

Summer 2014

# Before, upon, and beyond the podium: Reflections by retired orchestra directors

Joseph Daniel Austin  
*James Madison University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/master201019>

 Part of the [Music Commons](#)

---

## Recommended Citation

Austin, Joseph Daniel, "Before, upon, and beyond the podium: Reflections by retired orchestra directors" (2014). *Masters Theses*. 139.  
<https://commons.lib.jmu.edu/master201019/139>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the The Graduate School at JMU Scholarly Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Masters Theses by an authorized administrator of JMU Scholarly Commons. For more information, please contact [dc\\_admin@jmu.edu](mailto:dc_admin@jmu.edu).

Before, Upon, and Beyond the Podium: Reflections by Retired Orchestra Directors

Joseph Daniel Austin

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

JAMES MADISON UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree of

Master of Music

Music Education

August 2014

## DEDICATION

To all those who are met with an overwhelming challenge in life; Jesus Christ is your joy, your peace, and your wisdom. He will never leave you, and he has already overcome every trial you will ever face.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to first thank my Lord Jesus Christ, whose perfect love and unmerited favor have been the sole reasons I have accomplished what I have in life. I also cannot express how truly grateful I am to my mother and father for their unfailing love, and their constant prayers and support throughout my life. Lastly, I would like to thank Dr. Lisa Maynard for her guidance, and the JMU faculty who provided me advice, encouragement, and support throughout this daunting task.

## Table of Contents

Dedication.....	ii
Acknowledgments .....	iii
List of Tables .....	v
List of Figures.....	vi
Abstract.....	vii
I. Introduction.....	1
II. Review of Literature .....	8
Factors Against Longevity.....	9
The Problem of Attrition.....	9
The Influence of Administrative and Classroom Management Issues on Attrition.....	13
Factors Contributing to Longevity.....	17
Music Experiences in Youth.....	18
Support in the Profession from Mentors.....	24
Music Experiences in Retirement.....	26
Summary.....	30
III. Method .....	32
Participants.....	34
Survey .....	34
Procedure .....	35
Survey Questions .....	35
Data Collection .....	46
IV. Results.....	47
Results of the Survey .....	48
Conclusion of Results .....	72
V. Discussion.....	73
Summary of Results.....	76
Implications for Future Research.....	83
VI. Appendix A: Free Responses to Survey Questions 22, 38, 41-44 .....	85
VII. Appendix B: Email Invitation and Consent Form .....	95
VIII. References.....	98

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Question 23: Top 3 Career Goals During College.....	52
Table 2: Participation in School Musical Activities.....	63
Table 3: Participation in Out of School/Extracurricular Musical Activities.....	65
Table 4: Participation in Musical Activities During Teaching and Retirement.....	66
Table 5: Question 41: Highlights of Teaching Career.....	67
Table 6: Question 42: Advice for College/University Teacher Preparation Programs.....	69
Table 7: Question 43: Advice for Future or Novice Orchestra Directors.....	70
Table 8: Question 44: Best Reward of Having a Career Teaching Orchestra.....	71

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Comparison of Teaching Challenges Combined.....	56
Figure 2: Comparison of Total Level of Support.....	60

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to examine the background, educational, musical and professional factors that may contribute to the career longevity of string orchestra directors. Nine retired orchestra directors from the state of Virginia served as participants for this study. The names and contact information of the participants were acquired by various means including a mass email announcement inviting retired orchestra directors to participate in a survey that was received by all of the members of the Virginia Chapter of the American String Teachers Association, and by word of mouth within the educational community.

Participants ( $N = 9$ ) completed an online *Qualtrics* survey consisting of 45 self-reflective questions designed to examine the musical, educational, and professional experiences that occurred throughout the lives of the participants, from their youth and into retirement. The survey questions were organized by broad topic, and included questions specific to the following aspects: musical participation; demographic information, childhood experiences, collegiate experiences, teaching career experiences, and retirement experiences. Once each participant's individual survey responses were completed, they were collected and the data grouped and compared, with percentages then being formulated for each of the questions as appropriate. Participants' free response answers were then transcribed, examined, grouped and categorized.

The results of this study, which were formulated using both the survey answers and free response question responses suggested that the surveyed retired orchestra teachers shared a number of common shared characteristics/experiences, among which were: lifelong participation in music which included an increased amount of activity



beginning in high school; the belief in the value of providing mentors to beginning teachers; and there was a positive correlation between the retired orchestra director's perceptions of support, their reported levels of teaching ease, and the length of their careers. Given the current level of teacher attrition, it is important to make efforts to understand those aspects that contribute negatively and positively to the lasting careers of our music teachers.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

An orchestra director's job involves many components. In addition to teaching their students music-specific tasks such as playing string instruments, and reading music, orchestra directors have the potentially overwhelming task of shaping the lives of the young people they teach. The enormous responsibility orchestra teachers have, combined with the reality that they also work in professionally and socially complex environments that require a variety of skill strengths (in addition to those of the musical kind), results in additional pressures being placed on them that might contribute to their wanting to leave the profession. In fact, numerous studies – both general education and music education specific - have concluded that the teaching profession loses 30-50% of new teachers within the first 5 years, and that there are simply not enough teachers to replace them (Hancock, 2003; Hill, 2003; Roisum Foley, 2007).

An investigation of string, band, and choral director retention revealed 17% of teachers left the profession within their first 10 years of teaching, and that a further 34% of teachers left the profession after 6 additional years of teaching (Hancock, 2002). Sustaining teacher longevity is a significant problem, and trying to discover who precisely is most susceptible to attrition and what the underlying causes are for it has been a topic of much research in recent years.

There has been much research undertaken that has examined the effects of the stressful environments teachers endure throughout their career. Lack of administrative support, and classroom management issues have been identified in related literature as being potentially problematic so consistently that they can be considered two main

sources of teacher stress that can lead to attrition (Bullock, 1974; Hancock, 2002; Hearn, 2009; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007; Killian, 2006). Killian (2006) suggested that a lack of administrative support can tie in directly to student discipline issues, and their combined association with teacher attrition. Participants who intended to leave the profession were examined to find that a reported lack of enforced policies from weak administrators corresponded directly to the disciplinary problems teachers reported they were having with their students. While it has also been suggested that personal and family related obligations also have a large impact on a teachers career decisions, it is clear that in both retention and attrition issues that the stresses of low levels of administrative support and classroom management issues go hand in hand to create some of the most defining reasons for a teacher's choice to stay or leave the profession.

### Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

While new teachers may decide to teach for only a short time before leaving the profession permanently, there are many other teachers who enjoy long careers, only leaving for retirement. Why is it that some teachers choose to stay? Are there defining characteristics in the lifelong development of a music teacher that correspond to a lasting career in the profession? As Chiodo (1997) states, "If you want to teach music, should that be reflected in your music participation throughout your life?" (p. 257). The journey into and through the music teaching profession is a lifelong process starting from the parental, and music teacher influences of ones youth (McClellan, 2011; Rhyneer, 2002; Zdzinski, 1996), to the retaining benefits of mentor programs (Holbomb, 2008; Siebert, 2008), and through the continued musical experiences of retired music educators (Busch,

2005; Chiodo, 1997). All of these music experiences at various stages of life can provide insight into the question of what background, educational, musical, and professional experiences contribute to the lasting careers of orchestra directors.

There exists a large body of important research that discusses what factors cause current music educators to leave the profession. The majority of this research is focused on the experiences of those teachers who have already left the profession, or are planning to leave music education permanently, and rightly so. It is important to ask those who have left, what has contributed to their decision. However, there is not a lot of retrospective research that seeks to examine retired music educator's experiences teaching music from the perspectives of their past circumstances, traits, and experiences which could be useful in helping to identify specific factors that might have resulted in their having had long careers in the field of music education. In order to portray an accurate picture of the lifelong experiences that can lead to the longevity of an orchestra director's career, existing research on orchestra directors' background, musical, education and professional experiences from youth to retirement must first be examined. This will suggest some of the few experiences, or traits, that can help explain the longevity of some careers.

Individual's experiences and participation in music education have been shown by research to begin in the home, with this process most often initiated by parents. Parents can directly affect their child's attitudes toward music, and their perceptions of themselves as future performers and music educators (Busch, 2005; McClellan, 2011; Rhyneer, 2002; Zdzinski, 1996). While parents contribute to laying the positive foundations of their child's musical experiences and continued participation, as

individuals mature, their focus of influence begins to change to role models who can offer more precise musical skill and related advice. Research suggests that as individuals enter middle and high school, their orchestra, band, chorus, and private lesson teachers play an increased and very powerful role in their decision to continue performing music and to seek a music education career (Bergee, 2003; Rhyneer, 2002; Rickels, 2010).

Individuals majoring in music at the collegiate level share common musical experiences that can lead them to the field of music education. These formulative foundational musical influences and experiences have shown to produce individuals who value performing and participating in music, and also value music teaching as a profession.

As individuals enter into the field of teaching and are overcome with all of the new responsibilities and pressures associated with the profession, what resources do they have access to that might assist them in their quest to remain in the profession? Some of the most helpful research on attrition has focused on the importance of regularly scheduled music mentor programs for young teachers, and for the mentors who provide support and advice for the many challenges teachers must overcome (Holcomb, 2008; Siebert, 2008).

The final stage of a music educator's career is retirement. However that is just retirement from the classroom, as many educators stay very active throughout their retirement, and remain involved in musical and educational activities. It is important to investigate the backgrounds, educational experiences, musical experiences, and professional experiences of these music educators with the purpose of explaining which specific factors might contribute to their persistence in teaching music. Studies indicate that adulthood is a time of active musical engagement, and the more past musical

experiences an individual has the more musical activities and behaviors they will be involved in later in life (Busch, 2005; Chiodo, 1997).

It is this researcher's belief that there is a current need in research to continue to examine not just why some music teachers leave the profession, but also, why some choose to continue in the profession. Specifically, what background experiences, musical experiences, educational experiences, and professional experiences contribute to the retention of orchestra teachers in the school? The data from this study can then be paired with the findings of existing research to attempt to determine more precisely which factors might lead to contributing in a positive way to the lasting careers of current and future orchestra directors.

Therefore the purpose of this study was to examine the influential background, educational, musical, and professional factors that contribute to the career longevity of string orchestra directors. Study participants will be asked the following research questions, and individual results will be recorded, and compared with those of other participants in the group before being examined further to determine what the contributing factors to longevity in teaching orchestra might be.

1. What similarities exist between the background, educational, musical and professional experiences of individuals who choose to remain in the profession of orchestra teaching until retirement?
2. How do retired orchestra directors perceive they were influenced by the responsibilities and sources of stress associated with teaching orchestra, and the existence or nonexistence of support networks, in relation to their decision to remain in the profession until retirement?

3. How do the musical experiences and participation of orchestra directors who remain in their positions until retirement change over the course of their careers and into retirement?
4. What practical advice do retired orchestra directors have for current and future orchestra directors that might assist them in experiencing successful, long-term careers teaching orchestra?
5. Which important motivators should be present, according to the beliefs of retired orchestra directors, in order to ensure current and future orchestra directors' longevity in the field?

#### Limitations of the Study

The biggest limitation of this study came from the need to obtain contact information of retired orchestra teachers. The intended method was to obtain a list of retired Virginian orchestra directors from VASTA (Virginia String Teachers Association), or the corresponding national organization ASTA (American String Teachers Association). Membership chairmen were uncomfortable providing the contact information of their members, and so other more time consuming methods were employed, that will be discussed in the methods section. This initial limitation made for a more limited number of participants that were able to participate in this study than was intended.

**Definitions**

***Retirement:*** Permanently leaving the profession of teaching string orchestra in the public schools.

***Formal Music Experiences:*** Music academic and performance experiences that occurred in the public school setting.

***Informal Music Experiences:*** Music academic and performance experiences that occurred out of the public school setting.

***Longevity:*** Used to describe the act of remaining as a teacher in the music education profession until retirement.

***Attrition:*** The act of leaving the teaching profession for another career.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The initial inherent professional goal for most novice school orchestra directors is to have a long lasting and successful career in the profession they have chosen. This goal is realized by many orchestra directors who go on to have long, and successful careers teaching orchestra in the schools – even if they intersperse that career at times with short periods away from the profession to pursue graduate study. Unfortunately, while many orchestra directors have positive experiences in the profession it is not always the case that novice orchestra directors go on to have long careers, and in fact many end up leaving the profession within the first few years of entering it. Examining the long-term factors that contribute to the success of orchestra directors over the course of their careers is vital to knowing the reasons why other directors leave the profession, and constitutes a valuable source of information – particularly for those who work in the area of teacher training. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the influential factors that contribute to the career longevity of string orchestra teachers by surveying retired orchestra directors.

This chapter is a review of the relevant literature from previously completed research studies that have examined and reported information specific to the known factors that might contribute to, or hinder, the longevity of educators' professional careers. While some studies provided insight into the experiences of teachers in general education settings, others focused specifically on the experiences of music educators in the various areas of their trained areas of music specialization. Some of the known factors studied in these previously completed studies and included as areas of focus for this study include

issues related to: administrative support; classroom management; and musical educational, and professional experiences throughout the orchestra directors' pre-, during and post- professional lives.

## **Factors Against Longevity**

### *The Problem of Attrition*

One of the major problems affecting the teaching profession is attrition. Hill, Willie L., Jr (2003), former MENC president, specifically discussed the shortage of music teachers in his address to the Music Educators National Conference, stating around 11,000 new music teachers are needed each year to replace those lost to retirement or job burnout, however only about 5,500 new music teachers join the profession. When you compare this with the 30-50% of new teachers who leave the profession each year this creates a very serious problem of keeping a stable population of teachers. It is a subject that has been extensively looked at over the years by various researchers.

Roisum-Foley (2007) undertook a study to compare the general population of music educators ( $n = 523$ ) to superior (outstanding, expert) music educators ( $n = 103$ ) in Minnesota and Wisconsin on their longevity, job satisfaction, and the likelihood that they might leave the profession. The high rate of teacher attrition due to retirement was cited as a cause for professional concern by Roisum-Foley. The goal of the study was to answer three main questions regarding these two groups of music educators: (1) were there observable differences in general between the two groups; (2) were there differences based on level (elementary, middle school, and high school) between the two

groups, and (3) were there differences based on area (classroom music, choral music, and instrumental music) between the two groups.

Roisum Foley's survey examined human relations, negative stress, self-reported job satisfaction, and the perceived intent to leave the profession using a 5-point Likert-scale, and found that superior quality music teachers had a higher mean score (mean = 4.05) for longevity than did average quality music teachers (mean = 2.91), as well as a higher mean score (mean = 80.58) for job satisfaction than did the general group of music teachers (mean = 78.27). Roisum Foley also found that superior music teachers had a lower likelihood of leaving the profession and a higher job satisfaction rate. These findings agree with other research investigations that found that of those music teachers who leave the profession, novice teachers who are within their first 5 years of teaching are more likely to leave the profession. This study highlighted the need for local, state, and federal legislators to continue developing means by which to increase extrinsic, and intrinsic support mechanisms, with the goal of increasing retention.

Russell (2007) examined a range of factors that may affect string music teachers' decision to remain in the profession, migrate to a related position, or leave within the first five years. Russell sought to examine what proportion of string music teachers are "stayers," or "leavers," and which factors are most strongly associated with this career decision. Participants ( $N = 340$ ) completed a 44-item paper survey that focused on the effect of string music teacher's work environments on their decisions to stay within or leave their profession. Participants were asked to respond to questions designed to examine teacher characteristics, school culture and teaching position characteristics.

