Saskatchewan Secondary

Band Teachers' Rationales

For Assessment and

Evaluation Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Upon hearing a beautiful piece of music, one can find it difficult to express in words the most appropriate assessment of it. More challenging would be to quantify the performance with a numerical value. Assessment assists learning, while evaluation judges and assigns a grade to it. Secondary school band teachers are faced with this dilemma of quantifying musical achievement and knowledge in schools.

It was from an interest in how music teachers can use assessment (as opposed to evaluation) to guide their teaching, and to learn more about how they do assign a number to students' music, that I posed the following questions: (a) What are the participants' rationales for the assessment strategies they choose and the evaluative measures they make for students? (b) What influences have led teachers to have these particular rationales?

This study used interviews within a grounded theory method to conduct qualitative research. The research sample was limited to a selection of secondary band teachers in Saskatchewan. Eight teachers volunteered to participate in interviews which inquired into their current assessment and evaluation practices.

Research revealed several themes impacting teachers' rationales. Themes emerging through analysis were: the impact of the set-up of the band, performance versus best practice, issues around subject legitimacy, impact of school division policy, and held values specific to instrumental music education.

The theory arising from data analysis is that when a band teacher is reluctant to fully adopt best practice methods, this is based on fears of producing less than adequate group performances which is a response to a fear of losing the band program all together. The significance of these findings lies in the implication that existing underlying issues need to be addressed that best practice expectations and/or policy cannot fully encompass.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

Determining an assessment and evaluation strategy that quantifies the learning of music and generates an accurate reflection of each student's musical learning and achievement is a difficult challenge faced by secondary school band teachers. Assessment differs from evaluation in that it is ongoing and does not contain a judgment. However, the need for band teachers to legitimize music as valuable subject matter can justify the need to evaluate the students studying it. With ongoing arguments as to what should be included in a band student's grade and how that grade should be calculated, band teachers' evaluations can sacrifice meaning in exchange for satisfying the purpose of coming up with a number in time for report card distribution. With mounting accountability pressures and the ever increasing "value" placed on quantitative data results, band teachers are faced with evaluative decisions that may impact not only the legitimacy of their students' grades, but potentially also the perceived legitimacy of their subject matter.

Historical Context

During the 1600s mathematicians considered music to be a mathematical science (Field, 2003). Since then, significant historical events have influenced and had lasting effects on educational trends. Perhaps most significant to Western views during the establishment of the education system was the value of all things scientific. Writing in the 20th century, King (1991) believed that a western view held that human beings could control all things, and their only dependence was on God and science. This appears evident in the early writings on education. More than a century earlier, Spencer (1861) claimed that all men were employed in the production, preparation, and distribution of commodities, and efficiency in these areas depended on science. Spencer also believed that mathematics was just as valuable, since dealing with numbers guided all industrial activities. School was based on the skills and abilities necessary for the workforce, which in early educational history were largely centered on agriculture and industry. Writing in the early 20th century, Bobbitt (1918) believed that agriculture related to and was applicable to all occupations, and went as far as to suggest that curriculum itself should be designed using a scientific method of investigation in determining objectives.

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The early emphasis on math and science continued to have an impact on education long after theorists such as Spencer (1861) and Bobbitt (1918) had left their mark. Much later in history a new trend emerged that still exists in education today, in the form of the 1949 Tyler Rationale. At a time in history when the world saw the end of WWII, key inventions being created, students being encouraged to study math and science as a result of the Sputnik crisis, and airplanes getting faster; industrial efficiency became a strong value. This value of efficiency was then incorporated into education. The Tyler Rationale is based on having sound purposes for the school to attain, creating educational experiences that would attain said purposes, efficiently organizing those educational experiences, and measuring whether those purposes are being attained (Tyler, 1949). Largely accepted throughout North America this was perhaps the beginning of a North American commitment to efficient learning that produces measurable results. The more measurable the learning in a subject area, the more status it had in the education system, a status students themselves could perhaps attain when deemed successful in such subject areas. The value of a scientific analysis was not only applied to assessing and evaluating student learning, but was also passed on as a value to today's generation.

