondents, making it difficult to develop definitive conclusions about teacher expectations. While it was initially surprising to find expectations of elementary teachers to be higher than choir and band directors, when taken into consideration the broad-based approach to instruction embraced by most

elementary music specialists in an effort to address the wide-reaching range of TEKS, it seems reasonable. The focus of band and choir directors is much more limited, with an emphasis on the development of performance skills and ensemble techniques, as well as learning repertoire for performances.

Research Question Two

Is there a difference between expectations of preparedness between choral and band directors for incoming 7th and 9th graders?

A comparison of band directors' and choir directors' expectations for students entering 7th grade revealed some similar trends, while others were in direct opposition. In the category of rhythmic concepts, both band and choir directors ranked 8th note pairs as being the most important, followed by single 8th notes. Ranking of the importance of 16th note pairs and syncopated rhythms was reversed, with band directors ranking 16th note pairs higher and choir directors ranking syncopated rhythm patterns higher. Perhaps this is due to the frequent use of sixteenth notes in band music, due to its greater rhythmic complexity. Syncopated rhythms are used in several genres of choral music introduced at the 7th grade level, including spirituals and multicultural music, such as African, Jewish, Latino, and Calypso.

Ranking of expectations of incoming 7th grade students regarding knowledge of musical terminology revealed both similarities and differences among participants. Choir directors ranked understanding of dynamics as having the highest level of expectation, whereas band directors ranked it the lowest. Band directors gave fermata and coda their highest rank score in terms of expectations, while choir directors ranked it second in

importance. Both choir and band directors ranked identification of articulations, including accent and marcato, as third in importance. Finally, the lowest average rank score for choir directors' expectations was assigned to identification of tempi, including *andante*, *largo*, and *adagio*, while band directors ranked tempi identification as second in importance.

While no definitive reason can be provided for the variation between band directors' and choral directors' rankings, perhaps some idiosyncratic elements of the respective ensembles could provide some insight. The reverse ranking of importance of dynamics could be due to the greater emphasis on musical interpretation of choral works, due to the text, both in poetic interpretation and word and syllabic stress. Further, because choral music provides singers with the full score, sensitivity to who has the melody, the moving notes, unison pitches, etc. demands an understanding of dynamics. On the other hand, knowledge of terminology related to tempo is of greater importance to band directors, because tempo and a steady beat are integral parts of a band's performance. Most band halls are equipped with an electronic metronome that is played throughout the class. Marching band is highly dependent on the ability of members to maintain a steady beat and to be sensitive to tempo changes. Choral students do not have the communication barriers of instruments, stands, and musical scores between them and their director. Rather, they are standing on risers, typically with music memorized, when they perform. Therefore, it is easier for them to follow the tempo provided by their director. Also, bands are able to play at a wider range of tempi than choirs are able to sing.

Choir directors and band directors had similar average scores when ranking their expectation of 7th graders' music literacy identification skills. Both band and choir directors provided their highest average ranked score for naming the notes on the treble clef staff and crescendo and decrescendo. Identification of 6/8 meter was ranked second in terms of expectations, and interpretation of musical forms (binary, ternary, phrasic, rondo, and theme and variations) received the lowest average rank score from both choir and band directors. These results follow a logical order of knowledge acquisition for 7th grade musicians, regardless of the type of ensemble.

Lastly, data was collected to determine participants' expectations of 7th graders' performance skills, including pitch matching, proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, tone, and aural skills. Band directors provided the highest possible ranking score for their expectations regarding proper performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone. Pitch matching and aural skills received an average rank score from band directors. Choir directors' average rank scores showed a differing trend from band directors in terms of expectations for 7th graders. Pitch matching and appropriate breathing received their highest average in terms of expectations, and tone received the lowest scores. Proper performance posture was ranked second in importance by choir directors, followed by aural skills in third place. Both band and choir directors acknowledged the importance of appropriate breathing as a performance skill for young musicians, however their opinion of the importance of pitch matching skills varied by .31 and tone varied by .50. It is understandable that pitch matching skills might be considered

more important to choral music. However, the fact that band directors ranked tone at the top of their list of expectations and choir directors ranked it at the bottom is inexplicable.