Russell's results indicated that after 5 years of teaching, the percentage of "leavers" increased from 6% to 23%. Participants who were less satisfied with their relationships with peers and parents were found to be more likely to leave the profession. Having a work environment where the teachers perceived they were being supported by their administrators in a supportive environment was the most notable work environment variable that seemed to influence the teacher's decisions to stay or leave.

According to Russell ninety-three percent of this study's participants reported that they were certified to teach music, with 40% of them holding a Bachelors degree and 52% of the participants holding a Masters degree. These results suggest that it is not pedagogical training, but the relationships within work environments involving parents, teachers, and administrators that plays a role in whether or not a teacher will choose to leave the profession. The researcher also stated the importance of access to mentoring programs for new teachers, as results suggested that those teachers who had not participated in a mentor program were more likely to leave the profession completely.

Another valuable aid in the fight against teacher attrition is to examine the familiar belief that teachers who leave the profession do so because they are simply not well trained. Hancock (2003) investigated preservice teacher intensity, time on and off task, and effectiveness in relation to in-service teacher retention/attrition. One hundred and fifty music education students who graduated between 1986 and 1994 served as participants for this study. All had become state-certified music teachers after graduation. The participants videotaped themselves teaching a high-intensity lesson which was then observed by the researcher and two others to collect data specific to teacher on- and off-task behavior.

Data obtained included the frequency and duration of teacher on/off task behaviors. Each teacher's overall effectiveness was determined using two 10-point Likert scales (10 high, 1 low). The reliability between observers was calculated at .92. Each participant's employment status as a music educator was determined by compiling the in state and national music organization membership lists for the 2000-2001, and 1995-1996 school years. These lists provided Hancock with the employment information for 78 of the participants.

Results revealed that by 2001 only 57% of the participants were still teaching. A *Kruskal Wallance* test was used to examine if there were differences in effective and intense preservice teaching as differentiated by the participants in-service teaching status. Results indicated no differences between groups for teacher intensity ( $H = 4.41$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p > .05$ ) or effectiveness ratings ( $H = 4.67$ ,  $df = 3$ ,  $p > .05$ ). Results suggested that the skills and abilities honed during undergraduate training may not be indicators of continuing participation in the profession. This study also revealed that some preservice teachers who demonstrated high levels of effectiveness and intensity still left the profession, and vice versa. While mastery of these skills may produce effective teachers, the students may not be prepared to face the issues that affect retention and attrition.

This study, like many others, points away from the idea that weak pedagogical training is a main reason for attrition, and opens the doors for other variables to be explored outside of musical training such as administrative support, classroom management issues, and parental/community support.

*The Influence of Administrative and Classroom Management Issues on Attrition*

Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, and Meisels (2007) examined the specific factors that hindered resigned teachers from returning to teaching, and the importance of how those factors continued to influence those who were still teaching. Kersaint et al. used the *Theory of Planned Behavior* (Ajzen (1991)) as the foundational framework to phrase their 36 question survey that set out to analyze continuing and resigned teachers' plans to remain, resign, or return to teaching within the next three years. The survey used a 7-point Likert-scale (1 representing Strongly Disagree) for each belief listed. The *Theory of Planned Behavior* analyzes the participant's attitude toward a behavior, surrounding social perception to the behavior, and the ease or difficulty of engaging in the behavior. An exhaustive study was conducted on all teachers ( $N = 1799$ ) who had chosen to leave their employment from two large Florida school districts during a 2-year period.

Results revealed that of the 1,799 participants, 898 indicated they were going to continue teaching, and 901 indicated that they were intending to leave the profession within the next 3 years. Data revealed that administrative support was ranked as more important to those leaving (4.82), than those teachers choosing to remain in the profession (5.54), suggesting that a perceived lack of support may play a role in teachers deciding to leave their teaching posts. This study reveals a trend that most studies share; lack of administrative support and classroom management/student discipline are among the highest rated reasons teachers leave the profession.

Killian (2006) also sought to explore factors that might provide additional insight into the differences between those music educators who stay and those who decide to leave. The participants ( $N = 223$ ) for this study consisted of self-identified new members

of the Texas Music Educators Association. All participants completed a survey that recorded demographic data, and career information pertaining to such factors as their teaching location, and educational experience. The most important question asked of the participants was if they planned to continue teaching, and if not, to indicate their reasons for wanting to leave the profession. In this study 80% of the participants indicated that they planned to continue teaching music, and 20% of the participants indicated that they wanted to leave the profession.

Upon an analysis of those who intended to leave the profession of music teaching was discovered that the two most cited reasons were dissatisfaction with administration ( $n = 101$ ), and dissatisfaction with students ( $n = 46$ ). These two categories were mentioned overwhelmingly more than any other, with the next most cited category being career enhancement opportunities ( $n = 28$ ). It is also important to note that lack of administrative support and student disciplinary problems sometimes go hand in hand. As one participant stated, “The lack of enforced policies and weak administration are my main stress. I have had to learn to fully discipline students myself,” (p. 47). While a lack of administrative support, resulting in a lack of funding, and perceived respect might contribute to a music program’s director’s decision to leave the profession, this study seems to suggest that student behavior might contribute to this decision as well.

Bullock (1974) examined a group of junior high instrumental music teachers in New York State with the purpose of identifying the personal and professional qualities that contributed to them being classified as superior teachers. Bullock found that there exists a continuing need to identify the characteristics of superior teachers. Specifically, five traits were examined in this study. These included: personality; job satisfaction;

training and experience; selected attitudes; and the interaction of traits within the psyche of the participants.

A total of 82 high school instrumental music teachers from 53 counties participated in this study ( $N = 82$ ) and were chosen by being recommended by their teaching peers with the goal of ensuring that the participants had a record of excellent teaching experience and good ideas. The participants completed a 4-part written survey that contained questions designed to gather information about the personalities, job satisfaction, and training of the participants. While general job satisfaction for the junior high school instrumental teachers (73.33 average) was found to be lower when compared to elementary school teachers general job satisfaction (82.14 average), administrative support and peer-teacher relationships were ranked among the highest rated categories of sources of satisfaction. In response to their perceptions about their relationship with their principal, 40.7% of the participants selected “Good”, while 44.4% of participants selected “Excellent” (the highest percentages of answers chosen). Most participants (59.3%) of the participants believed they had a “Good” relationship with their peer teachers. This can be used to explain the lower percentage (29.7%) of participants who intended to leave the profession in this study. The results of this study again illustrate the important role administrative and peer-teacher support can play in the retention and attrition of music teachers.

Hancock (2002) investigated the affect job related stress had on music teacher attrition and retention in the state of Florida, and found that even in more stable suburban areas, the demand for specialized teachers in subjects like music was still high. The results of this study suggested that administrative, and parental support that rank highest



in their potential to affect job related stress. The participants in this survey were asked to complete an initial survey in 1995, and then to complete another follow-up survey given 6 years later. Both surveys contained questions related to aspects such as administrative and parental support. The participants ( $N = 137$ ) were a randomly selected sample of certified teachers representing a population of graduates who had obtained a BME degree during the past 10 years.

The results of the follow-up survey indicated that 34.4% of the participants were no longer teaching after 6 years. When asked about the level of support they had received while teaching on a scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high), surprisingly all scores were high, with the “*Administration*” option receiving an average rating of 7.47, “*Parents*” receiving 7.27, and the “*School*” 7.12. Most participants (37%) found that with regard to retention, administrative support was one of the most important issues cited by the participants for its role in helping teachers remain in the profession. Hancock concluded that while the participant’s rankings for the option of administrative support were quite high, the comment sections of the survey suggested that a lack of support was of concern to those teachers who left the profession. An examination of the participants’ comments revealed that the major issues that threaten teachers’ motivation to stay in the profession include the differing viewpoints of the importance of music education, and a perception of music as an extracurricular activity. Hancock’s participant’s responses highlighted the importance for all involved in music education to assist administrators and the public in understanding the role and importance of music in education.

Hearn (2009) studied factors that might affect the career longevity of band directors. Hearn sought to first discover which factors might influence career longevity in

band directing, and secondly, to examine more closely how those factors contributed to career longevity in band directing. The participants ( $N = 226$ ) were active members of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), and completed an anonymous online survey that focused on 4 categories; demographic data, environmental variables, personal variables, and education variables.

Results of this study identified three main factors that accounted for 24.7% of the variance in career longevity. These were: environmental; personal; and educational factors. The multiple regression model accounted for 12% of variance in career longevity, and of that, teaching environment made the largest contribution (10.2%) - meaning it was the environment that was the best predictor of career longevity. Environmental factors were defined as including such issues as: student success, parental support, and administrative support.

### **Factors Contributing to Longevity**

Here literature was examined that identified key factors that occur over an individual's lifetime that can contribute to the longevity of a career in music education. Examining teacher's musical experiences from their youth, the support they receive during their teaching careers, and the musical experiences they have throughout their lifetimes can provide vital information to identify which factors contribute to the successful development of those who pursue careers in the field of music education. While the majority of these studies look at music education as a whole the inferences drawn from them can be applied to orchestra directors for the purpose of this study.

*Music Experiences in Youth*

Most research indicates that in the various stages of childhood, parental involvement and motivation contribute largely to the continuation of musical participation throughout one's life, and contribute to the decision to teach music as a career. Zdzinski (1996) examined aspects of student-reported parental involvement on the cognitive, affective, and performance outcomes of instrumental music students. One of the aspects examined by this study was the relationship parental involvement had on a student's musical affective response (attitude). Three hundred ninety seven ( $N = 397$ ) music students from five public school band programs, in New York and Pennsylvania, voluntarily agreed to serve as participants for this study. The measure used was called the "Parental Involvement Measure" which assessed the degree to which parents and/or guardians were involved in a variety of musical activities with the students. Data from this parental involvement measure were analyzed with data collected about the participant's attitudes towards music, success in music, and their motivation to continue in music to discover the main parental activities that contributed most to the participant's musical involvement.

Results indicated that the strongest relationships were found between parental involvement and affective outcome scores (attitude). There were four parental involvement items that had a strong enough statistical significance to indicate practical significance. These items were activities that the participants indicated their parents had been the most involved in during their childhood. The following response selections and their relevant Pearson correlation scores follow: "Take to Concerts" (.12); "Attend Parent Meetings" (.12); "Listen to Music" (.15); and "Sing with Child" (.14). Based on the

results of this study, it might be assumed that parental involvement plays an important role in the musical attitudes of these participants. As Zdzinski concludes, parents are their children's first teachers, and they can help provide positive attitudes toward learning that will last a lifetime.

McClellan (2011) studied the relationships between a variety of variables including: parental influences; academic achievement; adolescent self-concepts as a future music educator; and the decision to major in music education. These previously stated factors were also examined to determine the extent to which they contributed to undergraduate students' concept of themselves as a future music educator. The participants in this study were music education undergraduate students ( $N = 148$ ) from The University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) ( $n = 103$ ), East Carolina University in Greenville ( $n = 27$ ), and The University of Idaho (UI) ( $n = 18$ ). It is interesting to note that 67% of the participants who were surveyed were majoring in instrumental music education. The participants completed a survey that examined parental involvement and the effect of parental influence on their musical experiences and self-concept as a future music educator. The survey used a self-reporting scale from 1 to 5 (1 indicating a negative rate of occurrence), and examined parental involvement, parental influence on adolescent decision to major in music education, and adolescent self-concept as a future music educator.

Results were split by university, and parental involvement items were similar between universities. The highest rated activity parents engaged in with the participants was "Attending School Concerts," with a mean score of 4.495 (UNCG), 3.814 (ECU), and 4.889 (UI) respectively. The second highest rated parental activity was "Parents as

Transportation To and From Music Activities,” with a mean score of 4.155 (UNCG), 3.963 (ECU), and 3.777 (UI). With regard to the participant’s decision to major in music education, parents were found to have a strong influence on the “ability of a student to complete the education successfully,” as follows: 4.669, UNCG; 4.407, ECU; and 4.777, UI. McClellan’s research highlights the fact that in music education, it would appear that parental influence has distinct relationships to adolescents’ perceptions of themselves in music, the decision to major in music education, and self-concept as a future music educator. The effect that a parent or guardian has on the musical development of an individual cannot be understated, and as the literature shows, it is an important first step in a lasting career, especially from the standpoint of creating future music educators.

As individuals grow up, many begin to explore the available musical experiences that middle and high school have to offer. The parent becomes less of an influence as individuals seek role models and advice from those with musical training. As the Rickels (2010) study will indicate, this has a significant impact on the development of future music educators. In the Rickels (2010) pilot study, a survey was given to undergraduate music education majors to learn what motivated them to aspire to a career in music education. The study sought to quantify the types of experiences participants had in teaching roles at the time of their college audition. Other research suggests that these experiences may increase interest in a music-teaching career.

The data for this study were obtained through a survey given to candidates auditioning for entrance as collegiate music education majors. The participants ( $N = 228$ ) were drawn from two state universities ( $n = 153$ ), one conservatory within a state university ( $n = 47$ ), and one private university ( $n = 28$ ) located in the north central,

western, southern, and eastern divisions of MENC. The survey was administered anonymously to the participants while awaiting components of their audition.

As for the results, questions one and two asked the participants to choose the time frame they decided to major in music generally, and music education specifically. More than half of the participants (63%) indicated that they had decided to major in music education by their junior year in high school. In question 3, participants were asked if their music teachers talked to them about becoming a music educator. The answers “Often” (29.96%) and “Very Often” (14.54%) made up the most common of the responses for this question.

Question 4 asked for the participants to select all of the different teachers who had impacted their decision-making process to choose to study music education. Rickels found that High school teachers ( $n = 134$ , 58.77%) were by far the largest group cited as a source of input about careers in music teaching. Private music teachers were also cited by a large group of participants ( $n = 97$ , 42.54%) as a source of music education information. The participant’s personal motivations were examined in question 5. The highest personal motivator selected by 84.65 percent of participants was “I want to teach others to love music,” with the lowest motivator (9.21%) being “I came from a terrible situation. I want to make sure others don’t have such an experience.” When asked about influential individuals in the decision to pursue music in question 6, the combined percentages for the item “high school directors” (band, orchestra, or choir) accounted for 83.33% of the sample. The second most influential individual for these participants was their private music teacher (66.23%). For question 7, the participants were asked to state the general frequency of opportunities to engage in teaching prior to college. The two

most common types of frequency were a “*few times*” ( $n = 72, 32.73\%$ ), and “*weekly or daily*” ( $n = 73, 33.18\%$ ).

Bergee (2003) found similar results to Rickels (2010). Bergee’s study sought to find data on influences critical to a young person’s decision to pursue music teaching as a career, and asked music education majors across the country to identify the most important people, experiences, events, organizations, and beliefs that influences their decision to choose music education as a career. Bergee gave an open-ended written essay to music education majors ( $N = 90$ ) to identify the factors that lead students to become music teachers. Each essay was read several times by both authors to develop a taxonomic structure. Two additional researchers then read all responses and classified them according to frequency into the taxonomic structure. Four categories emerged to describe when students first remembered wanting to become a music teacher: age, place, who was with you, and how you felt.

