

ACTIONS TO ADDRESS RURAL BAND DIRECTOR ATTRITION:

A CASE STUDY

A Scholarly Research Project

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## ABSTRACT

This action research project examined a rural band director's attrition/retention and possible reasons for staying or leaving a position. The purpose of this case study was to describe a rural band director's experience with content-related professional development and support networks, providing access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas to combat attrition. A convergent or triangulation mixed methods design was used to collect and analyze data. The independent variables in this case study were the subject-specific mentorship and professional development opportunities. The dependent variables were the ratings of isolation, job satisfaction, and professional development satisfaction that resulted from the interventions. The measurement tools included band director online questionnaires as well as researcher observation of band director practices. Results showed slight yet insignificant increases in the impact of content-related professional development on teaching, the influence of support networks on the desire to remain in a position, and the impact these methods had on teacher attrition/retention. The research project was hampered by the band director's busy schedule. Implications for practice include implementing an induction program for rural band directors that includes extra planning time, a continuation of teacher education in music pedagogy beyond education, and rural school partnerships with universities that can provide subject-specific professional development and mentorships.

## DEDICATION

I'd like to dedicate this scholarly research project to those rural band directors who are doing their best to make exceptional experiences for their students.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **Interest and Background**

Buffalo, Oklahoma, like so many rural school districts in the 5-State area of Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico, and Texas, continues the search for a qualified band director to serve its students. The job has been vacant for a few years with little hope of filling it. Prior to the beginning of the fall of 2020 school year, at least eight other rural band director positions needed to be filled within 125 miles of my employer, Oklahoma Panhandle State University (OPSU), where I am a music teacher educator and director of bands. OPSU resides in Goodwell, Oklahoma, a town boasting a population of 1,270 permanent residents in 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). When I heard about all these open high school band director positions, I became concerned because I find many of my college band students and music majors from this 5-State area. What is the reason behind this significant attrition rate? This chapter introduces the study's research problem, purpose, and questions; provides a brief literature review related to the research problem; and explains the significance of the study.

#### **Brief Review of Literature**

Teacher shortages, paired with attrition, have triggered alarms across the world (Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Dupriez et al., 2016). These shortages were created by an older retiring teacher work force and younger teachers leaving the field. The influence of job conditions (i.e., student discipline and motivation, class size, lack of administrative support, lack of planning time, insufficient salary) on these younger teachers, especially, plays a significant role in determining whether a teacher will migrate to another school or ultimately leave the

profession (Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Dupriez et al., 2016; Gardner, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Ramos & Hughes, 2020). This trend corresponds with music teacher attrition.

While music teachers identify lack of administrative support and student discipline as contributing factors in their reasons to leave, many ascertain that access to content-specific professional development and a content-relevant support structure play a more significant role (Certo & Fox, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Hancock, 2008; Howard, 2006; Killian & Baker, 2006; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000; Madsen & Hancock, 2002; Matthews & Koner, 2017; McLain, 2005; Millican, 2007; Scheib, 2004; Vaughn, 2011). Within the current system of lack of access to essential needs for music teachers, feelings of isolation develop. There are often only one or two music teachers in the district, so the administration might feel that it does not make sense to provide content-specific professional development for so few teachers (Abril & Gault, 2008). Contributing to this feeling of isolation, many music teachers work in itinerant positions, traveling daily to several different schools in the district, which doesn't allow them to develop a sense of belonging within the school culture (Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Spring, 2014). More feelings of isolation can develop because music is considered an extra-curricular subject.

The priority placed on music education within the school curriculum can cause rifts with other teachers in the system (Benson, 2008; Scheib, 2004). Music teachers must constantly advocate for their field. Benson (2008) put it this way, "Music classes are often marginalized from the rest of the academic curriculum by administrators, often giving music educators the impression that music classes do not matter as much as the rest of the core subjects" (p. 46). These feelings of isolation within the music education field play a substantial role in teacher attrition, but does working in a rural environment add to these feelings of isolation?

According to Lazarev et al. (2017), more than 70% of Oklahoma districts are rural. Among these districts, only 70% of teachers are retained through their fourth year. This figure is slightly lower than their urban counterparts. However, Harris et al. (2005) found that rural first year teachers were significantly more likely (50%) to move from their positions than their non-rural colleagues (20%). Lazarev et al. put the rural environment into perspective, “This rural school context—including isolation, limited access to professional development, and the need for many teachers to teach a wider range of subjects—presents additional challenges to recruitment and retention” (p. i). Monk (2007) confirmed this statement and added that extra assistance should be given to those rural schools that have low teacher qualifications, that have teachers teaching in fields unrelated to their area of training, and those with a high turnover rate. When rural educators seek professional development to offset these deficiencies and travel to a convention, the sessions are geared toward teachers in non-rural areas. In light of this and because of lack of meaningful professional development in their home districts, it can be difficult for rural educators to assimilate newly learned information into their own teaching practices. Walker-Gibbs et al. (2018) claimed that rural teachers need to stop comparing their situations to non-rural areas and celebrate the differences. The advantages to teaching in a rural environment are numerous and include smaller class size, better student discipline, and active community involvement (Edmondson & Butler, 2010; Hunt, 2009; Monk, 2007). However, the challenges for rural music teachers regarding community involvement have been noted by several researchers (Hunt, 2009; Isbell, 2005; Krueger, 2000; Maltas, 2004; Prest, 2013; Russell, 2012; Schaller, 2016).

This community involvement is often dictated to music teachers at the secondary level because they teach performance ensembles, such as band and choir. Spring (2014) commented about the role a music teacher plays in a rural community:

And in a specific rural place, the music educator performs an important role as a place and community builder, creating music with her students and advocating for community through her music praxis. To me, the music educator plays the role of a communitarian, a notion that gives emphasis to the importance of an individual to shape a community ideology. (pp. 256–257)

Hunt (2009) cited a response noting the music teacher's role in rural community, "The rural participants especially emphasized how community leaders expected their bands and choirs to perform at local events" (p. 38). This unique characteristic of performing ensembles also creates more work for the music teacher than what other teachers require, namely planning concerts, requesting transportation for offsite events, handling fundraising, organizing trips, and budgeting expenses for sheet music or instrument maintenance (Gardner, 2010; Hunt, 2009). This extra work and higher stress level create feelings of inadequacy and isolation among new music teachers who are not trained in this aspect of the job (Howard, 2006). Community involvement is only one aspect of the rural environment that a band director must consider.

As previously noted, music teachers can feel isolation because there might only be one or two of them working in a school. This is especially true in rural areas. They will probably have to travel to multiple buildings in the same district, report to multiple administrators, and attend numerous faculty meetings (Benson, 2008; Gardner, 2010). When you couple these experiences with teaching in a rural district, the isolation can be overwhelming (Krueger, 1999). Often there is a lack of full-time music teachers in rural schools, and they can become frustrated at having to

fulfill other job requirements by branching out into other fields, leaving no opportunity or time to develop teacher support networks (Matthews & Koner, 2017; Monk, 2007; Spring, 2014).

Rural music teachers—especially beginning teachers—need content support, school-level assistance due to the traveling nature of the position, and a support network (Asbill & Scott, 1997; Burkett, 2011; Conway et al., 2002; Gardner, 2010; Isbell, 2005; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000; Maltas, 2004; McLain, 2005; Miksza et al., 2010; Schaller, 2016). However, they are less likely to get content-related professional development than their coworkers (Asbill & Scott, 1997). Wenglinisky (2002) discussed the strong effect that professional development can have on classroom teaching, “The more professional development teachers received in hands-on learning, and indeed the more professional development they received regardless of topic, the more likely they are to engage in hands-on learning activities [with their students]” (p. 23). The goal of these professional development activities is to affect teaching and, ultimately, learning.

The quality of music programs depends on the continuity of their music teachers; therefore, teacher attrition can create serious problems for most schools (Krueger, 2000). Russell (2012) revealed the potential destruction left in the wake of music teacher attrition:

As music educators leave the profession, remaining music teachers may be forced to carry an extra load, causing extra stress and dissatisfaction, programs may be cut, or student learning may be negatively impacted by teacher turnover as experienced teachers are replaced by novice teachers, by overworked music educators, or by those not highly qualified. Moreover, the career decisions of music teachers can impact the musical lives of children. Student experiences in the classroom are often directly related to the knowledge, skills, and disposition of the individual teacher. (pp. 61–62)

The effects of well-prepared teachers on student achievement have been noted by several researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Parulekar, 2014; Wenglinsky, 2002). However, what steps can be taken to retain these well-prepared teachers?

Gardner (2010) suggested that the presence of a music supervisor in a school district be considered to “relieve music teachers of the tasks that take time away from planning and instruction or serve as mentors to inexperienced music teachers to help them navigate bureaucratic systems more effectively” (p. 118). Another idea to help with retention involves instituting a mentoring program that is specifically designed to combat feelings of isolation and provide emotional support (Benson, 2008; Collins, 1999; Conway et al., 2002; Harris et al., 2005; Kent et al., 2009; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000). Ford et al. (2018) found that using teacher evaluation systems with a fellow teacher or mentor as the primary evaluator led to higher job satisfaction and yielded meaningful knowledge that can be put into practice. The professional learning community structure was found to improve teacher effectiveness to the extent that teachers were able to build a sense of team community (Graham, 2007). Krueger (2000) recommended that “administrators bring experienced music teachers into regular contact with new music teachers through team teaching [to establish support networks]” (p. 25). Specifically addressing rural high school instrumental music instruction, Schaller (2016) suggested that instructors find a balance between personal and professional life, establish a support network, create a “need of identity” to develop and maintain a beneficial culture, realize there is a need for understanding among the stakeholders in the rural community, establish mental health support, create rural music education support networks, celebrate a unique program culture, and advocate for rural instrumental music programs. Each of these suggestions informs my study.

### **Deficiencies in the Literature**



Deficiencies in the literature reveal a need to study the implementation of a plan to combat teacher attrition for in-service rural music teachers. Many researchers have uncovered why music teachers leave and suggested ways to alter pre-service teacher training and/or institute first year induction programs (Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Harris et al., 2005; Hunt, 2009; Matthews & Koner, 2017; Prest, 2013). Some have focused on the access to content-specific professional development and content-related support structures which are unique to the field of music and play a role in music teacher attrition (Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Krueger, 2000; Schaller, 2016). However, few researchers have actually implemented plans that provide this access. Harris et al. (2005) established Project Launch, an induction program to fight rural teacher attrition in all subject areas that employs one-to-one mentoring and daylong conferences to support new teachers.

Also missing from the literature is information regarding the exact expertise of rural high school instrumental band directors. Elpus (2015) studied music teacher licensure in the United States and provided a demographic profile of candidates seeking licensure. Of note, “female candidates and black candidates underperform on the Praxis II music exams when compared to their white and male counterparts” (Elpus, 2015, p. 328). Female candidates across all races earned lower scores than their male counterparts. Also significant is that the pool of potential music teachers represented by Praxis test takers is substantially less racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse than the population of the United States. However, this profile does not address the specific content knowledge held by rural band directors. It is my belief that many band directors’ actual content knowledge is lacking even though they may be licensed to teach instrumental music.

The licensure in Oklahoma, for instance, is so broad and the need so great for teachers that rural administrators may hire unqualified teachers to fill the void. Oklahoma music licensure is for K-12 vocal/general music or K-12 instrumental/general music with cross-over between the two Oklahoma Subject Area Tests (OSAT). The test subareas for the vocal test (Field 003) include listening skills, vocal performance and music methodology, music theory and composition, and music history and culture (Oklahoma Subject Area Test, 2010b). The test subareas for the instrument test (Field 001) include listening skills, instrumental performance and music methodology, music theory and composition, and music history and culture (Oklahoma Subject Area Test, 2010a). The two tests overlap on three of the four testing competencies. A vocal music major could potentially pass the OSAT for instrumental/general music by scoring well on listening skills, music theory and composition, and music history and culture, even though they may not be successful on the instrumental performance and music methodology section. The need for instrumental music teachers is so great in my rural community, that administrators might not care if a candidate only has a vocal degree as long as the OSAT were passed. I can find no information that addresses this topic. Although this may lay beyond the scope of my study, the content-specific professional development and content-related support network within my study could help address this issue.

### **Significance of the Study**

A study examining the implementation and outcome of a retention plan for rural band directors is important for several reasons. First, it can establish a procedure for providing access to content-related professional development to rural band directors to inform their teaching (Millican, 2007). Second, it can create a method for providing content-specific support networks for those same band directors who tend to feel isolated not only because of their profession, but

also because of their geographic location (Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Gardner, 2010; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000). Third, researchers have often studied the reasons behind music teacher attrition, but few have studied the implementation and outcomes of actual plans (Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Hancock, 2008). Fourth, the benefits to the rural community, academic institutions, and students to have access to well-trained instrumental music professionals who stay in the community are numerous (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this case study was to describe rural band directors' experiences with content-related professional development and support networks, providing access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas to combat attrition. The study was guided by three research questions:

1. How do rural band directors describe the impact of content-related professional development on their teaching?
2. How do rural band director describe the influence of a support network on their desire to remain in a teaching position?
3. Does teacher attrition/retention explain the relationship between methods used to combat isolation (content-related professional development and support networks) and job satisfaction, controlling for the effects of student disciplinary issues?

It is my hope that offering content-related professional development and a support network will provide the access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas and therefore reduce band director attrition.

### **Organization of the Report**

This chapter introduced the study's research problem, purpose, and questions; provided a brief literature review related to the research problem; and explained the significance of the study. Chapter 2 will provide an extended literature review related to the study's research problem, purpose, and questions. Chapter 3 will describe the study's research methods and methodology. Chapter 4 will present and discuss the study's findings and results, and chapter 5 will draw conclusions, offer implications for practice, discuss the study's limitations, and make suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

#### Introduction

At the end of every school year in what is known as the 5-State area (the Oklahoma Panhandle, Southwestern Kansas, Southeastern Colorado, Northeastern New Mexico, and the Texas Panhandle), rural school districts are informed that their music teachers are leaving. The selected literature helped me create background information to determine the reasons behind this exodus of rural music teachers. This review of literature shows that the lack of subject specific professional development, the lack of music teacher mentors, and the lack of a rural community orientation leaves music teachers intellectually and geographically isolated without any skills to cope in a rural community. This isolation leads to the all-too-common attrition noted in chapter 1.

To complete this study, I selected a rural school from the 5-State area with a newly hired band director. My plan was to reduce feelings of isolation by being this music teacher's mentor, provide subject specific professional development, and help him find ways to adjust to living and working in his new community.

In order to establish consistency with terminology, I began with a list of terms and definitions to use throughout this study. The term retention refers to the effect of teachers continuing to teach in the same district. The term stayers is synonymous with those teachers who remain in the same district. Attrition refers to the effect of teachers leaving a school district. Movers are teachers who move from the school district, but who remain in the same teaching field. Leavers refers to those teachers who leave the teaching profession.

With my key terms established, I conducted a literature review to ensure that I fully understood what is already known on the study's topic. This chapter takes a more in depth look at teacher retention and attrition, rural teaching experiences, and then focuses on retention and rural experiences specific to music teachers. Therefore, this chapter is divided into four sections: Examining Teacher Retention and Attrition, Examining Rural Teaching Experiences, Examining Music Teacher Retention, and Retaining Music Teachers in Rural Areas. At the end of this chapter, I discuss the literature to establish some possible steps that can be taken toward rural music teacher retention and lay the foundation for my methodology.

### **Examining Teacher Retention and Attrition**

Through my research, I have noticed a consensus among researchers regarding the contributing factors leading to teacher attrition. In this section, I will discuss the importance of teachers attending an accredited teacher preparation program, administrative support, financial stability, and good working conditions as necessary for teacher retention.

Darling-Hammond (2000) suggested a relationship between teacher education or professional development and student achievement. Through the analysis of surveys from state policy, case studies on state policymaking, and quantitative examination of the distribution of state achievement scores and resources, Darling-Hammond found that teacher quality was a more powerful predictor of student achievement than teachers' education levels (i.e., advanced degrees) or student background. This finding was replicated by Dupriez et al. (2016). Their observations acknowledged that teachers with accredited teacher preparation were much more likely to stay in the profession than those who did not receive it. Other results indicated that job conditions along with qualification were predictive variables for the probability of leaving the

profession. Other researchers have found that perceived lack of administrative support contributes teacher attrition.

Certo and Fox (2002) studied the reasons for teachers staying in or leaving their school district and found that, salary aside, the number one reason teachers leave their school position or even the teaching profession is a lack of administrative support. The next most common reason for leaving was planning time or workload followed by class size. Dove (2004) also observed that job satisfaction results from improved working conditions and salaries for teachers. The retention of quality teachers leads to stability of instruction and, therefore, greater academic gain by their students. Similarly, Ford et al. (2018) found that teacher satisfaction reflects working conditions and predicts teacher attrition. These authors determined that perceived supportive teacher evaluation experiences led to positive changes in the practices which in turn led to higher job satisfaction.

