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Alternative Styles of String Education: Methodology and Practices

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ALTERNATIVE STYLES OF STRING EDUCATION:
METHODOLOGY AND PRACTICES

A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research

in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

Megan Kathleen Edinger
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
August 2013

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This study surveyed the implementation of alternative styles of music in public school orchestras. Specifically, methods, resources, and practices used in public school orchestra programs were examined. The study focused on jazz, folk, rock, and other non-Western art music as alternative styles of string education. The study was quantitative and data was collected via on-line questionnaire. The sample was comprised of string educators who were members of the National Association for Music Education in the state of Pennsylvania.

The data collection process was completed within a two-week period. Fifty-three of the 495 NAFME members selected to participate in this study submitted survey responses, a return rate of 10.7%. The results indicated that strings educators are more likely to incorporate alternative styles into their strings curriculum if they were (1) older in age, which naturally allows for a larger timeframe in which to achieve a post-baccalaureate degree, and (2) using alternative styles method books.

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CHAPTER 1

The Problem

Introduction

School orchestra programs in the United States have increased from eighteen percent in 1997 to twenty-nine percent in 2009.¹ To advocate for string education and promote interest in orchestra, music educators have sought to illustrate the versatility of string instruments by teaching and performing music from all cultures.² Music practitioners who have been performing and educating with non-classical music of Western and non-western origin, have coined non-classical genres with the term *alternative styles*.

Alternative Styles

While alternative styles have become a valid method of string education, a common reaction among string teachers is the trepidation of starting, and continuing, an alternative style group.³ This may be due to lack of content knowledge of alternative styles. The purpose of this study is to add to the current body of knowledge of use of alternative styles of music in public school orchestras by gaining a better understanding of the ways of implementation alternative styles into string education. Specifically, this study examined the methods, resources, and practices used in public school orchestra programs. The study focused on particular genres of alternative styles of string education, such as jazz, folk, rock, and other types of non-Western Art music.

¹ National String Project Consortium. "Wanted 3,000 String Teachers: Status of String and Orchestra Programs in United States Schools" Retrieved from http://stringprojects.org/Media_Files/PDFs/White-Paper.pdf

² Jenkins-Russ, Theresa. "My Turn: Integrating Diversity in Orchestral Music Performance and Education." *American String Teacher* vol. 56, issue 3 (August 2006): 106

³ Farrar-Royce, Janet. "Creating and Maintaining an Alternative Styles Program for Strings." *American String Teacher* vol. 56, issue 4 (November 2006): 40-43

While Western Art music does present a viable foundation of technique and accepted repertoire, alternative styles such as jazz, fiddling, mariachi, and popular music, offer students exposure to other rhythm structures, scales, and expressive elements of music. A lack of alternative styles from string education renders the formal teaching environment isolated from practical music making experiences and “frequently comes with institutionalized study a degree of technical polish and refinement uncharacteristic of praxis in the field outside.”⁴ The traditional curriculum of only using Western art music is setting the stage for students to lose sight of the rationale for a musical education, the practice, enjoyment, and holistic betterment of the individual (and community) through music. Restricting exposure to diversity, in turn, develops inhibitions for young musicians in terms of what and why to play music.

Rationale for Inclusion of Alternative Styles

The majority of high school and college students in America listen to non-classical genres of music, e.g. popular and rock music.⁵ Using the style of music students are familiar with to develop their skills is pedagogically sound. In addition to bridging the divide between students’ musical interests and the classical music taught by string teachers, practicing and performing alternative styles of music exposes students to a wider array of styles, keeps them enthusiastic about their instruments by displaying an interest in and respect for their musical taste, and helps them to develop an appreciation for the different aspects of each genre.⁶

⁴ Bowman, W. (2004). “Pop” goes...? Taking popular music seriously”. In C.X. Rodriguez, (Ed.), *Bridging the gap*. Reston, VA: MENC: 23

⁵ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004.

⁶ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004.

Public school music educators should be suitably exposed to, if not proficient in, the various musical practices of America and be well-versed in these practices so as to successfully educate students in genres such as folk, popular, jazz, and world musics. Alternative styles of music have been incorporated in music education curricula when society needed to support the government. For example, folk music was used in public school curricula during times of large rates of immigration as a means to teach American mores to immigrant children, and in turn, to their parents. Marching band music was initially incorporated into music education as an extracurricular, mirroring the military bands during the World War I era. American society deemed it patriotic to support and/or perform in these military style bands.⁷

Alternative styles of music can be incorporated into the strings curriculum to facilitate support for American cultural identity. Such inclusion enables students to explore the heritage of diverse ethnic backgrounds, immerses students in a culturally relevant repertoire that may be regionally, nationally and globally significant, and creates a framework for students to form a more informed opinion of the value of various music genres.

The Study

This research study used survey methodology to examine the curricula of string educators and the role of supplemental resource materials that may affect usage of alternative styles in the curricula. The study was primarily quantitative and data was collected via a questionnaire. The sample was comprised of string educators who teach

⁷ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

at the primary and/or secondary level in the state of Pennsylvania who are members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME).

Materials & Methodology

The survey was composed in Google Docs utilizing the Form tool. After questions were entered into the Form template in Google Docs, the questions were launched as an online survey by clicking on the “Form” tab and selecting “Go to live form.” Results from the Google Docs Form survey were collected in Google Docs Spreadsheet. The results were analyzed for statistical correlations between and among age, gender, geographic area, education level, and pursuit of professional development.

Method Books

Since not every string educator has advanced level experience in alternative styles of music, it is understandable that there may be trepidation in embracing non-Western European genres for classroom instruction. The following is a brief description of the method books listed in this study.

Of the instructional materials available to string educators for use in the public school classroom setting, the most prevalent in use are *Essential Elements for Strings, 2000*⁸, *Strictly Strings*⁹, *All for Strings*¹⁰, and the *Suzuki School*¹¹. These method books largely entail the Western European art music pedagogy. *Essential Elements for Strings*

⁸ Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

⁹ Dillon, J., Kjelland, J., O'Reilly, J. *Strictly Strings, A Comprehensive String Method*. Van Nuys, California: Highland/Etling Publishing, 1993.

¹⁰ Anderson, G. & Frost, R. *All for Strings, Comprehensive String Method*. San Diego, California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1986.

¹¹ Suzuki, S. *Suzuki Violin School*. Princeton, New Jersey: Zen-On Music Company, 1980.

2000¹² offers a sound progression of technical development along with in-book opportunities for ensemble performance in the elementary and middle school levels. It includes excerpts and illustrations to promote student-guided learning. *Strictly Strings*¹³, *Artistry in Strings*¹⁴ and *All for Strings*¹⁵ offer a similar progression for technical development but rely more on guidance from the teacher for interpretation and expansion of technical skill set.

The alternative styles method books most established for public school instruction are the *Philharmonic Series: Fiddlers Philharmonic*¹⁶, *Jazz Philharmonic*¹⁷, and *Mariachi Philharmonic*¹⁸, and Belwin *Pop* series¹⁹. The Belwin *Pop* series includes only arrangements for performance. The Belwin *Pop* series does not include genre-specific background information or technique developing instruction. Each book in the *Philharmonic* series includes arrangements for instrument-specific performance as well as full ensemble arrangements for performance. The teacher edition of the books includes guidance on genre specific performance practices, suggested variations for performance, and a brief ethno musicological background for the genre.

¹² Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

¹³ Dillon, J., Kjelland, J., O'Reilly, J. *Strictly Strings, A Comprehensive String Method*. Van Nuys, California: Highland/Etling Publishing, 1993.

¹⁴ Fischbach, G. & Frost, R. *Artistry in Strings*. San Diego, California: Kjos Music Press, 2003

¹⁵ Anderson, G. & Frost, R. *All for Strings, Comprehensive String Method*. San Diego, California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1986.

¹⁶ Dabczynski, A. & Phillips, B. *Fiddlers Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

¹⁷ Phillips, B. & Sabien, R. *Jazz Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2000.

¹⁸ Nieto, J. & Phillips, B. *Mariachi Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2005.

¹⁹ Belwin, *Pop*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.,
<http://www.alfred.com/SC/BelwinHotPopSeries.aspx>

The methodologies of Western European and alternative styles supported by the above referenced literature is appropriate for use in beginner to intermediate instruction found at elementary and middle school levels. However, advanced study on either side of the genre aisle is usually attained via a private instructor or attendance at a specialized school or camp. Private instructors can provide in-depth knowledge on technique, stylistic interpretation, and nuances of specific genres. While perhaps not to the same degree of depth of knowledge, specialized schools and camps provide still an increased knowledge base as well as simulated community-based performance opportunity. It is important to take such experiences into account as an alternate means of gaining skills and supplementing public music string education.

Research Questions

In this thesis I address three research questions pertaining to alternative styles of music and their use in Pennsylvania public school strings programs. The research questions are: 1) What is the prevalent method book of Western European strings instruction used in Pennsylvania public school strings programs? 2) What alternative styles method books are currently used in Pennsylvania public school strings programs? 3) What correlations, if any, exist among Pennsylvania string teachers in regard to age, gender, level of education, pursuit of professional development, demographics and the implementation of alternative styles of music?

Research Question 1: What is the prevalent method book of Western European strings instruction in Pennsylvania public school strings programs?

An understanding of current methodologies and materials is needed in order to establish a base for exploring how and why participants may or may not use alternative

styles in the curriculum. The traditional string method books referenced in this study are the most commonly used by strings educators. These books provide information on technique and performance practices that support existing knowledge base learned and developed by the instructor throughout the course of music teacher training in both pedagogy and performance on stringed instruments.