It is interesting to note that just as in the previous study, most of the participants (56%) in this study indicated that they had decided to become a music teacher in high school at the ages of 15-18, with only 22% indicating their decision was made in college. Although many participants (39%) did not indicate the location or place where they had made this decision, 44% of the participants had indentified the location as being their school band/chorus/orchestra rehearsal room.

A high percentage of participants (51%) indicated that they were with students and teachers in band/chorus/marching band/orchestra, when they made the decision to major in music. When asked about how they felt about teaching music, the category, “Liked and Wanted to Teach,” ranked the highest with 25%, closely followed by,

“Wanted to Emulate Director.” It is important to note that some of the most common phrases for why the participants would teach music were, “I can do this,” “I’m good at this,” and “This is what I was meant to do.” Bergee (2003) suggested that the results of his study show that age level and influential people were the factors having the greatest impact on the decision to become a music teacher.

Rhyneer (2002) examined how student’s attitudes, musical backgrounds, and immediate situations affected their participation in university orchestras. Among the six constructs Rhyneer studied, the most applicable for this current study are; the family’s role, the non-institutional experiences, the high school experiences, and the university experiences.

The participants ( $N = 131$ ) of this study consisted of both individuals who were part of a university orchestra ( $n = 103$ ) and individuals who were not part of a university orchestra ( $n = 28$ ), from the entire United States. The participants were given an online fifty-question survey to retrieve personal and background information, and to assess beliefs and attitudes of university string players.

Results revealed that 21% of the “orchestra participants” surveyed had taken between one and two years of private lessons, as opposed to the 10.7% from “orchestra non-participants.” Over three quarters (71.8%) of the “orchestra participants” reported that they participated in solo or ensemble festivals 4 or more times in high school. When asked about the rate of performances outside school each month, the “orchestra participants” responses revealed a sharp drop in the category of 2 or more times, between high school (36.9%) and college (18.4%). This is unexpected, as it is more likely that participation in outside performances increases with skill and age.



It is also important to note that both “orchestra participants” (99.1%) and “non-participants” (92.9%) overwhelmingly agreed that music was important in their life. In responses to the question about the effect of their high school directors on their choice to continue in music, the majority of both “orchestra participants” (70.2%) and “non-participants” (75%) indicated that they had been positively influenced by their director to want to continue playing their instrument. According to this study, “orchestra participants” had more musical experiences in their backgrounds than “non-participants.” This trend also proved true for their motivation to continue playing their instrument. The results of this study suggest that at the high school level musical experiences are a major influence upon students’ involvement in music ensemble participation and continuing musical experiences beyond high school. Another factor influencing students’ decisions to continue playing an instrument was revealed as the frequency with which the students participate in their high school orchestra’s performances at ensemble festivals. This study also found that parental encouragement to keep playing an instrument was an important factor in university orchestra participation.

#### *Support in the Profession from Mentors*

One of the most defining preventative measures of attrition research has shown is the positive effect mentors have on retaining young teachers. Siebert (2008) expresses his experience as a mentor by stating “as a mentor I could support other music teachers with curricular, pedagogical, and management advice.” (p. 2). In Siebert’s study, he investigated the development and retention of career music teachers. Some of the important questions Siebert asked were: (1) What working conditions and administrative

support are conducive to the development of career music educators?; (2) What professional activities support the life cycle of a career music educator?; and (3) Are there landmark events that increase the potential for longevity?

The participants in this study ( $N = 79$ ) were public school teachers from New York State, who completed a written survey and participated in a focus group interview discussing why teachers remain in the profession. Results suggested that the participants overwhelmingly believed that what would increase music teacher longevity was mentoring. One participant endorsed the role of the mentor for beginning staff, knowing that most districts do not have music administrators, so that new teachers can ask questions and confide in a knowledgeable teacher in their discipline during their first years of teaching. Another participant suggested the importance of mentoring beyond the first year. It is clear that these teachers value the ability to seek, find, and connect with others like themselves, allowing for them to grow and develop in the profession because of those relationships.

The qualification and training of mentors is also important in helping teachers remain in the profession and experience long lasting careers. Conway and Holcomb (2008) stated that continued concerns regarding teacher retention have led to an increased attention to mentoring as a support system for new music teachers. This study examined the *Mentor Project*, a federally funded professional development program for music teachers working in *Title I* schools. Selected for the study were 11 teachers who had been pre-classified as experienced teachers and had been chosen by their district music coordinators for being known as successful music teachers. The method of the study was to survey these 11 participants at two points within two years, using questions pertaining

to: the characteristics of a good mentor, the personal qualifications needed to be a mentor; and potential resources the teachers would need to become good mentors. These participants were also observed during development workshops and interviewed to add to the data collected on their experiences as mentors.

A surprising finding of the Seibert (2008) study that is often overlooked by the educational community is the need for mentors for mentors. Many of the participants in the study expressed their need for regular interaction with their own mentors as well. Another popular topic for these participants was the importance of mentors in providing positive, supportive feedback and less evaluation. The results of this study point to a need for experienced teachers to become more involved with beginning teacher mentoring, induction, and assessment programs, so that they themselves can grow professionally as well as their mentee. A participant's response summed up the purpose of the mentor system quite well, saying, "Mentoring taught me that I like to teach teachers," (p. 70), and "I really learned a lot about myself in this program. I became a better teacher by observing another mentor," (p. 72).

### *Musical Experiences in Retirement*

It is only by looking at the continuing musical experiences of retired music teachers, that we can develop a more accurate picture of the qualities that are present in those who have successfully completed a career as an orchestra director. A continued participation in music and music education throughout one's life may prove to be a defining aspect in the ability to remain in the profession despite its many challenges. Busch (2005) sought to determine selected predictors that may have had an effect on the

way her participants learn music, and participate in music activities at various community colleges in Illinois.

A total of six community colleges in Illinois were randomly sampled from 30 community colleges that had two or more performing ensembles. The participants, who were all members of performing ensembles ( $N = 352$ ), ranged in age from 11 to 89, with an average age of 40. A printed survey was developed and administered to individuals participating in a performing music ensemble at these six community colleges. The survey was divided into the following six sections: current musical activities and behaviors; past music experiences; learning in music; motivators to continue learning in music; music participation at the community college; and about yourself. Group interviews were also conducted by Busch on the same day the survey was administered.

Busch's (2005) findings, relating to musical activities and behaviors, show that three-quarters of the participants most often engage in the activities of listening to the radio (83%), and singing, humming, and whistling (81%). Overall, participants in Busch's study more often engaged in musical activities and behaviors in which they or others were making music and/or involved conversations about music. This study also found that the participants came to learn music by developing an appreciation for it, and it was in their early experiences in their family life, their community, and at their school where participants had developed a liking for music.

During the interviews, the majority of participants also reported that they were first introduced to different kinds of music through family activities and music in their community when they were young. Music was learned through a variety of experiences, informally, non-formally at home, individually, privately, in the community, and through

both vocal and instrumental music learning activities. It is also interesting to note that in regards to the musical participation of the participants, ages 50-60, Busch (2005) found that the participants' participation in performance-based experiences increased through the high school years, decreased during their college years (during their '20s), and then started to increase again from their '30's through their '50's. The participants' participation in non-performance music experiences remained low throughout their lifetime. Busch also found that the older the participant the less music experiences they have had throughout their lifetime, and the more their performance-based experiences occurred in school.

In conclusion, Busch (2005) found that those who influenced the participants' learning of music most strongly were their parents and family members, as they provided the most opportunities, encouragement and support in music-making. Positive school experiences were also found to be among the top influences cited for music participation. Overall, Busch's study clearly illustrated the connection between early childhood involvement in music, prior music experience, and family environment to sustained musical interests and activity. The results of this study demonstrated that the more past musical experiences individuals engage in, the more ways they will learn music, the more musical activities and behaviors they will be involved in, and the more motivators they will have to play music in the future.

Chiodo (1997) sought to describe and analyze the music participation of selected adults, in hopes of encouraging sustained commitment to music performance among students. The research questions used for this study centered around the following: (1) discovering how participants integrated music participation into the context of their

personal and professional lives; (2) examining how the participants' commitment to music participation developed over the course of a lifetime; and (3) discovering the benefits of adult instrumental music participation that support lifelong commitment.

Chiodo's study consisted of in-depth interviews as the main data-gathering method. Each interview was recorded on audiotape and was first transcribed by the researcher, who then coded the information to find patterns of participation within the data. Twenty-eight adult musicians were selected for participation in the study and were interviewed regarding their participation in instrumental music. Participant's ages ranged from 24 to 64 years, with a median age of 42 years. Of these participants, 5 were considered musical performers, and 5 were full time music educators. Twenty-seven participants (96%) played in two or more performing groups. Twenty-four participants (86%) stated that they routinely played in two or more types of performance setting.

The results suggested that for the participants who were included in this study, "during childhood, the school music program had an enormous influence on participation" (p.131). Ninety-three percent of participants reported that they had played in high school performing ensembles, while 23% of participants reported that they had played in community groups in high school. Seventy-five percent also stated that they started lessons on their current instrument in school (p. 100).

This data suggests that the roots of adult participation in music can stem from an early dedication to music in childhood, making even more important those musical experiences that were discussed earlier in the review of literature. Adulthood was a period of active and busy engagement in the activities of instrumental music performance for these participants, as they reported extensive involvement playing in multiple groups

and in different types of performing groups. Sixty-five percent of the participants said they would only stop playing music if a serious physical disability would prevent them. The results of this study suggest that music participation pursued over the span of a lifetime, becomes a consistent pattern of behavior, a basic orientation that influences major life decisions, and behavior so firmly entrenched that life cannot be envisioned without music (p. 136).

### **Summary**

This review of relevant literature first points to a widespread issue of attrition for all music educators. Numerous studies corroborate the Hancock (2002) study that concluded, in regards to music education as a whole, that 17% of teachers left within the first 10 years of entering the profession, and 34% left the profession after 6 additional years. Teacher longevity is a real problem, and trying to discover who precisely is most susceptible to attrition and what are the underlying causes are that contribute to this problem has been a topic examined in depth by research over many years.

Considerable research points to lack of administrative support and classroom management as the causes of teacher stress, and therefore attrition (Bullock, 1974; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007; Killian, 2006). Killian's (2006) research suggests that a lack of administrative support can be associated with a variety of teacher stresses, such as student disciplinary problems and the pressures of performance expectations. It will be important to understand the degree to which these issues affect those teachers who leave, and those who stay.

While new teachers may leave the profession permanently after only a few years, there are many other teachers who enjoy long successful careers, only leaving for retirement. Literature has revealed that there are many important potential sources of positive affirmation for music teachers that can limit and relieve the stresses of their jobs, and contribute to them having long lasting careers as music educators. Continued participation in musical activities can also contribute to a lasting career as discussed in the literature. As Chiodo (1997) states, “If you want to teach music, should that be reflected in your music participation throughout your life?” (p. 257). The journey into and through the music teaching profession is a lifelong process beginning with the parental, and music teacher influences of ones youth (McClellan, 2011; Rhyneer, 2002; Zdzinski, 1996) on into the continued musical experiences in ones career, and into retirement (Busch, 2005; Chiodo, 1997).

Just as important, is the research that has examined the importance of school districts having a mentor program for their teachers, and the positive impact such programs have on assisting in the retention of new music teachers. As individuals enter into the teaching career and are overcome with all of the new responsibilities and pressures, what sources of assistance are available? Some of the most helpful research on attrition has been discovering the importance of regularly scheduled music mentor programs for young teachers, and for other mentors that provide support and advice for the many challenges teachers must overcome (Holcomb, 2008; Siebert, 2008). It is important to link the literature on attrition with the literature on retention, to discover why new music teachers leave the profession, and why some decide to stay to pursue long lasting careers teaching music.



## CHAPTER III

### METHOD

The career of an orchestra director is one of purpose and dedication. However, as Hill (2003) states, a result of attrition and the retirement of the Baby Boomer generation is around 11,000 new music teachers are needed in the United States each year, and approximately only 5,500 teachers enter the profession annually. Choosing to pursue a career as an orchestra director is an option available to those who are among this aforementioned group. For those individuals who do choose a career in music education, Roisum Foley (2004) describes a music education field that is plagued with retention and attrition issues, with “at least 40 percent of music teachers leaving the profession in the first five years,” (p. 4).

This study sought to expand upon the existing literature that is focused on factors contributing to teacher retention and attrition, by providing information specific to the educational and career experiences of retired orchestra directors who chose to continue in their positions until retirement. As new waves of young orchestra directors continue to make their way into the educational community, it is of ongoing importance for researchers to continue examining and reflecting upon the experiences of those who are in a position to share their insight about the factors they believed contributed to, or detracted from their own long term successful experiences in the field.

While there exists a large body of research examining the factors that contribute to current music educators leaving the profession, there is a paucity of research that examines this topic from a retrospective perspective. This is especially true in the case of research that has been focused on examining retired orchestra director’s past

circumstances and experiences as a source of data. Such data should be paired with the findings of existing research to identify more precisely the specific factors that can contribute to orchestra directors having lasting careers. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the influential factors that contribute to the career longevity of string orchestra directors, by analyzing the responses of retired orchestra directors to the following questions:

1. What similarities exist between the background, educational, musical and professional experiences of individuals who choose to remain in the profession of orchestra teaching until retirement?
2. How do retired orchestra directors perceive they were influenced by the responsibilities and sources of stress associated with teaching orchestra, and the existence or nonexistence of support networks, in relation to their decision to remain in the profession until retirement?
3. How do the musical experiences and participation of orchestra directors who remain in their positions until retirement change over the course of their careers and into retirement?
4. What practical advice do retired orchestra directors have for current and future orchestra directors that might assist them in experiencing successful, long-term careers teaching orchestra?
5. Which important motivators should be present, according to the beliefs of retired orchestra directors, in order to ensure current and future orchestra directors' longevity in the field?

## **Participants**

This study examined the backgrounds of retired string orchestra teachers from the state of Virginia who had remained in their profession until retirement. Participants ( $N = 9$ ) were chosen by a variety of methods. The process of locating the participants proved to be a challenging aspect of this study due to the fact that when orchestra teachers retire they are unlikely to have school or professional organization-related email addresses. Those who do maintain professional memberships may not be identified by the organizations on their own membership lists as being retired and/or the organizations may not because of organizational and By-Law issues be allowed to share the names and email addresses of their membership. Therefore, participants for this study were solicited via a Call for Participants placed in the Virginia Chapter of the American String Teachers Association email newsletter, through suggestions by individual contacts in the profession, online searches for retired orchestra directors, and via word of mouth.

## **Survey**

The survey developed for this study included a combination of Likert scale, multiple choice, and free response questions. The 45 questions included in the survey were designed to examine factors specific to each participant's musical development, and music related experiences from birth to retirement, as well as selected aspects of each participant's teaching career. The survey questions were grouped into the following 5 areas: (1) background information; (2) childhood experiences; (3) collegiate experience; (4) teaching career experiences; and (5) retirement experiences.

## Procedure

Once the list of potential participants was completed, 14 retired orchestra directors were emailed an invitation to participate in the study which included a consent form and link to the survey. The survey was administered using the *Qualtrics* program. Once the surveys were completed, numerical data were collected and analyzed once again using the *Qualtrics* software program. In addition, transcriptions of the participants' free response questions were completed. The free response transcriptions were then examined by the researcher to identify trends within the participant's responses. Once the study was complete, all data remained secure in the *Qualtrics* program.

