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THE RURAL MUSIC TEACHER: AN INVESTIGATION OF
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIALIZATION FACTORS AND
CAREER SATISFACTION USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY

A DISSERTATION

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By

CARLA JO MALTAS

Norman, OK

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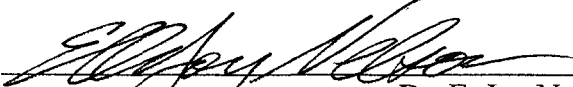
SCHOOL OF MUSIC


BY


Dr. Nancy H. Barry, Co-chair


Dr. Michael A. Raiber, Co-chair


Dr. Paula Conlon


Dr. E. Joy Nelson


Dr. Cal Stoltenberg

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*Make new friends, but keep the old
One is silver and the other's gold.*

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This dissertation is dedicated to the memory of my father,

Carl I. Maltas

(1937-1995)

He would have been proud.

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ABSTRACT

THE RURAL MUSIC TEACHER: AN INVESTIGATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SOCIALIZATION FACTORS AND CAREER SATISFACTION USING SYMBOLIC INTERACTION THEORY

By: Carla Jo Maltas

Major Professors: Nancy H. Barry, Ph.D.

Michael A. Raiber, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to examine the professional, occupational and cultural socialization of selected rural music teachers in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska. Experiences, reference groups and significant others were examined using elements of symbolic interaction theory to determine which factors were most important in order to experience career satisfaction. Fifty-four rural music teachers completed a quantitative survey. Data examined demographics, the choice of rural school district for employment, and types and sources of support. Ten individuals selected from survey respondents were interviewed to determine specific experiences and reference groups that affected socialization.

The findings from this study revealed that rural music teachers in this study understood the globalized tasks associated with music education. The music teachers in this study were not socialized to their position as music teacher in a specific rural school district. When the distance between the values of professional, occupational and cultural reference groups became too great, the music teacher had to compromise his/her personal vision and adopt the vision of one of the reference groups, use coping strategies or made strategic compromise in order to achieve the inner balance necessary to experience career satisfaction, or experience the types of frustrations that often lead to attrition.

Chapter One

Introduction

Background

Isolation is a part of the culture of teaching. Teachers spend the majority of their time behind closed doors, interacting with students but isolated from other adults (Lortie, 1975; Wyman, 1997). Interactions between and among adults are limited by the design of the building, the teacher's daily schedule and the conventions of the profession of teaching (Hollaway, 1994). A feeling of isolation is related to a lack of interpersonal interactions, and is one factor that is cited in many studies as a reason for leaving the teaching profession (Bubb, 2000; Harris & Collay, 1990; Krueger, 2000; Thoreson, 1997).

Professional, occupational and cultural socialization are important to the socialization of an individual to any teaching position. In order for individuals to feel connected to a teaching position, they must be socialized to the cultures that surround the position (Chafetz, 1976). The types of socialization that individuals experience help to determine their level of commitment and career satisfaction.

One framework that can be used for the examination of these types of socialization is called symbolic interaction theory. As described by George Herbert Mead (1934), symbolic interaction theory examines the individual as a complex social being who is constantly changing. Part of the change involves interactions with a number of reference groups. As the individual examines these reference groups, he/she adapts his/her vision of self to match the vision of the group and constructs realities as he/she interprets shared meanings.

Reference groups provide individuals with a set of gestures that are used within the group (Bandura, 1977). Gestures include language, symbols and communication that are specific to that reference group. In the context of adult socialization into a profession, these gestures are often first formally learned during preparatory training in college. They may also be learned during informal interactions within a group. Gestures provide individuals with cues about appropriate behaviors and responses in a variety of settings. The technical difficulty of the gestures comprise its body of knowledge and determine the degree of exclusivity of the group.

Individuals also need to identify significant others (Alfred, 2002; Merton, 1982). Significant others are members of the reference groups with whom the individuals have an especially acute identification. Significant others possess all of the gestures that define the groups' body of knowledge. There is frequently an imbalance of power, with the significant other having much more influence and power than does the individual (Kozicek, 1988). The individual looks to the significant other to provide the bridge for membership into the reference group.

Research indicates that in order to experience career satisfaction, teachers need to be professionally and occupationally socialized. This socialization aids the individual in identifying gestures necessary for admission to the various reference groups present in any school system. The more the individual desires membership in the group, the more he/she will adopt the gestures of the group. As the individual adopts the elements of persona associated with the specific reference group, he/she takes on a role within the group (Lasinski, 1992). Roles orient individuals to their place within a social group.

Roles can change within specific situations and can be accepted or rejected by individuals depending on their internal value systems.

There are some disagreements about the definitions and usage of the terms professional and occupational socialization. Professional and occupational socialization are terms that have been used interchangeably to describe both the globalized view of the tasks, gestures and attitudes necessary for admission to the profession (Kutch, 1994; Pavalko, 1988) and the daily interactions that come with integration into a particular occupational setting or location (Chafetz, 1976; Phelps 1982).

For the purpose of this study, professional socialization involves commitment to the globalized tasks, responsibilities and attitudes associated with a profession. Though this type of socialization occurs informally through the individual's elementary and secondary education, formal socialization into the profession of teaching typically begins during the training period of college and student teaching, where the technical language and other gestures needed for membership in the profession are learned (Pavalko, 1988). This type of socialization continues during the individual's career through staff development and other continuing education opportunities. Professional socialization provides an institutionalized view of the profession of teaching.

Occupational socialization involves commitment to a specific occupational situation or locale. During occupational socialization, individuals become aligned with the goals and philosophies of a particular school district or other educational organization. In education, this type of socialization initially occurs during field experience and student teaching. The pre-service teacher compares his/her personal vision as a potential teacher with those who work in the sponsoring school district. As the

individual modifies his/her global view of teaching to match the daily reality of the position, he/she decides if the job is right for him/her (Dallimore, 1998; Krueger, 2000). Occupational socialization continues through the individual's career cycle. Formal occupational socialization like in-service training and meetings, as well as informal occupational socialization like conversations in the teacher's lounge, provide the individual with opportunities to become affiliated with a particular school district. The localized situations found in a school district may or may not match the globalized views found in the profession of teaching.

In the case of the rural music teacher, it is necessary to examine the cultural socialization that affects the music teacher's life. In rural communities and school districts, it is especially important for teachers to understand the underlying culture and the community hierarchy. There are unwritten expectations that accompany a rural teaching position. DiBenedetto and Wilson (1982) indicate that the degree of cultural socialization and involvement in the school and community may determine whether a teacher will stay in a specific teaching position. Cultural reference groups help teachers to move from "outsider" to "insider" status as a fully participating member of a community reference group.

Rural music teachers face additional societal pressures. An early study by Hunt (1941) indicates that as one of the primary providers of culture for the rural community, rural music teachers are often expected to lead community or church choirs, direct community bands or serve other functions as leaders in the arts. Pressures in these positions are heightened by the lack of resources that are often available in urban or suburban districts. In a hierarchical view, rural teachers perceive their jobs in a rural

community as less prestigious than a job located in an urban or suburban school district. The perception that rural teachers are generally lowlier than their urban and suburban peers may lead to conflicts in self-perception (Becker & Burgess, 1995). Rural music teachers need strong occupational and cultural reference groups to help combat these feelings of inadequacy.

Studies about career satisfaction show that levels of satisfaction are closely tied to interpersonal relationships. Research about career satisfaction and the retention of teachers cites reference groups functioning as support systems as a prominent factor in the retention of teachers (Lasinski, 1992). Individuals need to make conformance adaptations in order to function successfully in an occupational and community setting. These reference groups define the gestures (i.e., language, actions, interactions, rituals and behaviors) that the individual needs to adopt in order to become a member of the community or social group. Educational research indicates that tangible factors like salary, facilities or teaching load have less influence on the individual than the level of affiliation with reference groups and the number of gestures adopted in determining whether an individual will continue in his/her specific position or in the profession of teaching.

Need for the Study

Rural music teachers have been noticeably absent from sociological educational research. The majority of educational research studies in the past twenty years have focused on urban and suburban teachers from the northeastern part of the United States (Bonner, 1997). Research in this field has examined the sociological aspects of teaching in urban and suburban districts (Brock & Grady, 1997). Studies in rural education have

typically focused on policy, culture, legislation, standards and the effects of centralization and consolidation on the delivery of education in rural school systems (Howley, 1997).

Rural teachers have been studied as a general population. Dempsey's (2000) study identified the competencies necessary to be effective rural educators. However, studies about specific content area specialists in rural school districts have not been done. Phelps (1982) stated that rural music teachers have not been studied because less population density makes study more laborious and issues develop related to distance. Levine and Lezotte's (1990) study stated that the lack of research might be due to the diversity found in the types of music teachers in rural school districts. The proximity of research Universities to urban and suburban school districts may also be a factor in the lack of rural school research.

Urban and suburban music educators have been the focus of some sociological studies. Because many attendance centers only have one vocal and one instrumental music teacher, studies have focused on how these music teachers related to those within their building regardless of content area (e.g., Chafetz, 1976; Faules & Alexander, 1978; Holloway, 1994; Lasinski, 1992; Rosenholtz, 1989) or to those within their content areas, but outside of their building (e.g., Goodson-Rochelle, 1998; Legette, 1997; Price, 1989; Reynolds, 1997). The implications of these studies are that these music educators are somewhat isolated from their colleagues in their daily interactions, but also maintain frequent contact with other music teachers when seeking content area advice.

General studies about specific types of music educators have also been the focus of some investigations (e.g., Heston, Dedrick Raschke & Whitehead, 1996; L'Roy, 1983; Olsen, 2000; Phelps, 1982), but no studies involving the solo or single rural music

teacher were found. The enculturation of rural music teachers involves a different set of reference groups for the localized socialization of the individual into the community and school cultures than those found in urban and suburban settings. The gestures used by reference groups are different when the music teacher is the only “expert” in the community. No studies have been found involving the professional, occupational or cultural socialization of the rural music educator. Because socialization may help to determine whether music educators experience career satisfaction, a study is needed to determine which professional, occupational and cultural experiences and reference groups may be important to rural music teachers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the socialization process of rural music educators in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization. This includes the development and role of personal and professional experiences, reference groups and significant others in the music educator’s career pursuit within a rural school district.

The results of this study may be valuable to:

1. Institutions of higher education who are interested in educating future music educators to work in rural settings;
2. Professional music organizations (such as the National Association of Music Educators and American Choral Director’s Association) who are interested in providing pre-service and in-service training to meet the needs and concerns of rural music educators;

3. Professional education associations (like the National Education Association and the American Federation of Teachers) who seek resources to meet the needs and concerns of rural content specialists;
4. State departments of education, individual professional service units and local school districts as they seek to develop specific content area in-services for rural educators.

Research Questions

In order to achieve the purpose of this study, the following research questions will be addressed:

1. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the professional socialization of the rural music teacher?
2. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the occupational socialization of the rural music teacher?
3. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the cultural socialization of the rural music teacher?
4. What factors help to determine the level of satisfaction regarding choice of profession and position of the rural music teacher?

Limitations of the Study

The following limitations will be made concerning the study:

1. Subjects for this study will be selected from rural public school music educators in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska who are listed on the Oklahoma Education Association or the Nebraska State Education Association membership rolls and who are the only certificated music educator in the district.

2. The study is limited to volunteers who are willing to fill out a survey or participate in an interview with the researcher.
3. Since qualitative research methods will be used for a portion of this study, some findings may not be generalizable.

Definition of Terms

Detailed explanations of terms will be provided at appropriate times throughout the study. The following key terms are defined here for clarification:

Body of Knowledge—a collection of shared gestures used to form reference groups (Becker, Geer, Hughes & Strauss, 1961).

Cultural socialization--addresses the qualities of shared values and beliefs, heroes, rules and rituals and an informal communication network that a culture or community possesses (Walsh-Reuss, 1998). Cultural socialization helps people to act collectively for a common purpose (Becker & Porter, 1986).

Gestures—communication, language or symbols common to a culture. Gestures have shared meaning or significance for the members of the group, and the group readily understands these gestures. The degree of exclusivity of the gesture determines the degree of exclusivity of the culture (Mead, 1934).

Music Teacher--a person who is certified in the state of Oklahoma or Nebraska in the field of music and whose primary job is to work as a music specialist teaching music K-12 in an instrumental, vocal or general music classroom.

Occupational socialization--occurs when values, attitudes, interests, knowledge and skills are learned that are localized to a specific school district or other reference group (Chafetz, 1976; Phelps, 1982).

Professional socialization—is defined as a generalized commitment to the tasks, attitudes, gestures and dispositions of a profession (Dallimore, 1998; Kent, 1979).

Professional socialization involves a globalized view of the profession.

Reference group--a group of individuals specific to a culture to which a person either belongs or aspires to belong. It is the group or social category whose outlook is used by the individual as the frame of reference in the organization of perceptions of the world (L'Roy, 1983; Shibutani, 1961).

Rural--a community that has less than 2,500 residents or a county that has less than 10,000 residents. Rural will also be defined as a non-metropolitan locale, where there is limited proximity to metropolitan areas (Rios, 1988).

Rural School--A school that has an average daily attendance (ADA) of six hundred students or fewer and/or a Johnson locale code of a 7 or 8 (Johnson, 1989).

Satisfaction--the state of mind where individuals adjust expectations and actions until a sense of balance or inner peace is achieved (Stryker & Owens, 2000).

Significant other-- a member of the reference group who exemplifies a body of knowledge or a set of gestures that an individual admires. The significant other provides the link between the reference group and the individual. He/she also determines entry of an individual into the reference group. The measure of amount of significance to an individual is determined by the frequency of contact, level of equality between the individual and the significant other, the control over the individual's rewards and punishments and the power wielded over the individual (L'Roy, 1983).

Organization of the Study

This study contains six chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter Two reviews the related literature. Sources related to symbolic interaction theory, professional socialization, occupational socialization, cultural socialization and career satisfaction will be discussed. Chapter Three describes the procedures of the study, including the selection of subjects, the development of the quantitative research instrument, the development of the qualitative research instrument, the interview protocol to be used, the types of data analysis to be used and the significance of the study. Chapter Four presents a statistical interpretation of the data collected from the quantitative questionnaire. Chapter Five provides an analysis and interpretation of data gathered from qualitative interviews. Chapter Six includes a summary of the study, conclusions, implications of the research and recommendations for further action.

Chapter Two

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Socialization is the process by which individuals gain the values, beliefs, attitudes, interests, knowledge, roles and skills specific to cultural groups in which they are or want to be members (Chafetz, 1976; Pavalko, 1988). Socialization involves a series of personal adjustments in response to external stimuli (Saccardo, 1986). These types of socialization are particularly important to the study of teaching and schools. Professional socialization provides a globalized view of the tasks and responsibilities associated with any profession. In studies about education, occupational socialization provides a localized view of the tasks associated with a position in a specific school district or location. Research that uses symbolic interaction and other approaches to professional and occupational socialization will be reviewed in this chapter. All cultures also have a particular set of behaviors that define them. Studies that provide a view of localized cultures specific to rural communities and rural school districts will be included as they pertain to the cultural socialization of the rural music teacher. Career satisfaction will be examined as it relates to attrition, isolation and the interpersonal interactions that result from socialization.

Symbolic Interaction Theory

Symbolic interaction theory provides a descriptive measure of human behavior (Faules & Alexander, 1978). This theory can be applied to every facet of the individual's sociological development. Through the use of symbols and descriptive language devices known as gestures, reference groups and significant others help the individual to

understand his/her role in relationship to the rest of society (Spillman, 2002). This theory is important to understanding professional, occupational and cultural socialization.

Using a symbolic interaction perspective, the ability of an individual to assign significance to an object or action is important. These objects and actions are called symbols and gestures. If these symbols and gestures are significant to the individual and the group, they have a shared meaning that effects communication within a group, and help to transform an individual from “outsider” to “insider” status within the group. The gestures used communicate an image of self in relationship to others and must be understood by the individual. The number of specific gestures and the amount of exclusivity of the technical language help to determine the degree of openness of the reference group (Becker, Geer, Hughes & Strauss, 1961).

Reference groups are important in symbolic interaction theory. Through the individual’s interaction and use of gestures with these reference groups, exchanges occur which establish common attitudes, organize behaviors and construct meaning. Reference groups provide gestures that are specific to that group (Bandura, 1977; Sly, Everett, McQuarrie & Wood, 1990). The sharing of a collection of gestures creates a body of knowledge for the individual and reference groups. This body of knowledge in turn provides normative behaviors for the individual. To achieve “insider” status within any profession, the individual must accept the tasks, behaviors and attitudes of the reference groups within the profession. The individual often relinquishes some individual behaviors in favor of group norms.

Significant others are members of reference groups who have high degrees of importance to the individual (Alfred, 2002; Merton, 1982). They are valued because they

possess all of the gestures that the individual would like to possess. As a result, they may also be perceived as having higher status and more power than has the individual.

Significant others are sought out by the individual for validation and as used as a comparative model to check the development of the self's role within the group. Because the significant other has all of the important gestures desired by the individual, he/she often provides the link between the individual and the reference group to which the person wants to belong. The significant other's measure of importance is determined by the frequency and primacy of contact in addition to the level of control he/she has over rewards and punishments (Kozicek, 1988; Lasinski, 1992). The amount of status and power, the number of meaningful gestures used by the significant other and the physical proximity to the individual all determine the level of significance or status he/she holds in comparison to the individual (Taylor, 1968).

In education, reference groups and significant others are often chosen from occupational groups in close proximity to the individual or those who teach identical subject area specializations. Individuals assign importance to reference groups and significant others. These assignments remind the individual of what to do in specific social situations (Sullivan & Feldman, 1979). Reference groups and significant others affect attitudes, values, role orientation, performance and commitment to the profession of education.

Adult socialization into the workplace has also been studied using the theory of symbolic interaction. Because adults normally spend most of their waking hours on the job, symbolic interaction theory is used to investigate occupational identity in a number of studies (Bandura, 1977; Becker & Carper, 1957; Kutch, 1994; Pavalko, 1988;

Saccardo, 1986). Sociologists have applied symbolic interaction theory and its notions of shared gesture and body of knowledge to a variety of different occupations. For example, Boys in White (Becker, Geer, Hughes & Strauss, 1961) was a longitudinal study about the professional and occupational socialization of physicians as they attended medical school and learned the role of physician. A series of formal interviews and participant observations documented students as they developed their self-concept as physicians (Becker, et al., 1961). L’Roy (1983) applied the techniques used in the Becker research to study role development in future music educators. Later studies about music education and role development also used elements of the symbolic interaction approach (Clinton, 2001; Schonauer, 2002; Wolfgang, 1990).

According to Griffin and Hukill (1979), sociology involves continual interplay between individual choice and situational constraint. The theory of symbolic interaction explains the gestures, reference groups and significant others that construct meaning for an individual in specific social situations. Gestures provide the language, symbols and communication tools specific to a group. Reference group members may function as comparative models with whom the individual can judge his/her gestures. Significant others serve as the bridge between the individual and the reference group. Examining the gestures, reference groups and significant others used in the socialization of individuals to the workplace is one application of the symbolic interaction theory that is important to the present study.

Professional Socialization

Studies about adult socialization frequently focus on the socialization that occurs in the workplace. In the context of work, socialization is the process of acquiring

knowledge, attitudes, values and skills necessary to become a professional. Professional socialization provides a globalized view of the gestures, reference groups and significant others used to socialize individuals within a particular profession. One feature of this type of socialization involves learning patterns of thought, customary actions and solutions to common problems that can be found in many generalized situations within a profession. According to Kutch (1994) and Pavalko (1988), professional socialization is dynamic, ongoing, and necessary for the continued growth of each professional member, frequently involving unlearning, relinquishing and modifying old individualized behaviors in favor of new, more conformative behaviors.

To understand the concept of professional socialization, delineations between “job,” “career” and “profession” need to be made. A job involves a predetermined amount of work undertaken for a fixed price that is set before a worker. A career involves a course of continued progress in the life of a person that has consecutive, progressive achievement (Nielsen, 2001). A profession has a body of knowledge and skills that members use with accuracy and confidence. The term “profession” also implies having a calling or higher purpose. Professionals are experts in the field, requiring little or no supervision and retaining a high degree of decision-making power (Dempsey, 2000; Lynn, 1965; Merton, 1982; Rice, 1979; Richardson-Koehler, 1987).

Because teachers are autonomous but are relatively powerless, they have been categorized as belonging to a pseudo-profession (Becker et al., 1961). Educators express values and attitudes that are used by members of a profession. However, situational constraints like time spent with students and the structure of the job make it difficult for teachers to achieve the total autonomy normally associated with a profession. Teaching is

also a divided profession. Divisions occur by areas of expertise, the status of the institutions in which the individual is employed and by the training that the individuals receive (Lacey, 1977).

The professional socialization of teachers often occurs through a series of planned experiences. Formal professional socialization begins during the initial training period in college and continues through the internship or student teaching period, where loyalties are formed to the profession through the introduction of the skills, tasks, attitudes and responsibilities of teaching. Though university training provides the bulk of initial professional socialization through coursework and field experience, additional professional socialization occurs throughout the teacher's career cycle via staff development and other professional growth activities. Professional socialization can also occur through mentoring, which is a formalized program of socializing beginning teachers to the tasks, gestures, skills and attitudes of the profession (Harris & Collay, 1990; Williams et al., 1991).

Studies about the professional socialization of music teachers have focused on the individual's perception of his/her dual identities as teacher and performer. Because musicians come into the profession needing to demonstrate both a certain level of musical and teaching proficiency, their initial needs may be different than those in many other subject areas (Allen, 1994; Linds & Lee, 2000; Phelps, 1982). An early study by Strub (1957) found that beginning music teachers perceive themselves as either performer or teacher, instead of viewing themselves as a combination of both. Later studies about the socialization of music teachers compare their perceptions of self as

teacher instead of musician. These studies provide a variety of views of teachers as artists and educators (Clinton, 2001; Schonauer, 2002; Wolfgang, 1990).

Studies about the professional socialization of music teachers also reveal the specific concerns related to the music teacher's position. Music teachers have a high visibility position, with more demands on their personal life, and more extra duties than many of their colleagues (Wohlfeil, 1989). They have extra administrative duties like equipment maintenance and inventory management, and their music programs serve as prominent public relations vehicles for the school (Haack & Smith, 2000).

Because there is often only one music educator as content area specialist in an attendance center, Olsen's (2000) study regarding professional reference groups focused both on how they interacted with other teachers within their content area who are outside of their immediate building, and with teachers in their schools outside of their subject area. This study found that unlike many other segments of the teaching population, music teachers have embedded reference groups and significant others when they begin their careers. These others are often those with whom the music teacher has created music. If musicians in the reference groups are only performers, the music teacher may align him/herself as performer with little career commitment to the profession of teaching (Linds & Lee, 2000). Music teachers who are most successful are those who can associate simultaneously with both musician and educator reference groups in an occupational setting (Legette, 1997).

Studies about the professional socialization of rural teachers indicate that many of the competencies and experiences valued by rural administrators are universal to the profession (Strub, 1957; Wyman, 1997). According to studies by Horn (1985) and

Surwill (1980), ideal rural teachers should be generalists who are certified to teach multiple subjects. They are frequently asked to sponsor multiple extra duties outside of the classroom. Because of these diverse tasks, they need to be able to respond to a variety of student needs and be adaptable. Rural teachers should exhibit professional independence, an interest in rural recreational activities and an appreciation for rural culture. They should be able to adapt to different living conditions and develop local and long-distance support systems. All of these qualities are often valued more highly by administrators than content area knowledge (Lortie, 1975).

Some studies about rural teachers indicate that they have certain types of common characteristics. Rural teachers tend to be less educated, younger, less experienced and less likely to be a minority (Vijaysimba, 2000). The National Rural Education Association states that teachers in high poverty rural areas are among the most likely to be under-qualified to teach in their subject area. In fact, the number of educators teaching in areas outside of their certification area is a growing professional problem (Conway, 1999; Stern, 1994). Rigorous certification standards can also be an impediment to attracting viable candidates to rural positions (Stone & Farberman, 1970). The implications of these studies are that rural teachers, because of their inexperience, may have strong reference groups, but they may not have a viable significant other that helps them to attain insider status in the professional culture of teaching.

It appears that colleges and universities have done little to socialize future teachers to the realities of teaching in a rural school district (Gregory, 1992). Certification programs tend to favor large urban and suburban districts, where teachers can specialize in a single subject (Gardner & Edington, 1982) instead of becoming generalists. Studies

show that to prepare teachers for rural educational settings, students need to study rural issues (Howley, 1996). They should examine issues from a localized, community perspective rather than one that is globalized (Horn, 1985). They should be able to assess the needs of a rural community and cultivate curriculum that contributes to local meaning and knowledge (Howley, 1997). They should have experience in a rural setting, either as a student (Russell, 1994), or as a pre-service teacher (Reynolds, 1997; Surwill, 1980) and their preparation needs to include sensitivity training about rural prejudices (Chalker, 1999).

Symbolic interaction theory is used in many studies as it applies to the professional socialization of adults in the workplace. In order for adults to be socialized into a career, a series of personal adjustments must be made. There is interplay between personal choice and situational constraint that accompanies the acceptance of a reference group's gestures. Through professional socialization, the attitudes encouraged by the reference groups are globalized to the profession, and the gestures used are generalized to the profession rather than being specific to a localized situation.

Occupational Socialization

Occupational socialization in teaching occurs as the values, attitudes, interests, knowledge and skills that are specific to a school district or other local situation are learned (Chafetz, 1976; Phelps, 1982). When applying symbolic interaction theory, as occupational socialization occurs, the individual assimilates the values, abilities, expected behaviors, social knowledge and other shared gestures that transform him/her from "outsider" to "insider" status within a school district. Loyalties are transferred from

generalized allegiance to the profession of teaching to an affiliation with an individual school district (Dallimore, 1998).

The occupational socialization of teachers involves formal experiences like mentoring activities and staff meetings and informal experiences like conversations in the teacher's lounge (Chafetz, 1976). As the individual assigns significance to gestures and understands the roles and responses that are particular to a reference group, he/she becomes a member of that particular community (Mead, 1934). Though most socialization is a by-product of routine human interaction, occupational socialization is explicit and intentional. Occupational socialization shows the patterns of relationships between organizations and individuals within a specific school district (Pavalko, 1988).

Teachers need an occupational reference group to learn about the culture of the local school district (Phelps, 1982). The occupational reference group uses a set of gestures that contains a common set of meanings (Becker & Porter, 1986). Occupational reference groups may include experienced teachers, formal mentors, building level administration, professional teacher organizations, school boards, students, and employees at professional teacher centers (Selzer, 2000; Taylor, 1968). Though experiences led by these groups are formalized through mentoring programs during the teacher's initial years of employment with a school district, they continue throughout the teacher's career. Formal professional activities also provide occupational support to teachers throughout their careers. These experiences include observing fellow teachers and attending in-service workshops and conferences with administrators (Morton, 1984). The informal support of colleagues and peers is necessary, as casual conversations and advice give much needed support to the teacher (Lasinski, 1992). Students play a

significant role as a reference group in the occupational socialization of teachers. This is attributable to the amount of time teachers spend with them and the fact that teachers look to students for validation of their efforts (Hollaway, 1994; Zeichner, 1979).

All organizations have patterns of relationships between participants. Because rural teachers are generalists who sponsor a variety of extra duty activities, occupational reference group patterns in rural school districts are often different than those found in urban and suburban school districts (Collins, 1999; Dempsey, 2000; Gardner & Edington, 1982; Gilliland, 1991; Stern, 1994). To replace the collegiality urban and suburban music teachers have with other music teachers within their school districts, rural music teachers will sometimes form alliances with music teachers in nearby districts (Hersh, Stroot & Snyder, 1995).

Teachers new to a district or new to the profession may have not established occupational reference groups or significant others. Colleagues in a school district may perceive a new teacher as a threat or only a short-term colleague. In addition, new teachers are not a part of established friendships (Morton, 1984). Without occupational socialization and effective reference groups, teachers will drift into survival mode, where they will never analyze their instructional effectiveness nor make an effort to improve (Kent, 1979). The lack of occupational socialization also effects the affiliation with an individual school district. Admission may not be made into specific reference groups within a school building if individuals fail to identify important reference group members and significant others.

Schools are bureaucratic structures. A bureaucracy demands that certain conventions are followed (Dubin, 1976; Saccardo, 1986; Smith, 1985). Individuals use

compromise and adaptations to survive in bureaucratic settings. As individuals examine their professional identities and receive occupational support from reference groups and significant others, they adapt their vision of self as a member of the profession to the localized environment.

A localized occupational view involves adjustment to the realities of teaching within a specific school district or location. The most important factors in this socialization are the relationships with colleagues and administration (Krause, 1971; Kutch, 1994). Teachers must balance their feelings of autonomy in the classroom setting with a sense of strategic compliance in order to survive within the bureaucratic structure. Occupational reference groups, significant others and gestures help the individual to modify his/her universal vision of teaching to match the specific vision of the local school district.

Cultural Socialization

Every culture has observable behaviors, shared cultural values and organizational assumptions. Cultural socialization addresses the language, gestures, shared values and beliefs, heroes, rules and rituals, and an informal communication network that a culture possesses (Walsh-Reuss, 1998). Since the establishment of the Rural Center for Policy Studies in the 1970's, the cultural sociology of rural communities and rural schools has been a topic for many research studies.

In order to have a better understanding of the cultural sociology of rural areas, the concept of rural must be defined. This is immediately problematic, as rural is often defined from an urban perspective. Though sixty percent of the world is rural, we live in an urban oriented society (Lonsdale & Enyedi, 1984). People who assume that all rural

regions are the same generalize the characteristics of rural communities. This results in “cultural imperialism” where urban is valued over rural (Haas, 1990). Because rural is typically defined by urban policy makers and stereotypical terminology is used to describe rural in regressive terms, many residents of rural areas have identity problems and perceive rural as less valuable than urban (Chalker, 1999).

Rios (1988) states that there are qualitative and quantitative definitions of rural, each serving different purposes. Quantitative definitions help to form policy in governmental agencies. Qualitative definitions attempt to define regions and those who live within them.

There are three quantitative definitions of rural. The Census Bureau defines rural as anything that is not urban, in open country or in communities with less than 2,500 inhabitants, while the Department of Labor defines rural as a county with less than 2,500 residents (Horn, 1985; Lawson, 1989; Sherwood, 2001). The Rural Development Act of 1972 states that rural is anything outside of a city of more than 10,000. In general, rural can also be defined by economy, density, isolation and relative proximity to urban centers or it can be defined as anything outside of a metropolitan area. Metropolitan is further defined as an area with a large population base and economically related, adjoining communities (Lawson, 1989; Rios, 1988).

Wilkinson (1991) provides a qualitative definition of rural, which encompasses ecology, history and occupational patterns. Ecologically, rural indicates that there are few people in a large territory. Historically, rural refers to a particular socio-cultural pattern that is traditional and conservative, while occupational patterns involve land-based careers like farming, ranching, fishing or working with raw materials. Rural areas are

characterized by dependence on natural resources, a narrow industrial base and reliance on low skilled jobs with limited pay (Huang & Howley, 1991). The word “rural” implies agriculturally related, rustic, idyllic, simple, homogeneous, and unrefined. Qualities like resilience, self-determination, a feeling of community, dedication to family and strong work ethics are valued in rural settings (Bushnell, 1999; Jones, 2001; Rios, 1988; Wilkinson, 1991).

The concept of rural in America manifests itself in the art, literature, music, advertisements and formation of public policy. The rural landscape has become a figurative symbol of stability in America (Bowers, 2000). Though art has romanticized the concept of rural, there are multiple rural realities due to the vast types of geography and the regional differences found in the United States (Stern, 1994).

Most rural communities have common characteristics. They use land-based industries for their economic foundation and may be especially vulnerable to volatile changes in the economy. There are limitations to the quantity, quality and variety of services offered in rural areas and there is less delineation between economy, education and entrepreneurship in rural areas (Chance, 1994; Huang, 1999; Lonsdale & Enyedi, 1984).

Studies about rural cultural socialization have also focused on the church, the school and the family in the rural setting. Social institutions like school, church, and family provide standards of behaviors, certain types of personal interactions, and many social activities for the residents of rural communities. Strong family, school, and church ties are characteristics that contribute to a strong sense of community in the rural setting (Arfstrom, 2001; Bryant & Grady, 1990; Miller, 1993; Yarrow et al., 1999). These social

institutions may direct the types and frequency of contacts between people as well (Bonner, 1997; Cernea, 1997; Ilbery, 1998; Stern, 1994). Solidarity in the rural community is increased through family ties/blood affinity, attachment to the land, honoring ancestral heritage and the habituation of community (Wilkinson, 1991). Affiliations often come from the community's social institutions.

As a social institution, the rural school can be the physical center of the community. As the center, the school functions as a stabilizer in rural communities (Miller, 1993; Raywid, 1999; Theobald, 1991). Rural schools and communities operate as a single, integrated sociological structure. The school provides recreational opportunities for the community and often it is the community's social center and gathering place (Howley & Eckman, 1997; Howley & Harmon, 1997; Miller, 1993; Sherwood, 2001). The significant gestures of school rituals, curriculum and activities that are localized to an individual school district contribute to the construction of school as place and connect it to the rural environment (Bushnell, 1999; DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995). Schools are often one of the largest employers in the community and provide the community with economic stability (Boethel, 2000; Flora, Flora, Spears, & Swanson, 1992; Gammon, 1994; Price, 1989). Rural school districts may also provide community educational services and serve as a satellite branch of a regional college or university (Mulkey, 1992) or provide health and social services for the community (Cotton, 1996; Huang, 1999).

In rural communities, the school provides rural community members with a sense of affiliation and pride. Many studies about rural schools state that those involved with schools have an increased sense of community ownership and involvement with a

common cause (Bryant & Grady, 1990; Hunt, 1941; Jones, 2001; Thurber, 1996). As is often the case with urban and suburban counterparts, the community interest in rural schools frequently centers on a non-academic area like sports or band. This community pride is at odds with the values traditionally associated with education, since this cultural contradiction places an emphasis in areas other than academic achievement (DeYoung & Lawrence, 1995).

Members of a rural community expect that all will participate in and contribute to the community. The types of contacts between community members are more frequent and intimate than similar types of contacts in urban and suburban areas (Wilkinson, 1991). Participation in community events is one way such contact is evaluated. There is also an expectation that rural community members will care for each other's physical and psychological needs (Bryant & Grady, 1990). There is a collective visualization of town residents as "insider" and all others as "outsider." The gestures used and reference groups that are formed become specific to each rural community.

The relationship between school size and interactions between reference groups has been the focus of sociological studies about rural schools. Rural schools are smaller, more homogeneous and often more nurturing and community centered than their urban counterparts (Cotton, 1996). One advantage of this small school size is that teachers, parents and students get to know each other with greater closeness and intimacy (Perreault & Hill, 2000). Rural school faculty often find it easier to develop consensus, work closely with the parents and community members and involve students. In addition, students have more diverse opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. In fact, many studies state that school size often contributes to an increased

sense of obligation to participate in all aspects of the school (Higgins, 1993; McLaughlin, Huberman & Haukins, 1997; Roellke, 1996; Stevens & Pelter, 1994).

Rural teachers are members of a highly visible reference group, and they face increased social pressures that may not occur for their urban or suburban colleagues. Because rural schools and their teachers have an intimate relationship with other community members, their gestures may be highly prized. Teachers are seen as having a “special mission” that is honored by society (Wyman, 1997). With this elevation in status comes increased responsibility as teachers are called upon outside of school to serve as church leaders, social organizers and role models for the entire community (Guilliford, 1984; Schonauer, 2002). High expectations for moral and civic behavior may overwhelm the teacher who is unprepared to conform to these implied community norms (Goodson-Rochelle, 1998).

The lack of knowledge about other reference groups within a community may also become a problem for teachers who move into a rural school district. The gestures shared by a community indicate how much value community members put on rural education and those who teach in their communities. Many times, local residents indicate that they value the opinions of teachers, administrators and local policy makers as important reference group members over the opinions of state and national governmental agencies (Heston, et al., 1996).

Social scrutiny by community reference groups may lead to feelings of cultural isolation (Miller & Sidebottom, 1985; Storey, 1993; Thurber, 1996). Isolation from the community may result in the teacher being perceived as an outsider, preventing the teacher from becoming a fully participatory member of the community. Teachers also

make the mistake of excluding themselves from community activities, because their focus is on the classroom (Hartley, 1996). Until the teacher chooses to participate in community activities, he or she may remain an outsider and may never attain insider status. Those who live outside of the community in which they teach are also more likely to feel like an outsider (Harris & Collay, 1990; Selzer, 2000). Phelps (1982) states that rural teachers need to seek out significant others in the community who will help the teacher “break into” the community culture.

Cultural reference groups are helpful in allowing teachers to move from “outsider” to “insider” status and to learn the hierarchy of the community’s social structure. This support may come from family, friends, church/faith groups and professional community contacts (Heston, et al., 1996; Selzer, 2000). These reference groups give the teacher assistance in times of crisis and may provide a supportive buffer that can help the teacher to retain his/her position if community factions oppose the teacher. A new teacher in a rural school district may not understand the cultural reference groups and climate that impact the community. This lack of knowledge of rural communities may result in culture shock (Selzer, 2000) and may slow the teacher’s enculturation into the community (Goodson-Rochelle, 1998).

Some teachers become deeply embedded in the rural community culture. There is an increased likelihood of these teachers being rejected as outsiders by occupational reference groups within the school district’s culture. Those teachers who are most effective in achieving “insider” status can simultaneously practice the gestures common to the school culture, the community culture, and can identify the important reference

groups and significant others who operate within each culture (Phelps, 1982; Selzer, 2000).

Symbolic interaction theory studies about rural communities and schools indicate that the cultural reference groups used by rural teachers are often significantly different than those used by their urban or suburban counterparts. Because the music teacher is often the main provider of arts and culture for the rural community, the lack of opportunity to interact with other skilled musicians on a regular basis may lead to feelings of isolation. Teachers in other content areas and community members may fill some aspects of this void. The degree to which a music teacher aligns him/herself with other members of the rural community and begins to share gestures within this group helps to determine the level of career satisfaction experienced by the individual as well as the likelihood that the music teacher will remain in the school district and rural community.

Career Satisfaction

Studies on professional, occupational and cultural socialization indicate that most who remain in their teaching positions do so because of a high level of career satisfaction (Allen, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Phelps, 1982; Price, 1989). This satisfaction is a key component in the retention of teachers. Studies on career satisfaction in education have concluded that levels of satisfaction with teaching are directly tied to interpersonal interactions with students and colleagues. Other factors influencing career satisfaction in music education include building a successful program, doing the variety of tasks found in the profession, identification of self as teachers and enculturation into the educational setting through identification with others.

Working conditions are also cited as influences in education studies about levels of career satisfaction. Some studies define working conditions as the physical facilities (Horn, 1985; Phelps, 1982). Others define conditions as tangible materials and resources (Kutch, 1994; Thoreson, 1997; Thurber, 1996). Etzioni's (1969) study defines working conditions as the psychological states and interpersonal relationships that contribute to the climate of a school. All of these studies state that the interpersonal relationships developed between members of a school are more important to the participants in the studies than any physical or tangible resources.

Though salary issues have been examined as a factor for leaving a particular position or education in general (Farkas, Johnson & Foleno, et al., 2000; Horn, 1985; Phelps, 1982), most people entering the field of education understand that salary limitations accompany the profession (Goodson-Rochelle, 1998). It does not appear, therefore, to be a significant career satisfaction consideration for many teachers.

When teachers express dissatisfaction and are not successfully socialized to a particular school district, to the profession of education or to the community, attrition may occur. Attrition has been studied in general teaching populations, rural teaching populations and music teaching populations. Statistics reported in studies vary regarding the numbers of teachers leaving the profession within a given time frame. Williams (1991) states that fifty percent of all teachers leave the classroom within the first seven years. The high visibility that occurs in the rural community combined with the reality shock of having to "know it all," contribute to the fact that attrition rates can approach 30-50% per year in rural areas (Selzer, 2000). The National Rural Education Association states that rural districts have an average vacancy rate of thirty-one percent per year

(Vijaysimba, 2000). Harris and Collay's (1990) study determined that without adequate support systems, nearly sixty percent of rural music teachers are likely to leave their first position after one year.

Attrition may be more related to conditions of teaching than to the locale of the job or the amount of preparation for the teacher's career. When teachers experience frustrations with principals, students, parents or lack collegial support, their feelings of commitment are stunted (Matthes & Duffy, 1989; Neese, 2001; Phelps, 1982). In order to survive, they either lower their aspirations and motivation, or they leave the position or the career. According to Kent (1979) and Rosenholtz (1989), the link between dissatisfaction and actually leaving a job may also be mediated by a lack of alternatives. When individuals have no choice about whether to remain in a particular position, they may be willing to "settle for less."

Occupational and cultural reference group members and significant others in a particular community help the individual to determine the perceived value of teaching in that school district. If the individual does not perceive the district as valuable, he/she may attempt to move to a teaching position with higher perceived value. This results in vertical career movement. Vertical career movement occurs when teachers move from building to building or between school districts in order to improve their perceived status, but remain teachers. Many teachers move for increased social status, money or better working conditions. Other individuals cite interpersonal factors and the socio-economic status of the students as reasons to leave a position (Becker & Burgess, 1995).

Summary

The literature discussed in this chapter included: symbolic interaction theory as it applies to professional and occupational socialization of adults, the professional and occupational socialization of rural and music teachers and the cultural socialization that occurs in rural communities and school districts. Career satisfaction was studied as it related to the socialization of rural music teachers.

Symbolic interaction provides the framework for this study. As individuals interact with reference groups, they begin to identify gestures (i.e., language, actions, skills, knowledge, etc.) that are specific to that group. Reference groups provide standards of behavior necessary for admission into the group. Literature regarding reference groups addresses the types of gestures used by the groups for membership. The number of technical and specialized gestures used by the group determines the amount of exclusivity in the group. Significant others also play a key role in the individual's socialization. The significant other possesses all of the gestures desired by the individual and is a link between the reference group and the individual. The significant other has a degree of importance that is determined by the amount of status, the number of gestures and proximity to the individual. The norms for acceptable behavior within an occupational setting are the by-products of interaction between individuals in the reference group and the mentoring by the significant other.

Adult socialization has been the topic of many research studies. Occupation is one of the significant ways in which an adult identifies him/herself. An entire body of literature exists which examines socialization into the roles, tasks and gestures of various professions. Since there are some disagreements about the definitions and usage of the

terms professional and occupational socialization, the terminology is in a state of flux. Professional and occupational socialization are terms that have been used interchangeably to describe both the globalized view of the tasks, gestures and attitudes necessary for admission to the profession and the daily interactions that come with integration into a particular occupational setting or location. Localized views of the occupation may or may not match the views of the broader profession. For the purposes of this study, professional socialization refers to the globalized view of teaching, while occupational socialization looks at the socialization that occurs in a specific occupational situation or location.

Though both of these views are necessary for an individual to experience career satisfaction, there are differences in perceptions. A globalized perspective encourages commitment to a profession. Learning the gestures important to a profession will help an individual to envision him/herself as a member of that profession. He/she may observe reference group members and identify significant others during this time.

Commitment to the profession will not, however, automatically translate to a commitment to a particular school district. Research has shown that retention and career satisfaction are closely tied to interpersonal relationships and localized socialization into the internal culture of an individual school district. Unless the individual aligns him/herself closely with those other professionals in the immediate vicinity, the commitment to the individual school district will be weak and attrition may occur.

In addition to the commitment to the profession of teaching and the localized occupational view, studies show that rural teachers need to be more closely aligned with their rural community than do their urban and suburban counterparts. There are extra

societal pressures placed on rural teachers, with implied obligations to serve additional functions within the community. If the rural teacher is unable or unwilling to conform to community standards of behavior, he/she may remain as a permanent outsider.

Legette (1997) studied music teachers and discovered that they frequently chose non-music teachers as their professional models. This may be especially true for rural music teachers. As the only content area specialist in their school district, they may turn to those who are in close proximity but outside of their content area for teaching advice. They have limited opportunities to interact with others who teach music.

The reference groups developed from professional, occupational and cultural socialization may be used to combat feelings of isolation that teachers may experience. Studies about isolation, attrition and career satisfaction all cite interpersonal interactions as one of the strongest predictors of whether teachers will remain in their particular positions. Significant others may be formally assigned through mentoring programs, or may evolve from the needs of the individual teacher. Reference group members and significant others help the individual to become an “insider” within the profession, community and specific school district. Individuals who share the gestures of the reference group and significant others eventually gain entry into the occupational group. This results in higher levels of career satisfaction. Studies also show that those individuals who do not develop support systems experience the isolation that leads to a lack of commitment and eventual attrition.

No literature was found that addressed the socialization of rural music teachers. Using symbolic interaction theory, the present study intends to fill the gap by surveying rural music teachers to discover their perceptions about how various experiences,

gestures, reference groups and significant others through professional, occupational and cultural socialization assist in developing personal feelings of career satisfaction. In-depth interviews with selected individuals will assist in discovering which experiences, gestures, reference groups and significant others are the most crucial in individual cases in order to feel career satisfaction.

Chapter Three

Design of the Study

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to examine the socialization process of rural music educators in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization. This process includes the development and role of personal and professional experiences, reference groups and significant others as the music educator pursued a career in a rural school district. To examine factors relating to the socialization of this population, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was employed. The quantitative data were gathered through a questionnaire designed to examine any commonalities of experience in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization by rural music teachers. The results of the quantitative study are discussed in Chapter Four. The qualitative data gathered during interviews provided greater insight concerning the unique perspective of individual rural music teachers. The results of the qualitative interviews are discussed in Chapter Five.

Pilot Quantitative Study

In order to create an appropriate questionnaire, a pilot study was conducted in the Fall of 2002. A preliminary version of the questionnaire was given to twenty-five suburban music teachers in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska for pilot testing. Belson (1981) defines a pilot study as the initial level of testing where respondents give verbal or written feedback about the instrument. This pilot study served two purposes. The primary purpose of the pilot study was to develop a questionnaire that would accurately reflect the problems of the study. A secondary purpose was to determine whether the

items on the survey accurately measured the symbolic interaction approach. These teachers represented a cross-section of current educators specializing in elementary and secondary vocal and instrumental music in urban or suburban school districts and were professional acquaintances of the researcher. E-mails were sent to these individuals, asking them to participate in the pilot study. All twenty-five participants agreed. A paper copy of the survey was sent, along with a self-addressed and stamped return envelope. In accordance with Cates' (1985) findings, a response rate of 60% or better was deemed acceptable as a return rate for the pilot study. Twenty-two surveys were returned out of twenty-five, resulting in a return rate of 88%.

Cronbach's Alpha was used to measure inter-item reliability of item clusters in the pilot questionnaire. Mode, median and standard deviation were computed to determine central tendency (see Table 1). Based on the verbal comments made by participants in this portion of the study, the survey was modified for content.

Table 1

Original Inter-Item Reliability Analysis for Pilot Study ($N=23$)

Item Clusters	Survey Questions	Cronbach's Alpha
<i>Occupational Duties</i>		
Social Aspects	19c, 19f	.77
Professional Development	19d, 19e	.62
Interpersonal	19g, 19h	.62

Table 1: Original Inter-Item Reliability Analysis for Pilot Study (continued)

Factors for staying on the job

Support of school and community	25f, 25g	.62
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Factors for leaving the job

Measures of worth	25a, 25e	.63
Lack of support of community	25f, 25g	.62
Personal factors	25b, 25d	.58

Selection of the district

Quality of life issues	28c, 28d	.72
Liked the particular job	28h, 28i, 28j	.70

Support within the district

Professional growth	31e, 31f	.83
Money	31a, 31g	.82
Working conditions	31e, 31b, 31d	.76
Interpersonal	31j, 31k	.74
Support for discipline	31d, 31h, 31i	.65

Support systems

Personal	32g, 32h	.92
Professional	32a, 32b, 32c	.86
Community	32e, 32f	.60

Item clusters yielding low reliability were examined and modified, and a revised table was constructed. It was determined that factors for leaving and staying in the district could be measured with a yes or no response instead of a Likert-type scale, so those items were also excluded from the revised scale. Revising the clusters yielded stronger reliability coefficients (see Table 2).

Table 2

Modified Inter-Item Reliability Analysis for Pilot Study

Item Clusters	Survey Items	<i>Cronbach's Alpha</i>
Professional support systems	32a, 32b, 32c, 32d, 32e, 32f, 32g, 32h	.87
Personal support systems	32ed, 32f, 32g, 32h	.85
Interpersonal support	31j, 31k	.74
Professional growth opportunities	31d, 31e, 31f	.68
Professional growth (modified)	31e, 31f	.83
Conditions of employment	31h, 31i	.67
Work environment	31a, 31b, 31c	.88

Prior to sending the questionnaire to the target population via on-line questionnaire and traditional mail methods, the revised survey was reviewed by a panel of master's and doctoral level students in music education for item critique and content validity check. These graduate students were chosen so that the study population of in-service rural music teachers remained intact. The students were asked to complete the questionnaire, record the time necessary for completion and make suggestions for

revisions. A panel of six music teacher educators and professional teacher advocates from universities, colleges and state education associations in Oklahoma and Nebraska also examined the questionnaire for face validity. They determined that the questionnaire was appropriate for measuring the questions that were proposed for the study.

Development of the Quantitative Research Instrument

The questionnaire for this study included four sections (see Appendix D). Modeled after Smith's (1985) questionnaire as well as those used by L'Roy (1983), Wolfgang (1990) and Schonauer (2002), these sections included demographic information, professional socialization and level of commitment to professional activities, level of commitment to community norms, and the sources of support and coping strategies used by rural music teachers. Question types included closed ended, forced choice, listing, and a five point Likert-type scale. The questionnaire was used to answer broad questions related to all of the research questions and to provide information on general trends that would assist the researcher in continuing to develop questions for the qualitative portion of the study.

The first section explored demographics and personal information about the teacher. These items included questions about personal background, teacher preparation and current teaching situation.

The second section included questions about the teacher's professional commitment to education, including daily teaching activities, professional memberships and types of leadership opportunities in which the subject had participated. The subject was also asked to compare the strength of the local program both to other music programs of similar size and other music programs in general, regardless of size.

The third section of the survey asked about the selection of a rural school district for employment. Reasons for accepting the job offer were examined. Items listing factors for potentially leaving a position were also identified.

The final section of the questionnaire identified the subjects' sources of support and the strength of the support each source provided. These sources of support were divided into professional, personal and community categories.

Selection of Subjects for Quantitative Research

The subjects for the quantitative portion of the study were rural music teachers in Oklahoma and Nebraska who were current members of the state affiliates of the National Education Association during the 2002-2003 academic year. A music teacher is understood to be a person who is certified in the state of Oklahoma or Nebraska in the field of music and whose primary job is to work as a music specialist teaching music K-12 in an instrumental, vocal or general music classroom. A rural teacher is also understood to be one who teaches in a school that has an average daily attendance (ADA) of six hundred students or fewer and/or a Johnson locale code of a 7 or 8 (Johnson, 1989). The Johnson locale code is a scale that was developed by the United States government to measure a community's population size, proximity to metropolitan areas and density of the community. In addition to being employed by a rural school district, the participants in this study must have been the only certificated music teacher employed by the school district. Parochial school music teachers were not contacted for this study because participants' names were generated from state education associations. These professional advocacy organizations have a history of supporting public education.

The selection process for the quantitative portion of the study involved two phases. In Phase One, the Nebraska and Oklahoma affiliates of the National Education Association were contacted, and asked to provide the researcher with a database of music educators who identified themselves as music teachers within a district that received grants from the Rural Development Act (see Appendix B). These lists were cross-matched against lists from the state departments of education to insure that those music educators listed by the associations were the only music teachers employed by the school districts.

The lists provided by the state education associations included personal information for each music teacher. Some listings provided an e-mail address for the music teacher. Each school district was contacted by telephone to check the accuracy of the e-mail address given. The American School District website (www.asd.com) was also used as a source for obtaining e-mail addresses. A combination of e-mail and traditional mail was used in an attempt to reach as many rural music teachers as possible to increase the number of responses.

The online questionnaire was constructed using Dreamweaver software (Ferguson, Kraemer, & Stanziano, 2002). A University of Oklahoma website dedicated to online questionnaires provided the space for the subjects' responses. Data from on-line and paper questionnaires were entered into a database and SPSS 10.0 software was used to analyze online and paper sets of data.

After receiving University of Oklahoma Institutional Review Board approval for research with human subjects (see Appendix A), the revised questionnaire was posted on-line. E-mails were sent to rural music educators in the states of Nebraska and Oklahoma

who were members of state affiliates of the National Education Association. The e-mailed letter stated the purpose and need for the study, invited the music teachers to participate in the on-line survey, gave the website's address, password and instructions for completing the questionnaire, gave the approximate time for completion, highlighted the importance of the participant's input and assured subjects of the confidentiality of their response. Subjects were asked not to include any identifying information on the questionnaire.

E-mail surveys were sent to fifty-nine teachers in Oklahoma and Nebraska. The online postmaster returned thirty e-mails as undeliverable. After rechecking the addresses for accuracy, the e-mails were resent. Twenty e-mails were returned as undeliverable a second time. Of the thirty-nine e-mails that were successfully sent, sixteen responses to the on-line survey were received. Two reminder e-mails were sent to on-line participants. The first reminder was sent ten days after the initial e-mail was sent, and the second reminder was sent seventeen days after the initial e-mail. Both reminder e-mails contained the link to the on-line survey. These reminders yielded an additional ten responses. Of the total of thirty-nine individuals contacted via e-mail with invitations to complete the survey, twenty-six completed and returned the on-line survey. For those teachers whose e-mails were returned a second time because the addresses were invalid, paper questionnaires were mailed to seven participants at their home addresses. Because the time frame of data collection included the summer months, no paper questionnaires were sent to school addresses of participants whose e-mails were returned. The identities of those who responded to the online questionnaire were not recorded, because tracking technology that would preserve the anonymity of the individual was not available.

A paper copy of the questionnaire was sent to those teachers who had no e-mail address listed in the demographic information provided by the State Departments of Education (see Appendix D). This packet included a cover letter that contained content identical to the e-mail, the questionnaire and a stamped, self-addressed envelope in which to return the questionnaire. These questionnaires had an identification number for each respondent to assist in tracking individual responses. After recording the receipt of the questionnaire, the researcher obliterated the code before data analysis began. Seventy-two questionnaires were mailed. As a result of the initial mailing, twenty-one questionnaires were returned. A reminder postcard was sent ten days after the initial mailing. This reminder yielded sixteen additional responses. Hard copies that were sent to e-mail participants yielded five responses, for a total of forty-two returned paper questionnaires.

A closing date of four weeks after the initial mailing was determined for the receipt of all on-line and mailed questionnaires. Responses received after the closing date were not included in the study. Of the one hundred and eleven teachers contacted by mail and e-mail, sixty-eight completed the survey, for a response rate of 62%. Of the sixty-eight responses, fourteen were not included in the analysis. In these cases, the questionnaire was incomplete, the respondents stated that there were two or more music teachers in the rural school district, or the school district had more than 600 students and did not match the criteria used by the United States and state departments of education to qualify as a rural school district. The fifty-four ($N=54$) remaining questionnaires formed the basis of the quantitative portion of the study.

Development of the Qualitative Research Instrument

Though the closed-ended questions used in the quantitative portion of the study were a rich source of data, they could not accurately capture the quality of the respondents' thought (Converse & Schuman, 1974). In-depth interviews with individuals during the qualitative portion of the study provided additional information about the socialization of music teachers in rural schools. By using a semi-structured format, rich data were gathered for later interpretation. This interview technique was designed to complement other data collection methods (Bogden & Biklen, 1998; Pouney & Watts, 1987). This semi-structured interview included questions generated in response to the data gathered during the quantitative portion as well as other open-ended topics. During this interview, a framework was constructed based on concepts of symbolic interaction theory and a list of topics derived from data from the quantitative survey. The interview occurred over the phone, and lasted no longer than ninety minutes. The general direction and timing of the interview was the responsibility of the interviewer (see Appendix F).

Qualitative research techniques were utilized for data gathering and content analysis of these findings. New ideas that emerged from the first interviews were incorporated into subsequent sessions. More specific follow-up questions also arose as individuals were interviewed. The interview technique used for this study involved three phases:

1. Development of the interview protocol;
2. Pilot interviews with subsequent modifications of the protocol; and
3. Interviews with the actual subjects.

The interview protocol was based upon participants' response to items on the questionnaire. Primary areas of interest for these interviews included identification of significant others and the support that administration, students, parents, peer teachers and the community at large provided to the rural educator. The individuals' perceptions of the types of support these reference groups provided and how these levels of support help to determine the teacher's level of job satisfaction were discussed during the interview.

In order to refine topics and protocol for the qualitative portion of the study, pilot interviews were conducted. The purposes of the pilot interviews were to allow the interviewer to establish an effective interviewing technique and to identify any problems with the content or structure of the interview guide. Two persons with previous or current experience as music educators were asked to participate. These teachers were chosen independently from the sample population to be studied. Verbal critique from these participants assisted the researcher in refining any portion of the interview that contributed to its overall effectiveness.

Each of the participants was interviewed at a time and location convenient to his/her individual schedules. These interviews were audio taped for later transcription. Respondents were reminded of the study's purpose, and were told that they could ask questions of the researcher at any time.