Research Question 2: What alternative styles method books are currently used in Pennsylvania public school strings programs?

Alternative styles method books are a valuable framework for string educators, giving an approachable method to alternative styles, in a framework comparable to method books for Western art music in instructional guidance. The alternative styles method books offer not only the knowledge and means needed to implement alternative styles in study and practices, but also provide media, such as CDs and DVDs available in each method book, which allows for authenticity for performance at the beginner and intermediate levels with minimal knowledge required from the instructor.

Research Question 3: What correlations, if any, exist among age, gender, level of education, pursuit of professional development, demographics and the implementation of alternative styles of music?

Several factors were considered as possible contributors to implementation of alternative styles in Pennsylvania public school strings programs. Post-graduate study may or may not translate to a broadening of musical exploration. Professional development opportunities may have been utilized as a means of enhancing and expanding on areas of instruction. Age and/or gender may have been relative to tendencies of self development as it pertains to education and educational practices.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Related Literature

Music Education in America

The history of music education in the USA is one of reactionary citizenship. The musical instruction given in the schools was historically intended to augment the music making authentically found in the greater life of the society. For example, the advocacy for vocal education came from the need of church leaders wanting to raise the quality of congregational singing during worship services. This resulted in the emergence of private singing schools during the decade 1830 to 1840. In the early years of the public schools, music education consisted only of classroom teachers teaching students to sing and to perform an occasional concert. Community leaders saw a need for musical education.²⁰ This tradition of having music education react to the musical needs of the greater society continues to the present day, and can be applied to the approaches found in string education.

Instrumental Music

Although not yet present in the public school curriculum until the early part of the twentieth century, instrumental music held a dual role in the community outside of education. For the upper echelon, music education involved learning Western European Classical music on classical instruments for performance at small, private functions. More commonly, members of the lower-classes learned the popular songs of the day for entertainment at town dances.²¹ However, the exploration and solidification of

²⁰ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

²¹ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

instrumental music in the public schools in the early twentieth century was due largely to the interests of the musical instrument manufacturers.²² Initially, the orchestra was the chosen medium for ensembles for public schools. The first two decades of the twentieth century were the glory days for orchestras in the public schools, with seventy-seven percent of cities offering orchestra programs, compared to twenty-five percent of city schools supporting band programs.²³ This difference could have been a reflection on how the public school perceived a need for music education, while possibly discriminating against popular styles and instrumentation. Going off of the pre-established standards of the Old World, the mindset was to train youths with a classical music education. This outlook has left the strings curriculum with a legacy today of "...a particular repertoire that is a really small percentage of the music that is in our world."²⁴

While the inclusion of strings education into the public schools was progressive for the curricula of the early 20th century, the music studied can be seen as the initial departure from the philosophy of providing music education as a way of serving the needs of the community. The Old World approach exhibited during the emergence of instrumental music education highlights two predicaments; first, standards were set by the upper echelon of the population. Secondly, there was a lack of confidence, in teaching abilities, in methods, and in educational value, in using culturally relevant musical styles.²⁵

²² Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

²³ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

²⁴ Jones, Patrick M. "Returning Music Education to the Mainstream: Reconnecting with the Community. *Visions of Research in Music Education* 7. [<http://www.rider.edu/~vrme/>] 2006.

²⁵ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

Fiddling

The use of violin for alternative styles of music has been a common practice for centuries in the form of folk music. Fiddling arrived in America with immigrants from Europe, bringing with them vast repertoires of Celtic traditional music. As the immigrants settled in the New World, traditional tunes became varied based on influences such as regional settlement, the influx of people traveling through the region, and historical events that caused relocation, such as the Civil War and Reconstruction.

Fiddling historically remained out of the American public school music programs, but did, however, function as a form of social entertainment. Music education in fiddle-style playing was mostly informal; educational scenarios were directed by the student, not the teacher, and occurred wherever music existed; a novice player sought guidance from an experienced player in the community on how to play a song, for example. Over the past thirty years, fiddling has found its way into the public school curriculum from educators like Bob Phillips, Andrew Dabczynski, Randy Sabien, John Nieto, and others.²⁶

Wind Bands

It wasn't until 1910 that school wind bands began to emerge to meet the needs of youths wanting to contribute to the activities of the community-based band.²⁷ Again there was a push from community leaders to include this genre, now coupled with the interests of the business community from band instrument manufacturers, acknowledging and responding to the supply-and-demand needs of the growing culture. As the desire for

²⁶Alfred Music Publishing. "Authors, Composers and Clinicians." <http://www.alfred.com/Company/Authors.aspx> (accessed August 4, 2012)

²⁷Harding, Austin. "The Band as a Community Asset." *Proceedings of the 38th Annual Meeting of the Music Teachers National Association*. Hartford, Music Teachers National Association, 1915

music making in the community and music education in public schools grew, the band instrument manufactures capitalized on the opportunity to market and sell wind and percussion instruments, sheet music and method books.²⁸

Towards the end of the 1910's, music programs were viewed as a necessary part of an evolving American school system with the desired outcome of music as means to socialize and aid citizens as they adapted to the surfacing multifaceted society²⁹. Wind bands had emerged in popular culture and became the preferred musical forum of society. This shift from Western art music string orchestras to popular music performed on wind instruments was reflected in the musical offering in public school systems. While this was progress for music education, it shows the bias placed on stringed instruments. American school systems embraced new styles of music in its curriculum, but only on newer instruments. Stringed instruments in the schools were left to fulfill the needs of classical music audiences, instead of being seen as versatile instruments used for performing various styles of music as was happening with other instruments in the community.

With the accepted stylistic versatility of wind band instruments, and the bias of classical music placed on strings in the curriculum, more students began to musically identify with and pursue instruction on band instruments. Band programs in public schools began to flourish and slowly become the predominantly populated instrumental ensembles in the public schools.³⁰ This preference came not only from popular music,

²⁸ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

²⁹ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³⁰ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

but also from the promotion and sale of wind and percussion instruments coupled with military bands touring the country as means of raising funds for the American effort in World War I. Students were surrounded with the popular music of the day being performed on band instruments.³¹ With the backing popularity of the military and high visibility of military bands, including Reserve Officer Training Corps bands at the high school and collegiate level, it was viewed as patriotic to play a band instrument.³² Americans, enthusiastically supporting the war-time culture and its adapted use of band instruments for popular music, brought a return to the original purpose of music education as a functional component of reflecting the music-making values of the community.

Stringed instruments still managed to carve a place in the American cultural landscape. The performance of stringed instruments and fiddle style playing of the violin in particular found outside of the public school systems was similar in function to that of the community band. Fiddlers were the predominant means of musical entertainment at town dances playing the popular music of the community. It is apparent that the alternative styles strings community was thriving outside of the public schools.³³

³¹ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³² Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³³ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004.

Western Art Music

Throughout the early to mid 20th century, Western art music was the acceptable genre of music for the upper echelon of American society. This standard was further seen in schools by promoting classical music as the only music of value.³⁴

The roots of music in American public schools during the mid-nineteenth century are stemmed in Americans' initial exposure of fine orchestral literature via the touring Thomas Theodore Orchestra. The Thomas Theodore Orchestra was modeled after European orchestras and performed in communities across America.³⁵ During this time, it was actually the bands of notable musicians Patrick Gilmore and John Phillip Sousa who were performing alternative styles, using popular music of the day.³⁶ Traveling bands toured the country and entertained communities which established the practice of bands supporting the cultural needs of the community while orchestras preserved the performance standards of the European Tradition.

Jazz

The relationship between string education and jazz is also relevant to the discussion of this study. Jazz ensembles surfaced on college campuses during the 1930's but were known not as jazz, but as dance bands. Although dance band was offered as a college course, it was still not recognized as a valid course of study.³⁷ It was not until after World War II, when every military base and camp had a resident band that jazz

³⁴ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³⁵ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³⁶ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

³⁷ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

courses were available for vocational studies. Public school music programs may have offered a jazz band ensemble as an extra-curricular activity, but not as a course of study, and not as an option for string ensembles. Strings were not included in jazz bands due to the composition of the ensemble during this era: saxophones, trumpets, trombones, drums, bass, piano and guitar.

Mariachi Music in America

Hispanic immigrants exposed America to the music of the mariachi. The modern mariachi came to America in the 1930's through the Mexican film business. Further exposure came through the U.S. film industry which adopted mariachi music for cowboy movies.³⁸ This alternative style of music has supported community activities among Latinos since its inception in the 1930s and is slowly finding its way into the public school music curriculum. In 1964, the mariachi group, Los Changuitos Feos, was formed by a Catholic priest in Tucson, Arizona, in order to provide cultural experiences for local Hispanic children.³⁹ Several members of this mariachi in 1971 went on to form the Mariachi Cobre which became an integral part of the mariachi movement, providing mariachi music education at music conferences throughout the nation, and subsequently penetrating the public school music programs.⁴⁰ While the mariachi movement is predominantly found in the western part of the nation, music educators across America are receiving greater exposure to this alternative style and its musical and cultural value.