After studying and reflecting on the historical events that have had an impact on education, one can see how we got to where we are now: a place where numerical measurement is not only the tool of choice for evaluation, but also where numbers have become the most familiar reference point that makes perceived sense to students, parents, and other stake holders in education. With society giving status to numerical value, much responsibility is placed on teachers to determine how those numbers are accumulated and distributed within evaluation. In addition to the pressure for appropriate evaluation, teachers also need to ensure that students are indeed actually learning, and evaluation alone does not necessarily indicate that. Reflecting on where we have been in education and studying where we are at present are key in determining where we go from here. What follows in this research is a look at the present: what is being assessed and what is being evaluated, and why do secondary band teachers make the decisions for assessment and evaluation that they do?

Overview

The following research is grounded in literature on assessment as it pertains to education in general, as well as that which pertains specifically to instrumental music education. A review

of current literature on assessment strategies in instrumental music education shows that issues in determining what to assess and evaluate in music education and how best to implement assessment are common struggles amongst music teachers. The standards movement, promoting the use of common standards of student achievement in subject matter across a nation, has led music teachers to fight for the legitimacy of music education by creating standards of their own. This struggle for legitimacy led Benedict (2006) to compare music education to a "marginalized society" striving to attain the same status and respect as other subject disciplines. Another component of the argument reflected in literature indicates many teachers continue to place significant weight on non-musical criteria such as attendance, despite research suggesting that such criteria not be evaluated (Lehman, 1998; McCoy, 1991; McPherson & Thompson, 1998; Russell, 2011; Russell & Austin, 2010). The literature reviewed provides evidence of assessment and evaluation strategies music teachers may choose to implement in their practice along with the ongoing debate on what to assess and what not to, but it does not provide indications of the factors that influence teachers' decisions or the rationales they use in making those assessment and/or evaluation decisions.

In this thesis, I wished to learn what music teachers' rationales are for the assessment and evaluation practices they are using. As well, I wished to learn what factors affect their choices and their rationales. Because this study involved the perspectives of individuals, qualitative research was appropriate methodology, with interviews as the method for collecting data. For the purpose of studying teachers involved in secondary instrumental music education, the research sample was limited to a selection of teachers who have specifically taught secondary band in Saskatchewan, which is the most common instrumental school programming available in Saskatchewan and is supported with Saskatchewan curricula. Band teachers have a knowledge base of all wind and percussion instruments and teach students to perform as individuals, in small ensembles, and as a large group. After a province-wide call for participants, eight secondary school band teachers volunteered to participate in an interview process which inquired into their current assessment and evaluation practices. Conclusions from the research were drawn following an analysis of data that included coding and categorizing data as well as the use of member checking.

The Research Problem

It is one thing for educational research and education decision-makers to suggest best practice methods for teachers when it comes to assessment and evaluation; however, it is another thing to get the teachers who have to implement these practices to buy-in to such methods. For total buy-in to be effective, education policy-makers need to have a better understanding of the barriers that exist for the teachers who struggle to fully implement best practice assessment and evaluation methods. It is not enough to tell teachers what best practice methods need to be used; education policy-makers should also be aware of what teachers need in order to make those methods practical and achievable for the teachers. To address those needs for band teachers in particular, it must first be identified what current assessment and evaluation strategies exist, and why band teachers choose those particular strategies for their classes.

The objectives of this study were to answer the research problems:

a) **What are Saskatchewan secondary band teachers' rationales for the assessment strategies they choose and the evaluative measures they make for students?**

b) **What influences have led teachers to have these particular rationales?**

Research questions that guided the interviews with band teachers were as follows:

- What are the influences that impact teachers' rationales and the resulting decisions they make to create their strategies of choice?

- What do band teachers assess and what do they evaluate?

- How do band teachers distribute weight values for calculating a student's evaluative grade?

- What type of categories are marked and weighted, and do students' grades include behavior/non-musical criteria or are they strictly achievement evaluations?

- What assessment and evaluation decisions are made by teachers, and in what ways, if any, do students contribute to those decisions with their input pertaining to what they, the student, value in assessment and evaluation?

- What is the significance of factors and influences on band teachers' rationales such as school policy, political initiatives, and societal and personal value systems?