Choir directors' and band directors' expectations of students entering 9th grade showed similar trends, with the exception of performance skills. When asked to rate their expectations of students' knowledge of music theory concepts, both band directors and choir directors ranked the three categories as follows: highest expectations were for students to know music symbols and expressive terms (dynamics, tempo, articulation), followed by rhythmic patterns in simple, compound, and asymmetric meters, and lastly, intervals and chord structures. Ranking of band directors' and choir directors' expectations of student knowledge of music literacy again were in alignment, with the highest rank score assigned to the identification of melodic and harmonic parts in performance and listening, the second highest score given to timbre, with only a .13 difference in their averages, and the lowest rank score was provided for timbre.

The category of performance skills revealed some differing priorities between choir directors and band directors, with the sole exception of their mutual high expectations for proper performance posture. Band directors placed appropriate breathing and tone alongside performance posture in their highest expectation category, followed by intonation. Choir directors differed by ranking appropriate breathing as secondary to proper performance posture, followed by an equal expectation of tone and correct intonation. Both choir directors and band directors assigned their lowest expectations to aural skills.

The variety of TEKS surveyed when assessing 7th and 9th grade teachers'
expectations made a direct comparison of expectations problematic. However, the
performance skills of incoming 7th and 9th graders listed in the survey were closely
aligned, making a comparison more feasible. Data trends revealed some surprising
differences between choir directors of incoming 7th grade and incoming 9th grade
students. Choir directors of entering 7th graders had higher ranking expectations for pitch
matching and appropriate breathing than that of proper performance posture, aural skills,
and lastly, tone. On the other hand, choir directors of entering 9th graders ranked proper
performance posture at the top of their list of expectations, followed by appropriate
breathing, tone, and correct intonation, and lastly, aural skills. This data presents a
possible problem for choral students as they venture from 7th grade to 9th grade, due to
contrasting expectations from their directors.

The data provided by band directors showed a very different trend in expectations
for students entering 7th grade and 9th grade. Band directors of 7th and 9th grade
students indicated their highest level of expectation was equally distributed across proper
performance posture, appropriate breathing, and tone, with differing averages for pitch
matching and aural skills. This could be attributed to the often shared responsibility in
this district of high school band directors and middle school directors within a feeder
pattern.

Research Question Three

What characteristics do music educators and directors acknowledge as their highest expectation of their music students? (categorized by 5th grade, 7th grade, and 9th grade)

Out of the 31 musical skills and concepts included in Survey 1, the concept that most participants considered to be the critical learning target was pitch matching, followed by rhythm and music literacy/basic terminology. These responses could be attributed to expectation that 5th grade musicians should possess a strong musical foundation, which can be readily assessed by having them sing, clap a rhythm, and define musical terms and symbols.

Respondents provided the following comments about the importance of pitch matching and/or rhythm in the free-response section of the survey:

- Aural conversations should begin in kindergarten, so their ears would be much more developed by the time they get to 5th grade.

- Pitch matching [is most important]–without it, it is impossible to tune an instrument group and difficult to sing in an ensemble.

- All of the others [categories] can be viewed and identified, matching tone has to be produced!

- Pitch matching and rhythm. I believe that will help them in any fine art they choose.

- Demonstrating pitch and rhythm–a strong foundation in these areas will make other learning targets more successful.

- Rhythm, treble note reading, and pitch matching are the most critical. Both

    are results of adequate exposure and practice given from the teacher. Also,

    when students enter into middle school and begin playing an instrument,

    there are so many things that students must think about when playing an

    instrument. Note/rhythm reading then applying that to a fingering on their

    instrument and actually making the sound happen. If students can identify

    absolute pitches and read rhythms already, students can move much faster,

    especially in the beginning stages of instrument learning.

Perhaps pitch matching is a critical target area for entering 5th graders because being able to sing pitch accurately is vital in a choral setting. In some band settings, students are required to sing their music, because it helps facilitate note production. As students get older, it is more difficult for them to learn to match, particularly males who are entering a voice change. Beginning pitch matching and aural skills at a young age in elementary level creates successful musicians in future secondary ensembles and programs. One participant mentioned student success in tone production could lead to the likeliness of that student continuing in music programs and electives.

While most participants identified specific foundational musical skills as being a priority, others endorsed a more holistic approach to skill development. One respondent stated: "I believe all of the learning targets are equally important because they all work together to build the necessary skills to read music."