³⁸ Nevin, Jeff & Noé Sánchez. *Mariachi Mastery*. San Diego, California, Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2006

³⁹ Nevin, Jeff & Noé Sánchez. *Mariachi Mastery*. San Diego, California, Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2006

⁴⁰ Nevin, Jeff & Noé Sánchez. *Mariachi Mastery*. San Diego, California, Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2006

Alternative Styles in Music Education

Despite varying views on the value of popular and folk music, music educators have found great value in using these genres. During the early part of the twentieth century, folk music was a vehicle for the “Americanization” of a diverse immigrant population in public schools.⁴¹ The Americanizing of immigrants accomplished two things: first, it acclimated a diverse population of students to the American culture while, secondly, with use of scales and melodies from their native countries, instilled a respect for their parents and heritage. By using folk music from the native lands of immigrants, popular music was successfully implemented into public school music curricula. The multifaceted function of the foreign folk music served both the needs of government and society in the enculturation of immigrants while remaining relevant to community-based activities.

Music Teacher Training

The foundation of American public school music education and teacher training can be seen as exhibiting Austro-German influences.⁴² Germanic ideals restrain music curricular content by preferring Western art music, stressing performance, and ignoring American music history.

Current demographics for American public schools reveal a population that is far from homogeneous.⁴³ There seems to be evidence that the music used in public school music programs does not reflect the cultural heterogeneity of the school population.

⁴¹ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

⁴² Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

⁴³ U.S. Department of Education: National Center for Education Statistics. <http://nces.ed.gov> (accessed on March 18, 2012).

In a survey of musical performances in the communities of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, only a small percentage of offerings included Western European Art music styles.⁴⁴ The predominant music performed in Philadelphia communities consisted of alternative styles of music which include rock, jazz, urban, and folk. Reestablishing a correlation between community-performed music and the music found in the curricula in the public schools may promote an increase in strings programs. For example, a review of a survey on musical offerings in public schools conducted by the U.S. Department of Education revealed a bias towards traditional music school ensembles. Courses/Ensembles such as band, orchestra and chorus were the only types of offerings listed in the survey.⁴⁵ There was no inclusion of ensembles of non-Western music, not even jazz band. The Western art music bias is an indicator of the divide between school-based music and community-based music resulting in a damaging impact on music education. The results of established practices of this Eurocentric music education are quite in contrast with the original intent and success of music education in America. “Music education in the US colonies flourished when it supported amateur musicing and directly contributed to the life of the community.”⁴⁶

The music teacher education curricula can benefit from a refocused perspective based on historical and contemporary American culture. The initiation of a music curriculum into public schools was to serve as a basis to support musical activities in the community. This is no longer the case as public school music offerings are disconnected

⁴⁴ Jones, Patrick M. “Returning Music Education to the Mainstream: Reconnecting with the Community. *Visions of Research in Music Education* 7. [<http://www.rider.edu/~vrme/>] 2006.

⁴⁵ Mark, Michael L. & Gary, Charles L. *A History of American Music Education*. 3rd ed. Lanham, Maryland, Rowan & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2007

⁴⁶ Keene, J. *A History of Music Education in the United States*. Hanover, New Hampshire, University Press of New England, 1982.

from the lives of the students and the community, as evidenced by musical performances in the community consisting of alternative styles (rock, jazz, world, etc.) contrasting the music curriculum maintaining Western Art music as the main stylistic forum.⁴⁷ Music teacher training programs should have curricula that are a reflection of the current state of American culture.

Summary

This review of the literature on music education in American public schools from its origins to the present day model summarizes the cause of the initial implementation of music education in public schools. Historical events and subsequent trends reviewed in regard to the development of music education throughout the past century showed the emergence of music education as a means of supporting musical activities within the community, then expanded and evolved with American culture encompassing varied geographic areas, class structures and instrumentation.

History of music education reflects reactionary responses to societal needs throughout its inception in the 1800s. The literature divide between wind band and orchestra music can be viewed as a reaction to the band instrument emergence during the early 1900s. The influence of fiddling on the playing practices of string education has demonstrated a reemergence of alternative styles in the music curriculum.

⁴⁷ Jones, Patrick M. "Returning Music Education to the Mainstream: Reconnecting with the Community." *Visions of Research in Music Education* 7. [<http://www.rider.edu/~vrme/>] 2006.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Introduction

This study surveyed Pennsylvania public school string teachers using an online survey document. With the support of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), the researcher collected data pertaining to teacher and institutional demographics, as well as specific research information on the teaching load, trends in pedagogy, levels of professional development, and teacher confidence among Pennsylvania public school string music educators as they pertain to the use of alternative styles in string programs. Data analysis was conducted using Excel spreadsheets in an effort to determine the frequency of alternative style use in Pennsylvania public school string programs.

Participants

Subjects for this study were current public school string teachers in Pennsylvania. A total of 495 Pennsylvania members of NAfME teaching string/orchestra at the elementary, middle and high school levels were selected for study participation. This population was selected in order to focus on string education, as opposed to music education for voice or other non-stringed, non-bowed instruments. Private/parochial school and private studio teachers were excluded from participation so as to have the results accurately reflect the relationship between public school string programs and community-based music in Pennsylvania. The population was further delimited to members of Pennsylvania Music Educators Association (PMEA) due to the online distribution support of NAfME for survey.

Survey & Implementation

A standard consent form was approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) Institutional Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects (See Appendix A). Survey questions and section heading areas were established on the basis of information from prior music education questionnaires. Three trial surveys were created, reviewed, and revised by the researcher before the existing survey was considered suitable for the use of this study. The survey contained sixteen questions pertaining to four different areas: Demographic Information, Teaching Load, Method Books & Ensembles, and Professional Development & Practices. The survey can be found in Appendix D of this document.

The researcher contacted the research department of NAFME to inquire about the use of the organization in order to collect data from its membership for academic research. The on-line survey was distributed by NAFME via e-mail to PMEA public school strings teachers. Each string teacher was sent an e-mailed letter asking for participation. Along with the cover letter (See Appendix B) a hyperlink to the survey webpage was also sent. Fifty-three survey responses were received through an on-line survey tool from www.google.com. Anonymity was preserved because only timestamps were collected. The researcher had no access to NAFME membership lists or participant internet service provider (ISP) information.

Method of Analysis

Demographic information was collected on gender (male, female), age (22-26, 27-31, 32-36, 37-41, 41+ years old), highest degree earned (Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate), and years teaching string instruments (1-4, 5-9, 10+ years). Teaching load

examined the type of area in which respondents taught (urban, suburban, and rural), at how many schools, and which grade levels, respondents taught, how many students per grade level, per week, the percentage of instructional time spent teaching bowed string instruments, and if string classes were held during the regularly scheduled school day.

Respondents were asked to indicate which Western art and which alternative styles method books were used in their curriculum and which alternative styles ensembles may be offered in their orchestra programs. Western art method books considered in this study were *Essential Elements 2000 for Strings*⁴⁸, *Artistry for Strings*⁴⁹, *All for Strings*⁵⁰, *Strictly Strings*⁵¹, and *Suzuki*.⁵² Alternative styles method books considered in this study were *Jazz Philharmonic*⁵³, *Fiddlers Philharmonic*⁵⁴, *Mariachi Philharmonic*⁵⁵, and Belwin *Pops* series⁵⁶. Alternative styles ensembles considered in this study were jazz, fiddling, and mariachi ensembles.

Professional development practices were examined in the forums of strings workshops, alternative styles training events, invitation of alternative styles artists to conduct master classes, and level of confidence with alternative styles use. Questions

⁴⁸ Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

⁴⁹ Fischbach, G. & Frost, R. *Artistry in Strings*. San Diego, California: Kjos Music Press, 2003

⁵⁰ Anderson, G. & Frost, R. *All for Strings, Comprehensive String Method*. San Diego, California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1986.

⁵¹ Dillon, J., Kjelland, J., O'Reilly, J. *Strictly Strings, A Comprehensive String Method*. Van Nuys, California: Highland/Etling Publishing, 1993.

⁵² Suzuki, S. *Suzuki Violin School*. Princeton, New Jersey: Zen-On Music Company, 1980.

⁵³ Phillips, B. & Sabien, R. *Jazz Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2000.

⁵⁴ Dabczynski, A. & Phillips, B. *Fiddlers Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

⁵⁵ Nieto, J. & Phillips, B. *Mariachi Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2005.

⁵⁶ Belwin, *Pop*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc.,
<http://www.alfred.com/SC/BelwinHotPopSeries.aspx>

regarding string workshops explored the frequency of attendance at workshop, over a 12 month period, at 3 different levels (school/district workshops, state conference workshops, and regional/national/international workshops). Questions regarding alternative styles training explored the frequency of attendance at training events, over a 5 year period, at 3 different forums (workshops/seminars, festivals, and schools/camps). Questions regarding alternative styles artists explored frequency of invitation, over a period of five years, of alternative styles artist to conduct master classes. Level of confidence was measured at five levels: Low: no desire to use alternative styles, Low-Medium: need more training in using alternative styles, Medium: use alternative styles periodically, Medium-High: use alternative styles several times a month, and High: use alternative styles on a daily/weekly basis.

Microsoft Excel was used to determine mean and mode of demographics and trends found in participants' responses using the AVERAGEIFS and COUNTIF functions. Trends in pedagogy were measured to determine frequency of use methodology based on classical music and alternative styles. Trends in professional development determined frequency of teacher education in classical pedagogy versus alternative style pedagogy. Trends in confidence were examined to observe correlations between frequencies of pedagogy used, professional development attained, and confidence level perceived. This assumed that more confidence would lead to a higher frequency of implementation and the reverse.

Summary

This study surveyed members of NAFME currently teaching strings in Pennsylvania public school music programs. Utilizing data collected from an on-line

survey, trends and frequencies of strings teachers were established based on information pertaining to demographics, teaching load, methodology and performance offerings, and professional development and practices. Findings were analyzed using Microsoft Excel AVERAGEIFS and COUNTIF functions. Results were then correlated to use of alternative styles in public school string programs. The findings of this survey provide an indication of frequency of use and correlating factors affecting alternative styles in public school string education.