Selection of Subjects for Qualitative Research

The original intention of the researcher was to use a separate letter to recruit subjects for the qualitative portion of the research. As both the e-mail and traditional surveys were returned, a number of participants nominated themselves for inclusion in the qualitative portion of the study. After examining the demographics of the individuals

and matching them to the profiles of the respondents to the questionnaire, ten teachers were chosen as interview subjects. All subjects who were interviewed for the study completed the necessary informed consent form approved by the Institutional Review Board at the University of Oklahoma (see Appendix E).

Data Analysis of Qualitative Research

Data for this portion of the study were collected from the following sources:

1. Teachers who self-nominated for the interviews;
2. Material from questionnaires; and
3. Interview transcriptions.

Data gathered during the focused interviews were audio taped and later transcribed by the researcher. Data were then labeled using situational codes as well as the labeling of categories, patterns and thematic material that emerged. Information from the questionnaire and interviews was combined with analysis of the qualitative data to provide the framework for some of the research findings. The constant comparative method of data analysis was used, where new material was compared and integrated with the original material gathered during the course of the investigation. This cross checking led to the production of larger and applicable conclusions regarding the research area. After coding, the data were subjected to peer review by another music educator who was familiar with this methodology. To further increase the trustworthiness, transcripts were sent to the participants for member checking. Member checking allowed respondents to further elaborate on the data. The goal of this qualitative methodology was to “preserve the uniqueness of the individual case, yet produce cross-site conclusions” (Stake & Bresler, 1991, p. 137).

Janesick (1994) stated that methodological triangulation occurs when multiple methodologies are used to examine a problem from a variety of perspectives. This study made use of methodological triangulation through a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques. Triangulation improves the dependability of qualitative studies and helps to insure against bias towards a particular outcome. In addition to using a combination of questionnaires and interviews to provide triangulation, an audit trail of completed questionnaires and transcriptions of the audio taped interviews was maintained. Content analysis helped to identify patterns and categories. Content analysis occurred in this setting by offering substantive theories. A qualified rural music teacher who was not a part of the targeted population examined and reviewed all documents and transcriptions gathered during the qualitative and quantitative portions of the study to confirm the conclusions reached as a result of this study. The construction of a profile based on a combination of qualitative and quantitative data began to provide a more authentic picture of the types of reference groups and significant others used by rural music educators.

Significance of the Study

Schools are complex social institutions that require multiple assessment criteria in order to understand them more fully (Jolly, 1990). The issue of socialization of teachers is also complex. This study attempts to determine which factors of professional, occupational and cultural socialization impacted the rural music teacher's level of career satisfaction. Significance levels of professional, occupational and cultural experiences, reference groups and significant others are compared to determine the relationship between teacher satisfaction and these factors in rural school settings.

There are two oppositional positions on social research. Bateson (1984) states that some believe that everything can be reduced to quantifiable data. Others believe that using quantifiable data ignores the richness that is inherent in this type of research. This study is based upon the assumption that the truth lies somewhere in between. According to Best and Kahn (1989), the difference between quantitative and qualitative studies is one of emphasis. Supplementing one approach with another could strengthen some investigations. This study attempts to provide a more comprehensive view of the socialization of rural music teachers by combining methodologies. The quantitative portion of this dissertation examines data about the sociology of music educators in rural areas of the Midwest to discover common trends. The trends discovered during the analysis of the quantitative data will help to form the questions for the qualitative interviews. The qualitative data provide insight about how individual music teachers use experiences, reference groups and significant others to effect their professional, occupational and cultural socialization.

Chapter Four

Quantitative Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the socialization process of rural music educators in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization. This included the development and role of reference groups and significant others in determining the music educator's level of career satisfaction in a rural school district. The research questions addressed in the quantitative portion of the study were:

1. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the professional socialization of the rural music teacher?
2. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the occupational socialization of the rural music teacher?
3. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the cultural socialization of the rural music teacher?
4. What factors help to determine the level of satisfaction regarding choice of profession and position of the rural music teacher?

A questionnaire was sent to one hundred and eleven rural music teachers in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska. Sixty-eight of the one hundred and eleven music teachers returned the questionnaire, for a return rate of 62%. Of the sixty-eight, fourteen were not included in the analysis. In these cases, the respondents stated that they worked in a community with more than 2,500 residents, there was more than one music teacher in the school, or there were too many responses missing from the survey. The fifty-four remaining questionnaires formed the basis of the analysis of the quantitative portion of

the study. In some cases, the number of responses was less than fifty-four. These lower numbers reflected respondents who left individual items blank. Because the surveys were at least 95% complete, they were still included in the statistical analysis.

Based on the verbal comments made by participants during the pilot portion of the study, the survey was modified for content by eliminating or consolidating some questions. Mode, median and standard deviation were computed to determine central tendency. Cronbach's alpha values were examined to determine the reliability of the instrument by ascertaining how the survey item clusters related to each other and to the total questionnaire (see Table 3).

Table 3

Inter-Item Reliability Analysis for Quantitative Study

Item Clusters	Survey Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Professional factors	27a, 27h, 27j, 27k	.70
Occupational/Cultural factors	27b, 27c, 27d, 27f, 27g, 27i, 27l	.79
Conditions/Materials	29a, 29b, 29c, 29d	.78
Occupational Factors/Conditions	29e, 29f, 29g, 29h, 29i, 29j, 29k	.84
Professional Support Systems	30d, 30i, 30j	.76
Cultural Support Systems	30g, 30h, 30c, 30d	.68
Local/Occupational Support Systems	30a, 30b, 30c, 30e, 30f	.72

Using the Johnson locale code and the U.S. Department of Education standards, fifty-four of the subjects for the study qualified as rural teachers. Though two respondents stated that there were more than six hundred students in the school district, a cross check with the tracking code revealed that the school district had less than five hundred students, so the teachers were eligible to participate in the study (see Table 4).

Three respondents indicated that their schools were located in communities of more than 2,500. These communities would receive a six in the Johnson locale code, and would not match the criteria established for eligibility. Further examination revealed that the wording of the question was unclear and that the respondents' school districts were located in a rural area near a larger community. All other respondents taught in communities or areas that matched the Johnson locale code of 7 or 8 (see Table 4).

Table 4

Characteristics of Rural Community

Community Population ($n=53$)

<500		501-1000		1001-2000		2001-2500		>2500	
Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
27	50	14	26	7	13	2	5	3	6

School population ($n=53$)

<200		200-400		401-600		>600	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
22	41	22	41	7	13	2	5

The majority of the music educators who responded to the questionnaire were females ($n=37$, 67%). Fifty-four percent of the respondents were from Nebraska ($n=29$) and 46% were from Oklahoma ($n=25$). The respondents were nearly equally divided between those who lived in the community in which they taught ($n=22$, 41%) and those who commuted to their positions ($n=28$, 52%).

Nearly 70% of the respondents were over 35 ($n=37$) and married ($n=36$).

About a quarter grew up in communities larger than 2,500 ($n=13$). The rest grew up in rural communities ($n=34$) or lived in more than one community before they were 18 ($n=7$). Only four respondents had more than 500 people in their high school graduating class. Just over half of the respondents had less than fifty people in their high school graduating class ($n=28$) (see Table 5).

More than half of the respondents lived and taught less than one hundred miles from the University from which they graduated ($n=28$). Many had earned Bachelor's Degrees of Music ($n=13$) or Music Education ($n=32$). Few had earned Master's Degrees in Music ($n=5$) or Music Education ($n=9$). Twelve were teaching with no certification in music (see Table 5).

The total number of years spent teaching was evenly distributed across the career cycle. But an examination of the years spent teaching in the current school district revealed that the majority of teachers had worked in their district for less than ten years ($n=41$). Thirty-nine respondents indicated that their current position was not their first teaching position.

Table 5

Characteristics of Music Teachers

Age ($n=53$)

<25		25-35		36-45		46-55		>55	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
9	17	7	13	18	34	14	26	5	9

Marital Status ($N=54$)

Single		Married		Separated/Divorced		Widowed	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
10	18	36	67	7	13	1	2

Table 5: Characteristics of Music Teachers (continued)

Size of Community in Which Teacher Grew Up ($N=54$)

<500		500-1000		1001-2000		2001-2500		>2500	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
12	22	18	33	4	7	13	25	7	13

Population of Graduating Class ($N=54$)

<50		50-100		101-250		251-500		>500	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
28	52	12	22	3	6	7	13	4	7

Distance Between School District and Graduating University ($N=54$)

<100 m.		100-250 m.		251-500m.		>500 m.	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
28	52	16	30	7	13	3	6

Degrees Earned ($n=53$)

Bachelor Music		Bachelor Music Ed.		Master Music		Master Music Ed		Other	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
13	24	32	60	5	9	9	12	12	22

(Note: some respondents earned more than one degree)

Total Number of Years Teaching Music ($n=52$)

1-3		4-6		7-10		11-15		16-20		21+	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
9	16	7	14	10	19	7	14	7	14	12	26

Number of Years Teaching in Current District ($n=52$)

1-3		4-6		7-10		11-15		16-20		21+	
Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
23	43	10	19	7	13	5	9	5	9	3	7

Because the title “music teacher” is interpreted in many different ways, respondents were asked about their current teaching assignment. Nearly all respondents worked in an elementary school setting ($n=53$). Forty-nine respondents also worked on the middle school level and forty-six taught high school students (see Table 6). The types

of teaching assignments varied. Many taught elementary general music ($n=48$). More respondents taught vocal than instrumental music (see Table 7).

Table 6

Respondents' School Assignment(s) ($N=54$)

Type of School	Freq.	%
Elementary	53	98
Middle School	49	91
High School	46	85

Table 7

Respondents' Teaching Assignment(s)

Type of Assignment	Frequency	%
Elementary General/Vocal Music	48	89
MS/JH Vocal/General Music	41	76
HS Vocal Music	39	73
Elementary Instrumental Music	29	58
MS/JH Instrumental Music	28	52
HS Instrumental Music	29	53

In addition to teaching assignments, many of the respondents had extra duties. Some of the common extra duties included musical activities or activities involving the arts. Conducting the marching band or pep band, directing the jazz or show choir, leading small groups and sponsoring musicals were listed as frequent extra duties. More than one-third of the teachers served as class sponsor (see Table 8). The majority of these extra duty sponsorships were either directly or indirectly related to the content area of music.

Table 8

Respondents' Extra Duty Assignment(s) (n=53)

Type of Assignment	Freq.	%
Marching Band	29	55
Small Group Ensembles	26	49
Class Sponsor	22	42
Musical Sponsor	17	34
Other	17	34
Jazz/Show Choir	16	30
Color Guard/Dance Team	8	15
Cheerleader Sponsor	2	4
High School Sports Team Sponsor	2	4
Academic Club Sponsor	0	0

Professional Socialization

A strong indicator of professional socialization to the field of education is a commitment to the tasks associated with teaching (Williams, et al., 1991). Teaching was a high priority to 94% of the respondents. Communicating with parents was cited as important to 74% of those answering this questionnaire. Besides teaching and communicating with parents, rural music teachers indicated that they valued participating in advanced education and musical training. They also appeared to appreciate interactions with musical colleagues as they attended music conferences and workshops outside of their district and held memberships in professional organizations. Locally sponsored staff development activities and faculty meetings were chosen among the least favored activities for these music teachers. When rank order was used to determine the position of an item in the table below, the first two columns were added to decide rank.

If the first two columns were equal, the third column was included in order to determine rank order (see Table 9).

Table 9

Importance of Activities Related to Teaching (in rank order)(N=54)

Name of Activity	Most important						Least Important			
	1		2		3		4		5	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Teaching	48	88	3	6	2	4	0	0	1	2
Communicating with parents	24	43	16	30	10	19	2	4	2	4
Additional college Education	12	21	28	51	10	20	2	4	2	4
Advanced musical training	19	35	19	35	10	20	3	5	3	5
Attending music conferences	17	31	17	31	16	30	4	8	0	0
Membership in professional organizations	15	28	16	29	17	31	4	8	1	2
Attending workshops outside of your district	15	28	16	29	16	29	4	8	2	4
Conducting programs after school hours	15	28	14	26	19	36	3	5	3	5
Writing lesson plans	15	28	14	26	17	31	3	6	5	9
Giving private lessons	15	28	14	26	17	31	3	6	5	9
Attending faculty meetings	9	16	20	37	15	28	9	17	1	2
Staff development	6	11	13	23	20	36	11	22	4	8
Student supervision	9	17	8	15	16	29	12	22	9	17

Another indication that an individual is professionally socialized to the profession of music education is an ability to rate the strength of his/her program in comparison to other music programs. Most of the respondents stated that their music program was average or above average when compared to all other music programs.

When compared to programs of similar size, respondents assigned higher rankings to their music program (see Tables 10 and 11). This ability to judge programs indicated that the rural music teachers had an awareness of what was going on in the profession of music education outside of his/her individual school district. The number of respondents who chose to omit their responses to this question may have indicated an ambivalence in comparing their programs to others.

Table 10

Ranking of Respondents' Music Program Compared to All Other Music Programs

(*n*=51)

Ranking	Freq.	%
Well above average	3	6
Above average	17	34
Average	24	47
Below average	5	9
Well below average	2	4

Table 11

Ranking of Respondents' Music Programs Compared to Other Similar Sized Music

Programs (*n*=48)

Ranking	Freq.	%
Well above average	11	23
Above average	19	38
Average	11	23
Below average	5	12
Well below average	2	4

Occupational Socialization

Occupational socialization is an affiliation with a specific job, location or school district. Respondents to this survey indicated that there were many factors that influenced their initial selection of their current school district for employment. These factors were all culturally based rather than occupationally based. When they initially selected the current school district for employment, 63% responded that having family and friends near was important. The job selected was the first or best offer for 61% of respondents, while 54% were influenced by the location of the district. Best job offer and location were the only two factors that may have been occupationally based, although each factor may have also had a cultural component. The importance of the spouse's or companion's job polarized the responses. Thirty-seven percent listed it as an important factor, while 30% said it was not a factor at all. There was a direct relationship between these responses and other factors like the marital status and the age of the respondent (see Table 12).

Table 12

Factors That Influence the Decision to Teach Music in This School District (N=54)

Factor	Most important						Least important			
	1		2		3		4		5	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Family/friends near	20	37	14	25	7	14	3	6	10	18
First/best offer	20	37	14	25	12	22	3	6	5	10
Location of the district	19	34	9	17	16	29	5	10	5	10
Liked the administration	14	26	13	24	14	25	4	8	9	17
Liked the community	19	35	9	17	18	33	1	2	7	13
Liked my interviewer	10	19	13	23	16	30	6	11	9	17
Grew up in a small community	14	25	8	15	5	10	5	10	22	40
Spouse/companion job	11	21	8	15	19	34	6	11	10	19
Liked the program	15	28	7	14	19	34	1	2	7	14

Table 12: Factors That Influence the Decision (continued)

Low cost of living	6	11	8	15	6	11	13	24	21	39
Leisure opportunities	4	8	8	15	6	11	13	24	23	42
Social opportunities	4	8	6	11	12	22	10	19	22	40

Respondents were also asked to select factors that would be important in their decision to remain in their current school district or move to another school district. Factors that influenced their decision to stay in a school district included liking their job and receiving support from administration and community members. Salary was a consideration in remaining at a school district for nearly sixty percent of respondents. Less important considerations were location of the district, opportunities for professional growth or other educational opportunities (see Table 13).

Table 13

Factors That Influence the Decision to Stay in Current Position ($n=53$)

Factor	Freq.	%
Like the job	37	69
Level of administrative support	32	59
Salary	32	59
Level of community support	29	54
Family/friends near	25	46
Spouse/companion job near	21	40
Location of position	17	32
Professional opportunities	15	28
Educational opportunities	13	24

(Note: Individuals could select more than one response.)

When respondents were asked about factors that would entice them to leave their current position, over half listed better salary or job. Others would follow a spouse or

companion to a new position. Only thirteen percent of respondents would not leave the position for any reason (see Table 14).

Table 14

Factors That Would Influence the Decision to Leave Current Position (N=54)

Factor	Freq.	%
Better salary	31	58
Better job	26	48
Spouse/companion job	21	39
Level of community support	20	37
Better professional opportunities	19	36
Level of administrative support	19	36
Location of new position	11	21
Family and friends near	10	19
Educational opportunities	7	13
I would not leave this position	7	13

(Note: Individuals could select more than one response)

According to previous studies, working conditions can be physical facilities (Horn, 1985; Phelps, 1982), tangible materials and resources (Kutch, 1994; Thoreson, 1997; Thurber, 1996), or the psychological states and interpersonal relationships that contribute to the climate of a school (Etzioni, 1969). Consistent with earlier research on occupational socialization, respondents to this questionnaire indicated that the support from interpersonal relationships developed between members of a school were more important than the availability of any physical or tangible resources (see Table 15).

Table 15

Support From the School System (n=53)

Name of Activity	Most important						Least Important			
	1		2		3		4		5	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Good communication and working relationships with other teachers	26	49	16	30	9	17	1	2	1	2
Supports discipline decisions I make	21	39	18	34	9	17	2	4	3	6
Good communication and working relationships with administration	18	34	14	26	13	24	4	8	4	8
Provides release time to attend conferences and conventions	17	33	15	27	13	24	4	8	4	8
Adequate teaching facilities	14	26	18	33	12	23	4	8	5	10
Maintains a school environment which is conducive to learning	15	28	16	30	15	28	4	8	3	6
Encourages professional growth and development	14	26	16	30	13	25	6	11	4	8
Reasonable workload/teaching assignment	10	19	17	32	15	28	5	10	5	10
Adequate equipment and materials	5	10	17	32	15	28	11	21	10	19
Budgetary support for the music department	11	21	11	21	15	28	6	11	10	19
Adequate salary and benefits	7	13	9	17	22	41	4	8	11	21

The support of professional and occupational reference group members was also examined. Respondents were asked to comment on those people who offered professional support. It was determined that colleagues, administrators and students in the school district provided the most support for the rural music teacher. Consistent with Etzioni's (1969) study, rural music teachers received the most professional support from those people with whom they were in daily contact. The degree of importance assigned to occupational reference groups weakened as the frequency of contact decreased. Former music professors and professional organizations were perceived as offering the weakest support as occupational reference groups (see Table 16).

Table 16

People Who Serve as Professional Support (N=54)

Name of group	Most important						Least Important			
	1		2		3		4		5	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Other teachers working in the same school district	21	37	16	30	9	18	6	11	2	4
School administrators	17	32	19	34	14	26	4	8	0	0
Students	17	32	19	34	14	26	2	4	2	4
Other music teachers in the area	11	20	22	40	12	22	4	8	5	10
School board members	14	26	18	33	14	26	6	11	2	4
Parents of students in the program	12	23	18	34	14	27	4	8	4	8
Professional education organizations	15	27	12	22	16	30	2	4	9	17
Former University music professors	18	27	12	23	7	15	6	11	12	24

(Note: Respondents left some answers blank, resulting in different sample sizes)

Cultural Socialization

Perrault and Hill's (2000) study referred to the frequency and intimacy of contacts between reference groups in a rural school setting and stated that the lines between reference groups blur in the rural setting, and that individuals may function in multiple simultaneous reference groups. Respondents to this survey report that they received strong support from family and friends. Rural music teachers may have perceived the reference groups cited in Table 15 as simultaneous occupational and cultural reference groups (Phelps, 1982; Selzer, 2000). This free and simultaneous exchange between reference group members is a feature of the types of socialization that occurs in the rural setting (see Table 17).

Table 17

People Who Serve as Personal Support

Source of support	Most important						Least important			
	1		2		3		4		5	
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Spouse/Family (<i>N</i> =54)	39	72	11	20	1	2	2	4	1	2
Friends (<i>n</i> =49)	31	64	8	16	5	10	3	6	2	4

(Note: Some respondents did not answer the question about friends.)

Because the lines between school and community are blurred in small towns, many of the people listed as sources of professional support may simultaneously serve as personal or cultural reference group members as well (Phelps, 1982; Selzer, 2000).

Career Satisfaction

Studies on socialization indicate that most who remain in their teaching positions do so because of a high level of career satisfaction. This satisfaction has been cited in studies as a key component in the retention of teachers (Allen, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Phelps, 1982; Price, 1989). Two thirds of those who chose to respond to this survey were satisfied with their current job. Those who were unhappy wanted to teach in a different school district, leave teaching all together or work with a different age group of students (see Table 18).

Table 18

Satisfaction with Current Teaching Situation (*n*=53)

Are you satisfied with your current teaching situation?	Freq.	%
Yes	33	66
No, I want to teach in a different district	9	18
No, I want to leave music education all together	8	16
No, I want to teach in a different field of music education	4	8
No, I want to teach a different age group	2	4

(Note: Subjects could select more than one response to this question.)

Another indicator of career satisfaction was the amount of time that individuals anticipated staying at a particular job or in the profession of teaching. When examining the age of the respondents, it appeared that most of those who responded to the survey indicated that they would stay in the teaching profession until they reached retirement age (see Table 19).

Table 19

Anticipated Length of Stay in Music Education ($n=47$)

Length of stay	Freq.	%
I plan to leave at the end of the year	3	7
1-2 years	5	11
3-5 years	8	17
6-10 years	6	13
More than 10 years	25	52

In Table 19, respondents indicated that they were committed to the profession of education. However, their commitment to their current job was much weaker. Because the survey was administered in the spring, most respondents knew about their plans for the following year. One third of the individuals planned to leave at the end of the current academic year or in less than three years. Less than 25% planned to stay in their current position for more than ten years. This lack of loyalty to an individual district may have shown a weakened occupational commitment (see Table 20).

Table 20

Anticipated Length of Stay in This Position (n=49)

Length of stay	Freq.	%
I plan to leave at the end of the year	5	11
1-2 years	11	22
3-5 years	15	31
6-10 years	6	12
More than 10 years	12	24

In order to determine which professional, occupational and cultural conditions would be a predictive model of dissatisfaction with their current job, a discriminant analysis was used. The question, “Are you happy in your current situation?” was chosen as the dependent variable. There were four distinct “no” responses to this question:

- No, I want to teach a different age group.
- No, I want to teach in a different field of music education.
- No, I want to teach in a different district.
- No, I want to leave music education all together.

If a respondent selected any of these answers, they were recoded to a single dichotomous outcome variable (or “No” response). Other questions in the survey were examined to determine possible clusters of variables. The clusters that were created for the discriminant analysis were similar to the clusters created for the reliability table. Professional support systems, occupational and cultural support systems, materials and teaching conditions availability and professional growth opportunities were all

determined to be potential sources for dissatisfaction with the current teaching situation. After running a number of discriminant analyses, it was determined that there was no best predictive model to determine levels of satisfaction. The results of this unsuccessful discriminant analysis pointed to the need to examine this issue from a qualitative perspective as well as a quantitative one. The results of the survey could illuminate important trends in the socialization of the rural music teacher. But because there was no single best predictive model for determining levels of career satisfaction, it was imperative that qualitative interviews are held to determine which individual factors contributed to the socialization of rural music teachers.

Summary

Most of the music teachers who responded to this survey were married females. About half taught in Nebraska and half taught in Oklahoma. The respondents ranged in age from 22-65. Half lived in the communities in which they taught while the rest commuted to their teaching positions. Most grew up in small communities and graduated from rural high schools. The majority of music teachers had Bachelor's Degrees in Music or Music Education. Only twelve respondents were teaching with no music certification.

Professional socialization to teaching was indicated by a commitment to the tasks associated with teaching. These tasks included teaching, communicating with parents and receiving additional musical training through lessons, workshops, classes and memberships in professional organizations. Rural music teachers indicated that staff meetings and local staff development activities were less important. Another indicator of a globalized awareness of music programs was the ability to compare their local programs to other music programs.

Occupational socialization to the particular rural school district began when the individual was first hired by the rural school district. Initial factors that influenced the decision to take the music position were having family or friends near and taking the first or best offer. These cultural socialization factors were replaced by occupational considerations when respondents were asked why they stayed. The support of school and community and the feelings of satisfaction outweighed family considerations when deciding whether to stay or leave a position. Teachers valued interpersonal relationships more than physical facilities when choosing a school district. Occupational support came from those with whom the rural music teacher had daily interactions. Less important to the rural music teacher were those other individuals and organizations with whom the music teacher had less frequent contact.

Many cultural socialization factors were embedded in other responses in the survey. The support of community members was cited as a factor in choosing whether to remain employed by a particular school district. The location of the position was much less important than the many relationships that the rural school music teacher developed. A number of the respondents had grown up in communities of similar size and indicated that they had an awareness of the culture of small communities.

There were notable differences in levels of professional and occupational commitment. Nearly two-thirds of respondents indicated that they were happy in their current teaching situation. Most anticipated staying in music education until retirement. However, their commitment to the profession and satisfaction with their career choices were not mirrored in their commitment to their current position. Though 2/3 of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their current job, many anticipated

leaving their current position within five years. The frequent movement of music teachers between school districts was a distinctive factor that effected occupational and cultural socialization.

The information gathered during the quantitative portion of the study was used to examine general trends and to refine the questions used in the qualitative portion of the study. Interviews with individuals helped to illuminate the professional, occupational and cultural socialization, experiences and reference groups of the rural music teacher in a way that a questionnaire could not adequately measure.

Chapter Five

Qualitative Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the socialization process of rural music educators in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization. This included the development and role of personal and professional experiences, reference groups and significant others in the music educator's career pursuit in a rural school district. The following research questions were studied through qualitative interviews in order to address socialization issues:

1. What are the experiences, reference groups, and significant others that assist in the professional socialization of the rural music teacher?
2. What are the experiences, reference groups and significant others that assist in the occupational socialization of the rural music teacher?
3. What are the experiences, reference groups, and significant others that assist in the cultural socialization of the rural music teacher?
4. What factors help to determine the level of satisfaction regarding choice of profession and position of the rural music teacher?

During the quantitative data gathering process, many individuals requested to be interviewed for the qualitative portion of the study. After studying the demographics of the volunteers, nine interview subjects were selected for the qualitative portion of the interview. A tenth subject was mentioned frequently by two of the other subjects during their interviews. He was also contacted and interviewed resulting in a total of ten interview subjects. The subjects chosen for these interviews closely matched the

demographics of the music teachers who responded to the survey during the quantitative part of the study (see Table 4).

As a part of the interview, individuals provided background information about their levels of education, teaching assignments and other pertinent biographical material. This information was consolidated into thick description profiles. These profiles allow for comparisons between these teachers and other rural music teachers.

Participant Profiles

All of the teachers chosen for the interview phase of this study were certified rural music teachers in the states of Oklahoma or Nebraska. All taught vocal and/or instrumental music at least fifty percent of the time in a variety of K-12 combinations. In order to protect the identities of individuals, the names of the teachers have been changed, no individual school districts are identified, and other identifying information has been changed.

Profile #1-Ron Burns

Ron is a 61-year old who has taught music for forty-two years in more than eight school districts. Ron retired from music teaching three years ago. He became a part time road representative for a local music company and a substitute teacher in a large community school district. During one of his sales visits, Ron realized that he missed full-time teaching and took a position at a rural music district approximately thirty miles from his home. Ron now teaches 5-12 Instrumental and 7-12 Vocal Music at a consolidated school district with a student population of 200 in grades K-12. He has Bachelor's and Master's degrees in music education. He is married, and has three grown

children and one grandchild. Ron is Melissa Jenkins' (another subject in the study) brother.

Profile #2-Denise Crawford

Denise is a K-12 Vocal and Instrumental Music teacher in a rural school district with 330 students in the north central part of the state. She has taught music in four rural school districts during her career, and took a sabbatical while in her mid-twenties to tour for two years with a Christian music group. Denise is now in her mid-thirties and has been at her current position for four years. She also teaches private instrumental lessons for band students. Denise holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and is single.

Profile #3-Jose Fresco

Jose has taught K-12 Spanish and music at a rural school district for seven years. As a married father of four in his mid 40's, he also works as a part-time minister of music in his church. Jose returned to school in the late 1980's when his job in the oilfields was not stable enough to support a family. He has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Spanish and English, but is not certified to teach music. Though he has no formal education in music, he was asked to teach the subject because the administration knew that he was a part-time minister of music for his church. He was teaching Spanish part-time in two neighboring school districts when the full time combination position opened up at this school district. He then taught a combination of Spanish and Music for three years to approximately 230 students in grades K-12. Due to budget cuts, Jose's full-time position at this school district was eliminated. In the fall of 2003, he returned to full-time Spanish teaching in a school district where he had been previously employed. Because he had been teaching music half time for at least a year, he fit the criteria established for this study.

Profile #4-Melissa Jenkins

Melissa is in her late 50's. She has been teaching for fourteen years, and substitute teaching for four years. She has taken time off from teaching to raise her children and when, as she says, "I get tired of teaching." She has taught in six different rural school districts, all within commuting distance of her home community. She has taught K-12 vocal and instrumental music in various combinations. She currently teaches K-6 vocal and general music part-time in a school district with 120 students in grades K-12. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and a K-12 Vocal and Instrumental teaching certification. She is also a licensed practical nurse. She is married and has one grown child. Melissa is Ron Burns' (another subject in this study) sister.

Profile #5-Mathilda Lewis

Mathilda is in her late 50's and has been teaching for more than thirty years. She has been teaching in Benda for two years. Prior to her divorce, she taught in many school districts as she followed her ex-husband's career as a school administrator. Since her divorce, she has lived and taught primarily in rural areas. She held one position in a suburban school district but the stress caused physical problems. She believed that the time spent in the suburban school district contributed to her stress, and that those previous positions in rural school districts had been less stressful. Heeding her doctor's advice, she returned to rural music teaching. Mathilda holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and a Master's Degree in Elementary Education. She teaches K-12 Vocal and Instrumental music to 200 students. Although she has taught private piano lessons in the past, she is now concentrating on her teaching position. She has two

children and four grandchildren. In prior school districts, Mathilda has served as a Kindergarten, Title I and 6th-8th grade teacher in addition to teaching music.

Profile #6-Mackenzie Meyer

Mackenzie has been teaching music for nineteen years in the same school district and is in her mid 40's. Mackenzie teaches K-12 vocal and instrumental music to 170 students in grades K-12 in a county wide rural school district. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and is working on her Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction. She also has Level I Kodaly certification. She is not married.

Profile #7-Kyle Smith

Kyle is in his mid 20's and has been teaching music for two years. He has taught in two different school districts. He will begin teaching 5-12 instrumental music at a third school district in the fall. Kyle quit his first 5-12 instrumental position when a job became available nearer to his home community. Due to budget reductions, his second position was cut to part-time and he found a full time position teaching instrumental music forty-five minutes from home. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and is taking coursework that will lead to a Master's Degree in music performance. He teaches approximately 100 students in grades 5-12. In addition to teaching, he also runs a lawn service business. Kyle is single.

Profile #8-Jane Tipton

Jane has been a music teacher for nine years, and is in her late 30's. During her student teaching, she decided she did not like some aspects of the profession and chose instead to purchase an existing piano studio in her home community. Nine years later, she reconsidered her decision. With her husband's encouragement she returned to school

to earn her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education. While following her husband's career, she taught in a rural school district near the community where he attended school before they moved to their current small town. She has taught in five rural school districts since beginning her career. She is currently teaching 225 students in grades K-12 in a rural school district. She also teaches private lessons in piano, voice and guitar to twelve students. She is married and has no children.

Profile #9-Irene Vacek

Irene teaches grades 2-12 vocal and instrumental music in her hometown school district. After receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and Master's Degree in Curriculum and Instruction, Irene taught in two other rural districts. When she received a call from her home school district, she decided to return to teach there and raise a family. She has taught 250 students at this rural school district for fifteen years. Irene is married and has two children.

Profile #10-Marie Yonker

Marie is currently teaching Junior High and High School vocal music and Junior High drama in a school district with approximately 700 students. Prior to working in this district, she worked in rural school districts where she was the only music teacher. Marie grew up in the area near her current school district and returned to this school district so that she could take care of her aging mother. Marie has earned her Bachelor's Degree in Music Education and plans to return to school to earn a Master's Degree in Counseling. Marie serves as the director of school plays and musicals and is also a member of the crisis team. Marie has taught for eighteen years and is single.

Methodology

In order to capture the richest data possible, the questioning strategy used for the qualitative portion of this study was open-ended, with the participants guiding the direction of the interviews as they responded to the questions outlined by the researcher (see Appendix E). This meant that some interviews strayed from the initial structure proposed by the interviewer. Since the purpose of this interview was to discover how these particular subjects related to important experiences that influenced the bodies of knowledge and significant others at the center of several social reference groups, this less structured and informal style was determined to be the most appropriate method of interviewing. Interviews were audio taped and transcribed by the researcher. In order to accurately convey the informal, conversational nature of the interview, all quotations are presented verbatim, with grammatical errors in tact. After an examination of the interviews to determine recurring ideas, a coding system was developed based on themes that emerged from the interviews. The full text of the interviews and the codes used to analyze the interviews is available in Appendix F.

Discussion of Emergent Themes

As a result of this semi-structured interview technique, a number of themes emerged as data were analyzed. They are themes associated with the broad categories of professional socialization, occupational socialization, cultural socialization and career satisfaction. Each theme within these broad categories will be discussed.

Professional Socialization

Professional socialization refers to the attitudes and dispositions that are globalized to the profession of music education. The themes discussed by those

interviewed included education, memberships in professional organizations, attendance at in-services, workshops and clinics, participation in contests, resource availability, the lack of musical colleagues and the creation of virtual communities. Each of these themes will be examined in depth.

Education

Music teachers in this study mentioned that their university training was important for providing them with the first formal socialization into the profession of music education. The education received by these individuals in college or university settings gave them the first institutional view of what music educators should do and be. Many looked to their professors during their first few years of teaching as reference group members or significant others who could offer practical content advice. This seemed to be especially true of those music teachers who were in their early years of teaching. Beginning music teachers also indicated they frequently spoke to the supervising teacher with whom they had student taught. Jane Tipton talked about calling her former student teaching supervisor for advice, and how that advisor's role had evolved from mentor to colleague.

I call [laughs] another music teacher in the community and other music teachers that I know in the county. Usually the one I call is the one I took my student teaching under. We actually attended college at the same time and she's been there longer, so she has more resources. (Jane Tipton)

Kyle, the youngest participant interviewed for this study, talked about how unhappy he was with the training he received in college. Kyle stated that most of the training he had was based on bands of 80-100 kids. Since his current band had 30 students, he felt that most of the advice given in his college classes was useless.

There was a number of questions I asked. It didn't matter—it was stuff I'd already learned. But when you get out there in the real world, you realize

that some of the stuff you were taught don't apply. You have smaller groups of kids. Some colleges are basing their training off a band of 80-100 kids, and you have maybe thirty. So you're trying to get the most out of what you got. (Kyle Smith)

Membership in Professional Organizations

Becoming a member of the professional organizations like the National Association of Music Educators (NAME/MENC), American Choral Directors Association (ACDA) and The National Bandmasters Association (NBA) was perceived by those interviewed as an expected part of being a professional music educator. These organizations provided additional training, in-services and workshops and continued the professional socialization that had begun during college and student teaching. Established professional organizations like NAME/MENC, ACDA and NBA also provided these teachers with a fixed, institutional view of what the tasks, attitudes and dispositions of music teachers should be.

Attending clinics and conventions related to music education reaffirmed the individual's vision of self as music educator. As they attended the conventions sponsored by professional organizations, these rural music teachers learned the gestures and compared their image of self as a music educator to the institutional image of what these organizations believed music educators should be. Often times, conference clinics focused on teaching specific grade levels or types of music specialization (like band, orchestra or general music). Rural music teachers understood the institutional view of the duties and responsibilities of a music teacher as presented by professional organizations. Yet because they knew that they had broad responsibilities as music generalists in the rural school setting, they

struggled with implementing the ideas presented to specialized music teachers at these conferences.

Mathilda Lewis stated that the magazines published by the professional organizations were not written with the rural teacher in mind. The magazines distributed by professional organizations helped the rural music teacher to discover the important issues in the field of music education, but because these professional journals often addressed specialized areas of music education or those who worked with specific age groups rather than focusing on the generalized needs of those who chose to be rural music educators, these journals mirrored the attitudes adopted by professional organizations. Articles focused on specific and narrow content areas or grade levels. As a result, rural teachers felt their needs were marginalized.

If you go to MENC/NAME convention, they don't understand our situations. When you go to conference meetings with other people with the same size of schools and the same sorts of problems, that's usually when I visit with them about what I need to do. When I was at Quincy, the gal who was at Turner was new then. I had never taught band before. (Mathilda Lewis)

Rural music teachers in this study also said that they were intimidated by other members of professional organizations, and cited this intimidation factor as a barrier to participation in professional organizations. Denise Crawford admitted that these feelings were internal.

When you go to those workshops, do you feel like they answer the questions of small community music teachers?

Not MENC/NAME. I don't know. Maybe I just didn't give them a chance.

What kinds of things do you think they could include?

Well, there was a sight-reading clinic that was good, something about sight-reading techniques. That was good. I think what I like about Bandmaster's and how it compares is that they'll have a—I guess there's more people who teach on the same level that I do. Even though it's geared more toward marching, they'll have more techniques about how to

get students from point A to point B. Like in percussion, which I know very little about. There was a really good workshop on that. And there was a workshop on literature for one-A schools. (Denise Crawford)

Ron Burns spoke about how much he appreciated the effort when Bandmasters Association attempted to bridge the gap between the organization and the small school music teacher. Rural music teachers like Ron felt validated when professional organizations included the needs of the rural music teacher in planning conference sessions.

...First I go to Bandmasters Association in Ulster in the summer. This year, they did something they haven't done which really helped. Everybody brought small group things. And said, "This is what we like, and this is what works and this is what we've done." (Ron Burns)

By inviting the rural music teacher to contribute ideas to the convention, they felt like their experience and opinions were valued. They were seen as reference group members who contributed to the body of knowledge that defined the group.

Though rural music teachers stated that there were self-imposed barriers to becoming fully participating members of professional organizations, those teachers also admitted that professional organizations provided them with some support. Respondents believed that much of what was offered at music clinics did not apply to them, but they also admitted that professional organizations gave them some of their best ideas for new content.

Participation in Contests

Rural music teachers interviewed for this study felt a personal obligation to participate in district music contests as a part of their jobs as music educators. Their college education, their student teaching experience and members of professional

organizations encouraged participation in contests as an institutional expectation for music educators. These contests were stressful times. Music teachers talked about being intimidated when discussing district music contests. Because the judges were often college professors, leaders of professional organizations or large school music teachers, the rural music teacher saw them as significant others. The fact that these significant others judged the product directed by the rural music teacher gave them more power in the rural music teacher's eyes and increased the value of their opinions.

Do you feel like the judges at music contests know what's going on with 1-A schools?

Yeah. Because there's usually at least one judge who teaches or has taught in 1-A schools. That helps. But it's not fair that a lot of the judges still hold us to higher standards. And what they forget is that we do what we do with lots less kids. (Mackenzie Meyer)

Music teachers indicated that they felt like they were being personally evaluated for potential membership as "insiders" in the institutional reference group.

Limited Resources

The rural music teachers in this study spoke of the lack of resources when asked about the differences between their rural music programs and other music programs that they admired.

When you hear about a rural music program, what impresses you about what makes the program strong?

Just up the road is Steph's Landing. [a slightly larger rural school district]. And Mr. Hoppick has had such a strong instrumental program for forever. And the administration there and the parents there, they make that a priority, no matter what. They do have marching. They do have a field competition show. It's like Mr. Hoppick can have anything he wants.

Financially, or emotionally?

Scheduling, money, you name it. (Mackenzie Meyer)

This perception of limited resources were highlighted when music teachers left their school districts to attend music workshops and conventions. During state

conventions music teachers interviewed for this study generally respected the clinicians who presented workshops, listened to the new music and heard strategies that could be used if they had adequate numbers of students, resources and finances. Most of the respondents in this study stated that they could admire the ideas from a distance but could rarely apply the knowledge learned at these workshops. The music was too difficult, and many of the topics at conventions were geared towards larger programs with more resources.

In a reading session of say twelve pieces, there is usually one or sometimes two things that I can actually use with students around here. In November, when you go to the women's ensemble reading session, the parts are too hard, the pieces are too complicated, the lines are too hard for the small groups that I have. (Mackenzie Meyer)

While attending professional conferences, the lack of resource availability was another reason that music teachers who were interviewed for this study felt marginalized by the professional organizations. They felt that they did not have the students, the equipment or the other resources to replicate the ideas learned at clinics in their own school districts. The lack of sensitivity to the available resources of rural music teachers was given as one reason many did not attend state workshops or conventions.

Some also felt that the publications produced by the professional organizations were geared toward those school districts that had ample resources available. Mathilda Lewis stated that she would like to write articles that gave pragmatic advice for those worked as music generalists in small communities that did not have access to a number of resources.

Yes. I was just reading the new MENC/NAME magazine today, and I thought if I was just smart enough, I'd write an article and submit it. The

articles say how to be choosy when picking your choir [members] or make sure that your students have only top-notch instruments when they're playing so that you have a good band. I'm lucky if they just want to play. I just want to have instruments that play. I try to get them a decent reed... it's just that [professional organizations] don't even have a clue [about rural music programs]. (Mathilda Lewis)

In some small school districts, students become a "limited resource" to be fought over and used as bargaining chips. Melissa Jenkins stated that most people in her district were good about sharing their students, but some needed continued improvement of their relationships with other teachers as they shared students for athletics and other extra-curricular activities.

Mathilda also talked about students as a resource. She felt that her program would be judged less harshly if professors and other reference group members understood the responsibilities and limited time that her students had available outside of the school day.

I talked to a music professor out at University TT, and he said that I should train some of [my students] to sing tenor. That doesn't necessarily work. Because the same kids are in basketball, football, drama, speech, you know. You don't have the time. And then they have to be out on the ranch. Right at contest time, these kids are out calving and branding. And you don't just have them for all of these practices. So I tape off all of the accompaniments and the parts and give them to the kids. So they can practice them as they are driving in the pick-up. They don't understand this in the bigger schools. (Mathilda Lewis)

Though the over scheduling of students is a common topic of concern in the field of music education, this statement indicated a concern not only for the many obligations students had in her district, but the severe lack of resources and prior experiences that Mathilda felt were handicaps to having strong music programs. She stated that many students came to her high school from extremely rural K-8 feeder schools as ninth graders without any formal musical training. She stated that she was doing well to get them to match pitches and sing in three parts.

Limitations in the numbers of students, equipment and resources available in the rural school district were also cited as barriers to receiving high ratings at district music contests. The judge's opinions were dismissed when they made suggestions that the rural teachers believed were not pragmatic for their situation or did not acknowledge the limitations they were facing in the rural school district.

And how did you end up doing (at district music contest)?

We felt like we were robbed.

Did you get a two?

Yeah. Professor A was our judge, and our vowels were too bright for his taste. We had worked on [vowels when we had time], we hadn't ignored it. We'd worked on it a lot. But that whole district music contest is a big issue around [state], because some sites hand out ones [to small schools] like they were gold, others hand out superiors like you should have that just for trying. (Mackenzie Meyer)

The perceived prejudices against rural music programs appeared to show up more in instrumental judging than in vocal judging.

I've always been proud of the fact that I've been in it for 42 years. And for forty of those years, I've had bands. And only five years, I've been associated with groups that didn't get superiors. So I feel very good about that. But it's just the fact that there are a couple of times that you get greedy. I thought, "Man." Like the last year that I was at Iandale. We had superior ratings every year for the past seven years. And we go to class B, which we'd been in class B for the two years before that. And I thought the band was every bit as good as it had been the previous two years. And out of seven bands, they only gave two superiors. The last year I was there, there were nine class B bands and they never gave a superior. And I thought what is going on here? (Ron Burns)

Mackenzie Meyer and Denise Crawford both stated that some of the judges talked about unrealistic expectations for instrumentation. Sometimes rural music programs did not have the financial resources to purchase the needed equipment, while other times they did not have an individual who could play the required instrument.

For instance, band remarks, band judging. They criticize instrumentation, when we're just glad to have somebody who plays an instrument. When you're building a band, and a kid plays an instrument, you let them play that instrument. You don't worry that you already have twenty of them. Right now, I'm short on low brass. And one of the judges remarked about our balance—and they should remark that balance is an issue. By the same token, I know that I should have a bass player, but it's not something I can do anything about. (Mackenzie Meyer)

Some music teachers solve the lack of instrumentalists in unique ways.

But it's not fair that a lot of the judges still hold us to higher standards. And what they forget is that we do what we do with lots less kids. Like a good friend of mine, some guy wrote on her critique sheet, "You need a tuba. Find one." She thought, "OK. Poof! You're a tuba."

And even if you physically have a tuba, you may not have a tuba player. Do you know what she told me that she does now? She gets a kid out there to hold the tuba [Laughs].

Do the judges perceive that they're hearing a low sound?

At least she doesn't get slammed any more for not having a tuba. (Denise Crawford)

Ron Burns stated that the unrealistic expectations by the judges were not only appearing at district music contests. In marching band contests, he believed that urban and suburban band directors had hurt themselves and their rural colleagues by hiring choreographers, arrangers and other experts to help create their marching show. According to Burns, these directors had more financial resources and students. This made it easier to create a superior product in marching band competitions. He believed that small town band directors could not compete on an even playing field, since financial resources, time with students and the numbers of people involved with the band program were more limited in rural settings than in urban or suburban school districts.

Do they ever comment on instrumentation [at the marching competitions]?

Oh, yeah. I try to fill it out as much as possible. They used to hurt [in marching band competition] if you had somebody sick or somebody out with a football injury. And you'd go to the marching competition, and they'd keep saying, "There's a space out there again." And I'd think,

“You morons.” Then I’d hear, “Oops, there it is again.” Of course! There was a person there, and we didn’t have a sub to put in. The person has a broken leg or he’s injured and he can’t even walk. And we don’t have a sub to put in. They wouldn’t even watch the whole band. (Ron Burns)

In talking about the troubles he had with marching competition, Ron indicated that absenteeism was a common problem for many band directors, but he felt that these problems were experienced more severely in rural situations due to limited resources. Rural music teachers attempted to bridge the resource gap through the exchange of musical scores, ideas for the classroom and other tangible materials.

Lack of Musical Colleagues

Many of the teachers interviewed for this study lamented about the lack of available music colleagues within their own school district. This lack of collegial support was felt most severely when faced with content concerns. Jane Tipton admitted that she needed help with weaknesses in her own teaching and stated that local staff development activities were unable to provide appropriate help for her.

Do you have staff development on site that the school district sponsors?

Yes, but I don’t feel that it is very pertinent to what I’m doing.

What types of staff development do they do?

Most of it is curriculum or the other thing would be discipline.

You don’t feel that it pertains to music teachers?

I don’t feel like it’s as useful as if I was with other music teachers. And you know, working on weaknesses that I have.

What do you think your weaknesses are?

Right now I think that my biggest weakness would be harmony--getting them to sing in 3 or 4 part harmony like a choir. (Jane Tipton)

Mathilda Lewis spoke about her anger and frustration when two college professors gave conflicting advice when talking about appropriate literature for district music contests. Without other professional reference group members readily available to interpret the meaning of the advice and provide additional help, rural music teachers had

to use their own professional judgment and experience to determine which advice was best.

So here we have a doctor at one college who says, "Yup, these are great songs." And we have a judge from another college who says [the songs are] ridiculous. It hurts the kids. (Mathilda Lewis)

This conflict between professors is not uncommon in contests or competitions.

But the rural music teachers in this study indicated that it was especially difficult to know whom to believe when presented with conflicting advice from two professional reference group members who were strongly associated with institutions or professional organizations that the rural music teachers respected and admired.

Rural music teachers indicated that the reason they attended professional conferences, workshops and in-services went beyond learning about new content and material. Many attended in order to work and interact with other music teachers.

You go to the conventions and attend the workshops to learn new ideas of stuff you could do to make the classroom better. When I go to Bandmasters Association, it's just for fun. I go and watch. And you can get ideas from it. There are some people who could say, "I can't come close to that because they have a band of 150-200 people." With me, I don't have that luxury. I've taught in schools where my first band was forty-five kids in the marching band. That was marching 8-12. I went to Bandmasters Association to get ideas then and I went there just before I got this job. And I realized that I couldn't do close to half or three-quarters of the stuff they could do on the field. But I tried to take their ideas and have fun with them, telling kids that we can try this. . But the workshops are great. They teach so much, and you get so many good ideas. Now, there are some that you go to that are just for fun with icebreakers or games or whatever. But y'all are there to have a good time. You go up there to get some different ideas. They're the biggest resource and source of information around. (Kyle Smith)

Teachers interviewed for this study stated that they admired the professors who initially taught them. They respected the leaders who presided over professional organizations, and those who directed in large school music programs were inspirational

in terms of levels of musicianship and teaching ability. But interactions with these professional reference group members did not produce a common body of knowledge for true reference group formation. The rural music teachers indicated that professors, organization leaders and large school music teachers were marginal reference group members because they did not typically understand the limitations associated with smaller, rural school situations.

Creation of Virtual Communities

Teachers within the same geographically close athletic conference frequently became the reference group chosen by those who were interviewed. The use of the Internet and other technologies allowed these teachers to create a “virtual community.” The installation of the Internet helped the rural music teacher maintain more frequent contact with their colleagues in the conference. These teachers became surrogate colleagues. They were typically present at district music contests, at regional in-services and at conference clinics. When area music teachers were together, they spent part of the time working on administrative tasks like planning the next conference clinic. They also spent significant amounts of time comparing their teaching situations and seeking advice about content and process concerns. Melissa Jenkins compared her job to other positions in her conference as well comparing herself to those who taught in higher education. She contrasted her situation to both other groups. She appeared to feel better when others who taught in surrounding rural school districts were also having difficulties in their positions.

So, usually you'd go to other teachers who were around. And you find out that you're not doing a college-level job. Not when you know that all of these other people are having problems. That's your big hope when you go into a school and talk to other [music] teachers. When you find out that someone else has a worse job than yours. You talk things over and you come out and you usually feel a lot better. You know that you're not the

only person who's having those types of problems. There's not something wrong with you [laughs]. (Melissa Jenkins)

Melissa Jenkins talked about the types of topics that were raised during annual conference clinics. While students were working with clinicians, the directors frequently sat in a side room and talked about the issues that were happening in individual school districts around the area and examining solutions to common problems that they were experiencing. This comparative talk helped to create the shared gestures and body of knowledge necessary for the development of this reference group.

We get together and have donuts and coffee. We have some good sessions then.

What types of things do you talk about in those sessions?

Probably a lot of it is stuff like how's your job going? Problems are always the things that get brought up. We probably do that more than the positive things. But then we also talk about, 'well in this area, we're doing great.' A lot of the times, the problems that we have, we want answers for. We talk about those more than anything. We give each other ideas. And say, "Well, I'd better try that." Conferences are great things. (Melissa Jenkins)

By maintaining a connection with other music teachers, these rural music teachers constructed a body of knowledge and their own collective vision of what a rural music teacher should be and do.

Conversations about specific types of reference groups were examined to determine professional significant others. Some talked about their student teaching supervisor and college professor as early significant others. As their careers progressed, they stated that they spent less time conferencing with those individuals. Sometimes, these early significant others were replaced by music teachers in their immediate geographical area. Other times, it appeared that the music teacher did not have a

significant other for professional socialization. Instead, many seemed to be self-reliant with occasional advice from their professional reference groups.

In your job, did you have a conference and other music teachers that you could talk to?

No.

Were you able to socialize with any other staff members at your school?

Not really. Not outside of school.

Did you have a lunch bunch?

It was mainly—there was a group of teachers who grabbed their lunch and went into the workroom and ate, and there was a group of us who sat in the cafeteria with the kids...

What about the other teachers? Do they respect and value you?

I think so...usually when I'm in my classroom, I'm in my own cocoon. I try not to worry about what anybody else is doing. Kids a lot of time tell me that so and so doesn't make us do that. Well, we're not in so and so's class. You're in my class. And you're in this class with me, and we're going to do things this way. (Jose Fresco)

Occupational Socialization

Occupational socialization occurs when loyalties are transferred from the globalized loyalty to the profession of music education to an affiliation with a specific school district. Themes discussed during interviews included programs and concerts, views of competition, school/community events, music versus sports, demands on student time, standardized testing and accountability, formal and informal support groups, social and community involvement and the conflicts that occurred when teachers were asked to teach multiple subjects. Each of these themes will be examined in depth.

Concerts and Programs

Concerts were a visible part of most rural music education programs. The Christmas concert was an expected part of the rural music teacher's job. Many of the teachers felt pressures to put on a large music program in December, including programming sacred music and other seasonal songs that the community knew. The

audience or administration would inform the teacher if the music was too different from the holiday favorites they had come to expect.

Well, I didn't know this when I came, but before I came, they never did any traditional songs on the Christmas concerts. For about five years. And they also never did the fun goofy stuff at the concert. It was all standard, top-notch music. And I appreciate that. But they also never had anybody come. The parents didn't even want to come to the concerts. (Marie Yonkers)

In Melissa Jenkins' case, the community wanted props, costumes and a very big elementary program at Christmas time. Her attempts to balance her desire for good musicianship with the expectations of the community led to a lot of stress.

Programs have always been a big deal. They would fire you if you didn't have a good program. Especially the elementary programs. That was a big deal. That's the way it was, anyway, when I was there. You had to put everything you had into the thing. They wanted an extravaganza. Most elementary positions don't expect quite as much. Nothing on such a large scale. (Melissa Jenkins)

Jose Fresco also talked about the stress of trying to work with an administration that stated that they wanted a Christmas program, but showed by their actions that they did not value the Christmas program.

I had dates ok'd by the principal and the superintendent. And as the time got closer, the dates started getting changed. And one date conflicted with a basketball game. But it had been scheduled late. One of them, I can't remember what happened. But I ended up doing three programs in one night...I told [my principal], "This is going to work. Because I want to make this work. But I'm NEVER going to do this again. I will do things with them, I will teach them music. But I will never do a Christmas program again." And so, another lady started doing that. She was the elementary principal. She started doing it, and I told her that I would help however I could. (Jose Fresco).

Denise Crawford used pre-packaged, commercial musicals for her elementary students. She believed that this gave her extra time to work with her secondary music

students while satisfying the community's needs to have a public performance at Christmas time.

What types of things do you do for the Christmas program?

Actually the Kindergarten through the fourth grade does one of those musicals.

Is it a pre-packaged musical?

Yes. There's narration and a few solos.

Do they expect costumes and props?

No. It's whatever I want to do. Actually, we could stand up there and sing Christmas carols, and they'd pretty much be happy. But I do have to do something (Denise Crawford).

Making "them" happy was a large part of the rural music teacher's job. Whether the "they" was the administration, the parents or the rural community at large, the function of public performances were to create a positive image and high visibility for the school district in the rural community. Many of the teachers felt pressures to put on a large music program in December, including programming sacred music and other seasonal songs that the community knew.

Marie Yonkers allowed her high school students to program most of the music for her concerts, within the parameters that she set, to increase their motivation to participate.

In the high school, I let the kids choose everything. But I give them the parameters. Like, I'll pick four or five gospel pieces, and then they'll have to choose one of them. Or I'll pick something like the Messiah or something like that, and they'll have to choose from those. And we do something goofy, and they choose that. And we always do a pop thing, and they choose that. And we do a traditional. So we have a good variety. And we have a lot of people who say that they really appreciate that because the concerts are more fun to go to. (Marie Yonkers)

Views of Competition

While performing local concerts in the community was an expected part of a rural music teacher's job, many of the interview subjects stated that participating in district or state music contests and competitions was not important to members of the local school

district or community. Teachers who were interviewed said that their administration would support their decisions about appropriate levels of participation in district music contests or marching competitions. Mathilda Lewis talked about her personal hatred of district music contest. Her students ended up feeling disappointed about their ratings, and she felt that the ratings were unjust as well. Ron Burns believed that the emphasis on marching band competitions had the potential to ruin an entire rural school band program.

I'd be the first to go to marching contests as long as you participate in corps style marching. At the end, you all want to get your superiors in the AA and A groups. And they look at C and D and say, "Well, that was nice" and give out twos and say, "Come back next year." And I said, "If you would do like the corps do and say, 'In sixth place, with a score of 82 is...' But you guys don't want that. But you want the majority of the big schools to go home with ones, which is what they usually do. And then you get to the little schools. That's why a lot of them don't go anymore. (Ron Burns)

There were many problems with auditioning students and having select groups in the rural school setting. On the local level, many of the teachers ignored competition in favor of democratically inclusive groups. Some discontinued auditioning and chair placement practices when challenged by parents. Denise Crawford told the story of a parent who stopped her outside of a local convenience store to tell her that she felt the auditioning policy Denise had adopted was humiliating to older students who were not the best band students. The parent's child was sitting behind some younger students and her daughter was unwilling to participate in band. The parent eventually made so much trouble at the school that Denise changed her audition policy to take into account the student's age when making chair placement decisions. Denise admitted that she had crumpled under pressure, but she looked at it as a part of the reality of "getting along" in a rural school district.

Did her daughter stay in band?

No, she quit after that year. But I still have her son in band.

Are you making sure that he's sitting ahead of the younger students?

To be honest, I had decided that it wasn't worth it to do chair try-outs.

So how do you do it? Do you just rotate them through?