Of the 22 musical concepts mentioned in Survey 2, the critical learning target selected most frequently by participants for entering 7th graders was tone. The

development of an appropriate quality of sound for students' age, maturation, and grade level is an important facet of musicianship. Tone production can have a bearing on both the complexity of repertoire selections and the aesthetic impact of a performance. Closely following tone as a critical learning target for incoming 7th graders was pitch matching, which is not surprising, given the emphasis on that skill in Survey 1.

It is interesting to note that of the 20 concepts listed in Survey 3, participants selected tone as the most critical learning target for incoming 9th graders. Students engaged in music making in the high school in Texas are expected to perform at a high level of musicianship, which is measured through state-endorsed competitions. Because tone is recognized as a crucial element of musicality, and because students are expected to possess foundational skills when they reach high school, it is understandable that participants would rank tone as most important.

When the results of the free-response question regarding learning targets are viewed collectively, tone and pitch matching are firmly established as the most critical skills. Music ensemble directors' focus on tone and pitch matching can be attributed to the necessity of the student musicians to possess those skills in order to achieve a blended, musical sound. While terms and basic rhythms can be learned and recreated, tone and pitch accuracy production has to be developed and utilized over time. Participants offered the following comments in regard to the importance of tone:

- Without a good tone, why listen?
- [Tone quality is] the foundation of everything else in playing a wind instrument.

- Tone. Achieving an excellent sound with a correct embouchure is the foundation for learning any instrument.

- Tone, if you do any of the other learning targets with a poor tone it doesn't matter how well you do them. They will still sound horrible.

- Tone–it is essential to everything we do.

- Tone–there must be a characteristic tone, otherwise, it is just noise.

Another category worth mentioning is that of rhythmic ability, which one participant described as "the foundation of music literacy" and would be applicable to students in either instrumental or vocal music production and participation. Respondents provided several additional statements regarding their opinion of the most critical learning targets mentioned in the survey.

- Counting. It is so important to be able to count rhythms. This will cross over to any/all areas of music.

- I want my incoming 7th graders to know what is on the page. I will cover everything else.

Participants were also asked in a free-response format which learning target, if any, they would add to the survey. The majority of participants wrote "not applicable," which can be interpreted as meaning that all of the primary learning targets were included in the survey. Since the survey was based on the TEKS, that response is expected. The primary topic participants listed as supplementary to the survey was sight-reading, followed closely by accurate rhythm reading. Given the emphasis on sight-reading in the school district in which the participants are employed, coupled with the sight-reading

requirement at the state-mandated ensemble contest, it is not surprising that teachers would view that as a priority.

Participants provided the following opinions regarding their expectations students' musical skills and knowledge:

- Students should be exposed to as many different experiences as possible.

- Accurate rhythm reading: just because students can identify notes visually does not mean that their rhythmic ability is accurate. Also, beat keeping, as a shocking number of students cannot play and tap their foot at the same time, wow! This is based on my observations mainly of my private students entering intermediate/middle school.

- The ability to actually read and execute a rhythm, not just name the type of note or its value.

Participants' list of critical skills for students entering 9th grade dealt with both procedures and proficiency. They offered the following comments:

- Proper rehearsal habits

- Expectation of participation in extracurricular [activities]

- Technique–scales and patterns are the basis for putting music together

- Proficient instrument ranges–students entering high school need to be able to perform at least at a proficient level appropriate for music they will need to perform.

Other participants chose to reference student musicianship:

- Balance–you did elude to identifying melody and harmony, but they also need to understand their role in the primary, secondary, tertiary, etc. in music. Lead lines vs. supportive lines.

- Tempo. Even subdivision of the beat taught at a variety of tempi at an early age will be an incredible gift for the students' in their future musical endeavors. Many times rhythm is taught on its own without an understanding of tempo. This leads to chronically incorrect rhythms due to poor understanding of subdivision.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Vertical alignment and collaboration in developing curriculum can be used as an effective means toward achieving successful student advancement through the various grade levels in both the general education classroom and the fine arts classroom. Additionally, the process of collaboration and alignment among districts can facilitate professional dialogue and engage students, teachers, and administrators in the development of cohesive educational programs. The results of this study show some areas in which teachers have goals in alignment and rank musical concepts with similar levels of importance, while in other areas, a discourse is needed to reach agreement regarding teaching methods and curricular content.