CHAPTER 4

Results

Introduction

The data collection process was completed within a two-week period. Of the 495 NAFME members selected to participate in this study, a total of 53 surveys were submitted over the two-week period for a return rate of 10.7%.

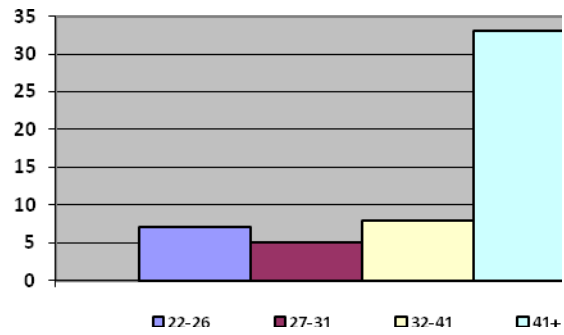
Summary

This research utilized a web-based survey that was distributed to members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) who were Pennsylvania public school string educators. This resulted in findings related to demographic information, teaching load, methodology used, and professional development practices. Specifically, trends found were that higher education levels were attained by older females, higher rates of string instruction occur at the elementary school level by itinerant teachers, and respondents who attend professional development in the form of alternative styles workshops, festivals and camps were more likely to implement alternative styles in public school music programs.

Demographic Information

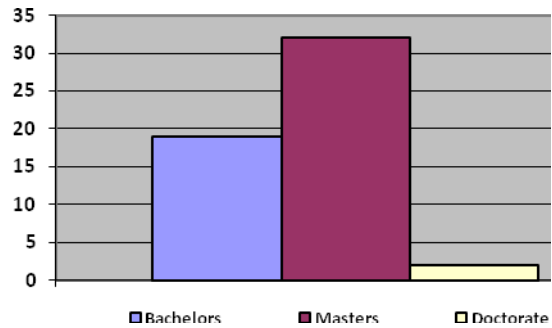
Sixty-two percent of respondents (33 teachers) indicated being 41 years of age or older, 15% (8 teachers) being 32-40 years old, 9% (5 teachers) being 27-31 years old, and thirteen percent (7 teachers) being 22-26 years of age.

Table 1. Age of respondent



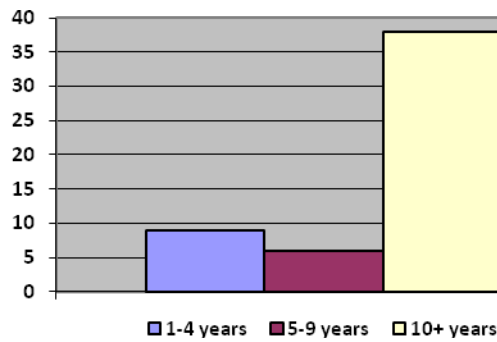
Thirty-seven percent (19 subjects) held a Bachelors degree, 60% (32 subjects) held a Masters degree, and 3% (2 subjects) held a Doctoral degree.

Table 2. Highest degree earned



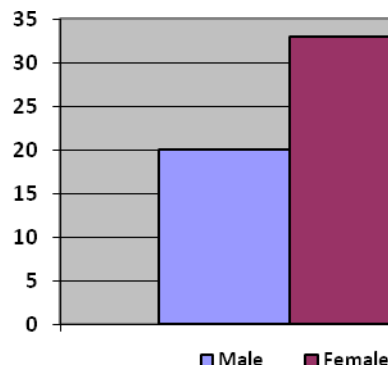
Seventeen percent (9 subjects) of teachers indicated that they had been teaching stringed instruments from one to four years, 11% (6 subjects) from five to nine years, and 72% (38 subjects) for ten or more years.

Table 3. Years teaching stringed instruments



Of the educators who returned questionnaires, 62% (33) were female and 38% (20) were male.

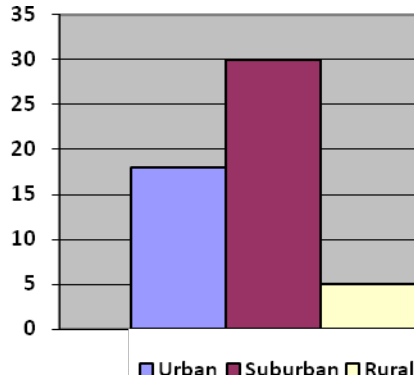
Table 4. Gender



Geographic Area of Teaching

Participants were asked to identify in which geographic area (urban, suburban, rural) they teach. Of the 53 respondents, 34% (18 subjects) indicated that the setting in which they teach is urban, 57 percent (30 subjects) suburban, and 9 percent (5 subjects) rural.

Table 5. Geographic location



Correlations discovered in the demographic data are as follows. Female to male respondent ratio is roughly 2:1. While no direct correlations between age and gender were made, the number of female respondents (62%) mirrors the amount of participants in the 41+ age group (62%). Similarly, the results for gender closely resemble that of the age range sample (60%) indicating having earned a Master's degree, again the two variables having no direct correlation. The data indicates that older females tend to achieve higher levels of education than their male and/or younger counterparts.

Teaching Load

Teaching load was examined to establish levels support for strings education. Teaching load was thought to indicate at what level of interest and participation in string education was demonstrated by the student population. The level of interest and participation was thought to necessitate support from school administration and the community in order to provide string education.

Number of Schools

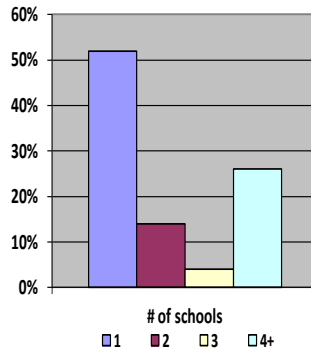
Respondents were asked to specify at how many schools, and at what grade level (elementary, middle/junior high, and high school), they teach. The results indicated that

string teachers had a tendency to teach at more than one grade level. Over 37% of respondents taught at only one level of schooling, and 83% of teachers taught at multiple schools.

Grade Levels of Teaching

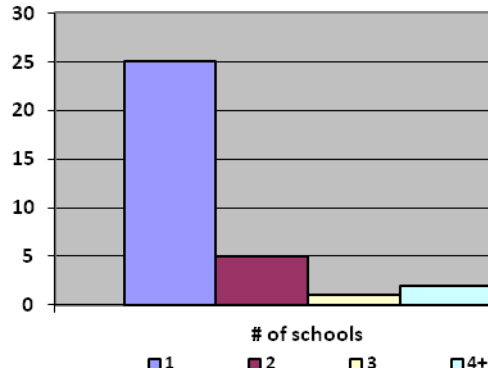
Of the 53 teachers in the sample, 79%, or 42 of the teachers, taught at the elementary level. Fifty-two percent taught at 1 elementary school per week, 14% taught at 2 elementary schools per week, 4% taught at 3 elementary schools per week, and 26% of teachers taught at 4 or more elementary schools.

Table 6. Number of elementary schools



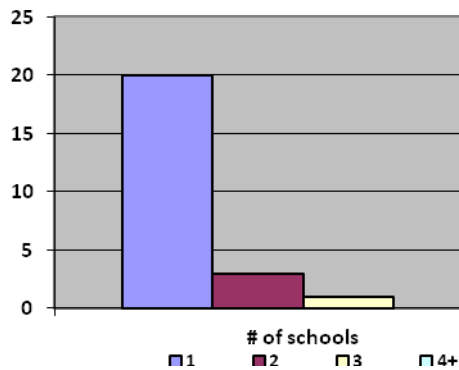
Sixty-two percent, (33subjects) of the teachers taught strings at the middle/junior high school level. More than 75% taught at 1 middle/junior high school per week, 15 percent taught at 2 middle/junior high schools per week, 3% taught at 3 middle/junior high schools per week, and 6% taught at 4 or more middle/junior high schools.

Table 7. Number of middle/junior high schools



Forty-five percent of participants (24 subjects) taught strings at the high school level. Eighty-three percent taught at 1 high school per week, 12% taught at 2 high schools per week, and 4% taught at 3 high schools per week. No teacher taught at more than three high schools.

Table 8. Number of high schools

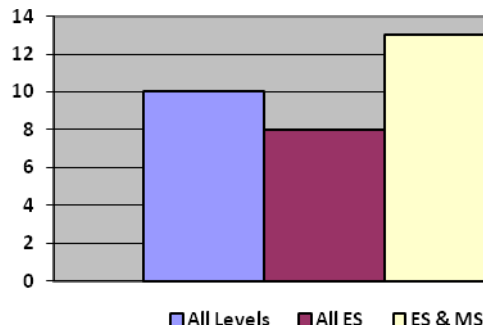


Itinerant Teaching

Ten respondents (19%) indicated teaching at multiple schools at all three levels of schooling, elementary, middle, and high school. Eight respondents (15%) indicated

teaching at multiple elementary schools. Thirteen respondents (25%) indicated teaching at multiple schools at both the elementary and middle school levels.