- What is the impact of situation specifics of teaching assignments that have uniquely influenced teachers' decisions; such as the impact of rural or urban settings, timetabling vs. pull-out programming, and appropriate teaching space and facility?
- What are band teachers' views of an ideal world in which they have what they believe they need in order to meet the needs of student assessment and evaluation?

Understanding why recommended best practice methods are not accepted and applied by all teachers is key to determining how to adapt those methods or present them differently for those teachers who struggle with implementing them. By researching and analyzing a sample of Saskatchewan secondary band teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation strategies, perhaps solutions can begin to be found that will generate buy-in for assessment and evaluation best practice methods from all teachers.

Significance of the Study

Just as evaluation alone is not enough to tell a student's entire learning story, simply identifying band teachers as notorious offenders of including behaviours or non-musical criteria in academic evaluation also does not tell the whole story. When studying the issues around what band teachers assess, what they evaluate, and what their methods are in doing so, the question also needs to be asked, *why* do band teachers make the choices for assessment and evaluation in their classes that in some cases are in opposition to what is currently considered best practice?

The ongoing debate on what to assess in instrumental music education and how to assess it has produced ideas and methods that perhaps can improve on past practice, provided teachers are able to implement them. This research will contribute to educational knowledge and practice by identifying the assessment and evaluation practices currently implemented by a sample of Saskatchewan secondary band teachers and by investigating the influences and factors these teachers consider when determining their assessment and evaluation strategies. An analysis of teachers' rationales for their chosen methods may serve as a basis for recommendations of factors and principles for future consideration when determining assessment and evaluation strategies. Perhaps solutions to the assessment of music education debate lie less in the chosen methods practiced and more in the principles and reasoning behind such choices.

This research also has the potential to have a timely effect on music education in Saskatchewan. Assessment and evaluation is not only a current topic being explored in general in Saskatchewan, but now is a time when several secondary school music curricula are being renewed. This year saw the publication of the very first Instrumental Jazz 10, 20, and 30 curricula, now available for implementation by Saskatchewan secondary band teachers. In the upcoming year, 2013, the Ministry of Education will begin work on the renewal of the Music 10, 20, and 30 curricula, and shortly thereafter the Band 10, 20, and 30 curricula are expected to also be renewed. With these music curricula seeing renewal now and over the next few years, data from this research could have an impact on the curriculum developers as they address assessment and evaluation within the courses. Knowing band teachers' rationales for assessment and evaluation strategies, as well as the issues faced by band teachers which impact their rationales and the choices they make as a result, should provide curriculum writers with valuable insight as to ways in which the future curriculum could be written to support band teachers and alleviate current concerns and struggles. This research seeks to hold significance particularly for band teachers, but could certainly also apply to teachers of other music genres as the situations and issues faced by such teachers could be expected to be similar. It is also with great anticipation, hope, and intention that conclusions reached in this thesis research will have a direct impact on assessment and evaluation in Saskatchewan secondary school band programs, right now and the immediate thereafter.

In the following chapter a review of literature drawing on assessment practice in North America and in the United Kingdom is presented and discusses assessment in education in general as well as that which is specific to music education. Chapter III addresses the qualitative methodology used throughout the data collection and analysis. In Chapter IV, the data is presented and analyzed incorporating my own perspective as an insider researcher. The final chapter draws collectively on the research findings within the review of literature and the research data to present conclusions and suggestions for further research.

To reiterate, the research questions guiding this research were: (a) What are the participants' rationales for the assessment strategies they choose and the evaluative measures they make for students? (b) What influences have led teachers to have these particular rationales?

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE ASSESSMENT PRACTICES IN MUSIC EDUCATION

The following review of literature will be presented in a style which introduces the topic through a summary of ideas to be discussed, followed by discussion and development of those particular ideas with reference to the literature. The development of ideas will be concluded by summarizing for the reader the main points and ideas stemming from the literature reviewed. This style will be used for each section within the chapter and is intended to bring clarity and organization to the discussion for both the reader and the writer.

As a music teacher myself, I have struggled to objectively quantify and measure musical achievement and knowledge acquired by students while maintaining the unique ways of learning held within the arts. A review of literature centering on alternative assessment strategies in music education identified three emerging themes: variation in what is assessed and evaluated in music education; the use of assessment tools such as rating scales, rubrics, and checklists; and the role of self and peer assessments. As this review will show, issues around determining what to assess and evaluate in music education and how to best implement the aforementioned assessment tools appear to be common issues in several different types of music programs and schools, in various western countries.