When Ramos and Hughes (2020) examined the reasons behind teacher attrition, they noted that financial motivations were contributory but also that classroom conditions—especially student discipline concerns—were paramount in the decision of teachers to leave. They discovered a disconnect between how teachers and parents viewed student behavior and its negative impact on a teacher's commitment to stay with how principals viewed the impact of student behavior on teacher attrition. The key recommendation made by Ramos and Hughes is a more holistic policy change that invites and respects teacher input just as much as hard data on student behavior. As noted previously, retaining quality teachers leads to greater academic gains by students resulting in higher job satisfaction (Dove, 2004), but how do researchers suggest improving retention?

Wenglinsky (2002) found that professional development influenced teachers' classroom practices resulting in more hands-on learning activities being evidenced in their classrooms. This subsequently led to changes in teachers' classroom practices which in turn resulted in a greater impact on student learning. Similarly, Certo and Fox (2002) found that professional development, opportunities for collegial interaction, participation in decision-making, and support for student discipline were among the reasons given by teachers for staying in a position. Along with professional development, mentorships have shown effectiveness in teacher retention.

Kent et al. (2009) performed an in-depth study of the efficacy of the Mentor Teacher Program (MTP) in Alabama. Specifically, mentor teachers helped guide candidates in planning for the first day of school (preparing their classroom, creating a classroom management plan, preparing to meet and greet parents, planning an overall organizational strategy, and preparing the specific content to be taught). These authors noted that the more successful mentorships occurred when mentors engaged in daily teaching, planning with the candidates, sharing paperwork, teaching intervention strategies, and conducting conferences along-side the candidates rather than just performing clerical duties or taking care of behavior problems.

Correspondingly, Graham (2007) found that professional learning communities (PLCs) had a strong positive relationship with teacher improvement, but it was contingent upon multiple factors at multiple levels. The primary strength of the PLC model was the way in which it created opportunities for teachers to learn from other teachers within the building. However, teachers need to develop a sense of community in order for substantive, collaborative, and ongoing conversations among teachers to occur. Similarly, Ford et al. (2018) found that more



frequent, subject-specific (or similar educational community) support offered by non-principal evaluators like a fellow teacher or mentor led to higher teacher satisfaction.

In summary, similarities among findings regarding teacher retention have been noted by researchers. In particular, working conditions—including administrative support and student discipline concerns (Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Ford et al., 2018; Ramos & Hughes, 2020), teacher preparation or professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Dupriez et al., 2016), and salary (Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Ramos & Hughes, 2020) played a significant role in the determination of teachers staying or leaving a school district. Researchers have looked at multiple methods to address teacher retention. Specifically, professional development (Certo & Fox, 2002; Wenglinsky, 2002) and mentorships (Kent et al., 2009; Ford et al., 2018; Graham, 2007) have been shown to have a positive effect on the retention of classroom teachers worldwide.

### **Examining Rural Teaching Experiences**

Rural school districts have unique challenges when compared to schools in higher population areas. This section will discuss the research involved in examining rural teacher retention.

Monk (2007) observed that many rural schools exhibit a below-average share of highly trained teachers, low compensation, more students with special needs and limited English skills, and fewer college preparatory students. Correspondingly, Harris et al. (2005) found that rural teachers in North Dakota were significantly more likely (50%) than their non-rural counterparts (20%) to move from their first positions after one year, but their attrition was not significantly different in later years.

Correspondingly, Lazarev et al. (2017) revealed that teacher recruiting and retention efforts in Oklahoma fall short of the need, especially in rural school districts. According to Lazarev et al.:

more than 70 percent of Oklahoma districts are rural. This rural school context—including isolation, limited access to professional development, and the need for many teachers to teach a wider range of subjects—presents additional challenges to recruitment and retention. (p. i)

Key findings of the Lazarev et al. study revealed that teachers in rural school districts have a slightly lower chance of reaching their fourth year of teaching in the same school district than their colleagues in nonrural districts; rural school districts had more trouble recruiting than nonrural districts; and higher compensation and more job responsibilities result in more successful recruitment and retention efforts. Researchers do have suggestions for improving teacher retention in rural areas.

Monk (2007) believed that successful efforts to stimulate economic growth in these areas would be highly beneficial for these rural schools. Along with attracting and retaining highly qualified teachers, schools could institute more computing technologies to help offset the isolation of rural areas. Harris et al. (2005) suggested designing support programs for rural teachers that (a) include approximately 25 hours of interaction with a mentor, (b) develop excellent teaching skills, (c) guide the formulation of action plan goals, (d) use a framework for teaching that helps participants to focus on teaching performance when setting goals, (e) have models of supportive interaction with mentors, (f) find ways for participants to share the benefits of an extended induction programs with their colleagues, and (g) use joint action planning by pairs of teachers to combat isolation. Other researchers suggest similar efforts.

Collins (1999) believed that implementing thoughtful recruitment, orientation programs, mentoring, and support networks will combat attrition in rural school districts. Using thoughtful recruitment to target candidates with rural backgrounds can help with feelings of isolation because candidates are familiar with the rural way of life. Also, Collins touted a school-community orientation which combats feelings of isolation, fosters a sense of community security, and develops professional competence. Collins found a direct relationship between the degree of participation in this type of orientation with the new teacher's decision to remain. To establish mentoring and support networks, Collins suggested partnering with a nearby college or university. Other researchers also advocate for the school-community orientation and the unique opportunities offered in a rural area.

Edmondson and Butler (2010) believed that rural teacher education should include unique experiences and learning opportunities that value rural life. Walker-Gibbs et al. (2018) argued that rural education is complex and that rural teachers need to learn to stop comparing their situations to nonrural areas. Walker-Gibbs et al. ascertained that identity is a shifting concept which under the preconceptions of rurality could distort feelings of effectiveness or importance within the larger educational community.

In summary, research shows that ideas to address retention in rural schools need to be unique by presenting an orientation to the rural culture (Edmonson & Butler, 2010; Harris et al., 2005; Monk, 2007; Walker-Gibbs et al., 2018). Included with cultural education, schools need to address isolation by implementing support networks and mentoring (Lazarev et al., 2017; Collins, 1999).

### **Examining Music Teacher Retention**

While music teachers face some of the same struggles as regular classroom teachers, there are many facets of the job that are inherently different, and so, produce different trials. This section will explore music teacher attrition for comparisons to regular classroom teacher attrition to determine specific needs for music teacher retention. Specifically, feelings of isolation, support, mentorships, and professional development will be examined.

Although many of the needs of new music teachers mirror the needs of first-year general classroom teachers, such as classroom management, curriculum, and assessment, it is clear that the music classroom is very different and beginning music teachers will need a different sort of assistance with these topics. Conway et al. (2002) determined that music teachers need subject specific professional development experiences. Music teacher mentorships allow beginning music teachers the opportunity to share materials, network, and grow professionally by interacting with more experienced music teachers. Along with content support, Conway et al. found that music teachers also need school-level assistance because many of them travel to multiple schools throughout the week. Feelings of isolation develop due to traveling and the separate nature of the music content itself. Conway et al. contended that an induction program will provide opportunities for the music teacher to interact with others in the building. Other researchers refer to the professional isolation that music teachers experience.

Sindberg and Lipscomb (2005) found that public school music teachers feel isolated in their building from other teachers, and that this isolation has a negative effect on teaching. These feelings of isolation depended on experience. For example, the least experienced music teachers experience the most feelings of professional isolation. Similarly, Davidson and Dwyer (2014) found that further consideration of strategies to relieve professional isolation of music teachers is needed. They identified the need to address the lack of discipline-specific pedagogical

knowledge and the need for effective professional development strategies as the most effective ways to alleviate professional isolation. Further, connecting with other music teachers in professional networks was significant for the teachers who participated in the study. Davidson and Dwyer proposed the continuation of teacher education in music pedagogy beyond graduation, the formal establishment of professional networks (either face-to-face or online), and the establishment of formal mentoring programs as ways to combat professional isolation. However, mentoring programs have not necessarily been effective in curbing these feelings of isolation.

Benson (2008) found that mentoring programs in which the mentor is not a music teacher are perceived to be ineffective by new music educators and that these programs do not combat the feelings of isolation or address the lack of emotional support commonly experienced by first-year music teachers. Regular access to fellow musical colleagues who can provide valuable insight, guidance, and advice is imperative for new music teachers' psychological and emotional needs. Benson identified common concerns expressed by beginning music teachers: difficult schedules, feelings of isolation, multiple instructional responsibilities outside their main subject area, lack of sufficient planning time, and difficulty maintaining classroom discipline. Unfortunately, not all these concerns can be addressed through a mentorship, but the mentor who is a musical colleague can provide needed emotional support and coping strategies.

Matthews and Koner (2017) examined current trends of 7,463 K-12 music educators across the United States regarding their professional background, classroom teaching responsibilities, and job satisfaction. Regarding classroom teaching responsibilities, Matthews and Koner found there is a small need for music teachers to instruct courses of music theory, piano, and guitar in addition to the large performance groups. However, only a small portion of

respondents had attained additional certifications and those were mostly elementary general music based (i.e., Orff or Kodaly). Job satisfaction was found to be of concern when Matthews and Koner uncovered that nearly 74% of respondents had been teaching less than 20 years. Working conditions, workload, and time commitment were identified by 23.5% of respondents as being the least favorite part of their jobs. A significantly smaller but still of concern 5.7% identified lack of support as causing dissatisfaction in the workplace. When examining professional background, Matthews and Koner identified a racial gap in music education teachers with just over 90% of the participants identifying as White/Caucasian. Another gap identified was based on gender. Music teacher educators are primarily male whereas K-12 music teachers are primarily female. Elpus (2015) found similar demographic disparities.

Elpus (2015) examined the demographics of Praxis II music test takers across the United States and found that people of color and females consistently underperformed when compared to their white and male counterparts. Elpus suggests that institutional and systemic barriers may exist for those more racially and culturally diverse that are trying to enter the music teacher workforce. Conversely, Lazarev et al. (2017) found that it was more difficult to recruit and retain non-specialist teachers who are male, those with a higher postsecondary degree, and those with more teaching experience to rural districts. Demographics have been used as predictors of music teacher attrition in certain research.

Hancock (2008) found the significant predictors for attrition of music teachers included: a young age, being a female or a minority music teacher, teaching at a private school, teaching in a secondary school, having a significant number of extracurricular hours, school concerns, lack of support from the administration, lack of parental support, and low salary. In contrast to what can be found among teachers in general, this survey found that participation in a school-sponsored

mentoring or induction program did not predict the attrition of music teachers, perhaps, because of the variety of these programs across the United States. Music educators seem to prefer mentors who are experienced music teachers, but this isn't always possible and could affect attrition rates. Other researchers have found support to be a predictor of music teacher burnout.

McLain (2005) examined the emotional exhaustion of 514 K-12 music teachers across the U.S. and found that music teachers appear to be "moderately burned out" (p. 81). Support, regardless of if it was from administrators, parents, communities, and other teachers, appeared to be the most significant factor effecting burnout levels. Classroom and stress management also appeared to cause music teacher burnout. Decreasing levels of burnout based on teaching experience was noted. McLain surmised this was due to the loss of those teachers who had burned out and already left the profession. Along with support, providing professional development and subject specific mentorships to music teachers during their first year will result in successful teaching and less burnout.

Krueger (1999) found that new music teachers who had access to subject specific mentors had fewer feelings of professional isolation. Krueger noted that beginning music teachers relied heavily on other music teachers if they were available to them by sharing materials, networking, and using informal observations to perform a guided self-evaluation. When these subject specific mentors were not available, the new music teachers spoke of their absence. Krueger recommended developing the music teacher mentorship through collaboration between school districts and teacher education programs. Professional development using music teacher mentors seems to be paramount to retention.

Miksza et al. (2010) found that Colorado band directors ranked personal characteristics and teaching skills as being more important for successful music teaching than music skills. The

highest ranked personal characteristic was "enthusiastic, energetic," suggesting that teacher affect is critical in being a successful band director. The two highest ranked teaching skills were related to motivation and classroom management. Miksza et al. surmised that music skills were ranked lower because music teachers perceive them to be understood intuitively by the time they graduate from college. According to Miksza et al., developing patience and a sense of perseverance along with forming relationships and being organized were among the most cited topics of advice the participants had for first-year teachers. Miksza et al. believed this highlights how critical mentoring is to the success and longevity of new music teachers.

Comparably, Vaughn (2011) found that the skills needed by first-year music teachers to be successful were not addressed in their student teaching experiences and so could lead to teacher attrition. Most notable of these are (a) the lack of practicing non-musical administrative skills by student teachers (69%) that are required by in-service band directors and (b) a significant percentage (31%) were missing relevant musical skills required in the first year of high school band teaching. Also notable were some open-ended responses indicating that dealing with parents, learning to deal with finances, and networking and communicating with other band directors were of concern. Vaughn suggested that a focus on providing professional development and mentorships to help new music teachers learn these skills as well as being able to practice skills exhibited by effective directors may help with attrition. Other researchers have focused their studies on the skills needed to be effective band directors.

Fredrickson and Neill (2004) recommended including support from mentors, training in collaboration and cooperation, and a focus on developing skills in dealing with issues related to the job of teaching and control of student social behavior. They studied 19 first-year music teachers in seven states in the U.S. Each teacher was required to journal for seven weeks at the



beginning of their second semester over their daily prediction regarding how they thought the day would go and then they recorded a score for their evaluation of how well the day had gone. In examining comments related to the worst aspects of their days, Fredrickson and Neill found that comments were primarily focused on situations related to the job of being a teacher (i.e., meetings, lunch duty, parent/teacher conferences) and inappropriate social behavior by students. Asbill and Scott (1997) found similar results.

Asbill and Scott (1997) discussed the most practical issues needed by beginning music teachers that were not covered in their college coursework. Listed among their top ten was the development of a network of colleagues, parents, and community leaders. These authors also cited the need to maintain classroom discipline, run efficient rehearsals, and show concern for students. Similarly, Howard (2006) found that the significant factors related to job satisfaction and teacher retention in Oklahoma included pre-service training, time management skills, budget, salary, colleague and peer support, as well as social support structures. Results of this study determined there is a vital need for teacher socialization among public instrumental music instructors and that social structures/relationships play a significant role in the decision-making process of staying or leaving the district. Another measure of whether music teachers will stay or leave is related to student achievement.

Parulekar (2014) reported that both band directors and principals in rural, suburban, and urban schools alike believe that effective communication, high expectations, and student achievement on music reading and performances are indicators of director effectiveness. Individual student learning outcomes were weighted by both band directors and principals as being the most important indicator of band director success followed by teacher attributes and then band program outcomes. Band directors' and principals' beliefs differed, however, on the

appropriateness of using adjudicated events as an appropriate measure of effectiveness with principals believing this was a more appropriate measure than band directors did. Millican (2007) also found that student achievement is a predictor of music teacher attrition.

Millican (2007) surveyed 214 band and orchestra teachers in secondary schools across the U.S. and found that teachers who measure their effectiveness through students' success were more likely to remain in the profession. Also important in determining longevity was the integration of skills to effectively relate musical concepts to their students. However, when music teachers are focused on things other than student achievement, they tend to leave. Scheib (2004) asked eight instrumental music teachers why they were planning to leave their jobs. Their reasons for leaving included: (a) difficult working conditions, (b) low salary, (c) public perceptions of teaching, and (d) low priority of music education within the school curriculum. Scheib asserts that educational policy makers are not addressing the real issues of poor working conditions and low teacher morale when they try to solve teacher shortages using alternative certification. Similarly, Russell (2012) determined that leavers from the profession are dissatisfied with their working and community environments.

Russell (2012) examined the career paths of music educators and the factors behind whether they stayed or moved from a position or if they left the field entirely. Those participants who had greater satisfaction with their professional environment, students, and psychological issues tended to stay at least for a short term. Those who had the greatest dissatisfaction with these issues and who taught more minority students were movers. Those who reported lower satisfaction with community relationships were also movers. Russell found that long-term stayers reported positive perceptions of their professional environment and greater satisfaction with students. Leavers were found to have had a lower GPA in college and were less likely to have

had a mentor. Leavers also tended to be older (i.e., retirees) or came from a lower socioeconomic background. Russell ascertained that as music educators leave the profession, they will be replaced by remaining music teachers forced to carry extra load, novice teachers, or by those not highly qualified. Other researchers note that dissatisfaction with workplace conditions and lack of administrative support are common responses given by music teachers as reasons for leaving.

Gardner (2010) found that music teachers changed teaching positions because of dissatisfaction with workplace conditions. Administrative support was the most prominent influence on both music teacher satisfaction and retention. While studying the reasons for music teacher attrition in Texas, Killian and Baker (2006) found similar results with the addition of problems with student discipline being a contributing factor. Of the 223 music educators who participated in their survey, 44 indicated they intended to leave the music teaching profession. Of those 44, 39 said they would return under the right circumstances. Likewise, Madsen and Hancock (2002) investigated issues concerning teacher retention and attrition in an effort to improve the effectiveness of preparatory programs for music educators and found a similar result. Respondents' primary rationales for leaving included administrative support and personal reasons. Madsen and Hancock found that after six years, 34.4% of the original 137 respondents indicated they were no longer teaching. Other researchers cite administrative support, among other considerations, as being a deciding factor for music teachers to stay or leave.