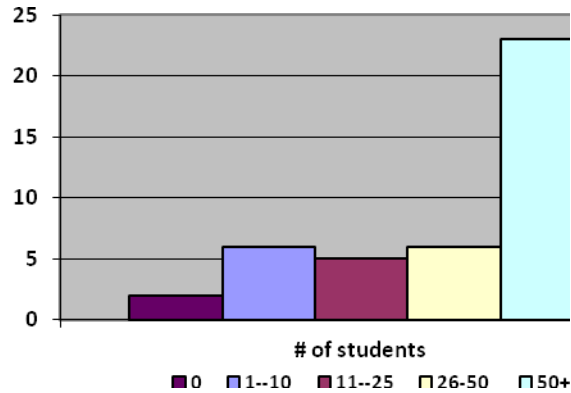
Table 9. Levels of itinerant teaching



Number of Students Taught

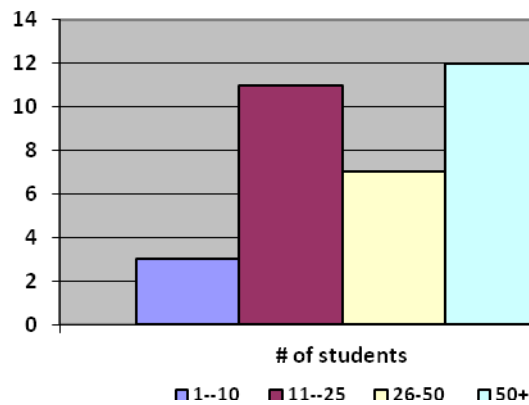
Regarding the number of strings students taught, 14% of elementary school teachers (42 subjects) that indicated they taught 1-10 students, 11% taught 11-25 students, 14% taught 26-50 students, and 54% taught more than 50 students. Roughly 5 percent of the elementary school teachers did not indicate teaching strings at the elementary school level.

Table 10. Number of students taught (elementary school)



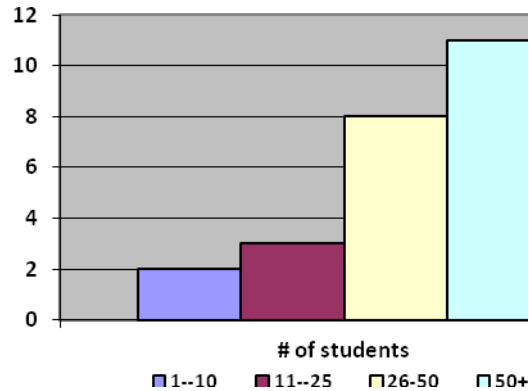
At the middle/junior high school level (33 subjects), 9% indicated they taught 1-10 students, 33% taught 11-25 students, 20% taught 26-50 students, and than 36% taught more than 50 students. All middle/junior high school teachers taught strings students as part of their teaching load.

Table 11. Number of students taught (middle/junior high school)



Eighteen percent of participants teaching at the high school level (24 subjects) indicated teaching 1-10 strings students, 14% teaching 11-25 students, 32% teaching 26-50 students, and 45% teaching more than 50 students.

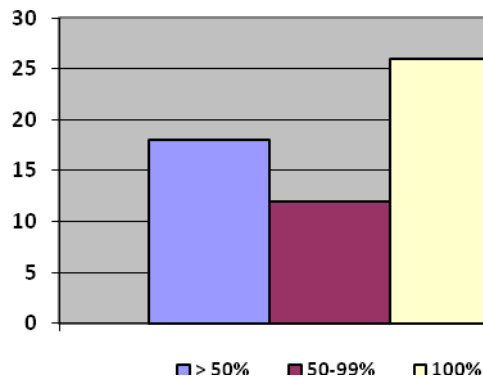
Table 12. Number of students taught (high school)



Instructional Time Teaching Bowed Instruments

When asked what percentage of instructional time was spent teaching bowed string instruments, 49% of the 53 respondents (26 teachers) reported that 100 percent of their teaching load was in bowed strings. Twenty-three percent of the respondents (12 teachers) said bowed strings instruction comprised 50 to 99% of their instructional time, while 28% or 15 teachers stated that teaching strings was less than 50 percent of their teaching load.

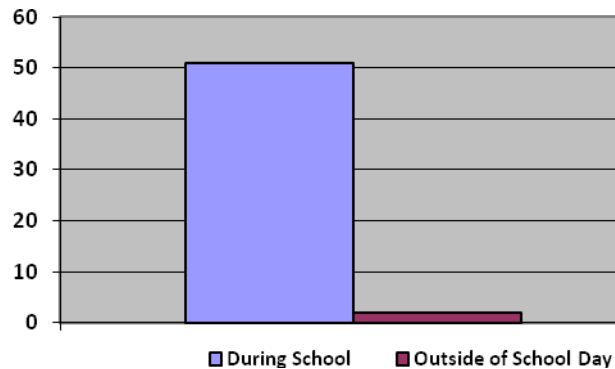
Table 13. Percentage of time spent teaching strings



Scheduling of String Classes

Regarding the question "Are your string classes held during the regular school day?" 96 % of respondents indicated that string classes were held during the regular school day. Only two of the 53 subjects answered that string classes were not held during the regular school day.

Table 14. When string classes are held

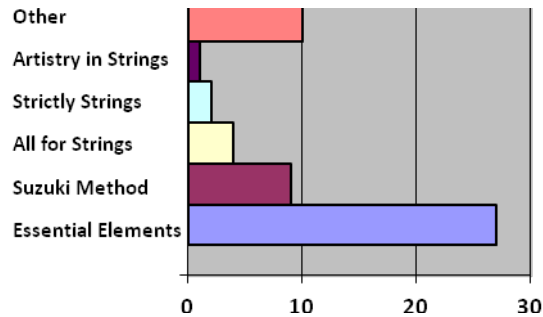


There is a correlation between itinerant teachers and elementary school strings programs. Thirty-five respondents (66%) who indicated teaching at the elementary school level also indicated teaching at multiple schools. Most of the respondents (31 teachers) are teaching strings for 75-100% of their instructional time. String class being offered during the regular school day validates the program as more than just an extra-curricular activity offered before or after school. The high rate of instructional time spent on teaching strings connected with the 96% rate of instruction being offered during the regular school day, indicates increased levels of support at the elementary level from the respondents' school administration and community.

Method Books

Method books used in the curriculum, and ensembles offered, were used to measure the degree of Western art music used versus alternative styles used in the curriculum. When asked the question, “What method books are used in your curriculum?” 50% of respondents (27 teachers) stated using *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*⁵⁷, 17% (9 teachers) using *Suzuki Method*⁵⁸ books, 7% (4 subjects) using *All for Strings*⁵⁹, 4% (2 teachers) using *Strictly Strings*⁶⁰, and only 2% (1 teacher) using *Artistry in Strings*.⁶¹ Nearly 19% of teachers (10 subjects) used method books other than those listed in this survey.

Table 15. Method books used



Respondents were asked to specify which alternative styles books are being used in their curriculum. Twenty-eight percent of teachers (15 respondents) use *Fiddlers*

⁵⁷ Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

⁵⁸ Suzuki, S. *Suzuki Violin School*. Princeton, New Jersey: Zen-On Music Company, 1980.

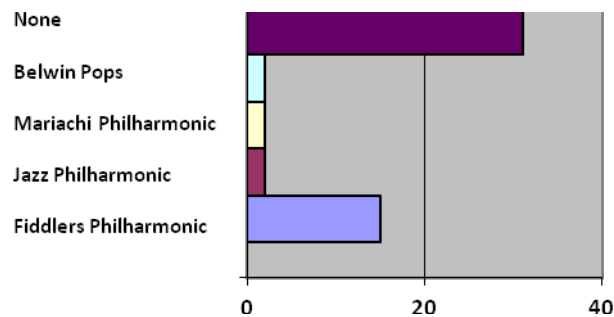
⁵⁹ Anderson, G. & Frost, R. *All for Strings, Comprehensive String Method*. San Diego, California: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1986.

⁶⁰ Dillon, J., Kjelland, J., O’Reilly, J. *Strictly Strings, A Comprehensive String Method*. Van Nuys, California: Highland/Etling Publishing, 1993.

⁶¹ Fischbach, G. & Frost, R. *Artistry in Strings*. San Diego, California: Kjos Music Press, 2003

*Philharmonic*⁶², while the method books *Jazz Philharmonic*⁶³, *Mariachi Philharmonic*⁶⁴ and *Belwin Pops*⁶⁵ were used only by 2 teachers each (11% of respondents; 3.77 % per book). Fifty-eight percent of teachers (31 subjects) did not use the alternative styles method books listed in this survey.

Table 16. Alternative styles books used



Alternative Styles Ensembles

The area of alternative styles ensembles offered was examined next. Twenty-two percent of respondents (12 teachers) offered a fiddling ensemble, and 11 percent (6 subjects) offered a jazz ensemble. No teacher indicated offering a mariachi ensemble. Sixty-six percent of respondents (35 teachers) offered no alternative styles ensemble.

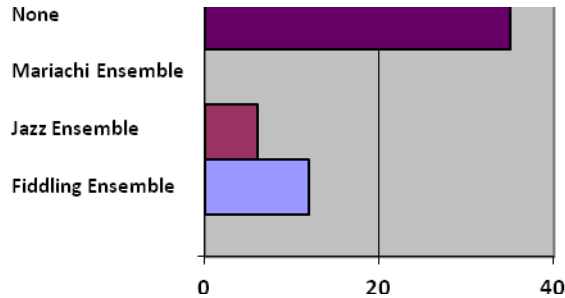
⁶² Dabczynski, A. & Phillips, B. *Fiddlers Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

⁶³ Phillips, B. & Sabien, R. *Jazz Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2000.

⁶⁴ Nieto, J. & Phillips, B. *Mariachi Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 2005.