Many studies show that teachers and administrators view vertical alignment and collaboration as a positive concept (Axelson, 1975; Battersby & Verdi, 2015; Chandler & Mizener, 2011). Utilization of the TEKS in developing curriculum for the music classroom should lead to stronger vertical alignment. However, communication is essential for maintaining an aligned curriculum across grade levels. Elementary music teachers are mandated to have a foundational approach to music education, and perhaps it would be advantageous for secondary ensemble directors (band and choir) to establish a working partnership with elementary music teachers to develop consistent curriculum support and implementation. Despite the variety of TEKS and expectations of student

knowledge and skills in different grade levels, this study supports the argument that

elementary music teachers and secondary ensemble directors are similar in their

autonomy of music instruction. However, the data suggest that the district could benefit

from vertical collaboration to encourage a more uniform approach to alignment and

music curriculum.

<p style="text-align:center">Recommendations</p>

The following recommendations, as a result of this research, could potentially

improve districts' implementation of vertical alignment and the collaboration process as

it relates to teacher instruction. Districts and feeder patterns would benefit from fine-arts

in-service training of vertically-aligned professional learning communities (PLCs). This

would encourage a more fluid alignment for music students transitioning from each grade

level to the next. In addition to adding vertical meetings during staff development,

districts should also consider utilizing vertical alignment and collaboration on an ongoing

basis as the focus for instructional dialogue between extending grade levels. According to

Wilansky (2005), districts should also engage in the process of curriculum mapping at the

elementary levels as a means of increasing professional collaboration, standards

alignment practices, and assessment practices. She defines curriculum mapping as a way

to define the relationship of standards and classroom instruction, leading to a monitoring

device of facilitating the collaborative process of alignment. By implementing structured

collaboration, the district encourages an ongoing dialogue between music teachers of

each grade level and allows for more successful music students and music programs.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this research reflect teachers' attitudes towards curriculum expectations of music students in a large school district in North Texas. Generalization of these findings beyond this district should not be made as it was a sample too limited to reflect all of North Texas, other regions of the state, or the country. Subsequent research across a wide geographic area is recommended to determine if these findings are consistent with music faculties in other school districts that are vertically aligned. Future research could explore the quality of teacher communication vertically within a feeder pattern to determine the focus of curriculum alignment. Perhaps this would be best accomplished through a qualitative study, to gain insight into the frequency, method, content, and purpose of communication.

Additional research exploring similarities and differences in program concerns of elementary music teachers and secondary choir and band directors (retention, logistics, communication) and possible solutions, would also provide beneficial insight for district music programs. While studies of student retention from elementary to secondary music programs exist, additional research of the relationship between teacher expectations and retention could contribute to improvement of vertical alignment in music programs. Furthermore, a longitudinal study could provide empirical data on whether or not the use of vertical alignment and collaboration would sustain improvement in student achievement and retention in a district's music program over a period of time. Examination of student-driven data based on the TEKS for each grade level over the course of a year's instruction could provide information regarding the scope and

effectiveness of instruction. District-wide benchmark testing of all grade levels at the beginning and end of the year could provide data to measure the success of district's vertical alignment and collaboration of music teachers and directors. Ultimately, a replication of this study with a secondary population in North Texas or another location would aid in ascertaining whether the findings of each are similar with regard to those teachers' expectations of student knowledge based on state music standards.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Exemption Letter

Texas Woman's University Institutional Review Board

Application for Exempt Review

Name of Principal Investigator (PI): Kelli King   Phone: 501-284-5354

Status: ☐ faculty ☒ student ☐ staff ☐ other : _____   E-mail: kking16@twu.edu

Department: Music

Colleague ID# (this is the 7-digit # on your ID):   1141994

Title of Study: A Comparison of Student Preparation and Ensemble Directors' Expectations of Musical Knowledge and Skills among Schools within a District's Feeder Pattern

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If the PI is a student, provide the following information for the faculty advisor:

Name of advisor: Vicki D. Baker   E-mail: vbaker@twu.edu

TWU Department: Music

Estimated beginning date of study: 11/15/2017   Estimated duration of study   12/15/2017

Campus (Denton, Dallas, or Houston)   Denton

Type of Project :   ☒ thesis   ☐ professional paper   ☐ dissertation   ☐ class project
(check all that apply)   ☐ faculty research   ☐ pilot   ☐ other _____

Has project has been submitted for funding (internal or external)? ☐ yes ☒ no
   If yes, funding source: _____

Signatures:

Principal Investigator (PI): Signature certifies that the investigator has primary responsibility for all aspects of the research project.