## Survey Questions

### Survey of Retired Orchestra Directors

1 Please select your gender.

- Male
- Female

2 Which of the following best describes your ethnicity?

- White/Caucasian
- Black/African American
- American Indian
- Asian American/Asian
- Mexican American
- Puerto Rican
- Other Latino
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

3 Please select your current age range.

- 45-50
- 51-55
- 56-60
- 61-65
- 66-70
- 71-75
- 76-80
- 81-85
- 86-90
- 91 and above

4 How many years have you been retired for? Please specify in the blank below.

5 At what age did you retire from teaching string orchestra?

6 How many years total did you spend teaching string orchestra? Please specify in the blank below.

7 If you were a principal string player during your undergraduate studies, please select your principal string instrument. If you were a **non-principal string player** (e.g. wind, brass, percussion, piano, etc.) during your undergraduate studies, please select "None" and **skip to question 9**.

- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass
- Guitar
- Harp
- Other. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_
- None

8 Please select your secondary string instrument. **Please skip to question 10**.

- Violin
- Viola
- Cello
- Double Bass
- Guitar
- Harp
- Other. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

9 **As a non-principal string player** (e.g. wind, brass, percussion, piano, etc.) during your undergraduate studies, please specify in the blanks your primary instrument, and what

you would now consider to be your primary string instrument after having taught orchestra.

- Primary Instrument \_\_\_\_\_
- Primary String Instrument \_\_\_\_\_

10 Which best describes your social economic status while growing up?

- Low Socioeconomic
- Mid Socioeconomic
- High Socioeconomic

11 In what phase of your schooling did you decide to become a music educator?

- Elementary
- Middle/Junior High
- Freshman - High School
- Sophomore - High School
- Junior - High School
- Senior - High School
- College. Please specify which year (e.g. 1st). \_\_\_\_\_
- Do not remember

12 From the following list, please rank in order of importance the individuals who **most** influenced you in your decision to become an orchestra director (5 being the **most** important). Note: Type the numbers in the spaces provided.

- \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian
- \_\_\_\_\_ Private music teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Ensemble director/Music teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Peers
- \_\_\_\_\_ Relatives

13 Please specify, beside the provided phases of schooling, any music classes/ensembles/lessons you participated in as part of your in-school activities (e.g. string orchestra, choir, private lessons, band, etc.)

- Pre-Elementary
- Elementary School
- Middle School/Junior High
- High School

14 Please specify, beside the provided phases of schooling, any music classes/ensembles/lessons you participated in **outside** of your in-school music activities (i.e. extracurricular non-school related activities like; community orchestra, summer music camp, quartet member, etc.)

Pre-Elementary  
 Elementary School  
 Middle School/Junior High  
 High School  
 College/University

15 Do you have a degree/s specifically in Music Education? **If not please skip to question 17.**

- Yes  
 No

16 Please specify the type of Music Education degree/s and concentrations you have (e.g. Bachelors in Music Education).

- Bachelors \_\_\_\_\_  
 Masters \_\_\_\_\_  
 PhD \_\_\_\_\_

17 Please specify any additional studies you undertook to become an orchestra director (e.g. alternative certification).

18 Do you have any degree/s besides a Music Education Degree? **If not please skip to question 20.**

- Yes  
 No

19 Please specify any other degree/s you have outside of music education.

- Bachelors \_\_\_\_\_  
 Masters \_\_\_\_\_  
 PhD \_\_\_\_\_

20 Which of the following best describes the undergraduate college/university you attended.

- Two Year  
 Four Year  
 Conservatory  
 Liberal Arts College  
 Other. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

21 Please select your level of agreement with the following statement.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I was prepared for my first teaching job after receiving my first degree.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22 In thinking reflectively about your experiences as a young teacher, in what areas/subjects do you feel you could have been better prepared?

23 From the 8 career titles listed below, rank the **top 3** career goals you had **during college** (with 3 being the **most** important).

*Note: You only need to rank 3 career titles. Please type the numbers in the spaces provided.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ School Orchestra Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ School Band Director
- \_\_\_\_\_ Studio Teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Performer
- \_\_\_\_\_ General Music Teacher
- \_\_\_\_\_ Recording Industry
- \_\_\_\_\_ Other Music Career. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not Music. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

24 Did the rankings of the career goals above change during your **teaching career**? **If not please skip to question 26.**

- Yes
- No



25 Please indicate this change in your career goals by **re-ranking** the career titles provided to reflect how your **top 3** career goals changed (with 3 being **most** important).

*Note: You only need to rank 3 career titles. Please type the numbers in the spaces provided.*

- \_\_\_\_\_ School Orchestra Director  
 \_\_\_\_\_ School Band Director  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Studio Teacher  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Performer  
 \_\_\_\_\_ General Music Teacher  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Recording Industry  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Other Music Career. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ Not Music. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

26 Please select the most accurate conclusion to the following statement: "In my first year as a new string orchestra director I had. . ."

- a formally assigned mentor.  
 an informal mentor.  
 no mentor.

27 "While an orchestra director I was. . ."

- a formally assigned mentor.  
 an informal mentor.  
 not a mentor.

28 "Since retiring an orchestra teacher I have been. . ."

- a formally assigned mentor/student teaching supervisor.  
 an informal mentor.  
 not a mentor.

29 Please select the response that best reflects your perception of the level of personal challenge you experienced in executing the following teaching related activities in the **first 5 years (approx.)** of teaching string orchestra.

	Neutral	Not Challenging	Slightly Challenging	Challenging	Very Challenging
Teaching instruments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching theory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching a new piece.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating written tests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serving as a role model.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking students on trips.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing with students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating with parents on their child's progress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30 Please select the response that best reflects your perception of the level of personal challenge you experienced in executing the following teaching related activities, in the **last 5 years (approx.) leading up to your retirement.**

For those answers that changed from the question above, if you are comfortable, please indicate why in the spaces provided at the bottom.

	Neutral	Not Challenging	Slightly Challenging	Challenging	Very Challenging
Teaching instruments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching theory.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teaching a new piece.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating written tests.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Serving as a role model.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Taking students on trips.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Performing with students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating with parents on their child's progress.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

31 Which best describes the community setting of the school/s you primarily taught at?

- Urban
- Suburban
- Rural

32 Which of the following best describes the school levels you primarily taught during your career as an orchestra director? Please specify what grades you taught under each selected school level. (e.g. Middle School: 6, 7, 8)

- Elementary School \_\_\_\_\_
- Middle School \_\_\_\_\_
- High School \_\_\_\_\_
- A combination. Please specify. \_\_\_\_\_

33 Please select the response that best reflects your overall feelings with regard to the **level of support** you perceived from the following sources during your **first 5 years (approx.)** of teaching string orchestra.

	Very Displeased	Displeased	Neutral	Pleased	Very Pleased
School District Administration (Supervisors)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Administration (Principal, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Music Store	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Music Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

34 Please select the response that best reflects your overall feelings with regard to the **level of support** you perceived from the following sources during your **last 5 years (approx.) leading up to your retirement**.

For those answers that changed from the question above, if you are comfortable, please indicate why in the spaces provided.

	Very Displeased	Displeased	Neutral	Pleased	Very Pleased
School District Administration (Supervisors)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Community	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Administration (Principal, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parents	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Music Store	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local Music Teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

35 Did you regularly take your students to assessment festivals and/or other competitions throughout your teaching career? **If not please skip to question 35.**

- Yes  
 No

36 Please specify all of the assessment festivals and/or other competitions you participated in.

- State level  
 National level  
 Trip related  
 Other. Please Specify. \_\_\_\_\_

37 Was there ever a time during your teaching career that you considered leaving the profession? **If not please skip to question 37.**

- Yes  
 No

38 Please give a brief explanation for why you considered leaving the profession, if you feel comfortable doing so.

39 Please specify the various music, and music service related activities you engaged in, next to the appropriate life phases below. (e.g. community orchestra, church choir, board member of music organizations, summer music camp counselor, quartet member, etc.)

*Note: Only list those activities you engaged in, outside of your designated teaching duties, while teaching string orchestra and during your retirement.*

While an Orchestra Director

During Retirement

40 Please select the response that best reflects the degree with which you agree with the statements below.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I received an appropriate level of recognition for my work as a music teacher.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My teaching career met the expectations I had in college.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel proud of my teaching accomplishments.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

41 What are some of the highlights of your teaching career?

42 What advice do you have for college/university teacher preparation programs that you believe would help strengthen the programs?

43 What would be your #1 piece of advice to future or novice orchestra directors?

44 What, for you personally, has been the #1 best reward of having a career teaching orchestra?

45 A huge thank you again for participating in this survey. I really appreciate your support. Would you like to share anything else about your experiences today? Sincerely,  
Daniel Austin

### **Data Collection**

Once all available surveys were completed, the researcher collected, compiled and analyzed the data using the *Qualtrics* program. Free response answers were then transcribed and the results were grouped according to similarity of categories.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the influential factors that contribute to the career longevity of string orchestra directors. Participants were given a 45-question online survey using *Qualtrics* the goal of which was to examine selected aspects of the participant's music and teaching experiences from youth to retirement. The participants were allowed two weeks to complete the survey, and upon the survey deadline, the data was reviewed and analyzed using the *Qualtrics* software. Answers for the free response and short answer questions, were transcribed, grouped and categorized, according to similarity of activity, subject, and/or participant, and presented in the form of tables in the results section of this document.

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What similarities exist between the background, educational, musical and professional experiences of individuals who choose to remain in the profession of orchestra teaching until retirement?
2. How do retired orchestra directors perceive they were influenced by the responsibilities and sources of stress associated with teaching orchestra, and the existence or nonexistence of support networks, in relation to their decision to remain in the profession until retirement?
3. How do the musical experiences and participation of orchestra directors who remain in their positions until retirement change over the course of their careers and into retirement?



4. What practical advice do retired orchestra directors have for current and future orchestra directors that might assist them in experiencing successful, long-term careers teaching orchestra?
5. Which important motivators should be present, according to the beliefs of retired orchestra directors, in order to ensure current and future orchestra directors' longevity in the field?

### **Results of the Survey**

The background data collected from the 9 retired orchestra directors who participated in this study revealed that 78% of the participants were female ( $n = 7$ ), and that 22% were male ( $n = 2$ ). All participants classified their ethnic identity as being White/Caucasian. Forty-four percent of participants ( $n = 4$ ) were in the 66-70 year age range, while thirty-three percent ( $n = 3$ ) were between the ages of 61-65 years, and twenty-two percent ( $n = 2$ ) of the participants were within the 71-80 year old age range.

The participants' years of string orchestra teaching experience ranged from 12 years of teaching, to 45 years of teaching, with an average teaching span of 34 years. The results found that all participants had retired within the age range of 55- 67 years. The length of retirement for the participants ranged from 1 year to 15 years, with an average number of retirement years of 8. When asked to describe the community setting of the school/s in which they had primarily taught, 76% of the orchestra directors ( $n = 7$ ) selected the survey response option of "suburban community," 22% ( $n = 2$ ) of the participants selected the response "urban community." As would be expected with music educators, most participants (67%,  $n = 6$ ) taught at a combination of school grade levels ranging from elementary to college. Twenty two percent of participants ( $n = 2$ ) taught

primarily at the elementary school level and one participant taught primarily at the high school level.

When asked to identify their principal stringed instrument, 56% of the participants ( $n = 5$ ) indicated that violin was their principal instrument, while 11% of participants ( $n = 1$ ) indicated that viola or 'cello was their principal instrument. An additional 22% of participants ( $n = 2$ ) indicated that their principal instrument was not a stringed instrument. Further examination of these two participant's survey data indicated that while trumpet, and percussion were originally considered their principal instruments, after teaching string orchestra they now considered violin and viola as their principal stringed instrument. While violin was the most common primary stringed instrument selected by all participants, viola was the most commonly identified secondary string instrument selected by 57% of the participants ( $n = 4$ ). Twenty nine percent of the participants ( $n = 2$ ) indicated that violin was their secondary stringed instrument, with fourteen percent of the participants ( $n = 1$ ) indicated that piano was their secondary instrument.

With regard to the question asking participants to select a response that best reflected their social economic status while growing up, 67% of the participants ( $n = 6$ ) selected "Mid Socioeconomic", while 33% of the participants ( $n = 3$ ) selected "Low Socioeconomic." Almost half (44%) of the participants ( $n = 4$ ) indicated that their decision to become a music educator was made during their first year of college, while 22% of participants ( $n = 2$ ) indicated that they had made their decision during middle/junior high school, and 22% of the participants ( $n = 2$ ) indicated that they had made the decision in their third year of high school. One participant reported that they did not remember when they had decided upon their career choice. When asked to rank in

order of importance the individuals who had most influenced their decision to become an orchestra director, the participants indicated it was first their ensemble director/ music teacher, followed by their parent/guardian, and then their ensemble music teacher.

When asked to select the response which best described the college/university they attended, 89% of participants ( $n = 8$ ) indicated that they had attended a four-year college, while with one participant had attended a liberal arts college. Eighty nine percent of participants ( $n = 8$ ) indicated they had earned a Bachelors degree, while 78% of the participants ( $n = 7$ ) indicated they had also earned a Masters degree. The concentrations of the participant's Bachelors degrees were as follows: Bachelor of Music Education; Bachelor of Science; and Secondary Education with a Concentration in Music. One participant also reported having received a degree in viola performance, organ performance, and music education.

Those participants who had earned Masters degrees listed the degree concentrations in a variety of areas. These included: Master of Music; Master of Music in Music Education; Master of Arts for Music; Master of Science in Music Education; and Master of Music in Viola Performance. When asked if they had obtained any degrees outside of music education, three participants reported that they had music performance degrees in violin, viola, and organ performance, while one participant reported having earned a Master of Music in Musicology degree.

In reference to the question asking how prepared they felt for their first teaching position once they had received their degree/s, one participant (11%) selected the response "Strongly Disagree," while three participants (33%) selected the response option "Disagree". A further two of the participants (22%) selected the response

“Agree”, while three of the participants (33%) had selected the response “Strongly Agree.” When asked to provide free response information about the areas or subjects of their music education studies that they could have been better prepared for, the two most cited areas were: (1) classroom management and discipline; and (2) greater exposure to string instrument pedagogy and methods. Other areas of perceived weakness in the university experiences of the retired orchestra directors including the following topics: assessment and testing; school budgets; pacing; working with disadvantaged children; and exposure to General Music.

Six of the survey questions had been designed to examine any changes in career goals, teaching difficulty, and support, over the course of the teaching careers of the participants. The first question had asked participants to rank the top three career goals they had during their college years (with 3 being the most important). The top career goals chosen by these participants were “School Orchestra Director” with 56% ( $n = 5$ ), “School Band Director” with 22% ( $n = 2$ ), and “General Music Teacher” and with 22% ( $n = 2$ ) with one participant also indicating college music professor as their top career choice in college.