Maintaining artistic ways of knowing is a phrase that refers to learning, understanding, acquiring, experiencing, and interpreting knowledge in ways that deviate from the traditional and are unique to a particular group or culture, in this case the arts. According to Swanwick (2001), "Music is a way of knowing, a way of being in a culture, a way of thinking and feeling" (p.35). In music education these ways of knowing include valuing the aesthetic and the subjective qualities of music.

As will be demonstrated in the following sections, much research has been published on assessment strategies in education that have led to trends such as Assessment For Learning and Constructivist theoretical approaches being used in the classroom. Additionally, ideas have been contributed to the field on how to use these approaches to then determine an evaluative number for grading purposes. These strategies have also been supported in music education research; however, such advances in education are only useful if actively implemented by teachers. More

research is needed to determine the extent to which music teachers are implementing current assessment strategies and how they are using them to determine grade values for students.

As schools have striven to meet accountability demands by policy makers and the public, the measurement of music education has gained attention with a perceived need to legitimize its existence. This has led to the questioning of what to measure and how to measure it. The literature indicates that many music teachers' past practices have been to include both musical (achievement related) and non-musical (behaviour related) factors in the grading of students. However, current literature questions the inclusion of non-musical factors, such as attitude and participation, as part of a student's grade (Lehman, 1998; McCoy, 1991; McPherson & Thompson, 1998; Russell, 2011; Russell & Austin, 2010). Despite this question, Russell and Austin (2010) have found that music teachers continue to grade music students, with non-achievement (or non-musical) criteria receiving the greatest weight values. In addition, Russell (2011) discussed the legal implications of assessing and evaluating students using non-achievement criteria, which can lead to litigation for unreasonable grading practices. In the United Kingdom, Swanwick (2000) suggested using an eight-level layer system to identify students' musical achievement. However, when teachers break from tradition and focus entirely on assessment and feedback by eliminating grade values altogether, parents struggle to interpret the information and seek a number or letter grade as a reference point (Conway & Jeffers, 2004). While most research reports on the categories music teachers evaluate, along with the assessment methods they use, there is little research that explores the rationale of teachers when making those assessment and evaluation decisions. Since there is a lack of literature available from non-North American countries on assessment of music education in the context of elementary and high school instrumental settings, much of the literature reviewed is American in context, with some comparisons drawn from Canada and the United Kingdom.

Research has demonstrated that there is great variation in what is assessed and evaluated in music education. However, as yet, there is little to no research addressing teachers' rationales for why they assess and evaluate what they do.

Differentiating Between Assessment and Evaluation

While assessment and evaluation may be connected, they are quite different concepts.

Assessment can be described as collecting data on student performance for the purpose of assisting learning (Gregory, Cameron, & Davies, 1997; Murphy & Espeland, 2007). Black and Wiliam (1998) state that assessment processes are deep down "social processes, taking place in social settings, and conducted by, on and for social actors" (p. 56). Examples of data collection include observing students, talking and listening to students, and looking at students' work (Gregory et al., 1997). Doane (2007) suggested that assessment shifts the focus to the progress and learning over time, and includes opportunities for students to receive feedback and make revisions without the pressure of a grade being attached to their initial, unperfected work. Assessing student learning is an ongoing process, and should be a continuous process throughout, not just at the end (Barden, 2009; Doane, 2007; Eisner, 2002; Gregory et al., 1997).

Evaluation means to judge and interpret data, and when required, assign a grade value to it (Gregory et al., 1997; Murphy & Espeland, 2007). Traditionally teachers have focused more on the evaluation of students' learning rather than more meaningful assessment. How teachers decide to assess students can impact evaluation, and conversely teachers' assessment strategies can be determined by a teacher's plan for evaluation. While assessment is ongoing, evaluation tends to take place only three or four times a year (Gregory, et al., 1997). Traditionally, numerical grade values or letter grades have been used to measure how much students have learned. However, although Kohn (2011) contended there is value in assessing teaching and learning, he argued it is not always necessary or possible to measure teaching and learning with a number.