Krueger (2000) suggested that new music teachers view the following elements as essential to their well-being and success: positive administrative support, sufficient resources to do one's job, and a support network which includes experienced music teachers. This study involved 30 K-12 music teachers in their first 10 years of public school teaching in the state of Washington. The data revealed that slightly more than half the teachers interviewed felt they had

positive support from administrators. However, the other teachers felt pressure to handle student misconduct on their own, work unassisted with large classes, and deal with special needs students on their own given little background information. Krueger also noted that isolation from other music teachers was found to negatively affect job satisfaction among music teachers in the study. Those who had music teachers as mentors were consistently more satisfied than those who did not. According to Krueger, dissatisfaction with music facilities and/or inadequate budgets were common factors influencing music teachers to leave the district.

In summary, subject specific professional development experiences are recommended by many researchers to combat feelings of professional isolation which will reduce music teacher attrition (Asbill & Scott, 1997; Benson, 2008; Conway et al., 2002; Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Krueger, 1999; Matthews & Koner, 2017; Miksza et al., 2010; Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Vaughn, 2011). Support from administrators, parents, and community members decreases stress and reduces music teacher attrition (Gardner, 2010; Howard, 2006; Krueger, 2000; Madsen & Hancock, 2002; McLain, 2005; Russell, 2012; Scheib, 2004). Student achievement has also been a predictor for music teacher retention because of teachers increased feelings of self-efficacy (Millican, 2007; Parulekar, 2014). Notable in this research is the lack of diversity among music teachers across the United States and its predictor of attrition (Elpus, 2015; Hancock, 2008; Lazarev et al., 2017).

### **Retaining Music Teachers in Rural Areas**

As mentioned previously, researchers have found that retention in rural communities can have distinct issues when compared to suburban and urban districts (Collins, 1999; Edmondson & Butler, 2010; Harris et al., 2005; Lazarev et al., 2017; Monk, 2007; Walker-Gibbs et al., 2018) and the retention of music teachers comes with its own specific issues (Asbill & Scott, 1997;

Benson, 2008; Conway et al, 2002; Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Gardner, 2010; Hancock, 2008; Killian & Baker, 2006; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000; Matthews & Koner, 2017; McLain, 2005; Miksza et al, 2010; Millican, 2007; Parulekar, 2014; Russell, 2012; Scheib, 2004; Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Vaughn, 2011). This section will examine both of these contexts in unison.

Hunt (2009) determined there were advantages and challenges for rural music teachers. Rural participants emphasized that community leaders, not necessarily administrators, expected their musical groups to perform at local events which can be both advantageous and challenging. Rural teachers noted that teaching elementary through high school levels, while creating a heavy schedule, is rewarding because they get to watch students grow as musicians and can highly influence that growth. All participants agreed on the importance of learning music skills during teacher preparation programs citing good piano skills, confidence at the podium, knowing how to teach beginning instruments, and providing appropriate musical models. General teaching skills such as being consistent with all students, flexibility, and developing skills to work with diversity and reform issues were also cited as being important. Organizational skills and advocacy skills were notably agreed upon by participants as being imperative to the music teacher. In regard to retaining rural music teachers, Hunt found that their demanding teaching schedule was a bigger issue than lack of resources, such as no music store or private teachers. Community expectations can add to that demand. Hunt suggested that community stakeholders and music teachers reflect on the roles of music in their schools and then carefully consider and embrace what will strengthen their commitment to provide meaningful music education for all. Maltas (2004) also found community to be a contributing factor in retention.

Maltas (2004) surveyed 54 rural music teachers in Oklahoma and Nebraska, the majority of which held Bachelors' Degrees in Music or Music Education. Having family or friends near

and taking the first or best offer were the factors respondents said contributed to their decision to take their current position. However, the support of school and community outweighed family considerations when deciding whether to stay or leave a position. A number of respondents had grown up in rural areas and so were aware of the culture of small communities. Paradoxically, the location of the position was not as important as the relationships the rural music teachers had developed. Another notable finding was the attending of clinics and conventions by these rural music teachers to gain an image of self as a music educator in the broad sense, however, most clinics focused on teaching specific grade levels or types of music specializations. They struggled with implementing these specialist ideas into their music generalist responsibilities. Maltas also found that a lack of resources added to the stress levels of respondents—some even describing anger or fear regarding musical contest performances and the inevitable comparison to urban and suburban schools with more resources. Respondents indicated frustration with the mentoring program in their district because of the lack of an experienced music teacher to help with content advice. Because of this, Maltas found that many respondents frequently sought guidance from their supervising teacher during their first few years of teaching. Frustration was also felt with administrators who were perceived to be poor. Those rural music teachers who had to justify their program to administration, colleagues, or community members exhibited less job satisfaction than their peers who received support. Maltas determined that the assumption of two distinct processes (rural music teachers needed to be occupationally socialized to a local rural school district and culturally socialized to the rural community) made at the onset of this study was incorrect. Maltas's findings about finances and stress, however, are confirmed in other studies.

Abril and Gault (2008) determined that rural music programs struggle with finances and staffing. In their study, Abril and Gault surveyed 541 secondary public and private school principals across the United States. Regarding staffing, 10.9% of respondents said that it was a primary obstacle in supporting music programs. The most commonly offered music course overall was band which can be a significant monetary investment. These authors also found that there were significantly more full-time music specialists in suburban schools than there were in rural schools which resulted in more variety of course offerings in those suburban schools. They hypothesized that the disparity of course offerings was likely a result of fewer human resources as well as financial resources in rural schools. Of note, principals in this study considered music teachers to have the greatest positive impact on a program but also a negative impact when they were perceived to be ineffective. Researchers also studied the effects of the rural on the viewpoints of music teachers themselves.

Spring (2014) explored the perspectives of four rural Ontario music educators to determine how “place” influences their lives, their music educational practices, and their interactions with their students and communities. Also, of interest was how the historical, sociocultural, and political issues prevalent in the community shape music educational praxes. Spring found that some rural music educators felt a disconnect with their music students if they were required to teach other subjects. However, Spring noted that relationships with students were strong because of the constant they represented throughout the students' educational lives. Rural music teachers often teach K-12 music. Spring argues that the music educator plays the role of communitarian building community while creating music with students. Similarly, Prest (2013) believed it is essential that rural music educators, faced with structural and dynamic constraints, ask the question, “What is music education good for in my set of circumstances?” (p.

2). Rural music educators must seek to understand how music contributes positively, not only to their students' lives, but also to the lives of various people in the community. Considering this context, does professional development help rural music educators find self-efficacy which in turn reduces attrition? Schaller's ethnography seems to confirm this but goes further.

Because of the unique needs of rural instrumental music instructors, Schaller (2016) recommended creating a mental health support system, rural music education support networks, unique program culture, and advocacy of rural instrumental music programs. Schaller stressed the need for rural band directors to create a balance between work and personal needs. Without a good balance, rural instrumental music teachers can develop health problems and anxiety. Schaller also identified the need of support from colleagues, administration, parents, and the community to combat isolation and develop a sense of self-efficacy. Developing an instrumental music program that reflects the rural community it serves was found to be important for student buy in. Lastly, Schaller stressed advocating for rural instrumental music programs by creating a need for understanding the unique challenges faced by rural music educators. The positive effects of professional development on music teachers can be seen in other studies as well.

Burkett (2011) implemented professional development activities for rural music educators led by a community symphony orchestra's educational outreach program. The activities addressed topics directly related to musical and pedagogical aspects of the rehearsal and were preferred over the more typical district offerings of non-music-specific in-service activities by the targeted rural instrumental music teachers. The specific activities involved seminars addressing the comprehensive design of rehearsal, workshops on using Orff-Schulwerk-based approaches appropriate for secondary performing ensembles, master classes on instrumental performance techniques, workshops on jazz technique and teaching strings for non-



string music teachers, and one-on-one classroom visits by an instrumental music master teacher. This resulted in the development of a positive attitude toward teaching by the participants. This and previously mentioned studies have shown that insufficient resources and geographic and professional isolation can overwhelm music teachers. Isbell (2005) offered keys to a successful rural music program which can combat feelings of isolation.

Isbell (2005) stated that finding support is imperative whether from administration or parents. Administrative support could help with funding or in the creation of the school's master schedule. Having some input on the school's master schedule could help alleviate conflicts with extracurricular activities or required core classes that will keep students from enrolling in music classes. To combat low enrollment, Isbell suggests combining groups (like middle school and high school band) when possible. This could be worked into the daily master schedule or may just be a few rehearsals together before the concert. Parents can help decrease the load of the rural band director by helping with routine school responsibilities like moving equipment or clean up after a concert. Lastly, Isbell relayed the necessity of understanding rural contexts. Day-to-day activities in a rural setting may take precedence over school requirements. This is confirmed by previously mentioned research regarding rural contexts (Prest, 2013; Schaller, 2016; Spring, 2014).

In summary, rural music teachers work in unique situations different from regular classroom teachers. Rural music teachers often are the only music specialist in the school district and are faced with a demanding schedule (Abril & Gault, 2008; Hunt, 2009; Isbell, 2005) and few resources (Abril & Gault, 2008; Maltas, 2004). Coupling subject specific professional development skill learning activities (Hunt, 2009; Maltas, 2004) with rural community

orientation (Isbell, 2005; Maltas, 2004; Prest, 2013; Spring, 2014) may help ease the burdens of rural music teachers and help them adapt to expectations.

### **Foundation for the Study's Methodology**

Researchers have noted similarities between findings regarding regular classroom teacher retention and music teacher retention from rural to urban districts. Working conditions—including administrative support and student discipline concerns (Certo & Fox, 2002; Collins, 1999; Dove, 2004; Ford et al., 2018; Gardner, 2010; Howard, 2006; Krueger, 2000; Lazarev et al., 2017; Madsen & Hancock, 2002; McLain, 2005; Ramos & Hughes, 2020; Russell, 2012; Scheib, 2004). Similarities were also found regarding teacher preparation or professional development (Asbill & Scott, 1997; Benson, 2008; Conway et al., 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Davidson & Dwyer, 2014; Dupriez et al., 2016; Fredrickson & Neill, 2004; Krueger, 1999; Matthews & Koner, 2017; Miksza et al., 2010; Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Vaughn, 2011) and resources (Abril & Gault, 2008; Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Isbell, 2005; Ramos & Hughes, 2020) as playing a significant role in retention. However, specific orientation on the rural culture needs to occur in rural areas whether the teacher is a regular classroom teacher (Edmonson & Butler, 2010; Harris et al., 2005; Monk, 2007; Walker-Gibbs et al., 2018) or a music teacher (Isbell, 2005; Prest, 2013; Schaller, 2016; Spring, 2104). Lastly, demographics need to be considered in the recruitment and retention of music teachers (Elpus, 2015; Hancock, 2008; Lazarev et al., 2017). These findings helped guide me in determining the methodology for completing my research.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter defined the study's key terms before presenting a literature review on teacher retention and attrition, rural teaching experiences, music teacher retention, and retaining

music teachers in rural areas. The chapter closed with a scholarly foundation for the study's research methods and methodology, which will be described in chapter 3.

### CHAPTER 3

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

### Introduction

It became apparent early in the planning process for my study that I should use action research if I wanted to affect change. According to Stringer (2014), action research should be used to find solutions to problems that people face in their everyday lives. Action research “seeks to build a body of knowledge that enhances professional and community practices and works to increase the well-being of the people involved” (Stringer, 2014, p.1). I also realized that a case study would be an appropriate research avenue for my study. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018):

Case studies are a design of inquiry found in many fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity, process, of one or more individuals. Cases are bounded by time and activity, and researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection procedures over a sustained period of time. (p. 14)

This case study occurred from October through December with observations on Monday mornings of the same band rehearsal period each time.

The purpose of this mixed methods action research case study was to describe rural band director’s experiences with content-related professional development and support networks, providing access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas to combat attrition. My research questions included:

1. How do rural band directors describe the impact of content-related professional development on their teaching?

2. How do rural band directors describe the influence of a support network on their desire to remain in a teaching position?
3. Does teacher attrition/retention explain the relationship between methods used to combat isolation (content-related professional development and support networks) and job satisfaction, controlling for the effects of student disciplinary issues?

This chapter is divided into four sections, detailing the study's research methodology, recruitment and research participants, data collection processes, and processes used for data analysis. The Research Methodology section explains the overall research plan used for the study. The Recruitment Process and Research Participants section details the process I used to identify a research site for my study, along with specific members involved. The Data Collection section explains the use of participant questionnaires to collect data, the purpose of researcher observations, and the time frame involved in the study. The Data Analysis section explains the methods used in analysis of that data.

### **Research Methodology**

#### **Convergent Triangulation Mixed Methods**

A convergent triangulation mixed methods research design was used to collect and analyze data. My mixed-methodology research plan was most closely aligned with Burkett's (2011) method in which a 2-year series of professional development workshops, seminars, and individual coaching sessions were developed to address the needs of instrumental music instructors. A convergent mixed methods design is one in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected in parallel, analyzed separately, and then merged to answer a study's research question(s) (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Turner et al. (2017) defined convergent triangulation as using multiple methods "to assess whether convergent results are observed across the methods"

(pp. 4–5). “Proponents of convergent triangulation have stressed that greater validation for a theory is produced when it has been subject to multiple tests using different methods and yields consistent results” (Turner et al., 2017, p. 10).

The two independent variables in this convergent triangulation mixed methods case study were subject-specific mentorship and professional development opportunities. The study’s three dependent variables were the ratings of isolation, job satisfaction, and professional development satisfaction that resulted from the interventions.

### **Case Study**

I used an exploratory type of case study to find out possible causes for rural band director attrition/retention. Stake (1995) posited that a “case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). Likewise, Salkind (2010) defined case studies as “using detailed inquiry into a bounded entity or unit...in which the researcher either examines a relevant issue or reveals phenomena through the process of examining the entity within its social and cultural context” (para. 1).

Stake (1995) believed that an advantage of case study research is the ability to have an interpreter in the field who can record and examine at the same time. This allows the researcher to “refine or substantiate those meanings” (Stake, 1995, p. 9). Another advantage is the ability to “treat the uniqueness of individual cases and contexts as important to understanding” (Stake, 1995, p. 39). This uniqueness is important to the study of the activity or event. However, “understanding each one requires an understanding of other cases, activities, and events” as well (Stake, 1995, p. 44).

Some disadvantages of case studies are that “qualitative inquiry is subjective. New puzzles are produced more frequently than solutions to old ones” (Stake, 1995, p. 45). Along

with the possibility of ethical risks, a case study is a measure a specific case at a specific time therefore there is little pay off “in the advancement of social practice” (Stake, 1995, p. 45).

However, Stake (1995) saw subjectivity as “an essential element of understanding” and not as a fault (p. 45).

## **Data Collection Tools**

### ***Questionnaire***

One of the study’s data collection tools included online pre-test/post-test type questionnaires. Salkind (2010) defined questionnaires or surveys as “a data-collection method in which individuals answer specific questions about their behavior, attitudes, beliefs, or emotions” (para. 1). The advantage of using a questionnaire for this study is that it reveals the personal beliefs of the research participant. One limitation of using a questionnaire occurs when participants misunderstand a question (Salkind, 2010). The questionnaire explored the effect that content-related professional development and a content-specific support network had on rural band directors’ retention rates using both rated items to collect quantitative data and open-ended response items to collect qualitative data. The quantitative items on the questionnaire were in the form of a Likert-like ordinal scale from 1 to 5. The qualitative items were in the form of open-ended responses in the questionnaire.

The band director questionnaire contained questions about professional development, support networks (measured by feelings of isolation), and job satisfaction levels which were calculated using a Likert-like ordinal scale. Each question on the questionnaire was aligned to one of the study’s three research questions (see Appendices E, F, and G). Questions regarding professional development used a five-item ordinal scale where respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with each question by indicating one of five responses: 1 =

*strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.*

Questions regarding support networks used a five-item ordinal scale where respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with each question by indicating one of five responses:

*1 = very isolated with no relationships, 2 = moderately isolated with minimal relationships, 3 = somewhat isolated with few relationships, 4 = very few feelings of isolation with several relationships, and 5 = no feelings of isolation with a significant number of relationships.*

Similarly, questions related to job satisfaction used a five-item ordinal scale where respondents were asked to provide their level of agreement with each question by indicating one of five responses: *1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree or disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree.*

The band director questionnaire was administered two times during the fall 2021 semester: once at the beginning of the semester to establish a base line and again right before the mid-school year break to establish a rate of growth (if any). A full semester was needed to examine the effects of content-related professional development and support networks on band director retention with the final determination being the return of the band director at the beginning of the following year. The questionnaires were made available to the study's research participants online via Google Docs for ease of completion.

### ***Researcher Observation***

Researcher observations were collected during on-site visits which were noted on a contact summary form (example in Appendix A). This type of observation is known as naturalistic observation in which observations are collected in the environment in which they naturally occur (Salkind, 2010). The advantage of researcher observations include having firsthand experience with the research participant and recognizing unusual occurrences when



they happen (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Stake, 1995). The limitations of researcher observations occur with errors in coding (Salkind, 2010) and poor observational skills (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Researcher observations were also used to inform professional development activities and to provide a support network for the band director participating in the study.