Kelli King   10-21-17

Principal Investigator   Date

Faculty Research Advisor (for student research only): Signature certifies that the faculty member has read, reviewed, and approved the content of the application and is responsible for the supervision of this research study.

_____   _____
Faculty Research Advisor   Date

Academic Administrator: Signature certifies that the administrator has read, reviewed, and approved the content of the application.

_____   _____
Academic Administrator (Department Chair, Program Director, or Associate Dean)   Date

APPENDIX B

Feeder Pattern Chart
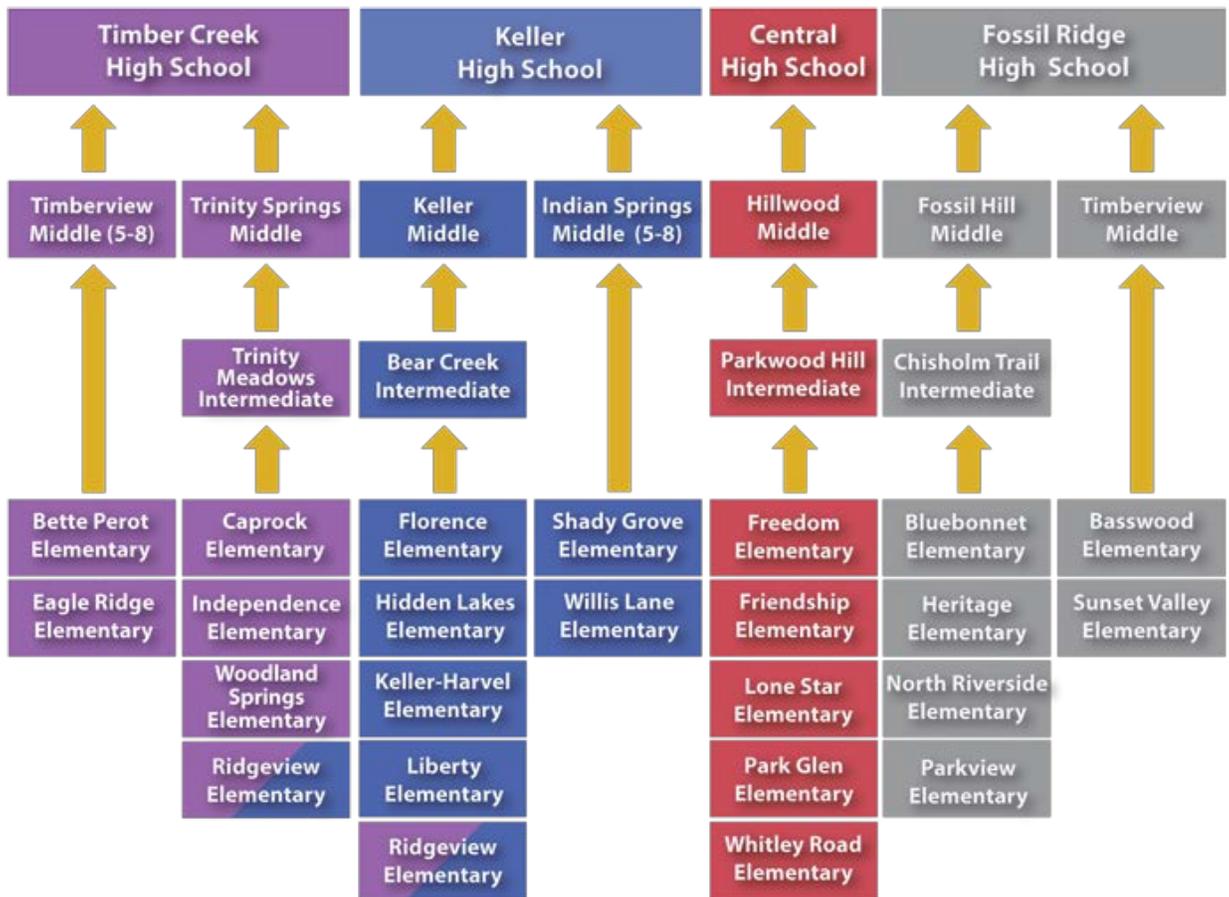
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APPENDIX C