Evaluation and assessment: one impacts the other. Past practice of teachers has generally favoured evaluation on its own with some movement at present to include comments with evaluation. However, the research of Black and Wiliam identified a comparative study of three student groups who received evaluation as one of either: numerical only, numerical plus comments, or comments only (Butler, 1988, as cited in Black & Wiliam, 1998). Results indicated the student group that received only a numerical evaluation showed decline in learning by the final evaluation, students receiving numerical evaluation plus comments showed the most decline, and those receiving comments only were the only group to show a gain in learning by the final evaluation (Butler, 1988, as cited in Black & Wiliam, 1998). It was explained that while feedback comments are helpful to students, their effect can be undermined by the negative motivational effects of the numerical evaluation that is alongside them, whereas the comments

only group would not have had that stigma (Butler, 1988, as cited in Black & Wiliam, 1998). It cannot be assumed that by adding comments to grades student evaluation becomes more meaningful or more valuable. As long as the numerical value still exists for students it is apparent that accompanying comments are likely to have an adverse effect on what was actually intended by them.

What Gets Assessed in Music Education?

Regardless of whether teachers plan instruction to fit their assessment strategy or plan their assessment strategy to fit their instruction, teachers must determine what should be assessed in musical study and what should be evaluated. As will be described below, the literatureshows variation amongst music teachers in the U.S. as to what aspects of music should be measured, with perhaps the most controversial variation amongst them being the inclusion or exclusion of non-musical factors. Along with this controversy (for both Canada and the U.S.) is an argument over the inclusion of standards in music education. Meanwhile countries in and around the U.K. appear to take a holistic approach to music education, viewing musical experience as a multi-dimensional phenomenon (to be explained in more detail later) (Thorgersen, 2011).

When considering the literature on what gets assessed and how evaluations are contrived, the purposes of assessment and the very different purposes of evaluation ought to be kept in mind. The audiences for assessment are largely the students and the teacher. A teacher can learn how well they are doing by learning how well the students are doing, and adjust their teaching accordingly. Likewise students adjust their learning based on the teacher's feedback. However, evaluation involves a formal report whose audiences are multiple: the next year's teacher or post-secondary institution, the school division, the parents, and the students.

Musical Versus Non-musical Criteria

Determining what to assess in music education is as important as determining the assessment strategy itself. Determining what to evaluate may pose an even larger dilemma. Research from the U.S. indicates many teachers continue to evaluate and place significant weight on non-musical criteria despite strong arguments suggesting that such criteria not be evaluated (Lehman, 1998; McCoy, 1991; McPherson & Thompson, 1998; Russell, 2011; Russell & Austin, 2010).

Having discussed with many colleagues the pressures from current research and trends in assessment and evaluation, I believe music teachers in North America are beginning to consider abandoning practices of including non-musical criteria in the assessment and evaluation of students. However, categories such as attendance, effort, behaviour, and attitude are for some, still in 2013, included in a student's final academic evaluation. Lehman (1998), while acknowledging the importance of these aspects on the overall functioning of the music program, points out that these non-musical criteria are not compatible with standards-based grading procedures (to be discussed later). Researchers Sunley and Locke (2012) explored teachers' personal values and professional values in England and found that a tension exists between teachers' personal values and those that schools demonstrate in practice. In research comparing principals' assessment recommendations with what music teachers were doing in practice, McCoy (1991) found that music teachers weighted attendance at concerts most heavily, in contrast to basic performance technique which was weighted most heavily by the principals. Russell's and Austin's (2010) findings echo McCoy's, revealing that the greatest weight in music classes were given to non-achievement criteria, indicating that not much has changed in music education assessment practices over the past 20 years.

Dzubay (2001) suggested a rationale for the lack of change in teaching pointing out that a request for teachers to change the way they teach is "akin to asking them to change who they are, what they value, and how they think" (p. 29). Further Dzubay (2001) says "If a teacher receives training in a particular approach to instruction that does not interest her or reflect her current philosophy of teaching, she is unlikely to integrate the new approach into her practice" (p. 4). Soon, however, music teachers may be forced to consider applying strategies that exclude non-musical criteria from evaluation regardless of their educational philosophies. The United States Supreme courts have now stood up for the public and are protecting students from unreasonable grading practices, including cases in which failing grades were heavily influenced by attendance and behaviour issues (Russell, 2011). For teachers to integrate outside regulations with their personal views, they need to understand the importance of this to achieving their own personal goals (Eghrari & Deci, 1989, as cited in Dzubay, 2001). Dzubay (2001) believes teachers need the necessary information and time to internalize the rationale behind new ideas and regulations and to build connections to existing values and beliefs.