I sit the older ones closer to the front, and only let the young ones move up if I really think that they can handle it.

So you do it by age now.

Yeah, kind of. I still have some seventh graders on first part. But I just gave in, I guess. (Denise Crawford)

One of the most interesting local competitions discussed in the study featured an event in one rural school district called the band carnival. This event had originated over fifty years ago as a fundraiser for the band. All of the girls in the school competed in a pageant to become the band carnival queen. Denise Crawford stated that the competition resulted in some of the most difficult situations regarding conflicts in the selection of individuals. When asked why the tradition was continued, Denise stated that she was initially opposed to the event. But she could see the value of the competition in terms of improving the students' self image.

There used to be a band carnival that was a fundraiser for the band. It was a two-day affair. Everyone got tired of doing that. But there was this pageant in conjunction with it. And they coronated a band carnival queen. Seventh through ninth graders compete for the title of band princess.

So it's only girls who compete. They don't have any prince or king.

No, but we do have the escorts. So the boys do that. Almost all the girls compete in it. I was kind of against it at first. I thought, "Oh man." But like last year, the girl who won. She was a Romanian girl who was adopted about four years ago. She had some—until she was 14, she had lived in an orphanage. She had never learned to carry herself. So she never learned how to hold herself up. And when she won it, I was just so proud. She had so much potential. And I thought, yeah, we can do this. We can do a pageant. That's going to really affirm her. (Denise Crawford)

This is a localized view of competition was in direct conflict with Denise's initial globalized view of the role and purposes of competition in a rural school music program.

School and Cultural Events

Many of those interviewed for this study served as class sponsor as one of their extra duties. Music teachers felt that they were selected in disproportionate numbers to serve as junior class sponsor and organizer of the prom. Prom was discussed as a significant school and community event that was viewed as a cultural rite of passage for students by many in the school and town. One teacher speculated that because music teachers were seen as providers of culture for the community, the administration, other teachers and community members viewed this extra duty as a natural extension of the music teacher's skills, interests and talents. Even when music teachers were rotated through this responsibility, they indicated that they were annually consulted for advice about this event.

Prom was a source of frustration for Mathilda.

See, we had a big problem. The kids had OK'd the date with the board, and we had the glasses ordered that were stamped with the date. Then two parents, who didn't come talk to the Board, didn't come talk to us, decided that, Hey the date is conflicting with the date that the girls might get to go to state basketball. And they want to stay out all night. But it wasn't the night before state basketball, it was three weeks before state basketball. And they didn't approach it right. The girls did get to go to state, but they stay out every weekend anyway. [This was] not about the night. It was just a power play. One gal was the counselor here [at school], and she had got replaced. The Board had to threaten to sue her to get the keys back. So she's just bitter and she's just doing some power play things. And in some respects, [the prom] was nice. But it was the way it was done. It was announced way before Christmas. Why didn't they come up and say, "We would just as soon..." or why didn't they come up and talk to us?
(Mathilda Lewis)

Jose Fresco stated that proms were out of hand in terms of expectations and money spent.

Of course the juniors put on the prom to honor the seniors. And the seniors, you mainly had to handle the technicalities. Like getting the panel ready to put out in the foyer with the pictures on it, and graduation. That was basically all. It's not nearly as difficult a load as trying to take care of

the prom is for the juniors. A couple of teachers took care of the junior thing and overdid it. The prom was just unreal. It looked real nice, but then everybody expects that.

Were the rest of the teachers grumbling a lot about that?

Yeah, they grumbled, but then they went in and did the same stuff. They don't want to be outdone. It never bothered me much [both laugh]. (Jose Fresco)

While Jose Fresco did not care if he disrupted prom traditions, others did not want to be the ones who changed the way things were done in favor of starting new traditions regarding prom.

In Denise Crawford's case, she was careful to work with the rural community to make sure her prom did not exceed the community's standards.

Do you sponsor any activities?

I am junior class sponsor this year.

Oh, my gosh. So I guess you get to do prom this year.

Uh huh.

And what's prom like in your community?

It's a big deal. We do it outside of the community about seventeen miles at a country club. That's where we have the prom.

Do they have the prom part at the country club rather than the school, too?

(Yeah)

Cool.

The kids really like it.

And what's the community expectation about the prom? Do they expect really, really swank?

Well, you try not to outdo the other classes.

You try NOT to outdo?

Right. (Denise Crawford)

Music versus Sports

The pep band and marching band were seen as two of the most important activities that the music teacher supervised. Music teachers stated that the marching band and pep band were the most visible parts of the program and, in the community's eyes, were the most important to the school culture.

As far as high school...In Armour, the pep band was a big deal. You better have a good pep band...Athletics are very important, so you gotta kinda function around that kind of thing. If you're in a high school or junior high, you need a good pep band. Give the kids the support if they go to tournaments and that type of thing to have the band kids there. (Melissa Jenkins)

The music teachers also realized that the purpose of these bands was to support athletic activities. In order to be successful, many indicated that it was necessary to participate in as many athletic events as was practical (especially district and regional football and basketball games).

[In the last school I was in,]...they were always having a big pep rally before the football games, and they always used to march right down by the stadium. So I made a different tradition where we marched from the school and made a parade all the way down to the football field playing the fight song and playing a couple of others, maybe show tunes or whatever. And the people would gather along the street to support them on the way to the football field. And then they would go in and sit down. And we'd go in the stands and we'd get ready for pre-game and everything else. They'd never done that before, so they thought it was great. They said, "We never thought of that for all these years. Wish we could have done that sooner." It was real good support. (Kyle Smith)

Though the school district often adopted an inclusive and democratic approach to participation in music, rural music teachers saw an increase in competition between sports and other activities. One battle was between marching band and sports. Irene Vacek and Ron Burns both stated that the increased demands on student athletics decreased the amount of time that they could spend on marching fundamentals and half-time shows.

So it's the high school principal that used to be a coach.
It's kind of the good old boys gang, you know. He doesn't really follow the same beliefs that the rest of the guys do. It seems like the younger guys think that sports is life. It's not an activity for the kids. It's do or die. He was the activity director before. They have added tons of games to our schedule. It's made it nearly impossible to schedule anything. And that's probably the biggest conflict that he and I have. Because he really doesn't

see that the sports thing has gotten out of hand. Even though a lot of people have confronted him about it. And it's getting very difficult. You know, I said that paperwork was my most frustrating thing. Well, I don't know. Maybe this is. It's really tough. (Marie Yonkers)

Rural music teachers in this study perceived that the erosion of support by the coaches spilled over to a general erosion of support for the music program by the community. They perceived that the coaches were significantly more powerful reference group members for members of school and community members who could destroy or cripple their music programs.

Demands on Student Time

There were many indications that students had to divide their time between a number of school activities and also had to meet obligations at home. In Kyle Smith's first position, many of the students traditionally participated in marching band, but dropped out of band during the concert band season. He battled this trend, but faced opposition from the school's counselor. The counselor believed that the marching band was the most important ensemble in the music department, and that the concert band functioned as a practice ensemble to prepare the students for the next marching season. Because this idea was pervasive in this community as well as the school district, Kyle had to convince the school counselor that the concert band was a legitimate ensemble. The counselor eventually agreed, and became somewhat helpful in retaining students for the concert band season. Though Kyle finally got his way, he felt that he was battling many cultural conventions.

In some rural communities, townspeople would occasionally express a wish for a stronger marching program. They seemed to be aware of the many demands on students' time and the limitations on the music program. Denise Crawford spoke about the

demands on student time as justification of the lack of a choral program on the secondary level.

So do you have a choral program, too?

Not really. People would like to have one, but the same kids that are in band would be in the choral program. It's hard enough with the course requirements needed to graduate to get all the classes in and get their honor certificate or college preparatory certificate. And since it is the same kids, they have to choose between chorus and band. It doesn't help my program. Plus, I'm not certified in vocal. So I don't push for it. (Denise Crawford)

Most of the teachers understood that the community wanted a decent music program, but also wanted students to be able to participate in other activities (like sports programs, student council or cheerleading) as a part of being a well-rounded participant in the school community. Teachers who did not understand this were often those who did not survive in the rural school program. When Irene Vacek was asked about guidance for rural music teachers, she gave some advice.

You need to get involved with a lot of the activities, a lot of the things at school. Don't think that the school revolves around music. I think that's a severe problem, especially with new teachers. They've been conditioned to be selfish and to think that music is the only thing. That's it. You see, when they hired the band director, we had forty-some kids. I was averaging in the upper thirties. And they all quit.

Because of the band director?

Yes. He was good, but he was a first year teacher, and he made the mistake of saying, "If you don't want to do this, you can get out of here." And they quit. (Irene Vacek)

Testing and Accountability

State and local testing was discussed but dismissed as unimportant by most of the teachers. Some had heard stories about test scores being the basis for employment decisions in other school districts, but they all felt that their principals were supportive of them no matter what test scores students received in the fine arts portion of the statewide

tests. In Denise's situation, the middle school English teacher prepared many of the students for the statewide tests in the arts. Test scores in the arts were relatively low, but Denise admitted that she did not have time in her schedule to work with the students.

I was wondering how they do on the humanities part on the state tests. Not real well. Usually the eighth graders do ok because they've had music recently. And a lot of times, the principal will have one of the teachers review with them as if they were learning in the humanities. He had me give [the English teacher] a whole bunch of music theory stuff. So she prepared them. (Denise Crawford)

Accountability in local testing and grading was a sore subject for Ron Burns. He had spent many years using attendance, attitude and gut feeling as the basis for grading in his bands. He was angry that grades now had to be justified by written standards or rubrics. His statements about grading made it clear that he felt that this was another mandate that came down "from above." He was not specific about whether above referred to his administration, the state department of education or other professional organizations. But having to learn a new grading system at this point in his career was a frustration for him.

And [at the Bandmaster's Convention] they brought grading systems, and grading things--which are just so impossible. To get a concrete grading system in your hands. And that's the big thing now a days. You have to justify everything. How are you going to grade? You can't just grade by attendance and gut feelings [anymore]. You got to have standards. (Ron Burns)

Reference Groups

The reference groups identified during the quantitative part of the study were identical to those who were talked about in the interviews. These occupational reference groups included colleagues in their school district, administrators, students, parents and other community members. Colleagues in the local school district offered a variety of

support to music teachers. Most of the support provided was personal support for the teacher's home life, information about the history of the program or individuals within the community, and process support. Music teachers sometimes went to their colleagues with questions about local policies, grading systems or information about extra-curricular sponsorships.

[My mentor and other teachers in the district] helped me with classroom management and they helped me with problems with lesson plans. They helped me with discipline. If I had a question about something, I could go to them and they would help me. Because the problem is that most administrators are going from one place to another, and they don't have time to help you with your problems. So with situations, you could go to your mentor teacher, and they would help you with your problems, or they would tell you that you need to talk to the principal. Or give you a little bit of your opinion. My mentor teacher was a very good one. He would try.
(Kyle Smith)

There were many anecdotes about colleagues in the district who were supportive of the music teacher. Rural music teachers valued their colleagues who were physically present at concerts, supported unusual rehearsal schedules and complemented the students for their performance in concerts or competition.

When I did the Christmas program and I had all of the kids in [the gym] at one time. The teachers just came and sat. And really, I've never thought about it per say, because I'm used to working with a large number of kids and having that kind of responsibility. But they were really supportive, and asked if there was anything they could do. Getting their costumes together and all of that stuff. And complimented me about how orderly and controlled [the kids were] and how the kids behaved so well. And really, all they had to do was sit. And that impressed them to where if I had anything that I wanted for the rest of the year, they were like, "Oh, what can I do? Let me help, let me help." My peers support me, my administration, my parents are real good as long as you let them know enough ahead of time what they need to have, and they'll go out and get it.
(Jane Tipton)

Music teachers also valued those teachers who they perceived as “taking their turns” when it came to sponsorship of extra-curricular activities or supervision of students.

Some of the local teachers were not looked upon as reference group members. Music teachers reported strained relationships with those teachers who were not hard workers. In Marie Yonkers’ school, the middle school teachers were especially unprofessional.

I’m really frustrated in one area about those same teachers that they tend to not be very compassionate toward kids. And it’s almost like a little junior high club at times. I’ve seen them pick on kids. A few of the teachers down there get into a bullying atmosphere. If it’s a kid that gives them problems, they harass that child through the halls. And I’m not a very quiet person about that kind of thing because that’s a big issue with me. So I had a parent who actually called me about both of those behaviors. About the drinking in public. Not just drinking, but getting drunk. And teachers talking about their sex life with their students. They should be fired. (Marie Yonkers)

Other criticisms of local colleagues included those who pitted students against each other, or made students choose between athletics and arts activities.

Most music teachers participated in social activities with their colleagues. They appeared to recognize the importance of maintaining a good relationship with other teachers in the district. Those who lived outside of the community had more difficulty participating in community activities as a part of the school district. They recognized this as a problem and most tried to spend some time participating in community activities. Melissa Jenkins admitted that that she rarely become close to the colleagues with whom she worked. Because Melissa Jenkins perceived herself as being a “short timer”, she did not anticipate becoming close to any members of her new staff, either.

Did you become close to any particular teachers? [pause] Where you would go to their rooms after school or gravitate towards them after a staff meeting?

To be honest with you, I've never really been a socializer. I don't talk a lot in the halls. There was probably one little gal there, about my age. She taught special ed, a really good person, and we'd have a pretty good laugh every once in awhile. It's such a small area [that] we'd meet each other in the hall and talk. But to really get to be a buddy and put all of your confidence in someone. I've never really been that way.

At any of the schools?

I just learned really fast not to do that. The less you know, the better off you are. That's a cold attitude, I suppose.

No, it's a legitimate attitude.

I learned it a long time ago. You learn not to tell people anything you don't want spread. You don't pour your heart out to them anymore.

You're supposed to be able to, but it doesn't work. (Melissa Jenkins)

Mentors who were formally assigned by the school district were another relatively weak reference group. As the youngest music teacher interviewed for this study, Kyle stated that his locally assigned mentor worked as hard as possible and gave some classroom management and process advice to him. Kyle stated, however, that he wished he had another music teacher who was around to serve as a content mentor. Jane Tipton echoed this sentiment, stating that her administrator tried to help, but was unable to analyze correctly the problems she was having or provide accurate prescriptive corrections in her content area. In both cases, it appeared that these teachers wanted content advice more than process advice. Locally assigned mentors did not understand the gestures valued by music teachers, so they were not able to give the content advice that would have been especially welcome.

Principals and superintendents were discussed as reference group members. When the respondents respected and admired administrators, the administrators became significant others for the music teacher. Some of the traits that improved the

administrator's status in the eyes of the music teacher included understanding the needs of the music program, supporting discipline decisions made by the music teacher, running interference for the music teacher during conflicts with other teachers and community members, helping with process issues like classroom management and lesson planning and committing to overall district improvement in active and visible ways. Music teachers also admired administrators who sponsored extra curricular activities and those who expressed appreciation for the music teacher and the music program. Irene Vacek had better relationships with previous administrators than she was having with members of her current administration.

So what's your relationship like with administration?

The gentleman we have now, it's his third year. Although the administration we have right now is not very music wise. Neither one of them are real good... The administration we have right now I'm probably not as close to. I really liked the principal—the last one was a former music teacher. But he struggled being an administrator. I think he's—this was his first job. He's much better now, since he's changed schools. He had a habit of promising things, and not following through with them. I think he wanted to do things, but it's hard to always do things. With money and that kind of stuff. Otherwise, music wise, he was pretty supportive of me. (Irene Vacek)

In several cases, music teachers reported feeling especially strong support from principals who were former music teachers. As a former member of the music teacher's professional reference group, these administrators may have been using common content-based gestures familiar to both teacher and principal when discussing music education issues.

Music teachers in this study listed administrators' negative personality traits as a concern. Any of these factors would distance the administrator from the music teacher. Administrators who were perceived to be poor dictated every aspect of the content of

programs or offered only criticism for performances. Some principals showed favoritism towards the individual members of the staff, or were former coaches who spoke out against the arts. Others argued with teachers or staff members in public, were critical or fired individuals for poor performance in statewide testing.

I don't find it so much here, but over the years, I've felt like no matter how hard I worked or how much work I do, it depends on what somebody else does. And I can be the best teacher in the world. But if I have some kid who's just a knot head and won't do it, I can be fired over it. Just like a coach can be. I've seen music teachers get fired because they didn't get good ratings at contest. Maybe that they didn't have anyone who could sing or play an instrument. Maybe they did a hundred percent the best they could. Maybe even the kids did the best they could with the talent they have. (Mathilda Lewis)

Jose Fresco discovered that the principal's attitude towards him changed when he transferred from being a Spanish teacher to being a music teacher.

Have [the principals] been pretty decent?

No, not all. All of them have had their strong points. But some of them have been really weak in some key areas. It usually doesn't make it difficult for me. So I've felt like as far as the administration, there's only one of the superintendents who was like I don't know...didn't respect me in a lot of ways. Things just changed when I became a music teacher. All of the sudden, I wasn't important any more. It was really strange. (Jose Fresco)

Mathilda Lewis actually distanced herself from her principal, because he was accused of criminal mismanagement of school funds. She stated that all of her colleagues felt the school board was doing little to investigate because it was difficult to get an administrator in her extremely rural school district. She also felt that she had some degree of power over her administration because of this knowledge, and because she knew that if she quit it would be difficult to find another certified rural music teacher who would move to that school district.

He knows that he can't get another [music] teacher. And I probably wouldn't have to do anything. But I'm not that personality. Most of us teachers who are here aren't that personality. (Mathilda Lewis)

Mathilda stated that colleagues in her school district were teaching students out of a sense of professional duty, but she made it clear that she would not need to work as hard as she did. Her position was secure because the administrative leadership in her school district was very weak. The principal and superintendent had little power over other occupational and cultural reference groups in the community.

Students were also a strong force in the occupational socialization of the subjects in this study. According to Holloway (1994) and Zeichner (1979), teachers look to students for validation of their efforts. Teachers referred to students frequently in the interviews for this study. They were genuinely fond of most of their students, and spoke of the admiration they had for students who could juggle their responsibilities at school with their extra-curricular activities and their home obligations (often on a farm or ranch). Teachers in this study spoke of positive relationships with students. They stated that their students were good, and that they enjoyed working with them. It was unclear from the interviews, however, whether the "good students" referred to well-behaved individuals or those who had special talents and skills in music. This distinction is an important one, as it may signal a localized view of what makes a student "good." Music teachers viewed programs as successful when the students produced a product that satisfied specific musical criteria. At the same time, music teachers felt some pressure from administration, school board members and the whole community to recruit and retain as many students as possible in their music programs. Numbers of students participating affected the school district and community's perception of "success." So music teachers

may have valued those students who were willing participants in the rural school music program.

Teachers recognized that the students were their best recruiters for the program, and word of mouth could help to build or destroy a rural music program quickly. Though Mathilda referred to some of the “knotheads” she had in class and Irene Vacek talked about a particular class of seniors who were “monsters,” most of the teachers were quick to point out that the students who were difficult were the exception rather than the rule, and that they were generally proud of their music students.

It also appears that students could provide a music teacher with the motivation and level of career satisfaction necessary to remain employed by a specific school district. Students were not reference group members for these music teachers. Based on the data gathered during the qualitative portion of the study, it appears that because teachers did not aspire to become members of the student reference group, they could respect and admire the students without wanting to become one of them.

Another occupational reference group included members of the music booster organization. It appeared that these parents were simultaneous members of both occupational and cultural reference groups for these teachers.

...the first school I taught in was in Lantagne. They were very do nothing before I got there. The people who were there were very helpful with me, because they would kind of say, well, back in the day, we used to do this, we used to do this. I had people who brought in pictures of what the uniforms used to look like 20 years ago. They were showing me what all was going on in the community. They tried to help and do everything possible...a lot of them were my band parents. They were really active in the band. (Kyle Smith)

Music booster organizations provided the music teacher with financial resources through fund raising, physical assistance with administrative tasks, chaperone services and historical background of the music program.

There is a lady here who went through the school system. She's about fifteen years older than me. And she accompanies my solos for me. And she was a band booster parent. And she was friends with the former band director. So she gives me the low-down. She feels sorry for the people who move in here, because it's a pretty clique-y community. (Denise Crawford)

Music teachers stated that they had colleagues in other rural school districts who had problems with music boosters wanting to run all aspects of the music program. But the music teachers in this study appear to appreciate the support they received from this valuable group.

I had band boosters at both schools I taught at before I taught at this one. They were great organizations that tried to help me whenever they could.

Do you have a band booster organization where you are going?

Yes. In this state you usually have a band boosters association no matter where you go.

And so, you feel like that's a very supportive thing?

Yes, that's a very supportive thing. Some people say that band boosters try to influence you, try to say don't do this, or we don't want that. But I never had any problems...we do fundraisers all the time. I'm only there to help. Parents know that if I'm there to help, they'd better be there to help. And they always want to be there to help. (Kyle Smith)

Because Ron Burns was the most veteran music teacher interviewed for this study, he provided a unique view of the changing role of band parents and boosters.

Oh, we put on a soup and song evening and they get everything organized for the fundraiser. And they'll get people if we need sponsors for bus trips. They'll help with things if you need some help. The trouble with boosters is it's hard to get anyone who can help because they all work. You need people to come in to do band uniforms. And it's just about impossible. (Ron Burns)

Sometimes, rural music teachers in this study stated that they would turn to those who had previously held that position in the school district for advice or historical context of the program. These “ghosts of programs past” were members of occupational reference groups who provided limited historical views.

Here’s what I think. I think that I’m not probably that good. But I think that I’m the first certified music teacher. So I’m pushing reading, I’m pushing playing with some expression, things they’ve never had before. And that makes people think that I must be...if you want to follow somebody, always follow somebody who hasn’t done a very good job.
(Mathilda Lewis)

I knew all of [the former music teachers] on a personal basis from when they taught at different schools.

Could you call them about your community?

The guy who was here right before me, we talked a couple of times. But he was real negative about the whole thing. He had some personal problems, and they weren’t really resolved before he left here. So he wasn’t good. (Denise Crawford)

Denise Crawford received recommendations from a previous music teacher in her district named Mr. Henry. She followed Mr. Henry in two different school districts, and felt that she had been hired for those positions as a direct result of knowing him.

Oh, so you didn’t come immediately after Mr. Henry.

No. There’s about six or seven teachers in between us.

So really, even though he was here for a long time, it sounds like it was a long time ago. His influence was pretty much gone by the time you got there, wasn’t it?

Except that the kids that I have now are the children of his students. [The parents] all said, “Band was this when he was here.” And, “This is why we need this for our kids.”

So do you ever feel like this is a little bit intimidating to have to live up to [his reputation]?

I think that if I wasn’t friends with him, or I disagreed with him, it would be a little bit different. Plus, I know that I have his approval. So it’s not intimidating then. But if it was somebody else, who maybe thought I was an idiot. Maybe I’d be walking on eggshells then the whole time. (Denise Crawford)

Denise Crawford indicated that Mr. Henry served as a significant other for her. It appeared that he also served as a simultaneous significant other for members of the community. His tenure at the school district set a standard for music education. Those who experienced that standard as students were parents at the time when Denise was hired. These parents wanted the same type of music education for their children as they experienced. If Mr. Henry's recommendation of Denise as "heir to the throne" was made public, it may have eased her into the local school and community reference groups. By having a nod of approval from someone who was valued in the community, she may have achieved "insider" status more quickly in the community. This phenomenon occurs in many educational settings, but it occurs more frequently in rural settings, where the communication system is more intimate and informal (Walsh-Reuss, 1998).

Former music teachers had attitudes ranging from benevolent (in the case of Mr. Henry) to malevolent (in Jose Fresco's and Melissa Jenkins' cases) toward the programs they had left. Most of the music teachers interviewed for this study seemed to know a great deal about the former music teachers in their districts. Many blamed problems with weaknesses in the program, numbers or student and community perceptions of the music program on former teachers. This makes the "ghosts of programs past" a unique and relatively powerful occupational reference group for rural music educators.

Multiple Assignments

Music teachers interviewed for this study talked about the divided loyalties that occurred when music teachers were asked to teach multiple subjects, or teach in more than one school district. Some principals made teaching assignments in subjects other

than music for the music teacher. Anger with the administration over these types of decisions was discussed as a reason to quit a position.

And [the administration] told me, “You have to teach two sections of science. Seventh grade science. So that we can add more in the high school.” And I said, “I have never taught science. I haven’t taken a course in thirty-five years.” And they said, “You have to do it.” And that mentally and physically did me in. Cause I can’t do justice to 210 kids in band grades 5-12 and then have 55 science kids in two classes...And before school even starts you’re turning in every direction...So after that, I told them that they could just take this and stick it somewhere where the sun doesn’t shine. And that’s when I decided to retire. (Ron Burns)

When Mathilda Lewis began working in her current school district, she discovered that she was expected to teach junior high speech and art as a part of her assignment.

They didn’t ask. They had assigned me speech. And the first day of school, I found out that I was doing Junior High Art. The only reason I’m doing art—I’m not certified, though I have a Master’s in Elementary—so I took that one obligatory art class that you have to take in college. That’s the only official art I’ve had. I’ve done a lot of fabric arts and I’ve taken a couple of painting classes. (Mathilda Lewis)

Jose Fresco talked about the administration’s decision to eliminate a part-time music teacher and hire him instead. The previous music teacher had so much trouble with classroom management that she was released from the position. Jose was sympathetic to her side of the story. He felt that the previous part-time music teacher was not valued as a fully contributing member of the staff, and that she had found another music position when she had become frustrated.

[So they said], “We choose you. You’re our new music teacher.”

It was pretty obvious why.

Did the music teachers seem pretty flummoxed that they weren’t asked back?

No, they were never let go. They always found somewhere else to go. It was only a part time position. I think it had a lot to do with it. The idea that they were just five/sevenths of a day kind of made them feel like they weren’t real valid or important. If you don’t feel important, and you don’t

feel like what you're doing is important, and nobody you're working with feels like it's extremely important, what's the point? (Jose Fresco)

Coping Strategies

Rural music teachers spoke of the coping strategies they used to build and maintain their music programs while satisfying members of occupational reference groups. They included making their performing groups integral parts of the school culture, limiting the numbers and types of performing ensembles on the high school level and allowing students to select music for performances within given parameters.

...I let the kids choose everything. But I give them the parameters. Like, I'll pick four or five gospel pieces, and then they'll have to choose one of them. Or I'll pick something like the Messiah or something like that, and they'll have to choose from those. And we do something goofy, and they choose that. And we always do a pop thing, and they choose that. And we do a traditional. So we have a good variety. And we have a lot of people who say that they really appreciate that because the concerts are more fun to go to. (Marie Yonkers)

Rural music teachers in this study tried to accommodate the needs of students, colleagues, administrators and music boosters when making decisions about the direction the program would take.

Cultural Socialization

In the rural community, many socialization factors influence the music teacher's program. These factors may be readily apparent or may be hidden in unwritten cultural expectations. Themes revealed by those interviewed for this study include the visibility/community demands on the program, community leadership expectations, drinking in public, church participation, evidence of community support, , the reference groups, and the feelings of inclusion/exclusion in relationship to the rest of the rural

community. Each of these themes will be examined as they relate to the cultural socialization of the music teacher.

Visibility/Community Demands

The visibility of the program had an effect on the occupational socialization of rural music teachers, but it also played a part in their cultural socialization. The community expected to see the students performing. Denise Crawford admitted, “They like to see us really visible. They like to see us go on trips. And they want us to do well at contest at Normandy. There’s a little pressure.” In talking about a former music teacher, Jose Fresco stated that there was a negative perception of a former music teacher when the students were seen by community members hanging out of the windows of the music room, smoking. Respondents stated that those music teachers who did not understand the value of a visible music program ran the risk of clashes with parents, school board members or other members of the community. There was a healthy respect for the opinions of the community and a strong emphasis on having students perform whenever feasible. As the youngest teacher participating in the study, Kyle was the only one to reveal his inexperience and naiveté about listening to the community when he made decisions about musical performances.

If there was a deadline about [a community performance] and I didn’t feel like we were ready, I would say that we’re not ready. And if they were upset about it, I’d say, “Sorry, but musicianship comes first.” We’re not always here to please the community. I want to be. But it’s kinda like you try to be the best you can be, but you can’t. So you do the best you can. And if I could, I would. But if I can’t I’d explain. They were understanding, though. (Kyle Smith)

Community Leadership

Studies by Guilliford (1984) and Schonauer (2002) indicate that music teachers have an elevated status and increased responsibility to serve as community leaders, church musicians and role models for other community members. Music teachers in this study were often called upon to be the music leaders for the community. These music teachers provided expert advice to other community members who wanted to make music. Many led civic musical groups, community theater organizations or church choirs. They had few opportunities to perform with others directing. Most had accepted this music leadership as a reality of being a member of the rural community. The only exception was the youngest teacher interviewed for the study. Kyle Smith wanted to play in a community jazz or Dixieland band, but couldn't find any opportunities where he was located.

For most of the music teachers in this study, community service and involvement was limited to musical leadership or any activities that were sponsored by the school. The only exceptions were Marie Yonkers, who served as a town council member and Irene Vacek, who participated in many activities in her community. Both of these women spoke about a family history of civic responsibility.

Community Support

Rural communities recognized that in order to attract teachers, they had to provide some additional benefits and assistance. Many of the small towns provided assistance in finding adequate housing. In some of the most rural communities, housing was a major issue. Communities that were the most rural responded to the shortage of housing by

providing “teacherages” for their educators. Jane Tipton and Mackenzie Meyer both lived in this type of community sponsored housing.

Do you live in the community?

Kind of. We have teacherages.

Really? Boy, is that an old concept!

So during the week, when we stay late at night to teach, or the night before I have duty, I’ll stay.

It’s almost like a dorm setting?

They have some houses that are back behind the school and they have some of them a couple of miles away from school.

Otherwise, how far do you live from school?

About 72 miles. (Jane Tipton)

This housing set teachers apart from other individuals who moved to these rural communities. The fact that rural communities were willing to provide housing for their teachers was perceived by the community as a way to provide a quality education for their children, and represented the community’s response to the difficulty in finding adequate housing in rural areas. Additionally, this sets teachers apart from other members who moved into the community, and stresses to the community and to the teachers that they are “outsiders” to the rest of the community reference group. By aligning themselves with other members of the educational community in their housing, the teachers may also be self-identifying as “outsiders” to the rest of the rural community.

Another situation where the community showed strong tangible support for the music program was in Kyle’s second school, where 100% of the students were in the band program beginning in the fourth grade.

Over at the school I was at last year, there was no problem. All the kids were forced—I shouldn’t say forced—all the kids were in band.

All the kids were in band?

All of them. (WOW) Because that was the way it had been done for years.

So you just knew that you’d be in band, and you’d just pick your instrument. Did you pick the instruments for them?

No, well, here's the deal. They would start in beginning band in the fourth grade. So you get all of these kids in the fourth grade class and you do the instrumental test. You test their hearing, you give them tests to see what they understand. I'd give them a choice at first, but I'd tell them, if it doesn't work out, let's try something else. Well, they would do this, and through the years, they would evolve and they would either play that instrument forever, or they would kind of change. (Kyle Smith)

Kyle admitted that there were problems with discipline and eventual attrition using this approach, but appreciated the community's strong commitment to keeping a band program. The community also helped with this program by sending the sixth through eighth grade students on a band trip every year. Kyle felt that going to amusement parks or other scenic attractions motivated the students and decreased the numbers of discipline problems for Kyle. "They went on a trip every year, so that gave the kids a goal." (Kyle Smith)

Community Acceptance

Rural music teachers interviewed for this study talked about competency of teachers and administrators in the rural school district. Hiring and retention decisions made by school districts may have been based on convenience or availability rather than competency of candidates. Denise Crawford said that administrators at her school district were anxious to keep her because she was competent.

Have you had pretty good relationships with most of the other administrations?

Yes, I really have. They've all backed me. They've been really helpful. I guess because band directors are so hard to find in our state at least, they want to do anything they can to keep one. Especially if you're competent. (Denise Crawford)

Her statement implied that some of her colleagues and predecessors were incompetent. Other music teachers implied that some colleagues were less competent when they

compared their own music programs to others and found them to be average or above average. Melissa Jenkins, Marie Yonkers, Mathilda Lewis and Ron Burns all mentioned music programs in their region that were struggling or failing. Jose Fresco admitted that the program at his school would be stronger if the school district hired a certified music specialist to replace him. Competence is normally an implied requirement for employment in the field of education, but the comments made by a number of respondents revealed that competence of educational staff members in a rural school district was viewed as a bonus, and that some rural teachers and administrators were incompetent.

Drinking in Public

In some communities, the center of town was the local pub or tavern. It was the gathering place for people, and a source of information about the culture of the community. The issue of public consumption of alcohol by educators appeared to be a divisive one for many rural communities.

Mackenzie Meyer went to the local steakhouse and pub as a part of her social life.

The bar, the steakhouse. That sort of ends up being the meeting place for a lot of people.

Are you allowed as a teacher to go into the bar?

Well, we've had administrators in the past who have frowned on it and were vocal about it.

It's against the law to prohibit it now. But it was an unspoken reality when I started teaching. We did not go into the bar.

No, we can go in. If you're interested in drinking, you can drink.

There's underage kids in there while you're drinking too? Families? Probably.

But that's an OK thing to do in your community? It's not a problem?

In fact, it's part of mixing in. It's part of belonging. I don't happen to use alcohol on a regular basis. So it's not a big deal. But they have good steak. So I go there for that. And I am not comfortable seeing students watch staff members intoxicated. Drinking, smoking, the whole business.
(Mackenzie Meyer)

For Marie Yonker, teachers' drinking became a divisive issue in her community.

The biggest problem we've had with [the middle school teachers] is drinking in the community.

The teachers drinking in the community? (Yeah). That's interesting. Because different people have talked about different perceptions about drinking. How does your community feel about drinking?

Our community is kind of different. We have both ends. We have people who think that this is what everybody should do every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night of the world. We also have the other, the Labenz Trace community, who I guess are more professional people. (Marie Yonker)

Though Denise Crawford admitted that she went out with staff members for margaritas in a neighboring community on occasion, she stated that she never considered drinking in the community in which she taught.

After the prom, we went and had a margarita last year.

So as far as the community culture, do you drink in the community?

No. It's not even worth it. (Denise Crawford)

Church Membership

A number of music teachers mentioned their involvement in a local church as an important part of belonging to the community. The community expected "Christ stuff" at Christmas (Melissa Jenkins), and many music teachers also functioned as volunteer music leaders at their local churches. For most of them, it appeared to be a part of their personal vision of spirituality rather than a response to community pressure. As they worshipped with school colleagues, administrators and community members, the types of socialization became blurred, and multiple, simultaneous relationships with others as reference groups were established. In Jane Tipton's case, she has found a church located in the community in which she taught. It was not clear whether she began teaching in the community or worshipping in the community first, but she indicated that she used this church reference group as a social group, too.

Well, we go to a little church up there...

In that community you do?

Yes. And one of the teachers is the preacher's wife, And the song director is the principal. And the pianist is the secretary.

Do you do social things with them in the context of the church? (Uh huh).
(Jane Tipton)

Reference Groups

The strongest reference group mentioned outside of the walls of the school was the family. All of the respondents mentioned that they had received significant help and support from their families. Spouses and children provided psychological support. Ron Burns, Jose Fresco and Jane Tipton received financial and emotional support from their spouses when they returned to school to receive their degrees. Others mentioned children supporting them when they were teachers in the rural district. Many also spoke of basing job-related decisions on the needs of their family members instead of their own needs.

Community friends formed weaker reference groups for these rural music teachers. Many respondents stated that their friendships were primarily with school co-workers and their families. Mackenzie Meyers stated that she chose not to make friends with the community members so that she could maintain a professional distance from her students and their families. She saw friendships as a barrier that would cause community members to accuse her of favoritism. She wanted to avoid this whenever possible.

Yes. It's always been kind of hard. I don't socialize with very many parents because I don't want the kids to think that I would prefer one kid over another or be closer to one family of kids over another. (Mackenzie Meyer)

The strength of rural community members as reference group members varied by individual. In some cases, respondents felt that the rural community was supportive, writing notes of appreciation and stopping the music teacher on the street to thank them

for a recent performance. On the other hand, Ron Burns left some of his positions because members of the school district and community became complacent about the quality of his music program.

I guess I was always the restless type. So after six years or so, I had an urge to move on. The honeymoon was over. The first four years were great. After four years, they would say things like, "Oh, yeah. We knew you'd do that." No more, "That was great." They began to expect things. And there was a little bit of a rebel in me. I wanted to say, "Hey you guys. I worked my butt off." And now the administration at the concert would say, "Somebody came in during the concert and flushed a bunch of paper down the toilet during last night's concert." Not nice work for the concert.
(Ron Burns)

By ignoring his students' musical growth, the growth in numbers of students in his program and his efforts, Ron felt the community was indifferent. Denise Crawford was also bothered by the silence in the community, stating, "I guess that they're the type who will let you know if something is wrong."

Irene Vacek was concerned about community members who wanted to gossip with her on the streets.

Do you ever have parents come up to you and say, "My child is hanging out with Buck. What do you think? Is Buck a good influence?"

I have had that happen.

And what do you do?

It's tough.

Do you talk to them as parent, or do you talk with them as teacher?

It depends on the situation. But it happens. This gal moved to town this year, and I saw her in the grocery store. And I hate that.

I remember that conferencing thing in the grocery store. I hated that, too.

You know what? I didn't answer her. I just kind of smiled. And she answered her own question.

What did she say?

She said, "This gal—her name is Amy—wants to hang around with my daughter. And then Hannah—her daughter—keeps getting into trouble. I just am worried about Amy." And I just stood there and smiled. And she said, "I just don't think she should be hanging around with Amy." I never even said a word. I just smiled. And I nodded my head a little bit. But I didn't say a word. You know,

you just can't...I just don't like the grocery store thing. It bothers me. (Irene Vacek)

Many respondents stated that they were reluctant to get involved with community groups because they did not want to deal with the dilemma of street gossip.

You have to be really careful, because lots of these people are related. And you know the saying, "I can talk about them, but don't you talk about them." And that's where you have to be really careful. (Mathilda Lewis)

For others interviewed for this study, colleagues frequently became personal friends.

Do you do things [with your colleagues] socially?

Yeah, the math teacher and I do things socially.

What kinds of things do you do socially?

Well, we go to school functions together. And we go out to eat sometimes. And sometimes we just goof around together. After the prom, we went and had a margarita last year. (Denise Crawford)

Irene Vacek had colleagues who had children who were the same age as her children. She socialized with other teachers who had young children. Kyle Smith went fishing with some of his school colleagues, but stated that they never talked "shop" during those fishing trips. Jane Tipton stated that the teachers in her district served as a community chest for community members in need, organized fundraisers and provided leadership within the community.

As far as community involvement, do you have any chance to get involved with the community? (Yeah—[emphatically]) Is that perhaps the community expectation?

The school IS the community. I mean, this last year, we had a little boy in kindergarten. And they found a brain tumor. And the school—especially the elementary school—is always the one who did the fundraisers for the family. I think we did four different fundraisers. And I think they raised over \$2,000 for each different fundraiser. We had auctions and dinners and bake sales and all kinds of stuff. The teachers are the first ones to reach out and help those families. And it's just the teachers you know that come together and do it. (Jane Tipton)

In all of these cases, the lines between local school and community reference groups were blurred and teachers associated as members of both reference groups simultaneously.

Insider/Outsider

Because this study involved symbolic interaction theory as it applied to the individual's socialization and development, the identification of gestures used when discussing various reference groups became important. In conversations with the rural music teachers in this study, it became clear with whom the teachers aligned themselves. For example, Irene Vacek and Marie Yonkers both reported that community members trusted them more than they did the administration. The community frequently came to them to ask for advice on how to deal with other school personnel. For Marie Yonkers, this phenomenon occurred during parent/teacher conferences.

...at parent/teacher conferences, I'm busy all night long. It's not because parents want to talk to me about their students failing, because not that many people fail my class. Or because they're that interested in the program. It's because they know me. So a lot of people just stop through and they will stop and conference with us about problems their kids are having in other classes. But it's usually classes where the people are from Chandler or Davidson or somewhere else. And I tend to tell them, "This is how I would approach this. I would tell the teacher this..."

You tell the community member what you need to tell the teacher?

Yeah. People will stop at someone who they feel comfortable talking to. Parents might stop by and say, "My kid's failing this class, and I'm afraid of—" I've had parents say that they're afraid of a teacher. She scares me. And I tell them, "No, no. They're really nice. Just go over and tell them your concerns, you know. And you get a lot of that when you're local. (Marie Yonkers)

Irene and Marie saw themselves as a bridge between the school and community and actively participated in the street talk of the community. By aligning themselves with the parents in this community, community members identified them as significant others

which provided a link between the school district and the community. They were the ones who know the language and the gestures that allowed the community members entrance to the other teachers and administrators. A portion of the community recognized this and came to them for advice before approaching other employees of the school district. This may be a significant indication of these teacher's "insider" status in the community reference group.

Jose Fresco and Ron Burns implied that they were outsiders to the rural community when they criticized the townspeople most severely. Ron talked about the "new reality" of the rural community.

Thirty years ago... lot of sharp people were in the small towns. But what happens when generation after generation of smart people leave the rural environment. When all of the college prep smart kids leave, and what do you have left? You can tell me that it's not politically correct, but it's the truest thing I've ever seen. I go back and I say no wonder kids are so rough in rural America. The parents are the rough ones when they went to rural school. And they didn't give a diddly squat about anything, so why should their kids? (Ron Burns)

Jose stated that many of the people were short sighted, and did not view music as important because it taught no job skills. He stated that in some ways, they were correct, since many of them did not leave their rural community to seek employment.

Do you feel like the community values music?

I think the community values music. I got encouragement like you wouldn't believe from kid's families. And even from the kids. But they don't feel like it's important for life. They think that it's important for kids to learn to...

It won't make them money.

Yes, it's not something that's going to benefit them when they get out into the "real world." I don't know that anyone in this community gets out in the real world.

Do most of them stick around there?

Yeah, pretty much.

Even after they graduate, do they go off to college?

Yes, most of them do. Most of them don't go off very far, and if they do, they usually end up back at one of the local colleges to finish up.

That's interesting.

It's a big shock for someone from a little pond like Charlestown to go to college and—going from a place where everybody knows what everybody does...a lot of times before they ever do it. To go to a place where nobody cares what you do. It's really a big shock for some of these kids. (Jose Fresco)

Because Jose Fresco commuted to his rural school position from a larger community, it was clear by the comments he made that he perceived himself as an outsider to members of this rural community. Though he stated that members of this rural community did not mind the fact that most of the teachers commuted into the school district, the language he chose to describe residents of the community may have reflected a pervasive attitude of the teachers who commuted in to teach at this school.

Ron Burns said that the more rural the community was, the "dumber" the residents were. In his view, the "dumbing down of rural America" was a significant factor in the amount of value placed on music in the schools.

You get more than fifty miles from Davidson or Chandler, and you're facing tough times, folks. All of the sharp families are gone, and the families that are moving in...well, you got to call a spade a spade on that one. They're low income people, they're welfare people, and they can live cheap there. You see some of those rag-tag kids coming through the classes. And you think, "Oh my gosh." (Ron Burns)

Irene Vacek frequently referred to the attitudes of those who had lived there for a long time as being different than those who were more recent arrivals to the community. She did not, however, indicate a timeline for moving from "outsider" to "insider" in her rural community. By using this insider/outsider language, she clearly aligned herself throughout the interview with the longtime members of the rural community over those who were newcomers.

Does the community value music?

There are a lot of people who do, but there are also people who don't. I'll tell you again, that the people who've lived here—and I'm not saying that it's everyone. But the people who are less likely to support me are the lower income, that don't...

Are they the outsiders that have just moved to the community? (Yeah) In other words, not the long timers. (yeah) (Irene Vacek)

The length of time needed for an individual to move from “outsider” to “insider” appears to be longer in a rural community than in an urban or suburban setting. Other respondents were more positive about members of the rural community. According to Jane Tipton, people wanted music in their town. They viewed music as a cultured part of their children's lives.

My peers support me, my administration, my parents are real good as long as you let them know enough ahead of time what they need to have, and they'll go out and get it. The communication there is really good, and the parents are real good to come in and volunteer, because they know that their kids are benefiting from it. And they want them to have music so bad. (Jane Tipton)

Except for music leadership, most spoke of reluctance to become an insider to other community members. Many felt that once community activities began, they evolved quickly into traditions and expectations and increased the pressure on the rural music teacher. All of the music teachers did acknowledge the value of being aware of what was going on in the community. Mathilda Lewis stated that teachers often heard conversations from friends in the community. Most respondents agreed that connections to the outside were needed in order to make the transition between the school and community as smooth as possible. The rural music teacher stated that they valued their rural communities, but many wanted to remain separated from community members.

Career Satisfaction

Career satisfaction is defined as achieving a state of mind by adjusting expectations and actions until a sense of balance or peace is achieved about job or career

choice. Topics discussed by the individuals interviewed for this study included rural comparisons, the value of music, the perception of the individual as teacher versus musician and the anticipated length of stay in the position. Each of these topics will be discussed in depth.

Rural Comparisons

Comparisons between the respondent's community and other rural communities were made. Frequently, they stated that the communities they lived in were not very rural. They compared distances from their small towns to larger communities, stating that shopping was only sixty-five miles away, or that they only had to travel two and a half hours to get to district music contest. Mathilda Lewis' comments about the distance to district music contest reflected this rural view of distance and travel time.

We go to University TT [for district music contest].

How far is that?

Oh, it's only about three hours away. When I was in Quincy, we were actually assigned to go to Roger's Crossing.

How far is that from Quincy?

About four and a half, five [hours]. We always opted out to go to Kimberly.

How far is that?

About 120 miles away. (*Only a couple of hours away*). Out here, that's not far. Our next town is twenty-five miles away. Our people run to Grunwald. Sixty-some miles. It's no big deal. (Mathilda Lewis)

The implications were that they perceived their community as a portion of a larger rural area and that many times this rural area also encompassed a central regional community that had more population. Transportation, technology and psychological mindset all contributed to the perception of interconnectedness that the teachers in this study appeared to feel between their rural communities and other communities.

The Value of Music

The career satisfaction experienced by music teachers was directly linked to the perceived value the teachers felt for the music program and for themselves as music educators. Mathilda Lewis spoke about the discussions she had with her administration. She was angry that she had to defend her position as a legitimate teacher.

...music is a class. I didn't even approach it as their planning time. It's my time to teach something important to these children. It was like they were allowing me to come in and teach, not like I was taking the kids off of their hands for their free time. That's my philosophy of it. If they feel that music is nothing but free time for the teachers, then they can go hire someone for minimum wage and they can work with the kids. And the kids will enjoy it, you can put on some CD's and the kids will sing with it. It works out that way if it's just free time for the teachers. To me, music is too important. There are some kids who will never be athletes. You need to get to them. Music will affect you for the rest of your life. Some of your other classes won't. I feel that it should not be classified as a time for the teachers to have their planning times. I know that that happens. I know it's their free time. But it shouldn't be labeled as that. It should be labeled as the time that I am allowed to work with those kids on something that is very valuable. (Mathilda Lewis)

Though she admitted that she was worried about losing her job after talking to the administration so passionately, she believed that she needed to stand her ground in defending her place in the school and the value of her discipline.

Role as Teacher versus Role as Musician

Consistent with Schonauer's (2002) study, most respondents perceived themselves as teachers more than musicians. Irene and Ron stated that they would be happy teaching any subject. None of the teachers regretted the choice they made to become music teachers rather than musician/performers. Some admitted they did not like performing but liked the process of creating music with others and helping others to become good musicians. They were content to be leaders of community groups. They

did not feel the need to maintain performance level on their instruments, choosing instead to act as facilitators and leaders for others.

When I play an instrument now, it's not the instrument I studied. I play trumpet with pep band. That's the instrument that I play the most regularly. (Mackenzie Meyer)

Ron Burns stated that he felt much more comfortable teaching than being a musician.

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

I feel very much more like a teacher who is a musician. (*Why?*) Meaning that I don't enjoy playing as much as I love teaching. I've never been one who really wanted to play but settled for teaching. No, I've always wanted to teach. And...

You said that it didn't matter to you if you taught science or math.
I've always enjoyed teaching. (Ron Burns)

Length of Stay in the Position

One measure of career satisfaction was the anticipated length of stay in the music teacher's current position. Music teachers interviewed for this study expressed ambivalence about this issue. Ron Burns and Melissa Jenkins began their current positions knowing that they would be "short timers" and did not plan to stay for very long. Mackenzie Meyer anticipated staying in her position for the balance of her career. Between these two extremes, there were many other opinions. Denise Crawford began the interview by stating that she wanted to stay in her job forever because of a good administration. By the end of the interview, she admitted that she would be leaving at the end of the academic year to get married. Kyle Smith stated that he had planned and hoped to stay at his second job, but his position was eliminated due to declining enrollments. In Jose Fresco's case the music program was completely eliminated from the school. Others mentioned consolidation fears and budgetary crunches that were

especially severe in rural areas. During the course of this research, Legislatures in both states announced severe reductions in funding to schools. Those interviewed stated that many rural teachers were fearful of the fate of their jobs as well as the future of their local school districts. Mathilda Lewis stated that anything that she bought she could use in her next school district. This attitude was interwoven into nearly every interview. The perception of these music teachers was that rural music teaching was an unstable profession and staying at any position was subject to the whim of many outside factors.

I guess [the worst part of teaching is] kind of the general attitude of the people that make the laws towards education. When you think of politicians and the people that make all of the rules, we're kind of like second-class citizens in many ways. (Jose Fresco)

When asked if the music teachers had any regrets about their career choices, every one of them was quick to answer that they were satisfied. Some felt that individual choices about employment with specific school districts may have been less than perfect, but they would make the same career choice. Mackenzie Meyer stated,

I don't think that everyone's cut out to be the only musician in the county or the only music teacher in the county. But it seems good to me. I guess that I've always felt it's like a mission, almost. To bring what I can to the rural community. (Mackenzie Meyer)

Summary

There are many experiences, reference groups, and significant others that assist in the professional socialization of the rural music teacher. Most of these experiences deal with the globalized socialization of teacher within the content area of music. The educational process of attending college and student teaching provided an initial view of what the role of music teacher should be. These views were affirmed by participation in content based in-services, workshops and professional development activities sponsored

by professional organizations. Competitions also provided the music teachers with a globalized view of what a successful music program should look like. When rural music teachers compared their programs to others in urban and suburban school districts, they realized that they had limited resources and no music colleagues within their district. They attempted to bridge this gap in resources and colleagues by creating virtual communities with other music teachers who taught in similar sized school districts. Many times, the rural music teachers interviewed for this study were unable to find the music, financial resources or students they felt that they needed to succeed. They attributed problems in their rural music program on the lack of resources that they perceived were readily available in urban and suburban school districts. They also credited any poor ratings that they received on the judges' lack of understanding about the realities of teaching in a rural school district.

Professional reference groups included music teachers outside of the teacher's local school district, music professors, contest judges, clinicians and professional organizations. These reference group members were often members or leaders of professional organizations. They also figured prominently in early socialization experiences of these rural teachers. Whether they were college professors, student teacher supervisors or leaders of professional organizations to which the music teacher belonged, they established an institutional view of what a music teacher should be and do. Rural teachers struggled with the globalized opinions these individuals expressed. When the views were inconsistent with the situations encountered by rural teachers in their localized situations, they had to decide whether to adopt the professional's view of music education or construct their own reality of the situation.

Professional significant others may be mentors, college professors or music teachers in nearby districts. For most of the teachers, these significant others did not take on a dominant role. They considered their professional significant other to be valuable for providing content or process advice, but admitted that because of the isolation that occurred in the rural school district, they had limited contact with their potentially significant others. The music teachers in this study contacted their significant other occasionally to ask for content or process advice. Perhaps due to the age and amount of experience of the respondents, the amount of contact with significant others appeared to be minimal. Many of these teachers seemed to rely on their own previous experience when making decisions about content or process, because they felt that their situation was “different” than the situations encountered by most of their professional reference groups or significant others.

There are many experiences, reference groups, and significant others that assisted in the occupational socialization of the rural music teacher. The themes discussed by those interviewed included programs and concerts, localized views of competition, school and cultural events, music vs. sports, demands on student time, standardized testing and accountability, formal and informal reference groups, social and community involvement, the conflicts that occurred when teachers were asked to teach multiple subjects and coping strategies. All of these themes were examined from a localized perspective. Programs and concerts were the most visible aspects of the rural music program. Music teachers were expected to use the types of music that school and community members could readily identify. School and community members also expressed a desire for a strong pep/marching band to support athletics. Rural music teachers in this study

understood that their presence at athletic events was a strong expectation. Locally, school and community groups allowed the music teacher to decide upon level of participation in district music contest. Competition was not expected or valued for most music departments, but it did appear to have greater value when it occurred in pageants and proms. Local school and community members favored democratically inclusive music groups. Those interviewed reported problems with individual community members when students did not receive favorable chair placements or membership in groups. School and community members also valued participation in competitive sports, and many rural music teachers in this study reported that support for the music program was eroding because of student participation in sports activities. Demands on student time also limited the amount of time that could be spent on musical activities. Additional demands on music teachers included teaching multiple subjects, or teaching in multiple school districts or school buildings.

Occupational reference groups included colleagues within the school district, administrators, students, “ghosts” of former music teachers and music booster and other parent organizations. These groups maintained and transmitted the gestures that were important to gain membership into the local occupational situation. “Ghosts” of former music teachers were the most unique reference group in this section. Former music teachers appeared to be capable of affecting a program for years.

There were many experiences, reference groups, and significant others that assisted in the cultural socialization of the rural music teacher. Themes revealed by those interviewed for this study include the visibility/community demands on the program, community leadership expectations, drinking in public, church participation, evidence of

community support, the reference groups, and the feelings of inclusion/exclusion in relationship to the rest of the rural community.

Many of the occupational demands on rural music teachers were also cultural demands. The community had a number of expectations for a visible and successful music program. They also expected that the rural music teacher would take an active role in the leadership of musical activities in the community. Music teachers interviewed for this study spoke of the disadvantages of drinking in public, and the advantages of being involved in church activities. By using specific language to describe experiences with rural communities, they identified themselves as insiders or outsiders in comparison to the members of the rural community.

Rural music teachers' primary cultural reference groups were family, friends and community members. Family appeared to be the strongest reference group. The community provided support to most of the respondents. Though the teachers reported cordial relationships with many in the community, most did not participate in the gestures that would make them integrated members of the community. Most of the community friends were also associated with the school district in some way. This citation of simultaneous cultural and occupational reference groups is consistent with Phelps' (1982) and Selzer's (2000) studies.

Career satisfaction is defined as achieving a state of mind by adjusting expectations and actions until a sense of balance or peace is achieved about job or career choice. Topics discussed by the individuals interviewed for this study included rural comparisons, the value of music, the perception of the individual as teacher or as musician and the anticipated length of stay in the position. All of these topics were

discussed in comparison to other school districts. These teachers used these topics as reasons to justify their selection of a rural school district for employment.

Those interviewed talked about their communities in terms of “how rural” they were. They used comparative language like “only” and time increments to compare their community’s proximity to other rural communities or regional population centers. By using this type of comparative language, these individuals may be attempting to improve the value and status of their community. They also may be including an entire rural region in their definition of “rural.”

Rural music teachers in this study also talked about the value of music in their school district and community. Those who had to justify their program to administration, colleagues or community members appeared to be less satisfied with their situation than their peers who received support from occupational and cultural reference groups.

Subjects who were the most satisfied with their position had a clear vision of self as teacher instead of musician. They spent most of their time leading, conducting and coaching others to be good musicians.

Rural music teachers indicated that they enjoyed teaching students and hated the administrative tasks of teaching. They had accepted their leadership role in the arts, and did not mind their inactive performing status. They would follow the same career path of teaching, though some would pursue a career in a different content area. The majority of the teachers interviewed were satisfied in their current school district.

Satisfaction levels about the choice of profession and position were determined by many factors. One measure of satisfaction level was the amount of movement between

districts. Mackenzie Meyer chose to stay in her position for her entire teaching career. Most of the others moved frequently between school districts.

Qualitative interviews provided the interviewer with a view of the issues important to individual rural music teachers. Chapter Six will discuss implications of the themes summarized in this chapter along with the quantitative data that was presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter Six

Discussion, Summary and Implications for Future Research

Introduction

This study examines the socialization process of rural music educators in the areas of professional, occupational and cultural socialization. This includes the development and role of personal and professional experiences, reference groups and significant others in the music educator's career pursuit in a rural school district.

For this study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodology was used. Fifty-four rural music teachers from the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska completed a survey, which formed the basis of the quantitative analysis for the study. Many who completed the survey requested that they be contacted to participate in the qualitative interviews. Ten subjects were selected for interviews on the basis of their demographic profiles. Analysis of the interview data formed the basis of the qualitative portion of the study.

Discussion

Every culture has specific gestures, behaviors, attitudes and dispositions. Studies using symbolic interaction theory suggest that an individual must learn and accept the gestures that form the body of knowledge that a group uses (Becker, Geer, Hughes & Strauss, 1961; Faules & Alexander, 1978; Spillman, 2002). This process socializes the individual to the culture as his/her status changes from "outsider" to "insider." For the purposes of this study, the socialization of individuals to the professional, occupational

and cultural gestures that define reference groups and set apart significant others in rural music teaching were examined.