Grade Level Survey Forms

Survey 1

Expectations of students entering 5th grade

For questions 2-12 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 5th grade, I expect them to be able to identify _."
For questions 13-15 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 5th grade, I expect them to be able to demonstrate _."

1. What is your job title? (band/choir/elementary; grade level)

2. 8th note pairs
- 4 Strongly Agree
- 3 Agree
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree
- N/A

3. Single 8th notes
- 4 Strongly Agree
- 3 Agree
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree
- N/A

4. 16th note pairs
- 4 Strongly Agree
- 3 Agree
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree
- N/A

5. Dotted half notes
- 4 Strongly Agree
- 3 Agree
- 2 Disagree
- 1 Strongly Disagree
- N/A

6. Syncopated rhythm patterns

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

7. Triplets

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

8. 2/4 Meters

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

9. 3/4 Meters

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

10. 4/4 Meters

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

11. Name the notes on the Treble clef staff

- ( ) 4 Strongly Agree
- ( ) 3 Agree
- ( ) 2 Disagree
- ( ) 1 Strongly Disagree
- ( ) N/A

12. Crescendo and Decrescendo

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

13. Pitch Matching skill

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

14. Proper Performance Posture

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

15. Appropriate Breathing

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

16. Tone

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

17. Which of the above learning targets do you believe to be most critical and why?

18. If you could add a learning target what would it be and why?

Survey 2

Expectations of students entering 7th grade

For questions 2-13 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 7th grade, I expect them to be able to identify _."
For questions 14-17 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 7th grade, I expect them to be able to demonstrate _."

1. What is your job title? (band/choir; grade level)

2. Single 8th notes

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

3. 8th note pairs

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

4. 16th note pairs

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

5. Syncopated rhythm patterns

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

6. Fermata and coda

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

7. Dynamics: including pianissmo to fortissimo

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

8. Tempi: including andante, largo, and adagio

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

9. Articulations: including accent and marcato

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

10. 6/8 Meters

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

11. Name the notes on the Treble clef staff

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

12. Crescendo and Decrescendo

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

13. Interpret musical forms (binary, ternary, phrasic, rondo, and theme and variations)

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

14. Pitch Matching skill

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

15. Proper Performance Posture

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

16. Appropriate Breathing

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

17. Tone

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

18. Aural skills: kinesthetic responses such as inner hearing, silent fingering, shadow bowing, or Curwen hand signs

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

19. Which of the above learning targets do you believe to be most critical and why?

[   ]

20. If you could add a learning target what would it be and why?

[   ]

Survey 3

Expectations of students entering 9th grade

For questions 2-7 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 9th grade, I expect them to be able to identify _."
For questions 8-11 please answer in response to the following statement: "When students enter 9th grade, I expect them to be able to demonstrate _."

1. What is your job title? (band/choir; grade level)

[   ]

2. Rhythmic patterns in simple, compound, and asymmetric meters

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

3. Music symbols and expressive terms (dynamics, tempo, articulation)

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

4. Melodic and harmonic parts in performance and listening pieces

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

5. Intervals and chord structures

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

6. Texture

○ 4 Strongly Agree   ○ 1 Strongly Disagree

○ 3 Agree   ○ N/A

○ 2 Disagree

7. Timbre

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

8. Correct intonation

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

9. Proper Performance Posture

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

10. Appropriate Breathing

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

11. Tone (mature and characteristic sound appropriate for the genre)

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

12. Aural skills: kinesthetic responses such as inner hearing, silent fingering, shadow bowing, or Curwen hand signs

- ○ 4 Strongly Agree
- ○ 3 Agree
- ○ 2 Disagree
- ○ 1 Strongly Disagree
- ○ N/A

13. Which of the above learning targets do you believe to be most critical and why?

14. If you could add a learning target what would it be and why?