⁶⁵ Belwin, *Pop*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., <http://www.alfred.com/SC/BelwinHotPopSeries.aspx>

Table 17. Alternative styles ensembles offered



The data, when considering the group mean of responses, indicates a correlation among instructional materials and performance opportunities favoring Western European art music. There is a 2:1 ratio of respondents identified as using *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*⁶⁶ as compared to *Fiddlers Philharmonic*⁶⁷, the two most frequently chosen instruction books of the survey. The same 2:1 ratio is evident in respondents offering no alternative styles ensemble when married with frequency of use of *Fiddlers Philharmonic*.⁶⁸

Professional Development & Practices

Professional development and practices questions illustrated frequencies of education pursued outside of higher education institutions. Professional development & practices were qualified as a three-tier level of alternative styles workshops: string teacher workshops (within 1 year), alternative styles training events (within the past 5 years), and invitation of alternative styles artists for master classes in the school setting

⁶⁶ Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

⁶⁷ Dabczynski, A. & Phillips, B. *Fiddlers Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

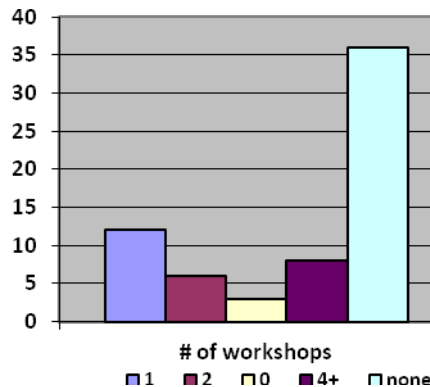
⁶⁸ Dabczynski, A. & Phillips, B. *Fiddlers Philharmonic*. Van Nuys, California: Alfred Publishing Co., Inc., 1996.

(within the past 5 years). String teacher workshops were categorized by the organizational level of offering, district-, state music organization-, and regional/national/internationally-based. The timeframe of one year for string workshops, as opposed to five year timeframe for alternative styles training or guest artist invitation, was established due to the increased availability of string workshops than to alternative styles training.

Strings Workshops

At the school district level, eleven percent of respondents (6 teachers) indicated having attended four or more string teacher workshops, six percent (3 teachers) attended 2 workshops, and fifteen percent (8 teachers) attended 1 workshop within the past 12 months. Sixty-eight percent of respondents (36 teachers) did not attend any possible offering at the district level.

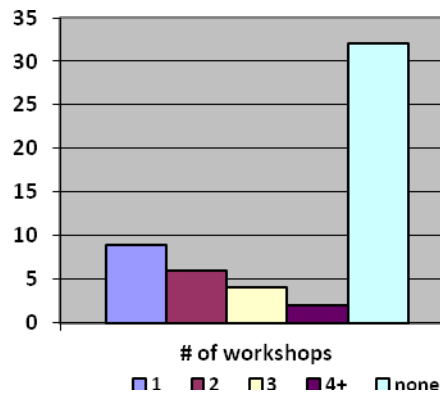
Table 18. School district workshops attended



At the state music conference level, four percent of respondents (2 teachers) indicated having attended four or more workshops, eight percent (4 teachers) attended 3 workshops, eleven percent (6 teachers) attended 2 workshops, and seventeen percent (9

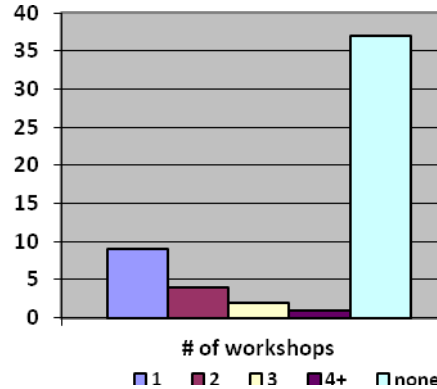
teachers) attended 1 workshops within the past twelve months. Sixty percent of respondents (32 teachers) did not attend any possible offering at the state music conference level.

Table 19. State music conference workshops attended



At the regional/national/international level, two percent of respondents (1 teacher) indicated having attended four or more workshops, four percent (2 teachers) attending 3 workshops, eight percent (4 teachers) attending 2 workshops, and seventeen percent (9 teachers) attending 1 workshops within the past twelve months. Seventy percent of respondents (37 teachers) did not attend any possible offering at the regional/national/international music conference level.

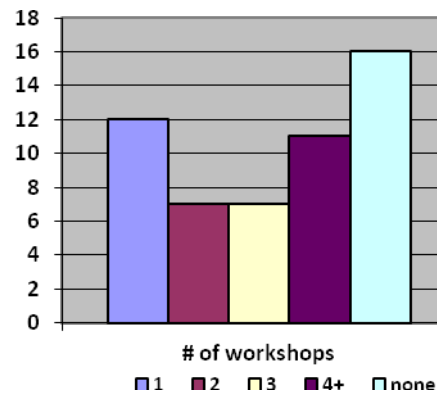
Table 20. Regional/National/International workshops attended



Alternative Styles Training Events

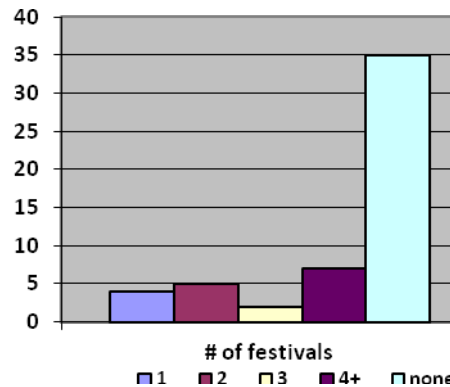
Alternative styles training events were categorized by forum, workshops/seminars, festivals & camps/schools. Twenty-one percent of respondents (11 teachers) indicated having attended four or more workshops/seminars, thirteen percent (7 teachers) attended three workshops/seminars, thirteen percent (7 teachers) attended two workshops/seminars, and twenty-three percent (12 teachers) attended one workshop/seminar. Thirty percent of respondents (16 teachers) did not attend any possible alternative styles workshops/seminars within the past five years.

Table 21. Alternative styles workshops attended



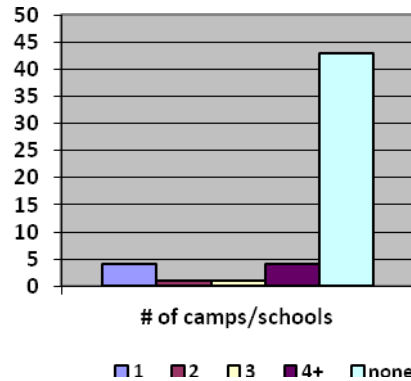
Attendance at alternative styles festivals had the following responses. Thirteen percent of respondents (7 teachers) indicated attending four or more festivals, four percent (2 teachers) attending three festivals, nine percent (5 teachers) attending two festival, and eight percent (4 teachers) attending one festival. Sixty-six percent of respondents (35 teachers) did not attend any alternative styles festivals within the past five years.

Table 22. Alternative styles festivals attended



Regarding attendance at an alternative styles camp/school within the past five years, eight percent (4 teachers) reported attending four or more camps/schools, two percent (1 teacher) attending three camps/schools, two percent (1 teacher) attending two camps/schools, and eight percent (4 teachers) attending 1 camp/school. Eighty-one percent of respondents (43 teachers) indicated not attending any camps/schools for alternative styles within the past five years. There was no clear correlation between respondents' age and the pursuit of training in alternative styles.

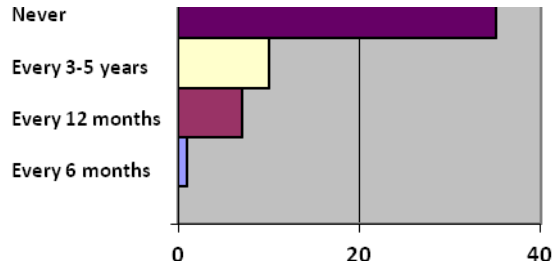
Table 23. Alternative styles camps/schools attended



Alternative Styles Artists Invitation for Master Class

Respondents were asked how frequently they invite alternative styles artists to teach master classes at their school. Two percent of respondents (1 teacher) invite alternative styles artists every six months, thirteen percent (7 teachers) offer invitations every 12 months, and nineteen percent (10 teachers) offer invitations every 3-5 years. Sixty-six percent of respondents (35 teachers) indicated never inviting an alternative styles artist to teach master classes at their school. Lack of professional development in the area of alternative styles could correlate to the lack of invitation to alternative styles artists to perform master classes in the school. There was no clear correlation among geographic location and frequency of invitation of alternative styles artists.

Table 24. Frequency of invitation for alternative styles artist



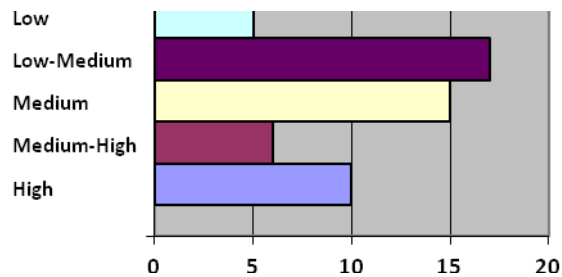
Regarding the three-tier level of alternative styles workshops offered, 60-70% of participants indicated not attending any professional development within the past year. Over the past five years, while still heavy on the side of no professional development, the data indicates a trend of increased attendance at minimally one workshop/seminar.