The professional socialization of rural music teachers can also be referred to as institutional socialization. The first formalized professional socialization occurs during undergraduate training, when future teachers are initially exposed to the skills, behaviors and dispositions that are commonly expected of music teachers. This type of socialization continues throughout the music teacher's career. Workshops and in-services provide content and process advice, but also contain the gestures that contribute to the body of knowledge necessary for the individual to identify him/herself as an insider within the music education profession.

One assumption made at the onset of this study was that rural music teachers needed to be occupationally socialized to a local rural school district and culturally socialized to the rural community. The assumption that these were two distinct processes was incorrect. As Jane Tipton stated in her interview, "The school is the community." Previous studies also indicate that the school is at the center of the rural community (Miller, 1993; Raywid, 1999; Theobald, 1991). Attempts by the researcher to separate the rural school culture from the rural community culture created a false paradigm. As data were gathered from this study, analysis became immediately problematic. It was difficult to separate occupational socialization factors from cultural socialization factors. In the end, it became apparent that they two types of socialization were closely intertwined, and needed to be examined simultaneously.

Professional Socialization

During the gathering of qualitative and quantitative data, the following professional socialization themes emerged: education, membership in professional organizations, participation in contests, limited resources, lack of musical colleagues and the creation of virtual communities. Each of these themes will be discussed in depth.

The education of the rural music educators formally began during their college preparation. The responses to the survey indicated that the majority of the music teachers who chose to participate in this study had certification to teach music. Most had received Bachelor's Degrees of Music or Bachelor's Degrees of Music Education. Only twelve of the fifty-four teachers who responded to this survey were teaching outside of their area of certification. These data indicate that the majority of the music teachers participated in coursework and other experiences that aimed at socializing them professionally to the tasks, attitudes and dispositions of a music teacher. Therefore, most of those who entered the profession may have been socialized to the globalized role of music teacher.

The education that began while obtaining undergraduate degrees was continued through workshops and in-service teacher education provided by professional organizations. In the survey, music teachers indicated that they valued additional college coursework, advanced music training, attending music conferences and maintaining memberships in professional organizations. The majority of survey participants indicated, however, that they did not pursue additional education by obtaining advanced degrees. It was unclear whether they were actively discouraged from pursuing advanced degrees by their local school districts, whether there were no courses offered within a reasonable driving distance of their rural community, or whether they did not receive adequate

money as a result of taking further coursework. In either case, the majority of those who completed surveys and those who were interviewed took only the courses required to maintain their certification. Examining the results of the survey raised the question about the difference between valuing additional education and actively pursuing advanced degrees or other types of training.

The reason that rural music teachers did not choose to pursue further education may be found in the qualitative interviews. Rural music teachers indicated that they had an inner conflict about professional educational opportunities. They admired the ideas presented at workshops and clinics. They enjoyed the intellectual stimulation they received when attending classes. But they saw little relevance or practical application to their rural situations. If music teachers perceived that there were barriers to obtaining practical, usable information for their teaching, they may have been unlikely to pursue an advanced degree from a college or university that catered primarily to the needs of urban or suburban music teachers.

Going to contests and competitions also appear to be key experiences that reinforced the rural music teacher's professional socialization. They admitted that much of the stress they felt was internally derived, and stemmed from wanting to "belong." Those interviewed indicated that professional reference group members like college professors and music teachers from urban and suburban school districts used an implied institutional standard to evaluate the music teachers for potential membership.

Contests were also an opportunity for individuals to compare their music program to other music programs. In the survey, respondents were asked to rank their program as compared to other music programs. They stated that their programs were average or

above average when compared to all other music programs. The status of the rural music teacher's program improved, however, when comparing their programs to other similar sized music programs. Music teachers appeared to be more forgiving of their own programs when they evaluated their program in relationship to other programs with similar attributes of school size and number of students participating. During interviews, rural music teachers indicated that they would like to see a more lenient evaluation of rural music programs by judges during music contests and competitions. Teachers in this study revealed the inner conflict they may have felt when they indicated that they felt that judges needed to take into account the limitations of numbers of students and other resources before assigning ratings to ensembles from rural schools at music contests.

Rural music teachers who were surveyed indicated that tangible resources were not a high priority when evaluating the support that they received from their rural school district. Music teachers in this study seemed to value intangible items like support for disciplinary practices and allowing attendance at professional development events over budgetary support for the music department. The low priority placed on budgetary support by those surveyed may have indicated a lowered expectation level on the local level. Perhaps these music teachers were denied adequate funding for the music programs for so long from their local school district that they did not expect adequate funding to be available. This may have also created an internal conflict as music teachers were aware of the limitations they would be facing due to lack of funding.

When music teachers stated that their programs were not successful, they often blamed this failure on a lack of resources. They stated that they did not attend workshops because the materials used by clinicians were frequently too costly or impractical for

rural school systems. They also indicated that poor ratings at district music contest were a result of a lack of resources that were available to their urban and suburban colleagues.

Rural music teachers who were interviewed stated that the lack of funding was a barrier to having an outstanding music program. They avoided blaming students, parents or themselves for the lack of musicianship.

I've seen music teachers get fired because they didn't get good ratings at contest. Maybe that they didn't have anyone who could sing or play an instrument. Maybe they did a hundred percent the best they could. Maybe even the kids did the best they could with the talent they have. (Mathilda Lewis)

Rural music teachers who participated in this study expressed a desire to have music colleagues. Hersh, Stroot and Snyder's (1995) study found that rural music teachers sometimes formed alliances with music teachers in nearby school districts in order to replace the collegiality urban and suburban music teachers have with other music teachers within their school districts. The findings of this study supported the findings of this earlier study. Rural music teachers met during conference clinics and music contests to talk about content and process concerns. In addition, they kept in touch through the Internet and frequent phone calls. Survey participants ranked the support of music teachers outside of the district as moderately strong. They looked to these teachers as professional reference group members, and created gestures that were unique to their immediate rural environment. By creating these more immediate reference groups, they were eschewing the globalized reference group of music educators in favor of a more local occupational view.

The rural music teachers in this study talked about principals who were former music teachers, and often indicated that these principals were supportive of their efforts.

The fact that these former music teachers could discuss content issues may be one reason these administrators were perceived as more supportive. Teachers interviewed also talked about contacting the music teachers who formerly taught in the same position. These “ghosts” provided the music teachers with information about the history of the music program as well as pragmatic information about inventory, concert programming and other information about the school district. Those interviewed indicated that they valued conversations with these individuals because they could provide important occupational information. But rural music teachers in this study reported that these “ghosts” were often bitter about the music program and school system. They appear to have adopted a professional occupational view over the localized view of music education, and had often left the rural school district for “advancement” to a larger school district.

As a result of professional socialization, rural music teachers in this study are socialized to the globalized tasks, roles and dispositions of music education. Through education, memberships in professional organizations, participation in workshops, inservices and clinics, participation in contests and the establishment of reference groups, the music teachers were able to talk about their music programs as they compare to an implied institutional standard of what a music program should look like. As a result of this professional socialization, rural music teachers in this study believe that they know how to be a music teacher.

Because most of these music teachers are successfully socialized to the institutional view of what a music teacher should do, they immediately experience conflicts. The rural music teachers experience conflicts regarding the expectations in the

level of product, the number of ensembles they should have and the level of achievement these ensembles should attain. Professional reference groups hinder the rural music teachers' efforts by judging the performances of rural schools by a globalized standard. These conflicts become apparent as the occupational and cultural socialization of the individual is examined.

Occupational and Cultural Socialization

While examining the data for this study, it became clear that the occupational socialization of music teachers to a specific rural school district and the cultural socialization of the music teacher to a particular rural community happened simultaneously. It was difficult for both the participants and for the researcher to determine which socialization elements were specific to the school district and which happened as a result of participation in the life of the rural community. In the end, it was determined that occupational and cultural socialization were so intertwined that it was necessary to consider them as a single socializing agent. Themes that emerged in these areas included music program visibility and community demands, demands on student time, morality, expectations for community involvement, and judgment of the music program. Each of these themes will be examined in depth.

Music teachers who completed the survey indicated that their position as music educator encompassed many different responsibilities. Though the individual may have thought of him/herself as a vocal, instrumental or general music specialist, the demands of the job forced him/her to evolve into a music generalist. This generalist position was extended to include extra-curricular sponsorships. These music teachers indicated that most of the extra-duty responsibilities were within the content area of music.

Additionally, while there were fewer than 400 students in most of the school districts (82%), the community often expected the rural music program to maintain many of the performing groups and opportunities that were typically available in urban or suburban school districts. While music teachers indicated that they often limited the number of performing groups in order to maintain their own psychological well-being, they felt pressure by community groups to build the music program.

Some of those who completed the survey reported feeling burned out. While most respondents planned to remain in the profession of music education until retirement, many stated that they planned to stay in their current position for less than five years. The number of ensembles and extra demands placed on music teachers by their rural school districts and communities may explain the reason for exhaustion. Earlier studies by Wohlfeil (1989) and Haack and Smith (2000) indicated that the high degree of visibility of music teachers combined with expectations of music programs as public relations vehicles for the community may contribute to being overwhelmed by the position. The findings of this study support the findings of earlier studies about teacher stress and burn-out.

One occupational and cultural issue that was addressed by many rural music teachers in this study was the perceived competency level of teachers and administrators in the rural school district. Two earlier studies revealed that the link between dissatisfaction and actually leaving a job might be mediated by a lack of alternatives (Kent, 1979; Rosenholz, 1989). When individuals have no choice about whether to remain in a particular position, they may be willing to “settle for less.” This may also be true when examining hiring decisions made by rural school districts. Denise Crawford

said that administrators at her school district were anxious to keep her because she was competent. Her statement implied that some of her colleagues and predecessors were incompetent. Other music teachers who completed the survey implied that some colleagues were less competent when they compared their own music programs to others and found them to be average or above average. Melissa Jenkins, Marie Yonkers, Mathilda Lewis and Ron Burns all knew about music programs in their geographical area that were struggling or failing. Competence is normally an implied requirement for employment as a content specialist in music education, but the comments made by a number of respondents revealed that competence of music teachers was viewed as a bonus, and that some rural music teachers were incompetent. Rural music teachers interviewed for this study also implied that many community members accepted moderate amounts of incompetence of school employees as a fact of life in the rural school district. As long as the incompetence was not blatantly illegal or immoral, the teacher or administrator often remained employed by the rural school district.

Another factor that effected competency levels of music teachers was the sharing of music teachers between districts and the hiring of part-time, non-certified teachers to fill positions in rural school district. Jose Fresco admitted that the program at his school would be stronger if the school district hired a certified music specialist to replace him. All of the teachers who participated in the qualitative part of this study were teaching part or full time in a single rural school district, and most were certified to teach music in their state. Many indicated, however, that they had been employed simultaneously by two school districts in the past. Others knew of programs where teachers felt like second-class citizens because of part-time employment or job sharing. Matthes and Duffy's

(1989) study concluded that when individuals do not feel like fully participating members of school districts, attrition might occur. Sharing music teachers also results in the divided loyalties between districts. When music teachers teach multiple subjects, they also feel divided loyalties in the time they spend on each subject. Music teachers tend to align themselves with specific occupational reference groups and may be serving as a significant other in groups formed around community culture. When these music teachers are employed by two school districts and are unable to fully participate in these social roles, the isolation felt by these teachers may become especially intense and attrition may occur. All of the rural music teachers interviewed for this study who had been employed by two district, or asked to teach in another academic area spoke about divided loyalties between school districts or between content and subject areas as a part of being employed by a rural school district. This is another example of professional socialization to the role of music teacher being compromised in favor of a localized view, and may contribute to overall feelings of dissatisfaction by the rural music teacher.

Those who were interviewed talked about school and community expectations. They included having a pep band perform at pep rallies and athletic events, organizing Christmas programs that contain familiar carols, and creating on-demand performances for civic groups and cultural events in the community. Because school events are community events in small towns, the residents feel a strong sense of community pride and ownership in these performances. The informal communication system cited in earlier studies by Walsh-Reuss (1998) and Becker and Porter (1986) also contributed to the community's sense of proprietorial rights when it came to extra-curricular activities like the music program.

Studies by Higgins (1993), McLaughlin, Huberman and Haukins (1997), Roellke (1996), and Stevens and Pelter (1994) examined the increased pressures and obligations for students to participate in many activities of the rural schools. In some of the interviews, students were viewed as resources to be shared or hoarded. The students in rural schools had limited amounts of time available, and many activities vying for their attention. Rural music teachers in this study indicated that student availability was always a problem on the secondary level. Due to the small number of students in the school population, they appeared to perceive this as a larger problem in rural schools than in urban or suburban schools. Those interviewed for this study talked about the demands on student time inside and outside of school, and indicated that the school and community wanted a curriculum that was well balanced. Some members of the town would express a desire for a strong band or choral program, but most preferred to produce students who were well rounded and participated in a number of activities rather than those who would commit to only one activity.

Participation in sports appears to be an exception. In many communities, sports were valued over other activities. School and community members looked at sports traditions as a way to demonstrate community pride. Those interviewed frequently mentioned conflicts with coaches about student time spent on sports and other activities outside of music. Rural music teachers talked about the encroachment of sports practices into time formerly dedicated to music rehearsals. There was a concern expressed about the general erosion of support for the music program in favor of sports.

There is often a demand for the rural music teacher's leadership skills to extend beyond the classroom and beyond extra-curricular sponsorships to church and civic

music leadership (Guilliford, 1984; Schonauer, 2002). Music teachers indicated in the interviews that they were expected to lead church and community choruses or bands, and to be the musical “expert” for the community. This meant that they provided music for others who wanted to sing or play their instruments. Participation and leadership in the artistic life of the community was an overt expectation of these rural music teachers. The rural music teachers in this study have accepted their role as music leader in the rural community. But the initial shock of leading all aspects of a community’s musical life may not have been a part of the music teacher’s initial professional socialization, and may have been another area where compromise was necessary.

Rural music teachers interviewed for this study talked about their participation in church. The rural community expected teachers to participate in church activities. The music teacher was often asked to direct the church choir or sit at the organ. Other teachers in the community were expected to be the leaders of Sunday School classes. Most of those who were interviewed stated that their church participation was in response to an internal set of beliefs rather than a cultural imperative. Going to church was something that the teachers wanted to do, and they believed that it was coincidental that the expectations of the community matched their personal belief system.

Rural music teachers in this study also understood that there was an implied community standard when talking about issues of morality. Goodson-Rochelle (1995) found that some teachers fail in rural communities because they don’t conform to implied community standards for moral behavior. Teachers interviewed for this study talked about the schizophrenic attitude about drinking in public by teachers. In some small towns, drinking alcohol was a gateway into the community culture, and transformed the

teacher from “outsider” to “insider” within a community. In other places, drinking and becoming drunk in public was a reason to be fired. In general, rural music teachers in this study stated that rural community members did not tolerate public drunkenness by schoolteachers.

Consistent with previous studies, some of the teachers who were interviewed indicated that they felt like an “outsider” to the community (Miller & Sidebottom, 1985; Storey, 1993; Thurber, 1996). Some factors that influenced community involvement included whether they were married and/or had children and whether they lived in the community in which they taught (Harris & Collay, 1990; Selzer, 2000). At times, music teachers in this study aligned themselves with others who were employed in the rural school district, and then the entire staff collectively distanced themselves from other members of the community. The choice that some of the rural music teachers who participated in this study made to align themselves with other teachers to the exclusion of rural community members may have distanced all of the teachers employed by the rural school district from other members of the rural community, and cultural socialization may have been retarded.

An earlier study by Heston, Dedrick, Raschke and Whitehead (1996) found that rural residents valued local opinions over those from more remote sources like state or national government leaders. In this study, it appeared that rural residents wanted to be the ones to determine whether a rural music program was successful without relying on opinions from outside sources. One example involved attitudes toward state testing. The school board and administrators felt pressure to have students perform well on state testing, and placed some pressure on the music teachers to help prepare the students for

the arts portion of the test. Most of those interviewed, however, indicated that the community did not care how high state test scores were for the students. Most of those interviewed said that as long as the tests remained consistent and relatively high, the community was more concerned with other local issues at the school.

Because the opinions of those within the rural community were more valued than those from outside the community, they often judged the success of the rural music program. They would decide if the literature chosen for the concerts and the types of groups that were formed met community standards and traditions of what a rural music program should look like. Rural school and community members did not seem to value music competitions. They allowed the music teacher to determine the frequency and level of competition for the students. Administration and parents were occasionally present at these competitions (especially the marching competitions), and would support the students. Often, these rural community members did not necessarily value the opinions of the music contest judges (professional significant others for the music teachers) over their own opinions. Some of the younger members who participated in the study did not recognize this phenomenon, and made some errors in judgment. Kyle, the youngest music teacher interviewed for this study, indicated that he would cancel music performances in the community if he perceived that his groups were “not ready.” Other music teachers with more experience learned to participate in occasional performances when they felt the students were not ready. They understood that the rural community valued participation over quality of the performance.

Locally, the school and community valued a music program where all students could participate equally. Teachers reported difficulties when they attempted to seat

students by chair or hold auditions for admission to exclusive ensembles. The rural school districts in this study wanted all students to have opportunities to develop an enjoyment and an appreciation for music, without the additional pressure of admission into exclusive groups or ranking students by degree of talent.

Local competitions were valued when they involved traditions like homecoming, proms and other pageants and festivals. Competition was also valued in sports. Music teachers were expected to support these competitions with the presence of ensembles at coronations, festivals and sporting events. Most of the teachers understood these cultural expectations, and participated in the events with their ensembles.

Most of the participants in this study were socialized to the rural school and community prior to their tenure as a music teacher. Many of those who answered the survey had grown up in rural areas and had graduated from schools similar to those in which they taught. Those who were interviewed appeared to be able to analyze the occupational and cultural factors that were important to rural schools and communities. They participated in cultural and school events as a necessary part of their job. This participation may have come at a price. Respondents to the survey indicated that they would remain in their rural position for five years or less before moving to another school district. It was unclear whether the anticipated movement would be a lateral move to another school district, or whether the rural music teacher planned to move to a larger school district in an urban or suburban area.

During the analysis of the data, many compromises were revealed. Some of the compromises involved the music teacher's perception of self as a music specialist in a school district. Locally, the school and community expected that the music teacher

would assume all responsibilities for providing culture for the community. Some teachers indicated that they had difficulty resigning themselves to the fact that they would always be musical leaders, most had compromised their initial vision of self as music teacher. Another set of compromises involved the music teachers' ideas of what a music program should look like. They had to learn that their program was one of many valued by rural schools and residents, and that students were to be shared between school, family and extra-curricular commitments. Finally, music teachers had to learn to compromise their beliefs about rural schools in general. In the rural school district, resources were scarce and employees were not always competent for the job. Though the rural music teacher may have been initially hired to teach music, many ended up teaching multiple subjects and sponsoring multiple extra curricular activities. All of these compromises impacted the rural music teacher's localized socialization to the rural school and community.

Career Satisfaction

Studies indicate that those who remain in teaching positions do so because of high levels of career satisfaction (Allen, 1994; Lortie, 1975; Phelps, 1982; Price, 1989). Satisfaction is defined as a state of mind where individuals adjust expectations and actions until a sense of balance or inner peace is achieved (Stryker & Owens, 2000). This study examined the relationship between career satisfaction with the rural music teaching position and the rural music teacher's socialization. Respondents who chose to participate in this study appeared to have achieved a degree of satisfaction with their choice of career and current position. Their responses to questions about professional, occupational and cultural socialization consistently indicated that they were happy with their choice of career as a music educator.

Music teachers indicated that their current position was initially taken for family reasons or because the job was the best one offered. Demographics of the survey revealed that most who taught in rural schools were teaching in the same vicinity in which they grew up or went to college. In addition, many graduated from small high schools. Some expressed a desire for their children to have similar rural experiences or liked the lifestyle found in a rural setting. These personal factors all seemed to contribute heavily to each individual's sense of satisfaction with his/her career choice, and are consistent with previous studies about individuals being attracted to the rural community because of family and community affiliations (Arfstrom, 2001; Bryant & Grady, 1990; Miller, 1993; Yarrow et al., 1999).

Teachers in the survey and follow-up interviews reported high levels of satisfaction with the choice of music education as a career. However, their commitment to their individual school district was significantly weaker. Only 13% of the teachers surveyed indicated that they were likely to remain in their current school district for the balance of their career. The rest would leave for professional gain (like better salary or duties) or for family considerations (like a better job for the spouse). When asked, survey respondents also indicated that they anticipated remaining in their current positions for less than five years. Commitment level differences between the profession of music education and the local school district may be explained by the differences in levels of professional and occupational/cultural socialization.

General conversations about rural issues revealed that music teachers considered their positions to be unstable and many felt that the music program could be eliminated for a number of reasons without warning. Local issues about finance and the future

funding available to their school district were mentioned, as were fears of consolidation or school closings. These were strong factors that determined whether these teachers remained in their school district. Music teachers felt powerless in the face of budget cuts, and stated that they were very aware of the tenuous hold they had on their positions. Some had small or non-existent budgets for their department. Most relied heavily on fundraisers through music booster organizations to provide the necessary equipment and supplies. Others tried to return a portion of their budget to the school's general fund each year in order to help keep the school open. Teachers in this study were fatalistic about positions, stating that they could always start over someplace else. This fatalism may have also affected their feelings of commitment to an individual school district.

When localized experiences and reference groups did not match the professional, institutional expectations, music teachers had to make strategic compromises in order to survive. For example, the institutional role of music teacher first identified in college and student teaching needed to be altered as soon as the music teacher began his/her first job in a rural school district. Kyle Smith, the youngest music teacher in the study, talked about how his college education did little to prepare him for the reality of teaching in a rural setting. In order to modify his previous idea of what music teaching should be, he looked to his student teaching supervisor for content advice. He also began to develop a network of rural music colleagues who could give him practical advice to use with his rural school band program.

Conflicts occurred when individuals needed to make choices between the values of professional reference groups and those of occupational and cultural reference groups. When the conflict between these three reference groups occurred, the music teachers felt

pressure to commit to a position that favored one group over another. By gravitating towards the institutional view of what music teaching should be, they often ignored local community and school district expectations. As a result, school district and community members may have viewed the music teacher as an outsider to the local culture. When the distance between professional and occupational points of view was too great, the rural music teacher had to adopt one view of the profession over the other which may have pointed to the frustrations that eventually led to seeking employment in a different school district.

Limitations of the Study

The present study investigated the role of professional, occupational and cultural socialization in the music educator's career pursuit in a rural school district. During the course of the study, a number of limitations were revealed. In using data gathered from state departments of education, state education associations and an on-line website, it was revealed that the data collection methods used by these organizations were imprecise and inconsistent. This resulted in a number of errors regarding e-mail and traditional mail addresses. A single more comprehensive and accurate database would have assisted in a wider and more efficient distribution of the surveys.

Another area of concern was the technology available for the dissemination of the questionnaire. The software program "Dreamweaver" did not contain tracking devices that allowed the information given by respondents to remain anonymous. It would have been impossible to maintain the anonymity required of the survey if on-line responses were tracked by coding. The survey was sent with no identification codes and the protection password could be used multiple times. This meant that individuals could fill

out the survey many times. Though visual inspections of the results revealed a low probability of this event occurring, it weakened the statistics gathered from the survey. There was evidence that some individuals may have allowed other people to fill out the surveys. In order to preserve the integrity of the study, questionable surveys were eliminated prior to analysis.

Those who chose to respond to the on-line or mailed surveys were typically people who had a strong commitment to the profession of music education. The majority of those individuals had taught for at least five years. Information gathered from the state departments of education directories indicated that many of the individuals who were teaching in rural settings were those with less than five years of teaching experience. Those teachers may have lower commitment levels to the profession of education and limited financial resources that prevented them from becoming members of the state education association. Because they were not members of the state education association, they were not eligible to participate in this study.

When examining results from the survey, it was difficult to determine strong statistical levels on any given topic. A larger, more stratified population of rural music teachers would strengthen the power of the statistical results of this study.

Implications of the Study

The rural music teachers who participated in this study knew how to be music teachers. The majority had received degrees in music or music education, and held the proper certification. Many participated in content-based workshops, in-services and clinics. For the rural music teachers who participated in this study, these experiences reinforced the globalized picture of what music educators should do and believe.

These same teachers may not have understood how to be a music teacher in a specific school district. Though they understood the gestures important to the role of music teacher, they may have misidentified or simply not noticed the gestures that the rural school and community valued. These were not initially significant gestures for many of the teachers as they did not share meanings with the rural community members.

Music teachers and rural schools and communities both value a strong music program. The definition of what attributes make a program strong appears to be very different. Music teachers appear to value programs where students perform music that satisfies specific musical criterion, meeting a specific level of achievement. Rural communities in this study appear to value a music program where all students can participate as a part of a well-rounded education that will prepare them to take their place as participating members of the rural community.

Rural music teachers often value the opinion of professional reference group members over those of occupational or cultural reference groups. Rural schools and communities appear to want to be the judge of their local programs. Music teachers seem to value the achievement level of their students when evaluating the success of the program. This may be the result of the professional socialization experiences in which music teachers must participate. These experiences usually involve analysis of skill levels of participants, and the assigning of ratings. Rural communities look at the number of students participating in programs and the amount of enjoyment the students have as they participate in the music program. This may be result of the cultural gestures the rural community may have collectively experienced. Because they have limitations on the number of students who can participate, they may not want to leave students out of these

types of experiences. The distance between the music teacher's expectations and the expectations of the rural community lead to conflicts about the content and philosophy of the rural music program. This is another area where the music teacher has to compromise his/her professional socialization to match the views of occupational and cultural groups.

As music teachers compare the music they can produce in their rural school districts, they sometimes express anger about the limitations they face. They either become willing to settle for less, or experience increasing frustrations that eventually lead to attrition. Rural music teachers frequently compare their music program to other rural music programs and to all music programs. As a result of this comparison, music teachers either feel closer to or distanced from their music colleagues. Many of the rural music teachers who participated in this study appeared to have an internal struggle to be seen as valuable members of professional music organizations. Yet, most felt that as a rural music teacher, their opinion was less valuable than opinions of their urban or suburban colleagues.

The formal professional socialization of rural music teachers in this study began when they entered college. Because of the structure of college classes, all professional coursework was taught as if the student would specialize in that particular area of music education. Professors from universities often talked about future employment primarily in terms of urban or suburban assignments, where students specialize in one kind of music. Implications from this study indicate that colleges and universities may need to become aware of these practices. Coursework needs to include the study of rural community and school topics and the examination of the issues that are important to rural music programs. The findings from this study reinforce Gardner and Edington's (1982)

study, which calls for universities to prepare these teachers to be generalists in music, rather than specializing in one area of music education. An intentional inclusion of field experience opportunities in rural school districts could help future music teachers to envision themselves in a rural school district. Making this a part of their professional socialization may eliminate or at least limit the conflicts and compromises like those found in this study. Rural music teachers in this study indicated that they were poorly prepared to assume the many responsibilities they were given in their rural school district. One reason may be because their preparation occurred in suburban or urban field experience and student teaching placements.

Colleges and universities located in rural areas of the country also need to identify those students who would be most likely to succeed in a rural setting. Some characteristics which may be compatible with a rural lifestyle include coming from a rural education system, a willingness to participate in the whole life of the school and community, a disposition to have the same values as rural residents do and a willingness to teach multiple music assignments and sponsor a variety of extra-curricular activities. By identifying these students, colleges can increase the likelihood of rural schools matching the needs of their districts with the skills of potential music teachers.

Professional organizations need to be aware of the special concerns of rural music teachers when planning in-services. The rural music teachers in this study indicated that they admired the clinicians who presented at the conferences, but felt that they could not replicate the activities in their school districts due to lack of resources. Organizations like NAME/MENC, ACDA and ABA could offer clinics especially for those who worked in rural schools with student populations of less than 600. Professional

organizations also need to work to identify successful rural music teachers who can serve as clinicians for other small school music teachers. Offering in-service in rural schools in various regions of the state instead of one central site may also encourage music teachers from rural school to attend these workshops. Professional music education organizations like NAME, ACDA and NBA need to create opportunities for rural music teachers to gather and study issues and concerns that are important to them. Providing encouragement for rural music teachers to become workshop and in-service leaders and mentors for other rural music teachers may also raise their perceived status as important members of the organization and profession. The formation of a Special Research Interest Group (SRIG) at MENCC/NAME would also serve these rural teachers well. By identifying additional research strands, the professional organization that serves as the umbrella for all members would be providing a vital service to a number of its members. If there were concrete evidence that the organization cared about the issues of its members, there may be an increase in membership from rural music teachers.

When planning district level in-service, rural school administrators tend to select topics that are generalized for their entire staff. Music teachers in this study indicated that general in-services did not give them any useful tools to use in the music classroom. Administrators from small schools may want to consider collaborating with other school districts in the geographic region or athletic conference to plan in-service activities that would address content issues for music teachers and those in other academic areas. By establishing rural teacher cooperatives for in-services, these administrators would also be helping to establish content area reference groups. Forming a consortium of schools and coordinating school calendars would allow rural music teachers (and other content

specialists) to meet together. By allowing these teachers to have time to share gestures and establish a localized reference group of music specialists, these rural music teachers may create a virtual community and experience the professional socialization that can increase the likelihood of retention.

Rural school administrators also need to recognize that music teachers are strongly socialized to the role of content specialist. Music teachers in this study admitted that they received inadequate assistance from district assigned mentors. Administrators need to examine existing practices to determine if new employees would benefit from pairs of mentors. One mentor from the school district could provide process advice and local history and culture (Occupational/Cultural Socialization). A music teacher from a nearby district could provide the content advice needed by the rural music teacher (Professional Socialization). As the study indicates, both may be necessary for the rural music teacher to successfully negotiate the demands of teaching in these rural school districts.

Music teachers who were most successful were those who could balance their personal desires for an outstanding music program with the community's desire to have a number of extra-curricular programs that would contribute to the students' overall academic, social and emotional growth. These rural music teachers have learned to make the strategic compromises between the institutional beliefs they have about the profession of music education, and the beliefs held by the rural school district and community. It appears that when rural music teachers realize that the music program is not the only program in which students want to participate, they learn the key to creating the internal balance that in turn creates a sense of career satisfaction.

Recommendations for Future Research

The present study attempted to examine the professional, occupational and cultural socialization of the rural music teacher to determine which factors contribute to the sense of career satisfaction these teachers appear to feel. Those who chose to participate generally feel satisfaction with the career choices they made. The information provided by the state departments of education indicated that there were a number of teachers who did not participate in the study. A cursory review of the statistics provided by these departments of education indicated that some of those who were in their first years of teaching chose not to belong to the professional education association and were not eligible for participation in this study. Those who did not participate in this study are a population that should be examined. A study of levels of career satisfaction of beginning teachers in rural settings may provide a different view of the gestures and reference groups developed by those rural music teachers.

Many of the rural music teachers who participated in the interviews indicated that economic uncertainty colored their responses and their sense of commitment to the field of education. A longitudinal study involving rural music teachers and levels of commitment would help to determine whether the results of this study were effected by specific national and local economic conditions, or whether general economic concerns are always an issue in rural school districts.

These rural music teachers indicated that they did not like the general content of the professional development opportunities in small school in-services. A study concerning the content of small school local in-services might help determine if a more

effective model exists that can address the general needs of the staff and be meaningful to individual teachers in a variety of content areas.

There is an internal struggle when the globalized gestures of any profession do not match the localized view. This struggle becomes especially intense when the product is scrutinized or criticized. District music contests were discussed frequently during interviews. Rural music teachers indicated that they valued judges' opinions when the opinions closely mirrored the teacher's own opinion. When the teachers felt that they were "robbed of ratings," they turned to colleagues in similar sized positions for validation. They rejected the professors and those who taught music in larger school districts as judges who did not understand the realities of working in small, rural school districts. A study that asks music teachers to anticipate the ratings they would receive for their large groups at music contests would help to determine whether these teachers truly believe that they were "robbed" of ratings, or whether they can accurately judge the ratings they will receive at contest. Perhaps their reaction is a defensive mechanism against the product they created or a protective barrier against criticism of their students' efforts.

The interaction between teachers and community members has also been studied as it relates to attrition and isolation. Because rural community members have relatively closed reference groups with specific language and expectations, a study involving music teachers and formally assigned community mentors could examine if this type of mentoring is effective in helping the music teacher to enter the community reference groups and assist with cultural socialization.

Finally, studies about rural administrators have indicated that they value generic competencies that are not content specific in their rural teachers (Lortie, 1975; Wyman, 1997). A study involving the expectations of administrators when hiring music teachers could reveal which competencies match the abilities of the music teacher and which competencies need to be nurtured through formal in-service and mentoring activities.

The teachers in this study used their experiences and contacts with reference groups and significant others to become socialized to the profession of education as well as the localized occupational and cultural realities of working in a rural school district. Most of these teachers indicated that they had achieved a sense of inner balance necessary to experience career satisfaction. Though additional studies need to be conducted to determine whether the levels of career satisfaction demonstrated in this study are commonly found among rural music teachers, apparently a level of professional, occupational and cultural socialization are all necessary for rural music teachers to persist in a particular position.

Many of the teachers were self-deprecating when explaining why they chose to teach in rural settings. As Mackenzie Meyers stated,

I don't think that everyone's cut out to be the only musician in the county or the only music teacher in the county. But it seems good to me. I guess that I've always felt it's like a mission, almost. To bring what I can to the rural community.

A rural music teacher once expressed her feelings of frustration with the many tasks associated with rural music teaching by stating, "It's hard to tango when you're dancing with an octopus." By learning the gestures and reference groups necessary to experience career satisfaction, the rural music teacher diminishes the sensation of

isolation and increases the chance of remaining in the rural music position and in the profession of education.

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Appendix A:
Consent Letter from
Institutional Review Board



The University of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF HUMAN RESEARCH PARTICIPANT PROTECTION

May 28, 2003

Ms. Carla Jo Maltas
1321 Creekside Drive #2203
Norman, OK 73071

Dear Ms. Maltas:

The Institutional Review Board-Norman Campus has reviewed your proposal, "The Rural Music Teacher," under the University's expedited review procedures. The Board found that this research would not constitute a risk to participants beyond those of normal, everyday life, except in the area of privacy, which is adequately protected by the confidentiality procedures. Therefore, the Board has approved the use of human subjects in this research.

This approval is for a period of twelve months from May 28, 2003, provided that the research procedures are not changed from those described in your approved protocol and attachments. Should you wish to deviate from the described subject protocol, you must notify this office, in writing, noting any changes or revisions in the protocol and/or informed consent document and obtain prior approval from the Board for the changes. A copy of the approved informed consent document(s) is attached for your use.

At the end of the research, you must submit a short report describing your use of human subjects in the research and the results obtained. Should the research extend beyond 12 months, a progress report must be submitted with the request for continuation, and a final report must be submitted at the end of the research.

If data are still being collected after five years, resubmission of the protocol is required.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at 325-8110 or irb@ou.edu.

Sincerely,

Steven O'Geary, Ph.D.
Director, Human Research Participant Protection
Administrative Officer
Institutional Review Board-Norman Campus (FWA #00003191)

JSO
FY2003-320

Cc: Dr. E. Laurette Taylor, Chair, Institutional Review Board
Dr. Nancy H. Barry, Music

Appendix B:
Request Letter to the Nebraska and Oklahoma
State Education Associations

Carla Jo Maltas
1321 Creekside Drive #2203
Norman, OK 73071

Jay Sears
Nebraska State Education Association
605 South 14th Street
Lincoln, NE 68502

Dear Mr. Sears,

I am currently in the process of completing my dissertation at the University of Oklahoma. This dissertation, entitled *Rural Music Teacher: A Study of Support Systems*, examines the socialization process of rural music educators and their self-perception as musicians and educators. This study will also determine factors that affect persistence of rural music educators, their career development and the role of support systems in the rural music educator's socialization.

In order to complete this project, I need the help of the Nebraska State Education Association. I am requesting a copy of your 2002-2003 membership roles of music educators in the state of Nebraska who are the only music teacher in their district. I understand that a copy of this list may be made available to me sometime after November 15, 2002. In addition to the name of the music educator, I am requesting the name of their school district, their e-mail address, their school's address and the contact phone number that they have listed.

I understand that this information is confidential. I will not share this information with any other individual, organization or corporation. I also understand that individual members will not be identified in any reports generated from this study. Your organization will be listed as "a professional education association in the Midwest."

If you have any questions or further concerns about this request, you can contact me via e-mail at cjmaltas@ou.edu, or call me at (405) 325-3170 (work) or (405) 321-5797 (home) anytime. If you agree to help with this project, please send a letter of agreement to me at the address listed above.

I appreciate the help and support your organization is giving to me, and I look forward to working with you on this project. Thanks again for your help!

Sincerely,



Carla Jo Maltas
University of Oklahoma School of Music

Carla Jo Maltas
1321 Creekside Drive #2203
Norman, OK 73071

Lela Odom
Oklahoma Education Association
P.O. Box 18485
Oklahoma City, OK 73154

Dear Ms. Odom,

I am currently in the process of completing my dissertation at the University of Oklahoma. This dissertation, entitled *Rural Music Teacher: A Study of Support Systems*, examines the socialization process of rural music educators and their self-perception as musicians and educators. This study will also determine factors that affect persistence of rural music educators, their career development and the role of support systems in the rural music educator's socialization.

In order to complete this project, I need the help of the Oklahoma Education Association. I am requesting a copy of your 2002-2003 membership roles of music educators in the state of Oklahoma who are the only music teacher in their district. I understand that a copy of this list may be made available to me sometime after November 15, 2002. In addition to the name of the music educator, I am requesting the name of their school district, their e-mail address, their school's address and the contact phone number that they have listed.

I understand that this information is confidential. I will not share this information with any other individual, organization or corporation. I also understand that individual members will not be identified in any reports generated from this study. Your organization will be listed as "a professional education association in the Midwest."

If you have any questions or further concerns about this request, you can contact me via e-mail at cjmaltas@ou.edu, or call me at (405) 325-3170 (work) or (405) 321-5797 (home) anytime. If you can help with this project, please send a letter of agreement to me at the address listed above.

I appreciate the help and support your organization is giving to me, and I look forward to working with you on this project. Thanks again for your help!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carla Jo Maltas". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Carla Jo Maltas
University of Oklahoma School of Music

Appendix C

Consent Letter for Quantitative Study

(Mail version)

**THE RURAL MUSIC TEACHER
ANONYMOUS QUESTIONNAIRE
INFORMATION FORM**

*For Research Being Conducted Under the Auspices of the
University of Oklahoma-Norman Campus*

Dear Rural Music Teacher,

I am currently a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Oklahoma School of Music. Prior to coming to the University of Oklahoma, I was a music teacher for fifteen years in the state of Nebraska. Part of my time in Nebraska was spent as the K-12 music teacher in a rural school district. I became interested in the special challenges facing rural music teachers. This interest has grown into the topic for my dissertation.

You are invited to participate in a rural music teacher questionnaire. This survey is a part of a study about rural music teachers that I am conducting under the supervision of Dr. Nancy H. Barry at the University of Oklahoma School of Music. The purpose of this letter is to fully inform you about the nature of this study before you consent to participate.

The purpose of this study is to examine the socialization process of rural music teachers and the role of personal and professional support systems in the career of rural music teachers in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska.

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to complete a questionnaire about your current teaching situation and the types support that you receive from personal, professional and community sources. The questionnaire will take about fifteen minutes to complete.

No risks beyond those present in normal everyday life are anticipated in this study.

Participation in this study may provide you with insight regarding the types of support you have in your teaching situation. This level of self-awareness could be very beneficial as you continue to develop as a teacher.

Your participation in this study is strictly voluntary. Refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled, and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Since the study is completely anonymous, however, once you have submitted a completed questionnaire, it is impossible to withdraw it.

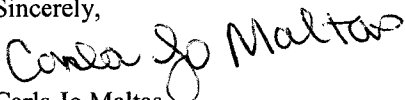
Please be aware that returning this questionnaire implies your consent to participate.

To participate, you must be 18 years of age or older.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact Carla Jo Maltas at (405) 325-3170 or Dr. Nancy H. Barry at (405) 325-4146. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, contact the Office of Research Administration at (405) 325-4757.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,



Carla Jo Maltas
OU School of Music

Appendix D
Questionnaire
(Mail version)

The Rural Music Teacher

The purposes of this survey are to examine the people and situations that support you as a rural music educator, to examine your self-perception as a musician and teacher, to look at your career development and the role of support systems in your personal and professional life. To get the necessary information, please answer this survey as completely as possible.

About You...

1. Are you ☐ a. Male
☐ b. Female
2. Are you ☐ a. Single
☐ b. Married
☐ c. Separated/Divorced
☐ d. Widowed
3. Age ☐ a. 25 or less
☐ b. 26-35
☐ c. 36-45
☐ d. 46-55
☐ e. 56 or more
4. What was the population of the community that you grew up in?
☐ a. 500 or less
☐ b. 501-1,500
☐ c. 1,501 to 2,500
☐ d. Over 2,500
☐ e. I lived in more than one community before I was 18
5. What was the population of your high school graduating class?
☐ a. Less than 50
☐ b. 51-100
☐ c. 101-250
☐ d. 251-500
☐ e. More than 501
6. What degrees have you earned? (Please check all that apply)
☐ a. Bachelor of Music
☐ b. Bachelor of Music Education
☐ c. Master of Music
☐ d. Master of Music Education
☐ e. Other (please specify) _____
7. How far is the college/University where you earned your first degree located from your current teaching community?
☐ a. Less than 100 miles away
☐ b. 100-250 miles away
☐ c. 251-500 miles away
☐ d. More than 500 miles away

About Your Current Teaching Assignment...

8. In what state is your school district located?

☐ Nebraska
☐ Oklahoma

9. Including you, how many music teachers are employed by your district?

☐ One
☐ Two or more

10. What type of school do you currently work in? (Check all that apply):

☐ Elementary School
☐ Middle School/Junior High
☐ High School

11. The population of the community closest to where your school is located is:

☐ a. Below 500
☐ b. 501-1,000
☐ c. 1,001-2,000
☐ d. 2,001-2,500
☐ e. 2,501 or more

12. What is the total enrollment of your school district? (Check one)

☐ a. Below 200
☐ b. 201-400
☐ c. 401-600
☐ d. 601 or more

13. What is your teaching assignment? (Check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> a. Elementary General/Vocal Music	<input type="checkbox"/> d. Elementary Instrumental Music
<input type="checkbox"/> b. MS/JH Vocal/General Music	<input type="checkbox"/> e. MS/JH Instrumental Music
<input type="checkbox"/> c. HS Vocal Music	<input type="checkbox"/> f. H.S. Instrumental Music

Other teaching assignments (please list):

14. Extra Duty Assignments (Please check all that apply):

<input type="checkbox"/> Marching Band	<input type="checkbox"/> Cheerleader Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> Jazz/Show Choir	<input type="checkbox"/> H.S. Sports Team Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Group Ensembles	<input type="checkbox"/> M.S./J.H. Sports Team Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> Color Guard/Dance Team	<input type="checkbox"/> Class Sponsor
<input type="checkbox"/> Academic Club Sponsor	<input type="checkbox"/> Musical Sponsor

Others (please list):

15. What is your state certification (Please check all that apply)?

- ☐ a. Instrumental/General Music
- ☐ b. Vocal/General Music
- ☐ c. K-12 Vocal and Instrumental Music
- ☐ d. Elementary (K-6) only
- ☐ e. Secondary (7-12) only
- ☐ f. Other (Please specify)

16. Including this year, how long have you taught in your current school district?

- ☐ a. 1-3 years
- ☐ b. 4-6 years
- ☐ c. 7-10 years
- ☐ d. 11-15 years
- ☐ e. 16-20 years
- ☐ f. More than 20 years

17. Including this year, how long have you taught music?

- ☐ a. 1-3 years
- ☐ b. 4-6 years
- ☐ c. 7-10 years
- ☐ d. 11-15 years
- ☐ e. 16-20 years
- ☐ f. more than 20 years

18. Is your current teaching situation your first and only teaching situation?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

About Your Professional Life...

19. Rate the importance you place on the following activities:

	Most Important		Not Very Important		
a. writing lesson plans	1	2	3	4	5
b. teaching	1	2	3	4	5
c. student supervision (lunch duty, playground duty)	1	2	3	4	5
d. staff development (provided by your district)	1	2	3	4	5
e. attending music conferences	1	2	3	4	5
f. conducting programs after school hours (plays, ensembles)	1	2	3	4	5
g. communication with parents	1	2	3	4	5
h. attending faculty meetings	1	2	3	4	5
i. giving private lessons	1	2	3	4	5
j. attending workshops outside of your district	1	2	3	4	5
k. membership in professional organizations	1	2	3	4	5
l. additional college/university education	1	2	3	4	5
m. advanced musical training	1	2	3	4	5

20. Compared to all other music programs that you know, how would you rank your music program?

- ☐ a. Well above average
- ☐ b. Above average
- ☐ c. Average
- ☐ d. Below average
- ☐ e. Well below average

21. Compared to other music programs that you know of similar size to yours, how would you rank your music program?

- ☐ a. Well above average
- ☐ b. Above average
- ☐ c. Average
- ☐ d. Below average
- ☐ e. Well below average

22. Are you happy in your current teaching situation (Please check all that apply)?

- ☐ a. Yes
- ☐ b. No, I want to teach a different age group
- ☐ c. No, I want to teach in a different field of music education
- ☐ d. No, I want to teach in a different district
- ☐ e. No, I want to leave music education all together

23. How long do you plan to continue in this position?

- ☐ a. I plan to leave at the end of this year
- ☐ b. 1-2 years
- ☐ c. 3-5 years
- ☐ d. 6-10 years
- ☐ e. more than ten years

24. How long do you plan to be in music education?

- ☐ a. I plan to leave at the end of this year
- ☐ b. 1-2 years
- ☐ c. 3-5 years
- ☐ d. 6-10 years
- ☐ e. more than 10 years

25. What factors would influence your decision to stay in this position? (Please check all that apply):

- ☐ a. salary
- ☐ b. spouse/companion job
- ☐ c. professional opportunities
- ☐ d. family/friends near
- ☐ e. like the job
- ☐ f. level of community support
- ☐ g. level of administration support
- ☐ h. location of position
- ☐ i. educational opportunities for self, spouse or children

Which of the above would be the most important factor in your decision to stay in this district? _____

26. What factors would influence your decision to leave this position? (Please check all that apply):

- ☐ a. better salary
- ☐ b. spouse/companion job
- ☐ c. better professional opportunities
- ☐ d. family/friends near
- ☐ e. better job
- ☐ f. level of community support
- ☐ g. level of administration support
- ☐ h. location of new position in urban/suburban district
- ☐ i. educational opportunities for self, spouse or children
- ☐ j. I would not leave this position

Which of the above would be the most important factor in your decision to leave this district? _____

About Your Decision to Teach in This School District...

27. Rate the importance each of the following had on your decision to teach music in this school district:

Important	Most Important			Not Very	
a. first/best offer	1	2	3	4	5
b. spouse/companion job	1	2	3	4	5
c. social opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
d. leisure opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
e. low cost of living	1	2	3	4	5
f. family/friends near	1	2	3	4	5
g. grew up in a small community	1	2	3	4	5
h. liked the program	1	2	3	4	5
i. liked the community	1	2	3	4	5
j. liked my interviewer(s)	1	2	3	4	5
k. liked the administration	1	2	3	4	5
l. location of district	1	2	3	4	5

Which of the above was the most important factor in your decision to teach in this district? _____

28. Do you live in the community in which you teach?

- ☐ yes
- ☐ no

About Your Professional Support...

29. Rate the types of support you receive from your school district in the following areas (1=High, 5=Low):

a. Budgetary support for the music department:

1 2 3 4 5

b. Adequate teaching facilities

1 2 3 4 5

c. Adequate equipment and materials

1 2 3 4 5

d. Reasonable workload/teaching assignment

1 2 3 4 5

e. Encourages professional growth and development

1 2 3 4 5

f. Provides release time to attend conferences/conventions

1 2 3 4 5

g. Adequate salary and benefits

1 2 3 4 5

h. Maintains a school environment that is conducive to learning

1 2 3 4 5

i. Supports discipline decisions I make

1 2 3 4 5

j. Good communication and working relationships with administration

1 2 3 4 5

k. Good communication and working relationships with other teachers in the district

1 2 3 4 5

About Your Other Support Systems...

30. Circle the number that best describes the level of professional or personal support you receive from the following people: (1=High, 5=Low)

a. School Administration

1 2 3 4 5

b. School Board Members

1 2 3 4 5

c. Other teachers in the district

1 2 3 4 5

d. Other music teachers in the state

1 2 3 4 5

e. Parents of your students

1 2 3 4 5

f. Students

1 2 3 4 5

g. Spouse/Family

1 2 3 4 5

h. Friends

1 2 3 4 5

i. Former University Music Professors

1 2 3 4 5

j. Professional Organizations

1 2 3 4 5

Please write any additional information that you feel would help me to complete this study about rural music teachers here: _____

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey!

Please return this survey to Carla Jo Maltas c/o:

Carla Jo Maltas

1321 Creekside Drive #2203

Norman, OK 73071

By June 15, 2003

Thank you!

Appendix E

Qualitative Consent Form

CONFIDENTIAL INTERVIEW
INDIVIDUAL CONSENT OF VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION
For research being conducted under the auspices of
The University of Oklahoma

INTRODUCTION

I, _____, voluntarily agree to participate in this study about rural music teachers. I understand that this study involves research that will be carried out by Ms. Carla Jo Maltas under the supervision of Dr. Nancy H. Barry at the University of Oklahoma School of Music.

It is important for me to understand: 1) that participation in this study is completely voluntary; 2) that I am free to refuse to participate and to withdraw from the experiment at any time without prejudice to me. The study is described as follows:

PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to examine the socialization process of music teachers and the role of personal and professional support systems in the career of rural music teachers in the states of Oklahoma and Nebraska.

DESCRIPTION

Participation in this study will require you to do the following: 1. Complete an interview with Ms. Maltas. Topics for this interview may include questions about your teaching situation, your experiences as a music teacher in a rural school district, your musical activities, your relationship with various groups in your community, the levels of support you receive and your perceptions of satisfaction with music programs in rural communities. This interview will take no longer than sixty (60) minutes to complete.

SUBJECT ASSURANCES

By signing this consent form, I acknowledge that I am at least 18 years of age and that my participation in this study is voluntary. I acknowledge that I have not waived my legal rights or released this institution from liability or negligence. I understand that I may refuse to allow video and/or audio taping of sessions in which I am involved. I understand that I may withdraw from this study without prejudice to me.

CONFIDENTIALITY

I understand that records from this study will be kept confidential, and that name or other identifying feature in any reports or publications of this study will not identify me.

SUBJECT BENEFIT/RISK

I understand that there is no known risk involved in this study. Participants may not personally benefit from this study, although the educational community may benefit. Subjects may obtain research results by contacting Ms. Carla Jo Maltas at cjmaltas@ou.edu

INFORMATION

To get more information or answers to your questions about this study, contact Ms. Carla Jo Maltas at (405) 325-3170 or Dr. Nancy Barry at (405) 325-4146. If concerns arise regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the University of Oklahoma Office of Research Administration at (405) 325-4757.

SIGNATURE

I have read this informed consent document. I understand its contents and I hereby agree to participate in the above-described research. I understand my participation is voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits. I understand that I may request to receive a copy of this signed consent form.

_____(Research participant)

_____(Date)

Signature

_____ I consent to be audiotaped for this research.

Appendix F

Initial Questions for Qualitative Interviews

Questions for qualitative interview

1. Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?
2. Where do you go for information about music content, the process of teaching and the culture of the community?
3. Do you attend conventions or workshops for music education? What was the last music workshop/convention you attended? Did they have what you needed to learn?
4. What is the best part of your job? What do you like least?
5. Who supports you professionally?
6. Who supports you personally?
7. Have you ever had a job-related conflict? Tell me about it.
8. How did you resolve it?
9. If you were to choose a career again, would you follow the same career path?

Appendix G
Interview Coding Key
And Transcripts

Coding Key

The following codes are embedded in the text of each interview. As themes emerged from the respondents' remarks, the appropriate code was placed by each remark. Not every remark is coded. The coding changes as different themes emerge. Codes appear in parentheses. The interviewers' questions and comments appear in italicized print. All of the respondents' remarks appear verbatim, with grammatical errors intact.

1.0 Professional Socialization

1.1 Musician/Institutional experiences

- 1.11 Playing with others
- 1.12 Attending clinics/conventions

1.2 Reference groups

- 1.21 Music teachers outside of district
- 1.22 Music professors
- 1.23 Contest judges
- 1.24 Clinicians
- 1.25 Professional organizations

1.3 Significant others

2.0 Occupational Socialization

2.1 Local experiences

- 2.11 Pep/Marching band
- 2.12 Programs/concerts
- 2.13 Prom
- 2.14 Contest/Competition
- 2.15 Testing/Grading
- 2.16 Local in-services
- 2.17 Finance/Fund Raising
- 2.18 Scheduling
- 2.19 Accompanist

2.2 Reference groups

- 2.21 Other teachers in local school district
- 2.22 Administration
- 2.23 Students
- 2.24 Ghosts of former music teachers
- 2.25 Music Boosters/Parents

2.3 Significant others

3.0 Cultural Socialization

3.1 Community Experiences

3.11 Drinking

3.12 Church

3.13 Visibility of program

3.14 History of program

3.15 Music making in the community

3.16 Community service

3.17 Communication

3.18 Teacherages/Housing Issues

3.2 Reference groups

3.21 Family

3.22 Friends

3.23 Community members

3.3 Significant others

4.0 Levels of Satisfaction

4.1 Movement between school districts

4.2 Distance/proximity to other communities

4.3 Best/worst part of teaching

4.4 Perception of self as teacher/musician

4.5 Choice of career path again

Ron Burns

When you need information about music, literature and things like that, where do you go for that type of advice?

Now a days, when I need advice about music and things...first I go to Bandmasters in Ulster in the summer. This year, they did something they haven't done which really helped. Everybody brought small group things. And said, "This is what we like, and this is what works and this is what we've done (1.12, 1.21, 1.25)." And they brought grading systems, and grading things--which are just so impossible. To get a concrete grading system in your hands. And that's the big thing now a days. You have to justify everything. How are you going to grade? You can't just grade by attendance and gut feelings. You got to have standards. So these were just ideas (2.15). And you used to be able to go to Davidson and Chandler and to all the music stores to get your ideas. And that's changed so much. I have to go to [two other regional music stores]. It's about as close as I can go to get band music. There isn't much. [Music store] has a lot of solos and things.

They always did.

They carry that but not a lot of band music. It's hard to do.

They used to send out demo tapes to listen to. They don't do that anymore, do they?

No, they don't. But you get the company stuff sometimes. Even [store] sends out a collection of their stuff. You get [two music companies] to send out their music and their CD's. And that really helps to listen to it. Vocally and instrumentally. Excerpts only. You don't hear the whole thing.

At least you get a flavor of it, though. Is Ronella in a conference?

Yes, we're in the Y Conference.

Do you ever get together at the conference?

As a matter of fact, we got together last night. And we get together to plan an honor band for next year (1.12, 1.21). There's 12 schools in our conference, and they split into two sections. For chorus, you pretty much bring everybody, and it's zoo time. I wasn't too impressed with that. There were so many kids that if they were in chorus, you wouldn't know it. The sound of the boys especially was pretty bad. That was a difficult thing to get. Yeah they do have a conference band and choral thing both every year.

You talked about going to Bandmasters in Ulster during the summer. Do you go to any other conventions/workshops during the year?

I go to music clinic. And I a lot of times—I haven't gone for the past couple of years. I like to go to [national workshop] a couple of times in [distant state]. It's a big summer thing. And then the choral workshop I did last summer so that I could catch up, because I haven't done nearly as much choral stuff. That's basically it. Bandmaster's and American Choral Director's Association and MENC/NAME. I would probably like to take a class or something again. I haven't for three or four years (1.25).

When you go to these conventions, do you feel like they have what you need as a small school music director?

You kind of have to pick and choose. They have been getting a lot better in the past 3-4 years. Of course, you can get into the political part of it like marching band festivals and clinics. I go to Bandmaster's convention in the spring in Davidson. But I'd get a little miffed about it. I'd be the first to go to marching contests as long as you participate in corps style marching. At the end, you all want to get your superiors in the AA and A

groups. And they look at C and D and say, "Well, that was nice" and give out twos and say, "Come back next year." And I said, "If you would do like the corps do and say, 'In sixth place, with a score of 82 is...' But you guys don't want that. But you want the majority of the big schools to go home with ones, which is what they usually do. And then you get to the little schools. That's why a lot of them don't go anymore." They always say just come back next year (1.23). Then they say, "Well, it's a little difficult when they have somebody writing all their shows, and somebody doing the choreography to get the people that love to write the marching stuff on the computer. And somebody writes the music for them in the big schools." They don't go out and buy the canned music. And somebody does their flags, and somebody does their drum line. And some of them here have two weeks of band camp here in the summer. And they do that—but band directors have kind of dug a hole for themselves (2.11). They just have to do more. So we're only going two-three hours a day to get that. I guess that's not my cup of tea. As a kid, I would have said, "See you around." And they do the same show from beginning to the end of the season. From August first, right through to the end of November. Go somewhere every Saturday and say, "Aren't we great?" There's a camaraderie in the big schools, where you don't get a chance to do a lot of things. But if one hour and a half is good, two is better. Think of what could be done with three. And they actually will do that. They start at 7:30 in the morning, then at 8:30 when school actually starts, they have band. And then they'll have some after school, too. And you couldn't do anything else if you wanted to (2.18).