The reason for collecting both quantitative and qualitative data was to triangulate the collected information from the band director questionnaire and researcher observations to check for teacher growth (if any) and its relationship to retention rates. Triangulation based on converging sources of data contributes to the validity of a study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Stake, 1995).

### **Recruitment Process and Research Participants**

Possible research sites included rural public schools in the 5-state area designated for the study (the Oklahoma Panhandle, Southwestern Kansas, Southeastern Colorado, Northeastern New Mexico, and the Texas Panhandle) with fewer than 5,000 people in the community that only staffs one band director position. To be eligible, the research sites needed to have a newly hired, full-time band director. Newly hired was defined as a teacher new to the school in fall 2021. To allow for acceptable drive time between each research site and my university, proximity was given more weight in the selection of research sites, assuming there were a number of possible participants. The sample size was planned to be two people per site—the newly hired band director and the principal responsible for evaluating the band director.

Permission to conduct research had to be obtained from each school's superintendent, principal, and newly hired band director in order to participate in the study. I contacted rural public school principals and superintendents via email beginning in May 2021 and then followed up later the same month with a phone call introducing myself and my study to establish a

connection. I followed up by phone again in July 2021 to determine which schools had a new band director hire for the fall. Of the seven schools that met the study's selection criteria, I was only able to visit with the principal at three of the schools when I made these phone calls. Once I had the principals' permission, I tried to contact the newly hired band director at these sites. One of the band directors moved over from a different position in the school and was returning to the band director position, one of the band directors had no intention of returning in the fall and was just filling in for the school year, and I was never able to make contact with the third band director. At this point, I made first contact with a newly hired band director from a different school who met the criteria and agreed to participate. This band director received permission from the principal to participate in the study.

As a result of this tedious participant selection process, one band director/administrator pair out of a total of seven potential band director/administrator pairs accepted the invitation to participate. The responding band director completed all the participation requirements of the study, which involved a pre-test/post-test questionnaire. However, because the administrator did not complete either the initial or follow-up survey, the study was based on one band director research participant. Demographic information shows that the band director respondent was male, graduated from college with a bachelor's degree in instrumental music education, and was certified to teach instrumental music. Although he was in his first year at this rural public school, it was not his first year as a band director.

The following section describes the data gathering process, which was completed over a three-month period from October through December 2021.

### **Data Collection**

As previously mentioned, several area schools fit into the participant constraints; however, I only obtained written agreement to participate from one school. Appendix B shows the band director informed consent document and Appendix C shows the administrator informed consent document. As a means of triangulation, I used quantitative questionnaire results, qualitative questionnaire results, and researcher observations. “The term triangulation refers to the practice of using multiple sources of data or multiple approaches to analyzing data to enhance the credibility of a research study” (Salkind, 2010, para. 1).

### **Questionnaire**

I used a questionnaire as a pre-test/post-test survey of growth. “The basic premise behind the pretest–posttest design involves obtaining a pretest measure of the outcome of interest prior to administering some treatment, followed by a posttest on the same measure after treatment occurs” (Salkind, 2010, para. 1). The band director’s first questionnaire was completed prior to the second week of researcher observations. The early response helped establish a base line to determine growth (if any) by the end of the semester. The second and final questionnaire was completed by the band director before mid-term break in Mid-December. All collected data was kept confidential and maintained in a locked file cabinet in my office and in a secure password protected online location.

The band director questionnaires contained quantitative questions that use a Likert-like ordinal scale from 1 to 5 and qualitative questions with an open-ended response. Apart from the demographic information asked in the first band director questionnaire, the subsequent questionnaire asked the same qualitative and quantitative questions related to relationships/isolation, job satisfaction, and mentor/professional development satisfaction. The band director and administrator questionnaires are provided in Appendix D and E respectively.

The tables in Appendices F, G, and H describe the relationship between my research questions and the band director questionnaires. I used these tables to help me apply the questionnaire answers to my research questions in a meaningful way.

### **Researcher Observations**

I mentored and observed the newly hired band director during weekly visits from October to December at the research site. We established a day and time each week in which I observed the band rehearsal and offered follow up suggestions for improvement and affirmation of teaching and management techniques. The research participant introduced me to the students on my first visit so they would know why I was there and the rest of the time I had no interactions with the students. Notes were taken regarding general teaching techniques and professionalism, classroom management skills, music teaching techniques, and related management skills not associated with teaching. During each observation's follow up conference between myself and the research participant, I discussed my observations, answered questions, and offered suggestions. I notated my observations and summary of conversations on a contact summary form immediately after each visit and coded them at the same time. Miles et al. (2020) advised "analysis concurrent with data collection" (p. 62). The coding and analysis will be discussed in the next section. These coded observational notes were kept in a locked file cabinet in my office when not being used.

### **Data Analysis**

"Data analysis in a convergent design consists of three phases" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 219). Creswell and Creswell (2018) recommended analyzing "the qualitative database by coding the data and collapsing the codes into broad themes, ... [analyzing] the quantitative database in terms of statistical results, ... [then] integrating the two databases" (p. 219). I used

these phases as a guide for the data analysis of my study. First, I analyzed the quantitative data in terms of statistical results including means, paired *t*-tests, and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. Second, I analyzed the qualitative data by coding the data and creating themes. Third, I conducted a mixed methods analysis of both the quantitative and the qualitative data sets by integrating the two data sets using a side-by-side comparison of the findings considering the study's research questions. Creswell and Creswell (2018) defined this approach of side-by-side comparison as first reporting "the quantitative statistical results and then discuss[ing] the qualitative findings...that either confirm or disconfirm the statistical results" (p. 220).

### **Quantitative Analysis**

To help in analyzing the data from the questionnaire, I implemented a version of the Net promoter score<sup>®</sup> or NPS developed by Fred Reichheld that measures customer satisfaction (Qualtrics, 2022). I created two tables measuring the types of responses (detractor, passive, and promoters) by the band director (initial and follow-up questionnaires) and related them to the research question constructs of Professional Development, Support Networks, and Job Satisfaction. For my purposes, detractors were answers that fell in the 1–2 range, passive were answers that were ranked as 3, and promoters were answers that fell in the 4–5 range. I used a paired *t*-test of this raw data to determine the significance of the variance of the data. Paired or dependent sample *t*-tests are used for dependent or correlated data (Pyrzack & Oh, 2018). Since this data was obtained from a single sample, I also completed a Wilcoxon matched-pairs signed-rank test of this data which can be used when you have observations from a single group and they are observed at two-points in time (StatsTest.com, 2022).

### **Qualitative Analysis**

Written responses regarding professional development, support networks, and job satisfaction levels were analyzed from the band director questionnaire as a pre-test/post-test measurement, as well. Support networks were measured by feelings of isolation as rated by the band director on the questionnaire. I used techniques described by Miles et al. (2020) to define the range of variation between the responses, detect conceptual ideas, and to compare findings with other data. Other qualitative data include four contact summary forms (example in Appendix H) that were created to record researcher observations for each of the classroom visits.

When I began my qualitative analysis, I coded these observations as they related to my research questions. “Codes are labels that assign symbolic meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study” (Miles et al., 2020, p. 62). I began with In Vivo Coding, an elemental coding method, which uses words or short phrases taken directly from the source of the data as codes (Miles et al., 2020). I used In Vivo coding to identify words or phrases important to the context of the band director’s responses to ascertain regularities or patterns within the responses. I also used In Vivo coding when analyzing the contact summary forms.

Second, I patterned these codes by sorting them into three categories: Positive Emotions, Negative Emotions, and Descriptors. These labels were used to help associate codes with the research questions and band director’s perceptions of professional development, support networks, and job satisfaction. Emotion Coding is an Affective Method of coding that addresses more subjective experiences. Miles et al. (2020) deemed Emotion Coding appropriate for studies that “explore intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions” (p. 67).

Third, I created summary tables of the band director questionnaires that include theme-related and dramaturgical codes. “Dramaturgical coding is appropriate for exploring

intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies, power relationships, and the processes of human motives and agency” (Miles et al., 2020, p. 68).

Dramaturgical coding is a literary and language method of coding. The codes I used were OBJ (objectives), CON (conflicts), TAC (tactics), ATT (attitudes), EMO (emotions), and SUB (subtext).

Fourth, I created a two-variable case-ordered matrix to explore possible interrelationships between the desire to remain in a position (quantitative data) and support networks (qualitative data). This method is useful in examining the “possible interrelationships between two variables, but where the direction of causation is unknown or ambiguous” (Miles et al., 2020, p. 146). As can be seen in Appendix I, the information gathered about the desire to remain from both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire was related to support networks. The raw qualitative data from both questionnaires, as well as the coding I used for this information, was noted on this matrix. The responses related to administrative support, co-worker support, community support, and mentor support are compared with the band director’s desire to remain.

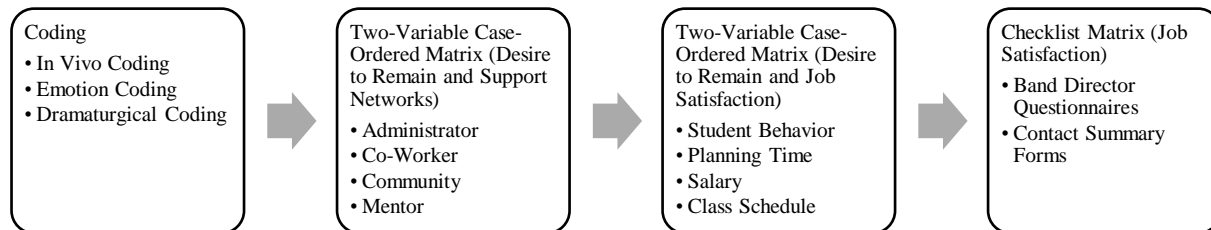
Fifth, I created a two-variable case-ordered matrix to explore possible interrelationships between the desire to remain in a position and job satisfaction properties. In Appendix J, the quantitative data regarding the desire to remain in the position from both band director questionnaires is related to job satisfaction obtained from the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire, student behavior, planning time, salary, and class schedule. I used Appendices I and J to examine the relationship more easily between the quantitative questionnaire responses and the qualitative questionnaire responses.

Sixth, I created a checklist matrix (Appendix K) that shows the conditions supporting job satisfaction. Those conditions (administration support, coworker support, community support,

and mentor support) are compared with related responses from the band director questionnaires and researcher observations from the contact summary forms. I used a visual display of the data (see Appendix K) to help me draw conclusions about job satisfaction and ultimately how that relates to the decision to remain in a position. Figure 1 visually displays my data analysis process.

**Figure 1**

*Qualitative Data Analysis Process*



Combining and comparing quantitative analysis results to findings from the qualitative analysis helped me to gain additional insight beyond the information provided by either method alone and to minimize the limitations of both (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This enabled me to attain what I believe to be valid conclusions with a more complete interpretation of the research. Analysis results presented in the next chapter display comparative information between selected variables and present detailed evidence regarding the research questions.

As a final step in the process, I wrote up the data analysis in the form of a scholarly report and compared my study's findings and results to the literature to answer my study's research questions. I separated the report into quantitative and qualitative analyses of findings and results related to professional development, support networks, and job satisfaction. After a discussion of



the separate results, I discussed how they impacted each other citing relationships with the literature.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter detailed the study's research methodology, recruitment and research participants, data collection processes, and processes used for data analysis. The results of the data collection and analysis will be discussed in the next chapter where I will use researcher observation, band director questionnaires, and the resulting decision to move to another position or stay in the current one to assess the effectiveness of these interventions.

## CHAPTER 4

### DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

#### Introduction

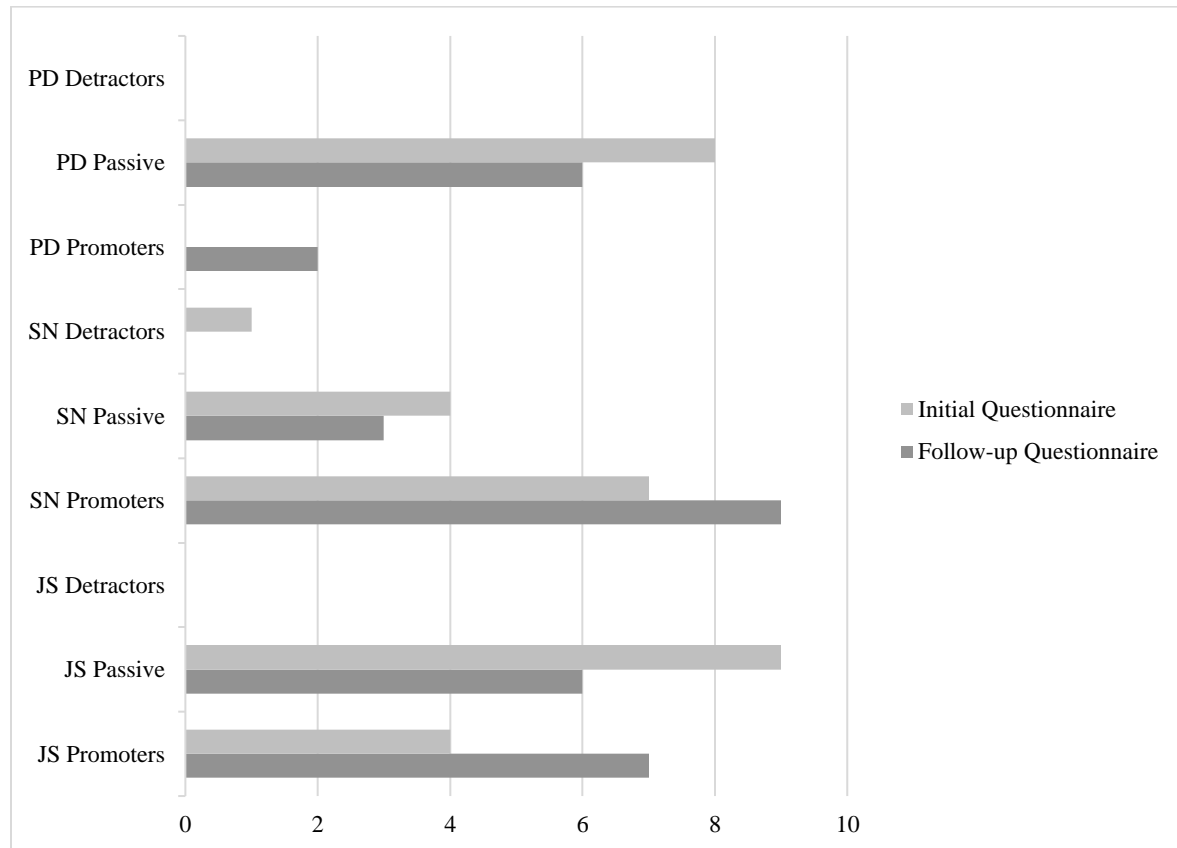
The purpose of this mixed methods action research case study was to describe a rural band director's experience with content-related professional development and support networks, providing access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas to combat attrition. The study's data analysis findings and results will be presented and discussed in this chapter. I will detail the results of the analysis in three sections: Professional Development, Support Networks, and Job Satisfaction. The Professional Development section describes quantitative results and qualitative findings regarding the band director's perception of professional development activities provided by the school and the mentor. The Support Networks section describes quantitative results and qualitative findings regarding the band director's perception of support from administration, co-workers, community, and the mentor. Job Satisfaction describes the quantitative results and qualitative findings related to student behavior, planning time, salary, and class schedule. The results connected to the research questions are presented after the Job Satisfaction findings.

For each section, the quantitative results are presented first. Then, a combined summary of qualitative findings and quantitative results is provided to offer a comprehensive view of the results. Quantitative results are presented using basic descriptive statistics. Qualitative findings are presented in summary tables that use theme-related and dramaturgical codes. Finally, the quantitative and qualitative data are merged in tables to identify trends between the two types of data and a summary of each section is included. A summary of the results related to the research questions is followed by a discussion of results to conclude this chapter.

## **Professional Development**

### **Quantitative Results**

On the questionnaire, there were eight quantitative questions regarding professional development, 12 questions related to support networks, and 14 questions dealing with job satisfaction. The mean of the initial questionnaire band director's responses related to professional development was 3; the mean related to support networks was 3.38; and the mean of the responses related to job satisfaction was 3.38. The mean of the follow-up questionnaire related to professional development was 3.25; the mean regarding support networks was 4.08; and the mean for job satisfaction responses was 3.69. Since the sample size was so small, there was no reliability analysis completed. Figure 2 compares the responses from both questionnaires regarding detractor, passive, and promoter responses.