Level of Confidence

The final area of questioning under the topic of Profession Development & Practices concerned level of confidence in regard to inclusion of alternative styles into string curricula. Results were compared to levels of confidence with alternative styles to develop a correlation between level of professional development and degree of implementation of alternative styles in the curriculum. Nineteen percent of teachers (10 respondents) stated having a high level of confidence having incorporated alternative styles into the curriculum on a daily/weekly basis, 11 percent (6 subjects) claimed a medium-high confidence level (using alternative styles several times a month), 28 percent (15 subjects) indicated a medium confidence level (using alternative styles 1-5 times per year), 32 percent (17 teachers) stated a low-medium confidence level (needing more

training on alternative styles), and 9 percent (5 respondents) indicated a low confidence level (having no desire to use alternative styles).

Table 25. Level of confidence with alternative styles



There was no clear correlation between professional development and level of confidence in using alternative styles. The largest response rate (only 32%) indicated having a low-medium confidence level of implementation. Minimal participation in alternative styles professional development opportunities could possibly be correlated to a low rate of medium to high confidence level when implementing alternative styles in the curriculum.

CHAPTER 5

Summary & Discussion

Introduction

This research utilized a web-based survey that was distributed to members of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) who were Pennsylvania public school string educators. This resulted in findings related to demographic information, teaching load, methodology used, and professional development practices. Specifically, trends found were that higher education levels were attained by older females, higher rates of string instruction occur at the elementary school level by itinerant teachers, and respondents who attend professional development in the form of alternative styles workshops, festivals and camps were more likely to implement alternative styles in public school music programs.

Summary

Results from demographic data indicate that of the educators who participated in this survey, 62 % were female, 62% were over the age of 40 years old, 60% have earned a Master's degree, and 72% have been teaching strings for ten or more years.

Information regarding teaching load indicate that 83% of participants are itinerant teachers, 79% of participants teach at the elementary school level, 54% of respondents teach 50 or more students, and 49% of respondents spend 100% of their instructional time teaching strings.

The data from this survey indicates that the majority of participants (58.49%) are not integrating alternative styles of music in the curriculum. Fifty-five percent of participants did indicate, however, using the method book *Essential Elements for Strings*

2000⁶⁹ in the curriculum, a method book that incorporates alternative styles along with the Western Art music curriculum.

Results from professional development data indicate that of the educators who participated in this survey, on average, 34% of respondents attend professional development events for Western art music, 41% of respondents on average attend professional development events for alternative styles music. Specifically, the results regarding Western art music workshops indicate that respondents most frequently attended state conferences (40% of participants) as compared to district level workshops (32% of participants) or regional/national/international workshops (30% of participants). Regarding alternative styles professional development events, results show a higher rate of attendance workshops (70% of respondents) as compared to festivals (34% of respondents) or schools/camps (19% of respondents).

There may be a connection between gender, age, and highest degree earned. The results indicate that 62% of respondents are female, 62% of respondents are 41 or more years of age, and 60% of respondents have earned a Masters degree.

The data additionally suggests a connection between rate of string instruction, level of school, and itinerant teachers. Forty-nine percent of respondents have 100% of their teaching load teaching bowed, string instruments. Seventy-nine percent of respondents teach at the elementary school level. Forty-eight percent of respondents indicated being itinerant teachers.

Finally, there is a connection between alternative styles professional development and implementation of alternative styles. The data indicated an average of 41%

⁶⁹ Allen, M., Gillespie, R., & Hayes, P. *Essential Elements for Strings 2000*. Milwaukee, Wisconsin: Hal Leonard Corporation, 2004.

respondents attending alternative styles professional development events and 33% of respondents implementing alternative styles (22% fiddling, 11% jazz) in public school music programs.

Assumptions

Demographic assumptions of this study were that as age ranges ascend so would the level of education. Gender designation was requested to determine tendencies of pursued graduate studies and male to female ratios of strings educators in the public schools. Higher levels of education were thought to correlate to increased levels of confidence implementing alternative styles and thereby yield higher frequencies of use of alternative styles in strings programs. Information on years teaching strings instruments was tracked to measure trends in alternative styles use over the course of a teaching career. The assumed connection of these last two points will be explored in the Professional Development & Practices portion of this chapter. It was assumed that a higher level of professional development would lead to a higher frequency of implementation.

Contributions to the Field

The literature review for this study can be used as a consolidated reference for future research in music education. Music education and the classroom-community relationship were brought about by church leaders desiring improved choral performance from members of the congregation. This historical need from the community was the catalyst for music education and directed the content in the curriculum. While having departed from this historical context, alternative styles are promoting the reemergence of community-based music into American public school music curriculum.

One of the main contributions this study offers is the evaluation of present trends in Pennsylvania public school music programs. This contribution should be utilized as a point of reference for future study of string programs in public schools in this geographic region. Several variables were found to be important to this study's sample of alternative styles usage in string programs in Pennsylvania public schools: age of teacher, methodology styles used in teaching, and type of geographic area of the school setting in which instruction occurred. The results indicated that strings educators are more likely to incorporate alternative styles into their strings curriculum if they were (1) older in age, which naturally allows for a larger timeframe in which to achieve a post-baccalaureate degree and (2) using alternative styles method books.

Limitations

One of the main limitations of this study was the small sample size. The study yielded just over a 10% response rate which greatly diminished any significance of statistical analysis possible from the research. The amount of variables used for this study required a larger sample size. A goal response rate of 40% would have been more conducive to determining statistical significance. Being that there was no incentive for participants to respond to the survey request, some inducement or financial remuneration on the part of the researcher may have resulted in higher participation rates.

Directly related to the small sample size was the limiting vehicle for soliciting participants. The use of the Pennsylvania chapter of the NAFME enabled the research to be conducted, but only on an anonymous basis. E-mail addresses or other contact information for possible participants was not available for distribution. This did not allow for any opportunity to follow up with possible participants who had not responded

in the initial distribution of the survey. Additionally, the use of NAFME membership did not allow for contacting any string educators who were not members of the organization.

Finally, the limited timeframe made available for the survey may also have been a limiting factor. The survey was available on-line for two weeks only. Given that not every teacher has computer and internet access at school, it is possible that would-be participants were unable to access the solicitation in the allocated timeframe.

Recommendations for Future Research

A study with a larger sample size of string teacher participants is needed. The scope of this study was limited to the state of Pennsylvania, and in particular, to strings educators with current membership to NAFME. Future replication of this study may include incorporating other related professional organizations such as the American String Teachers Association (ASTA). Additionally offering some form of incentive may promote participation in the study. Offering the survey for a greater amount of time may afford prospective participants the opportunity to respond in light of possible time or computer/internet access limitations.

Considerations for expansion of this study could include gathering data on participants' race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, and varied geographic locations. It is possible that the ethnicity of a community may have an effect on the music genres studied or performed in public schools found in such communities. Historical background of any particular ethnic group might influence the style of music incorporated in music curricula.

It may be that further investigation on geographic location would reveal trends in string education that have not yet been documented. It is quite possible that regional

ethnic demographics have significant influence on the use of alternative string education methods as well as the styles and genres of the alternative methods used. For example Mexican-American urban communities could reveal strong connections to Mariachi or Tejano music. This likelihood of ethnic influence could affect the propensity of integration of the alternative style being offered in the public school music program. The musical offerings of the community may provide a base for the musical development of the public school music teachers. Expanded musical offerings may affect the value of music education placed by the school administration and community, as it pertains to budget allocation for the school system.

Discussion

Orchestra programs in the public school systems are outdated and losing the interest of students. While strings students are enjoying the experience of learning and performing in classically-dominated ensemble setting, there are too frequently accounts of student musicians who have stopped playing after the orchestra experience for the sheer fact that they did not know they were allowed to play an instrument solely for pleasure, for entertainment.⁷⁰

The philosophical position behind this study has a functional assumption that alternative styles are underutilized in public school string programs to the detriment of student learning and cultural relevancy, and generally perpetuates a bias towards Western art music. Many of the public school music programs do not educate with the outcome of making music a continued element in students' adult lives. The instrument gets put

⁷⁰ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004.

away, and the performance environment is abandoned.⁷¹ By enabling students to have a musical framework relative to more diverse and contemporary music, they will be inspired to continue playing instruments, both in and out of the public schools programs.⁷²

By limiting the scope of music genres exposed to students, public school music programs are preparing young musicians for failure upon entering the community. If students are taught history, mathematics and language in preparation for involvement in community activities, why then prepare them with offerings that are nothing more than accounts of musical experiences that, in essence, exist in a vacuum? By this rationale, public school music education can be viewed as non-essential to overall school curriculum.

In order to rejuvenate string programs and keep them from fading out of the public schools, music educators must step outside of the classical comfort zone and explore the alternative styles of music that are all around the American culture. It would be beneficial for string educators to resume the role of student and take advantage of alternative styles training opportunities. These experiences would help to broaden their knowledge base of repertoire and performance practices, especially in the case of alternative styles of music.

Stringed instruments, like any other, are versatile and able to perform a variety of repertoire. Music educators must include jazz into strings curriculum as it presents a forum which fosters composing, community-making, and musically meaningful

⁷¹ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004.

⁷² Jones, Patrick M. "Returning Music Education to the Mainstream: Reconnecting with the Community." *Visions of Research in Music Education* 7. [<http://www.rider.edu/~vrme/>] 2006.

experiences. Music curricula must desegregate opportunities for learning and performing in order to offer truly holistic music programs.

Popular music has been shaped and developed by contributions of musics from around the globe. Just as classical composers found value in folk songs by referencing them for orchestral works, music educators will find value in popular music as it references both classical and popular music from previous eras.