In small schools they have to be less specialized, they have to be in drama and football and music and things.

And I say a lot of times, "Take a look at the kids in the University UU band. And even at University SS. There's a lot of kids in there who are not from Davidson or Chandler. That are in there, but don't do a lot of marching. 'Cause seriously, a lot of those kids say, "I have had enough of this." They're burned out totally. And I like University UU. I think it's fantastic. Cuz they don't look the other bands. With everybody looking exactly like everybody. But they do a different show every week or two. And that's hard work to do. And it's neat to see that instead of saying, "For the eight home games this year, we're going to do a Stan Kenton show. And we'll never change, we'll just keep getting better and better."

What do you think about district music contest? Is it good for small schools?

It depends on who you get. Usually, I've been on the very fortunate end of that. I've always been proud of the fact that I've been in it for 42 years. And for forty of those years, I've had bands. And only five years, I've been associated with groups that didn't get superiors. So I feel very good about that. But it's just the fact that there are a couple of times that you get greedy. I thought, "Man." Like the last year that I was at Iandale. We had superior ratings every year for the past seven years. And we go to class B, which we'd been in class B for the two years before that. And I thought the band was every bit as good as it had been the previous two years. And out of seven bands, they only gave two superiors. The last year I was there, there were nine class B bands and they never gave a superior. And I thought what is going on here?

They just didn't feel like anybody was a superior that year (1.23).

No. So we were talking about it at Bandmasters. About what the deal is with the marching and everything. We fight the athletic people, but they take care of themselves.

They say there's going to be two winners in D and two winners in C and one in B and one in A for all the state competitions. They're always going to be with us. But you're telling us in districts there's no winner here. Nobody that they'd even recommend if we had a state contest. And I said what are you comparing us to? Especially since I've been around and I've had as good a band as I'd had before. And they did it to class D again a year ago. The guy that Bandmasters had voted "Outstanding Band Director" in the state. Mr. Slaughter out at Reinke Consolidated in Class B. They got a two. And they NEVER get that rating. They are always a very clean band (1.21, 1.23).

That had to be a disappointment.

They never gave any ones again. And they had the same judges. And I thought, "What are you guys?" But it's something where you can't—and it's too bad. The state, they have objectives and all that. And you can go to Osberg, where they have D, C, B and A. And they'll knock everybody. You'll be lucky to come out of there alive. And then you go to one that you have at Princeton or Yardley where it's all class C schools, and you'll have 8, 9 of them there. And they give four ones (1.23). But I like district music contest. And I know that there are some states that don't even have them. It used to be [state], I think, where they used to have regional stuff, but they didn't give ratings. And their bands are great. And [state] has district, regional and state competition. I used to argue that you couldn't tell much difference [between the levels]. And so, I don't know. As I get older, it gets to be much more stress (2.14).

Do they ever comment on instrumentation?

Oh, yeah. I try to fill it out as much as possible. They used to hurt [in marching band competition] if you had somebody sick or somebody out with a football injury. And

you'd go to the marching competition, and they'd keep saying, "There's a space out there again." And I'd think, "You morons." Then I'd hear, "Oops, there it is again." Of course! There was a person there, and we didn't have a sub to put in. The person has a broken leg or he's injured and he can't even walk. And we don't have a sub to put in. They wouldn't even watch the whole band (2.11).

If you have questions about teaching process-things like lesson planning, long range planning, etc. Who do you go to for that advice?

Right here in my school district, they want lesson plans. I never did lesson plans in my life. But now, since they want lesson plans and they want to have outcomes on it, the principal kind of helps me with that. He's a good guy (2.22).

Has that been a difficult transition, trying to learn how to lesson plan so that it includes outcomes?

Yeah, it's kind of like the old joke, How many conservative Lutherans does it take to change a light bulb? Five. One to change the light bulb, and four to say that it was better the old way.

So you miss the old way where you just came in and rehearsed?

I knew what I wanted to do. And now I have to think more about how I am doing things, and letting them know at the end of the period what they have accomplished. So that's a big change for me the past 4-5 years to do that. But I figure that I won't be doing this for too much longer (4.1).

With all of the different schools you've been in, you've had to have a variety of experiences with administrators. Could you tell me some of the things that you've noticed about the administration?

That would take too long. Let's just put it this way. In a lot of areas, a lot of them have not been very good. Some of them are very good.

When you say a lot of areas, do you mean administrative areas?

I've been to a lot of districts where it's been the good old boys club. I'm talking about the old PE teachers that I call the "bracket buddies." The kids ask, "What are we doing today?" And they put up bracket charts on the board that say who plays who. Then they stand at the side of the gym with their arms folded. They don't teach any fundamentals. There are good P.E. teachers, don't get me wrong. But a lot of them that I've seen have been terrible. They just stand there (2.21). And they can only do that so many years before they say, "Why don't I go back and become an administrator?" But I've had some administrators where I think [groan], are these actually the people who get out and make the decisions? Like if there's a history book to choose. Does it have good content? They wouldn't know about content from boo. They were the hell raisers in college, and never did anything. Then I had some really good ones that supported me and backed me and that's the kind of people I've enjoyed working with. I'm best working with people. I'm not so great working for people. The people who make me feel like I'm working with them—those are the great ones. They don't make me feel like, "This is MY music teacher." The MY people.

The ones who are a little bit power hungry. So what about this administration? Are they pretty good?

They are really quite good. I have some good ones who try quite hard. My principal is the most positive fellow. In fact in some ways, he's too positive. He scares me. He's always coming in and saying, "I think that this will work. We'll make it work." He works hard

at it. And the superintendent is an ex-music teacher. This is the second one of those I've had, and both have actually been quite good (2.22).

How about your relationship with the students there?

This is what I told the administration. If my relationship isn't real good, then I want to be the first to know (2.22). Because I don't want to mess it up for other music teachers. And I don't have to do this any more. But I want to do it if I can. Because when you get into your 60's, your jokes are antique and you can't use them any more. The kids have no clue, and if you don't get the new stuff, your humor gets like, "Where did this come from?" I know that it's difficult to relate to high school kids anyway. I find it easier to relate to junior high and fifth and sixth grade students more than I can with high school students anymore. I guess my philosophy right now is that I don't want to go out and get thrown out and yet I want to continue to teach if I feel that I can still contribute. I want to know when it's time (2.23). Cause I've seen some colleagues and coaches who if they had stopped teaching a couple of years before, they would have been up for sainthood. But they stayed a couple of years too long. And they were thrown out (1.21, 2.24). I believe that this is a young man's job, chasing bands up and down the street. The night things and stuff. I'm probably going to apply in Davidson. And if I get the chance to teach maybe two or three days a week elementary band, or a couple of periods at a junior high, I'd be thrilled. And then I can go home. But if not, I'll sub. And I know that I can do that. Cuz I don't fish, and I don't hunt, and I don't play golf. What do I do? I'm looking forward to subbing. I'm one of those crazy people who enjoy doing subbing. I'll be doing that in Davidson in music and other things. I'll take my guitar and sub in elementary music and they say, "If you don't like my lesson plans, we'll put on a twenty

five minute show.” I enjoyed most of the places where I subbed. The places where I didn’t enjoy it, I just tell them, “Sorry, I won’t go back there again.” Most of them are pretty good. I liked the elementary and the junior high band.

How long did you sub for?

For a year in quite a few different schools in Davidson. A lot at [a local] Junior High School and a few other places in band. I won’t do high school. I got into one there that was very interesting. High school kids are kind of rough on subs anyway (2.23). But they’ll call you all the time, because those people take their days (2.21).

How about the colleagues at Ronella? Do you get along with them?

This is the other part that’s bad about this job. I never see them. They’re in a separate building (2.21).

Is Ronella located in a cornfield or is it in a community?

It’s in a community. It is just straight south of Davidson.

Do you feel like you have a pretty good pulse of what’s going on in your community?

Yeah, pretty good. You get an idea. But not as good as when I lived in the towns where I taught. Before, we always lived in the community, we sang there, we went to church, we volunteered there. We sang in the choir. We did lots of community things (3.16, 3.12, 3.15). When our kids were in school, we went to all of the games. I feel distant here and at Dunlop because we’re not a part of the community. It makes it kind of tough.

Have you found any friends that you can talk to about community culture? Any friends that you feel comfortable with?

Mmmm...a couple, yeah. There’s a science teacher at the school who’s an older gentleman. He’s having a hard time, because you know you can feel it when you get

older (2.21). I don't want to be a burden. I've always tried to leave things better than I found them. And this is a tough school due to the fact that—I thought, this will be one last challenge for me. The kids are pretty much used to dropping out of music. And it's hard to rid them of that mentality. Because there are some schools that have big choruses. A lot bigger bands. They're not any bigger schools. But the kids stick with it (2.23). And the parents say, "You're going in there, and you're going to do this. Cuz it's good for you." (2.25) Here, they say, "I stuck with it through sixth grade. That's more than my brothers did." And that kind of thing. So I have had to scrounge around to get kids involved last year and this year. We've got eighth graders now. And we had nineteen kids in high school band. They can play, they knew what they were doing, but there was no involvement from a high school of about ninety.

In a year and a half, have you managed to build the program back up?

Actually, the eighth grade class only has fifteen in the class, and only five of them were in the band. Cuz there were about ten in band, but in the middle of sixth grade, about half quit. And it's almost impossible to get them back in band once they quit. They really have a sour taste in their mouths around here about that. But I had a good bunch of seventh graders last year. So this year, I got them to put the eighth graders with the high school band. So we're running about thirty-two now.

It's a young band.

Yeah, it's a young band (2.23).

Do you march competitively?

No, I haven't done that for several years. If you really want to cut your band down, that's the way to go (2.11, 2.14). And we only have band three days a week. It's not a block

schedule. But they have band three days a week, and chorus two days a week. So it doesn't give people much time (2.18). Doesn't give us much chance to experiment a whole lot. To do different things. We're just marching right now. But with all these young kids, it's really rough to get them playing and in step and all those other things.

How's your choral music going?

In junior high it's great. But in high school, they ran about seventeen or eighteen in choir.

The last music teacher couldn't get more students in there (2.24). Now, we still have seventeen or eighteen in choir. My band kids have that study hall, so they don't want to do it. I have about seven or eight of them in there. The rascals! In junior high, we have everybody in it. They were good last year, and they look like they're going to be good again this year. And we have like fifty kids in that. But thank heavens that it's only two days a week. I say it's punishment for every evil thing I've ever done in my life.

I remember.

That's my penance.

Mandatory middle school is yucky.

It's the worst thing you could possibly do. Thank goodness I have a good accompanist and we work their little butts off. Thank goodness it's only two days a week. I always take a big deep breath after that class is over. It takes a lot of energy to keep them going (2.23).

Do you have jazz band and show choir, too?

I have jazz band but we do it pretty much during the band period. The kids are pretty decent readers, and we don't do a lot of it. We just do it second semester, getting ready for contest. And I don't have show choir here. I've had it before. It takes time, and you

only have five boys. I hate to do show choir with ten girls and five boys. And one of them can't sing. We do a little bit of it in class, just to let them know what it is.

Do you have extra duties on top of your musical responsibilities?

No not really. I have fifth and sixth grade vocal class. That's been a learning experience.

But nothing else, besides summer band. I have very little of it, and don't really want much of it.

Do you have pep band?

Yeah, during football and basketball.

Do you march a half-time show at all?

No, I asked, and they don't want a half-time show. We go to Panapoly to compete in that parade. We go to Cassaday to march because it's during the week, and we get out of school. And we go to the State Fair and then they have a parade here in town. So we get four parades. That works out so that hopefully we place somewhere. It's tough to place in the top five when over half of your band is eighth graders and ninth graders (2.11, 2.14).

That's tough. Do you have a band boosters group there? (Yes). And what kinds of things do they do for you?

Oh, we put on a soup and song evening and they get everything organized for the fundraiser. And they'll get people if we need sponsors for bus trips. They'll help with things if you need some help. The trouble with boosters is it's hard to get anyone who can help because they all work. You need people to come in to do band uniforms. And it's just about impossible (2.25).

Unless you do evenings or weekends. That's interesting. Do you feel pretty good about your relationships with parents in general?

Oh, yeah. Of course, I know that if I lived in the town, the relationship would be closer. But my relationship is OK, but I'm pretty distant (4.2). And they know that I'm not going to be there for very long (4.1). But they are in a situation where they couldn't get anybody. They had three or four other music teachers where they said, "These people aren't going to help us."

So they view you pretty much as a short timer, then.

I think so.

Does Ronella have any musical traditions? It's a fairly new school, isn't it?

Yeah, it's a consolidated school that's only four years old.

Are there any musical traditions, or community expectations about what needs to be done in music?

Oh, it's just like most things. They've had some fairly good music in the past, there's been quality but not quantity. It's just like a lot of things. They want good music. But they've had such a high tradition in sports. (*Already?*) When it was two individual school districts for years. But they've won the state volleyball championship for girls for the last two years in a row. They've graduated all of those girls, so it's going to be some slim pickings for a while. It's been a thing where it's that type of community where it's OK to go through band until eighth grade (3.14). And then you're going to concentrate on sports. And so, I'm kind of feeling that. I don't think that I could be long enough here. If I was twenty years younger, and I could go out and play basketball with them, I think it would be a different thing then (2.23).

So do you feel like you're valued as a music teacher? Is your program valued?

I think that they know that we had a good program here last year. I told them, "Let me know, guys." And we have younger kids. There's more of them. But I don't want to wait another three or four years to see if I can keep them interested and in the program in high school. I want to build it up in 5-8th grade. I'll build them up so there are quite a few people in each class, and then in a few years a new person can come in and they can build things up on the high school level. I don't want to spend three or four years, only to discover that they still quit when they get to high school. I take it too personally. It's not an easy life.

It isn't easy. And especially for forty-two years. That's pretty amazing to me. And getting used to eight different school districts had to be rough, too. Any time you move, it's rough.

It is. But I guess I was always the restless type. So after six years or so, I had an urge to move on. The honeymoon was over. The first four years were great. After four years, they would say things like, "Oh, yeah. We knew you'd do that." (2.12, 3.14, 3.23) No more, "That was great." They began to expect things. And there was a little bit of a rebel in me. I wanted to say, "Hey you guys. I worked my butt off." And now the administration at the concert would say, "Somebody came in during the concert and flushed a bunch of paper down the toilet during last night's concert." Not nice work for the concert (2.22).

So you're feeling a little bit taken for granted.

Yes. And then you get a big program built, and you can't get any help.

Are you certified to teach anything besides music?

That's why I retired in the first place. I'm also certified to teach science, biology and all that good stuff in grades 7-12. At Iandale, when I started, we had 29 kids in the high school band. And we had 80 after five years. And continued with about that many over the next three years. So I had 210 kids in the program in grades 5-12. And they told me, "You have to teach two sections of seventh grade science. So that we can add more classes in the high school." And I said, "I have never taught science. I haven't taken a course in thirty-five years." And they said, "You have to do it." And that mentally and physically did me in. Cause I can't do justice to 210 kids in band grades 5-12 and then have 55 science kids in two classes. Doing something new that you've never done and something you basically know nothing about and you have to keep up with. Grading papers. And you should be working with those science kids if they have trouble. You can't do it. And you should be working with your band students who need help after school. And before school even starts you're turning in every direction. And I was the freshman girl's basketball coach. So after that, I told the administration that they could just take this and stick it somewhere where the sun doesn't shine. And that's when I decided to retire. I had plenty of years (4.1).

So they assigned you science, which just amazes me. Nice reward for a job well done.

If I hadn't been so close to retirement, I would have walked out on the spot. But my daughter, she wanted to stay until she got out of school, and I wanted to see her graduate. That's a little bit different. Sometimes kids don't like their parents to be their teachers. But she did. So I hung on until she got out of high school (3.21).

Why did you originally want to become a music teacher?

Why? I was originally influenced by my band director in little bitty Yardley. This guy came in when I was a sophomore in high school. He was fresh out of college, but he knew his stuff. And he made an impression on me. And I worked but I couldn't read music until he came. I played baritone horn. I mean, I was one of those people where like most low brass people I knew that fourth line was open, and second line was one and if it didn't sound right, it was two. And he got me reading music and playing solos, and I really got into it. And I knew that I didn't want to farm. That's what I was brought up doing. It was the last thing that I wanted to do. And it was the time of early Viet Nam. 1959, nothing really going on, but when it got going, I was in college, and when it really got going heavy, all they said was you had to report to your draft board every year and not change schools. And I did. I taught in Berniece until I was 27 or 28. Because after you turned 26, you were considered to be 1-A inactive, and you wouldn't be drafted. I really didn't want to go over there. If they would have forced me, I would have gone, but I thought, "Why should I do this?" And I knew since I was a little kid that I wanted to teach something.

Oh, you weren't sure that it was music, but you knew you did want to teach.

Yeah, I wanted to be a teacher. My mom was a teacher. I never saw her teach or anything, but she taught when she was younger (3.21).

So who were your early models for music teaching? Other than the gentleman who came over from University PP. Do you even remember his name?

Yeah, Mr. Schmidt (1.21).

Do you know where he ended up?

Yeah, he's a computer person.

He quit teaching?

Yeah, after about fifteen years. He couldn't take it any longer. He's out in Wyoming right now. In music, he was a big influence. Probably Mr. Peety at the University UU (1.22). Because I'd make state FFA band when I was a sophomore, junior, senior in high school. When I was a junior and senior in high school, I would go to Davidson like the big weekend out. We never got off the farm. And he would direct us. He really impressed me. And Mr. West at Princeton was a dynasty in that part of the country. He was a biggie. You didn't mess with Mr. West. And Mr. Rose at Helenan (1.21).

Gosh, I haven't heard that name in forever.

He stayed at Helenan that whole time. His two sons, John and Don. Don is retired and works on the road for a music store in Davidson. And John, he retired. He still lives in Chandler. And another thing that makes this job nice. I'm one of those nasty double dippers. When you retire, you get your retirement. If you wait a year, then go back in, you don't lose it. So I'm making a halfway decent salary for the first time in my life. I took all my family to Disney World last Christmas.

That's so nice.

We had a great time. My wife and three daughters and son-in-law and five year old grandson (3.21).

What's the best part of your job?

The best part of my job? If I could just feel like maybe I made a difference in someone's life. That maybe this kid didn't like this before, but now he likes it. Now she really enjoys it. Or, I used to hear kids complain and they don't anymore. If you're having fun, not just by goofing around. Fun to me in band is going some place and having people say, "Wow!

They're good." That's fun. And just working with kids is fun. The year I was out, for instance, I was out on the road selling reeds and all that stuff, and I stopped at a school once. And this lady said, "I'm having trouble with my tuba player and I don't have much experience. Could you possibly help?" And I said, "Well, I'll try." And I worked for fifteen or twenty minutes with this kid, and I thought, "This is the most fun I've had all year." So that's why I wanted to go back to it.

That was a clarity moment for you (Yes) (4.3). Do you have anyone with whom you make music?

I belong to a barbershop chorus in Nichols. And they go at it pretty heavy.

I remember that in Nichols.

Those guys are crazy. I mean, it's like, get a life, guys.

Davidson has a barbershop chorus too, don't they?

Davidson has one, too. They have a big chorus there, but the guys in that, they practice four or five nights a week if they could. I need a life, too. [chat] I can tell you about four of the guys out of our group of 55. That's where they take their vacation every year to Nationals (3.15).

Do you make music with anyone else besides the barbershop group?

Yeah. I still sing with—when I was in college, my sister who lives in Osberg, and myself and Mr. Joplin is the guy who taught vocal music at Coleman. We did a lot of Peter, Paul and Mary stuff. We still get together to do some every once in awhile. We did a concert in Iandale a couple of years ago, and we're thinking about going back to University PP to do one. We just get together for some fun now. Bout three or four times a year. If I retire,

then we'll have more time for this stuff. The other two are younger than me, but they've already retired (1.11, 3.15).

Mathilda doesn't sound like she retired.

She wasn't teaching for a while, and then she got back into it.

But part-time, right?

But last year, she taught full time at Armour. That was a tough thing.

And I remember in the past. Wasn't Mr. Bradley there?

Yep, he was.

Even when he first started, that was a tough position. It sounds like he did well for a while, and then not so well towards the end.

That's why he got out of there. He couldn't take it there (2.24).

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

I feel very much more like a teacher who is a musician. (*Why?*) Meaning that I don't enjoy playing as much as I love teaching. I've never been one who really wanted to play but settled for teaching. No, I've always wanted to teach. And...

You said that it didn't matter to you if you taught science or math (4.4).

I've always enjoyed teaching. And I was never super good at playing. I was more for the small school. Cuz I liked to do all of the other things, the sports and everything, too. And I did them for many years. But I loved the teaching part of it. To create a sound with a band or a chorus (4.3). I've never much tried to do the dance jobs on the weekend, and get up on Monday morning. I know that there's a lot of guys who do that (1.11). I had to be fresh.

What do you think makes a rural music program strong?

To be candidly honest with you, I'd probably say the teacher. If you can get a teacher in there who's young with a lot of energy and a positive person, and gets right in there and goes. If they see results, people will get their kids in it, and they will support it. Because I think a lot of people take a lot of pride. And I think it's very different today. Thirty years ago, if you were in a Cassaday, you had a lot of people--well a lot of people didn't go to college back then. And I'm just saying this—I don't know if it's for print or not. A lot of sharp people were in the small towns. But what happens when generation after generation of smart people leave the rural environment. When all of the college prep smart kids leave, and what do you have left? You can tell me that it's not politically correct, but it's the truest thing I've ever seen. I go back and I say no wonder kids are so rough in rural America. The parents are the rough ones when they went to rural school. And they didn't give a diddly squat about anything, so why should their kids (3.23)? But they stayed home because they weren't going to venture to the outside and take a shot at life. That's what happened. Now here, you're close enough to Davidson that it makes a difference.

It's a bedroom community.

There's a lot of people who work in Davidson and commute back home every day. You'd be amazed. You get more than fifty miles from Davidson or Chandler, and you're facing tough times, folks. All of the sharp families are gone, and the families that are moving in...well, you got to call a spade a spade on that one. They're low income people, they're welfare people, and they can live cheap there. You see some of those rag-tag kids coming through the classes. And you think, "Oh my gosh."

Do you even see it when you do instrument displays?

Yeah.

Do you have a lot of kids who come begging—who say that they would be in band, but don't have the money for the instrument?

Yes.

How do you accommodate them?

A lot of kids have their own horns already. Because they have older brothers or sisters who played, then quit. Now, this group this year is a different kind of group. The classes aren't an average class. It's below average. And a lot of kids in it don't have older brothers and sisters who played, so they don't have used horns. So they'll have to rent instruments. Well, they make the rent cheap enough on them, they'll never buy. I'm sure of that. We'll have to find something. So I have to try to interest as many as I can. And I hope that there are enough instruments around the community that they can come up with the money themselves (2.23). So they'll spend \$200 or \$300 instead of having to spend \$1500 for a saxophone. It's pretty expensive (2.18).

If you had to do it all over again, would you teach music again?

Yep, I would (4.5).

Is teaching what you imagined it to be? Would you change anything?

I don't know what I would have changed. Sometimes I thought I would like to get into a larger school system. But knowing the guys who I'm friends with, they have different kinds of problems in the large schools. I've always been pretty comfortable with trying to build up programs—as many places as I've been, I've always built the band (1.21, 4.1). Then gone somewhere else to help build that band. My wife and kids have been good

enough to go with me (3.21). I'm dumb enough I'd probably do it all over again given the same opportunities. I just have enjoyed—you could quote me on the Garth Brooks song, "The Dance." It's kind of the story of my life. "I could have missed the pain, but I would have missed the dance." (4.5)

That's a good philosophy.

I think that there's a lot of things that hurt sometimes. But when you average them with the good and the bad. I'm still happy.

Denise Crawford

If you have a question about music content, where do you go to for advice?

There's two other band directors in the area. And we kind of put our heads together every once in awhile. And we say things like, "This song's on the list—what do you think of it?" Like a question about woodwinds, since I'm a brass player, but I have a friend that I can call who's a woodwind player. She helps me there (1.21).

Do you ever go to conventions or workshops for those types of things?

Yes, Bandmaster's and MENC/NAME. I like Bandmaster's better.

Why is that?

It pertains more to what I'm doing and it's not quite as highbrow.

Did you go to Bandmaster's this summer?

Actually not this summer, but I have in previous summers. I wanted to, but I was out of town. Out of state (1.12).

What about content questions? Not necessarily things that have to do with the content of music, but have things to do with lesson plans, long range planning and classroom management. Do you have someone who you talk to about that?

For classroom management, there's my principal (2.22). I trust him a lot. And there's a counselor at my school who's really good, too. She's given me lots of good advice about classroom management (2.21). And then I do a lot of reading. About lesson plans, stuff like that. Different procedures. There's a free publication that comes out call The Band Director's Guide. Every issue is devoted to an instrument. It says do this, don't do that (1.25).

So you read that for music content. Does it have a section about process--like what to do when the drummers won't stop drumming? Things that are more classroom management?

I wish I could figure out that issue, but I haven't (both laugh).

If you found out that solution, you could sell it for about a million bucks. Is there a reason that you moved between the districts?

Not really. I did come back to this area because I liked the other teachers in this area.

They're very helpful.

The other music teachers in the area? (Yes) (1.21). Are you back in the same conference as you were in before?

Right. I just moved out for one school. And then I found out I didn't like it in that part of the state. Nobody was friendly (1.21, 2.21). The administration was bad, and that's why I like this school. I have the best administration I've ever had. I don't ever want to leave.

Just for that purpose (2.22, 4.1).

That's great. So how long have you been in this district?

Four years.

Do you teach K-12 everything? (Yes). How many kids do you have in your marching band? (Forty-four). That's pretty big (I know. I'm proud of them) (2.23). So about how many kids start in the fifth grade?

Between 20 and 25. There's quite a tradition of band in this town. It makes it kind of different (3.14).

It sounds like when you walked into this position, it was a pretty solid position. Is that correct?

Yes, I find it's not good when they've had a different band director every year. They had been in that situation for about five years (2.24, 3.14).

You talk about having a mentor, Mr. Henry. Did you follow him twice?

Yes.

Did he recommend you for those positions?

In Amos he did. It was an accident. On this second position, they asked Mr. Henry. The man who was the superintendent was also the football coach. He was a friend with Mr. Henry. I was actually about to take another job, and every family friend said, "You might want to check out Amos." I said, "OK." My other mentor, Mr. Dohmen, he owns the music store in Foley. And he called me up and said, "You have to go." And I said, "OK." So I get out here and the superintendent said, "I really don't know you from anybody." And he said, "I know that you have to give this other school district an answer." So he checked my references. And he called Mr. Henry. And he called me back two days later, and offered me the job. Just because he talked to Mr. Henry (1.3, 2.24, 4.1).

And this was the job. (Yes) Sounds like it worked out well. Has the administration stayed the same as when you got hired?

Yes. Even the football coach has been here for twenty-five years (2.21, 2.22).

And for the administration to stay that stable is very unusual. Are these folks mostly from the area? (No.) Why do you think they're staying in the same place?

Well, they started farming, basically, in addition to teaching. That kind of locked them in.

You didn't come immediately after Mr. Henry.

No. There's about six or seven teachers in between us (2.24).

Even though he was there for a long time, it sounds like it was a long time ago. So his influence was pretty much gone by the time you got there, wasn't it?

Except that the kids that I have now are the children of his students. *(Well, sure)*. They all said, "Band was this when he was here." And, "This is why we need this for our kids (3.14)."

And why did Mr. Henry move away from your school?

He wanted to step into a larger school.

So do you ever feel like this is a little bit intimidating to have to live up to his reputation?

I think that if I wasn't friends with him, or I disagreed with him, it would be a little bit different. Plus, I know that I have his approval. So it's not intimidating then. But if it was somebody else, who maybe thought I was an idiot. Maybe I'd be walking on eggshells then the whole time (1.21, 1.3, 2.24).

So do you have a choral program, too?

Not really. People would like to have one, but the same kids that are in band would be in the choral program (3.14). It's hard enough with the course requirements needed to graduate to get all the classes in and get their honor certificate or college preparatory certificate. And since it is the same kids, they have to choose between chorus and band. It doesn't help my program (3.14). Plus, I'm not certified in vocal. So I don't push for it. But in first through fourth grade, we do little musicals (2.12).

Do you know why the other band directors left that position? Bigger schools, or was it something else?

Well that's some of it. The guy who was right before me, he was more used to AA and AAA schools. Then he had some personal problems and ended up needing a job. This job

had just been vacated by somebody in November. That person's not teaching anymore (2.24).

He walked in the middle of the year.

Right. But he was a really good teacher, so he was able to handle that. So the guy before him isn't teaching anymore. And everybody says that he shouldn't be teaching. Then before him was a lady who had a drinking problem. And the kids knew that (2.24, 3.11).

Did she drink during school hours?

Yeah. She has it under control now.

Is she back teaching?

Yes. She's actually a good teacher. She has lots of years of experience. She just had that problem. Before her was this other guy who was just pretty much an idiot. He managed to get ones at state, but he had the students playing baby literature. So then before that, there was a guy who was here for nine years, then before him was Mr. Henry.

So there was stability after Mr. Henry left.

Yeah, Mr. Burton. He teaches at Dictum now (2.24, 4.1).

Were you fairly familiar with the community when you came here?

All of these directors I was just telling you about, I knew all of them on a personal basis from when they taught at different schools (1.21, 2.24).

Could you call them about your community?

The guy who was here right before me, we talked a couple of times. But he was real negative about the whole thing. He had some personal problems, and they weren't really resolved before he left here. So he wasn't good (2.24).

Do you have anyone at the school that you've become close with?

Yeah. There's the second grade teacher, and the first grade teacher, and the fourth grade teacher. And at the high school, there's the math teacher, and the English teacher and the counselor.

It sounds like pretty much everybody. Do you do things socially?

Yeah, the math teacher and I do things socially (2.21).

What kinds of things do you do socially?

Well, we go to school functions together. And we go out to eat sometimes. And sometimes we just goof around together. After the prom, we went and had a margarita last year.

So as far as the community culture, do they let you drink in town?

No. It's not even worth it (3.11).

If you needed information about the community, about the culture and the history of the program, who can give you that information?

There is a lady here who went through the school system. She's about fifteen years older than me. And she accompanies my solos for me (2.19). And she was a band booster parent (2.25). And she was friends with the former band director (2.24). So she gives me the low-down (3.3). She feels sorry for the people who move in here, because it's a pretty clique-y community (3.14).

So it's a pretty closed community. (Oh, yeah) Have they accepted you?

To teach, yes. As a member socially, no. Part of it's my own fault. I go to church in Evansville. And I go home every weekend (3.23, 3.12).

So you don't spend a lot of time there.

It's really my own fault. I haven't tried to make inroads. I have people in the band boosters who...we're friends and everything. We talk on a personal level (2.25, 3.17).
You have a pep band and a marching band for the football games (2.11). (Right) Then do you head out on Saturday morning? (Right) And don't come back until late Sunday night.

Right. It's pretty isolated here (4.2).

When did you first realize that you wanted to become a music teacher?

I think it was ninth grade.

And how did it come about?

We were working on this little brass quintet, and I was helping out. And one of the guys said, "You should become a band teacher." I was kind of coaching them along. And I thought, "Yeah, that is a good idea." I loved playing, and I loved my horn (1.11, 2.11).

Who were your earliest models?

I guess my band directors (1.21).

Were there a series of band directors, or just one?

I've had about five directors in junior high and high school. Then we moved to Zizka. And then college, of course.

All of those folks were pretty influential? (Yeah) Did you have Professor H as your (instrument) instructor in college (1.22)?

Yes. I found that when I started teaching that I used so much of my horn lessons for what I did in class. I never told Professor H that.

Well you need to.

I suppose I should.

You just do K-4 general. And then they go into band in fifth, or they do nothing after fifth.

(Right) Do they have any sort of humanities class in high school that the kids can take?

They call it humanities but music is really the only fine art-- it really is not much.

I was curious because I was wondering how they do on the humanities part on the state tests.

Not real well. Usually the eighth graders do ok because they've had music recently. And a lot of times, the principal will have one of the teachers review with them as if they were learning in the humanities. He had me give (the English teacher) a whole bunch of music theory stuff. So she prepared them (2.15).

How often do you see your students?

Every day.

All of them?

Yes.

Do you sponsor any activities?

I am junior class sponsor this year.

Oh, my gosh. So I guess you get to do prom this year (uh huh). And what's prom like in your community?

It's a big deal. We do it outside of the community about seventeen miles at a country club. That's where we have the prom.

Do they have the prom part at the country club rather than the school, too? (Yeah)

Cool.

The kids really like it.

And what's the community expectation about the prom? Do they expect really, really swank?

Well, you try not to outdo the other classes. Like our class is a large one.

You try NOT to outdo? (Right) (2.13, 3.14). What types of fundraisers do you have to do for the prom?

For the prom, they do a sausage sale (which is actually going to conflict with my band fund raiser). There's just no getting around it. Everyone has to do fundraisers. And the juniors have been doing fundraisers since they were seventh graders. They did one where they sold afghans.

Homemade afghans?

Kind of. Like a blanket afghan. They sold boucoups of those, so we really don't have to do all that much.

Do they start in seventh grade to earn toward their junior prom?

Yes, and their senior trip (2.17).

And where do they go for their senior trip usually?

It depends, but usually they have to stay in state. The band is the only school group that is allowed to go out of state. We're the only ones who haven't blown it (2.13).

So where's the band gone recently?

Last spring, we went to Texas.

How fun! I love Texas. Did they go to Six Flags?

Yes, and Sea World.

And did they compete down there?

No. And it's funny. Because Mr. Henry had just taken his band to Texas and we were talking (1.3). And he decided not to take them to competition any more. He said, "You know, we play in front of the same group we always do, the parents and grandparents. So instead, they have the chance to perform in a school. They got to play in front of a whole bunch more kids than they did before. So I think that's the way to go, too. I mean, who needs the stress of competition? Just go down there and do your performance (2.21, 2.14).

So on your band trip, you did perform, (the band) just didn't do it for any sort of ratings?

Right. I couldn't see the point in it. We go to Districts, and we go to all sorts of competitions during the year. Why go to one more (2.14)?

That's a great idea. Do you have band parents?

They call them band boosters.

Aha, and that way, if you're not a parent, you can still join?

That's kind of the idea. But they just liked the sound of band booster instead of band parent, I guess. I don't know why.

Your band boosters do fundraising (2.17). Do they ever give you any advice about what they'd like to see done?

NO.

That's good.

No (laughs).

Some band boosters think they have a right to that kind of power because they do work so hard.

I feel lucky because Mr. Henry started both of the band booster clubs that I have had (1.3). But the one in south [state] near Swenson. The band booster president was also on the school board. And she wanted things to be run in a certain way. I didn't like it (2.25, 3.14).

What kinds of other things do the band boosters do for the program?

Well, they run the football concessions stand. So we get the revenue from that (2.17). And they do a pageant that's 68 or 70 years old. It's a traditional pageant. And so they run that (2.24, 3.14).

Tell me the name of the community again?

Amos.

I've never heard of it. I need to look on a map. Is it very far from Arlo?

Only about 35-40 miles away (4.2). [chat]

So they have a pageant, and do the parents help with it?

Oh, yes, they do it. It's their baby.

Describe the pageant for me. It sounds really interesting.

There used to be a band carnival that was a fundraiser for the band (2.17). It was a two-day affair. Everyone got tired of doing that. But there was this pageant in conjunction with it. And they coronated a band carnival queen. Seventh through ninth graders compete for the title of band princess.

So it's only girls who compete. They don't have any prince or king.

No, but we do have the escorts. So the boys do that. Almost all the girls compete in it (2.14, 3.14). I was kind of against it at first. I thought, "Oh man." But like last year, the girl who won. She was a Romanian girl who was adopted about four years ago. She had

some—until she was 14, she had lived in an orphanage. She had never learned to carry herself. So she never learned how to hold herself up. And when she won it, I was just so proud. She had so much potential. And I thought, yeah, we can do this. We can do a pageant. That's going to really affirm her (2.23).

If I went into the community of Amos and asked about you as a teacher, what would they say about you?

Well, I think that they would say that I've improved the band a whole bunch. They would say that it's gone from kind of an embarrassment to something that they're proud of. I think I've gained their respect in that area (3.13, 3.14, 3.23).

Do they have any expectations? It sounds like it has a fairly rich tradition in that community that has kind of gone by the wayside. And now you're bringing it back. Do they have any expectations besides the pageant? Like a vet's day program, anything like that?

They would like to see some kind of a good marching band (2.11, 3.14). And the principal and superintendent told me—because I was really trying to get one. I was pushing the kids and doing early morning rehearsals, and saying, "We're going to do this" (2.22). And at the end of the year, he said, "We know you have a bunch of young kids. It's mostly a junior high group. And if it's going to be a couple of years before you compete at Bandmaster's, that's fine with us (2.14)." And I said, "What if the community says it's not OK?" (3.14) And he said, "I'm your boss." I mean, he was not threatening me. He was just saying, "The important thing is that you make me happy (2.22, 3.23)."

Do you think that the administration is stronger than the community is?

I do. I think they've been administrators long enough that they've seen the directors leaving one after the other. The guy that left in November? The community just drove him out. He was really kind of snotty (2.24, 3.23).

They don't tolerate that well.

No, [the former band director] asked that same lady that plays piano for me (3.3). He asked her to write a half time announcement for the marching band to give to the press box guys to read. And he just tore her up, saying it was not appropriate. It wasn't the way he wanted it written (3.17).

The next time I'd have him write it.

That's exactly what she said. Excuse me for living, but this lady is trustworthy. I'm sure that she didn't do anything wrong. But he was not a people person (2.24).

So what do you think that the community values most in the program?

They like to see us really visible. They like to see us go on trips. And they want us to do well at contest at Foley. There's a little pressure (2.14, 3.13).

Do you have a Christmas program? (Yes) Is it a big deal? (Yes) What types of things do you do for the Christmas program?

Umm. Actually the Kindergarten through the fourth grade does one of those musicals.

Is it a pre-packaged musical?

Yes. There's narration and a few solos.

Do they expect costumes and props?

No. It's whatever I want to do. Actually, we could stand up there and sing Christmas carols, and they'd pretty much be happy. But I do have to do something (3.14). And there's a Halloween costume parade that's highly important.

That's something that you do? (Yes). How did that fall on your shoulders? Is there music involved with it?

The kids are supposed to sing. But nobody ever listens to them. There are children running everywhere. It's a mess. And I get on the microphone and you would not believe this. I had to stand up even at the Christmas program and announce, "The band is ready to play their next song. We will do that as soon as you're quiet. We've worked really hard and deserve to be heard." I said it as nicely as I could (2.12).

But the fact that you had to say it at all. Wow!

I don't understand how the audience can behave that way. The only thing that I can figure is that we have our concerts in the gym. We don't have an auditorium. So people are used to physical activity in there (3.14).

And getting up and down from the bleachers. I forgot about that. It was hideous.

Especially if they had clogs [both laugh]. Those were the ones with the weakest bladders.

The ones who went clippity clopping across the gym floor during the concert.

And the bathrooms are on either side of the stage. So the audience actually has to parade up on the stage to go to the bathroom.

Oh no. Can't they hold it in at all (2.12)? [Both laugh] Have you made any friends at

all? (Oh yeah) Are they mostly school people, or do you have any community friends?

Pretty much all teachers. Like the lady who plays piano for me, and some of the staff at the school. There's a few of the parents that I would consider my friends (2.21, 2.25).

Do you feel valued by the people in Amos?

At the school, I do.

Not in the community?

No. I guess that they're the kind (of people) who don't say anything unless there's a problem (3.17).

So the fact that they are completely silent might be a good thing. You don't own a home there, do you?

I am buying a trailer, a mobile home that I moved up here (3.18).

Do you anticipate staying there for a while, then?

I did, but...I'm going to move next year (4.1).

And why is that?

I'm getting married.

Congratulations [chat]. You say that you attended conventions and workshops for music [education]. You go to MENC/NAME and Bandmaster's. (Right). Did you go to MENC/NAME last January?

No. I went two years ago.

When you go to those workshops, do you feel like they answer the questions of small community music teachers?

Not MENC/NAME. I don't know. Maybe I just didn't give them a chance (1.25).

What kinds of things do you think they could include?

Well, there was a sight-reading clinic that was good, something about sight-reading techniques. That was good. I think what I like about Bandmaster's and how it compares is that they'll have a—I guess there's more people who teach on the same level that I do. Even though it's geared more toward marching, they'll have more techniques about how to get students from point A to point B. Like in percussion, which I know very little

about. There was a really good workshop on that. And there was a workshop on literature for one-A schools (1.12).

Do you feel like the judges at music contests know what's going on with 1-A schools?

Yeah. Because there's usually at least one judge who teaches or has taught in 1-A schools. That helps. But it's not fair that a lot of the judges still hold us to higher standards. And what they forget is that we do what we do with lots less kids. (1.23). Like a good friend of mine, some guy wrote on her critique sheet, "You need a tuba. Find one." She thought, "OK. Poof! You're a tuba (1.21)."

And even if you physically have a tuba, you may not have a tuba player.

Do you know what she told me that she does now? She gets a kid out there to hold the tuba [Laughs] (2.14).

Do the judges perceive that they're hearing a low sound?

At least she doesn't get slammed any more for not having a tuba (1.21, 1.23).

For heaven's sake. Now they'll say, "Tell the tuba to play louder." [Laughs]

I'm really lucky. I have a really good tuba player.

What year?

She's a sophomore this year (2.23).

Oh good, then you have her for two more years. Do you ever go to workshops for elementary?

You know, I would like to. I really want to—there's that Kodaly one at University MM I've always wanted to go to.

And remember that there's some one-day workshops too. Like in Evansville or at University LL on a Saturday.

I didn't know that (1.12).

I didn't know if you had ever gone to workshops for those. I got some of my best ideas off of other music teachers (1.21).

So what do you think is the best part of your job?

I really enjoy fifth grade band and the beginners. I could do that all day.

Why is that?

I like the detail that it takes and I like their excitement about it, and I like to hear them going from splat and honk to sounding like something like music. So that you can tell what the tune is sometimes.

What do you like least about your job?

Probably marching band.

And why is that?

I thought that it would be not the way it was. I was so gung-ho about marching band after being in the [University LL] Band and everything. But it just, in a small school like this it's not possible to do (2.11, 4.3).

Now when you do marching band with the kids, do you have student athletes that march?

Or student athletes who are in band but don't march?

Right. That would be my situation. Of course, my basketball players do, but my football players don't. There was one time when the coach let me have the football players for halftime. They had absolutely no idea what they were doing there. They were so not there. And I said, "OK, this is a waste of time." I decided not to use them again [both laugh]. I mean, their eyes were glazed over and they were staring kind of into space. OK, you're not here.

I remember from homecoming a lot of the candidates came from band. So all of the sudden, you've lost half of your flute players or something. We'd go out to the middle of the field and stand fast. And the candidates would come out to "Ice Castles" or something like that. It's kind of funny to think back on it now. I had forgotten about that.

Do you play for volleyball games too?

You mean basketball?

No, volleyball.

No. We don't have a volleyball team.

How about for basketball? Do you play for both boys and girls?

No, we just play for football games.

No pep band for basketball?

No, I have in other schools, but not here.

Wow, how did you get away with that?

I know. Plus, I get some pretty serious extra duty pay (2.17). I couldn't believe it. I asked them, "You mean I don't have to do basketball?" And they said, "No. It's too loud in there." And I thought "OK with me (2.11)."

No kidding. Do you have a jazz band?

No.

Have you ever had a job related conflict with students or parents?

You mean as a teacher?

I mean any sort of conflict where the parent tells you, "Don't treat my child this way."

Or the student says, "You're not being fair." Or something like that. Where you had auditions for things and things didn't go well?

Actually, the first year that I was here, I had a mother stop me in a parking lot. The band had a fund-raiser and for the fund-raiser party, I had just gone into her convenience store and spent \$200 on pizza and pop. She took the things to my car and then proceeded to chew me out because her daughter was sitting third chair trumpet or something like that. And there was a seventh grader sitting ahead of her, and she was in ninth grade. There had never been any band director who had let the younger kids sit in front of the older kids. And I'm like, "Whatever." And I said, "I'm sorry you feel that way." And I got into the car and drove off. But I haven't been back in her convenience store since. I thought it was really tacky (3.17).

Did her daughter stay in band?

No, she quit after that year. But I still have her son in band (2.25).

Are you making sure that he's sitting ahead of the younger students?

To be honest, I had decided that it wasn't worth it to do chair try-outs.

So how do you do it? Do you just rotate them through?

I sit the older ones closer to the front, and only let the young ones move up if I really think that they can handle it.

So you do it by age now.

Yeah, kind of. I still have some seventh graders on first part. But I just gave in, I guess (2.14, 3.14).

Did you have administrative help on that one?

No (2.22). The other teachers told me, "Well, she's just a nut." But then, they all know each other. That was what my best friend told me. "Just blow it off. She's a nut (2.21)."

Have you ever had to have the administration help you with a problem? (Yes.) Were they pretty supportive?

Oh, yeah. My principal pretty much fields everything, and I don't even know about it.

There was a situation with band queen. Oh, my gosh (2.22).

(Laughing) What happened there?

The girls who were juniors at the time did not like it that a freshman got to be the band queen. And I said, "You've already had your chance to be the band queen so it falls to her. It's a long, drawn-out story." But they flung a ring-tailed fit. And then, they made the girl so miserable that the father yelled at me about you can't control those kids. So I just listened to him and thought, "He's just mad because his daughter was upset." I just listened and I did what I could with the situation. I took the girls aside and told them that they needed to back off. And that situation did up in the principal's office over it because they didn't stop harassing her (2.22, 2.23, 2.25).

You hate to hear about stories like that.

I just figure that life is too short, and I just do the best I can with it, then go on. [chat]

You said that when you taught down south that you had some problems with the administration. Have you had pretty good relationships with most of the other administrations?

Yes, I really have. They've all backed me. They've been really helpful. I guess because band directors are so hard to find in our state at least, they want to do anything they can to keep one. Especially if you're competent.

What about the one down south. What did they do to make them less than perfect?

I found out the year after I left, they were telling the kids that they weren't going to offer band any more. So if they wanted band, they would have to transfer to a different school district. They just wanted the program gone. That's the best they could come up with. *Did it feel like a personal vendetta at the time?* (Yes) [Tape break] (2.22).

I will never go through that kind of situation again. I mean, I'll get out of this line of work before I go this again. It was awful (4.3).

You talk about them supporting you, supporting your discipline decisions. Do the administrators also come and support your concerts?

Yeah (2.22).

How about your relationships with students?

I think I have a good rapport with them.

Do you ever have students you have to kick out?

No, not here at Amos. Actually the administration does a lot of that for me. Occasionally a kid will want to get into band so that he can goof off. And the principal says, "Oh, no."

Isn't that nice that he does that for you?

Yes. My principal has a good personal friend who's a really good band director here in [state]. So they swap stories and he gets a lot of information from this other band director.

So it really helps (2.22).

How about the counselors? Do they ever come to you and say, "Don't you have a cymbal part for this kid? He needs hours to graduate."

No, never (2.21).

What do you think makes rural music programs strong? If you see a strong program, what do you notice?

Administrative support. They were real committed to keeping a teacher there for more than a year. That helped. But they wouldn't have settled for someone who wasn't qualified. They wouldn't have just taken a warm body (2.22). I guess that parental support is a big part of it. Attitude from the kids who are involved in band. Cuz the rest of the kids in the school are pretty negative about band, and are not supportive of it at all (2.22, 2.24).

Even in your school district they're not?

No. But it's changing since the band is getting better. They're not making as much fun of them anymore (3.14).

Have they ever been state champs in athletics?

Yeah. In football and basketball.

That doesn't seem to help sometimes.

But the other coaches...none of the other teachers come to my concerts (2.21).

Is drinking allowed for teachers in your community? I know in some towns, that's actually the gateway to entry into community culture. In some towns it's absolutely accepted. It just depends. In some small towns, the bar is the only place to go. There is no other gathering place. In some towns, the school is the gathering place. That's where everybody goes. It just depends on the community.

There's a pretty strong bias against drinking in this community. I just stay away from it (3.11).

And I think that would be consistent with what I'm finding in [state]. The community is more likely to say no to drinking. Even if the parents drink, the teachers probably shouldn't.

Actually, in Herkemer, the teachers' parties—the first school district that I taught in, and actually, I didn't like it much there, either. They got really wild.

Is it also in the area?

Yes it is.

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

A teacher who's a musician.

And why would you say that?

I guess because I don't get much opportunity to play anymore. And I guess because I'm a stronger teacher now than a player. It's the reverse from when I got out of college (4.4).

Are there other musicians in your community? (Yes) Do you ever make music with them?

I have the pianist [from school]. The two of us play for church. I play for some things with her. As far as an ensemble or something like that—no. We are going to get a woodwind quintet together with some of us band directors. So that will be fun (1.11, 3.15).

That's cool. How many miles away are the other band directors?

There's one who's twenty miles away. And another that's forty. Then the ones in Foley are about twenty miles away (4.2).

I know that Foley's not that far. And there are quite a few musicians in Foley, aren't there?

There really are. I played in the Foley symphony before for a while. I didn't really like it. Same with the community band. I don't know. The Foley symphony, we were doing Beethoven's Ninth. And I was playing the fourth part, and I had to transpose everything from A. It was low anyway. And the conductor stopped and pointed at me and said, "You were on the wrong note." And so I tried to play it right. And he stopped again and said, "You're still playing the wrong note." And I said, "It's written such and such, and I'm playing such and such. That's it." And I never got asked to play again (1.11, 3.15).

Do you ever play at the church that you attend in Evansville?

Yes. Of course, I played for four years while I was touring with the band (1.11, 3.15).

Did you play with the band? (Yes) For some reason, I thought you were a singer.

We had ten singers and about twelve of us in the orchestra.

That's a big entourage to work with. So, is music teaching what you thought it would be?

(Yeah). And if you were to choose a career path, would you follow the same career path again?

Yes. When I've had a rough day, I think, "I'm so out of here." Then I start thinking, "What would I rather be doing?" And the answer to that is, "Nothing." I would be really bored in an office or a laboratory (4.5).

Jose Fresco

Where do you go for information about music?

I use the Internet quite a bit. I spent a lot of time in Allen talking to the choir teacher Ms. Brown (2.21).

When you say that you were in Allen, did you teach music there?

No, I just got acquainted with Ms. Brown. So anytime I was getting ready to start something, or I was getting ready for something new and I didn't know what to do, I went to her and she'd help me out. She was very helpful.

Did you ever go to any workshops while you were there?

I went to the MENC/NAME workshop in October for three years. I've never been to the one in January (1.12).

Up in Jonestown? (Yeah) Did you feel that when you went to the one in October that you got some information that you could use?

It was really helpful.

What types of things did you get from there?

I took my elementary kids to [an elementary honors chorus], my fifth and sixth graders. And I got kind of a head start on the music then.

With Ms. Miller.

Yeah. And I got a lot of information about the high school honor choir.

Did you have some kids that made the honor choir?

I had one that made it [to Regional] two years.

Did they make it to state? (No). I hear that's pretty tough.

Yeah, it's pretty tough. Especially when we don't sing a lot. Well, we sing a lot, but not like a choral situation where there are fifteen or twenty people on a part. We only sing two parts. It's hard to get them all together (2.14).

So how many kids participated in your high school program?

Yeah. There were on the average about seven.

Was it boys, girls, a little bit of both?

Mostly girls, a boy now and then.

Do you have other ministers of music with whom you consult on the job about musical things?

Not really. There are a couple, but they're not local.

In your job, did you have a conference and other music teachers that you could talk to?

(No) (1.21). *Were you able to socialize with any other staff members at your school?*

Not really. Not outside of school.

Did you have a lunch bunch?

It was mainly—there was a group of teachers who grabbed their lunch and went into the workroom and ate, and there was a group of us who sat in the cafeteria with the kids (2.21).

Did you sit with the kids or did you have a staff table?

There was a staff table. Not with the kids. It wasn't that they didn't want me. I felt that they needed the time away from us.

You don't need to be with kids all day long.

It would drive them as crazy as it did me.

What about teaching process in music? Like lesson plans, or long range planning or sequencing. Did you find anyone at your schools that you could talk to about anything that was difficult for you?

I've never had any problems talking with the principal (2.22). During the three years when I was doing part time at the two schools, we went through three principals at Allen. All the time I've been at Charlestown, we've been through four.

In how many years?

Seven years. (*Oh my*). So attrition is somewhat of a problem. Especially here on the border of [state]. A lot of these principals have already retired from [state], and are working on a second retirement or a second income (4.1). In fact, for four of the years, that's who we had. We had a retired Superintendent from Davis who was in [state] who came over and taught and a retired high school principal who retired from a High School in Barry who came over to work for two years. And our superintendent retired. And now, we have a superintendent who brought a guy that he knew. Now they've found a guy who will make it a home. I think he'll be there for a while. I never had much of a problem with going in and talking with the principal (2.22). But I've also not had a lot of problems with the kids (2.23).

What about the other teachers? Do they respect and value you? (I think so) (2.21). How about administrators? (Yeah). Of course, you've had so many administrators sometimes it's hard. Have they been pretty decent?

No, not all. All of them have had their strong points. But some of them have been really weak in some key areas. It usually doesn't make it difficult for me. I usually when I'm in my classroom, I'm in my own cocoon. I try not to worry about what anybody else is

doing. Kids a lot of time tell me that so and so doesn't make us do that. Well, we're not in so and so's class. You're in my class. And you're in this class with me, and we're going to do things this way. So I've felt like as far as the administration, there's only one of the superintendents who was like I don't know...didn't respect me in a lot of ways. Things just changed when I became a music teacher. All of the sudden, I wasn't important any more. It was really strange (2.22).

So you sound like that you had a few problems with parents when they didn't think that you worked well with their kids. Did the administration back you when things went a little bit foul?

Pretty much. It was put to me from the perspective to look at the situation and look at what I've done.

(Tape break) What's your relationship with the school board?

Other than just an isolated situation, I think I've had an excellent relationship with the school board (3.23).

It sounds like your principals have been commuters, too. Are most of the teachers commuters at Charlestown?

Probably half or more.

Does it bother the community?

I don't think so. No, I think they're pretty accepting of people (3.23). Or they have of me. I see them here in my hometown or whatever. And they come and hunt me down just to say hi.

Now how far is Charlestown from your hometown?

It's about twenty-five miles (4.2).

So it's a little bit closer than the new position that you have. Do you anticipate when you move to the new position that you will be pretty involved with the community?

Outside of school, probably not (3.16). I mean, the things that I do with my kids. The last time that I was there, I translated their fight song into Spanish and we sang it at the homecoming pep rally downtown, and we did some things as a Spanish class that went out into the community. But as far as going over for something that's happening at night or in the middle of the week, it's not going to happen.

So, do you have anyone in the community in Charlestown that you could call to find out what was happening?

Yeah, I was close enough to the rest of the teaching staff (2.21). The principal from Davis was also a deacon in my church (3.12). They got pretty attached to him while he was there. So if something were to happen to him, I would probably call someone to tell them what was going on.

You were able to find out the history, the traditions of Charlestown. Obviously, you heard about the previous music teachers...

[Laughs] More about the previous Spanish teachers. I did hear--I was there for what went on with some of the music teachers. So that was first hand (3.14).

And then they came to you and said, "We choose you. You're our new music teacher."

It was pretty obvious why.

Did the music teachers seem pretty flummoxed that they weren't asked back?

No, they were never let go. They always found somewhere else to go. It was only a part time position. I think it had a lot to do with it. The idea that they were just five/sevenths of a day kind of made them feel like they weren't real valid or important. If you don't

feel important, and you don't feel like what you're doing is important, and nobody you're working with feels like it's extremely important, what's the point? (2.24)

Do you feel like the community values music?

I think the community values music (3.23). I got encouragement like you wouldn't believe from kid's families (2.25). And even from the kids (2.23). But they don't feel like it's important for life. They think that it's important for kids to learn to...

It won't make them money.

Yes, it's not something that's going to benefit them when they get out into the "real world." I don't know that anyone in this community gets out in the real world.

Do most of them stick around there?

Yeah, pretty much.

Even after they graduate, do they go off to college?

Yes, most of them do. Most of them don't go off very far, and if they do, they usually end up back at one of the local colleges to finish up.

That's interesting.

It's a big shock for someone from a little pond like Charlestown to go to college and—going from a place where everybody knows what everybody does...a lot of times before they ever do it. To go to a place where nobody cares what you do. It's really a big shock for some of these kids.

Who do you think values you?

The kids (2.23). And their parents. I very seldom have negative visits from parents at parent/teacher conferences. Most of the time they come in and then they make sure they

stop to see me and say hi. And they tell me that they appreciate what I'm doing with their kids (2.25).

How would the community members at Charlestown describe you as a music teacher?