The career goals ranked second were “Studio Teacher” with 22% ( $n = 2$ ), and “Performer” with 33% ( $n = 3$ ). The third ranked career goals selected were “Performer” with 33% ( $n = 3$ ), “Studio Teacher” also with 33% ( $n = 3$ ), and “School Orchestra Director” with 22% ( $n = 2$ ). For all of the top three career goal rankings of all participants see Table 1. When asked if the ranked order of their original undergraduate career goals had changed during their teaching careers, 33% of the participants ( $n = 3$ ) indicated that “Yes” their career goals had changed. These participants were asked to re-rank their

career goals to reflect how their career goal rankings had changed during their teaching careers.

Table 1

*Question 23: Ranking of Top 3 Career Goals During College.*

<i>Participants A-I</i>	<i>Rank of Career Goals</i>	<i>Re-rank of Career Goals</i>
<b>A</b>	I. General Music Teacher II. Studio Teacher III. School Orchestra Director	
<b>B</b>	I. School Orchestra Director II. Other Music Career not specified III. Studio Teacher	
<b>C</b>	I. School Orchestra Director II. Performer III. Studio Teacher	
<b>D</b>	I. School Band Director II. Performer III. School Orchestra Director	I. Administration II. School Orchestra Director III. Performer
<b>E</b>	I. School Orchestra Director II. Music Therapy III. Performer	
<b>F</b>	I. College Music Professor II. Studio Teacher III. Performer	I. Studio Teacher II. School Orchestra Director III. Performer
<b>G</b>	I. School Orchestra Director II. Choral Music Teacher III. Studio Teacher	
<b>H</b>	I. School Band Director II. Musicologist III. Performer	I. School Band Director II. School Orchestra Director III. General Music Teacher
<b>I</b>	I. School Orchestra Director II. Performer III. General Music Teacher	

As part of the survey, participants were asked to select a description that best reflected their perceptions about the teaching activities they had found most challenging during their first 5 years (approximately) of teaching string orchestra. Please note that for the activities of “Teaching Instruments,” “Teaching Theory,” and “Creating Written Tests” only eight participants responded. The activity of “Teaching Instruments,” was found to be “Very Challenging” by one participant (12%), and “Challenging,” by another participant (12%), while four participants (50%) selected “Slightly Challenging,” and two participants (25%) selected “Not Challenging”. Four participants (50%) indicated that they had found “Teaching Theory” to be “Slightly Challenging,” while three participants (37%) indicated that they had found it “Not Challenging”. One participant (12%) indicated a “Neutral” response in regard to the difficulty level they had experienced in teaching theory.

In response to the question about the level of challenge they had experienced while “Teaching a New Piece” during their first five years of teaching, two (22%) of the retired orchestra directors selected the response option of “Challenging”, while four of the participants (44%) selected the option “Slightly Challenging,” and three participants (33%) selected “Not Challenging”. With regard to the difficulty level of “Creating Written Tests” during their first five years of teaching, only two participants (25%) selected “Challenging” from the response options, and one participant (12%) selected “Slightly Challenging,” while five other participants (62%) selected “Not Challenging.”

In response to the level of challenge of “Serving as a Role Model,” eight participants (88%) found it “Not Challenging,” and one participant (11%) selected “Neutral.” In the activity of “Taking Students on Trips,” two participants each found it

“Very Challenging,” (11%), and “Challenging,” (11%). Three participants (33%) indicated they found it “Slightly Challenging,” and another three participants (33%) indicating it was “Not Challenging,” with one participant (11%) as “Neutral.” The majority of participants ( $n = 8$ , 88%) found the activity “Performing with Students” to be “Not Challenging,” and one participant (11%) was “Neutral.” The last activity examined was “Communicating with Parents on their Child’s Progress,” and in response to the challenges of this activity, one participant (11%) selected “Challenging,” five participants (55%) found it “Slightly Challenging,” and three participants (33%) selected “Neutral.”

Participants were then asked to describe the challenges of these same activities, but in regards to their last 5 years (approximately) of teaching, leading up to their retirement. For the activity of “Teaching Instruments,” six participants (66%) indicated that it was “Not Challenging,” with one participant (11%) indicating it was “Slightly Challenging,” and another participant (11%) indicating it was still “Challenging.” The level of difficulty of “Teaching Theory” saw a rise in six participants (66%) who found it “Not Challenging,” and two participants (22%) who found it “Slightly Challenging.” The activity “Teaching a New Piece” was found by six participants (66%) to be “Not Challenging,” leading up to their retirement, with only two participants (22%) indicating it was still “Slightly Challenging,” and one participant (14%) found it to be “Challenging.”

The challenge of “Creating Written Tests” proved to be easier for the participants leading up to their retirement with seven participants (77%) selecting “Not Challenging,” and one participant (11%) selecting “Slightly Challenging,” and another participant (11%) selecting “Challenging.” Again, “Serving as a Role Model” was not challenging for eight of the participants (88%), and one participant (11%) was “Neutral.” Four

participants (44%) found that the activity of “Taking Students on Trips” became “Slightly Challenging” in the years leading up to retirement, with three participants (33%) indicating it was “Not Challenging,” and two participants (22%) selecting “Neutral.” Again, the challenge of “Performing with Students” was found by eight participants (88%) to be “Not Challenging,” and one participant (11%) was “Neutral.” The final activity of “Communicating with Parents on their Child’s Progress,” was selected as “Not Challenging” by six participants (66%), with three participants (33%) indicating this activity was still “Slightly Challenging” leading up to their retirement.

The participants were asked to explain (if they were comfortable doing so) why their selected response had changed from the previous question. Two reasons were given. For the challenge of “Teaching Instruments,” a participant indicated that it was easier leading up to their retirement because of the teaching experience they now had. For the challenge of “Communicating with Parents on their Child’s Progress” a participant indicated that this became easier with the advancement and widespread use of email. For the comparison of combined challenges from the first 5 years (approximately) of teaching, to the last 5 years (approximately) of teaching see Figure 1.



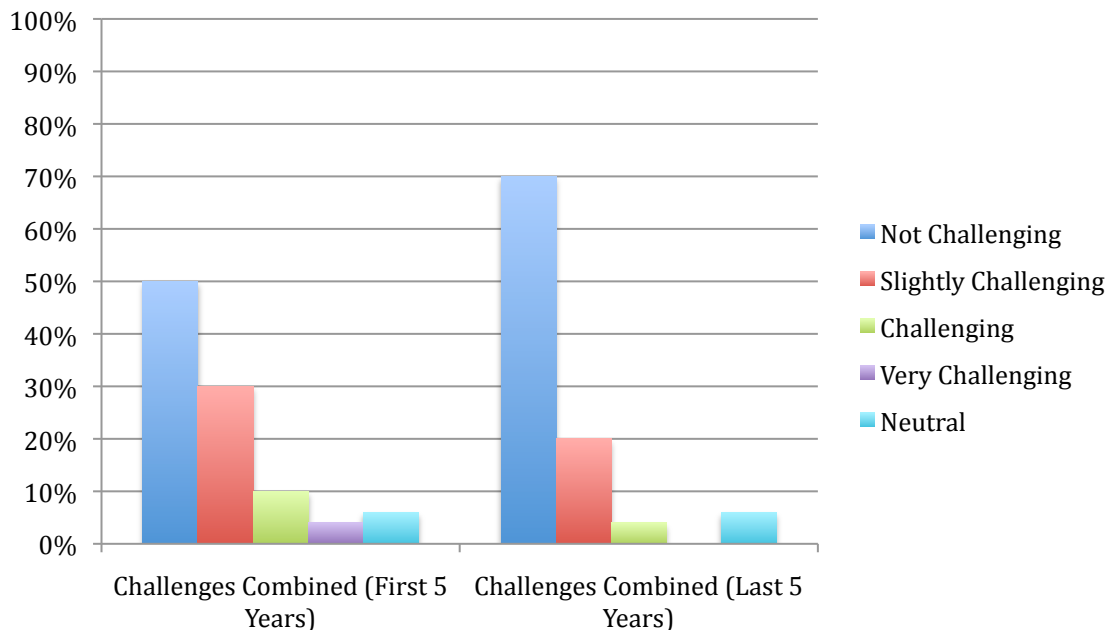


Figure 1: Comparison of Teaching Challenges Combined

The last of the survey questions were included to examine how levels of support from a variety of potential sources may have changed while the retired orchestra directors had been teaching. The participants were first asked to select a response that best described the level of support they perceived they had received during their first 5 years (approximately) of their teaching string orchestra. With regard to the level of support from their “School District Administration,” four participants (44%) selected the response option “Very Pleased”, two participants (22%) selected the response “Pleased”, two other participants (22%) indicated that they were “Displeased”, and one participant (11%) selected the response option “Very Displeased”.

When selecting the response options related to the level of support perceived by their “Local Community,” one participant (11%) selected the option “Very Pleased”, four participants (44%) selected “Pleased”, one participant (11%) selected “Very Displeased,” and three participants (33%) selected “Neutral.” All participants reported that they had

perceived only positive levels of support from their “Colleagues”. Specifically, three of the participants (33%) indicated that they were “Very Pleased” with the level of support from their colleagues, and six participants (66%) indicating that they were “Pleased”. The support perceived from “School Administration (Principal)” was mostly positive, with two participants (22%) selecting “Very Pleased,” and three participants (33%) indicating they were “Pleased.” Only one participant (11%) indicated they were displeased with their “School Administration (Principal)” and three participants (33%) were “Neutral.”

In regards to the level of perceived support from “Parents” in the first 5 years (approximately) of teaching, two participants (22%) indicated they were “Very Pleased,” four participants (44%) indicated they were “Pleased,” one participant (11%) indicated they were “Displeased,” and two participants (22%) were “Neutral.” The participants also felt a positive level of support from the “Local Music Store” with three participants (33%) indicating they were “Very Pleased,” four participants (44%) selecting “Pleased,” and one participant (11%) was “Neutral.” The final category asked for the perceived level of support from “Local Music Teachers,” and these results were all positive, with four participants (44%) indicating they were “Very Pleased” with the level of support, and five participants (55%) indicating they were “Pleased.”

These same categories were examined again looking at the last five years (approximately) leading up to the participant’s retirement. Two participants (22%) revealed that they were now “Very Pleased” with the perceived level of support from the “School District Administration.” Five participants (55%) indicated they were “Pleased,” with the level of support, and one participant (11%) selected that they were “Displeased,” with another participant (11%) as “Neutral.” There were no negative levels of support

from the “Local Community,” as three participants (33%) indicated they were “Very Pleased,” and three participants (33%) indicated they were “Pleased.” Three participants (33%) remained “Neutral” on this level of support. The perceived level of support from “Colleagues” in the years leading up to the participants retirement remained positive, with four participants (44%) indicating they were “Very Pleased,” with the support from their colleagues, and three participants (33%) indicating they were “Pleased.” Two participants (22%) decided to remain “Neutral” in this category.

With regard to the level of support perceived by the participant’s “School Administration (Principal)” leading up to their retirement, three participants (33%) indicated they were “Very Pleased” with the support from their Principal, four participants (44%) selected “Pleased,” and two participants (22%) selected the response “Neutral.” Interestingly, three participants (33%) remained “Neutral” when asked about the level of perceived support from “Parents” leading up to retirement. However, two participants (22%) did indicate they were “Pleased” with the level of support from “Parents” and four participants (44%) selected the response “Very Pleased.”

The two most positive levels of perceived support leading up to the participant’s retirement came from the “Local Music Store” and “Local Music Teachers.” Both of these sources of potential support had six participants (66%) who had indicated they were “Very Pleased,” with the level of perceived support, and only one participant (11%) who selected “Pleased” as their response. In their selection of a response option to the level of support perceived by their “Local Music Store” one participant (11%) selected “Displeased” while another one participant (11%) selected “Neutral” to the level of support their perceived from their “Local Music Store.”

In this question as well, participants were asked to specify (if they felt comfortable to do so) why they perceived that certain levels of support had changed during their careers. The participants' free response answers indicated that the levels of perceived support by the "School District Administration" had increased for two participants because one had received more mentors, and the other participant had moved to a new district. One participant indicated that they had acquired a perception of increased levels of support from their "Local Community" through the availability of more resources. On the other hand, related to the school administrative support, one participant cited the negative impact of working in a school system too big for administrators to be able to provide much help in. Another participant indicated that the level of support they perceived from their "Local Music Store" increased when the store became more informative about the materials they had available to help the teacher and students in their program. One participant indicated they perceived an increased level of support from "Local Music Teachers" when they were able to benefit by learning their ideas about string teaching from them. To see how the participants' perceptions of how levels of support varied in all of the previously mentioned factors, from their first 5 years (approximately) of teaching until their last 5 years (approximately) of teaching, see Figure 2.

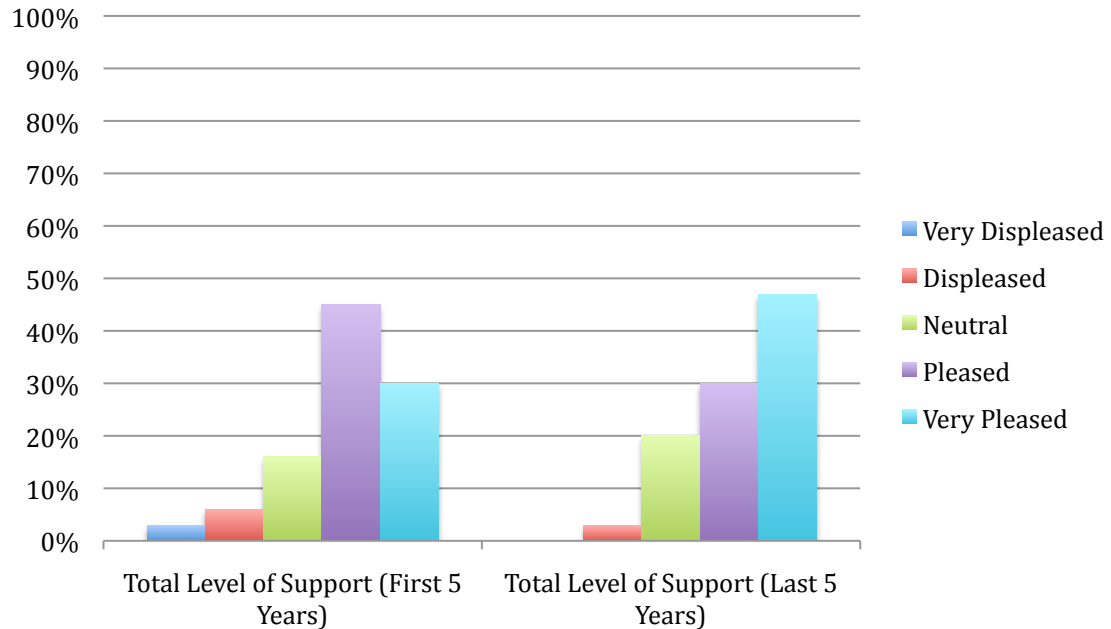


Figure 2: Comparison of Perceived Level of Support in Teaching Environment

In response to the question specific to the frequency with which they took their students to assessment festivals, only eight participants ( $n = 8$ ) responded. Of those who responded, eighty-eight percent ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants stated they regularly took their students to assessment festivals and/or other competitions throughout their teaching careers. One hundred percent ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants who had taken their students to assessment festivals participated at the state level, with only one participant (14%) indicating that they had participated at the national level, and 86% ( $n = 6$ ) of the participants responding that they had participated in trip related assessment festivals.