We should be practicing and performing alternative styles of music in our everyday curriculum, not censoring students' experiences solely to Western European Classical music. "The study of history and geography is required throughout our school systems, yet we tend to ignore rich musical traditions cultivated in our own backyards."⁷³

Perpetuating the perception of Western art music as more natural, multifaceted, and meaningful than alternative styles is both narrow-minded and dismissive in its arrogant disregard for similar values presents in musics of other cultures. Although there have been fleeting departures from the mindset of a musical hierarchy leaning more towards Western art music, alternative styles of music could still be integrated into music curricula.

Popular music is often simple and repetitive. These characteristics lend popular music to a high success rate of comprehension for varying ability levels of students, provide opportunities for students to improvise and, in turn, open the door for students to begin composing. If there is to be a return to public school music education supporting the musical happenings of the community, popular music, being relevant to a diverse

⁷³ Lieberman, Julie L. *Alternative Strings: The New Curriculum*. Pompton Plains, New Jersey: Amadeus Press, LLC, 2004: 11

population and providing a simplistic framework, is a logical forum for this arrival and will enable students to explore various aspects and functions of musicing.

Culture has vast capabilities with diverse populations, geographic areas, and histories to stimulate students and should be used as a framework for learning. But without the validation, support, or need of the upper echelon or the government there is no tipping point for alternative styles of strings into the music curriculum.

A community, region, or nation enriches its population and strengthens its sense of self by embracing not only from where it came but also the possibilities for development. Students must be afforded a musical education that will facilitate exploration of diverse American heritage and culturally relevant repertoire, thereby forming a framework for students to shape a more comprehensive outlook of the value of varied music genres.

Alternative styles of music must be integrated into the public school curriculum in order to support defining American cultural identity. Society must look past preconceived notions of alternative styles of music, having limited musical value, and take full advantage of the possibilities therein to further the aims of public school music education as an effective component of society by retaining teacher and students' interest in and exploration of musical practices. In order to better serve the community and improve the quality of public school strings programs in America, music curricula must reflect a greater diversity of musical offerings by including alternative styles of music relevant to American culture.

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APPENDIX A:
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL LETTER



Indiana University of Pennsylvania
www.iup.edu

Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects
School of Graduate Studies and Research
Stright Hall, Room 113
210 South Tenth Street
Indiana, Pennsylvania 15705-1048

P 724-357-7730
F 724-357-2715
IRB-research@iup.edu
www.iup.edu/irb

March 1, 2010

Megan Kathleen Edinger
208 North 8th Street
Indiana, PA 15701

Dear Ms. Edinger:

Your proposed research project, "Alternative Styles of String Education: Methodology and Practices," (Log No. 10-022) has been reviewed by the IRB and is approved as an expedited review for the period of February 23, 2010 to February 23, 2011.

It is also important for you to note that IUP adheres strictly to Federal Policy that requires you to notify the IRB promptly regarding:

4. any additions or changes in procedures you might wish for your study (additions or changes must be approved by the IRB before they are implemented),
5. any events that affect the safety or well-being of subjects, and
6. any modifications of your study or other responses that are necessitated by any events reported in (2).

Should you need to continue your research beyond February 23, 2011 you will need to file additional information for continuing review. Please contact the IRB office at (724) 357-7730 or come to Room 113, Stright Hall for further information.

Although your human subjects review process is complete, the School of Graduate Studies and Research requires submission and approval of a Research Topic Approval Form before you can begin your research. The form can be found at <http://www.iup.edu/page.aspx?id=4697>.

I wish you success as you pursue this important endeavor.

Sincerely,

John A. Mills, Ph.D., ABPP
Chairperson, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
Professor of Psychology

JAM:jeb

cc: Dr. Stanley Chepaitis, Thesis Advisor
Ms. Beverly Obitz, Thesis and Dissertation Secretary

APPENDIX B:
SURVEY COVER LETTER

March 15, 2010

Dear MENC Colleague,

Below is a link to a survey on use of alternative styles of music in public school orchestras. It was developed by an MA candidate in music education at Indiana University of Pennsylvania.

This survey is entirely voluntary, and confidential. If you are interested in participating, the survey will take about 10 minutes to complete.

The contact information for the researcher and the survey can be found in the survey. Please click here:

[Alternative Styles of String Education: Methodology and Practices](#)

If you have any questions, please let me know.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request!

Sincerely,

Sue Rarus, Director, MENC Research/Info

You have received this e-mail because you are a current member of MENC: The National Association for Music Education. This is a special, one-time notice of a survey sent to you by MENC, 1806 Robert Fulton Drive, Reston, VA 20191. Receipt of this message does not mean you will receive weekly MENC e-mail updates if you have requested that your e-mail be "unsubscribed." Questions about this survey? Contact info@menc2.org For general questions about MENC or your membership, please contact Member Services or call 800-828-0229. MENC does not sell or share member e-mail addresses.

APPENDIX C:
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent Form

Title of Study: Alternative Styles of String Education: Methodology and Practices

Principal Investigator: Megan K. Edinger

Email Address: LLGH@iup.edu

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Stanley Chepaitis

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. To join the study is voluntary.

You may refuse to join, or you may withdraw your consent to be in the study, for any reason, without penalty.

Research studies are designed to obtain new knowledge. This new information may help people in the future. You may not receive any direct benefit from being in the research study. There also may be risks to being in research studies.

Details about this study are discussed below. It is important that you understand this information so that you can make an informed choice about being in this research study.

You will be given a copy of this consent form. You should ask the researchers named above, or staff members who may assist them, any questions you have about this study at any time.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this study is to add to the current body of knowledge of use of alternative styles of music in public school orchestras by gaining a better understanding of the implementation of alternative styles of string education. Specifically, this study will examine the methods, resources and practices used in public school orchestra programs. The study will focus on particular genres of alternative styles of string education, that is, jazz, folk, rock, and other Western Art Music types of music.

How long will your part in this study last?

This survey will take approximately ten (10) minutes. There will be no follow-up for this study.

What are the possible benefits from being in this study?

Participants will assist in gathering information about alternative styles in string education. This may further benefit teachers as they prepare implement alternative styles into their music curriculum.

What are the possible risks or discomforts involved from being in this study?

There are no known risks to participants in this study.

How will your privacy be protected?

This survey is a web based survey to be emailed by the National Association for Music Education (MENC). MENC does NOT share/give out MENC member email addresses. All participant information will be completely anonymous.

Participants will not be identified in any report or publication about this study. Although every effort will be made to keep research records private, there may be times when federal or state law requires the disclosure of such records, including personal information. This is very unlikely, but if disclosure is ever required, IUP will take steps allowable by law to protect the privacy of personal information. In some cases, your information in this research study could be reviewed by representatives of the University, research sponsors, or government agencies for purposes such as quality control or safety.

Will you receive anything for being in this study?

You will not receive anything for taking part in this study.

Will it cost you anything to be in this study?

There will be no costs for being in the study

What if you have questions about this study?

You have the right to ask, and have answered, any questions you may have about this research. If you have questions, complaints, or concerns, you should contact the researchers listed on the first page of this form.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, or if you would like to obtain information or offer input, you may contact the Institutional Review Board by email at irb-research@iup.edu.

This project has been approved by the Indiana University of Pennsylvania Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (Phone: 724/357-7730).

APPENDIX D:
QUESTIONNAIRE

Alternative Styles of String Education: Methodology and Practices

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Gender

- Female
- Male

2. Age

- 22-26
- 27-31
- 32-40
- 41+

3. Highest degree earned

- Bachelor's
- Master's
- Doctorate

4. Years teaching string instruments

- 1-4 years
- 5-9 years
- 10+ years

TEACHING LOAD

5. In what type of area do you teach?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

6. At how many schools do you teach?

	0	1	2	3	4+
Elementary School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Middle/Junior HS	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. How many string students do you teach per week?

	1-10 students	11-25 students	26-50 students	50+ students	None
Elementary School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Middle/Junior High School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
High School	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. What percentage of your instructional time (teaching load) do you spend teaching bowed string instruments?

9. Are your string classes held during the regular school day?

- Yes
- No

METHOD BOOKS & ENSEMBLES

10. What method books are used in your curriculum?

- Essential Elements for Strings
- Artistry in Strings
- All for Strings
- Strictly Strings
- Suzuki
- Other:

11. What alternative styles books are used in your curriculum?

- Jazz Philharmonic
- Fiddlers Philharmonic
- Mariachi Philharmonic
- Belwin Pop Series
- None
- Other:

12. Do you offer any of the following alternative styles ensembles?

- Jazz
- Fiddling
- Mariachi
- None
- Other:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & PRACTICES

13. How many string workshops focused on training for string teachers, on average, have you attended in the last 12 months?

	0	1	2	3	4+
School/District String Workshops	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
String sessions/workshops held at my State's MENC Conference	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Regional/National/International String Workshops	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

14. How many alternative styles training events have you attended in the past five (5) years?

	0	1	2	3	4+
Workshops/Seminars	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Festivals	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Camps/Schools	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>

15. How frequently do you invite alternative styles artists to teach master classes at your school?

- Every six (6) months
- Once a year
- Once every 3-5 years
- Never

16. What is your level of confidence for including alternative styles into your string curriculum?

- High: I use alternative styles on a daily/weekly basis.
- Medium-High: I use alternative styles several times a month.
- Medium: I use alternative styles periodically (1-5 times per year)
- Low-Medium: I need more training in using alternative styles.
- Low: I have no desire to use alternative styles.