It would depend on who you talked to [laugh]. Some of them would have some really foul names for me, but it was because I wouldn't let their kids do whatever they wanted to. I think they would probably describe me as a good teacher and a decent guy (3.23).

Is fairness valued by [people in] your community?

Yes, fairness unless it's their kid, then they want all of the advantages possible (3.14).

That's nothing to do with a rural school. I think that's every school and every parent.

And I think that's the way it should be. You've talked about going into the community. Do the teachers do any projects with the kids outside of school in the community?

Sure, we all do (3.16).

Were there any musical expectations? Did they want a Christmas program?

They did. With the elementary, they had a Christmas program every year. And the first two years, I put together a Christmas program with them. It pretty much felt like, it got rave reviews from everybody in the community. They were pretty excited about it. But it was such a fight with administration. Elementary programs tend to get out of hand with the production. It's always bigger and better. And that was where as far as support from the administration, the Superintendent, I had things set up...Our auditorium was set up as a half gym with a stage on one end of it. And it's almost like every school in rural (state). And we couldn't fit everybody in the community in there for any sort of program. And we tried to do it every year. And every year, there would be some sort of...we had 200 chairs and something like 150 people standing up around the sides. But it was just cram

packed full and... You can't get all of the kids up on the stage at one time. There are 120 elementary kids, and trying to get all of them up there at one time. You'd march them in and out or do something.

So then you'd have them back in their classrooms waiting for their turn.

But how do you get them up there with 150 people standing around the side of the gym? (Laughs). So, I had, after the first year, I told him, "This is crazy." So I started working on a primary program, a secondary program...

And that's what I was thinking.

And then I started working with the older kids. They hadn't had a high school program in years. And I started putting things together. And I had dates ok'd by the principal and the superintendent. And as the time got closer, the dates started getting changed. And one date conflicted with a basketball game. But it had been scheduled late. One of them, I can't remember what happened (2.18, 2.22). But I ended up doing three programs in one night (*Oh, my gosh*). When [the principal] finally came to me, and said, "This is what we need to do," I told him, "This is going to work, because I want to make this work. But I'm NEVER going to do this again. I will do things with them, I will teach them music. But I will never do a Christmas program again." And so, another lady started doing that. She was the elementary principal. She started doing it, and I told her that I would help however I could. That was kind of a defiant thing (2.22).

It sounds like it was probably a good decision, though. Did you originally want to be a music teacher?

No. Honestly, I didn't want to be a teacher 'til I went to school.

Why did you decide to teach?

I've worked for twenty years in the oil field. It was kind of a decision that it wasn't going to make me a living at the time. I had four kids. Mainly, it was a change in career direction.

Why did you leave the oilfield?

Economy.

I know that there was an oil bust in the mid eighties. Was there another one in the early nineties?

(Laughs) It was a kind of a firecracker show. It went bust every couple of years since the mid-eighties. It was never very good. But we survived the eighties. And it never really came back. My dad and I were in business together. He had most of the financial burden. And the business wouldn't make both of us a living (3.21). And I needed a change. I'd been doing it for twenty years. I really hated it at the time. I opted to bail and get an education.

So you went back to school at that point, and then went into teaching.

Everybody suggested teaching. I thought coaching. Then they made me do a research paper on coaching. That broke me of thinking about that.

Have you ever coached?

I coached Little League when my son was young (3.21).

But you never coached in a school setting.

No, I never did coach in a school.

At Charlestown, was that the only school where you taught music?

Yes. I'm the minister of music at my church. I've been interested in music like from—I've been singing since I was in junior high (3.12).

You wanted to become a Spanish teacher, not a music teacher?

Well, that's my area. The only reason I was teaching music was out of desperation at Charlestown. I'm not certified in music. I'm certified in English. And we taught music under the heading of humanities. I taught humanities, and in humanities, I taught music. They got to the point where they couldn't keep a part time music teacher (mainly because of location, I think, more than anything). It's kind of out of the way (4.1, 4.2), and most teachers who want to teach need full time. And I was teaching part time, teaching Spanish. And I taught in Allen three years, split between Charlestown and Allen. And so they talked me into staying at Charlestown [since it's] closer to where I live full time (4.2). And [so I] taught music and Spanish. I'm certified to teach Spanish in this state, but in another state...they're really unreasonable [both laugh] .

Have you ever taught in a community where you were a resident?

Well, technically no. I did my student teaching in the town...I was living in Davis, which is just a suburb of Barry. And I did my student teaching there.

When you became a teacher, who did you look to for your models?

That's a deep question. As far as discipline and that sort of thing, I looked toward my choir teacher in high school. As far as my approach to my presentation, I've tried to follow one of my Spanish professors. He was really influential (1.22-Spanish).

You say you performed. Did you have an instrument, or was it all choral/vocal?

It was choral. We just had small ensembles. I sang and played guitar.

Do you play guitar?

Yes.

Do you do that for your ministry?

Yes. Out of necessity, I've picked up a few other instruments.

Like what?

Since I've been doing the music at church, I've picked up the mandolin and I spent some time working on the keyboard.

So did you have lessons on them, or did you just pick it up on your own?

I've never had a lesson at anything.

So how did you pick up guitar? Did you get a Mel Bay book or something?

When I was in choir in high school we went to Mexico for three weeks. I bought the worst guitar you've ever seen for fifteen dollars down there my senior year. And when I came back, I locked myself in the bedroom with a pile of records and a book of Simon and Garfunkel with the chords above the song. I picked [guitar] up because I wanted to have something to sing with (1.11, 4.4). Pianos are heavy. Portability is an issue.

When you lost your job last spring, did you get worried?

I never really had a chance to get worried. I had applied several places in [state] back in April. And I never heard from any of them until the first day I was out of school. I got a call from two different places and interviewed at both. One was in Allen, and the other was in Barry.

What made you choose Allen?

I had to take the oral proficiency exam here in [state]. I've taken it several times. And I did a lot of preparation this time. But I didn't get the results until the eighteenth of July. Allen couldn't wait that long, and everyone else couldn't hire me until I got the results.

Did you do any middle school music?

No, they didn't have any space in their schedule. I took several of them to auditions for all state and all region chorus (2.14). I worked with them with the music after school. And I've got 'em together to sing for some of the special occasions (2.12). But it was never very organized (2.18).

It was never formalized. You just did what you could do. For the middle school, it was just whenever. Outside the school day and just kind of casual. How about for elementary music?

I had two grades at a time. And I saw them...first through fourth I saw twice a week.

For how long?

About forty-five, fifty minutes. And fifth and sixth grade, I saw once a week.

And why did you only see them once a week?

Scheduling. Well, it rotated with—I can't remember right now. Sorry, summer brain.

The Spanish and music rotated out with the library and computers. If you really wanted to put a label on it, I was just taking care of them so that the teachers could have an hour off (2.18).

Was that their plan time, or did they consider that their break time?

Their plan time. The fifth and sixth graders had more time for P.E. They went to P.E. every day. So they only got Spanish and music once a week. The main reason they did that, the fifth graders test (2.15). I don't know why it worked out the way it did.

When you say that you taught music and Spanish, did you teach 25 minutes of music and 25 minutes of Spanish?

No, we just learned a lot of songs in Spanish.

Oh, really?

We learned Spanish and other languages. We learned different languages, and spent more time learning things in other languages. More than most elementary teachers do. I was just trying to give them an exposure and an idea of what was around in other languages.

The reason they even considered even asking me to teach music in the first place and take that first place was, I was probably teaching as much music in my Spanish class as the music teacher taught in her class. They had some really flaky people in there (2.24).

You know, I was over at Allen when I was split between the schools. They picked me for teacher of the year. It was my first year and I lorded over everybody. Then I got over it (2.21, 3.23).

Congratulations.

And I went to gathering in Evansville for the ceremony where they picked the state teacher of the year. And you could walk through there. And you could pick out the art teachers, you could pick out the Spanish teachers and you could pick out the music teachers. The rest of them sort of ran together. But, Spanish teachers, we don't have a good reputation in (state). Everywhere I've been where they had Spanish teachers, people could tell me fifteen stories about Spanish teachers who were freaks. Music teachers at Charlestown before I took it were kind of strange people (1.21).

What kinds of stories did you hear about them?

Well, at one point in time in one of the classes at Charleston, the kids were hanging out of the window smoking.

I bet the community wasn't happy about that.

Nobody was real thrilled about it except for the kids (2.24, 3.13, 3.14, 3.17).

My question is, Charlestown sounds so rural. Is it in a community at all?

Yeah, it's in the community.

Is it a community school?

No, it's a consolidated school with 250 students. But it's in a little town called Farber. It also includes Gator Crossing and Happiness and Irving community schools.

It's like right on the edge of the town.

But there were still town folk who could see what was going on?

Yeah, they could have. But it's not a lot of houses adjacent to where (the school is) at. But it was pretty chaotic before I took it (3.14). It's been pretty chaotic since I took it, too, but most of the chaos has been instruction.

So what sort of activities did you sponsor beside music and Spanish? Did you sponsor anything else?

Yeah. Every full time teacher is a class sponsor.

Which class did you sponsor?

It rotated every year. Junior class is so massive (*oh, yeah*). Junior class we had fund-raisers. And the biggest fund-raiser was the concession stand for the basketball games. We don't have football there.

Oh, there's no football team at all?

No. And so we had the concession stand at all the home basketball games, so we had to do all the candy and cokes and everything. And we did the fundraising and the planning and the decorating for prom (2.13). We had junior one year, then you had senior. You move up with the class. And you had to deal with all of their senior-itis.

Was senior class sponsor rough, too? Doing all the senior activities?

Of course the juniors put on the prom to honor the seniors. And the seniors, you mainly had to handle the technicalities. Like getting the panel ready to put out in the foyer with the pictures on it, and graduation. That was basically all. It's not nearly as difficult a load as trying to take care of the prom is for the juniors. A couple of teachers took care of the junior thing and overdid it. The prom was just unreal. It looked real nice, but then everybody expects that.

Were the rest of the teachers grumbling a lot about that?

Yeah, they grumbled, but then they went in and did the same stuff. They don't want to be outdone. It never bothered me much [both laugh] (2.13).

You thought it was ok to be outdone. Do you have any other jobs? Do you still work in the oil fields?

I do sometimes. I did last summer and this summer. I have my dad who's pretty much shut down his business. But he has a couple of farm clients. So I spent five weeks last summer, and I'll spend about four weeks in this summer up in [state] doing some work up there. I don't—it's not a regular job. I just do it when I'm feeling really ambitious. Then I'm on staff at the church.

How close to full time is that?

Well, there's never been a part-time church position. They require as far as in the job description for me to be there on Sunday morning, Sunday night and Wednesday night. I don't have any office hours. But you know. It's supposedly half time. It's considered half time. But it's another full time job for me (3.12).

Well, what do you think is the best part of your job?

I guess using the terms that my wife refers to when she talks about my job...I never have to get a real job (3.21). I can go and for what to me in a lot of ways is playing and just goofing around. Teaching kids how to make it in life. I guess when it comes really down to it, the best part is seeing kids come back and thank me for things that I did that helped them (4.2).

What's your least favorite part of teaching?

I guess kind of the general attitude of the people that make the laws towards education. When you think of politicians and the people that make all of the rules, we're kind of like second-class citizens in many ways (4.2).

What would your advice be to people who are rural music teachers as far as running a successful program? Both from your own experience, and from what you've heard about things that go wrong in rural music programs. What constitutes a successful program?

Probably strong discipline and classroom management. Classroom management would be a better term. And be strong and fair. And get the kids out in the community as much as possible. Doing what you're teaching them, showing what's going on. And be visible (3.13). Let people see what you're doing, and that you're doing the best to do the right thing. People will be behind you if they see that you're trying to do what's right (3.23).

Sounds like good advice, all of it. What do you think would make the program better at Charlestown?

Probably if they'd hire a music teacher [both laugh] (3.14).

A real live, honest to goodness certificated music teacher. How long has it been since they've had someone who is certified?

The last one was. It took her two years to get through her initial--what is it called?

Oh, the internship.

Yeah, she didn't pass the first year, so she was on the second year too. It was the one that had the kids hanging from the rafters. I'm still fixing stuff from her time here. The kids were bad (2.23, 2.24).

Is music teaching what you thought it would be?

Oh, pretty much. If I had my choice in the beginning... I was thirty years old when I went back to school. I probably would have been a choir teacher as my main area if it hadn't required so many extra hours. It required about 1000 extra hours for recital and everything. And I had four kids (3.21, 4.5).

I don't know how you made it through the program the way you did with four kids.

Though I'm sure that you have a very loving wife.

We were both going through school at the same time, so we kind of helped each other out (3.21).

So if you were going to follow a career path, would you follow the same career path toward teaching?

Sure. I've been called to teach (4.5).

Do you anticipate teaching until retirement now?

Sure.

Will it always be based out of Barry? Are you willing to move?

Most likely not. I probably won't move. I'm probably not willing to move. I've learned never to say never.

Do you have lots of family and friends in the Barry area?

Yeah. I've been here since '72.

That makes it difficult when you're entrenched in the community. Does your wife have family around there?

Yes (3.21).

Melissa Jenkins

You go to your brother Ron for some of your questions about music. (Right). Do you have someone in the immediate area that you can talk with about music?

The band director at Cassaday was real good about helping me. We'd help each other out every once in awhile. I'm hoping to use that more this year coming up. Yeah, I talk to teachers like Mr. Michaels [from Osberg] mmmmmnnnn. He's a good one to consult with. I've talked with nearly all of the teachers.

It sounds like you're talking about mostly instrumentalists. How about vocal people?

You mean the people who are teaching vocal? I don't know. There are not a lot of top things around here. There's a lady who's in her first year out. There's a lot of bad teaching. We all go to the vocal stuff at convention. The vocal programs are not in the best shape. We talk things over, but as far as learning things (1.21). You have to go to the clinics and things (1.12).

Do they still have programs through the local professional development centers?

Like maybe once or twice a year. They have a teacher thing, you know. All teachers from the surrounding area go to it. You do that about once or twice a year to get together. And they have a big speaker.

How about conferences? When you worked in the small schools, did the conference people get together?

Yeah. I forget about that. Yeah, you get together. We get together and have donuts and coffee. We have some good sessions then.

What types of things do you talk about in those sessions?

Probably a lot of it is stuff like how's your job going? Problems are always the things that get brought up. We probably do that more than the positive things. But then we also talk about well in this area, we're doing great. A lot of the times, the problems that we have, we want answers for. We talk about those more than anything. We give each other ideas. And say, "Well, I'd better try that." Conferences are great things (1.21, 1.12).

You talked about the workshops. Like MENC/NAME. Do they usually have what you need?

I admit I haven't been there for three years. I sure plan on going this year. On elementary, they do pretty well. Sometimes they don't show me much. I'm not a Kodaly person. I'm aware of what the thing is. But I want to see the sparkly ideas. I haven't done elementary for a while. Maybe I'll go back and think that it's really great. But for high school, they have what you need.

Does the state association of MENC/NAME have a tendency to lean towards Kodaly?

No, no. It's been so long since I've concentrated on elementary. But back in the 80's and early 90's quite a bit. They more or less incorporate it with other ideas (1.25).

Do you give letter grades for music classes? Or is it pass/no pass?

I give letter grades. It's kind of a hassle and kind of a farce. We had to do that, and I had them do a try-out. Then they had a musicianship grade. The rest of it was on some conduct (2.15).

Is there a statewide test for music?

No, not that I know of.

Did you do any testing that was mandated by your school district for music? (No)

There was nothing formalized? (No). Was there any curriculum that you were supposed to follow?

No, they're going to have to sometime.

What about other schools that you were in?

Same deal there.

No curriculum, just do what you can.

There's nothing as far as state requirements any more. We were given some things that gave us an idea of what should be done. But they don't force us. They don't come around and do any checking. There's nothing to measure besides...like I said, I haven't taught elementary for a while. It may be a little bit more that way. It's coming out that statewide they have a curriculum. No one really pushes it much (2.15).

Describe the kind of program that you like to do. What sort of teaching do you particularly like?

I like hands on things in elementary. Playing instruments, not necessarily all the marimbas and things. I have autoharps, and I have bars that I like to use with the kids. In high school and in junior high, I read quite a bit, a lot of lecture. I don't have time to lecture, but I read a lot, and I feel like I have a lot of the answers if the kids ask me. And I tried, like at Partridge, to bring in another director. And have them listen to what the students are doing. That always helps. In elementary, I like to teach them music history. Of course, we do a lot of singing. Got to keep some history alive. There are certain songs you should teach.

What sorts of songs do you like to keep going?

Like Stephen Foster. Even for contest songs for high school. He's got some good stuff. If you don't keep some of this stuff going and give them the history, well it doesn't mean a thing. Keep some of the old songs alive. But you've got to be on the current, up on what's going on. But you can see that statewide. I have a list of songs that should be kept to teach your kids. That's a good idea. Then nothing will be forgotten.

Do you have any source that you talk with about teaching process, objectives, long range planning?

Last school I was at, I kinda came in the middle of things. I didn't do long term planning. Anymore, I don't do long term planning [Laughs].

Just go week by week and day to day.

I'm not a good lesson planner. I'm sure that when I do elementary, I'll have to do more of that. They kind of let you go in high school. I've done them, in the last couple of schools. Really, in elementary, you can plan more. More than the high school, I've always thought. I have a good idea of what I'm doing. I just kind of write it on the board for the kids and everybody for the day. So I can be ready to go for the week. But as far as lesson plans...yes, you should plan. More than I think I do. Or else you wouldn't survive.

Was the administration supportive over at Armour?

Pretty much. I shouldn't say anything about them. They've had their problems.

But they were pretty glad that you were there.

I think so.

If they pulled you in during the sixth week of school...

The principal said that they didn't know what they'd have done without me. That was nice. But the kids were something else. But a lot of good kids too. There were just a few kids who were trying to get out of there over the years. Somebody had to have the guts to go in there and clean things up. So I was asked to do that, and then all of the sudden, I wasn't supposed to do that. It was kind of an unusual situation. But overall, I had good backing (2.22).

How were the kids naughty? Did they feel like they were too cool to be in band?

They had been that way before. They decided to come in and make life miserable for the teacher. I got some of them out of there. But there were still some that I felt like I was just babysitting with. Really, really bad characters. Lots of good kids, too. And they got upset with the situation. When you're getting to my age, it's time to—they'll get somebody young in there. Someone who's planning on staying (2.23).

So you knew when you walked in that it was only going to be a one-year thing.

No, I didn't. I told them that I'd come over to help out for a while. Which is what I planned on doing. But then I stayed. I decided that one-year was enough (4.1). The attitudes, I guess. The attitudes of some of these kids, even in a little school like that (2.23).

As far as other schools that you have taught in [since you've taught in six districts (4.1)], have you found that in other schools, too? With the student attitudes? Or was this a special case?

It was kind of a special thing. It was kind of a different deal. Some of the other places, like Brady. The first time I taught there. Never the mean stuff, I guess. I can't say it any

other way. They were here for no other reason than to make life miserable (2.23). It was an easy course. And it was the way things had been.

You've had a whole bunch of different administrators you've worked under. What's been your relationship with them?

Most of the time, I was fine. There was one guy, one time, who just didn't like the way I would teach. He thought I was too strict.

Were you at Cassaday when Mr. Irwin was there?

He was the principal there.

Didn't he go over to Nichols or someplace?

I guess. I don't know. I don't remember where he went.

He ascended to principal while I was there. He left not too long after I left.

[chat]

Mr. Joseph is actually over in Brady.

He's not at Cassaday anymore?

No, they finally decided not to share superintendents anymore. They got Yardley in there with them.

So he's over at Brady. So he's YOUR superintendent (2.22, 4.1). Changing the subject a little bit, were there any teachers at Armour with whom you socialized?

You mean out of school? I lived too far away.

Were you able to do things like the Christmas party, end of the year party?

We did a couple of things. We had a couple of things after school and I always attended those.

Or even after the game? I know that sometimes teachers go...

No, we never really had anything like that.

Not even going over to a teacher's house or anything?

I shouldn't say that. They did something after the last basketball game. But it was so late that I didn't make it there for a night out. As far as around the school, they were a good bunch of teachers. They would really help you out.

Did you become close to any particular teachers? Where you would go to their rooms after school or gravitate towards them after a staff meeting?

To be honest with you, I've never really been a socializer. I don't talk a lot in the halls. There was probably one little gal there, about my age. She taught special ed, a really good person, and we'd have a pretty good laugh every once in awhile. It's such a small area [that] we'd meet each other in the hall and talk.

Did you have a group that you had lunch with?

I didn't eat lunch most of the time. That was my busiest time.

Teaching lessons during lunch. I understand that.

But we'd go in during the afternoon or we'd meet in the morning for a little bit and have some coffee. Most of the teachers were there during that time. We got to talk about a few things then, but we only had about twenty minutes or so. In the afternoon, I had some time off, but no one else was around. They were busy then. But to really get to be a buddy and put all of your confidence in someone. I've never really been that way.

At any of the schools?

I just learned really fast not to do that. The less you know, the better off you are. That's a cold attitude, I suppose.

No, it's a legitimate attitude.

I learned it a long time ago. You learn not to tell people anything you don't want spread. You don't pour your heart out to them anymore. You're supposed to be able to, but it doesn't work (2.21).

Are you anticipating having to find out who can help you learn more about Brady, or do you feel like you know about it?

Actually, I've taught down there twice before. I think I will feel comfortable (3.23). I feel like they always thought I was such a great teacher in Brady. I hate to go back down there and blow it. They have a high opinion of me. I hate to mess up in a year. I hadn't thought of that when I told them that I'd do it [laugh] (3.14).

The community is familiar with you, right? You're not an unknown. Did they call you about this position?

No, I saw it in the paper. I called to see if it was still open.

Did you go through the whole formal interview process?

Actually, no. It's the first time I really haven't had to go through a whole lot of things. They wanted my credentials.

Do you know the school board members down there? Or the administration?

No, I don't know who they are right now (2.22, 3.23). But I need this job for this year. If it goes on beyond the year, that's fine, too (4.1).

What's the expectation in rural communities for the music program? What types of things do they expect you to do?

Program wise?

Like in Cassaday, you were expected to do the county fair. Are there any of those types of experiences that you've had through the years?

Programs have always been a big deal. They would fire you if you didn't have a good program. especially the elementary programs. That was a big deal. That's the way it was, anyway, when I was there. You had to put everything you had into the thing. They wanted an extravaganza. Most elementary positions don't expect quite as much (2.12). Nothing on such a large scale. As far as high school...In Armour, the pep band was a big deal. You better have a good pep band (2.11). As far as some of the smaller schools, mostly they were just glad to have a program. Most of them I've gone into have been so bad, there was only one way to go, and that was up (3.14). Most people are pretty good. They expect things to get better. I've gone into two schools where things were pretty good. That's more work than when you go into bad programs. They're already good. Most of them have room to improve. The Armour program had a good band, but they went kaput in the last four or five years (2.24). They were very nice. They were better than what they'd been, so people appreciated it (3.14). At Partridge I taught there for three years before, they were about as far down as they could get. They ended up doing great. They were a rough group there (2.23).

I taught quite a few private vocal students from Partridge. They didn't have a good choral program while I was there.

The choral program isn't anything anymore (3.14).

These students wanted to take solos to district music contest, and I'd had pretty good luck with my kids. So they contacted me.

They haven't had anything there for a teacher for a really long time. I don't know who the teacher was before me, but the kids told me that she would go lock herself in the office and cry. You don't need to record that one. But it was a rough situation when I went into it. I'm just at the age right now where stirring things up doesn't appeal to me at all. You need someone younger to do that (2.24).

Do you try to be involved in the community? Even though you lived away from the community in Armour, did you try to do that at Armour?

Not really. It was a long commute, so I went over there, taught, and went back home. I got them through a year (3.16). I won't go into details. We made it through a year, but things didn't get better. Now someone can come in there and redo some things.

Did they ask the other person to leave?

I was never real sure on that. Poor guy came in there for about five weeks and couldn't get anything done (2.24).

Oh my goodness. So you actually came in about the sixth week of school this year. And had you not planned on teaching at all this year?

Not really. No. No, I was doing some subbing, and I was ready for a change. It was a long drive.

How long have you taught?

Probably 18 years, not counting subbing.

How many districts have you been in?

Quite a few. I go around, then I get tired of teaching. Then someone comes around. I kinda go in when things aren't so good.

They call you and say, "We need a teacher?" (Yes) How many school districts have you taught in?

Probably...one, two, three, four...probably six of them.

Is it always K-12?

Not always K-12. I've done just K-6 for a while (4.1).

Why did you become a music teacher?

It's just what I always wanted to do. Ever since Junior High, a band man came in, and I had a cousin who was a musician. I liked music before I saw him come in and sit down and I thought, "Boy, this is for me. I've gotta get into this business." My whole family sang together, and that's where the real beginning of it came. That's what I wanted to do since Junior High.

And you knew that you wanted to teach rather than perform?

Actually, yes at the time. It's what I really wanted. When I first started out, I wanted to teach. I had such a good time at it that I wanted to do it forever.

So you talk about your early models being your cousin and a band director. Did you have any other early models?

They were probably the big ones. I know that when I was really young like that, they kept things going. Other models were at College PP. Back when I was in there, there were good people.

Professor D.

And then there was Professor E. Another trumpet teacher.

I remember him, too.

He was one of the best ones. He inspired me (1.22).

Was trumpet your major?

No, I was a vocal major. But band was always my favorite thing to teach.

Were you in band in high school? (Yes)

And you'll teach K-6 vocal. (Yes). Are they going to have you do extra duties? (No)

Good! No high school proms or anything like that? [Nope] (2.13).

I'm really surprised, quite frankly that Brady has remained an independent school district.

Like I said, this may only be a year-long job, too (3.14).

Are they talking consolidation?

They just don't know what to do or when. They've been talking for quite awhile. But when it comes down to it, they're kind of in an odd place. Where to go is a problem.

I know that Cassaday and Partridge talked about it for a while and now it's Cassaday Consolidated. Cassaday and Princeton talked about it for a while, too. But now it's Cassaday Consolidated. But with Brady kind of off to the side, it's hard to decide who to go with.

They were talking about building a school half way in between Cassaday and Princeton, and then having a K-6 or K-8 facility in both communities with a consolidated high school.

They have that with Yardley. Yardley only goes through Junior High (8th grade). We'll see what happens. It's interesting to see how things—it's the budgets (2.17).

What's the best part of teaching for you?

When you finally see accomplishment. I like to go into schools where things have been down and see what you can do with them. When you finally get on top, why that's your

best in your class. Competition. If you don't do so well, you're in trouble, too. Lot of times...your kids have to feel that way, too. When they feel like they've really accomplished something—their own personal feelings.

What do you like least about teaching?

The pressure, I guess. It's a touchy area, having to watch everything you do and say. How would you describe that? I want to have a life of my own. That's why I like to teach away from my hometown [laugh]. I don't want to have someone calling me all the time. I come out at the end of the day and say, "Well, I made it through another one without getting into trouble [laugh]." I guess it's like that anywhere. In a small community, everyone knows everything about everybody (3.17).

Yep, the fishbowl thing.

I didn't like that. That always bugged me (4.3).

So have you ever had any sorts of job related conflicts? Like students or parents or community members not liking what you were doing?

The majority like what I am doing. Oh, yeah. Over in Armour, where I taught last year, some of those kids had to go out of band (2.23). There had been a band director there for 11 years before, and then there was the guy who was there for five weeks. Then I came.

Who was there for eleven years?

Mr. Carlton.

And where did he go?

He went over somewhere closer to Nichols. He lives in Nichols. So he does a half time position one place, and halftime another place (2.24).

How far was Armour from you?

Forty-eight miles. That's if you take gravel for seven miles. So if you have late nights down there three or four nights a week, you leave about ten at night, then you have to drive back and forth that far. It was fifty miles on a good road. But it was faster on the gravel.

It sounds like you've kind of been in the good, the bad and the ugly when it comes to school districts (laughs).

You shouldn't put it that way.

I mean, you've gone into some districts where it's poor and built the program up.

That's what I've tried to do.

What makes a good rural music program?

Athletics are very important, so you gotta kinda function around that kind of thing. If you're in a high school or junior high, you need a good pep band (2.11). Give the kids the support if they go to tournaments and that type of thing to have the band kids there. There might not be that kind of thing left because all of the budgets around here. It's terrible here in (state) (2.17). Statewide there isn't any help. With the small schools, it's about what it amounts to. So get a pep band and getting to know your parents. You got to keep in touch with your parents to keep the programs going and so on. And like that kind of thing. Parent involvement (2.25). If you're putting on programs and so on, most of the schools are good about that. You get the moms to come in and help with the outfits and so on. In a little school like that, it's a little bit easier, I would think than in a larger school. Then there's the parent cooperation. Most times, they're pretty good about things. I don't really have any problems with them (3.17). Trouble is, those parents stick out in

your mind, and you can't forget about the good people. Most are good people. Anything else. The values. The smaller schools [I think] still don't care if you call it a Christmas program (2.12). Some of that stuff.

Yeah, they want the religious stuff, I've noticed.

And they have it. I figure as long as you're doing it for history's sake. That's the main thing. I can't think of anything else. If you're in a small community, you have to take your kids around to the different groups, your Kiwanis and other things (3.13). People expect that. You know you're going to be doing that if you take a job in a small school (3.14).

What do you think of that three plus two schedule?

I think it's rough. But in a rural school, that's about the way it has to be.

I liked it. (For the vocal, yeah). In Cassaday, I liked it a lot. Just because I had more students than could have been in it if it were five days a week. Otherwise, they would have to choose. And some of my best students were band students. They were in both (2.18).

Exactly. That was the only way to go. That's still the best way for Armour to go, too.

Do they have a jazz band then?

No, they haven't had a swing choir or a jazz band for about five years. If I were there for another year, I certainly would have said let's get something started. There are several small schools around like that. But there's no interest in some of it. You put athletics ahead of other things. [Tape break] Early morning things are always hard for teachers to get them in for.

We had problems, and I'm sure that you encountered this too, where bussing was a problem for students who couldn't drive.

Yup, then they couldn't get into town until about ten minutes to eight, when rehearsal started at 7:30 or quarter after. Kids couldn't do that—no. You'd have to get yourself a ride or whatever. That's the way it is in most places, where you have to go before or after school (4.2).

Is music teaching what you thought it would be?

No. To be honest, the first year I went out when I'd had such a wonderful thing in college (or at least I thought it was great while I was there). Brady was the first school I went to. It woke me up right away. It was the only school around. I'd just gotten married, and it was the only thing open. That was a rude awakening.

What surprised you about it?

Oh, I couldn't relate to the students. The kids just sat there, and they didn't go gaga. I thought there were so many things I wanted to teach them, and they didn't want to learn. I just didn't understand it [laughs].

I remember fantasy vs. reality.

I remember I told one mother, "I can't figure it out. In college I did all of these things, and the kids responded well (2.23, 2.25)." One of the teachers (and I still remember her) who said, "Welcome to the real world (2.21)." I thought I was pretty level headed, I thought I was just...

So when you started teaching at Brady, did you have any sort of person that you could cry on your shoulder? Did you go back to your college people or anything?

I just toughed it out.

Did you suffer in silence?

No, I would talk to some of my old college professors during the first year or two (1.22).

Not on a regular basis. Just figure it out yourself. And I'd go ask my brother who had been teaching for a while (3.21). So, usually you'd go to other teachers who were around. And you find out that you're not doing a college level job. Not when you know that all of these other people are having problems. That's your big hope when you go into a school and talk to other teachers (2.21, 1.21). When you find out that someone else has a worse job than yours. You talk things over and you come out and you usually feel a lot better. You know that you're not the only person who's having those types of problems. There's not something wrong with you (laughs)?

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

I guess a teacher who is a musician.

So you feel more teacher than musician.

No, let's reverse that, shall we? I feel more like a musician.

Do you have a chance to do music making on your own time?

I actually have. Here in Osberg, there's a group who does just vocal. We do show tunes and things like that. And we go and sing around the area. I also play my horn in church every once in awhile. We have a community band around here. I just don't have the time. There's opportunities (1.11, 3.15, 4.4). You should ask my brother. He's a good one to get involved.

Is he still at Iandale?

He was there and then retired. They're pulling him out of retirement to do a couple more years. He quit and wasn't going to come back. Then they called him from around the

Ronella area. One more year. Then that's it. When you don't have your insurance plan coming in, and your wife doesn't have a good one from where she is working. Until you can get to social security, if you get any...

If you were to choose a career again, would you follow the same career path?

Yeah, I probably would. Though I'm a negative person, there have been a lot of good things. I would have liked to have gone to a larger school district, just to try it. I know that Osberg's in the area, but I never wanted to try for it. After you teach a few years, you get the idea that you really don't want to teach in the same town where you live (4.2).

So you've always lived in Osberg and commuted out.

I've done the six districts, and didn't want to overdo it (4.1). Yes, I joke about it, and I hate to say that, but it's usually the deal. I just didn't want to teach anymore. I would just give it a break for a while (4.5). If I'd been the breadwinner of the family...I was a nurse, too, an LPN. So I'd do that until for years when I wasn't teaching.

I was going to ask you what you did when you didn't teach. Did you work as an LPN in Osberg?

I'd work in peoples' homes before I taught. I did it for four years before I thought it was too much for me.

That's impressive that you're actually in two different professions.

Life's too short with messing around with just one thing to do. I don't know. There's always a new adventure out there.

Mathilda Lewis

Where do you go for information about content? If you have questions about new literature?

Oh, dear. When we have clinics, the music teachers of our conference get together to choose new music for the kids for the instrumental or the vocal clinics. And some of them go to conferences, or I'll have been somewhere and heard new music (1.12). Our biggest problem is, and the reason I don't go to conferences, we don't have any money. The only new music that I really get is the music that I get for clinics. So, we try very hard to pick music that would be suitable for contest. So we can use that same stuff.

Do you all go to the same district (music contest)?

Yes.

Does it sound funny when all of you do the same pieces?

Generally we don't. Occasionally we do (2.14). The thing is that we are in two different conferences. (*You're in two?*) Yes, because we have to have more ball games. But at any rate, in the one conference, we can half of the conference goes to their own instrumental clinic. We go to the [regional] conference and we invite [regional schools], because they're too far from the rest of their conference (and I think they're going to come into our conference, anyway) (4.2). But that way, we end up having two vocal clinics. One for each conference. But we only have one band clinic. And our [regional] conference, some of them are the other end of the district. These districts are different than in the east part of the state. Things are so far away (4.2). So they are actually in a different district. They go somewhere else. We go to University TT.

How far is that?

Oh, it's only about three hours away. When I was in Quincy, we were actually assigned to go to Roger's Crossing.

How far is that from Quincy?

About four and a half, five (hours). We always opted out to go to Kimberly.

How far is that?

About 120 miles away. (*Only a couple of hours away*). Out here, that's not far. Our next town is twenty-five miles away. Our people run to Grunwald. Sixty-some miles. It's no big deal (4.2). I run to Haackland or to Patrick. I have ordered one new piece of pep band music. The parents pay for most stuff. They follow kids to sub-districts and state in athletics. The parents had the pep band play last year (2.11, 2.25). They've never done that before. If you're loud and enthusiastic, they think you are good. But I do know that the parents are planning on having a fund-raiser to get us some more music (2.17). But it's basically for the band. They did buy us a new cymbal and new cymbal stand. The old cymbal had a hole in it. And I put a requisition in for it, and after I kept asking about it. I kept being pushed aside. But it wasn't even in the budget. No money for a bass drum stick. I found an old one and repadded it myself. Whoop di-do. But the parents now have decided that they passing the hat at every concert after some of them noticed the hole in the cymbal. And they passed the hat and got \$570 that night (*Hooray! That's astounding*). But by the time you buy a cymbal and a stand and some drumsticks, you've pretty well got that spent. I have spent a lot of my own money on stuff, because you need several director's scores for the contest (2.17, 2.25, 4.2). Well our superintendent doesn't understand that (2.22).

And the contest people won't let you make Xerox copies.

So I bought it out of my own pocket. And that's why the parents are willing to help (2.25). They're going to pay me back, then buy some stuff. I told them the vocal stuff I can keep. I can use it different times or I can use it somewhere else (4.1).

And with only a few kids in choir.

Now, next year with the middle school kids joining the high school, that might be more of a problem (2.18). But I have three soloists that are really coming up good. One has been in the contest for (a major summer festival). Another one—two of them have been asked to sing the Star Spangled Banner at different rodeos. Because I had such a small group, I was really able to work with them and the superintendent has decided that I'm going to have a musical next year. And no money is budgeted for it [laughs]. He wants me to see if the parents will pay for it (2.22, 2.25). I talked to some of the parents, and what we want to do is have someone other than the booster club can pay the initial outlay. But we're going to sell ads. We'll raise money that way (2.17, 2.25). Right now, I'm toying with "Good Man, Charlie Brown". I did that when I was at Princeton, and I had just a few good singers. I think that would work. I'll probably use junior high or middle school kids. Whether he wants them in there or not. And I do have a men's group that sings at my concerts. I did that to entuse the boys for singing harmony. The men's group consists of administrators, board members, teachers and people like that (2.22, 2.23, 2.25, 3.23). I'd like to get a women's group, but I can't get them enthused. Now, the town is talking about having a Christmas cantata if I will do it (3.15). Here's what I think. I think that I'm not probably that good. But I think that I'm the first certified music teacher [this community has had]. So I'm pushing reading, I'm pushing playing with some expression,

things they've never had before. And that makes people think that I must be...if you want to follow somebody, always follow somebody who hasn't done a very good job (2.24).

You look like a miracle worker.

That's the way it is. And I just don't know. I just may do it for good PR for the whole music program. I don't really want to (3.13).

And the parents might get to know you, too.

We used to do musical theatre in Grunwald. I played piano for the (regional) Symphony (3.15). And maybe I'll enjoy it more than I think I will.

Have you attended workshops or conventions for music education?

I did in Panapoly.

Did they have what you needed?

In Panapoly, they did (1.12). That same stuff really didn't apply a whole lot here. I can't—a lot of my stuff was done on assessment and stuff like that. When I have four-five students in a grade. (That's all you have?) Yes. Some of them have ten (2.23).

Just depends on how fertile they were that year (laughs).

I remember how the snowstorms affected things. I remember one year that we had thirty-two, where the rest of the classes hovered around twenty-five. We all laughed and said, "Whoa. What happened that year???" We had two sets of twins—that helped.

Even so, goodness.

This year, I'll probably have fifteen in first, second third. And fifteen in fourth fifth sixth. And I don't know how big the kindergarten will be. [This was] part of the thing with the first and second [grades] last year. People were taking their kids elsewhere or home schooling their children because they did not like the teacher. She's the one that's gone.

They do not like the kindergarten teacher either. There are two who will be home schooling their kindergarteners, then bringing them in for first grade on (2.21, 3.13). So it's always iffy that way. And it always affects our numbers when it comes to state aid and stuff like that. We have kids that come in from Greystone.

Is Greystone a rural school outside of Williamsburg?

Yeah, it's about thirty some miles north of here. We have some high school and junior high kids that come in. But we may have some grade school kids, too. We don't know how many that will come in. We know that there is a seventh grader coming in. We also know that there is a seventh grader coming in from a country school. Jonathan's Valley country school is a part of our district. I had two kids—one was in sixth, one was in eighth. They had never been to a public school. I had three kids that came in, one in seventh, one in ninth and one in twelfth who had never been at a public school. They had been home schooled because their ranches are so far away. And for some of them, it's not until Junior High that they can become involved in things. They socialize through 4-H and church. There's the home schooling situation. If I live fifty miles away [from the closest school district], I might think about it too (4.2).

Especially for the little ones.

Yes. I was just reading the new MENC/NAME magazine today, and I thought if I was just smart enough, I'd write an article and submit it. The articles say how to be choosy when picking your choir or make sure that your students have only top-notch instruments when they're playing so that you have a good band (1.25). I'm lucky if they just want to play. I just want to have instruments that play. I try to get them a decent reed... it's just

that American Choral Director's Association, Bandmaster's Association and MENC/NAME don't even have a clue.

You mean that they don't know what Williamsburg [state] is going through?

Well, a lot of us. The commissioner of education and the governor—of course, there's no money in the state is what they claim. So they want to consolidate as many schools as they can.

How about expectations about concerts and programs?

I'm not putting down church. I go to church. But if you make it like you have to be quiet, and you only sing church music. And we sing church music—the town expects that.

Christmas program, they expect all Christ stuff (3.12, 3.14).

They don't like Santa Claus stuff or Jingle Bells.

Oh, that's fine. But in Panapoly, one principal told me I had to have Hannukah, I had to have Kwanzaa, I had to have Santa Claus. But I wasn't to have any religious music. So I said, "Let's don't call it a Christmas program, then." But they said, "Yes, you have to."
[Laughs] (2.12, 2.22).

You're kind of stuck between a rock and a hard place, then.

I told them that if I can't have religion, I can't have Hanukkah. It was just one of those things. But the around here is different. And rural schools are different.

What's the best part of teaching?

Oh, I suppose the enjoyment of the kids. When they really love music, and they're having fun and I'm having fun, we're all enjoying it.

What do you like least about teaching?

I don't find it so much here, but over the years, I've felt like no matter how hard I worked or how much work I do, it depends on what somebody else does (4.3). And I can be the best teacher in the world. But if I have some kid who's just a knot head and won't do it, I can be fired over it (2.23). Just like a coach can be. I've seen music teachers get fired because they didn't get good ratings at contest. Maybe that they didn't have anyone who could sing or play an instrument. Maybe they did a hundred percent the best they could (2.14). Maybe even the kids did the best they could with the talent they have. I told you that I went to Roger's Crossing with Corinth. The first year I went down there—well, when I went to Corinth, there were two kids in band. One I taught his mother, she made him come in. The other one, his mother was on the school board, she made him come in (2.25). They'd had major problems the year before (2.24). I ended up with twelve, so we went to contest. We went in, we sat down, we were ready to play, and two judges stood up and walked out (1.23). And I thought, OK, they're having potty break or something. And I waited and waited. And that's bad for the kids. Once they've tuned and got psyched, it's like, they gotta play (2.23). So they sat there, and they asked, "What's going on?" And I told them, "Oh, I think they went on potty break or something." And the two judges had walked out. One of them hadn't walked out, but he agreed with the others. So I went up and asked. And they said that we were too small. They weren't going to judge us. Only if you had forty or fifty (*oh, no!*). They refused to judge us. The director was livid. He went and found a judge who would come and judge us (1.23).

As a miscellaneous ensemble, I suppose.

Well, the next year, the same guy was the director down there. And he called me and said, "I'm going to put you down as a small group." He wanted to know how many I

had, and by that time, I had eighteen or twenty. He said, "I'm going to put you in as a small group so we don't have this problem again." Because the kids were so psyched up the year before, they couldn't play worth a darn. And I said, "Fine." Well, we get in there and the judge says, "What are you doing in here?" And I told him. And the director happened to be standing right there and he said, "I knew that there would be a question. So I made sure that I was here when you got here." And he explained to the judge what had happened the year before. And the judge said, "That's ridiculous."

It is.

So he judged us as a small group. Because we were right on the edge (1.21, 1.23, 2.14).
So when does a small group become a band? What was your instrumentation like? Was it pretty close to a band, or was it high on flutes?

I had a keyboard of my own. And I conned a girl into playing the keyboard so that we could have some low brass. I had a couple of trombone players, I had a couple of trumpets. I had a saxophone player. I had three drummers [laughs]. I had one boy who played flute, clarinet or saxophone. I had him play flute because I had a clarinet player. It was a mixture. And the guy gave us a two. I think it was a pity grade. We got pretty high, and I think it was because he saw the situation for what it was (*E for effort*). And I told Professor C when he was up here for the instrumental clinic here's what we're going to perform (1.22). Because I'm not really an instrumentally trained person. All these years I was going to do elementary music. I'm not that up on it. I said, these are the songs that I'm going to do for contest from the clinic. And he said, "That's good." And, "Your band does such a good job." Cuz for our solo we did one of them, and he thought it was great. We got to contest, and the judges wrote on there, "I'm not going to look at this

music. This is the poorest chosen music. I don't know why you chose it." So here we have a doctor at one college who says, "Yup, these are great songs." And we have a judge from another college who says it's ridiculous. It hurts the kids. And that's why I really hate contest. I keep preaching to the kids, "Don't take it personally"(1.23, 2.14).

You probably have to psych yourself up about don't take it too personally.

Oh, yeah. And I have had pretty good luck with my administrators, but I have known teachers who have got fired over it. Because (the teachers) didn't get the good ratings (2.14, 2.22).

Do you have anyone locally with whom you can talk about teaching process?

Oh, that comes up a lot when we have our clinic meetings and directors get together. I've found that a lot in small schools. When we get together for clinic meetings or any sorts of in-service (1.12)...if you go to MENC/NAME convention, they don't understand our situations (1.25). When you go to conference meetings with other people with the same size of schools and the same sorts of problems, that's usually when I visit with them about what I need to do. When I was at Quincy, the gal who was at Turner was new then. I had never taught band before. She helped me select music and she loaned me some of hers. The whole conference is good about sharing music back and forth (1.12, 1.21).

That is good.

So if somebody is allowed to buy a new piece, they play it this year. They can loan it out next year. I've put all my music on computer so when I go to our Fall Conference meeting. That way, if someone is asking for something, I can look right away and see if I have it. On the vocal end, I put how many copies I have. If I have five copies, and another school has five copies, they know. But to say that I go to other places, I find that

if I talk to other small town music people, I get more help. At Burrack, by the last year that I was there, out of the forty-three kids in high school, I had thirty-five in the choir. And I was there for four years, and I started out with five. But the thing is, I never had four-part harmony. The kids came in from the country schools and they didn't know harmony. I just had a bunch of basses, and some altos and sopranos. So I revamped the music, which I wish they'd allow us to do for contest (2.14). But to go to a Davidson or a Chandler schoolteacher to ask what to do (1.21)? I talked to a music professor out at University TT, and he said that I should train some of them to sing tenor (1.22). That doesn't necessarily work. Because the same kids are in basketball, football, drama, speech, you know. You don't have the time (2.18, 2.23). And then they have to be out on the ranch. Right at contest time, these kids are out calving and branding. And you don't just have them for all of these practices. So I tape off all of the accompaniments and the parts and give them to the kids (2.19). So they can practice them as they are driving in the pick-up. They don't understand this in the bigger schools. So most of the ways I get information is from other small town music teachers, and especially those who are in the conference (1.21).

How about your teaching colleagues at Williamsburg? Do they support you?

Normally, I'd say yes. But there was one teacher...She wanted me to take fifth and sixth for an hour altogether, but I said, "I can't do that." But most of them want their free time. That's the battle (2.21). And I went into the superintendent's office last year—it was after I'd signed my contract. And I had had a big battle with some of the elementary teachers about their free time. And they wanted me to take the whole grade school because the PE teacher was going to be gone. And they needed their free time. And I went in and said

that you need to contact the Board of Education right now. I will tear up my contract, and I will not sue the school or anything. But if I'm only hired to help with their free time, you can go out, and there are a lot of women here who need a job. And they can go in and play with them (2.22).

Now they call it free time rather than planning time?

Oh, yeah. And they demanded their free time (2.21). I kept on saying, "No it didn't work." It's not even that—music is a class. I didn't even approach it as their planning time. It's my time to teach something important to these children. It was like they were allowing me to come in and teach, not like I was taking the kids off of their hands for their free time. That's my philosophy of it. If they feel that music is nothing but free time for the teachers, then they can go hire someone for minimum wage and they can work with the kids. And the kids will enjoy it, you can put on some CD's and the kids will sing with it. It works out that way if it's just free time for the teachers. To me, music is too important. There are some kids who will never be athletes. You need to get to them. Music will affect you for the rest of your life. Some of your other classes won't. I feel that it should not be classified as a time for the teachers to have their planning times. I know that that happens. I know it's their free time. But it shouldn't be labeled as that. It should be labeled as the time that I am allowed to work with those kids on something that is very valuable (4.3).

Let's talk a little bit about your relationship with administration. How's things at Williamsburg with you and the administration?

Pretty good. He let's me do just about—he's not a very good administrator in my book, as far as knowing what is going on.

Musically, or just in general?

In general. He's having some problems. He doesn't understand budgets or something, I guess. He—oh, this fund is a little short, so he takes it out of that fund. And he juggles things around. So when it comes time for an audit, nobody knows which fund has what in it. Like my junior class ended up at the end of their sophomore year with over \$1,000 but at the beginning of last year, they had less than \$400. We couldn't figure out where that money went (2.17).

Is he doing anything criminal, or is he just not a good budgeter?

I don't know. You know how gossip is (3.17). I do know that the Board had approved to buy two DSL's. When they came in, the gal keeping the books found out that there were extra. So the lady went to the one teacher, and she said, "Yup, mine's right here." And the other one said, "Yup, mine's right here." She said, "Who has the third one?" They said, "The superintendent has it." She went to the superintendent, and he told her that he had taken it home to program it. He also took a VCR home three years ago to program it, and he hasn't brought it back. He admits that he took it home to program it, he just keeps forgetting to bring it back.

He could get fired over that.

But I suppose that in Williamsburg, they're having troubles keeping Superintendents. He came up to me the last of school. He said, "I never did come in and evaluate you or anything." And I said, "No, you didn't." "Ah, well," he said. "I know that you're good. I'll write something up." And I've never seen the paper. At the last meeting, we had a picnic for someone who was leaving. And we had a meeting afterwards—an Association meeting (1.25). Something was brought up about the evaluations. And one of the other

new teachers said, "Well, he came in and out a couple of times for five seconds or five minutes. But he never sat down or wrote anything." And they asked, "Did you sign a paper?" And there are four of us new ones. And no one had ever signed a paper (2.21, 2.22). The English teacher said that he did go and sit for about a half an hour in her class one day. I told him that I was having problems with three boys—well, two in particular—in my choir. And I said that they got to get out. I do not want them in there. They were picking on the singers. They were just being knot heads (2.23). And he said, "Oh, you don't have the numbers. You're just going to have to keep them." To me, that's a poor excuse. I went in there and I complained. And I said, "You have to go in there and see what's going on. And he says, "When's choir?" And I told him it was eighth hour. He came in and sat in band for five minutes one day and he says, "Well, I think that you're doing a fine job"(2.22).

And you said that the band's not the problem. It's the choir.

So I just do whatever. He doesn't know. He knows that he can't get another teacher. And I probably wouldn't have to do anything. But I'm not that personality. Most of us teachers who are here aren't that personality. But he's one who believes that it's who you are as far as the students are concerned, who your parents are (2.25). If the parents are the type who will yell at him, he won't do anything to the student. If the parents are the type who say, "Well the school says you did that, so you did that," then he just lays into the kids.

So it doesn't sound like the best administration situation.

The one I had in Burrack was outstanding. The one I had in Scotsland, he and I went around. Because the way that he observed me was by looking in the window. He said that

he saw the kids were running around and jumping off of the stage. And he said, "That's not what you're hired for. You are hired to teach music." So I went and got my lesson plan book and said, "What does that say there?" And he said, "Well, it says something about square dancing or something." He didn't know the difference between square dancing and running around. So administrators don't understand music always. It's like the one I told you about in Panapoly. She didn't understand that you can't make little kids stand still on the risers for an hour. And so...but this one I have here. Partially because they can't get anybody out here, partially because I do work a lot with the kids and I have fun with them (2.22). The last lady who was here, she was church music. And boy, you don't do anything but sit. You get your music and you sit there. One sound out of an instrument before (she) told them they could play, and they were kicked out (*oh my*) (2.24). And to me, you put your instrument together and you warm up. And when I say, "Cut," that's when we start with our warm-ups. But I want them to start with warm-ups. So the kids like me because of that (2.23). Because they have more freedom. And when we have pep band, I tell them, "This is your time to entertain. And I have a trombone coming up and a couple of trumpeters. And they love to improvise, so I tell them in pep band to improvise away (2.11). And sometimes, I make a face. Then they come back, and I'll say, "Try it again." Just say some stupid comment (3.17). So they go home, and their parents like me, and they think that it's all rapport with the kids (2.23, 2.25).

Do you follow what the administration wants, or what the community wants?

I tend to lean more towards what the community wants. I try to do as much as I can to please the administration. But if you do what the administration wants, but not the community wants, the community can get you fired (3.14, 3.23). But the other way, the

administration is going to have a harder time. Because if they start talking about getting rid of you and not liking what you do, the community's going to go up in arms against them. Whether it's music or sports or English, or whatever. If you have the community's backing, you're better off. Because I think that a lot of music and sports and drama, they're the public relations for the school. Do what they want. Please them. Because if you have good public relations for the school, more good things will happen for you (3.13, 3.17, 3.23). But we were talking about small schools. I don't know if I put it down, but I teach Junior High Art, also.

That's kind of typical that they ask about what else you can teach.

They didn't ask. They had assigned me speech (2.22). And the first day of school, I found out that I was doing Junior High Art. The only reason I'm doing art—I'm not certified, though I have a Master's in Elementary—so I took that one obligatory art class that you have to take in college. That's the only official art I've had. I've done a lot of fabric arts and I've taken a couple of painting classes. But when I was at Quincy, it was just the high school basically. I taught all the music, I taught Spanish (and I wasn't certified and never had a class in Spanish but I'd been to Mexico and they couldn't find a Spanish teacher). I could speak some, so I taught that. Over at Quincy they had an Arbor Day program with all of the grade school kids and the eighth grade county graduation. The teachers might select the music, or they might ask me to and tell me what the theme was, and I would select the music and make a tape, and make copies of the music and send it to the different schools in the county. And the teachers would teach it that way, and they would come in for one rehearsal. And that morning, they would also rehearse for the graduation that was usually a few days later. That was the sum total of their country school music

(2.21, 3.15). They'd come in as freshmen, and they'd say, "I want to be in band," and they'd sign up and they'd walk in, and they wouldn't know one note from another. And yet we have people, like this MENC/NAME magazine thing, it says be selective (laughs) (1.25). Well, we can't do that. It's just a different life.

Have you found anyone in Williamsburg who's outside of the school who you can go to and say, "Hey what's the history? What's going on here?"

I talk to people over at Quincy, because I know them. You have to be really careful, because lots of these people are related. And you know the saying, "I can talk about them, but don't you talk about them?" And that's where you have to be really careful (3.17, 3.23).

Now, do you sponsor some of the activities? (Junior). Junior class? (Uh huh) So you get to do the prom?

I had another teacher who had done it before to help last year. But she's said that she won't do it this year (2.21).

She's passing it off to you.

See, we had a big problem. The kids had OK'd the date with the board, and we had the glasses ordered that were stamped with the date. Then two parents, who didn't come talk to the Board, didn't come talk to us, decided that, hey the date is conflicting with the date that the girls might get to go to state basketball (2.25). And they want to stay out all night. But it wasn't the night before state basketball, it was three weeks before state basketball.

So you have prom really early, don't you?

Well, we tried, but it didn't end up that way. They got a petition together all over town. Then they came and presented it to the board. That was the first we had heard about it. We heard rumblings as it was being passed around town (3.17). One of them even came and tried to get my pep band to sign it during sub district game *(for heavens sake)* (2.11). I told them, Nope. I don't even want to see it." Then the lady said, "I'll give it to my son." I said, "No. If I even see it, I'm going to rip it up, because this is not the time or place." And they didn't approach it right. The girls did get to go to state, but they stay out any weekend anyway. It's not about the night. So it was just a power play. One gal was the counselor here, and she had got replaced. The Board had to threaten to sue her to get the keys back. *(Oh, dear)*. So she's just bitter and she's just doing some power play things (2.21, 2.22, 3.14, 3.23).

Well, this one worked, it sounds like.

Well, we couldn't have it over at Corinth in the lodge like we planned. It worked out, we did fine, but...

Did you do it in the gym?

Yes. And we ate out at (famous regional restaurant).

Oh, that's a great place.

And in some respects, it was nice. But it was the way it was done *(sure)*. It was announced way before Christmas. Why didn't they come up and say, "We would just as soon..." or why didn't they come up and talk to us?

(chat about the prom) (2.13, 3.17)

So, for instance, how did you find out that the lady had been released as a counselor?

Was that told in the school?

Yes. The other gal who worked with me on prom knew it (2.21). She's been here for twenty some years. And my landlady said, "What's this about the petition? Someone called me and I told them that I didn't have time right now. But I wanted to ask you about it. What is this?" And that's how I found out about it. And the other gal found out about it about the same way (3.23). The kids were talking about it. And some of the juniors who had helped to plan it found out about it and got very angry. And they came in and talked to us about it (2.22). So we found out about it that way. And every time I saw the lady, I treated her like I didn't know anything. Because, if I had done anything else, when prom was over and everything...I had to speak to one of her daughters. She has a college- aged daughter who went to the prom as a date. And I caught her laying on top of her date. Right there on the bleachers. She wore a college-type outfit with the bellybutton showing and the thong showing. I got onto her and told her she had to keep her skirt up and her shirt down. That wasn't acceptable. She said, "Well, I'm in college now." And I told her, "But you are at our high school function. You will follow our dress code or you will leave here." And then when I caught her laying on top of her boyfriend, I said, "This is the last time I speak to you. You will be gone." And I thought if it was someone else, I would have probably gotten even rougher, but knowing her mother. I didn't want...(2.25, 3.14)

All of the sudden you have a lawsuit.