When asked if they had ever considered leaving the profession, surprisingly 78% ( $n = 7$ ) of the participants indicated that they had considered it at one time during their career, and 22% ( $n = 2$ ) of the participants responded that they had never considered leaving.

Those participants who indicated that they had considered leaving the profession were asked to state the reasons that contributed to their having felt this way if they felt comfortable doing so. Once transcribed, the retired orchestra directors' answers to the free response questions such as this were grouped according to similarity. A number of similar areas of concern were identified that the participants had perceived as being major threats at some point to the longevity of their careers. These included: the pressures of expectation; problems with their administration's support and philosophy; issues with the amount of support they perceived they had received from their community; the termination of the programs within their school district; student discipline issues; problems resulting from too much travel; and personal life conflicts.

When responding to the question specific to whether or not they believed that they had received an appropriate level of recognition for their work as an orchestra teacher, four participants (44%) selected "Strongly Agree," four participants (44%) selected "Agree," and only one participant (11%) selected "Neither Agree nor Disagree." In regard to the issue of whether or not the participants' experiences in their teaching career had filled the expectations about it that they had had in college, three of the participants (33%) selected "Strongly Agree," four participants (44%) indicated "Agree," and two participants (22%) selected "Neither Agree nor disagree." All participants answered positively in regard to how proud they were of their teaching accomplishments, with six of the retired orchestra directors (66%) selecting "Strongly Agree," and three of the retired orchestra directors (33%) selecting "Agree."

In response to the questions specific to their involvement as a mentor and a mentee in questions 26 through 28, 56% of the participants ( $n = 5$ ) indicated that they did

not have a mentor in their first years as a new string orchestra director. Thirty three percent of the participants ( $n = 3$ ) indicated that they had had an informal mentor during their first years of teaching, and one participant (11%) had been assigned a formal mentor. When asked about their involvement as a mentor to others while teaching, 33% of the retired orchestra directors ( $n = 3$ ) reported that they had been formally assigned as a mentor to younger teachers, while 44% of the orchestra directors ( $n = 4$ ) indicated that they had served as informal mentors. Only 22% of the participants ( $n = 2$ ) indicated that they had never been mentors at all. Participants were also asked if they were currently involved in mentoring activities as a retiree, to which only one participant (11%) indicated their current involvement acting as a formal mentor and/or student teaching supervisor. Forty-four percent of the participants ( $n = 4$ ) reported that they were continuing to serve as informal mentors during their retirement, while an equal number (44%) of participants ( $n = 4$ ) reported that they were not currently serving as mentors at all.

A number of the survey questions sought to investigate what the in-school and out-of-school musical experiences of the participants were both in the past during the participant's youth and currently, in their retirement. The questions were grouped according to various phases of the participants' schooling throughout their lives, and participants were asked to list the musical activities they were engaged in during these time periods. All of the participants reported that they had had no in-school musical experiences during their pre-elementary school years, and that during their elementary school years, the musical activities offered to them were limited to taking the following classes/lessons: general music; orchestra, band, or chorus; piano and violin.

Results reflected the fact that during their middle school years five participants (55%) reported an increase in the number of in-school musical activities they were involved in, with three participants (33%) indicating that they had begun participating in band, orchestra, and private lessons at this age. It was not until high school that all of the participants, except for one, were engaged in various in-school music activities including orchestra, band, private lessons, choir, chamber orchestra, theater orchestra, and regional and all-state orchestras. It is important to note that this study did not examine the collegiate in-school music experiences of the participants due to the fact that music degree concentrations are commonly known to require participation in ensemble, and solo performance classes, and the various music training classes such as music theory, history, and sight singing. For a frequency count of all the in-school musical activities listed by the participants please see Table 2.

Table 2

*Participation in School Music Activities*

<i>Phases of School</i>	<i>Pre-Elementary %</i>	<i>Elementary School %</i>	<i>Middle/Junior High School %</i>	<i>High School %</i>	<i>Total Number of Activities #</i>
Vocal Ensemble Member	0	50	0	50	2
Instrumental Ensemble Member	0	14	27	59	29
General Music	0	50	50	0	4
Vocal/Instrumental Private Lessons	0	15	23	62	13



Participants were also asked to list the musical activities that they had engaged in outside of their school, or extracurricular activities, in the same various age group categories. While no participant offered responses for their pre-elementary in-school musical activities, two participants did participate in out-of-school, extracurricular activities; one in dance and one in piano lessons. Similarly to the increase in in-school musical activities, there was also a noticeable increase in the number of out-of-school musical activities for the participants for elementary school and then again for high school. Musical activities listed for elementary school included private violin lessons, private piano lessons, summer strings classes, Girl Scouts, and dance.

Out-of-school, music activities that the participants had been involved in during their Middle/Junior High School years were similarly scarce for all participants, and were generally a continuation of their participation in those activities that had begun during their elementary school years. The out-of-school music activities the participants listed for having been involved in during their Middle/Junior High School years included summer music camp, dance/drama, band, church choir, violin lessons, and piano lessons. Just as there was an increase in the number of in-school musical activities that the participants were involved in during High School, there was also a large increase in the extracurricular music activities during this age span. The participants reported being involved in a variety of extracurricular activities during their high school years including: attending summer music camp; working as an instructor at summer music camp; playing chamber music with friends; performing in musicals; playing in community orchestras; taking violin lessons; participating in youth orchestras; singing in church choirs;

undertaking private study; playing in the city band and orchestra; and playing in string quartets.

Interestingly there was a slight drop in the extracurricular musical activities reported by the participants for their college years. Activities in this category included participation as members/performers/teachers in: summer music festivals; professional ensembles; professional and amateur orchestras and symphonies; private music instruction; community orchestras; teaching church music; and city bands and orchestras. For a frequency count of all of the out of school/extracurricular music activities listed by the participants please see Table 3.

Table 3

*Participation in Out of School/Extracurricular Music Activities*

<i>Phases of School</i>	<i>Pre-Elementary %</i>	<i>Elementary School %</i>	<i>Middle/Junior High School %</i>	<i>High School %</i>	<i>College University %</i>	<i>Total Number of Activities #</i>
Vocal Ensemble Member	0	0	50	50	0	2
Instrumental Ensemble Member	0	9	9	43	39	23
Musical Theatre Participant	0	50	50	0	0	2
Vocal/Instrumental Private Lessons	10	30	30	30	0	10
Teach Music to Others	0	0	0	50	50	2
Summer Music Camp	0	14	28	44	14	7

This study also sought to examine how changes in the participants' musical activities occurred during their teaching careers and into their retirement. Whereas in the previous data, it appeared that a decrease in out-of-school, extracurricular music activities occurred during college, during their teaching careers the retired orchestra directors had taken advantage of opportunities to play outside their teaching day. This trend was also evidenced into the orchestra teachers' retirement (see Table 4). The most common musical activity participants reported engaging in was as an "Instrumental Ensemble Member," encompassing professional orchestra, chamber, jazz combo, community orchestra, quartet and other musical options (See Table 4).

Table 4

*Participation in Music Activities During Teaching and Retirement*

<i>Phases of Career</i>	<i>Teaching %</i>	<i>Retirement %</i>	<i>Total Number of Activities #</i>
Vocal Ensemble Member (Church Community Choir)	50	50	2
Instrumental Ensemble Member	58	42	26
Music Ensemble Director/Conductor	67	33	9
Music Judge/Adjudicator	50	50	4
Vocal/Instrumental Private Lesson Teacher	50	50	6
Board/Committee Member	33	67	6
Workshop Presenter	50	50	2
Summer Music Camp	100	0	2

Question 41 asked the participants to describe the highlights of their orchestra teaching careers. The participant's responses were generally focused around successful performances at festivals and competitions, important venues that their students had performed in (including traveling internationally to perform), and seeing the success of their former students succeeding in both music performance and music education settings (see Table 5).

Table 5

*Question 41: Highlights of Teaching Career*

<i>Participants A-I</i>	<i>Responses</i>
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Orchestral festival</li> <li>- Students that made it big</li> <li>- Work done on various boards.</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having highly successful students</li> <li>- Have received 3 Who's Who awards.</li> </ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students labeled as worthless in the Title 1 School come alive in my music class.</li> </ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High festival ratings for band and orchestra</li> <li>- National and International performance trips with students.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Students who have chosen a career in orchestra teaching/performance</li> <li>- Taking groups to state music conventions</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Workshops sharing the Paul Rolland Pedagogy, and expanding that internationally.</li> <li>- Presentations at ASTA</li> <li>- Students who are excellent performers and composers</li> </ul>

Table 5. continued

<b>G</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- International trips to Canada, Russia and Europe.</li> <li>- Performing at the state music educators conference.</li> <li>- Students who are now professional musicians and teachers.</li> </ul>
<b>H</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Received excellent and superior ratings at festivals</li> <li>- Learned how to work together, and how to mentor.</li> <li>- Students who went on to pursue music careers.</li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Beginning an instrumental program.</li> <li>- Formation of an orchestra.</li> <li>- Taking orchestra on a summer retreat every summer.</li> <li>- All of the relationships with students and parents.</li> </ul>

While these were not all of the highlights the participants listed for their careers, all direct responses can be viewed in the Appendix.

In question 42, the participants were asked to use their expertise and knowledge of the difficulties of beginning teaching to give advice to college/university teacher preparation programs. A common piece of advice was providing more training on the non-musical aspects of a teacher's responsibilities, for example creating assessments, choosing literature, getting instruments, and relations with parents and other faculty. Another highly cited item was providing students in preparation programs with more opportunities to teach, observe and be mentored by teachers out in the community (see Table 6).

Table 6

*Question 42: Advice for College/University Teacher Preparation Programs*

<i>Participants A-I</i>	<i>Responses</i>
<b>A</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to pick appropriate literature.</li> <li>- Assessment</li> <li>- Conducting</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Defending the importance of music education</li> </ul>
<b>C</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Listen to students.</li> <li>- Set high expectations</li> <li>- Have fun with the [college] students, they are still kids.</li> </ul>
<b>D</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training for non-music aspects of the job, like relating to parental support, getting instruments etc.</li> </ul>
<b>E</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teaching/observing situation asap.</li> </ul>
<b>F</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Observations of good teachers</li> </ul>
<b>G</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Energy and enthusiasm of [college] students is what makes the difference.</li> </ul>
<b>H</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Creating top-notch performers should be top goal.</li> <li>- Performing to enjoy music</li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Strong hands on mentoring in first few years</li> <li>- As much hands on experiences during college as possible.</li> <li>- Teaching under supervision.</li> <li>- Get out of the college and into the community.</li> </ul>

Along similar lines, question 43 asked for participants to provide the number one piece of advice for future and/or novice orchestra directors (see Table 7).

Table 7

*Question 43: Advice for Future or Novice Orchestra Directors*

<i>Participants A-I</i>	<i>Responses</i>
<b>A</b>	- Join ASTA, and attend conferences.
<b>B</b>	- Always be respectful even when you disagree.
<b>C</b>	- Be clear with students your expectations and consequences.
<b>D</b>	No Response
<b>E</b>	- Don't be afraid to ask for help! - Don't isolate yourself from colleagues. - In her experience orchestra teachers are very very happy to help each other.
<b>F</b>	- Support your colleagues, strings band etc. o Find some to pal around with. Communicate a lot via Facebook. - Find a mentor. - Find upbeat mentor-colleagues and develop relationship.
<b>G</b>	- Teach only if it is your passion. - You need to be a missionary of music education.
<b>H</b>	- Maintain high standards and expectations. - Encourage students to strive to reach their potential. - Some of the most dependable members will not be most talented.
<b>I</b>	- Passion for teaching, like a calling. - Build a community within your classes, students and parents. - Be yourself, let everyone see real you, they will love you for that.

Again, a common thread observed throughout the results was the regard these participants placed on relationships with those in their school community, and the importance of mentoring opportunities. Many participants expressed their belief in the importance of finding and building strong relationships with other music educators in maintaining a successful career teaching orchestra. Finding a community of music educators, be that at a national conference, or in your own community is clearly a great source of advice, and mentoring opportunities.

The final question of this survey asked the participants to share their best reward of having had a career as an orchestra director. Overwhelmingly, the responses suggested that building relationships and a community with students, and former students continued to be a great source of pride and satisfaction for the participants (see Table 8).

Table 8

*Question 44: Best Reward of Having a Career in Teaching Orchestra*

<i>Participants A-I</i>	<i>Responses</i>
<b>A</b>	- Watching students grow into excellent musicians.
<b>B</b>	- Success of students
<b>C</b>	- Continue in music as an avocation, real consumers of music.
<b>D</b>	- Taught band for 15 years before getting strings as well for another 23. - Grew to enjoy the repertoire and students.
<b>E</b>	- Students that appreciate being a part of their ensemble growing up.
<b>F</b>	- Helping students learn to play a string. - Instrument well and enjoy the beauty and friendship.
<b>G</b>	- Doing something I love and am passionate about. It will get rough.



Table 8. continued

<b>H</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Encountering former students who recall joys of being in my class. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Some of whom continue to perform and have children who participate in band and orchestra.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A number of students and parents have become personal friends.</li> <li>- Students who are still involved in music in some way.</li> <li>- Creating and “orchestra family.”</li> </ul>

### Conclusion of Results

In conclusion, the results of this study revealed many similarities between the educational backgrounds, teaching experiences, and musical participation of the retired orchestra directors. Strong threads connecting the participants’ similar responses were identified and included: the strong influence of their own music ensemble director; a continued involvement of music over the course of their life; the value they placed on the importance of teacher mentors; and the personal rewards they felt in the knowledge that some of their former students had chosen music as a career path. What makes this data so valuable is the long-term retrospective insights provided by orchestra directors who have already lasted through a successful career teaching orchestra. These results shed light on specific aspects of the participants’ career that improved, or worsened; became easier, or more difficult, the longer they taught, and as a body of retrospective data give valuable insight into specific career aspects that might prove helpful to others aiming to pursue long-term successful careers as orchestra directors.

## CHAPTER 5

### DISCUSSION

The teaching profession faces ongoing challenges with how best to avoid teacher attrition during the professional lifetimes of current and future music educators. Most at risk are novice teachers within their first few years of entering the profession, but the potential for other more experienced teachers leaving the profession also exists. The orchestra classroom is not immune to the stresses and experiences that can contribute to teachers leaving their careers as educators (Hancock, 2003; Roisum Foley, 2007). While a large body of research exists that examines teachers' reasons behind their leaving or planning to leave the profession, a smaller body of research has examined the factors that contribute to teachers remaining in the profession until and even into retirement. Therefore, the process of examining through research the musical, educational, and teaching experiences that occur over a teacher's career that may contribute to the longevity of their career will remain relevant as long as teachers continue to seek out professions as educators.

Current literature indicates that the main sources of teacher stress for general classroom, and music classrooms, stems from a lack of administrative support, and challenges presented by classroom management issues (Bullock, 1974; Hancock, 2002; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007; Killian, 2006). While these are known causes of teacher attrition, aspects that have been identified as positively contributing to teacher retention are the existence of teacher mentor programs, and, the availability of opportunities for involvement in activities that nurture the artistic side of a teacher's dual identity as a music educator and performer (Holbomb, 2008; Scheib, 2006; Siebert, 2008).