**Figure 2***Detractor, Passive, and Promoter Responses Comparing Both Questionnaires*

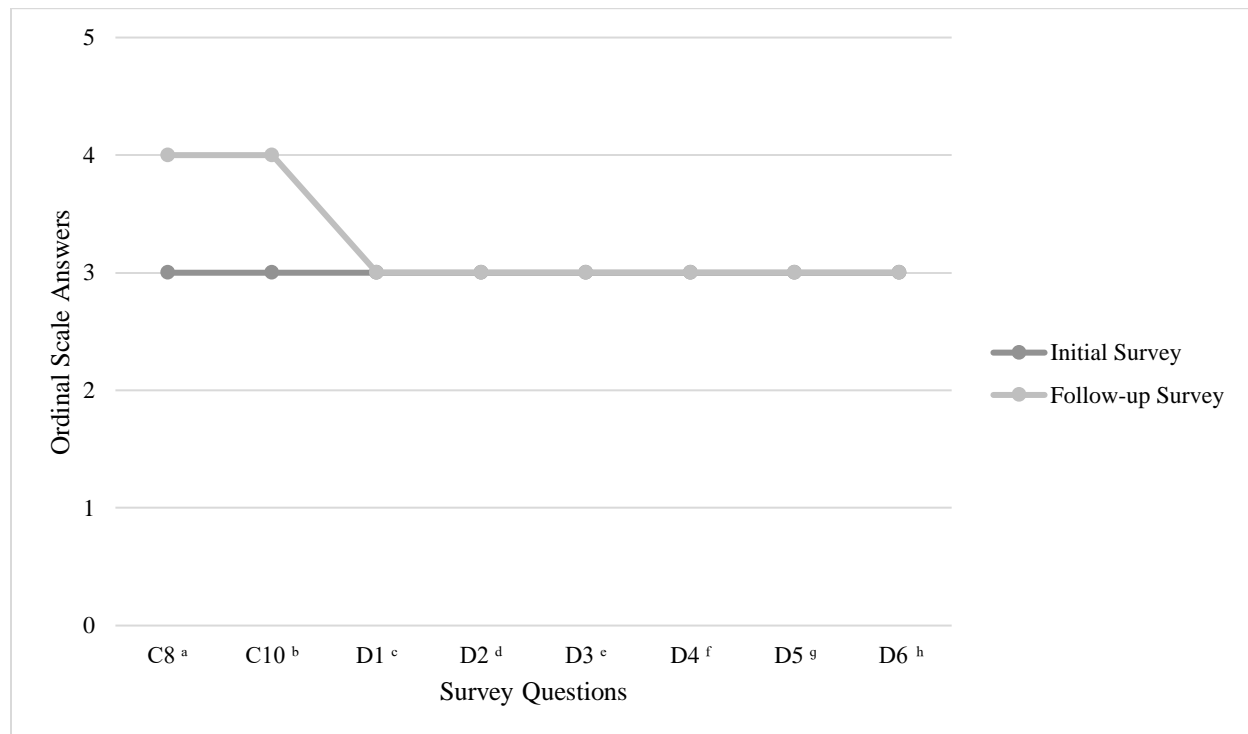
*Note.* Detractors were answers that fell in the 1–2 range; Passive were answers that were ranked as 3; and Promoters were answers that fell in the 4–5 range. PD = Professional Development, SN = Support Networks, and JS = Job Satisfaction.

When comparing the quantitative data from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire, there was a slight increase of 0.25 in the mean regarding professional development. The initial response included all passive answers of a 3 ranking with mean of 3. The follow-up response included mostly passive answers of 3 with two rankings of 4 and had a mean of 3.25.

Figure 3 shows the raw ordinal scale answers regarding professional development comparing both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire by the band director. As you can see in the figure, very little change can be detected between the two questionnaires. While this could be an indication of ineffective professional development, this could also be explained by the lack of scheduled professional development due to the band director not having a planning time built into the schedule.

**Figure 3**

*Quantitative Answers Regarding Professional Development Comparing the Initial Band Director Questionnaire with the Follow-up Questionnaire*



*Note.* Letter/Number combinations relate to the questionnaire questions found in Appendix C.

<sup>a</sup> Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques.

<sup>b</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

<sup>c</sup> The professional development was relevant to my current teaching assignment.

<sup>d</sup> I will use this material in the future.

<sup>e</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to my mentorship.

<sup>f</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to professional development.

<sup>g</sup> I will use new teaching methods learned through professional development.

<sup>h</sup> I am confident in applying newly learned information.

## Qualitative Findings

Open-ended band director questionnaire responses revealed the participating band director's perceptions about professional development. Questions B9 and D7-D10 sought to explore the construct of professional development and how those affect a first-year band director's desire to remain in a position. The theme uncovered for this construct was that there were limited opportunities for professional development. The initial questionnaire shows no emotional responses and one descriptor in one response and the follow-up questionnaire shows no descriptor or emotional responses regarding professional development. Table 1 displays the theme-related codes, themes, and assertions associated with the responses pertaining to professional development.

**Table 1**

*Codes, Themes, and Assertions Related to Professional Development*

### Initial and Follow-up Questionnaires

Theme-Related Code w/ (Dramaturgical Code)	Theme	Assertion(s)
1. Busy Schedule (SUB)	Limited opportunities for professional development	Since the band director travels between schools and does not get a planning period, there is no opportunity to participate in professional development activities.

*Note.* SUB = subtext, the dramaturgical code used in analysis.

### ***Limited Opportunities for Professional Development***

The theme that emerged from the data regarding professional development was Limited Opportunities for Professional Development. My assertion for this theme was that, since the band director traveled between schools and does not get a planning period, there was no opportunity to participate in professional development activities. The band director's busy schedule left him with limited opportunities for professional development.

The band director commented on the lack of opportunity to participate in professional development activities. In the initial questionnaire, the director responded, "Nothing outside of teacher in-service of which I am limited being able to attend at only one school due to timing." The band director's follow-up response was similar "None, just exposure to other students and faculty in the average school day." The responses for the questions about how professional development affected feelings of isolation, job performance, types of activities for future professional development, and satisfaction with professional development were left blank in both questionnaires. This was probably because the band director did not have a planning period in which he could participate in other professional development activities offered by the mentor.

### **Integrated Analysis for the Professional Development Construct**

The quantitative findings revealed there was no significant difference between the results of the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. The results of the paired *t*-test indicated that there was a non-significant medium difference between the two questionnaire responses regarding professional development with a *p*-value of 0.1705. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test of the eight questions related to professional development revealed that the difference between the initial and follow-up questionnaires was not statistically significant.



The qualitative findings revealed that there was no opportunity for the band director to participate in professional development opportunities because of his busy schedule. Because the band director travelled between two schools and there was no planning time built into the schedule, there was no time for any kind of professional development. When considered together, the quantitative and qualitative results regarding the newly hired band director's experiences with professional development showed that there was likely no statistical change in results between the initial questionnaire and follow-up questionnaire because the band director did not have time to participate in professional development activities.

### **Support Networks**

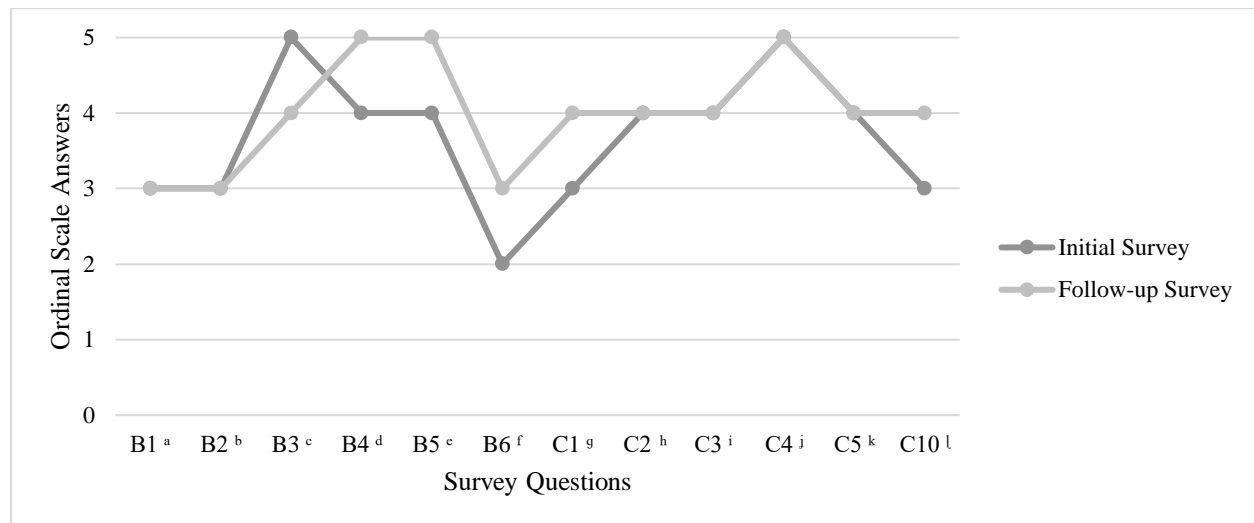
#### **Quantitative Results**

When comparing the quantitative data from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire, there was a slight increase in the mean regarding support networks. The initial response included one detractor response, four passive responses, and seven promoter responses with a mean of 3.38. The follow-up questionnaire included three passive responses and nine promoter responses with a mean was 4.08.

Figure 4 shows the raw ordinal scale answers regarding support networks comparing both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire by the band director. There were six different responses between the two questionnaires with one decline in a response from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. There were six responses with no change and five increased responses from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire.

**Figure 4**

*Quantitative Answers Regarding Support Networks Comparing the Initial Band Director Questionnaire with the Follow-up Questionnaire*



*Note.* Letter/Number combinations relate to the questionnaire questions found in Appendix C.

<sup>a</sup> I feel professionally isolated from other music teachers.

<sup>b</sup> I feel isolated because of where my school is located.

<sup>c</sup> I have a positive relationship with my colleagues.

<sup>d</sup> I have a positive relationship with my principal.

<sup>e</sup> I have a positive relationship with my superintendent.

<sup>f</sup> I have a positive relationship with community members.

<sup>g</sup> I am currently very satisfied with my job.

<sup>h</sup> My administration is understanding.

<sup>i</sup> My administration is helpful.

<sup>j</sup> My colleagues are understanding.

<sup>k</sup> My colleagues are helpful.

<sup>l</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

## Qualitative Findings

Open-ended questionnaire responses also revealed the participating band director's perceptions about support networks. Four questions sought to explore how support networks affect a first-year band director's desire to remain in a position. The two themes discovered for this construct were that there were limited opportunities to build relationships and that more input from the administration and community was needed. In the initial questionnaire there were three negative emotional responses and four positive responses regarding support networks with two descriptor responses. The follow-up questionnaire shows a decrease in both positive and emotional responses with two negative and three positive responses. There was also an increase of two descriptor responses in the follow-up questionnaire for a total of three. Table 2 displays the theme-related codes, themes, and assertions gleaned from qualitative responses pertaining to support networks from the initial questionnaire. The follow-up questionnaire had a similar response about limited opportunities to build relationships.

**Table 2**

*Initial Questionnaire Codes, Themes, and Assertions Related to Support*

Theme-Related Code w/ (Dramaturgical Code)	Theme	Assertion(s)
1. Busy Schedule (SUB)	Limited opportunities to build relationships.	The band director expressed a desire to have more time to build relationships with coworkers and the community.
2. Geographic Isolation (SUB)		
3. Job Isolation (SUB)		
1. Job Isolation (SUB)	More input from administration and community needed.	The band director would like more guidance from administration and the community for the direction of the program.
a. Intimidating (ATT)		
b. Challenging (ATT)		
c. Need an introduction to the community (TAC)		

*Note.* Dramaturgical codes are as follows: SUB=subtext, ATT=attitude, TAC=tactic

***Limited Opportunities to Build Relationships***

The first theme that emerged from the data regarding support networks was Limited Opportunities to Build Relationships. My assertion for this theme was that the band director expressed a desire to have more time to build relationships with coworkers and the community. The band director's busy schedule, geographic isolation, and job isolation each contributed to his limited opportunities to build relationships.

The band director commented on the lack of time available to participate in activities that could allow him to build relationships with coworkers and the community. In the initial questionnaire the band director commented, "Day to day interactions are realistically the only relationship building I have had." The follow-up response regarding participating in these types of activities was, "Nothing outside of teacher in-service of which I am limited being able to attend at only one school due to timing." This response was also mentioned as a response in the professional development section.

In the initial questionnaire, the participating band director mentioned geographic isolation: "With the continuing growth of social media in society, it is very easy to communicate with colleagues in the music world. While that is a tool that can help with isolation, it is not a replacement for in-person interactions." Another comment he made was, "The isolation and lack of opportunities due to geography exists." In the follow-up questionnaire, the band director commented about relationships: "I do not have any complaints in that field, but the sense of home is not there for me due to being an isolated individual in an isolated part of the world." This comment could be counted as a response related to job isolation, as well.

In the initial questionnaire, a comment the participating band director made regarding combatting job isolation by building community relationships was, "I have not attended an event

where I have felt unwelcome. That being said, local events that are not related to the school are smaller in number.” Another response was, “It is imperative for a teacher in a performance field to introduce themselves into the community.” In the follow-up questionnaire, the band director shared, “There isn’t anything that has created a sense of isolation as created directly by the community or school. However, there isn’t anything that has propelled a deep sense of familiarity in the community.”

### ***More Input from Administration and Community Needed***

The second theme that emerged from the data regarding support networks was More Input from Administration and Community is needed. My assertion for this theme was that the band director would like more guidance from administration and the community for the direction of the program. Job isolation was the contributing factor for the need for more input. This theme was only found in the initial questionnaire. The band director’s response was, “The challenging part for a new teacher is that being immediately thrust into an already established system is intimidating. I honestly can’t entirely put my finger on the most challenging parts of this topic.”

### **Integrated Analysis for the Support Networks Construct**

The quantitative results for the support networks construct revealed there was no significant difference between the results of the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. The results of the paired *t*-test indicated that there was a non-significant medium difference between the two questionnaire responses regarding support networks with a *p*-value of 0.054. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test revealed that the difference between the initial and follow-up questionnaires was not statistically significant.

The qualitative findings revealed that a busy schedule was problematic for the band director in both the initial and follow-up questionnaires because of the lack of time available for

relationship building. Geographic isolation also continued to be a factor, as well as job isolation. However, the band director had a more negative attitude about job isolation in the initial questionnaire than in the follow-up questionnaire, suggesting that perhaps he was growing used to the isolated nature of the rural band director position.

To compare the quantitative results with the qualitative findings, I used a two-variable case ordered matrix (Appendix I) to compare the desire to remain in a position (quantitative data) and support networks (qualitative data). The initial questionnaire response was neutral about remaining in the position was evidenced by feelings of isolation coupled with a supportive administration. The follow-up questionnaire response of leaning toward remaining in the position was evidenced by positive relationships with a supportive administration and salary satisfaction. The initial and the follow-up questionnaire responses reveal that co-workers are supportive. Both questionnaires expose the need for more community relationships outside of school activities to combat feelings of isolation. Both questionnaires reveal the lack of comments regarding mentor support. This was probably because the class schedule did not allow for time to have professional development activities and lengthy conversations with the mentor. cursory critiques, suggestions, and advisement opportunities had to happen within the 3- to 5-minute window after class before the band director had to travel to the next school.

### **Job Satisfaction**

#### **Quantitative Results**

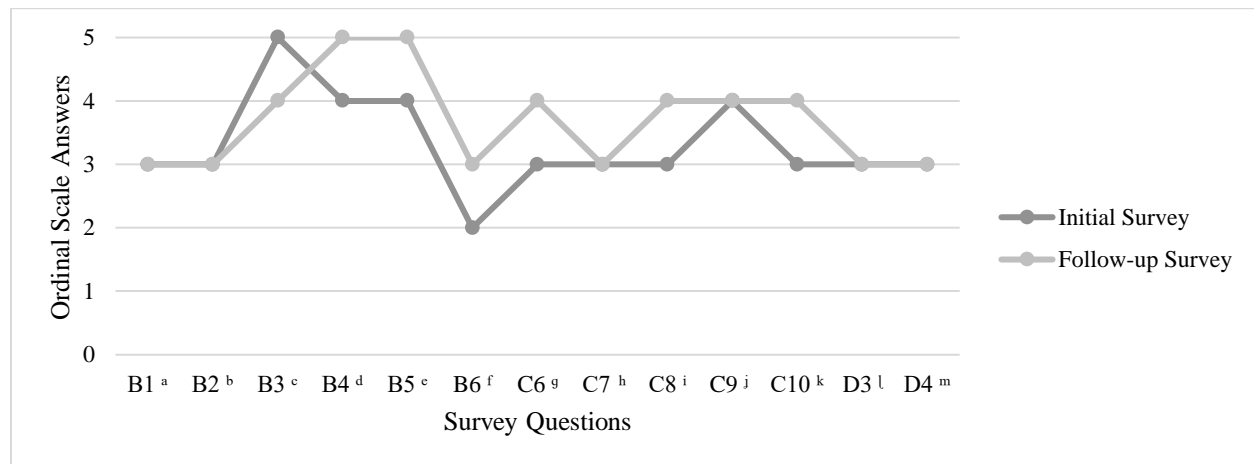
When comparing the quantitative data from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire, there was a slight increase in the mean regarding support networks. The initial response included nine passive rankings and four promoter rankings with a mean of 3.38. The

follow-up response included six passive rankings and seven promoter rankings with a mean of 3.69.

Figure 5 shows the raw ordinal scale answers regarding job satisfaction comparing both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire by the band director. There were seven different responses between the two questionnaires with one decline in a response from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. There were six responses with no change and six increased responses from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire.

**Figure 5**

*Quantitative Answers Regarding Job Satisfaction Comparing the Initial Band Director Questionnaire with the Follow-up Questionnaire*



*Note.* Letter/Number combinations relate to the questionnaire questions found in Appendix C.