And that's something...people who come in from other places don't know. On the other hand, Professor C came in from University UU for my instrumental clinic. He could not

believe the support and the standing ovation and everything that we received and the thank yous not just from our kids but from all the kids, all the people there (2.12). And the help he got and out at (local restaurant). I told him to tell his people when they graduate not to shy away from a small town. In some respects, you get more respect from people and more backing than you do in big schools (3.14, 3.23).

Are there teachers that you socialize with outside of school?

[slowly] No. Not really (2.21).

Have you found some community members?

Yes. I go dancing in Grunwald with some of them from here. One guy came back here to retire, and a couple of grandparents who love to dance (3.23). What I did this year after the prom (since we had it in the gym, we could do this—and that's one plus). The next day after the prom, I opened the gym up (we got permission) and left the decorations up. And the Senior Citizens came in and we had an afternoon dance. They brought in some of their own players. Like we had an electronic keyboard for one of them, and we had a couple of accordion players. And they danced for a couple of hours (2.13). Then they left, and I had something going on at church (3.12). But the other sponsor came up and she and the kids took down all of the decorations and everything. And that gave a rapport with some of the older people. I do like to dance. And they knew that I did. So they've started to invite me to go down—you know that it's really nice, and it's lots of fun. But they're a lot younger than me.

But it sounds like you found a good group of peers to go dancing with and do social things with. (uh huh). But it doesn't sound like you socialize with your peers except for

end of the year picnic and Christmas parties. That sort of thing. But you live in Williamsburg, don't you?

Yeah, and I talk to them on the phone and stuff. But one of them, her parents live in Elmo, so she goes down and works on the ranch all summer. A couple of others, their husbands are ranchers, so they're out on the ranch. The one I visit with all year long the most—I talk on the phone the most—she lives twenty-five to twenty-eight miles out. I've been invited out there a time or two. But it's not like you drop over there for coffee for five minutes or so. She's out on her horse. To drive out there—that's kind of a different situation than if you're in a bigger place (4.2). When I was in Emma, there were a few more teachers that weren't involved with farming--that was a different kind of place. I did visit with them. Brady, Rex, there were teachers who lived right there in town that you would visit with. When it comes here or Quincy, everyone goes out to their ranches. And when it's twenty-five or thirty miles or even more, you just don't...I see them at rodeos, things like that. So in the summer it's more visiting on the phone, during the school year, visiting at school or after school or during ball games (2.21, 3.17).

How did you decide to teach music?

That's what I wanted to do. I originally wanted to do that. Well, I originally wanted to work in an orphanage. But then I decided I wanted the elementary ed. In the little bitty town of Yardley, everyone told my dad that I was the best musician around. Well, my dad—I was probably the only one. So I played for the church starting in the seventh grade, and I played for high school by the time I was in the eighth grade, I was in band. You know, all of the. So, he went to the University SS. I wanted to go to (small regional college) PP and study elementary ed because all of my friends were going there. So he

came home one day and told me, "I just enrolled you in music at the University SS."

And back then, I said, "Yes, dad." (3.21)

So it really wasn't your idea at all.

No, I never did want to teach music. Still, I enjoy it, I enjoy lots of it. But I HATE contests (2.14). I like the performance part and the showcasing of the kids, but not the rest.

Isn't that interesting. So, who were your earliest models? Who were the earliest people you looked up to as musicians?

I don't know. Yardley was quite a musical place. Professor A (1.22).

He was at University PP, right?

Actually, he started teaching at my high school the year after I graduated. Before that, Two of my students had just come back from the [state travel and goodwill program for high school students], going to Europe with Professor A. And this is not the first time I had students go with Professor A. I had them go three or four times. I don't really know, I know that there were a lot of reasons that I did a lot of music. I had two brothers who were each a year younger, and they'd go off and play, and I'd sit and play the piano. I started piano when I was four. So I ... Yardley was a town where you danced a LOT. So a lot of the people—I think that's why I don't like contests and stuff. I substituted in dance bands, things like that. They weren't famous people, but they were people who were [pause]...

Is it a big Czech community?

No, a big Bohemian community. It was. It isn't now that they've built the prison in Estvold. That's brought in a bunch of people so it isn't so much any more. But yeah, it is.

We were the only German-English people in the whole Bohemian town. My best girlfriend couldn't speak English when she started school.

Even in the fifties. (Yes) Wow. I forget that's such a strong ethnic identifier.

[member of a prominent Yardley family] he's the second boy, he's the lawyer in Princeton. He's had a big push with keeping the Czech/Bohemian language alive. There's a statewide Czech/Bohemian organization, and they sing and stuff. I know that his mom played piano in a couple of different bands (2.19). And occasionally, she'd come up to me and say, "Why don't you play some. I have to go to the bathroom (or something)". And there were people like that who would encourage a lot of us. And it wasn't just me—there were a lot of us that are in to music because of things like that. I can't say that there was one famous person who influenced me. It was the community in general.

If you were going to give advice to a rural music teacher on how to start a good rural music program, what would you tell them?

Find out what the community wants. This community wants the pep band (2.11) and wants the fun programs (2.12). They couldn't care less about everything else. We could get all the lowest ratings possible at contest, but they wouldn't care. But I've been in other communities like Augustus where they wanted high ratings at contest (2.14). They couldn't care less if you never showed up for ball games or had a pep band. Of course we had a band teacher there. They said they would like it when they heard a pep band from another school (2.11). But then they would just shove it off. They didn't really care. This community wants to see the kids. They don't care what we do outside. If I take my pep band to a ball game or another state or something, they like that. But to go to a contest...(2.14)

They just don't care.

Yeah. They're happy. That's it. They're proud of the kids. But that's it. So, find out what the community wants from a program. Not necessarily the administration, but the community (2.22, 3.23).

Are there any musicians in the school with whom you make music?

I have that cantata and I have that men's group. They have a new assistant pastor at this church who's the new assistant football coach. They've asked him to join the group. I have a church that's next door to me where I have a group. And they just contacted me, which means that they must want to start up again this year (1.11, 3.15). But basically, I've had some parents come up to me and tell me that they were just dumbfounded when they heard their child sing (2.25). I just didn't know—but remember that they haven't had a certified teacher before. They haven't had a pushy certified teacher. I had a girl who couldn't carry a tune in a basket. I was told that by the last teacher (2.24). The teacher told the child that she was sucky. The little girl was the nicest person I ever taught in my life (2.23). I taught her stuff [before] she went to contest. Every time I told her that she did something wrong, I phrased it positively. And she took voice lessons. And she got a one at contest. I told her that I wouldn't give her lessons at first because she's one of my students. And I gave it to her because she deserved it. But going from that to getting a one at contest was a way that I got a lot of people thinking that I was pretty special (2.24, 3.23). And so...I am a people person. Some people are 100% into the music. I'm pushy that way. It's a personality thing. I like to work with people. I don't like to perform myself—I hate it (4.4). I like working hard myself. I guess it's pride. Like some of the boys got to go to Europe. I chat it up like I got the award, not them.

Are you more of a teacher who is a musician or a musician who is a teacher?

I think I'm a teacher first. I'm not one who thinks you have to have perfect balance. You have to have perfect pitch. Twenty years from now, I want them to do a decent job. They may not know every nuance of Mozart, or things like this or that. The last teacher, her husband is here, she was raised here. He's our custodian. He's always put things down, and said things like, "That piano player didn't sound very good." And I always tell him, "Well, she did the best she could." I thought that it wasn't his place. I'm a teacher. I'm a person who wants them to succeed more than to be perfect (4.4).

If you were to choose a career path again, would you choose to teach?

Not music. Kindergarten, or I enjoy teaching Spanish. Originally, I wanted to learn to be a social worker. I wanted to run an orphanage on a ranch or some place. That would allow the kids to be themselves. That was what I wanted to do originally. Then my father changed it. I went back for my Master's degree, just because I didn't ever want to teach music (4.5).

And yet here you are.

Here I am [both laugh]. I do the job only because I like the kids, and I like pushing people to sing and to play their instruments. Like when I was in Grunwald, I worked in a church with kids (3.12), making them sing. I've done that before. So I wouldn't have abandoned music. I just wouldn't have done it as a profession. I would use it as a hobby or as a secondary thing.

Mackenzie Meyer

Where do you go for information about music content?

Since I was mostly trained as a band director, I sought membership in American Choral Directors. American Choral Directors became important to me. I keep learning about that, because it was not real—not at the top of my education. So I haven't been that interested on important literature for choral music. So that's one of the reasons I've always been a member of that (1.25). A long time ago, I had a level one Kodaly training (1.12).

Was that down in Davidson?

No, that was in Boulder. With [well known music educator].

Wow, that would be fun.

And [well known music educator](1.21). *(That would be great)*. That was good. And that probably helped me to form a little bit more what to teach with the elementary kids (1.4).

So do you attend conventions or workshops in music education?

I have always gone to the summer clinic for American Choral Directors. I occasionally go (not every year, maybe every third year or so) to MENC/NAME convention.

Have you ever been to the American Choral Directors regional?

I haven't been except when it was in [state]. As it happened, in February I went to the National convention in New York City.

How was that?

I had a great time. *(I'm so envious)*. We tried to go to something convention related every day. But we were in New York City, for crying out loud. You can't just blow through there. You have to do some sight seeing.

Did you feel like they had what you needed [at conventions]?

No.

Nothing you could take back at all?

I looked at the program and decided, well, I guess I'll try to attend some of these things.

Just because of the name. Just because of the venues. There was a concert in Carnegie

Hall. I'm sure that the concert was marvelous, but I was more impressed to be in

Carnegie Hall. A lot of it is way more than what I can do here (1.12). Even in reading

sessions, even in our state's reading sessions.

That's what I was wondering. What about the state reading sessions? Are you able to get anything that you can take back?

In a reading session of say twelve pieces, there is usually one or sometimes two things

that I can actually use with students around here. In November, when you go to the

women's ensemble reading session, the parts are too hard, the pieces are too complicated,

the lines are too hard for the small groups that I have (1.12, 2.23).

They aren't able to hold four independent parts with eight kids.

We were able to hold three. We were able to do three, so I was happy with that.

So when you go to district music contest, do you list it as an octet, or do you go ahead

and list it as a women's choir?

I put it as a miscellaneous ensemble.

And how did you end up doing?

We felt like we were robbed (1.23, 2.14).

Did you get a two?

Yeah. Professor A was our judge, and our vowels were too bright for his taste. We had worked on [vowels], we hadn't ignored it (1.22, 1.23). We'd worked on it a lot. But that whole district music contest is a big issue around (state), because some sites hand out ones like they were gold, others hand out superiors like you should have that just for trying. So it's not even across the state. It's something that MENC/NAME is looking at, it's something that American Choral Directors is looking at, and it's something that Bandmasters is looking at. And the strings [teachers]. I'm not sure how many organizations--They're all talking about it. Our state activities association has to look at it (1.4).

Do you think that there's a prejudice with judges against rural districts? (No.) Do you think they understand the realities of rural music programs?

Well, let me back up. I don't think they have a prejudice necessarily. In vocal, I don't think that this shows up as much (1.23). For instance, band remarks, band judging. They criticize instrumentation, when we're just glad to have somebody who plays an instrument. When you're building a band, and a kid plays an instrument, you let them play that instrument. You don't worry that you already have twenty of them. Right now, I'm short on low brass. And one of the judges remarked about our balance—and they should remark that balance is an issue. By the same token, I know that I should have a bass player, but it's not something I can do anything about (1.23).

Do you ever e-mail other music teachers to get ideas for different things?

Not for teaching, probably. For organizing, and when we do have activities.

Informational rather than for content. How about Ms. James? Are you still in contact with her?

Ms. James, no, she's at Rudolph. Not so much.

I didn't know if you talked about music things.

We're from the same college, but I'm older than Ms. James (1.21).

So you don't talk with her. How about other band directors? Do you ever get together with them?

Similarly, only at conference events (1.21,1.12).

So they still run those conference clinics?

We do.

Have you ever served as a clinician for those?

No. Not yet.

Who do you usually get for clinicians for those?

Sometimes we get clinicians for those from colleges, sometimes we get high school directors with some notoriety.

Do you try to get College TT, QQ, RR?

We don't get them from University TT, and rarely from University UU. We've had clinicians from University RR, not University SS, usually. Now that I think of it, it's been high school directors. Mostly from larger schools (1.21).

Like Mr. Andrews.

I've worked with him. Mr. Baland, who's from Sandyhorn. When I hosted it, a couple of years ago. Mr. Calvin.

Gosh, I haven't thought about him in years. I bet he'd be good. Do you get Telland,

Dodson, Provance folks?

I think we might ask Mr. Delmer.

He's good (1.24).

And his sister is in our conference. [chat]

You've been at your school district for a while (Since 1984). Do you talk to other folks in your district? Not about music necessarily, but about lesson plans, sequence, long range planning?

At the school?

Yeah. Do you have anyone there who's a special buddy of yours? Where you go in after school or at lunch and chat with. I know you probably have plenty to do.

Yeah, there are a few. There's a couple that I ask. One of the hardest things for me is to give a grade that's fair and reasonable. So anytime I can come up with an idea, there's a gal that I go and talk to. We always vent together.

You mean like teacher's lounge talk?

Yeah. But they're also good support to me (2.21).

You talked about going to the consumer and family science person and saying, "Hey, I need the kids." Could you go to the rest of the staff and say, "Hey, we've got a special opportunity. There's this group coming in. Can we change the schedule?" Are they pretty good about that?

I'm sure it wouldn't be a problem.

Does that happen very often?

Sometimes when it's time for a concert dress rehearsal or something like that. Then I ask for that kind of privilege. But most of the time, if it's possible, I try to use my own class time (2.22).

You try not to disrupt the schedule (right). How about your principal? Has he been supportive?

We've had the same—well, his position isn't exactly principal. Because he's not certified as a principal, but he acts in that regard. He's been here a long time, too. He works with me pretty well to get schedule to be the best we can make it, and recruit the kids and keep the kids involved. We've had a number of Superintendents, and a full range of support from them. Some of them won't like to miss anything we did. Some of them attend if it's in town and convenient. Some of them you know, come to the main performances and not anything that's out of town. So we've had a whole range of support from superintendents.

So how long has your current superintendent been there?

Last year was his first year.

And how's he doing so far?

He made an effort to attend some out of town concerts. He supported the kids pretty well (2.22).

How about in some of the other areas? Was he pretty good in supporting athletics and other activities? (Yeah) Do you have a drama department or anything besides music and athletics?

We don't very often have a full three-hour play or two act play very often. But the kids are in drama for the one act play competition. They do have speech team...

Does your school have an area where they are consistently strong, like a strong wrestling team or basketball or something? Where there is a strong tradition?

Volleyball. Volleyball is probably the strongest. They've gone to state tournament probably four out of five years, lately.

Describe your relationship with your students.

Well, some it's better than others. I don't—you should ask that. With most of my students, it's a pretty easy relationship. With some, I have to be cross with more often than I care to be. I don't like that. But it seems like it's become necessary.

Do you think that it's more recent than in the past?

No, I think it's these particular individuals. I don't think that it's anything that's a general trend (2.23).

Have you been teaching long enough to begin to see second generations where you think, "He's just like his father," or "Not another one of this clan."

I hear things like that about some of these kids. "His dad was just like that."

And do you think that it's an advantage to know their parents as well as you do?

[Laughs] Advantage. There might be some advantage to that. It also helps that I can speak to their parents about that (2.25).

Do you do any auditioned groups, or hold auditions during the year?

No. The only time I have to pick one kid over another is like a [major choral festival] project when I can only bring ten. Then I have to cut some kids.

Does that cause hardships?

I try to mention it at least six times that I wished that I didn't have to eliminate anybody.

I'm only allowed to take ten. And I try to tell them before the process even starts that I can only pick ten. Remember, I can only pick ten...I can only...

That's a subliminal message. [Both laugh]

So I try to have them prepared before I actually announce results (2.14).

Do you see all of the students in music class?

Through 8th grade it's required of everyone. Then in the high school, band and choir are both electives.

How often do you see the students?

Band and choir meet every day.

For how many minutes?

Fifty. The general music kids...the junior high meets...some quarters they meet twice a week, and some quarters three times a week for fifty minutes. And the children through sixth grade meet twice a week for thirty minutes.

So the quarters when you meet with them three times a week, do they try to do it so that it's not district music contest quarter?

With the junior high music, it's just—it doesn't depend on district music contest.

Oh, well, I just thought they might be kind to you and give it to you when you weren't so busy, and during Christmas maybe let you meet a little more often.

At my request, family and consumer science has seventh graders while I have the eighth graders. And the next day, it's the other way around. If I need extra rehearsals with the whole junior high, I just have to make that arrangement (2.12, 2.21).

That's nice that you can work together that way. When I taught K-12, it was opposite of P.E.

They have P.E. every day.

How big is your community?

The population of just the village of Tanner is 150.

But LaVerne school encompasses a larger community, doesn't it.

It's a county school. There is only one other village in the county, and that's Zane. It has 100 people in it.

I've been up there to the lake. So you have mostly rural kids.

Even the kids who live in town. We are all rural (3.14, 4.2).

Do you own a house up there?

I rent. I've always rented. There's a little apartment up here. At one time, there were full time students who boarded here. The parents would bring them here and they stay in the dorms all week. And the parents come get them on Friday. When the school district consolidated throughout the county, they discontinued boarding students. The dormitories were turned into other...So where the boy's dorm was, that's now the art department and the counseling services.

For heaven's sake. So do you live on property then? (Yes) Wow!

The girl's dorm is now four apartments, and they refer to it as the teacherage (3.18). And right now, it's full. There are four of us living here in the building.

Are you all single? (Yes). Do you get together socially?

Well, the two teachers upstairs are brand new, so we haven't got to know them yet.

Brand new for next year?

Yes. In the past, I've had neighbors where we did that. We had spouses. We had married people upstairs. I have a patio set, and we put it out on the lawn. When it's nice in the evenings, I like to sit out there. And sometimes there gets to be a crowd of us out there, just sitting and visiting (2.21).

In this teacherage, have you had a lot of different teachers in this through the years?

(Yes) *And do you pay rent?*

I pay rent, and I pay utilities.

Are they pretty nice apartments?

Well, mine has recently been remodeled quite extensively, because of some water damage that happened sometime ago—several years ago in the winter. I think it's the nicest apartment. But I would say that the other ones are pretty average (3.14).

Are they the only living options in town?

There are a few other houses in town that are available, but most of them have been rented out. The people who rent them work in pig confinement.

So where do you go for your culture?

Culture? Let's see. Occasionally I go to Panapoly. I've gone to the living Christmas tree in Panapoly. In Chandler, I got to see a couple of shows. Last year, I won a raffle and got free tickets for 10 students to go to a big event that they had at the [major concert venue].

That was neat (4.2).

So did you take your whole choir and that was 8?

We opened it up to honor society kids and upper classmen that I had in band or choir.

Some kids chose not to go. But we ended up using all of the tickets.

So did you have to stay overnight and everything?

We didn't. It was a matinee—no it was an evening. And we started out in the afternoon. And went to the concert. It was on a weekend. And we came home after midnight (4.2).

Do you have any community members, like parents, or just people in the community that you go to for advice or just to find out what's going on in the community?

Well, there are people in the community I guess that are friends of mine. We attend the same church and things like that (3.12).

Do you use them as your ear to the ground as far as what's going on in the community, where they come to you and say that they've heard that the band's doing really well?

(No). *So the community members aren't really a link between you and the school? You keep them separate?*

Yes. It's always been kind of hard. I don't socialize with very many parents because I don't want the kids to think that I would prefer one kid over another or be closer to one family of kids over another. So it's just...(2.25, 3.17).

If I went to the community and asked around, what do you think they would say about you as a teacher?

I think generally, people are pleased with the work I do here. Some would lament that there's not boys in choir. And that somehow that's my responsibility to fix. You know, I've always said, whoever signs up, that's who I'm going to teach. I don't really lament who I don't have too much. And I don't recruit very hard. I just never have. Whoever signs up, we'll make them the best musicians that we can (2.23).

What do you think the community likes most about the music program?

I think, generally, the community feels that having music in the school is important. What do they value the most? I would hope, I guess, that the kids are working together on a project and they don't have to compete with anybody about it. And that everybody can be a part of it (2.14, 3.14).

Do you have a town square or anything?

No. We have a park in town. The courthouse for the county is in Zane. But there's no real town square. There are no real businesses in downtown Zane.

I was just wondering if your front yard ended up being like the town square.

I wouldn't say that.

It's not that big.

The bar, the steakhouse. That sort of ends up being the meeting place for a lot of people.

Are you allowed as a teacher to go into the bar?

Well, we've had administrators in the past who have frowned on it and were vocal about it (2.22).

It's against the law to prohibit it now. But it was an unspoken reality when I started teaching. We did not go into the bar.

No, we can go in. If you're interested in drinking, you can drink.

There's underage kids in there while you're drinking too? Families?

Probably.

But that's an OK thing to do in your community? It's not a problem?

In fact, it's part of mixing in. It's part of belonging. I don't happen to use alcohol on a regular basis. So it's not a big deal. But they have good steak. So I go there for that. And I am not comfortable seeing students watch staff members intoxicated (3.11).

Drinking, smoking, the whole business.

It sounds like you have a pretty good pulse on small town programs around your area at least. Do you have a pretty good sense about programs around the state? Do you talk to other people about their small town programs?

Um, I do. Not statewide, just in our general vicinity (1.4).

Are there any people in town who take care of private lessons? (No.)

If they want to take piano, they have to go to Morton or Nelson.

How far is that?

Morton is about 45 miles, Nelson is about 35 miles.

I'm surprised that someone doesn't come in there once a week.

For a while, there was that arrangement. But the kids didn't appreciate that teacher that much. So after awhile, it became unnecessary (1.21, 4.2).

How about church positions?

Those are all volunteer. At one time, we did have a little participation in that. But the women got older (3.12).

Do you have any other community music things going on in your town?

No, not right here. I have participated in a community choir in Osage, which is about forty miles away. I was just a performer in that one (1.11, 3.15).

Do you have any extra duties at your school?

I do receive extra duty pay, but it's just as music director.

Do you do pep bands?

We do pep bands, and I limit our participation to one a week. I try to put it on the weekend rather than during the week.

Do they worry about title IX and making sure that boys and girls games get equal coverage, or does that matter?

I don't know if anybody in any administrative office worries about that. But we play once during the girl's game and once during the boy's game (2.11).

I was going to say that in the smaller communities, they bus both groups at the same time. (Yes) Do you play volleyball games or just football games?

We play at the volleyball games, and halftime at the football games.

And do the sports people participate in band, too?

Mostly, whoever I have do both pretty well. A lot of times, by the time they're juniors and seniors, the young men have dropped out of music. So, for those athletes, it becomes a non-issue. But we work around—whoever is available, that's who plays.

Do you do a marching band for football?

We don't do any field marching. I do try to give the kids an opportunity to be in parades, to just give them some general marching skills.

Do you have any parades in your community?

No. We go to the [large festival] parade. It's 70 miles to Panapoly (2.14).

Do you do 7-12 when you march? Yes. How many kids do you have in the band?

Last year (which has been about average) we had 32.

In 7-12? (Yes) Is the vocal program going? (Yes) How many people do you have in your vocal program?

Women only. Last year we had eight.

In 9-12?

Yes.

In 7-8, do you run that program like a general music class? (Yes) And do they perform anyway?

They perform twice—well, more than that if you consider the vocal music clinics that we go to in junior high. The junior high does a spring concert here and a winter concert here. And then we go to Redwood and conference clinic that changes site every year (2.12).

Do you ever make music with anyone outside of school?

For awhile I was with the community choir at Osage. For a while, we made music at church. Within the Methodist church, there is a retreat series called a Walk to Emmaeus. Sometimes, I'm called on to be the musician in that setting. I enjoy that a lot (1.11, 3.12).

Do you have time to keep up on your instruments at all?

When I play an instrument now, it's not the instrument I studied. I play trumpet with pep band. That's the instrument that I play the most regularly (1.11).

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

I think mostly teacher first (4.4). I think that's because, well, I'm a student right now and my coursework is all in curriculum. And so, it's not going to be a music degree—it's going to be a curriculum degree.

Where are you getting that done?

College VV.

Are they coming to your community?

They're coming to Prosperity, which is only forty miles away (4.2).

Are you more concerned right now as you attend classes with the educational process?

More than the music field? (Yes). Do you have any other music teachers in those courses? (Yes) So, do you have a chance during the coursework to talk with the other music teachers?

Yes, we worked together on our projects. Ms. George is the elementary music specialist from Prosperity. And she and I worked on our research project together. Her school is quite a bit larger than mine. And we make comparisons and stuff. And then the band director at Prosperity is also working through this program. So that's been good.

Since you have taken this class in curriculum design, you can still compare music curriculum with those folks. That is neat. Do you kind of guide your own path, then?

Well, so far, I've just finished the required coursework. So now, I can get into the electives and other stuff. But this last year was the research methods and the project. So that was pretty much decided what that would be. We had some general guidance on how to put things together. Then we pretty much did our own stuff.

What types of things did you examine in your research class?

Our project was to expose kids to classical music in a teaching wheel format. To see if that helped improve their appreciation for those styles of music. One of my classes taught it the regular old lecture/demonstration sort of method. The wheel method includes left brained, right-brained activities and different learning styles. And concentrating on different learning styles throughout their teaching cycle to try and hit more kids. And then we did a pre- and post-survey.

An attitude survey? (Yes) And what did you find out?

The kids that got the old, traditional method actually liked the music less.

They actually had an aversion to it? (Yes). Ooops.

Kids who learned it the other way actually learned to appreciate it more. And we had a lot of questions. We did parent surveys, too. You know, what the kids liked mostly closely followed what the parents liked, too. There were some notable exceptions. Like heavy metal and rap.

The kids liked heavy metal and rap?

Well, not as much as they liked country music.

That sounds like a really cool project, though.

I thought it turned out well. We learned a lot through it (1.12).

Are the other two teachers about our age also?

They are a little younger. She has two—as a matter of fact, part of our project had to be on hold a little bit because she had a baby around Christmas time. So we had to wait until she came back to school to start teaching those units.

But you guys worked together. Did you just do elementary kids?

Just fifth and sixth graders (1.21).

Did the band director have elementary kids, too?

Mr. Hanover did it differently. His project was about drop-outs.

Attrition and the band program. (Uh-huh) Did he interview kids that had left the band program? (Uh-huh). That sounds interesting too. So when you worked with Ms. George, did you feel like you were working on an equal footing? Or did you have to take a leadership role with it?

We divided up the writing of the document. And I'm kind of—she'd send me her work, and I'd edit. She didn't mind it. And I'd send her my work and she'd read it. It didn't

seem like she would edit so much. I guess I felt as though maybe I liked to write more than she liked to write. But we did divide it up. You know, when you start to edit, it starts to sound like you instead of hers (1.21).

Right, you put your own voice into it. So did you use the email, is that what you're talking about with sending?

E-mailing frequently (4.2).

When you hear about a rural music program, what impresses you about what makes the program strong?

Just up the road is Steph's Landing. And Mr. Hoppick has had such a strong instrumental program for forever. And the administration there and the parents there, they make that a priority, no matter what. They do have marching. They do have a field competition show. It's like Mr. Hoppick can have anything he wants (1.21).

Financially, or emotionally?

Scheduling, money, you name it.

So do you think—it sounds like you're really satisfied with your program. Is there anything that would make it better? Anything that you long for every once in awhile?

An accompanist (2.19).

Do you have to do your own?

I do my own.

Is there no one in your town?

Not that I would ask to do it. You know. There are people who play piano, but they are not truly accompanists (1.11, 4.3).

If you were to choose a career path, would you have decided on the same one?

Yeah, I think I would. It seems like this niche works out well for me. I can do some vocal music, I can do some instrumental music. I can work with little kids. I don't think that everyone's cut out to be the only musician in the county or the only music teacher in the county. But it seems good to me. I guess that I've always felt it's like a mission, almost. To bring what I can to the rural community (4.5).

And it sounds like the community's supportive.

Yeah, it is pretty good.

Kyle Smith

If you have questions about music content, is there anyone you call?

As a matter of fact, I have a large directory of people I can call. I have former teachers that taught me, I have my professors from college, I have the one I student taught with, I have Teacher C, who was my band director in high school, who is now at Hillshire. I have Professor A, who was director of bands and a professor in the music department at WW University. I have Teacher D, who was the person I student taught under. I have various friends who teach in Blatchford, Jarodia, one who teaches in Karen's Valley. I have a directory of people who I can call up anytime and also the schools where they teach at. I knew the instructors over in Edgar very well, and they would help me with whatever I needed (1.21). I have a vast directory because I made a lot of friends in college who were people I'd met. I talked to them, and they would help me—I was on the phone the first year I taught nearly every day.

What type of questions did you have your first year?

Oh, I had questions like, "What's the best way to set up my band to get the full effect of all my instrumentation? What's the best way to write a marching show?" The stuff I learned in school—if they had experience, I would ask questions like how to deal with intonation. There was a number of questions I asked. It didn't matter—it was stuff I'd already learned. But when you get out there in the real world, you realize that some of the stuff you were taught don't apply. You have smaller groups of kids. Some colleges are basing their training off a band of 80-100 kids, and you have maybe thirty (1.22). So you're trying to get the most out of what you got. I think the most common question I had was what do I do if I try to tune two trumpets with a tuner, should I try to do it by ear so

that they understand that they need to listen to each other. And try to match their sound. Or, like with marching band at the first of the year, trying to make sure that they understand the role of what discipline is, and how to deal with the main people that are at my school—my principal, my superintendent, my mentor teacher that first year. Basically that first year was talking to other band directors (1.21). How do you deal with people who are not going to listen to you without having to kick them out? What else can you do to make them understand that they gotta listen?

Oh, you mean students?

Yeah, students. You know how it is when you first teach and people try to get you. So you always wonder, what's the best way to get things across to them, to make them understand? Just basic stuff. I went to college and I learned my craft well, but you get out there and the person I student taught with, he told me that everything you learn in college was a great gift. Now out in the real world take about half of that stuff and put it to the side to accommodate what you got (1.3). But I have a large directory of people that I could call. I wasn't left in the dark.

Do you attend conventions or workshops for music education?

All the time. As much as I can.

What was the last one you attended?

I went to MENC/NAME convention last January, and I'm fixing to go to the Bandmaster's convention this next week. (Chat) It's always great.

When you go to conventions, do you feel like they have what you need?

You go to the conventions and attend the workshops to learn new ideas of stuff you could do to make the classroom better. When I go to Bandmasters, it's just for fun. I go and

watch. And you can get ideas from it (1.25). There are some people who could say, “I can’t come close to that because they have a band of 150-200 people.” With me, I don’t have that luxury. I’ve taught in schools where my first band was forty-five kids in the marching band. That was marching 8-12. I went to Bandmasters to get ideas then and I went there just before I got this job (2.11). And I realized that I couldn’t do close to half or three-quarters of the stuff they could do on the field. But I tried to take their ideas and have fun with them, telling kids that we can try this. Last year, I didn’t have the marching band, because I was in a K-8 school. But going to the workshops gave me some more ideas about how to teach them and that was what I did all of the time. But the workshops are great. They teach so much, and you get so many good ideas. Now, there are some that you go to that are just for fun with icebreakers or games or whatever. But y’all are there to have a good time. You go up there to get some different ideas. They’re the biggest resource and source of information around (1.25).

Have you ever had any sorts of conflicts with students or parents while you were at these two schools?

Oh, yeah [laughs]. Plenty [laughs] (2.23, 2.25).

Did the administration back you?

Yes.

How was your relationship with administration, generally?

Been fairly well. The last school I was in, they backed me completely, 100%. The first school I was at, my principal would back me, but he’d also say, “Choose your battles wisely.” That didn’t float with me very well (2.22). And I didn’t like it because I had some conflicts with students and parents. Basically, I told them my rules the first day of

school and I wanted them to understand that. Once they were told, that was the extent. There was no exception to the rule. Everything had to go by that standard. Like, I had a kid show up one day late to a football game. We were going to leave and the person never showed up. So we left. His grade got dropped a letter grade, and his mama came up and talked to me and said, "That's not right. He missed the bus." He was told a certain time to be here. And she said, "I drove him up here." I said then that it's not my fault (2.23, 2.25). The principal was driving the bus. He said, "Are you ready to go?" And I said, "Yes, sir." We got up there, and we took off. When I dropped a letter grade, they kind of griped at me, and I said, "That's the rules. I'm sorry you don't like it, but that's the way it is." And that person did not take my class the next semester (2.23). But I stand by what I say.

Did the principal back you?

Yes he did. He said, "I understand." He didn't say much about things. That's what your rules say, and that's the way it goes. But there was other situations I had not just with band but with music appreciation where they acted up in class and I couldn't do anything about it because I was told (by the administration), well give 'em a D or something like that. And they say, "Give them another chance." But I tell them, "I've already given them two chances. I'm not trying to kick a kid out." I don't like to do something if I can help (2.22). But if a person's not going to listen to me, then they're not going to do well. They're just going to be a distraction.

Do you ever have any problems with counselors?

The counselor at my first school was very helpful—she told me at my first school, she said, "How many kids do you have?" Well, I had thirty-some kids but I wanted more, so I

told her I wanted to recruit. In two weeks, eight kids switched classes. And she said, "Yeah, I'll give you them." The kids switched over, I had a bigger band. After that, the next semester, I had kids who wanted to get out of band because, they said in the past they didn't take concert band. We do marching band, we don't do concert band (2.11).

I've seen that before.

I told them (and the principal backed me 100%). We tried to keep them but the counselor was a hometown person. The principal said that they should be in band all year round. And I said, "That's what I want." He said, "That's the way it's gonna be." But the kids don't like concert band, so I really hate to force them to be in it all year round. Most of them wanted to get out, then get back in for marching band. And I said, "No. I don't do that." And she finally kinda understood. She told those kids that she'd let them get out. At the end, only about five or six got out half way through the year. After the fact that I'd already resigned, it was kind of funny. Those kids thought, "Aha, he's gone. I can get back in, no big deal." She told 'em, "No. He's made the decision, that's the way it stays. If the new band director takes you back, that's his decision. But I'm not going to let you back in." So I thought, I fought this battle with you a lot and now you finally agree with me. It was a little bit after the fact. She was helpful with other things. She would try to help me to get kids into the class. In my music appreciation classes, she would tell me about any person who wouldn't get to graduate. Like you were saying earlier with the problems. I told them, "Well I'm not going to have them in my class." She wanted me to do it. I told them, "I'll tell you what. You can put this child somewhere else if he needs to graduate. Those are not my problems. I will give them the assignments they need. But

I'm not going to sit there and take their abuse." We made agreements like that, but it was hard at first.

Now, you talked about your administration. Did you have a formal mentor your first year? (Yes). How about when you moved to your second job? Did they assign you a mentor there?

No. What they do is, whenever you start teaching in (state), you have to have an evaluation process. The first year I was there, they helped in dealing with my paperwork and everything, trying to take care of it. They would assign me a mentor teacher. The only problem is, being a band director, they assigned me a teacher who wasn't music related (2.21).

Did they assign you a music teacher?

No. They assigned me a regular classroom teacher. That was the person who just kind of helped me along. Make sure I was learning to do the paperwork properly, just basic questions that I had. That's the only problem for the band directors, because you do not have another band director around to help you out with certain things (1.21).

And that's where you ended up calling your friends, then. So what types of things did the mentor help with? Did they help with teaching process?

They helped me with classroom management and they helped me with problems with lesson plans. They helped me with discipline. If I had a question about something, I could go to them and they would help me. Because the problem is that most administrators are going from one place to another, and they don't have time to help you with your problems. So with situations, you could go to your mentor teacher, and they would help you with your problems, or they would tell you that you need to talk to the principal. Or

give you a little bit of your opinion. My mentor teacher was a very good one. He would try (2.3).

You've never lived in the community where you've taught. But you've lived pretty close sometimes. Is that correct?

Technically, yes. Because Arnoldville was close enough to me, but the community...a lot of the kids that go to that school don't live in Arnoldville at all. They live in Edgar. So technically, I've lived in the community.

Do you have any teachers at school with whom you socialized outside of school hours?

Last year, there were a couple of fellows. I'd go eat dinner or I'd go over to their house and we'd talk. We wouldn't talk shop, but we'd talk a bunch. We would just talk.

Would you get together with any sort of "lunch bunch" who met in the teacher's lounge? Or before or after school?

We would gather at lunch and we would talk, and they would kind of tell me what's going on during the week. And if they needed something, they would ask me. I had plenty who would call me plenty of times, you know. We're doing something this weekend. Wanna come along? I was socializing with all of my teachers. A lot of them were my friends (2.21).

Did you gravitate toward friends your age, or was it all across the board?

All across the board.

Was there a person or two that you were particularly close with?

I wasn't too close with anybody. I was friends with a lot of people, but there wasn't really one person that I was especially close with, except for maybe a couple of fishing buddies.

But you didn't talk shop when you went fishing, did you?

No. You don't talk shop when you're fishing (laughs) (2.21).

Do you feel valued by the people in your community?

At my first place, no. I didn't know everything that went on, because I hadn't been there.

After I'd been there a semester, then it felt different (3.14, 3.23).

Did you meet anyone in the community who could help you learn about the culture of the rural community?

As a matter of fact, I did. I had to be honest, the first school I taught in was in Lantagne.

They were very do nothing before I got there (3.14). The people who were there were very helpful with me, because they would kind of say, well, back in the day, we used to do this, we used to do this. I had people who brought in pictures of what the uniforms used to look like 20 years ago. They were showing me what all was going on in the community (2.24, 3.14, 3.17, 3.23). They tried to help and do everything possible...a lot of them were my band parents. They were really active in the band. And the kids were active. And they really tried to help. I had never been in a situation where they had really tried to help. You know, we did this or we did that. And we had a lot of fun back then. They tried to help me with whatever (2.25).

Did they try to maintain the traditions of the band? Were the people in your town resistant if you tried to change anything? Or were they supportive?

They were real supportive when I tried to do new things. I could give you a good example. They used to for years in the first school that I taught in, and even last year, they were always having a big pep rally before the football games, and they always used to march right down by the stadium (2.11, 3.13). So I made a different tradition where we

marched from the school and made a parade all the way down to the football field playing the fight song and playing a couple of others, maybe show tunes or whatever. And the people would gather along the street to support them on the way to the football field. And then they would go in and sit down. And we'd go in the stands and we'd get ready for pre-game and everything else. They'd never done that before, so they thought it was great. They said, "We never thought of that for all these years. Wish we could have done that sooner. It was real good support. It was great (2.11, 3.23).

Did you have a band booster or music booster organization?

Yes, I had band boosters at both schools I taught at before I taught at this one. I had band boosters at both schools. They were great organizations that tried to help me whenever they could.

Do you have a band booster organization where you are going?

Yes. In this state you usually have a band boosters association no matter where you go.

And so, you feel like that's a very supportive thing?

Yes, that's a very supportive thing. Some people say that band boosters try to influence you, try to say don't do this, or we don't want that. But I never had any problems. I know that a lot of this sounds really positive, all of my questions have been positive, but so far I've been positively responding to the questions because they were helpful. We do fundraisers all the time. I'm only there to help. Parents know that if I'm there to help, they'd better be there to help. And they always want to be there to help (2.25).

If I went into the communities that you worked in, what would the community members say about you?

That's a hard question. They would probably say that I'm a good person. I tried to do my job the best that I could.

What do you think that they would value most about your teaching?

I would think that I was a very hard worker. I would make sure that I would try to get everything done. They appreciated that (3.23). I would try to make compromises whenever, because being in a rural school, we shared kids. There would always be like, "I need to borrow so-and-so for a little bit, do you mind if I take them out of class?" If I needed something, there would be many times that if I needed them to come in before contest to practice for a little bit, I could go to the teachers and say, "Could I have so-and-so for maybe thirty minutes after class?" And they'd go, like, "Sure." They would make sure that they were caught up on their homework ahead of time, and get their assignment and that way we'd know. And I'd send them straight back as soon as they were done. I was very understanding (2.21).

Were there any expectations about the band doing things for the community?

No, there were no expectations. We could do something that if I would promote it we could do it. But it was not like it was a disappointment if we didn't do something.

So they didn't say every September you have to go to the Rotary Club for their flag day or whatever.

No, they would basically say, "In the past, we did this. Do you think you could still do it?" If I thought it was feasible, I'd say yes. If not, I'd say, Well I don't think I can do it, because like if I was teaching kids a certain thing and there was a deadline to do something, and I was able to do it, I'd say yes (3.13, 3.14). If not, I'd say, "We're just not ready to do it." If there was a deadline about it and I didn't feel like we were ready, I

would say that we're not ready. And if they were upset about it, I'd say, "Sorry, but musicianship comes first." We're not always here to please the community. I want to be. But it's kinda like you try to be the best you can be, but you can't. So you do the best you can. And if I could, I would. But if I can't I'd explain. They were understanding, though (3.23). Over at the school I was at last year, there was no problem. All the kids were forced—I shouldn't say forced—all the kids were in band.

All the kids were in band?

All of them. (WOW) Because that was the way it had been done for years (2.23, 2.25, 3.14).

So you just knew that you'd be in band, and you'd just pick your instrument. Did you pick the instruments for them?

No, well, here's the deal. They would start in beginning band in the fourth grade. So you get all of these kids in the fourth grade class and you do the instrumental test. You test their hearing, you give them tests to see what they understand. I'd give them a choice at first, but I'd tell them, if it doesn't work out, let's try something else. Well, they would do this, and through the years, they would evolve and they would either play that instrument forever, or they would kind of change. And the person who was there before me, you know, he was pretty good about making them stay on an instrument. This last year, I had so many kids come up to me and say, "I can't play this instrument"...And I would say, "Well, I haven't heard you, so we'll just wait and see." They would try their dangdest to fake it. And I would know that they could play, because the person before me was a pretty good friend of mine (2.24). And he told me, "Don't let them fool you. They can play it and if you can hold out, I promise you that they'll give in." There was some that I

had to trade over. But all the kids were in band, and I had to deal with discipline problems every day (2.23). I never had a “quiet” day in band class (both laugh). I just dealt with whatever came in front of me.

So what was the attrition rate like? Do they have to stay in band until the eighth grade?

Yes.

Wow, I have never heard of that.

Once they got out of there and went to high school at Edgar, they had a choice.

But there was no choice (at your school).

No, there was no choice. Here’s the bad thing about it. I had a lot of students who came from Arnoldville and they did well. But when they got to high school and realized that they had a choice, most of them would choose not to continue. And that really discouraged me, because I thought, you go to all that work and then they quit. And I understand why. They know that they can do the job. But when they get up there around different people, and around different friends, they sort of... There were always a decent amount who would stay in. But not all of them would come back over and say, “Gee, I’m going to be in band.” That was kind of a bad thing, but I understood why they did it. I was just trying to make sure that the program stayed alive. Because if a lot of them said no, the band program would not make it. They went on a trip every year, so that gave the kids a goal.

Did fourth through eighth go on the trip, or just six-seven-eight?

Six through eight would go on the trip. We would always go to a contest, and we would go perform (2.14, 2.23). We would always have something to work for. And it was always a trip where the kids would go somewhere they would never have the chance to

go otherwise. Like two years ago, before I got there, they went to Breckenridge, Colorado skiing. They've been to Missouri, they've been to Texas, they've been to Kansas, they've been to Florida. They raise a lot of money (2.17). The band boosters are a big part of these trips. They did all of this, and these people make sure that these kids go on these trips raise enough money (2.25). And they would go somewhere, and they could come back and say, "I've been there." They may never go again. But they'd been at least once. *That's amazing.*

Oh, it is.

So for you, what is the best part about teaching?

That's easy. The kids. I love kids. Whenever you get a kid whenever they get it together with a horn in his hand, you hear the first notes, sounds only a mother could love. But you know that you can teach that kid to play the horn, that child and head them in the right direction. It's a great feeling. It's not about going to contest and winning sweepstakes and all that stuff. It's about children, and that's what I've always cared about. I went to college and I observed people who were doing their jobs and everything. People get caught up in competition too much. Those children come first, do you know what I'm saying? When you teach children how to play, you're teaching them a skill they can use for the rest of their lives. When they're eighty years old, they can still grab a horn and they can still say, "I know how to play." There's not a better sound in the world.

So what do you like least about teaching?

I'd have to say it's paperwork.

I think a lot of people would say that.

Paperwork is a pain, because all it does is consume you. It's time consuming. You don't have time to do everything you need. And once you do it, you have to do this because it's a formality. You're done (4.3).

How long have you taught?

Going on three years.

Going on three years. How many districts have you taught in?

I've taught in two different districts.

Are you going to a third district this fall?

Yes. The only reason that I'm doing that is because I was in one, and I found a job closer to home (4.1, 4.2). Then the second district cut me to half time. I wanted to stay here, but due to financial matters, I had to take another job.

Was it budget cuts on their part?

Yes.

Did the position go to a half time position then?

Yes.

Which district were you at last year?

I was in Arnoldville.

Where are you going to next year?

Brighton.

Is that pretty close to where you're at now?

Umm, it's about forty-five minutes away. I don't know if you're familiar with the area.

It's closer to Connorsdale.

And so will you commute from where you're at now or are you going to move closer?

I'm going to commute, then later on, I'll move.

Why did you initially become a music teacher?

My band director was a great motivator. I took band, football and ag all at the same time. I stretched myself. And we did so much with band. We did contest and marching band and concert band. I told him, "I admire everything that you do." And he said, "I appreciate that." And the biggest thing was...I was in Delmar, then I moved to Edgar. I had the hardest time learning to read music. I couldn't read music very well. I started out on trumpet and switched over to tuba. And I was having a hard time switching clefs. But he took the time to teach me, my band teacher taught me how to read music. And when I learned to read music, it opened up a whole new world for me. I told him, "I want to be a band director." He told me, "If you do this, it's a huge, huge thing. It's a very challenging thing." I said, "This is what I want to do." So he helped me to talk to tech schools, to get stuff going, and I made my decision. I was the first one in my graduating class to decide what I wanted to do. He was the reason why, my high school band director (1.21).

Have you had any other models through the years, then?

Teacher A was a big influence on me. He's a professional tuba player. Also, Teacher B, the band director at Fairhaven. He's the one I student taught under. He was a GREAT model. He was great with young kids, and he's done a LOT for music in [state] (1.21).

Various performers—I couldn't give you enough names.

Are you talking mostly about tuba performers?

Really, any performers. A lot of tuba performers, clarinetists or trumpet players.

So you admire any good musicians rather than looking for someone who's good on your instrument.

Yes, I admire all musicians. They were a great influence on me because from all of them, you get so many different ideas.

Are there any other musicians in your community?

As a matter of fact, there is. I live about three houses down from a very talented piano player who does a lot of accompanying. She plays at church, and she comes out and plays for the community all of the time (2.19). She's a great person. But yeah, there are a lot of musicians in the community.

Do you make music with them on a regular basis?

Not all the time. I try to whenever I get the chance, like over Christmas or Thanksgiving we do cantatas or whatever. And I try to get her to accompany on the piano (2.19). Not all the time. I wish (1.11).

Do you play your instrument then?

Yeah, especially at Thanksgiving and Christmas I do a lot because a lot of that stuff is for brass choirs or concert choirs, you know, a brass section. I do it that way. That's the only time I get to play. There's no ragtime band, or anything like that (1.11).

Do you wish that there was a swing band or ragtime band or something?

I wish there was. If I lived in Anderson or Jonestown, I bet I could find one. Out here there's not that big of a call for them (3.15).

What's important to have in a good rural music program?

I would say that you have to have a good administration that's willing to work with you. You would have to have good facilities. In rural, they would play a bigger part, because

you know that if you have the facilities, you know that you can get the kids involved. A good parents base. That's one of the biggest things I can stress, because a lot of communities have kids that when they get home, they have to go out and plow or milk cows at the end of the day. Because mom and dad own a dairy or they have to haul hay. And these kids are occupied. If you have parents who are involved, and they know that their kid hasn't practiced his horn, and they have to be at a concert or go to a contest, it helps tremendously (2.25). Because if parents understand, they know they have to make the time. Money always plays a factor, but in a lot of these schools, money is not in abundance (2.17). So you have to do with what you got. Administration, parents and facilities play a big part (2.22, 2.25).

Do you consider yourself a musician who is a teacher or a teacher who is a musician?

A teacher who is a musician.

Why is that?

Because I can play my horn. I was taught sufficiently. I know the instrument. But I'm a teacher first. I'm there to educate those kids. If I never perform again, I can live with that. But I'm there for the kids, so I want to make sure that I can do anything. I can do music, because that's my job, and that's what I love (4.4).

Is music teaching what you thought it would be?

No, because I thought it would be one of those jobs where you would go in and kids could already play. I really didn't know anything about it. Cause when I got to college and started studying, they told me that little Johnny didn't know what a horn was, and wouldn't know until you showed him. Whenever they start playing that first note, you realize it sounds like the worst thing in the world, what are you going to do to fix it? I

understand a little bit more. Now, when I got out, it wasn't a real shock, but when I was in high school, I was one of those kids who learned music easily. When I got to college, I realized that I had to teach the kids all of the notes. It's just one of those things where you get kind of sidetracked before. I got into this, now I gotta know what to do. I didn't realize—I'm one of those guys who didn't pay much attention. I was an aggie, I got a state degree when I was in high school. I was one of those guys who just—I wanted to be a teacher. I knew that. But I didn't know what all it took. So I was kind of simple. So when I started to learn, it made more sense. I thought, "Man, now I know why being a band director is such a hard job." It opened my eyes, really. I realized before I graduated that this was something that you had better be sure that you were dedicated to. If not, you might want to stop now.

If you were to choose a career path again, would you still choose to teach?

Yes, definitely. It's kind of disturbing right now, being here. Teachers are leaving right and left. They're going to other states, but if I was in the same situation again, I would choose it again all over. Because I love it, I wouldn't ask for anything more (4.5).

Would you stay in [state]?

I'm loyal to [state]. Through the good times and the bad. Unless something just comes up that I could not refuse. I love this state, I love everything that the state has done for me. I know that this is where I want to be. You couldn't ask for anything more.

Jane Tipton

When you need information about music content (like a song). Do you have someone in the community or some place where you can go?

I call [laughs] another music teacher in the community and other music teachers that I know in the county. Usually the ones I call are the one I took my student teaching under. We actually attended college at the same time and they usually—she's been there longer, so she has more resources (1.21, 1.3).

Is it your student teaching supervisor that you go to quite a bit? (Uh huh). And is she pretty close to you? Could you drive there if you needed to? (Uh huh). How often do you contact her?

Probably twice a year.

Is she also a friend of yours? Do you ever get together socially?

Not very often.

When you get together, do you talk about school stuff mostly (Yep—laughs). And what types of school topics do you go into?

What kinds of things her kids are liking particularly. And if she's found anything new or different that helps them with a particular part of their skills like sight-reading or such.

And anything we like music that we've found that the kids really like, we'll share.

Do you feel like it's a reciprocal relationship? Do you give her help as often as she gives it to you? (Uh huh) It didn't start out that way (No). When did you think it become reciprocal?

Probably after a couple of years--about two or three years (1.21, 1.3).

Do you use Kodaly in your teaching?

I try. I teach them the numbers for the scale and the hand signs with the syllables just because I don't know what they're going to question them on in the test. And most of the sight reading texts that I have are mostly geared toward Kodaly and syllables. And so, I try to do that. I haven't had a lot of training in it. I know how to ascend and descend and I know so and la and me. But that's all I know (laugh) (1.25).

That should get you some place. So, do you have any textbooks that you use?

I do not have any textbooks. The only textbooks I have are the single textbooks that I have acquired during adoption years, and the textbooks that I found during workshops. Everything that I have is just what I've been able to gather up, copy and get together.

So do they let you go to a lot of staff development trainings? Like MENC/NAME?

Not very much.

Is it an issue about finding substitutes?

No, because they are good about finding substitutes. I think it's more about money. And because the distance is so far, I have to stay the night. It's just more expensive (2.17, 4.2).

So when you went to the Kodaly workshop, was it the first one you had attended in a while? (Uh-huh) And did you feel like you got a lot out of it? (Uh-huh) (1.12, 1.25) Good.

You mentioned testing. What is your community opinion of the (statewide) standards? Is the community uptight about it?

I don't think the community is as uptight about it as the school board is (3.14). The school board puts a lot of pressure on the administration, because they publish the results in the newspaper. The administration then bases everything on those test scores (2.22).

None of my other work experience has had as much to do with an emphasis on test scores.

Have you ever felt like your job's been threatened if the test scores aren't high enough?

No.

I've actually heard about districts where the jobs have been on the line based on test scores.

There's a lot of it in this county, but not particularly at our school (2.15).

Do you have staff development on site that the school district sponsors?

Yes, but I don't feel that it is very pertinent to what I'm doing.

What types of staff development do they do?

Most of it is curriculum or discipline.

You don't feel that it pertains to music teachers?

I don't feel like it's as useful as if I was with other music teachers. And you know, working on weaknesses that I have (1.21, 2.16).

What do you think your weaknesses are?

Right now I think that my biggest weakness would be harmony--getting them to sing in 3 or 4 part harmony like a choir.

Are you trying to do it with elementary school students?

No, the fifth and sixth grade. I don't know if they have a strong enough inner voice to where they can stay on their part. Toward the end of the year, they were able to do partner songs. It must have to do with experience. I don't know if the more that they do it the easier it will be. But just understanding the whole concept. Because most of them haven't even heard a three or four part choir, so they don't even know what to do themselves. They don't know what to model themselves after. I just assumed that they know what a choir is or that they know which part to sing. I assume too much.

How about when you have questions about the teaching process?

Sometimes I'll talk to my professors from college (1.22).

Do you ever look to anyone from your district for help with that type of thing?

Just my mentor teacher person who I did my student teaching program with (1.21).

Do you ever have a district assigned mentor? When a new teacher comes into the district, does anyone ever formally take them under their wing? (No). I was wondering if you ever

had anyone who you've sort of guided along (No). (2.21) Do you live in the community?

Kind of. We have teacherages (3.18).

Really? Boy, is that an old concept!

So during the week, when we stay late at night to teach, or the night before I have duty, I'll stay.

It's almost like a dorm setting?

They have some houses that are back behind the school and they have some of them a couple of miles away from school.

Otherwise, how far do you live from school?

About 72 miles.

Oh, my goodness. No wonder you stay overnight.

We're still in the same county. We're just at different ends of the county (4.2).

So, who supports you professionally at school?

My principals, and my superintendent is wonderful. I'm real lucky this year to have both principals support my program. And my superintendent is real open to the needs I have for the program (2.22). When I did the Christmas program and I had all of the kids in there at one time. The teachers just came and sat. And really, I've never thought about it

per say, because I'm used to working with a large number of kids and having that kind of responsibility(2.12). But they were really supportive, and asked if there was anything they could do. Getting their costumes together and all of that stuff. And complimented me about how orderly and controlled (the kids were) and how the kids behaved so well. And really, all they had to do was sit. And that impressed them to where if I had anything that I wanted for the rest of the year, they were like, "Oh, what can I do? Let me help, let me help." My peers support me (2.21), my administration (2.22), my parents (2.25) are real good as long as you let them know enough ahead of time what they need to have, and they'll go out and get it (3.17). The communication there is really good, and the parents are real good to come in and volunteer, because they know that their kids are benefiting from it. And they want them to have music so bad (2.25, 3.23).

The kids do? (Yeah)(2.23) Does the community want it too? (Yeah) (3.23).

Have you ever had a job related conflict? With a parent or a teacher or a student?

I have in the past, like when I worked at Kingston. But not anywhere else (2.23, 2.25, 3.23).

How supportive is the administration about decisions that you make?

Oh, they are great. They ask no questions. If they're sent to the office, they're taken care of (2.22).

And do you ever have parents come in and say, "You can't talk to my child" or anything like that? (No) That's got to be a positive for that community.

They want you to treat their kids just like they were your kids (2.25).

Are there any other musicians in the community that you make music with? (Yes) What kinds of things do you do with them?

We've prepared some things. We've played with them. We've helped them polish some things and helped them get ready for some fund raising things where the guys dressed up like girls. We've done some church stuff and I don't know. That's probably about it (3.15).

Are there times when the community ever came to you as the expert, and say, "I need this song. I'm going to sing at this wedding, I'm going to sing at this funeral." And you become the expert (Yeah). What types of help have you given to them for that?

Preparing Easter stuff and a couple of weddings and Christmas (3.15).

How are your relationships with students?

I think they're real positive.

The fact that you had four girls in the choir interests me. What was your relationship like with them?

I don't know how to describe it. I'm more like another mother. They would probably tell me more than they would tell their mother. Like maybe a big sister kind of thing.

Well, the reason I'm asking is that often times in the arts our relationships are stronger than they are in the core classes. It's because we're all making music together. So I was wondering if that kind of relationship had been developed with those girls.

Yeah. One of 'em was dating a guy in the service. And he was sent to Iraq. And he got to come home on a ten-day leave before they sent him back. And over those ten days, we were out [of school] for Thanksgiving. And he proposed to her. So when she got back, she had to tell us about it step by step. The whole ordeal, blow by blow. And we were all sitting there, hugging and crying. It was really neat.

Does that make you nervous at all, when seventeen year olds get engaged?

A little bit. Not really. She's real mature and she comes from a good family. And most of her family is military.

Was he a home-town boy, someone she grew up with? A boy next door?