The process of becoming a music teacher is one developed over a lifetime of musical activities and experiences. It begins in the home with the involvement of parents, and moves to the height of musical experiences and experimentation in high school (Busch, 2005; McClellan, 2011; Zdzinski, 1996). While these experiences appear to peak in high school, the active involvement in music remains a common characteristic shared by the most dedicated of music teachers throughout their careers, and even through retirement (Busch, 2005; Chiolo, 1997). This literature supports the idea that there are certain factors that can positively influence an individual's chance at having a long lasting career in music education.

For the purposes of the current investigation, an examination of retired orchestra directors who had remained in the profession until retirement was undertaken in order to paint a more accurate picture of the potential challenges and rewards of those choosing to pursue careers teaching orchestra, and to provide a source from which to determine which of these influences might seem to positively or negatively affect orchestra teachers the most. The data from this study were collected, and analyzed to provide a summary of the survey responses and free response information provided by the retired orchestra directors who had elected to serve as participants. Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What similarities exist between the background, educational, musical and professional experiences of individuals who choose to remain in the profession of orchestra teaching until retirement?
2. How do retired orchestra directors perceive they were influenced by the responsibilities and sources of stress associated with teaching orchestra, and the

existence or nonexistence of support networks, in relation to their decision to remain in the profession until retirement?

3. How do the musical experiences and participation of orchestra directors who remain in their positions until retirement change over the course of their careers and into retirement?
4. What practical advice do retired orchestra directors have for current and future orchestra directors that might assist them in experiencing successful, long-term careers teaching orchestra?
5. Which important motivators should be present, according to the beliefs of retired orchestra directors, in order to ensure current and future orchestra directors' longevity in the field?

The participants in this study were nine ( $N = 9$ ) retired orchestra directors from the state of Virginia. The process of locating the participants proved to be a challenging aspect of this study due to the fact that when orchestra teachers retire they are unlikely to have school or professional organization-related email addresses. Those who do maintain professional memberships may not be identified by the organizations on their own membership lists as being retired and/or the organizations may not because of organizational and By-Law issues be allowed to share the names and email addresses of their membership. Therefore, participants for this study were solicited via a *Call for Participants* placed in the Virginia Chapter of the American String Teachers email newsletter, through suggestions by individual contacts in the profession, online searches for retired orchestra directors, and via word of mouth. Participants completed an online survey consisting of multiple choice, Likert scale, and free response questions, which

were then collected, recorded, analyzed and presented in the form of the previous Results chapter.

### **Summary of Results**

In reference to the first research question: “What similarities exist between the background, educational, musical and professional experiences of individuals who choose to remain in the profession of orchestra teaching until retirement?” a number of similarities between the participants’ shared educational, musical, and teaching experiences were identified that might provide insight into the participants long lasting careers as orchestra directors. With regard to their level of education, all but one participant reported that they had received Bachelor’s degrees in music education, and most of the participants (78%) reported that they had also received Master’s degrees from four-year institutions in various concentrations, such as music education, viola and violin performance, and musicology. It is interesting to note that while a high number of the participants in the current study (78%) reported having Master’s degrees, there was no literature reviewed in this study that linked having a graduate degree to contributing to the longevity of a career teaching orchestra.

Interestingly, more than half of the participants ( $n = 5$ , 55%) indicated that they had decided to become music teachers in their freshman year of college, which is contrary to a few of the studies reviewed earlier in this document, whose results seem to suggest that high school is the more often the time when this decision is made. While most of the participants in this study (55%) reported waiting until college to make the decision to pursue careers in teaching orchestra, the majority of participants ( $n = 6$ , 66%) indicated that their high school ensemble director had been the most influential person in

their decision to seek a career in music education, while their parents had been second most influential in this decision.

This finding supports the results of other existing literature which seems to suggest that while students begin life with the influences of the parent guiding most of the students' musical choices and experiences, as they continue to participate in high school music programs they seem to value more highly the advice from their role models with musical training, such as their school music directors (McClellan, 2011; Rickels, 2010; Zdzinski, 1996). What is most interesting in reference to the current study is the value the participants placed on their high school ensemble directors in relation to the increase in the number of positive music-related experiences that they perceived had occurred in their own lives during their high school years. Frequency charts used to illustrate this data show a large increase in the number of music-related activities the participants reported experiencing during their high school years (see Table 1).

Specific to the participant's reported career goals during their first years in college, 78% of the orchestra director participants listed the occupation of "School Orchestra Director" as one of their top three career goals, while 67% of the participants had also reported having considered a career choice as a "performer" as one of their top three potential career choices. Scheib (2006) identified the potential struggle that exists for music teachers in wanting to maintain the dual identity of being an artist and a teacher. The fact that so many of the participants in the current study reported having experienced a desire to both teach and also perform during the teaching careers is reflective of Scheib's (2006) findings, and also illustrated that the participants valued highly their participation in their art thus suggesting that it is important for all orchestra directors to

maintain their identity as musicians, in order to create a more holistically fulfilled career for themselves.

Another interesting finding came from the three participants who reported that their career goals from college changed once they had begun teaching. Participants D, F, and H had either selected the career description “String Orchestra Director” low on the list, or not on the list at all with reference to their pre-teaching careers goals. Yet once they had begun teaching, the desire to become a “String Orchestra Director” became more important to them, and it was ranked higher on the provided survey response options of career goals.

The only similarities in responses specific to the participants’ teaching careers were that the majority of participants had taught a combination of grade levels, and most had taken their students to state level assessment festivals, and trip related events. High ratings of excellent or superior in assessment festivals, and national and international performances were cited as a source of pride for many participants in the current study. While there is no research reviewed in this study that suggests the importance of assessment festivals on the longevity of a teaching career, one can speculate that it is a very extrinsic and satisfying reward to have the validation from other peer teachers on the success of your group.

The second research question for this study sought to analyze selected predictors of teacher stress, and how teachers might be affected by such sources over the course of their teaching careers. As perhaps might be expected, the results of this study showed that overall, the participants more than likely perceived that the challenging aspects of teaching and sources of support improved the longer that they taught. The challenging

aspects of teaching that were included in the participants' responses in this study (such as, communicating with parents, and teaching the instruments), reportedly became less of an issue for the participants to deal with by approximately 20% by the time the participants had reached the 5 years (approximately) goal even before their retirement. Similarly the results indicated that there was an increase of over 15% for the participant's responses to how supportive the administrators in their own teaching school district had been. It would appear that the longevity of a career and these selected aspects of the participant's career are positively related, and that the longer one teaches, the more positive and beneficial these aspects become for their career.

Another finding of this study was that the majority of participants responded that they had considered leaving the profession at some point during their careers. Participants had been presented the opportunity to provide free response data that explained the various types of issues that had contributed to their having considered this as an option during their career span. Factors such as career related stress, student discipline issues, differences with administrators, lack of administrative and community support, and the pressures of expectation were all selected as contributing reasons to this negative mind set.

Problems with student classroom discipline, differences with administrators, and teachers' perceived lack of support by administrators and the community in which they teach are well documented in the literature about teacher attrition (Bullock, 1974; Hancock, 2002; Hearn, 2009; Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007; Killian, 2006). A high number of participants in the current study indicated through the free response options, that their self-perceived pressures about others' expectations for them as an



orchestra teacher and their program had served as a serious source of stress and challenge during their teaching careers. The review of literature undertaken for this study found very little research on this topic thus suggesting a need for increased investigation of this issue. It is not surprising that the potentially overwhelming pressures resulting from the constant expectation to perform at a high caliber, and the frequency with which it is encountered by teachers can over time lead to teacher burnout, not to mention the feelings of inadequacy some orchestra teachers may feel when their orchestra's performance does not meet these high expectations.

It is clear that many teachers at some point in their careers battle with the decision to leave the profession, and that this is a "normal" part of the process of growth that occurs in making the transition from novice to experienced teacher. Responses provided by the participants suggested that the retired orchestra teachers placed great value on the importance of mentoring, as it had a positive impact on their careers. Specifically, the participants often contributed responses that were relevant to peer teacher relations, such as the importance of mentoring, and staying connected with colleagues.

Current literature examining the importance of mentoring for teachers supports the value placed on mentoring by both mentees and the mentors, and its importance in helping teachers to stay in the profession – especially if it is received during the beginning stages of their careers (Holcomb, 2008; Siebert, 2008). An interesting finding of this study is reflected in the responses to questions that asked about the participant's mentor and mentee experiences. While the participants' responses suggested that they believed that teaching in settings that nurtured peer teacher relationships and mentoring as being very important in promoting teacher retention, over half of the participants did

not have a mentor themselves in their first years of teaching. This finding perhaps is reflective of the fact that the trends in educational settings during the early part of the participants' own teaching careers had not favored the provision of mentors, and that research on the positive impact made by mentors on teacher retention is a more recent development. Whatever the reason, it is clear through the experience of the participants that mentoring should be considered an important factor in retaining orchestra directors in the profession.

Relevant to the third research question about the participants' musical experiences over the course of their lifetime, results illustrated that the participants in this study had continued engaging in music related activities during their teaching careers, even with the added responsibilities of being a teacher. All of the orchestra director participants in this study had engaged in ensemble performance in some way during their careers, and all but one participant still continued to play in music ensembles even into retirement. This finding is reflective of research that suggests that adulthood can be a time of active musical engagement, and that the more past musical experiences an individual has the more musical activities and behaviors they will be involved in later in life (Busch, 2005; Chiolo 1997). The impact of the increased number of musical experiences and greater levels of participation experienced in high school, as discussed earlier in this chapter are reflected by the results of this study. This link between the increased levels of musical activity experienced by individuals during their high school years, and their continued involvement in musical related activities even into their retirement, should be considered an important factor in contributing to the success of all orchestra directors, and therefore,

should be a trait that is encouraged by those working with and mentoring future and current teachers in the field of music education.

The participants in this study were asked to share any valuable advice they had to offer for college/university preparation programs, with the intention of increasing the existing body of knowledge about issues that might prove to be most challenging for new teachers as they navigate through the various challenges they might encounter in their careers as orchestra teachers. An interesting trend emerged from the participants' responses which indicated a perceived need for teacher preparation programs to focus on the non-musical aspects of training future teachers, such as ensuring students are provided with enough observations and teaching experiences during their studies. Perhaps too, these free response comments were a reflection that the participants themselves perceived that their own, older, educational experiences at the university level had lacked these options.

Additionally, some of the participants ( $n = 4$ , 44%) reported that they believed that the practical skills and knowledge needed for selecting appropriate literature, enlisting parental support, and obtaining and maintaining instruments is necessary for succeeding in an orchestra teaching position. These issues are undoubtedly covered in great depth in a Music Education degree, however it seems to be the view of these participants that these are aspects that should be covered in greater depth than they already are. Many of the participants ( $n = 5$ , 55%) were also adamant about the need for teacher training programs to provide actual "hands on" teaching experiences in the community, with Participant E stating: "I have had several student teachers who

absolutely should not have continued in music ed., but they did not realize it until the junior or senior year when put in front of a group of students” (Question 42).

The last question in this research study invited participants to share their thoughts about their own perceived personal rewards for having chosen and maintained a career as an orchestra director, once again with the goal of using the data to assist current and/or future orchestra directors continue in their chosen profession. Overwhelmingly, almost every participant ( $n = 8$ , 89%) listed the joy and satisfaction experienced in witnessing the musical successes of their students as being an important source of affirmation for them both during their teaching careers and beyond into their retirements.

Related to the previously mentioned point, many of the participants also shared that their number one reward for having pursued careers as orchestra directors was being able to see former students become talented performers and music educators. The participants in this study had obviously valued highly throughout their careers the process of developing a classroom community of students who loved to play their instruments, and whose passion for music had taken them further into the field as performers and future teachers.

### **Implications for Future Research**

To ensure the successful career trajectories of current and future orchestra directors, and music teachers as a whole, it is imperative that ongoing research in this area continue to reexamine the factors that contribute to retention and attrition in the field. With the retirement age increasing from the age of the Baby Boomers and the possibility of attrition always facing the profession of teaching, more research should be undertaken and utilized to provide an ongoing source of valuable data for teacher preparation

programs, school systems, and most importantly, the individuals themselves who plan to pursue, or are already pursuing careers as orchestra directors.

While valuable data can be taken from this study, a limitation arose in the small number of available participants. Additional research should be undertaken to examine the experiences of retired orchestra directors from other parts of the country to add to this study's generalizability. Just as importantly, additional research should be undertaken to compare the data collected about selected aspects of this study, such as lifelong musical experiences for example, with data collected from other populations within and outside of the field of music education such as those who are not orchestra directors, or those orchestra directors who chose to leave the profession of teaching music prior to retirement.

Teachers who remain in the profession of teaching music – orchestra directors, choir directors, band directors and general music teachers – all contribute a great gift to the students that they work with. These professionals contribute to society a great “gift that keeps on giving”....the experience of making music. As in all professions, there are difficulties that novice and experienced practitioners encounter on a daily basis in achieving their goals, and certainly access to any research that informs and strengthens future and current music educators' knowledge in the field is a valuable and important topic for ongoing research.

## APPENDIX A

**Free Responses to Survey Questions 22, 38, 41-44**

Question 22: In thinking reflectively about your experiences as a young teacher, in what areas/subjects do you feel you could have been better prepared?

PARTICIPANT A: Assessment, class management, preparing school budgets.

PARTICIPANT B: More exposure to winds and percussion.

PARTICIPANT C: 1. Classroom dynamics and discipline 2. How to maintain a class tempo and how to change up when things are not going well.

PARTICIPANT D: String methods

PARTICIPANT E: Theory, composition for school string orchestras.

PARTICIPANT F: Since I was a performance major, I did not have any music ed. courses or cello or bass lessons.

PARTICIPANT G: Cannot remember at this point...but I have always felt I was about as well prepared as I could have been at the time. Excellent teachers and experience during undergrad years.

PARTICIPANT H: Dealing with disadvantaged children

PARTICIPANT I: My first job was in General Music and I had prepared for a instrumental teaching job – you take what you can get! I was not prepared for the job, but learned ON the job very quickly. I started an instrumental program the second year, along with the Gen. Music duties.

Question 38: Please give a brief explanation for why you considered leaving the profession, if you feel comfortable doing so.

PARTICIPANT A: I thought I might like to do something different.

PARTICIPANT C: On one of those music trips, when the students misbehave, you are the one who pays the consequences. It almost cost me my job and was it worth it in the long run. How beneficial are these trips? You are paying for the trophies and as a judge in these events, we are told not to judge below a certain percentage so the groups will return. How honest are we really being to them? It is rewarding the bad performers!

PARTICIPANT F: The frustrations concerning producing excellence in a public school elementary string program where we saw the students once a week in groups were considerable. Fairfax County Public Schools had that setup the whole time I taught there (26 years). The first year I went to 5 schools, one a day. After 5 years, I decided I could not continue that way, so I resigned and spent one year just teaching privately. I returned to the school system the next year and taught part-time in the schools as I continued teaching privately and playing free-lance jobs the rest of my career.

PARTICIPANT H: Frustration over scant community support and changing administration philosophy

PARTICIPANT I: I was being unfairly pushed out of a county that I had been a part of, built their orchestra program up from “hardly there” to a thriving program and I had strong roots in the community. It was very obvious

that the administration wanted me gone - still am not sure why - perhaps I was doing too good a job? I thought about leaving teaching – instead, I moved to a county next door and really had a chance to blossom. Glad I made the move – it was VERY hard, as I had such strong roots in the previous county, but moving was the best decision, ever!