<sup>a</sup> I feel professionally isolated from other music teachers.

<sup>b</sup> I feel isolated because of where my school is located.

<sup>c</sup> I have a positive relationship with my colleagues.

<sup>d</sup> I have a positive relationship with my principal.

<sup>e</sup> I have a positive relationship with my superintendent.

<sup>f</sup> I have a positive relationship with community members.

<sup>g</sup> Students respond to my musical directions.

<sup>h</sup> Students are well-behaved.

<sup>i</sup> Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques.

<sup>j</sup> I am able to teach what I want to teach.

<sup>k</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

<sup>l</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to my mentorship.

<sup>m</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to professional development.



### **Qualitative Findings**

Open-ended questionnaire responses revealed the participating band director's perceptions about job satisfaction. Twelve questions sought to explore the construct of job satisfaction and how that affects a first-year band director's desire to remain in a position. The five themes discovered for this construct were: classroom management difficulties, classroom management and relationship development connections love for educating students, support, and unhappy with schedule. In the initial questionnaire, there were three negative emotional responses and five positive responses regarding support networks with two descriptor responses. The follow-up questionnaire shows a decrease in emotional responses with zero negative and three positive responses. There was also a decrease of one descriptor response in the follow-up questionnaire. Table 3 displays the theme-related codes, themes, and assertions formed from the responses pertaining to job satisfaction from the initial questionnaire and Table 4 displays this same information from the follow-up questionnaire.

**Table 3***Initial Questionnaire Codes, Themes, and Assertions Related to Job Satisfaction*

Theme-Related Code w/ (Dramaturgical Code)	Theme	Assertion(s)
1. Student Behavior (SUB)	Classroom management difficulties	The band director sometimes feels helpless in addressing student behavior.
2. Classroom Management Plan (TAC)		
3. Class Schedule (CON)		
1. Classroom Management Plan (TAC)	Classroom management and relationship development connections	The band director believes it takes time to develop relationships with students.
1. Music Education (OBJ)	Love for educating students	The band director enjoys seeing student growth.
1. Respected (SUB) a. Listens (SUB) b. Acceptable Salary (ATT)	Support	The band director feels supported by administration.
2. Appreciated (SUB)		The band director feels supported by coworkers even though there is no time to interact.
3. Busy Schedule (SUB)		

*Note.* Dramaturgical codes are as follows: SUB = subtext, TAC = tactic, CON = conflict,

OBJ = objective, ATT = attitude.

**Table 4***Follow-up Questionnaire Codes, Themes, and Assertions Related to Job Satisfaction*

Theme-Related Code w/ (Dramaturgical Code)	Theme	Assertion(s)
1. Class Schedule (CON)	Unhappy with schedule	The band director expressed a desire to have more time to accomplish tasks.
1. Music Education (OBJ)	Love for educating students	The band director enjoys seeing student growth.
1. Respected (SUB) a. Acceptable Salary (ATT)	Support	The band director feels supported by administration.
2. Appreciative (SUB)		The band director feels supported by coworkers.

*Note.* Dramaturgical codes are as follows: CON = conflict, OBJ = objective, SUB = subtext, ATT = attitude.

### ***Classroom Management Difficulties***

The first theme that emerged from the data regarding job satisfaction was Classroom Management Difficulties. My assertion for this theme was that the band director sometimes felt helpless in addressing student misbehavior. Student behavior, the band director's classroom management plan, and class schedule each contributed his low level of job satisfaction regarding classroom difficulties.

The Student Behavior theme was only found in the initial questionnaire. The band director's response when asked about the worst aspects of the day was: "Realizing there are some aspects of behavior that I am unable to help with." When asked to comment on classroom management practices and related student behavior, the band director responded: "The first step in my management plan of which I attempt to maintain is a pace that does not allow much down

time. If this is maintained, there will not be enough room for disruption.” The band director then went into detail about a tactic used to regain attention: “The second step in behavior to regain attention once lost is to clap a short rhythm. The expected response is to repeat the clapped rhythm as presented. This usually is enough to regain attention without drawing much attention to individual students.” The band director continued the process of what to do if the clapping tactic doesn’t work. The follow-up questionnaire reiterated the use of this plan and went further: “An isolated moment of my management practice is a clapped rhythm that will be repeated by students when they lose focus. It is inevitable that every student will not maintain absolute focus, the clapping of a rhythm gives their ears something that gains their focus without feeling reprimanded.”

When asked to share anything else related to job satisfaction, the band director commented in the initial questionnaire on the difficulties of the class schedule related to student behavior: “Satisfaction in teaching for me isn’t the sense of perfection. It is the ability to help growth and learning. That being said, I have experienced a few difficulties in obtaining that growth. The first is the lack of options to locate students. Younger students are required as a whole to participate which allows for a deeper understanding, but also creates tension when young minds are determined to not grow in a class.”

### ***Classroom Management and Relationship Development Connections***

The second theme that emerged from the data regarding job satisfaction was Classroom Management and Relationship Development Connections. My assertion for this theme was that the participating band director believed it takes time to develop relationships with students. When asked to comment on classroom management practices and related student behavior, the band director said in the initial questionnaire that: “Unfortunately the blend of different learning

styles can make it difficult to address every issue in the same manner. The largest amount of behavioral development comes with time as familiarity between teacher and students develop.”

### *Love for Educating Students*

The third theme that emerged from the data regarding job satisfaction was Love for Educating Students. My assertion for this theme is that the participating band director enjoyed seeing student growth. When asked to comment on the best aspects of the day, the band director commented in the initial questionnaire, “The fact that after such a long time of trying, I can spend my entire day trying to convey my love for music and see potential growth of students in that field.” The follow-up questionnaire contained a similar response, “[I feel satisfied] every moment I see a kid performing or soaking up music.”

### *Support*

The fourth theme that emerged from the data regarding job satisfaction was Support. My assertion for this theme was that the participating band director felt respected by administration and appreciated by his coworkers, which created an atmosphere of support. When asked to share if the administration is supportive of the band program, the band director responded in the initial questionnaire: “Very supportive. They have been open to listening to any suggestion I might have. I don’t know what they could do at this time that I shouldn’t be able to do myself.” The follow-up response was: “Yes. I do not know of anything my administration could do to support me more.”

In responding to how supportive of the band program other teachers were, the band director’s initial questionnaire comment was: “They are very supportive. I feel that they have enough to worry about with there [sic] respective fields of interest that I don’t wish to bother

them.” The follow-up response was, “Yes. I do not know of any way my fellow teachers could support me more in.”

### ***Unhappy with Schedule***

The fifth theme that emerged from the data regarding job satisfaction was Unhappy with Schedule. My assertion for this theme was that the participating band director expressed desire to have more time to accomplish tasks. The follow-up questionnaire contained a response about being unhappy with the schedule when asked about the worst aspects of the day: “The lack of a moment to really breathe and process everything that it is I need to do.”

### **Integrated Analysis for the Job Satisfaction Construct**

The quantitative results for the job satisfaction construct revealed there was no significant difference between the results of the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. The findings of the paired *t*-test indicated that there was a non-significant medium difference between the two questionnaire responses regarding job satisfaction with a *p*-value of 0.219. The Wilcoxon signed-rank test of the 13 questions related to job satisfaction showed that the difference between the initial and follow-up questionnaires was not statistically significant. However, the raw responses showed a slight increase in job satisfaction with six higher rankings and only one lower ranking from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire.

The qualitative findings for the job satisfaction construct revealed that student behavior was more of a concern for the band director in the initial questionnaire than in the follow-up questionnaire. However, contact summary forms (as can be seen in Appendix A) reveal constant issues with students talking throughout the class period. In my experience, this is a common occurrence in many bands that have students with varying levels of ability. In both questionnaires, the band director did express concern regarding the schedule—either related to

student behavior issues or time management. Researcher observations corroborated this with some students not participating because they didn't want to be there yet didn't have a choice. In both the initial and follow-up questionnaires, the band director expressed a love for teaching students and enjoying seeing their growth musically. The contact summary forms reflected this as well. Students showed excitement about playing specific songs and for the most part tried to take musical instruction. The band director expressed in both questionnaires that the administration and coworkers were very supportive. Researcher observations agree with this. In the very first observation, the superintendent told the researcher that they were happy the band director was there and that they thought he was doing a great job.

The two-variable case ordered matrix in Appendix J compares the quantitative results with the qualitative findings in order to explore interrelationships between the desire to remain in a position and job satisfaction properties. The first comparison was between the neutral desire to remain and feelings of helplessness about student behavior in certain situations and the excitement over student growth in the initial questionnaire. In the follow-up questionnaire, the band director still enjoyed watching students learn and grow, but now the band director was leaning towards remaining. In both questionnaires, the band director was frustrated that there was not enough planning time. The band director was satisfied with the salary in both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. Finally, feeling of frustration with the class schedule were noted in the initial questionnaire, as well as mentioning not having enough time in the follow-up questionnaire.

### **Summary of Results and Discussion**

My convergent triangulation mixed-methods action research design involved collecting both qualitative and quantitative data in parallel but analyzing them separately. The two forms of

data were then merged comparing their results to reach overall conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Stake, 1995). Collecting data from band director questionnaires and researcher observations provided me with data to draw conclusions concerning the study's three research questions.

In this section, I provide a discussion of the results and offer initial conclusions. I also provide comparisons to prior research and briefly discuss some implications for practice.

The study's first research question asked, how do rural band directors describe the impact of content-related professional development on their teaching? Quantitative results associated with research question 1 indicated very little change from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire with only an increase in two of the responses. One of those responses, however, was the likelihood of returning for a second year. Qualitative findings revealed that the band director had a busy schedule that did not allow time for a planning period nor an opportunity to participate in professional development activities. Therefore, no impact could be made regarding content-related professional development on his teaching.

The study's second research question asked, how do rural band directors describe the influence of a support network on their desire to remain in a teaching position? Quantitative results associated with research question 2 indicated a slight increase from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. Relationships with the principal, superintendent, and community received a higher rating in the follow-up questionnaire. However, the differences between the two questionnaires were not significant. Qualitative findings revealed that a busy schedule inhibited the band director from creating more support networks, but that he was not unhappy with the relationships that he had established with the administration and coworkers.



However, he would like more relationships with community members. This was consistent between questionnaires.

The study's third research question asked, does teacher attrition/retention explain the relationship between methods used to combat isolation (content-related professional development and support networks) and job satisfaction, controlling for the effects of student disciplinary issues? Quantitative results associated with research question 3 indicated a slight increase from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. There was an increase in the questionnaire statements "I am currently very satisfied with my job," "Students respond to my musical directions," "Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques," and "I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year." However, the remaining responses were unchanged, revealing an insignificant increase between the two questionnaires. The band director did ultimately decide to return the next fall in the same capacity. Qualitative findings revealed the band director was unhappy with his busy schedule but enjoyed educating students about music. There were more emotional responses in the initial questionnaire than in the follow-up questionnaire, which could indicate the band director was growing more satisfied with his position the longer he was in it.

The increased responses about professional development and support networks fed into research question 3, revealing that the band director was more likely to remain in his position as of December than he was in October. Whether this was because of the professional development and/or mentorship, was difficult to determine. The inability to offer professional development and mentorship opportunities for longer than 3- to 5-minute conversations hampered the goal of this research project but did confirm previous research that observed itinerant teachers find it difficult to develop support networks (Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Spring 2014).

This study confirmed many things that my literature review detailed regarding rural band directors. First, itinerant teachers find it difficult to develop a sense of belonging (Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Spring, 2014). Second, working conditions, workload, and time commitment lead to job dissatisfaction (Matthews & Koner, 2017). Third, rural communities need to offer some kind of orientation for new teachers in which to make connections (Maltas, 2004). Fourth, geographic and professional isolation can overwhelm music teachers (Burkett, 2011).

The participating band director in this case study differed from the literature in at least one key area. Collins (1999) believed that isolation from coworkers translates into lack of support. While my research participant felt isolated from his coworkers, he did feel supported by them. He didn't make any specific comments about why he felt supported, but he did mention that they were busy too, and he didn't want to add to their load: "[My coworkers] are very supportive. I feel that they have enough to worry about...that I don't wish to bother them."

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter, I presented and discussed the study's data analysis findings and results in three sections: Professional Development, Support Networks, and Job Satisfaction. Chapter 5 will present my conclusions through a comprehensive summary, implications for practice, suggestions for future research, and a discussion of the study's limitations.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **CONCLUSION**

#### **Introduction**

As of May 2022, there were already seven rural band director jobs in the 5-state area surrounding Goodwell, Oklahoma that needed to be filled by the start of the school year in the fall. My study's research site was not one of them. Many researchers have identified the influence of adverse job conditions such as student discipline and motivation, class size, lack of administrative support, lack of planning time, and insufficient salary on younger teachers, especially in their decisions to remain (Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Ford et al., 2018; Ramos & Hughes, 2020). These job conditions play a significant role in determining whether a teacher will migrate to another school or ultimately leave the profession altogether (Certo & Fox, 2002; Dove, 2004; Dupriez et al., 2016; Gardner, 2010; Miksza et al., 2010; Ramos & Hughes, 2020). Rural music teachers such as the band director who participated in this study need content support and a support network consisting of administrators, coworkers, subject-specific mentors, and community members (Asbill & Scott, 1997; Burkett, 2011; Conway et al., 2002; Gardner, 2010; Isbell, 2005; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000; Maltas, 2004; McLain, 2005; Miksza et al., 2010; Schaller, 2016). This is the reality that drove my study. It is my hope that this study will provide insights into how to stop this exodus.

#### **Summary of Results**

The purpose of this mixed methods action research case study was to describe a rural band director's experience with content-related professional development and support networks, providing access to and a process for collaboration in isolated areas to combat attrition.

Regarding the impact of content-related professional development on teaching, there was

a very small (if any) impact made. While the quantitative results showed an increase in the likelihood that the band director would return in the fall, there was very little change in the responses between the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. The participating band director did ultimately decide to return in the fall; however, this can't be attributed to participation in professional development activities. His busy schedule did not allow time for a planning period in which professional development could be administered.

Regarding the influence of support networks on his desire to remain, there was a slight increase from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. Again, the band director's busy schedule had no impact on his ability to create more support networks; however, he was not unhappy with his relationships with administration and coworkers. He did express a desire to have more relationships with community members in both the initial questionnaire and the follow-up questionnaire. The differences found between the two questionnaires was not significant probably because of the lack of time in the band director's schedule to create opportunities to build support networks.

Regarding the question whether teacher attrition/retention explains the relationship between methods used to combat isolation and job satisfaction, quantitative results showed a slight increase from the initial questionnaire to the follow-up questionnaire. However, these results showed an insignificant increase between the two questionnaires. While the band director shared in his responses that he was unhappy with his busy schedule, he enjoys educating students about music. Responses indicated that the band director was more likely to remain in his position as of December than he was in October. Whether this was because of the professional development and/or mentorship, was difficult to determine. The inability to offer professional development and mentorship opportunities for longer than 3- to 5-minute conversations

hampered the goal of this study. It did however confirm other research that indicated itinerant teachers find it difficult to develop support networks (Sindberg & Lipscomb, 2005; Spring 2014).

### **Implications for Practice**

The need for content-related professional development and support networks for rural band directors is evidenced by the research upon which I built my study, but the need is also evidenced in my study. The lack of a planning time for the participating band director was very concerning to me and limited my ability to provide professional development opportunities. Consequently, there are several practical applications that should be considered by administrators of rural schools.

First, more guidance should be given to first-year teachers whether they are traditional students who just graduated from college, mature beginners, alternatively certified, or experienced teachers who are just new to the school. Brock and Grady (2007) highlighted several actions that principals should take to help new teachers from “finding services to meet their basic needs” to helping them “become familiar with the community and socioeconomic backgrounds of the students” (p. 8). Alternatively certified teachers typically have a quick transition into full-time teaching; therefore “induction and mentoring are critical to the performance and retention” of these teachers (Brock & Grady, 2007, p. 10). Because of these special circumstances, Brock and Grady believed there is a need for “extensive ongoing induction programs” (p. 11). Therefore, I believe that establishing a schedule where first-year band directors in rural settings have two daily planning periods would help with their retention. Fry (2007) found that teacher induction programs were only beneficial if they focused on what teachers needed. The extended time I propose could be used for planning for classes, grading, and other typical teacher duties

that take first-year teachers longer to master; but the time could also be used for attending content-specific professional development, developing support networks within both the school and community, observing veteran teachers at work in the classroom, and getting advice from mentors in their field.

Second, I believe a continuation of teacher education in music pedagogy beyond education would be beneficial. In-service music teacher education might be a way of addressing professional isolation. The establishment of face-to-face and online networks as well as formal mentoring programs could help alleviate professional isolation (Davidson & Dwyer, 2014) among rural, newly hired band directors. While this study's participating band director had very little time to participate in mentoring activities, I believe having a mentor in the music field (through participation in this study) was helpful to him, if only for support and companionship. Implementing a formal year-long professional development process for new band directors would establish a practice that could eliminate lack of participation. However, there must be time built into newly hired band directors' schedules to accomplish this goal.