Yeah, they've been dating for quite some time (2.23).

How long have you been at this position?

This will be my second year.

Oh, so you've only been at this position for one year.

At this district.

So before that, where were you at?

Lemondale.

And before that?

Kingston.

And it comes to nine years total?

Five years at Kingston and four years before that in (state). I did gifted and talented there.

Have you always taught in rural schools?

Yeah (laughs).

As far as community involvement, do you have any chance to get involved with the community? (Yeah--emphatically) Is that perhaps the community expectation?

The school IS the community. I mean, this last year, we had a little boy in kindergarten.

And they found a brain tumor. And the school—especially the elementary school—is always the one who did the fundraisers for the family. I think we did four different

fundraisers. And I think they raised over \$2,000 for each different fundraiser. We had

auctions and dinners and bake sales and all kinds of stuff (2.17). The teachers are the first

ones to reach out and help those families. And it's just the teachers you know that come together and do it (2.21).

So the teachers spearhead this (Yes). Do a lot of the teachers live in the community, then? (Yes). Do they expect you to do any sorts of community things?

No, I had my high school music class and my general music kids put together a Veteran's Day program because I thought the community might like it if I put one together. They didn't. They were glad I put it together, and they welcomed it. And they enjoyed it, and everybody participated and supported me. But they really don't expect anything except for a Christmas program (2.12, 3.13).

And in the Christmas program, are you doing sacred and secular literature?

Mostly sacred. The district's philosophy is that until someone has a complaint, we're going to do it this way. And I actually had one family, where they had two children in my music class. They wrote a letter for each one and they said that they didn't feel that the program was serious enough (2.12, 2.25, 3.17).

So do you have any teachers that you socialize with in the district? At lunchtime or another time?

Oh, not really at lunchtime. I sit with the superintendent's wife at lunchtime. That's only because she's also—yeah, we have a few that sit together...the counselor, the special ed teacher, we sit together. That's in the cafeteria. Then after school...we do assemblies and every grade has a month that they do the assembly for, so we sit and visit and try to plan those out after school.

Do you do anything socially, like the Christmas party or staff parties?

Oh, yeah. Christmas party, we have a dinner at the end of the year, and that kind of thing.

[We have a] faculty picnic (2.21).

I imagine with commuting you don't have a whole lot of time for getting really good friendships going.

Well, surprisingly, we have made about a handful of pretty good friends. People who I can call and say, "Could you do this for me? Or would you do that for me?" (2.21)

Those are school friends (Yeah). Is there anyone in the community who goes beyond professional support to give you personal support?

Well, we go to a little church up there (3.12)...

In that community you do?

Yes. And one of the teachers is the preacher's wife, And the song director is the principal. And the pianist is the secretary.

Do you do social things with them in the context of the church? (Uh huh).

And how often do you go up to church?

Twice a month or so.

On Sunday mornings?

Yes. Usually when we're in school, we're there every Wednesday night (3.23, 3.21).

Why did you become a music teacher?

I started teaching private lessons when I was in the eighth grade. I love music and I love sharing it with young kids, you know. I always knew that's what I wanted to do. I could teach and be successful and it wasn't just my success, it was them achieving. And me just being able to be different and experience different things that normally they wouldn't be

able to experience. Because of financial hardships or different things, you know. And when I taught private lessons, if I felt that someone was really serious about it or really wanted to learn but didn't have the money, I would just work it out with them. So that way, it may be the one thing that they're really good at. And it would help them to stay in school, and it helped them, you know, broaden their friends base. Give them some roots and somebody from the outside who cared for them and could encourage them. So I always do that. But when I do my student teaching, and was thrown into that classroom where the kids didn't want to be there, didn't want to learn, and didn't like the classroom. That turned me off. I wanted to be with kids who wanted to do it. So just maturity, I guess. I knew that my classroom wouldn't be like that. And I've never had a problem trying to encourage someone or make them be enthusiastic about music and not want to do anything they're doing (2.23).

Who were your earliest models?

My elementary music teacher was also the pianist at my church. And the youth choir at my church was a big deal. I loved that. And she and her husband were in charge of it. He was the director, and she played the piano. And she didn't give piano lessons. But I always kind of wanted to be just like her, wanted to do just like her. I really only had probably three piano teachers growing up. But they all taught differently and I learned something from all of them (3.12, 1.21, 1.3).

Were they all good teachers?

Yes. I think they were (laughs). They were good to me.

So your first job was in Kingston. Isn't it around an hour and a half commute one way?

(Yes, it was awful) *Did your husband say, "We're moving. That's it. You can't commute there anymore? (Yes)(4.2) You just took one year and said, "That's enough."*

Well, the first year that I moved to the city, I got the job at Kingston. We didn't get up there until late July, so it was the only job offer that I had. And I took that job and drove back and forth (4.2). And I really did not like it. I did not like the administration. I didn't like—I just didn't feel right. Without discussing it with (my husband) or anything, I just saw the superintendent in the hall one day and I told him that I didn't plan on being there the next year.

Oh. Did they act surprised?

No, not really (2.22).

They sensed your unhappiness.

There was a great big turn over that year anyway.

Was it because of the superintendent?

No. The person who's place he took. It was the high school principal who was the biggest problem for me. And the elementary principal was almost as bad. Trying to be the superintendent. And they ran the (Superintendent) off that was there. It was all politics (2.22).

How did you end up coming to the profession a little bit later than usual?

The year that I did my observation and student teaching, I decided I did not want to teach school. I had already taught private lessons for about nine or ten years. And the opportunity came up to buy the studio where I had studied. And so I bought the studio and just gave private lessons, and then I just quit college.

So how close were you to finishing when you quit college?

Nine hours.

Oh my gosh. Did you go back and finish those nine hours eventually?

Yes.

Did you have to do extra? (Yes). And re-student teach? (Yes) Wow.

But my husband encouraged me to do that because we're both musicians and played with a group. And we didn't have a set, steady income. And so he wanted to go back and finish school and his degree. So I just went ahead and did mine, too (3.21).

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

A musician who's a teacher.

Can you tell me why?

Because I've performed. Most of my kids are encouraged and excited about learning because they see me be able to perform. Does that make any sense? (4.4)

Sure. What's the best part of the job?

Actually getting to teach forty minutes with the kids.

What do you like least?

Duty (4.3).

What kinds of duties do you have?

I have breakfast duty.

And that's when you have to stay in the teacherage.

Well, yes, most of the time, I do.

Is music teaching what you thought it would be? Has it been good for you?

Yeah, it is. I wouldn't do anything else.

If you were to choose a career again, would you follow the same career path?

Yes.

No regrets?

No regrets (4.5).

Irene Vacek

When you have questions about teaching music, do you have someone or somewhere that you go to?

Yes, I usually e-mail (I used to call) fellow directors, especially the vocal and band directors at Linda's Falls. Mr. Young has been around since the dinosaur ages. And he knows everything, so I call him a lot. And Ms. Haek—she hasn't taught that long, but she has a wonderful knowledge base. She's at Linda's Falls also, and then the gal from Cougar's Teeth, I talk to her a lot (1.21).

Are they all people from your conference? (Yes) Do you get together with them during concert band clinics? And do you have planning sessions for those?

What we've kind of started doing at the clinic when we're all sitting around and the director is working with the band. We get together and decide who we're going to try to hire for the next year. And we try to pick out a few songs. We go from there. Some songs are in our files, and we try to pick a few new ones (1.12).

When you pick clinicians, how do you choose them? What types of directors have you had in the past?

We've had like University UU directors or University HH, and Professor H from University JJ before. Sometimes we've had to use guys from Panapoly, or someone from Class A schools. Or college directors (1.22, 1.24).

Do you try to pick directors where you think the kids might actually go to college?

Not necessarily. Professor C is wonderful, and Professor I. We usually try to cycle those two through so the kids get to have them once every four years. Cuz they do a nice job (1.22). Some of those kids are going to go to those schools. But not all of them.

When you do your conference clinics, do all of the kids get to go?

No, we have a try-out. And we go to Linda's Falls. And we have to do it on Saturday. I'm always amazed at kids participate. It's terrible. Most other conferences are on a Tuesday. Our try-outs are the first Saturday in February and the conference is the third Saturday in March. I think that it's amazing that the kids do it. But they do (2.14).

That is interesting. As far as the people in your conference, are they pretty stable? Or do certain schools keep cycling through?

Pretty stable. We have actually gained since I've taught here. We started out with about eight schools. We were up to eleven last year, and this year, Morton is adding in.

Is Morton a similar size to Deer River?

Well, they've shrunk. They used to be a lot bigger. Now, they're just a little bigger (4.2).

Do you ever go to conventions or workshops? (Yes) What's the last one you went to?

American Choral Directors. I didn't stay the whole time. This summer.

Did you feel like they had what you needed?

Oh, yeah. They did a wonderful job. I always go to MENC/NAME, too.

Do they do a pretty good job too?

I think so. I think we have a pretty strong organization. I used to always go to Bandmasters in the summer, too. But then when I went to get my Master's, I kinda got out of the habit. And I didn't teach band for a couple of years (1.25). And now my kids are in baseball, and I keep thinking that I don't have that many more years with them. I figure once my children are not doing baseball every night of the summer (3.21)...

You won't know what to do with yourself.

Then I'll go to some of those things again. But I do try to go to band things at

MENC/NAME.

When you go to MENC/NAME, do you try to do a little bit of band, a little bit of chorus, a little bit of general music?

Yeah, I do try to mix it up. Although I think that—last year, (famous music educator) was here, and I really like him. So I went to all of his sessions.

He's fun. He's a fun guy.

That was neat. So I probably went to more general music stuff last year (1.12, 1.25).

How about if you have questions about things other than musical content. Process, lesson plans, discipline. Do you have anyone you go to about that?

Oh, I used to go to the principal. I don't so much anymore.

You probably have a good handle on things.

But as far as discipline, I probably talk to my principal.

And have you maintained the same principal through the years?

No. They stay quite a few years, but I've worked under different principals and different superintendents. This is about the fourth superintendent at Deer River.

In how many years?

About eighteen years.

Four superintendents in eighteen years is really not that bad. It's not like some of the schools that I've interviewed where it's been a revolving door.

The gentleman we have now, it's his third year. Although the administration we have right now is not very music wise. Neither one of them are real good.

So what's your relationship like with administration?

The administration we have right now I'm probably not as close to. I really liked the principal—the last one was a former music teacher. But he struggled being an administrator. I think he's—this was his first job. He's much better now, since he's changed schools. He had a habit of promising things, and not following through with them. I think he wanted to do things, but it's hard to always do things. With money and that kind of stuff. Otherwise, music wise, he was pretty supportive of me.

Was it difficult since he was a former music teacher?

It was kind of hard at times. You know what I mean? Sometimes, he'd criticize, but yet, the next time he'd be more than helpful. But he and I differed a little bit on philosophies. For instance, for music contest. I know that they're not all going to get ones. But if they want to try to do a solo, I have always let everybody go. Some of them aren't going to get ones. His philosophy was that we should only take the ones who could get ones (2.14). Those kinds of things we differed on. But on things like equipment and stuff, he was wonderful. The principal that was before him was not a music person, but I really liked him. I probably got along with him the best (2.22).

So have you had conflicts with students in the past? Where the parents had to get involved?

Oh yeah. Yes. I've had really good luck. But I always try to go to the administration right away when things happen (2.22).

So they hear your side first. (both laugh) Always a wise choice. They hate it when they get blindsided on the other side. They get pretty unhappy with people when that happens.

How about your relationship with students? We've talked about your relationship as mother, but how about your relationship as teacher?

Sometimes, it's weird. I try to keep a professional demeanor and I'm not afraid to discipline (2.23). This may sound like bragging, but I believe my own children have a great group of friends (3.21).

That helps a lot.

They really do.

Is music required on the junior high level?

Yes.

I think that's a special kind of hell to get through.

I don't have so many problems—you know, they start getting weird in sixth grade. So junior high is not always fun. Right now, this year, it's going pretty well. But I'm thinking of years past. The kids that are seniors, they were incredible. We have a bunch of kids who've dropped out. That class was the class from hell.

They've dropped out?

They were terrible kids. I've never seen anything like them. A lot of them have dropped out of school. So the class isn't so bad anymore. They were terrible in junior high. I've never seen a class like that. It was awful. Every time a new teacher got that class, they said, "Oh, my gosh. What hit me (2.23)?"

Did the drop outs just stay around Deer River?

A few of them. A couple of them have moved, one's in jail. Interesting.

Do you have any extra duties at school?

I'm a class sponsor. I follow them through. This year, it's sophomore.

So next year, it's the big one with the junior class. (Right) Do you rotate every four years, or every six years?

Six years. But sometimes you get a few years off. I was off for a while. Then I came back. I've been here long enough. When you're a junior sponsor, you do it for two years. So the gal that was junior sponsor this year will help me next year. So that's nice.

Then you'll help someone else later on. That's a great idea, because the junior class can be just amazing. How big of a deal is the prom in your community?

It's pretty big. Pretty big. It's what you raise money for (2.13). And then the senior year, the principal always takes them. He just does that every year (2.22).

Oh really? That's kind of a neat deal.

It works out pretty good. As long as everyone takes their "turn"(2.21).

Do the elementary teachers support you?

I think so, yeah. There are a couple of them that aren't very supportive, but they don't support anybody.

It's nothing personal against you, then. Do you feel that the elementary teachers value you as a teacher, or do they look at you as the person who provides planning time for them?

Both. The planning time is important to them.

But do they value music as a subject?

I think so.

How about your relationships with all of your colleagues? Is there anyone that you're especially close with?

Yeah, there are a couple of teachers. Actually, in a couple of cases, there are some wives of staff members that I'm even closer to (2.21, 3.22).

Do you do things socially with them?

Yes, and then they have some kids who are my son's age, and I'm close with their parents (2.25, 3.21, 3.22).

Does your staff do things socially?

You know, it's weird. There are some of us who do a lot. Then there are others who never come to anything. So you know, you just don't worry about it. But there's a group of us who—like after a ball game, you go over to their house (2.21).

Do you have a lot of family in the area?

Yeah, except for—it's also my husband's family who lives around here. Some of my family is, you know, dying.

I was just thinking if you had problems, would you call these friends? Or would you call your family (3.21)?

I could call my friends (3.22).

Do you have a music booster group? (Yes) Do they call themselves band boosters, music boosters, music parents...?

Music parents is what they call themselves.

What types of support have they offered?

Mostly fundraising (2.17).

And what do you fund raise for?

Well, the band trip. A major trip every four years. And an overnight trip every two years, the opposite two years (2.25).

And you said that's the band. What about the choir?

No. I have such a higher turn over rate for the choir. And a lot of them who are in band are also in the choir. *(So that would be double dipping)*. So I haven't really pushed that

too much. And we've fund raised for band uniforms. The school paid for half, and the band boosters came up with the other half. And we do give scholarships if someone wants to go to music camp.

That's cool. And isn't there a big camp at University UU?

Most go to the junior high and middle school camp.

Isn't that over by Davidson somewhere?

They've—it was at Hyde Village, then it was in Chandler. This year, it's in Davidson.

That's cool. This will be a different question for you since you've lived in Deer River for most of your life. I've been asking people, when you move to the district, do you have someone in the community, who's not affiliated with the school, that kind of keeps a pulse on what's going on in the community, and you can go to them and say, "Have you heard anything about the..." Just to let you know about things that are happening in the community that you might not be aware of?

I have friends who aren't affiliated with the school. But I would say that most of my circle of friends is associated with the school in some way (2.21, 3.22).

Like I said, you're in a different position because most of the people who I've been asking the question have been new to the community. So normally, you have to become an insider. But I think that you already have an inside track if you were raised there. Was the sensation like "Welcome Back, Kotter"? Was there a feeling of coming home? How difficult was it to walk back into your old school?

I didn't ever think I'd be teaching in Deer River. It's much easier now. But it was hard at first.

I would imagine. Did some of your former teachers look at you like, "What are you doing back here?"

I had teachers (and they're still there) who taught me. So that was weird.

Can you call them by first names?

Oh, yeah. Now it's fine. But it was weird at first.

Did they have a hard time perceiving you as an adult?

I never felt that that part was too bad, because I was not the first teacher to come back.

There are many teachers in our school system who graduated from Deer River.

Isn't that interesting. Did you know some of them as children, then again as adults?

You mean the fellow teachers? Yes (2.21).

And how was that? (Pretty good) Did they keep a professional demeanor? (Yes). I can't imagine having a conflict with a parent and having them say, "I knew you in Junior High. You were a so and so then." There's no psychic distance.

Fortunately, I was pretty good all the time. People are pretty professional most of the time (2.25, 3.17, 3.23).

Do most of the teachers live in town?

No. There are several of them who do. But there are many who commute from Panapoly and Valley Crest.

Do you think that the proximity to those major population areas keep the teaching population stable? (Yes) Even though you're rural, you're not extremely rural. You're close to a couple of large communities (Right) (4.2). Do you think that also impacts the community? Are they open to new people, or do they have a culture that's not quite so welcoming?

Not bad, but there are groups that are cliques. So it's hard for a newcomer. And everyone's related to each other.

But you're a part of who's related, aren't you?

Yes. I teach my niece and nephew and some of my cousins (2.23, 3.22).

Are there pressures on those folks to become a member of your musical groups?

I don't think it's too bad.

Are they all members?

Not all of them. But my nephew and niece are right now. I don't know if I'll keep my niece, though. She's in band. I can tell that it's not necessarily her thing. But we'll see (3.21).

And have you had your own children in your classes? (Yes) What's that like?

Not too bad. They're pretty good kids, we get along pretty well.

Are they able to maintain the teacher student relationship as well as the mother/child one?

Not real great, but you know every child in the school, anyway.

And when you have kids over for slumber parties, how does everyone handle that?

Well, sometimes they call me Irene, but I tell them they have to call me Mrs. Vacek at school. I feel like Mrs. Vacek at school. So I correct them. They're pretty good kids (2.23, 3.22).

A school name and a home name. Do you ever have parents come up to you and say, "My child is hanging out with Buck. What do you think? Is Buck a good influence?"

I have had that happen.

And what do you do?

It's tough (2.25, 3.23).

Do you talk to them as parent, or do you talk with them as teacher?

It depends on the situation. But it happens. This gal moved to town this year, and I saw her in the grocery store. And I hate that.

I remember that conferencing thing in the grocery store. I hated that, too.

You know what? I didn't answer her. I just kind of smiled. And she answered her own question.

What did she say?

She said, "This gal—her name is Amy—wants to hang around with my daughter. And then Hannah—her daughter—keeps getting into trouble. I just am worried about Amy."

And I just stood there and smiled. And she said, "I just don't think she should be hanging around with Amy." I never even said a word. I just smiled. And I nodded my head a little bit. But I didn't say a word. You know, you just can't...I just don't like the grocery store thing. It bothers me. But sometimes, it's where you catch people (3.17).

It's the same with football games and basketball games. What is your relationship like with parents?

Pretty good. I have had some run-ins with some parents. But you know, it's mostly parents who are new to the community (2.25).

So they may not know your expectations or the whole school's expectations?

A lot of times, I think that it's parents who probably had a bad experience themselves growing up in schools. And then they don't support the school. I don't have too many run ins. I'm not going to say never. But only once in awhile (3.14).

If I came into Deer River and asked the community about you, what would people say about you?

Some of them would say I'm busy. I do a lot of church. I don't know (3.12, 3.23).

Does the community value music?

There are a lot of people who do, but there are also people who don't. I'll tell you again, that the people who've lived here—and I'm not saying that it's everyone. But the people who are less likely to support me are the lower income, that don't...

Are they the outsiders that have just moved to the community? (Yeah) In other words, not the long timers (yeah) (3.14, 3.23). Are there musicians in your community?

Yeah. But we don't have many people anymore who can actually play. They haven't taken piano lessons long enough (1.11).

Do you teach piano?

I used to. I don't anymore. I just don't have time.

Does somebody in the community teach piano?

Yeah, there's a gal (3.15).

Does the community of Deer River have any musical traditions? Do they have any expectations about things you should be doing? Things you've noticed through the years that they really want to maintain?

Oh, you have to march in the Deer River parade. It's our summer celebration.

You get the band together during the summer?

Yes, I have a pretty good turn-out. I have a few that don't show up, but most of them are pretty good about getting there (2.11, 3.13, 3.14).

So the kids realize that it's an expectation, too. That they'd better be there.

Memorial Day, I don't have a very good turn out. But a lot of those kids camp or go out of town. But we get by. I have about a dozen kids (2.23).

Do you march out to the cemetery?

Actually, they take a bus out there, then we play.

Do you march on the field plus street marching?

I don't anymore. I did when I first got here. Then I had a real small band. But athletics have just taken over in the morning and after school. They never used to do that in the morning (3.14). We do have early band some mornings. But we don't do it every morning like we used to because of sports. It's tough (2.11).

What's the expectation for Christmas program?

We just have one program.

Is it K-12?

Actually, we have two programs I should say. Elementary K-6, then high school 7-12. Then in the spring, I have the fifth and sixth grade band play on the high school concert. The other elementary students don't perform. I have a fine arts evening in the spring, where a few select groups perform. And then the speech kids do a few things--more of a variety (2.12).

Do they expect costumes and props, the whole extravaganza?

No. Once I took over I told them that I won't do that. And actually, I have had a positive response from the community. Sometimes I use small props for songs, but I try not to go too crazy. I don't do a whole play. There's not time to practice with the kids. Now the gal before me, who taught elementary music part-time, she always did a little play. It was a totally different situation. She could find time to practice with them at different times

during the day. So, I can't because I have high school. I told them that I can't, and they said that's fine (2.12, 3.14, 3.17, 3.23).

Have you always taught in your school district?

I've taught in three. Two prior to this one.

Tell me about your districts.

They were both a little bit smaller—Class D districts.

You can tell me names, then I'll erase them.

Cupid's Bow, (state) and it was a class C school. Not too far from Panapoly.

Did you commute there? (Yes). K-12? (Yes). How long did you work there?

One year.

And what was your assignment?

I had 5-12 band and 7-12 vocal.

So you lived there with your husband.

Yes. Then my husband got a different job, so we moved back to Deer River, which is where I grew up. And he grew up here, too. We lived in Deer River. Then I commuted to Manners, and I did K-12 everything there. I commuted out with two other people. I had to drive myself a lot, though.

With all the basketball games and the other obligations you had.

But it was pretty good—at least some days I didn't have to go by myself.

How long did you teach there?

Four years.

And then Deer River came open?

Yes. I was not going to change jobs. But they approached me. It came open in June and I had to get out of my contract. In Manners. But it was nice because that was about the time we started having children. So I didn't have to commute (4.1).

Why did you become a music teacher?

Pretty much everybody in my family played in band. And several of them sang also. My sister-in-law was a very good singer. My step-sister practiced the piano every day. It was a lot in my family. And then my one sister, she was an elementary music teacher. I was an afterthought. I was fifteen years younger than my next sibling. My mother died when I was young, and dad remarried, so I also have two step-sisters.

Younger than you are?

No, older. I'm still the youngest by quite a bit. So I was around music a lot and I found I liked it quite a bit. I thought I'd become a teacher. I had some success in my school.

When I went to college, I found out I was pretty terrible compared to some of the others.

Don't you think that happens a lot when you come from a small school? You're a leader.

You've always been asked to do things like sing at funerals or weddings. And when you hit college, you realize that other students are bright, too. I wasn't very strong in theory. I nearly changed my major when I was a freshman. I enjoy it, though. I like what I am doing. Otherwise, I don't think I'd still be doing it.

You talk about your family being good early models. Can you think of anyone else being good models for you for becoming a teacher?

We had band directors in Deer River change every couple of years.

Mr. McAllister was a good buddy of mine.

He stayed here three years, and he was the first one to stay for three years since the 1960's. They might stay two years, then they left. I came right after he left and I've been here ever since. I really like Mr. McAllister. And the kids really liked him a lot. He did a good job.

Getting back to the other models. So you had a lot of band directors who came through there when you were a student. Were they the good, the bad and the ugly, or were they all pretty good?

All pretty good. The two I was closest to were Ms. Fuchs (and she's still teaching in this state) and Mr. Hahn (and he's still teaching). [chat] I talk to Mr. Hahn all the time.

What's the best part of the job?

I really enjoy it when the kids accomplish something. When they work hard and it pays off, you know.

How about the worst part of the job?

I hate the discipline. Especially when in my junior high general music when they hate to be there. I hate that discipline part (4.3).

Do you feel more like a teacher who is a musician, or a musician who is a teacher?

At this point in my life, I'm more of a teacher who is a musician.

And why is that?

I don't get to perform as much anymore. The guitar thing is it and singing at funerals.

That's pretty much it for music.

For a while, I did play in a community band. Panapoly has one, and Valley Crest has one. But you have to cut something when you have kids. Maybe some day, I'll get back to that (1.11).

Are you able to make music with anybody in the community?

Yes. We're Catholic, and we have guitar mass nearly every Sunday. So there's a bunch of us who play guitar. So that's fun (1.11, 3.12).

Do you lead that group, then?

Oh, kind of. Except if I'm not there, there's another gal.

So it's not a paid position.

No. I don't get paid for that.

It's good that least you have someone to make music with in the community.

See, actually my friend from high school that I used to sing with all the time, she started singing with us again. It's just been wonderful. I absolutely love singing with her, and our voices blend.

That's always a nice experience.

Yes, it's fun (4.4).

If you were going to give advice to rural music teachers about what you think makes a rural music program strong, what would you say?

You need to get to know the kids and the families (2.23, 2.25). Don't leave after a few years (4.1). But I can see why teachers burn out. I sometimes feel that way. Usually at the beginning of the year, I do things a lot. I know that I may not get things done by tomorrow but it'll get done. I try not to promise unless I can deliver. I don't tell them that I can get things done by tomorrow. I think you have to do things with your family so that you don't get burned out (3.21). And right now, I'm still doing a lot of school stuff. But in another month, I won't be doing things every night like I am right now. I can't.

It's hard to maintain that type of schedule.

And we go to almost all of the athletic events. We did that even before we had kids. And I think that's another thing. You need to get involved with a lot of the activities, a lot of the things at school. Don't think that the school revolves around music. I think that's a severe problem, especially with new teachers. They've been conditioned to be selfish and to think that music is the only thing. That's it. You see, when they hired the band director, we had forty-some kids. I was averaging in the upper thirties. And they all quit.

Because of the band director?

Yes. He was good, but he was a first year teacher, and he made the mistake of saying, "If you don't want to do this, you can get out of here." And they quit.

They got out of there.

The ones that stayed, he was very good to. So now, we're trying to build back up. And Deer River has never had a huge, huge band anyway. I hope to get it back into the forties again. We're back up to the thirties (2.24).

It's always hard to build things back up. Is music teaching what you thought it would be?

Oh, I think so. I was around and helped the directors enough. I think so.

If you were to choose a career again, would you follow the same career path?

I don't know. There are times when music is tough.

If you didn't teach, what would you do?

If I didn't teach music, I would probably still be a teacher. I really think so (4.5).

Just maybe not music.

Maybe elementary. Because I really like the elementary age. I love that age. Maybe the other thing is, maybe some sort of secretarial thing. I could never work in a factory. One thing I love about music is that you can do new music almost every year. You do some

pep band things the same. I never use the same vocal things. I'm not saying that you don't reuse some things.

You have to reuse some stuff for economic reasons, if nothing else (2.17).

But a lot of times I try to do different things so that the kids have different things during their high school careers. Band-wise, I've never done the same thing concert after concert. I have recycled some things. And that's what I love about music. There's so many songs.

Any regrets?

No, none (4.5).

Marie Yonkers

When you need information about music content, do you have someone or some place that you go to?

This will be the difference between me and the other ones you've done. I actually talk to the band director a lot. We use each other for information. Also, I go online a lot when I need information (2.21).

Do you have other music teachers in your area, perhaps in smaller schools, who ever call you?

I didn't think about that. We call each other a lot in our conference.

Are there some schools in your conference that are solo music teachers, or are you all in the same size schools?

There are some who are solo. And just recently. There are departments that have been cut down. I believe that Lonewolf has been cut down. I didn't get to go to the meeting this year. We have a meeting at the beginning of the year, but I didn't get to go. But I believe that they only have one person now.

For the whole district?

No. One person secondary. And I know that at one time, Barrington was doing the whole thing with only one person, then a half time assistant who was helping in one area or the other. I'm not sure how they divided it.

Do you ever go to conventions or workshops for music education?

Yes. I go to the All-State MENC/NAME convention every year. Whenever my kids get into honor choirs, there's a lot of times when there are workshops there. I don't go to

reading sessions very much. I'd like to. It tends to be something that I don't have enough time for (1.25).

You mean during the summer? Those reading sessions?

Either in the summer or sometimes in November. In Chandler in November, they have some smaller reading sessions. Like that. But I don't get to a lot of those.

Do the music conventions have a tendency to have the things that you need?

Yes. They have had a lot in the past. As a matter of fact one of the first ones I went to in Chandler was all on technology. I mean, not all, but primarily. And I came back from that with enough ideas that I started a music tech lab. I still have all the notes I took from all those music sessions, too (1.12).

Do you feel like the professional organizations are pretty responsive to the needs of smaller schools?

I think it's geared more towards the bigger schools. There are some sessions, and those are usually the ones I hit. But a lot of it is geared towards the larger schools. Umm, and the more—for example, when you go to a conference...I have high school chorus for twenty-six minutes a day. *(Oh, my gosh! How did they think of such a small time period?)*

I kind of did it to myself in a way. Because it used to be, when I came Laceyville, one of the big reasons they hired me was because they weren't getting kids into the program.

And they said that they wanted to make the program grow, and figure out how to get more kids in the program, and blah blah blah. And one of the big conflicts was that kids couldn't be in band and chorus. [The band kids] can read music, and they are generally the top kids. And band used to be in a separate period. We moved band to fifth period during lunch. And we have band for the first lunch, chorus for the second lunch, then we

all eat lunch during third lunch. This year, the groups have gotten so big that we split.

And honors choir has first lunch, then band, then third choir. So it's a challenge. When I go to convention, and they say, "You need to do this with the music." I don't get to do the finishing touch stuff very much (1.12, 2.12, 2.18).

Yeah, twenty-six minutes is not much time.

And now, I'll be able to do a little bit more. Because the select choir are the kids who really excel at that stuff. So they'll pick up the music a lot faster. But when you're doing the full choir...And I'm not that unusual. A lot of people will have fifty minutes but every other day. I'd rather have them every day. And the minute that first bell rings, I'm playing warm-ups. And they're warming up as they're getting their folders and taking their seats. And as soon as that bell rings, we're singing. We don't waste a minute. We can't.

Do you have an accompanist?

No, I don't.

And how is that for you?

It's not the best situation. I'm pretty accomplished at the piano, and I can do what I need to do. It's very difficult for us to find somebody because we're out in the middle of the country, and because the district doesn't have a lot of extra money (2.17, 2.19, 4.2).

So do you get somebody right before contests and concerts?

I have accompanied all of them. I've accompanied everything. Even when we perform. I have a couple of students that I'm bringing along right now. And I have them play a couple of pieces. But they're not able to handle the kind of music that we've done. Like,

we did the Neighbor's Chorus. I don't have anyone who can play that. We've done the Gypsy...

Zigeunerleben.

Yes. And we always get a note [from the judges] that says, "It would be nice if you could find an accompanist." I know that (1.23, 2.19).

They've changed the rules then. Because when I took the kids to contest, the rule was that you HAD to have an accompanist. It was very difficult. No taped accompaniment. And for solo and small ensembles, I could accompany them. But not for large ensembles.

I do a capella music as much as I can. It will be easier now with my select choir because they can read better. Because the full choir is just anyone who wants to be in there.

How many kids do you have involved in the choir this year?

Seventy-three.

In the concert choir?

Well, I have—what I did was with my scheduling, if they're in select choir and not in band, they have to be in my full choir, too. So I have forty kids in my select choir. And I have fifty-three in my choir. Of course, there's an overlap of about twenty kids.

And then the rest of them are also in band, so they're not in your concert choir. (Yes).

That's a really great idea. So how many kids are in school?

About two hundred and fifty.

So you have about twenty-five percent. And I think that's good for any size of school to have over twenty percent.

When I first came to Laceyville, we had twelve in the choir.

And how long have you been there?

Five years. This is starting on my sixth year.

That's really good.

And I can give a lot of that credit to the principal that we had when I first got there. He was the principal of the 7-12 graders. And he gave me anything that I wanted. He let me—when I got here, the seventh graders only had choir one trimester per year. And eighth graders, everyone in eighth grade was in one class, in one room. And he let me reorganize and revamp. And the kids were more interested once they got in the group where they were comfortable. And everyone was interested, and it was an elective. So he's done everything that he could think of to promote our program, he did it. I miss him a lot (2.22).

Does the community have any traditions that they expect you to keep up?

Not really here, because like I said, when I came there was hardly anything left.

How about Christmas programs?

Well, I didn't know this when I came, but before I came, they never did any traditional songs on the Christmas concerts. For about five years. And they also never did the fun, goofy stuff at the concert. It was all standard, top-notch music. And I appreciate that. But they also never had anybody come. The parents didn't even want to come to the concerts (2.12).

Oh, that's so sad.

And I have tons of people who come to my concerts now (3.23). And I didn't realize this. We always do a mix. In the high school, I let the kids choose everything. But I give them the parameters. Like, I'll pick four or five gospel pieces, and then they'll have to choose

one of them. Or I'll pick something like the Messiah or something like that, and they'll have to choose from those. And we do something goofy, and they choose that. And we always do a pop thing, and they choose that. And we do a traditional. So we have a good variety. And we have a lot of people who say that they really appreciate that because the concerts are more fun to go to (2.12).

How about if you have questions about process? Lesson plans, long term planning, discipline?

A lot of that I—we have a new principal this year. But the principal we had last year, I would go to him with a lot of that stuff (2.22). I have contacted other teachers that I know. Not really other teachers in the district (2.21). But I have a friend who teaches in Nichols who I went to college with. Not Nichols, Hollywood. She used to teach in Nichols. We went to college together. So we do a lot of that stuff back and forth (1.21).

You said that the principal's new this year. Have you had many principals through the years?

Since I came, the principal who just left was there. And he used to do 7-12 grade. Then they hired an additional administrator and split the position. And then last year, two of the administrators quit. So we've had a total of five administrators in the last five years.

What about the superintendent?

The superintendent is also new this year. The other one also went on to Ashley. So we have a new superintendent this year also (2.22).

You mention something about the principal being new. And about your serving as a mentor for the principal. Do you actually serve as a mentor for the principal directly?

Or do you try to do it indirectly and subtly?

He's pretty good about asking us. He's been in the district for twenty-some years as a teacher.

Oh, so he moved up from within.

Oh yeah, he's from here, too. He's from Franzen, which is basically in this area. So he was born and raised around here, too. And he's kind of a really nice guy, but he's a little bit insecure about being firm. So if he has to take a step that he knows people will be angry with him for, he usually comes and talks to about three of us to find out, "What do you think about this?" So it's more him asking us, you know. Rather than us going in and saying, "OK, this is what you have to do." He's good about that (2.21).

That's really interesting. And he takes your advice?

He really does. There's another teacher and I. She's a head teacher this year. So she's his official sidekick. He does talk to her officially about things. But he usually gets the same answer from she and I. So it makes him feel more comfortable.

I understand that. What about the Superintendent? Is he from around here also?

The superintendent just came to us from Lambrecht.

Trying to think where Lambrecht is. Is it out by Burrack?

I think it's west and south a little bit. I thought it was west and north. But someone told me west and south. So he's from a more rural area. And we're just getting to know him, but he seems really good. He's very kid oriented. Which is always a plus in my book (2.22).

How's your relationship developing with your new principal? Is he adapting to the new role of being administrator rather than teacher pretty well?

It's very difficult for him. He's been trying really hard. He was a part of the coaching crowd. Most of the young teachers on our staff are coaches. We only have two older teachers that coach. But all of the sports have the same young teachers coaching them.

So it's the high school principal that used to be a coach.

It's kind of the good old boys gang, you know. He doesn't really follow the same beliefs that the rest of the guys do. It seems like the younger guys think that sports is life. It's not an activity for the kids. It's do or die. He was the activity director before. They have added tons of games to our schedule. It's made it nearly impossible to schedule anything. And that's probably the biggest conflict that he and I have. Because he really doesn't see that the sports thing has gotten out of hand. Even though a lot of people have confronted him about it. And it's getting very difficult. You know, I said that paperwork was my most frustrating thing. Well, I don't know. Maybe this is. It's really tough. And it's hard for Flint to see, you know. I kind of think—he's made comments to me before that make me just want to say, "Flint, you don't see what you've done." I know what it was. I volunteered to teach a competitive speaking class last year. His argument about doing that was that it would be like paying me to do an extra curricular during the school day. And I said, "And that's not the same thing as weight lifting class?" We have several coaches who do that (2.22, 2.21).

You're taunting him, though.

Yeah, but he thinks like, "Oh. I've never thought of that." And that's the problem that we have. He doesn't see it until you just blatantly point it out to him. Then he's, "Yeah. I guess that we do that." But it's still different to him. It's just kind of—its not that he's a

bad person. It's just that it's so ingrained in that thought that it's hard for him to separate why the kids are in school. But we have a superintendent who will try to equal it out.

So have you had any sort of conflicts since he's been principal? Like conflicts with students, or conflicts with parents?

No.

Have you been able to see how he'll respond to those types of things?

No. I may find this out this week.

Uh-oh. Something coming down the pike?

Well, the choir was invited to represent our county at a domestic violence conference in Valleria. And it was one of those things that you don't plan for, and you don't schedule, because we were just asked to do it. And it happens that it's on the same evening as a freshman volleyball triangular. And I have two girls who are very avid music performers. They perform all around the area. And it's an outdoor thing. And they were going to play guitars for us. And they want to do that for us. They would rather do that than play volleyball. But already we're getting a lot of stuff from the coaches, like, "This was scheduled first." And you know—it was. And I'm thinking, "You're right—it was." But this is a once in a lifetime thing. And these are kids whose priority is music. And they're not used to that. So we'll see. I haven't talked to Flint about it yet (2.12. 2.22).

That is interesting. You have no feeling about whether he'll support you or the volleyball?

I tend to think that he'll go toward the athletic side of it. But I don't know. Because these parents are really strong parents. They're not radical parents or anything (2.12, 2.25). But their kids' priority is music. And we get told all the time—Flint says this all the time. The

kids have to make choices sometimes. And that's OK as long as the choice is sports.

It depends on what the choice ends up being.

Yeah. And I had this when I was at Hartley in the early years. We would go to play competition every year. And during play competition, we would have tournament events scheduled for every sport. They would have gymnastics regional, wrestling districts.

They would have a volleyball tournament, which was a big thing for them. And they'd have basketball sub-conference. And every year we fought this because we were shuffling kids from one end of the state to the other, or they just wouldn't make it.

Because everything conflicted. So at the beginning of the year, I said, "OK, guys. You know this conflict is going to come up. You're going to have to make a choice. And this is what I was told by the activities director. And so I have a contract here. You have to sign it. And if you don't think that you can do it, don't do it." So the whole team signed it (2.23). And it took five starters off the basketball team, and two wrestlers and four of the starters in the volleyball team. So I went into the principal's office, and said, "It looks like there's going to be a conflict again." And the principal said, "Well, it looks like the kids are just going to have to choose." And I said, "That's what I told them. That they'd have to choose and sign contracts." And I threw the contracts on his desk. Because we went to state competition every year there. And they chose to go to state rather than participate in other sports. And immediately, all of those things changed. And I had been trying to get things changed for years. And so, you know, I said, "Your words were, they have to choose." And he said, "But you're taking the starting five off the basketball team." And he was the basketball coach. And I said, "Does choosing mean they have to choose your way, or does choosing mean they have to choose?"(2.18, 2.22)

Sounds like you're my kind of person. That's exactly the kind of stuff you have to do.

It's getting worse and worse, and it's getting harder and harder. The problem with that is because we have young coaches who aren't very mature in their behavior, they take it out on the kids. *(Right)* I once had it on rotation in the practices that we could practice right after school sometimes. And the teams practiced later. We had morning, afternoon and evening practices. And we all signed up and we all worked it out. And the coaches terrorized the kids so much that I never did it again after that year *(for heaven's sakes)*. They told them that they couldn't go out for drama again (2.21).

What about your relationship with your colleagues?

They can be frustrating, especially the younger, newer ones. We just moved buildings because they just finished a lot of the renovations on our building. And practically built an elementary building add-on. So it used to be that K-3, 4-6 and 7-12 at the high school. And now they've realigned it. So we had to move in the middle of the year. And when we got down to the middle school, they were showing movies every day. Because the principal had told them, "While we're getting the move done, do what you need to do. Keep the learning going on as much as possible, but we understand." It was a terrible situation. But then, they didn't quit. We moved in April. And the whole month of April and May was spent watching movies. There was one teacher who showed the entire "Roots" saga.

That would take a while [both laugh] (2.21).

And the kids would come to music and say, "Oh, this is so much fun. We've been watching movies all day. We're so sick of watching movies." [chat]. We all have fillers

for in between concerts and such, but it shouldn't last for more than three days [chat].

I've never had that much time between getting ready for things. Even in elementary.

I truly remember the first few years I taught and I had K-5 every day for a half an hour.

And it was tough finding enough stuff. And I kept my lesson plans. And I look at them now, and they were hideous. I can't even imagine what I did. It was bad.

Well, we all go through that.

It's a learning curve.

The true talent comes in figuring it out, though.

I usually ask about how people find out about the community. Do you have friends outside of the school system that kind of give you an inside scoop about how things are going in the community's perception of the district?

Oh yeah. Especially since I am a person who is in the district and in the community. I'm also on the town board here (3.16).

Like the city council?

[Laughs] Like the big city council. We do dogs. (Both laugh)

Is that your main concern?

That's probably the most heated topic that we get around here. (Mimics) Can't you take care of those dogs? My dad was on the town council years ago, and I remember him complaining about the dog issues (3.16, 3.21). And I can kind of understand it a little bit more. But I do have—people who know me will call me before they will call the principal sometimes. And say, "I'm having a problem with this teacher." Or, "I'm worried about my kid and so on." So I get calls from people who just want to talk to

someone that they know from the past rather than teachers they haven't known for very long (2.22, 3.17, 3.23).

Is Laceyville out in the middle of the country?

Yes it is. It's about three miles outside of town.

Which town is it closest to?

Trawick.

Do most of the teachers come from the immediate area, or do most commute in?

We have a pretty good mix of both. We have actually—we have a school in Trawick for elementary, then we have a school in Hunter for middle school, then the high school is out in the middle of the country. And in the high school, we probably have the biggest mix. We have a lot of teachers who come from Davidson, Chandler, Roberts. But in the elementary schools, it's probably a lot higher rate of local people.

How do you think the community feels about that?

I think that they tend to trust the local teachers more. If there's a teacher—it seems like the teachers who don't quite get the support are the ones who are from farther away (3.23).

Is it overt, or is it something subtle?

If you sit at parent-teacher conferences at our building, I—and it's not just me, it's all the people who are from around here or have been in the district for a very long time, and live around here—at parent/teacher conferences, I'm busy all night long. It's not because parents want to talk to me about their students failing, because not that many people fail my class. Or because they're that interested in the program. It's because they know me (3.17, 3.23). So a lot of people will stop and conference with us about problems their kids

are having in other classes. But it's usually classes where the people are from Chandler or Davidson or somewhere else. And I tend to tell them, "This is how I would approach this. I would tell the teacher this... (2.21)"

You tell the community members what they need to tell the teacher?

Yeah. People will stop at someone who they feel comfortable talking to. Parents might stop by and say, "My kid's failing this class, and I'm afraid of—" I've had parents say that they're afraid of a teacher. She scares me. And I tell them, "No, no. They're really nice. Just go over and tell them your concerns, you know. And you get a lot of that when you're local (2.21).

You take kids to district music contest, don't you? (Yeah). And what are the community's feelings about districts?

They don't go because it's a bad time. I mean we don't get support from their physical presence. I think they're supportive of it. We usually do fairly well at competition. And we get a lot of response from people. I have a lot of people who tell me, "I saw that your group got good ratings at contest. Congratulations." So I think basically supportive. I've never had any conflict over it (2.14, 2.21).

Do you feel that the district music contest judges are pretty good for your size of school?

Umm...I've had years, where...last year was one of those years. We did Zigeunerleben and an a capella piece. And I had directors coming up there and saying, "Oh my God. That was just wonderful." And then our rating came up, and we got a two.

Did you get straight twos?

No, we got two twos and a one. And then, this is where I get irritated with the judging. We get our tapes, and everything is glowing. Just glowing. There's not even a negative

on them. And we had one judge who didn't give us a one. And he was saying, "This was just wonderful. You had wonderful enunciation, the vowels are all similar. And this is a very difficult piece." And he was just glowing. And then he gave us a two. But the judges are all from bigger schools (1.23). So I don't know what the answer is. And we're on the cusp, too. We're a C-1 school, but because of the number of people who go to contest, we compete in class B.

Oh, so you're a small B.

We're the smallest B.

Do you think their expectations are different than if you showed up as a C-1?

That might be it. Last year, a bunch of directors were upset with the judging (1.21).

Do you remember who the judges were?

One of them was from University OO.

Professor G?

Yes. That's who it was. And you know, there was a woman from [state] who I do not know. The woman from [state] was a high school teacher. And then the other one was a high school teacher. I didn't know him. It was George something. He was from a larger, school. And I don't know what all went on. But I was approached several times. Other directors were very upset. And a number of them had seen my performance, and they were sure that I had to be upset, too (1.21).

Oh, yeah. If you have a two.

And people were coming to say, "We have to do something about these judges." And I did go and talk to the contest head. But you know, it's hard. My main thing is that they need to have some kind of schooling (1.23). If they're going to be a high school judge for

a specific class, they should be like—they have judges training for drama. And they don't do it for music. Of course, we're all trained, but especially when you're in a college setting, you kind of lose touch with what goes on in a school setting. If you haven't made an effort to go out and find out what's going on (1.12).

Absolutely. What do you see as the biggest barrier about the other teachers who are trying to break into the community culture? What are the successes and failures when breaking into your community?

Well, we've had a lot of young teachers. And we've had quite a lot of problems with that. Mainly because most of the young teachers are in the middle school. Our middle school is comprised of 99%, maybe 98% of teachers who are under the age of 28. And there are some teachers who've been there the longest—and by that, I mean more than five years. And their principal is also very young. He's under thirty, I believe. The one's who've been there longer don't tend to be good role models sometimes for the others. The biggest problem we've had with them is drinking in the community (3.11).

The teachers drinking in the community? (Yeah). That's interesting. Because different people have talked about their community's perceptions about drinking. How does your community feel about drinking?

Our community is kind of different. We have both ends. We have people who think that this is what everybody should do every Friday, Saturday and Sunday night of the world (3.11). You know? We also have the other, the Labenz Trace community, who I guess are more professional people. This is one of those things I got a phone call about.

From a parent?

Right. (I got called) about the behavior of the middle school teachers (2.21, 2.22, 3.17, 3.23). I'm really frustrated in one area about those same teachers that they tend to not be very compassionate toward kids. And it's almost like a little junior high club at times. I've seen them pick on kids. A few of the teachers down there get into a bullying atmosphere. If it's a kid that gives them problems, they harass that child through the halls. And I'm not a very quiet person about that kind of thing because that's a big issue with me (2.23). So I had a parent who actually called me about both of those behaviors (2.25). (I got called) about the drinking in public. Not just drinking, but getting drunk. And (she talked about) teachers talking about their sex life with their students. They should be fired. But they're pals with the principal (2.21, 2.22). And he's also bullying and picking on kids. AND the teachers are on the computer all of the time. In the classroom, we all have computers. So they say, give the kids something to keep them busy, then get on the computer and email your friends back and forth. They're emailing each other all the time. So I got the call, and I talked to the parent. And I said, "You need to talk to the principal. This is not my area. I understand that you're upset about this, but you should call the principal and tell him." But she didn't think that he'd give it a chance because he's a friend with the teachers. And I told her that if she didn't feel like it was taken care of, after she talks to him, then she should go to the Superintendent. But give the principal a chance (3.17). Then I went in, and talked to the principal about it. And he got very upset. (*With you*). Right. In some respects, he knows that I am right. He got upset because he doesn't believe that these behaviors go on (2.22). And I gave him some incidents that I had witnessed of things. And most of us that are older that go into that building aren't there all of the time. Like I'm only there two periods a day. So that kind

of behavior is the biggest problem we have and it's 99% our younger teachers. But we do have some older teachers that do it, too. It's really just basically junior high behavior.

So if I came into the community and asked them what they thought of you, what would they have to say?

I think that they'd be pretty positive. Based on the fact that I pulled the choir out of nothingness and the drama department out of nothingness (3.23). I get a lot of kudos from parents. We have a parent organization (2.25).

Is it music boosters or band boosters?

It's fine arts boosters. They work with visual arts, drama, vocal and instrumental music.

And what kinds of support do they give you?

Well, we give a scholarship, a fine arts scholarship. And when we do musicals, they do a dinner with it.

Do you do a dinner theater with it? Or is it the same time as the musical?

Yes. Just on one night of the musical, we have on Saturday because we can set up and get more done. When we did Grease, we made \$1500 in one night.

Just off the dinner part?

Yes, because we also did fifties atmosphere. And we sold sundaes and things like that on the side (2.17, 2.25, 3.13).

Why did you take your first position?

It was good pay. For a starting teacher, it was excellent pay. But when I went there, after one year, I was about ready to quit teaching. Because I had K- 12 Vocal and Instrumental, I had the jazz band and the show choir. I did the drama, assistant librarian, freshman class sponsor, and served as volleyball coach. I was just burned out after one

year. My professors from college made a deal with me. Try one more school. We'll find you a place that you'll like (1.22).

So where did you go?

[Northern state]

And where in [northern state] did you go?

Hartley, [northern state].

That's right, we talked about that. I think that's pretty funky to live at Hartley.

I loved it. It was a great place to live.

And you moved back to [state] because of your mother's illness?

Right (3.21).

Is Laceyville the high school you went to as a student?

No, as a student, I went to Roberts.

Was Laceyville your hometown the whole time you grew up?

Yes. I was born and raised here.

Why did you decide to teach music?

Well, I was brought up kind of in a home full of music and acting. My mother has always done shows for her auxiliary or organization. Actually, I was expected to be an instrumental major. I was fourth chair in All-State in [state] on clarinet and planned on teaching instrumental (1.11). Then I found out that I enjoyed teaching vocal music more.

Did you go to college thinking that you would be an instrumentalist?

Actually I did. I was first chair clarinet all the way through college. And really enjoyed it. Had no intention of getting into the theatre department. And I had a really inspirational vocal teacher. Actually, she became a good friend of mine (1.22).

Who was that?

Ms. Hustad. Because she was a friend of mine, I had her in choir. But I wasn't really one of her students. But she helped me with my vocal, because she knew that I would probably have to teach it if I taught in a small school. And I had such a hard time learning how to use my voice properly that I think it's easier for me to teach voice. Instrumentally, I can pick up an instrument and play it in no time at all. When I started teaching, I found that it was hard for me to figure out what was wrong with the kids (who played instruments). Vocally, I could tell you everything that could be done wrong [laughs].

That's great. So who were your early models? Who did you look to as inspirations to become a teacher?

Well, I—as far as just a teacher, I would say that one of my elementary teachers was a big part of that. Ms. Mancuso was her name. And she was just a fun, fun teacher and made things fun for us. Of course, that was when I went to elementary school in St. Augustine, and we had probably twelve kids in our classroom. She made it really fun. As a matter of fact, all the way through high school, I used to go back to visit her. I would get out of school, and I would go up and visit her. Musically, I had a high school band director named Mr. Carlton.

I remember that name.

He was just a crazy, crazy man. He was a big guy. When I knew him, he had an afro.

That would be the 70's and the Shaft influence [both laugh].

He had all of these fantastic ideas. Before he came, we would sit in band and we just sat there and played. But he would do shows. He would have joke things in the middle of the concert. And he made the concert so much fun (2.12). So he probably musically was a

big influence (1.21). And I had a piano teacher named Ms. Schatz (a lady of German descent) who I had from the time that I was ten years old. I didn't start piano until I was ten years old. But I was her prize student and she was always saying, "You can do this. You can do this." Little old lady with a million cats. And a blind husband. (Laughs) So probably, those three influences. Plus my parents, of course. And a lot of the influence came from church. Because we were real active when we were kids, and music was a big influence.

Do you remember playing for church or singing for church?

I didn't play as much as I sang for church. We had an accompanist, but I would sing or do special things. And we did a musical in church one year with the youth of our church plus a couple of other churches.

Was that in St. Augustine?

St. Augustine plus a couple of other towns. We played in all three cities and we practiced here (3.12).

What's your relationship like with your students?

I think that it's probably pretty good. A lot of students come to me when they have problems. But they also know where the line is. Most of the kids who come to me know that when they come to me, I'm going to take action if I need to. So they're usually pretty serious by the time they come to me. I get the typical, "My boyfriend dumped me." The kids are pretty professional. I expect professional behavior in the way that they handle themselves with music and with drama. And they're pretty good about that (2.23).

What's your relationship like with parents?

Good for the most part. I have some parents, of course, who don't like different rules and you always will have run-ins with parents over certain things that go on. But generally, I don't think that I have ever had anything that we couldn't resolve in the end with a parent (2.25).

Do you feel more like a musician who is a teacher, or a teacher who is a musician?

I feel more like a teacher who is a musician.

Why is that?

Probably because I'm a better musician from being a teacher. Partially because I have to play for my choirs. When I first started, I was a good pianist, but I wasn't a great pianist. And I'm probably not a great pianist now. But when I see a new song, I can pick it up and play it right there. Because you have to do it (4.4).

So what's the best part of your job?

The best part? Probably the kids. I have good kids. I don't have a lot of discipline problems. The kids (who cause trouble) don't generally take the class or stay in the class. Because the kids who are in the class are pretty firm. That's our class motto: "If you're in here, you're going to treat people right. You're going to be good to everyone." And they don't put up with it. So the other day, I had a freshman boy. And he's cute, and he thinks he's humorous—more humorous than he really is. He was messing around the other day, and one of the girls said to him, "Oh my God. Does someone have to make you behave? That's so immature."

Wow. So they're at the point where they're monitoring themselves. You gotta love it.

I do have really good kids (2.23).

What's the part that you like the least?

The paperwork. Lots of paperwork. That's an easy answer (4.3).

What do you think makes a good rural music program?

You're talking about a public school setting.

Right, K-12.

I think the biggest thing is to start early. Because they have to start loving music when they're young. So the music has to be fun. That doesn't mean that—one of the things when I taught K-12 that we tried to hit on was first of all trying to learn all of the notes. There's nothing worse than the kids being older and not having any grasp at all about what a note is. And I've had that when the kids come up from elementary. But we always did a lot of game type of activities when they were very young. That involved the notes, and learning the notes. I also pick a lot of music...I don't do all classical, top notch music. We also do some really silly stuff. Things that kids want to choose. And I let them choose it. Because I think that it's important for them to have fun with it. And probably the promotion of it, that it's ok to be in band, or it's ok to be in choir (2.23).

Get those attitudes to be in there.

Right. And a lot of that comes from faculty, too. I mean, if you've got people on your faculty who know that they support you, and they say to the kids, "Hey, I heard you sing at the concert, or sing at the assembly, or whatever. That was really great." That really helps a lot. They know it's ok with other people (2.21).

So getting them out there and into the community. Visibility.

That's the other thing. We already have Valentine's Day booked, and we have a Christmas event booked. And we just did a 9-11 thing. A lot of times that's when the kids

get to do—we have a small group of maybe 6-8 acts that are totally their own making (3.13).

If you were to choose your career path again, would you choose the same career path?

Oh, wow. Umm. Yes I think I would with one exception. I've gotten a lot into counseling recently through the groups that I'm involved in. And I'm planning on working on a Master's for that. I think I would have done what I'm doing, but I think I would have started on the Master's a lot earlier in counseling (4.5).

Are you planning on going into counseling full time?

That's kind of my semi-retirement plan. [Laughs]. I have to face the fact that I can't keep these hours forever. And I have to find something that's a little bit more eight to five hours. I'm on the crisis team now.

And what does that involve?

For instance, we just had a student who was killed in an accident. So we counsel students and we attend services to be there for the students. Any time there's a death or a situation—like if we had a bomb threat or something at school, the crisis team would be called to handle it.

So was 9-11 one of the things the crisis team helped with too?

Basically, unless it's something that needs to be taken care of, we just organize and we watch kids. We take a list of kids that we think might need to be watched. Because we had—it's just really strange since I've been at Laceyville. We've had three kids die at the beginning of each year, one each of the years that I've been here. One student who was in a terrible accident and disfigured her face and almost didn't live the fourth year. And we had two parents who died the other year.

So it sounds like the crisis team was definitely needed.

We've been pretty active. And we have to go to training. And we have a debriefing this Thursday for the student who died. You have to watch the people who are doing the watching, too (2.21).

And how many people are on the crisis team?

Umm, I believe that we have twelve district wide. We have four in each building.

That's got to be a difficult challenge.

It's been interesting because we've had so much since I've been here.

Do you have any regrets about where you moved or things you haven't done?

Probably not. If there were any, it would probably be the trip to [state] [laugh] (4.5).