Question 41: What are some of the highlights of your teaching career?

PARTICIPANT A: Orchestra festival, students that made it big, students, working on various boards.

PARTICIPANT B: Highly successful students, Have received 3 Who's Who recognitions.

PARTICIPANT C: Highlights – seeing students who had been rejected by academic teachers as worthless come alive in the music classroom. It was their life line to bring them out of their horrible life. Being a chapter 1 school is hard to begin with, motivating students takes everything you have. But music offers an even playing field for all.

PARTICIPANT D: High festival ratings for bands and orchestras. National and international performance trips with student groups.

PARTICIPANT E: (1) Knowing that many of my students (some as old as 55) have chosen a career in orchestra teaching/performing (2) Taking a group to the state music convention, (3) Taking a group to Washington DC during the first inauguration of President Obama; (4) Knowing that many of my students (some as old as 55) have chosen a career in



orchestra teaching/performing; and (5) Having recognition with the building that orchestra is a viable and important class.

PARTICIPANT F: Workshops sharing the Paul Rolland Pedagogy at George Mason University 6 years ago, and the expansion of that work internationally - workshops in Hamburg and London the last few years. Presentations at ASTA Conferences, Former students who are excellent performers and composers.

PARTICIPANT G: Taking groups to, Canada, Russia and Europe, performing at the state music educators conference, having students who are now professional musicians and teachers.

PARTICIPANT H: I taught band and orchestra to inner city, “disadvantaged” students for thirty-three years, attending yearly festivals and receiving many “Excellent” and some “Superior” ratings. Many of my students experienced educational success for the first time while learning to play a musical instrument. It often transferred to other academic pursuits. I opened young minds to the joys of exploring sundry music genera. They amassed life skills including how to work together to achieve lofty mutual goals, how to mentor peers, self-respect and a sense of self-worth transcending often meager socio-economic constraints. I nurtured students positive work ethics honed by striving to perform technically challenging music to the best of their abilities and, perhaps most important, I cultivated self-control and self-discipline. Some went on to pursue music careers, though that was not my primary aim. I

wanted to nurture voracious consumers and supporters of music in their communities, people who would attend orchestra concerts, operas, Broadway musicals and other “live” music offerings during the course of their workaday lives. Furthermore, hoping they would recall positive school music experience, they would encourage their own children to take up musical instruments during the course of their education. One does not expect to amass certificates, plaques and trophies for pursuing out such aims but I assure you the personal satisfaction accrued remains more valuable than extrinsic accolades.

PARTICIPANT I: The starting of an instrumental program in a tiny, rural school in Indiana (in my second year of teaching) – not sure if it is still going. The formation and development of the Arlington Junior Honors Orchestra, the Arlington All-County High School Orchestra, the Chamber Music of Arlington, the co-founding and development of the McLean/Detmold Exchange Program. Taking the McLean top orchestra to Bear Mountain each summer for a retreat. I especially cherish all of the friendships that developed with thousands of students and parents – that may be the best “highlight” of my career – that never ends.

Question 42: What advice do you have for college/university teacher preparation programs that you believe would help strengthen the programs?

PARTICIPANT A: More detailed study on how to pick appropriate literature, more on assessment and conducting.

PARTICIPANT B: Be prepared to defend the importance of music education.

PARTICIPANT C: Listen to your students. Set high expectations. Have fun with them – they are still kids. We would sneak out the back door of the school to run around in the snow when it did snowed. Mum was the word!

PARTICIPANT D: Provide more training/experience in non-musical aspects of the job: e.g. relating to parental support, acquisition of instruments, care of instruments, grading systems, relations with other faculty departments, etc.

PARTICIPANT E: Get first year students into some kind of a teaching/observing situation asap. I have had several student teachers who absolutely should not have continued in music ed ,but they did not realize it until the jr. or sr. year when put in front of a group of students.

PARTICIPANT F: As much observation of good teachers as possible. I am sure this already happens.

PARTICIPANT G: The programs I have observed in the past few years at JMU seem to be doing an excellent job of preparing teachers. Often it's the energy and enthusiasm of the students themselves that make the difference. You just never know what exactly will be the defining motivator for any one student.

PARTICIPANT H: Striving to produce top-notch performers should be our foremost goal but remember; learning to play a musical instrument is the visceral means of learning to enjoy music. Those top-notch professionals will need willing consumers to purchase concert tickets. We hope every violinist will strive to be concertmaster but we do need dependable second violinists to have an orchestra.

PARTICIPANT I: There must be strong, hands-on mentoring for the first few years of a young teacher's career – those first few years are really tough. Provide opportunities for students to get as much hands-on experience during their college training as possible – through summer camps, programs in the community, etc. Nothing beats actually “doing” the teaching...in supervised settings, but still getting their hands in the dirt! Get out of the college and into the community, as much as you can (and as you have time for – yikes! The time factor is the hardest!).

Question 43: What would be your #1 piece of advice to future or novice orchestra directors?

PARTICIPANT A: Join ASTA and attend their conferences – so much great information.

PARTICIPANT B: Always be respectful even when you disagree

PARTICIPANT C: Be really clear what your expectations are and what are the consequences. Have them sign a document and have it on file. Remind them over and over again. Be strict at the beginning of the year then you can lighten up later. Not the other way around. Be prepared at all times and on time.

PARTICIPANT E: Don't be afraid to ask for help....everything from selecting music which is appropriate for your group, having good discipline, to technique for teaching string skills. ASK. Don't live in a cocoon. You can easily keep to yourself since we are generally the only string teacher in a bldg but don't isolate yourself from colleagues who want to help. In my experience, orchestra teachers are very very happy to help each other. In my district, none of us felt that we were in competition with each other.....unlike some disciplines.....

PARTICIPANT F: Learn to support your colleagues, strings, band, etc. In addition to finding a mentor, find some colleagues to pal around with and share ideas. Communicate a lot – via Facebook, etc. In particular find successful and upbeat mentor-colleagues to develop relationships with.

PARTICIPANT G: Do it only if it's your passion. You have to be a missionary, dedicated to your cause. Otherwise, earn a Living some other way, keeping music for an avocation.

PARTICIPANT H: Maintain high standards and expectations. Encourage students to strive to reach their potential. Realize that some of your most dependable orchestra members will not be the most musically talented.

PARTICIPANT I: You must have a passion for your teaching – it's almost like a calling, as in a minister! Build a “community” within your classes, both with the students and the parents – the rest of the job will be so much easier, if you have that “community” working with you and supporting you.

BE YOURSELF – don't try to be someone that you are not – let your students and parents see the real you – they will love you for that!

Question 44: What, for you personally, has been the #1 best reward of having a career teaching orchestra?

PARTICIPANT A: Watching my students grow into excellent musicians

PARTICIPANT B: The success of my students

PARTICIPANT C: Seeing students continue in music as an avocation. Real consumers of music. Some are in the music industry and some are in church orchestras or fiddle groups.

PARTICIPANT D: As a non-string teacher with a background of 15 years in band directing in a rural setting, I took a job in a large, urban system which included directing high school orchestras, string and full. Over the next 23 years I grew to truly enjoy and love the repertoire and the higher quality of students. Fortunately I had fine string consultants to assist me. I was essentially a conductor and administrator. It is now rewarding to see that many of my students have become very successful, both in music and non-music related careers.

PARTICIPANT E: Having students call, write and stop by to tell me that playing in the orchestra was the best activity in which they participated and that they will always be grateful.

PARTICIPANT F: To know I am a part of helping young people learn to play a string instrument well and enjoy the beauty and friendship that brings into their lives.

PARTICIPANT G: Doing something I love and am passionate about, even when the going gets rough...and it does.

PARTICIPANT H: For me, the #1 reward is the pleasure of encountering former students who recall the joys of participating in band and orchestra, some of whom continue to perform and some of whom have children who participate in band and orchestra.

PARTICIPANT I: I think the #1 best reward is the astonishing number of students & parents who have become my personal friend. So many of my students are still involved with music in some way – many still playing and loving that! We all have fond memories of our wonderful “Orchestra Family” – quite an amazing thing!

## APPENDIX B

### **Email Invitation and Consent Form**

Dear (Participants Name),

You were recommended to me by colleagues in the field as a retired string orchestra director. My name is Joseph Daniel Austin, and I am currently in my final semester of studies towards a Master of Music in Music Education degree, at James Madison University. The culminating project for my studies is the completion of my thesis, and I am hoping you might be able to assist me in this process by participating in an online survey.

The purpose of my thesis research is to investigate the traits and experiences that contribute to orchestra directors having successful careers in the profession. I am hoping you might be willing to assist me in this process by providing your valuable input through answering some questions in a online survey. The survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time to complete, and all responses will remain anonymous, with any data obtained being kept in the strictest confidence and reported in a non-identifiable manner.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of my request. I hope you will accept my invitation to participate, as the final goal of my research is to learn from your expertise and provide the music education community with valuable data to help future orchestra directors experience long and lasting careers in the field, as you have.

Should you decide to complete the survey, please read and agree to the content of the consent form below. Please then click the link below to begin answering the survey questions. My goal is to have all surveys completed by Saturday, April 5. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please feel free to email me or my advisor, Dr. Lisa Maynard at the email addresses provided below.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of, and participation in my survey.

Sincerely,

Daniel Austin

### **Web Consent Form/Cover Letter**

#### **Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study**

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Daniel Austin, a graduate student, from James Madison University. The purpose of this study is to examine and describe influential factors that contribute to the longevity of successful orchestra director's teaching careers. Study participants will be retired orchestra directors



and this research will examine their lifelong participation in music and in the music education profession. This study will contribute to the researcher's completion of his master's thesis.

### **Research Procedures**

Should you choose to participate in this study, your involvement will include the completion of an online survey that will be administered to individual participants through Qualtrics, an online survey tool. You will be asked to provide responses to a series of questions related to your own personal musical and teaching experiences both during your youth and adulthood. Questions asked in the survey will examine the participant's lifespan of musical development, and their perspectives and experiences teaching orchestra.

### **Time Required**

Participation in this study should require no more than 15-20 minutes of your time.

### **Risks**

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study (that is, no risks beyond the risks associated with everyday life).

### **Benefits**

Potential benefits from participation in this study include developing recommendations to assist future orchestra directors and music educators in preparing for successful and lasting careers as orchestra directors and music educators, and to better understand the role music plays in the lifespan of prior orchestra directors who are now currently retired.

### **Confidentiality**

The results of this research will be presented in the format of a written thesis that will be towards the completion of a Master of Music in Music Education from James Madison University. Results of the research may also be disseminated at national and state meetings of music educators. While individual responses will be anonymously obtained and recorded online through Qualtrics (a secure online survey tool), study participants should also be aware that data will be kept in the strictest confidence. No identifiable information will be collected from the participant and no identifiable responses will be presented in the final form of this study. Furthermore, the results of this study will be coded in such a way that the respondent's identity will not be attached in anyway to the final version of this study. The researcher retains the right to use and publish non-identifiable data. At the end of the study, all records will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the researcher. Research participants are invited to request an e-copy of the final version of the thesis, should they choose to, by emailing the researcher directly at: [austinjd@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:austinjd@dukes.jmu.edu).

### **Participation & Withdrawal**

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without

consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and anonymously recorded you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

### **Questions about the Study**

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final document of this study, please contact:

Joseph D. Austin  
School of Music  
James Madison University  
[austinjd@dukes.jmu.edu](mailto:austinjd@dukes.jmu.edu)

Lisa M. Maynard  
Assistant Professor of Music  
James Madison University  
[maynarlm@jmu.edu](mailto:maynarlm@jmu.edu)  
[540-568-6465](tel:540-568-6465)

### **Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject**

Dr. David Cockley  
Chair, Institutional Review Board  
James Madison University  
[\(540\) 568-2834](tel:540-568-2834)  
[cocklede@jmu.edu](mailto:cocklede@jmu.edu)

### **Giving of Consent**

I have been given the opportunity to ask questions about this study. I have read this consent form and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. By clicking on the link below, and completing and submitting this anonymous survey, I am consenting to participate in this research.

(Survey Code)

*This study has been approved by the IRB, protocol No. 14-0273*

Thank you for your consideration of participation in this research.

Sincerely,

Daniel Austin

## REFERENCES

- Bergee, M. J. (2003). Developing tomorrow's music teachers today. *Music Educators Journal*, 89(4), 17-20.
- Brewer, W. D. (2013). Career influences of music education audition candidates. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 61(1), 115-134.
- Bullock, J. A. (1974). *An Investigation of the Personality Traits, Job Satisfaction Attitudes, Training and Experience Histories of Superior Teachers of Junior High School Instrumental Music in New York State* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Busch, M. R. (2005). *Predictors of lifelong learning in music: A survey of individuals participating in performing ensembles at community colleges in Illinois* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3182229)
- Chiodo, P. A. (1997). *The development of lifelong commitment: A qualitative study of adult instrumental music participation* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 288-288 p. (Order No. 9801280, State University of New York at Buffalo).
- Hearn, S. T. (2009). *Career longevity among southeastern band directors: Environmental, personal, and educational factors* (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (Order No. 3365540, Auburn University).
- Hill, Willie L. Jr. (2003). Connections: The teacher shortage and policy. *Music Educators Journal*, 89(4), 6-7.

Hancock, C. B. (2002). Support for music education: A case study of issues concerning teacher retention and attrition. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 50(1), 6-19.

Hancock, C. B. (2003). An examination of preservice teaching intensity in relation to in service teacher retention and attrition. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(2), 166-178.

Hancock, C. B. (2008). Music teachers at risk for attrition and migration: An analysis of the 1999-2000 schools and staffing survey. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(2), 130-144.

Kersaint, G., Lewis, J. Potter, R., & Meisels, G. (2007). *Why teachers leave: Factors that influence retention and resignation*. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(6), 775-794. Retrieved June 10, 2008 from Academic Search Premier database.

Killian, J. N. (2006). The effect of personal and situational factors in the attrition and retention of Texas music educators. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 16(1), 41-54. Retrieved from

McClellan, E. R. (2011). Relationships among parental influences, selected demographic factors, adolescent self-concept as a future music educator, and the decision to major in music education. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 187, 49-64.

Rhyneer, B. L. (2002). *A study of student attitudes, musical backgrounds, and immediate situations that affect string participation in the university orchestra*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, , 104-104 p. (Order No. 3069547, Ball State University)

Rickels, D. A. (2010). Influences on career choice among music education audition candidates: A pilot study. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 57(4), 292-307.

Roisum Foley, A. K. (2004). *The Longevity, Job Satisfaction, and Likelihood of Leaving the Profession of Music Educators in the States of Minnesota and Wisconsin*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 196-196 p. (Order No. 3148350, University of Minnesota).

Russell, J. A. (2007). *Career decisions of string music educators: Factors associated with retention, migration, and attrition*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 256. (Order No. 3273719, University of Colorado at Boulder).

Scheib, J. W. (2006). Policy implications for teacher retention: Meeting the needs of the dual identities of arts educators. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(6), 5-10.

Siebert, J. J. (2008). *Why music teachers remain in the profession: Conversations with career music educators*. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses, 147. (Order No. 3295324, University of Rochester, Eastman School of Music).

Zdzinski, S. F. (1996). Parental involvement, selected students attributes, and learning outcomes in instrumental music. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 44(1), 34-48.