Third, public schools should develop a partnership with a nearby college or university. These partnerships could attract local youth into teaching, provide orientation and mentoring, and offer "cost-effective distance-learning courses to keep rural teachers up-to-date" (Collins, 1999, p. 3). Partnerships already exist with early college high school programs, concurrent programs for students, and certainly with internships for pre-service teachers (Haston & Russell, 2012; Henning et al., 2018). Abrahams (2011) confirms the need for subject-specific mentoring of first year teachers. Partnerships between schools and universities that extend the work of pre-service teachers into their first year of teaching "provide novice teachers with opportunities to learn the routines of the school, while also honing pedagogic strategies and skills" (Abrahams,

2011, p. 112). It should not be difficult to extend these partnerships regarding band directors and their continued education. In the very least, a mentorship with teachers in subject-specific fields like music could be garnered for first-year teachers with a nearby university.

### **Limitations of the Study**

My intended plan for this research project did not come to fruition. This affected the number of participants, administrative involvement, community involvement, and release time to participate in professional development. I had planned on mentoring four different band directors from August through December 2021, but I could not find enough participants who fit the criteria and were also willing to participate. While there were seven band director positions that needed to be filled in the study's designated five-state area by fall 2021, I had difficulty contacting the new hires. I emailed the superintendents and principals and never heard from one of them. I followed up my emails with phone calls and managed to visit with three of the administrators. Of those three schools, I visited with the newly hired band directors at two of them. Those two band directors did not fit the criteria for my study. Noteworthy, the third band director (that I was never able to contact) will not be returning for fall 2022. It was only after visiting with the band director first that I was able to find an acceptable participant for my study. After that, it took another month for me to get the required signatures for the informed consent forms. This necessitated me beginning my action research in October rather than in August.

My research plan was also hampered by the fact that the administrator did not complete either of the questionnaires. Therefore, I was not able to gather any administrator feedback as to what impact my mentorship may have made on the participating band director. The administrator did not complete any evaluations on the participating band director either, so I was also unable to substitute evaluations for the missing data. The lack of an evaluation might be due to the band

director travelling to another school in another district for the rest of the day after the first period band class. According to the Oklahoma State Department for Education (2017), probationary teachers must be evaluated twice a year and career teachers (teachers who have taught at least 3 years in the same district) should be evaluated once every year. Although the participating band director was a new hire at the study's research site, he had been working at a nearby school for over three years. He split his time between his former school and the new school during the 2021-2022 school year.

The last two pieces that are missing from my research plan are community involvement and participation in professional development. As I was contacting administrators during the summer prior to the study, I asked them about chamber of commerce members or other members in the community who might be able to facilitate professional development for the participating band directors. None of the administrators knew who to contact. This, however, became a moot point because of time constraints and the one participating band director's ability to participate. My original idea for professional development was to offer participant-driven professional development in the hour following observations. Schmidt and Robbins (2011) detailed the need for implementing a strategic architecture for professional development in music education. A strategic architecture recognizes learning and teaching as complex, interrelated processes that can be irregular and emotional. Schmidt and Robbins believed that professional development needs to include experiences fed by participants desires (Schmidt & Robbins, 2011). Participant-driven professional development and community awareness could not happen because of the lack of any planning time for the band director. In a way, the issues I had implementing my action research are a confirmation of prior research: newly hired band directors in rural settings have a difficult time because of isolation and time constraints.



### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Building upon my research and implications for practice, I have three suggestions for future research. First, I believe future research should be conducted on the implementation of school-university partnerships for the induction phase of newly hired band directors. More research should also be conducted on implementation of school-community partnerships to help orientate newly hired band directors to the area, specifically in rural communities. Furthermore, a study should be conducted on the efficacy of more planning time for first-year band directors. Further research in these three areas will contribute to the practical application of band director induction in rural areas to aid with band director retention.

While school-university partnerships are well documented in the literature with preservice teaching internships (Haston & Russell, 2012; Henning et al., 2018), implementing inservice teaching partnerships is not well documented (Hunt, 2014). Researchers have expressed the value in the potential of these types of partnerships for rural public schools, but few have been formally studied. Hayes et al. (2019) admitted that “matching beginning teachers with someone in their subject area or teaching role may not always be possible in rural schools with small staffs” (p. 2). This is where matching newly hired band directors with mentors from a partnering college or university could fit in. I hope to be able to expand upon this research in the future by partnering with local schools in an induction program for rural teachers.

More research also should be conducted on the implementation of school-community partnerships. Research shows that implementing orientation plans can help geographically isolated communities retain beginning teachers by helping them adjust “to the culture of their community while simultaneously adjusting to the demands of the teaching profession” (Hayes, et al., 2019, p. 5). Hayes et al. (2019) suggested detailing community expectations, introducing new

teachers to prominent community members, and offering strategies to help beginning teachers build relationships with community members. My research shows that this type of orientation would have been beneficial for the one participating band director, who admitted to not feeling a “sense of home” in the community.

Extended planning time, when used with multiple other components of teacher induction, has proven very effective in teacher retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). More research, however, is needed to confirm these findings. My study was greatly hampered by the participating band director’s lack of planning time in which to offer any kind of induction process. Ingersoll and Smith (2014) found that “the probability of a departure at the end of their first year for those getting [an induction package including a reduced number of course preparations] was less than half of those who participated in no induction activities” (p. 37).

Lastly, I recommend the replication of my study. The continued need for rural band directors in my area of Oklahoma is evidence that changes need to be made. Replication of my study could provide the evidence that is needed to implement those changes.

### **Conclusion**

It is evident that changes need to be made in Oklahoma. Providing subject-specific professional development and support networks has been a proven success (Asbill & Scott, 1997; Burkett, 2011; Conway et al., 2002; Ford et al., 2018; Gardner, 2010; Isbell, 2005; Krueger, 1999; Krueger, 2000; Maltas, 2004; McLain, 2005; Miksza et al., 2010; Schaller, 2016). While my study did not show any significant effects, the participating band director showed some professional growth in both the quantitative and qualitative responses of the questionnaires. Additionally, the band director is returning for a second year at the same school in the same capacity. I wish him all the best!

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**APPENDIX A****CONTACT SUMMARY FORM**

Contact type: \_\_\_\_\_ (with whom) \_\_\_\_\_ Site: \_\_\_\_\_  
 In person \_\_\_\_\_ Contact date: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Virtual meeting \_\_\_\_\_ Today's date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. What were the main issues or themes that struck you in this contact?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. Summarize the information you got (or failed to get) on each of the target questions you had for this contact.

**Question****Information**

Classroom management

Job satisfaction

Relationships with colleagues

Subject specific knowledge

PD needs

3. Anything else that struck you as salient, interesting, illuminating, or important in this contact?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What new (or remaining) target questions do you have in considering the next contact with this site?

**APPENDIX B****INFORMED CONSENT BAND DIRECTOR FORM****Bradley University**

Department of Education, Counseling, and Leadership

**Principal Investigator (PI):** Charla Lewis, EdD student

**Phone:** 620.370.0259

**Project Title:** Actions to Address Rural Band Director Attrition

You are invited to participate with no obligation in a research study which has as its main purpose determining if a subject-specific mentor and professional development program will combat band director attrition in rural communities. There are no costs to participate in this study. We do not believe that there are any risks associated with this study.

If you choose to participate in this research study, I would require your participation in a mentorship and professional development program which involves at least 1 hour a month during the school year for the band director, as well as the completion of 3 electronic questionnaires throughout the school year. A link to complete the survey will be sent via email. Respondents will not have access to the responses. In addition, the final piece of data I will need will be whether or not the band director will return in the same capacity the following school year. The questionnaire responses obtained from this study will be kept confidential with no specific connections made to individuals, however since there is a small sample size, inferences could be drawn. We plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, the questionnaire responses obtained from this study ~~Data~~ will be stored in an electronic database and a locked file cabinet, accessible only by the PI.

You are voluntarily making a decision to participate in this study. Your decision whether or not to participate will not interfere with your current or future employment by the school district. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and the PI may choose to cancel your participation at any time. You may or may not benefit from this study that involves professional development. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You don't have to participate and can stop at any time.

Do you have any questions? (Circle One)

**NO**

**YES**

If you selected YES, please contact the PI, Charla Lewis, at the above phone number or by email at [charla.lewis@opsu.edu](mailto:charla.lewis@opsu.edu) before signing this form. If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may also contact the Chair of the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research (CUHSR) at Bradley at 309.677.3877, or at [srast@bradley.edu](mailto:srast@bradley.edu). Do not sign this form until these questions have been answered to your satisfaction.

**YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO ALLOW THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TO USE THE RESULTS OF PI OBSERVATION, YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE, AND THE DECISION TO CONTINUE EMPLOYMENT FOR**

**RESEARCH AND PRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY. YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW ALSO INDICATES THAT YOU ARE OVER THE AGE OF 18.**

**I      AGREE      DO NOT AGREE**      (circle one) to participate in this research study.

Participant's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C****INFORMED CONSENT ADMINISTRATOR FORM****Bradley University**

Department of Education, Counseling, and Leadership

**Principal Investigator (PI):** Charla Lewis, EdD student

**Phone:** 620.370.0259

**Project Title:** Actions to Address Rural Band Director Attrition

You are invited to participate with no obligation in a research study which has as its main purpose determining if a subject-specific mentor and professional development program will combat band director attrition in rural communities. There are no costs to participate in this study. We do not believe that there are any risks associated with this study.

If you choose to participate in this research study, I would require the participation of your band director in a mentorship and professional development program which involves at least 1 hour a month during the school year, as well as the completion of 3 electronic questionnaires throughout the school year. As the band director evaluator, you would be required to complete 3 electronic questionnaires throughout the school year. A link to complete the survey will be sent via email. Respondents will not have access to the responses. In addition, the final piece of data I will need will be whether or not the band director will return in the same capacity the following school year. The questionnaire responses obtained from this study will be kept confidential with no specific connections made to individuals, however since there is a small sample size, inferences could be drawn. We plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, the questionnaire responses obtained from this study will be stored in an electronic database and a locked file cabinet, accessible only by the PI.

You are voluntarily making a decision to participate in this study. Your decision whether or not to participate will not interfere with your current or future employment by the school district. You may choose to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty, and the PI may choose to cancel your participation at any time. You may or may not benefit from this study that involves professional development. Taking part in this research project is voluntary. You don't have to participate and can stop at any time.

Do you have any questions? (Circle One)

**NO**

**YES**

If you selected YES, please contact the PI, Charla Lewis, at the above phone number or by email at [charla.lewis@opsu.edu](mailto:charla.lewis@opsu.edu) before signing this form. If you have questions or concerns regarding your rights as a research participant, you may also contact the Chair of the Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research (CUHSR) at Bradley at 309.677.3877, or at [srast@bradley.edu](mailto:srast@bradley.edu). Do not sign this form until these questions have been answered to your satisfaction.

**YOU ARE MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO ALLOW THE PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR TO USE THE RESULTS OF PI OBSERVATION, YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE, AND THE DECISION TO CONTINUE EMPLOYMENT FOR**

**RESEARCH AND PRESENTATION PURPOSES ONLY. YOUR SIGNATURE BELOW ALSO INDICATES THAT YOU ARE OVER THE AGE OF 18.**

**I      AGREE      DO NOT AGREE**      (circle one) to participate in this research study.

Participant's name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Participant's signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX D****BAND DIRECTOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

**A. Demographics.** Please respond appropriately.

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Certification type
5. Years teaching experience
6. Level of education

**B. Relationships/Isolation.**

Rate the statement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=very isolated with no relationships, 2=moderately isolated with minimal relationships, 3=somewhat isolated with few relationships, 4=very few feelings of isolation with several relationships, and 5=no feelings of isolation with a significant number of relationships).

1. I feel professionally isolated from other music teachers.
2. I feel isolated because of where my school is located.
3. I have a positive relationship with my colleagues.
4. I have a positive relationship with my principal.
5. I have a positive relationship with my superintendent.
6. I have a positive relationship with community members.

Please respond to the prompt provided.

7. What orientation activities have you enjoyed the most regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.



8. What orientation activities have you liked the least regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.
9. What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?
10. Please share your thoughts related to building relationships or isolation at your school and in your community.

**C. Job Satisfaction.**

Rate the statement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3=neither agree or disagree, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree).

1. I am currently very satisfied with my job.
2. My administration is understanding.
3. My administration is helpful.
4. My colleagues are understanding.
5. My colleagues are helpful.
6. Students respond to my musical directions.
7. Students are well-behaved.
8. Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques.
9. I am able to teach what I want to teach.
10. I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

Please respond to the prompt provided.

11. What are the worst aspects of your day-to-day job?
12. What are the best aspects of your day-to-day job?

13. Is administration supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?
14. Are the other teachers supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?
15. Describe your class management practices and comment on related student behavior.
16. Are you satisfied with your salary? Explain.
17. Please share anything else related to job satisfaction.

**D. Mentor/Professional Development Satisfaction.**

Rate the statement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=none, 2=minimal, 3=moderate, 4=significant, 5=a great deal, and N/A=not applicable).

1. The professional development was relevant to my current teaching assignment.
2. I will use this material in the future.
3. I have had a positive change in practice related to my mentorship.
4. I have had a positive change in practice related to professional development.
5. I will use new teaching methods learned through professional development.
6. I am confident in applying newly learned information.

Please respond to the prompt provided.

7. How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?
8. How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your job performance?
9. What types of professional development activities would you like to participate in in the future?
10. Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.

**APPENDIX E****ADMINISTRATOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

**E. Demographics.** Please respond appropriately.

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Race/Ethnicity
4. Years administration experience
5. Level of education

**F. Relationships/Isolation.**

Rate the statement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree).

1. The band director is professionally isolated from other music teachers.
2. The band director is coping with teaching in a rural district.
3. The band director has a positive relationship with colleagues.
4. I have a positive relationship with the band director.
5. The band director has a positive relationship with my superintendent.
6. The band director has a positive relationship with community members.

Please respond to the prompt provided.

7. What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?
8. Please share your thoughts related to building relationships or isolation regarding the band director.

**G. Mentor/Professional Development Satisfaction.**

Rate the statement using a Likert scale from 1 to 5 (1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree, and N/A=not applicable).

1. The professional development offered to the band director was relevant to the teaching assignment.
2. I have noticed a positive change in practice related to the band director's mentorship.
3. I have noticed a positive change in practice related to the band director's professional development.

Please respond to the prompt provided.

4. How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to the band director's feelings of isolation?
5. How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to the band director's job performance?
6. Do you think the band director will return next year? Explain why or why not.
7. Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.

## APPENDIX F

## QUESTIONNAIRE RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH QUESTION #1

#	Research Question	Questionnaire Numbers
1.	How do rural band directors describe the impact of content-related professional development on their teaching?	B9 <sup>a</sup> C8 <sup>b</sup> C10 <sup>c</sup> D1 <sup>d</sup> D2 <sup>e</sup> D3 <sup>f</sup> D4 <sup>g</sup> D5 <sup>h</sup> D6 <sup>i</sup> D7 <sup>j</sup> D8 <sup>k</sup> D9 <sup>l</sup> D10 <sup>m</sup>

<sup>a</sup> What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?

<sup>b</sup> Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques.

<sup>c</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

<sup>d</sup> The professional development was relevant to my current teaching assignment.

<sup>e</sup> I will use this material in the future.

<sup>f</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to my mentorship.

<sup>g</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to professional development.

<sup>h</sup> I will use new teaching methods learned through professional development.

<sup>i</sup> I am confident in applying newly learned information.

<sup>j</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?

<sup>k</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your job performance?

<sup>l</sup> What types of professional development activities would you like to participate in in the future?

<sup>m</sup> Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.

## APPENDIX G

## QUESTIONNAIRE RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH QUESTION #2

#	Research Question	Questionnaire Numbers
2.	How do rural band directors describe the influence of a support network on their desire to remain in a teaching position?	B1 <sup>a</sup> B2 <sup>b</sup> B3 <sup>c</sup> B4 <sup>d</sup> B5 <sup>e</sup> B6 <sup>f</sup> B7 <sup>g</sup> B8 <sup>h</sup> B9 <sup>i</sup> B10 <sup>j</sup> C1 <sup>k</sup> C2 <sup>l</sup> C3 <sup>m</sup> C4 <sup>n</sup> C5 <sup>o</sup> C10 <sup>p</sup> D7 <sup>q</sup>

<sup>a</sup> I feel professionally isolated from other music teachers.

<sup>b</sup> I feel isolated because of where my school is located.

<sup>c</sup> I have a positive relationship with my colleagues.

<sup>d</sup> I have a positive relationship with my principal.

<sup>e</sup> I have a positive relationship with my superintendent.

<sup>f</sup> I have a positive relationship with community members.

<sup>g</sup> What orientation activities have you enjoyed the most regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.

<sup>h</sup> What orientation activities have you liked the least regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.

<sup>i</sup> What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?

<sup>j</sup> Please share your thoughts related to building relationships or isolation at your school and in your community.

<sup>k</sup> I am currently very satisfied with my job.

<sup>l</sup> My administration is understanding.

<sup>m</sup> My administration is helpful.

<sup>n</sup> My colleagues are understanding.

<sup>o</sup> My colleagues are helpful.

<sup>p</sup> I am definitely returning in the fall for my second year.

<sup>q</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?

## APPENDIX H

## QUESTIONNAIRE RELEVANCE TO RESEARCH QUESTION #3

#	Research Question	Questionnaire Numbers
3.	Does teacher attrition/retention explain the relationship between methods used to combat isolation (content-related professional development and support networks) and job satisfaction, controlling for the effects of student disciplinary issues?	B1 <sup>a</sup> B2 <sup>b</sup> B3 <sup>c</sup> B4 <sup>d</sup> B5 <sup>e</sup> B6 <sup>f</sup> B9 <sup>g</sup> B10 <sup>h</sup> C6 <sup>i</sup> C7 <sup>j</sup> C8 <sup>k</sup> C9 <sup>l</sup> C10 <sup>m</sup> C11 <sup>n</sup> C12 <sup>o</sup> C13 <sup>p</sup> C14 <sup>q</sup> C15 <sup>r</sup> C16 <sup>s</sup> C17 <sup>t</sup> D3 <sup>u</sup> D4 <sup>v</sup> D7 <sup>w</sup> D8 <sup>x</sup> D9 <sup>y</sup> D10 <sup>z</sup>

<sup>a</sup> I feel professionally isolated from other music teachers.

<sup>b</sup> I feel isolated because of where my school is located.

<sup>c</sup> I have a positive relationship with my colleagues.

<sup>d</sup> I have a positive relationship with my principal.

<sup>e</sup> I have a positive relationship with my superintendent.

<sup>f</sup> I have a positive relationship with community members.

<sup>g</sup> What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?

<sup>h</sup> Please share your thoughts related to building relationships or isolation at your school and in your community.

<sup>i</sup> Students respond to my musical directions.

<sup>j</sup> Students are well-behaved.

<sup>k</sup> Students respond positively to my classroom management techniques.

<sup>l</sup> I am able to teach what I want to teach.

<sup>m</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

<sup>n</sup> What are the worst aspects of your day-to-day job?

<sup>o</sup> What are the best aspects of your day-to-day job?

<sup>p</sup> Is administration supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?

<sup>r</sup> Are the other teachers supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?

<sup>s</sup> Describe your class management practices and comment on related student behavior.

<sup>t</sup> Are you satisfied with your salary? Explain.

<sup>u</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to my mentorship.

<sup>v</sup> I have had a positive change in practice related to professional development.

<sup>w</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?

<sup>x</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your job performance?

<sup>y</sup> What types of professional development activities would you like to participate in in the future?

<sup>z</sup> Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.

**APPENDIX I**

**TWO-VARIABLE CASE-ORDERED MATRIX:  
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DESIRE TO REMAIN IN A POSITION AND SUPPORT NETWORKS**

Desire to remain (C10 <sup>a</sup> )	Administrator support (B10 <sup>b</sup> , C13 <sup>c</sup> , C16 <sup>d</sup> )	Co-Worker support (B10 <sup>b</sup> , C14 <sup>e</sup> )	Community support (B7 <sup>f</sup> , B8 <sup>g</sup> , B10 <sup>b</sup> )	Mentor support (D7 <sup>h</sup> , D8 <sup>i</sup> , D10 <sup>j</sup> )
Strongly disagree				
Disagree				
Neutral band director (initial survey)	<p>“The challenging part for a new teacher is that being immediately thrust into an already established system is intimidating. The isolation and lack of opportunities due to geography exists. I honestly can’t entirely put my finger on the most challenging parts of this topic.” ISOLATION, INTIMIDATING, LACK OF OPPORTUNITES</p> <p>“Very supportive. They have been open to listening to any suggestion I might have. I don’t know what they could do at this time that I shouldn’t be able to do myself.” SUPPORTIVE, LISTENS</p>	<p>“They are very supportive. I feel that they have enough to worry about with there (sic) respective fields of interest that I don’t wish to bother them.” SUPPORTIVE</p>	<p>“Day to day interactions are realistically the only relationship building I have had. When it comes to organized activities, I usually am occupied with trying to organize students of my own. However, those interactions have been positive and joyous.” JOYOUS, NO ORGANIZED ACTIVITIES</p> <p>“With the continuing growth of social media in society, it is very easy to communicate with colleagues in the music world. While that is a tool that can help with isolation, it</p>	NO REPLY



	<p>“Yes. I honestly couldn’t regurgitate how much it is that I make. I know it is enough to live with.” SALARY SATISFACTION</p>		<p>is not a replacement for in-person interactions. It is imperative for a teacher in a performance field to introduce themselves into the community.” ISOLATION, INTERACTIONS</p>	
<p>Agree Band director (follow-up questionnaire)</p>	<p>“There isn’t anything that has created a sense of isolation as created directly by the community or school.” ISOLATION</p> <p>“Yes. I do not know of anything my administration could do to support me more.” SUPPORTIVE</p> <p>“As a general rule, yes. I am able to survive off of my combined salaries.” SALARY SATISFACTION</p>	<p>“Yes. I do not know of any way my fellow teachers could support me more in.” SUPPORTIVE</p>	<p>“There are not any activities explicitly designated for community relationship development. But I have enjoyed attending a few athletic events which are actively attended by the public.” NO ACTIVITIES</p> <p>“The lack of actual events for that purpose. Granted, I have not been actively seeking anything along that line.” NO ACTIVITIES</p> <p>“There isn’t anything that has created a</p>	<p>NO REPLY</p>

			<p>sense of isolation as created directly by the community or school. However, there isn't anything that as propelled a deep sense of familiarity in the community. I do not have any complaints in that field, but the sense of home is not there for me due to being an isolated individual in an isolated part of the world.”</p> <p><b>GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION</b></p>	
Strongly Agree				

*Note:* Letter/number combinations refer to specific questionnaire questions.

- <sup>a</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.
- <sup>b</sup> Please share your thoughts related to building relationships or isolation at your school and in your community.
- <sup>c</sup> Is administration supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?
- <sup>d</sup> Are you satisfied with your salary? Explain.
- <sup>e</sup> Are the other teachers supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?
- <sup>f</sup> What orientation activities have you enjoyed the most regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.
- <sup>g</sup> What orientation activities have you liked the least regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.
- <sup>h</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?
- <sup>i</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your job performance?
- <sup>j</sup> Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.

**APPENDIX J**

**TWO-VARIABLE CASE-ORDERED MATRIX:  
RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE DESIRE TO REMAIN IN A POSITION AND JOB SATISFACTION**

Desire to remain (C10 <sup>a</sup> )	Student behavior (C11 <sup>b</sup> , C12 <sup>c</sup> , C15 <sup>d</sup> , C17 <sup>e</sup> )	Planning time (C11 <sup>b</sup> , C17 <sup>e</sup> )	Salary (C16 <sup>f</sup> , C17 <sup>e</sup> )	Class schedule (C17 <sup>e</sup> ,
Strongly disagree				
Disagree				
Neutral Band director (initial questionnaire)	<p>“Realizing there are some aspects of behavior that I am unable to help with.” <b>HELPLESSNESS</b></p> <p>“The fact that after such a long time of trying, I can spend my entire day trying to convey my love for music and see potential growth of students in that field.” <b>LOVE, GROWTH</b></p> <p>“The first step in my management plan of which I attempt to maintain is a pace that does not allow much down time. If this is maintained, there will not be enough room for disruption.” <b>PACE</b></p> <p>“The second step in behavior to regain</p>	<p>“As a whole, time is the greatest friend and enemy. While one would think that a smaller community would allow for more of it, the inverse has proven to be true in that I feel that I can’t always give as much as I should.” <b>NO TIME</b></p>	<p>“Yes. I honestly couldn’t regurgitate how much it is that I make. I know it is enough to live with.” <b>SATISFIED</b></p>	<p>“Satisfaction in teaching for me isn’t the sense of perfection. It is the ability to help growth and learning. That being said, I have experienced a few difficulties in obtaining that growth. The first is the lack of options to locate students. Younger students are required as a whole to participate which allows for a deeper understanding, but also creates tension when young minds are determined to not grow in a class.” <b>GROWTH, REQUIRED PARTICIPATION, TENSION</b></p>

attention once lost is to clap a short rhythm. The expected response is to repeat the clapped rhythm as presented. This usually is enough to regain attention without drawing much attention to individual students.”  
ATTENTION

“The third step is to address a student or students directly. This is usually at the point when a behavior has left an acceptable sense and has prohibited the general development of the class.” SINGLE OUT

“These 3 steps typically solve problems in a quick manner, but does not always address every issue. The general nature of children is to explore be it through verbal or physical means. Unfortunately the blend of different learning styles can make it difficult to address every issue in the

	<p>same manner. The largest amount of behavioral development comes with time as familiarity between teacher and students develop.”  <b>HELPLESSNESS, FAMILIARITY</b></p>			
<p>Agree                  Band director                  (follow-up                  questionnaire)</p>	<p>“Every moment I see a kid performing or soaking up music.” <b>LEARNING, GROWTH</b></p> <p>“An isolated moment of my management practice is a clapped rhythm that will be repeated by students when they lose focus. It is inevitable that every student will maintain absolute focus, the clapping of a rhythm gives their ears something that gains their focus without feeling reprimanded.”  <b>FOCUS</b></p>	<p>“The lack of a moment to really breath (sic) and process everything that it is I need to do.” <b>NO TIME</b></p>	<p>“As a general rule, yes. I am able to survive off of my combined salaries.”  <b>SALARY SATISFACTION</b></p>	<p>“The lack of a moment to really breath (sic) and process everything that it is I need to do.” <b>NO TIME</b></p>
<p><b>Strongly Agree</b></p>				

*Note:* Letter/number combinations refer to specific questionnaire questions.

<sup>a</sup> I am definitely returning in the Fall for my second year.

<sup>b</sup> What are the worst aspects of your day?

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<sup>c</sup> What are the best aspects of your day?

<sup>d</sup> Describe your class management practices and comment on related student behavior.

<sup>e</sup> Please share anything else related to job satisfaction.

<sup>f</sup> Are you satisfied with your salary? Explain.

## APPENDIX K

## CHECKLIST MATRIX: CONDITIONS SUPPORTING JOB SATISFACTION

Condition	Presence of Supporting Conditions	
	From band director questionnaire	From researcher contact summary form
Administrator support C13 <sup>a</sup> , C17 <sup>b</sup>	<p>“Very supportive. They have been open to listening to any suggestion I might have. I don’t know what they could do at this time that I shouldn’t be able to do myself.” SUPPORTIVE, LISTENS</p>	<p>Superintendent had nice things to say about the band director. (10/11/21) SUPPORTIVE</p> <p>Frustrated with the lack of information about expectations for upcoming event. (10/18/21) FRUSTRATED</p>
Co-Worker support C14 <sup>c</sup> , C17 <sup>b</sup>	<p>“They are very supportive. I feel that they have enough to worry about with there (sic) respective fields of interest that I don’t wish to bother them.” SUPPORTIVE</p>	Not observed
Community support B7 <sup>d</sup> , B8 <sup>e</sup> , B9 <sup>f</sup> , B10 <sup>g</sup> , C17 <sup>b</sup>	<p>“There are not any activities explicitly designated for community relationship development. But I have enjoyed attending a few athletic events which are actively attended by the public.” NO ACTIVITIES</p> <p>“The lack of actual events for that purpose. Granted, I have not been actively seeking anything along that line.” NO ACTIVITIES</p> <p>“There isn’t anything that has created a sense of isolation as created directly by the community or school. However, there isn’t anything that as propelled a deep sense of familiarity in the community. I do not have any complaints in that field, but the sense of home is not there for me due to being an isolated individual in an isolated part of the world.” GEOGRAPHIC ISOLATION</p>	Not observed

Mentor support  D7 <sup>h</sup> , D8 <sup>i</sup> , D9 <sup>j</sup> , D10 <sup>k</sup>	Not answered	Assessment and classroom management suggestions (10/18/21) ADVICE  Encouraged BD to talk to administration to get the plan for the upcoming performance. (10/18/21) ENCOURAGE  Gave advice about performance attire and how to handle those expectations. (12/1/21) ADVICE
Student behavior  C11 <sup>l</sup> , C12 <sup>m</sup> , C17 <sup>b</sup>	“Realizing there are some aspects of behavior that I am unable to help with.” HELPLESSNESS  "The fact that after such a long time of trying, I can spend my entire day trying to convey my love for music and see potential growth of students in that field.” LOVE, GROWTH	Students talking (10/11/21) NOISY  A lot of socializing (10/18/21) NOISY  Students very noisy and off task during rehearsal time. Percussionists sent to look for equipment in another room. Students want to wear jeans to performance. (12/1/21) NOISY, OFF TASK  Students talking while he worked with individual students. (12/13/21) NOISY
Planning time  C17 <sup>b</sup>	“As a whole, time is the greatest friend and enemy. While one would think that a smaller community would allow for more of it, the inverse has proven to be true in that I feel that I can’t always give as much as I should.” NO TIME  “The lack of a moment to really breath (sic) and process everything that it is I need to do.” NO TIME	No planning time to have lengthy conversations about observations or time for professional development activities. He has to travel to teach at another school where there is no planning time. NO TIME
Salary  C16 <sup>n</sup> , C17 <sup>b</sup>	“As a general rule, yes. I am able to survive off of my combined salaries.” SALARY SATISFACTION	No complaints about salary. SALARY SATISFACTION
Class schedule  C17 <sup>b</sup>	“Satisfaction in teaching for me isn’t the sense of perfection. It is the ability to help growth and learning. That being said, I have experienced a	BD would like to have the class separated into students with similar skills. The observed class has beginners and more advanced



	<p>few difficulties in obtaining that growth. The first is the lack of options to locate students. Younger students are required as a whole to participate which allows for a deeper understanding, but also creates tension when young minds are determined to not grow in a class.”</p> <p>GROWTH, REQUIRED PARTICIPATION, TENSION</p>	<p>students in the same class. (10/11/21) SKILLS-BASED CLASS</p>
<p>Subject specific knowledge</p> <p>D7<sup>h</sup>, D8<sup>i</sup>, D9<sup>j</sup>, D10<sup>k</sup></p>	<p>No response</p>	<p>Related lesson to music history, posture/embouchure instruction is lacking, percussion sitting (10/11/21) POSTURE, EMBOUCHURE, MUSIC HISTORY</p> <p>Good. Can answer student questions when they arise (10/18/21). KNOWLEDGE</p> <p>Lack of organized assessment plan (10/18/21) ASSESSMENT</p> <p>Fine tuning performance procedures (12/1/21) PROCEDURES</p>
<p>Classroom management</p> <p>C11<sup>l</sup>, C12<sup>m</sup>, C15<sup>o</sup>, C17<sup>d</sup></p>	<p>“The first step in my management plan of which I attempt to maintain is a pace that does not allow much down time. If this is maintained, there will not be enough room for disruption.” PACE</p> <p>“The second step in behavior to regain attention once lost is to clap a short rhythm. The expected response is to repeat the clapped rhythm as presented. This usually is enough to regain attention without drawing much attention to individual students.” ATTENTION</p> <p>“The third step is to address a student or students directly. This is usually at the point when a behavior has left an</p>	<p>Established an attention-getting clap. (10/11/21) ATTENTION</p> <p>Students weren’t as responsive to the echo clapping for attention (10/18/21) ATTENTION</p> <p>Seems to have a good relationship with students. He jokes with them, but they seem to respect him. RELATIONSHIP</p> <p>More aware of classroom management priorities. Did eventually give students something to do while he worked individually. (12/13/21) AWARENESS</p>

	<p>acceptable sense and has prohibited the general development of the class.” SINGLE OUT</p> <p>“These 3 steps typically solve problems in a quick manner, but does not always address every issue. The general nature of children is to explore be it through verbal or physical means. Unfortunately the blend of different learning styles can make it difficult to address every issue in the same manner. The largest amount of behavioral development comes with time as familiarity between teacher and students develop.” HELPLESSNESS, FAMILIARITY</p>	
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*Note:* Letter/number combinations refer to specific questionnaire questions.

- <sup>a</sup> Is administration supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support.
- <sup>b</sup> Please share anything else related to job satisfaction.
- <sup>c</sup> Are the other teachers supportive of your program? What (if anything) could they do to better show their support?
- <sup>d</sup> What orientation activities have you enjoyed the most regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.
- <sup>e</sup> What orientation activities have you liked the least regarding building relationships with the community? Explain.
- <sup>f</sup> What orientation or professional development activities has the school provided regarding building relationships or combatting isolation?
- <sup>g</sup> Please share your thoughts related to isolation or building relationships at your school and in your community.
- <sup>h</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your feelings of isolation?
- <sup>i</sup> How have these activities proved helpful (or not) to your job performance?
- <sup>j</sup> What types of professional development activities would you like to participate in in the future?
- <sup>k</sup> Please share other thoughts regarding mentor/professional development satisfaction.
- <sup>l</sup> What are the worst aspects of your day?
- <sup>m</sup> What are the best aspects of your day?
- <sup>n</sup> Are you satisfied with your salary?
- <sup>o</sup> Describe your class management practices and comment on related student behavior.