While there may be little argument that musical criteria should be included in students' assessment as well as evaluation, determining what specific areas of musical skill and knowledge should be assessed results in additional variation amongst North American music teachers. The list of specific skills and cognitive knowledge in music education with potential for assessment is too numerous to review in detail. However, music teachers generally include variations and combinations of such musical aspects as technical performance, composition, theory, sight-reading, and factual music knowledge in assessments (Conway & Jeffers, 2004; McCoy, 1991; Russell & Austin, 2010). Conway and Jeffers (2004) surveyed parents, students, and teachers in regards to assessment procedures for beginning instrumental music students and found that parents and students want progress reports that provide musical information based on musical criteria. Lehman (1998) suggested that non-musical criteria should be reported to parents separately from the academic report.

Determining what musical concepts are taught and how they are taught can be strongly influenced by how they will be assessed. Lacking in research of its own, Canadian music teachers are strongly influenced by trends and research resulting from the U.S. American research indicates great variation exists amongst music teachers as to what should be assessed in music education, with particular variation in determining the inclusion or exclusion of non-musical factors.

Use of Objectives and Standards

Leading the education trends in Canada and especially the U.S. is the standards movement that promotes having measurable common standards of student achievement in subject matter across a nation. As this section will show, debate exists among teachers as to the value of implementing standards-based education. Some are strong supporters believing students should all achieve the same level of competence and therefore meet the same standards, while others suggest music teachers have used this movement to simply legitimize music education by joining in with the creation of standards of their own. Another perspective to be discussed below, offers a rewording of Bloom's Taxonomy as the key to enabling music education to be full participants in the assessment debate. The issues surrounding standards-based education are significantly impacting music education today in North America.

Objectives, when discussed throughout this section, will be in reference to the foundational and learning objectives specified in Saskatchewan curriculum or the American equivalent. Music standards will refer to separate documents in each of the U.S. and Canada which describe precise details of levels of achievement. While the two concepts reflect similarities, the biggest difference lies in the fact that they are separate documents and were written by different groups of people. In addition, the standards document in the U.S. is required to be followed by some states but remains voluntary in others (Consortium of National Art Education Associations, 1994). In Canada curriculum documents are required to be followed while the instrumental band standards document is completely voluntary (Canadian Band Association, 2006). Examples of each will be provided below.

Subject areas given greater value in our North American education system tend to have measurable standards such as in math and reading. There is a current focus on objectivity in education through standardized testing (Orlowski, 2011). This has influenced the development of the American-based National Standards for Arts Education (Consortium of National Art Education Associations, 1994), which was later followed up in Canada with the National Voluntary Curriculum and Standards for Instrumental Music (Band) document (Canadian Band Association, 2006). For example, to achieve a level of proficiency for the U.S. standard: to perform on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music, one must perform expressively, technically accurate, a large and varied repertoire of instrumental literature with a level of difficulty of 4, on a scale of 1 to 6 (Consortium of National Art Education Associations, 1994). An example of a Canadian standard in grade ten would be to play scales in sixteenth notes/arpeggios in eighth notes, at a metronome marking (speed) of 72 beats per minute and to achieve this at a proficient level requires articulating the scales slurred, all legato, and all tongued, which is only one of several listed criteria for this level of achievement (Canadian Band Association, p. 38, 2006).

Music teachers in both Canada and the U.S. are encouraged to turn to the National Music Standards to determine learning standards that are measurable in order to hold a place in the academic circle (Benedict, 2007; Brasher, Griffith, Circle, Granlie, et al., 1999; Lehman, 1998; Russell & Austin, 2010). Brasher, et al. (1999) refer to issues around what gets taught and assessed as assessment management. They go so far as to suggest that the integrity of music education as an academic subject is dependent on having an assessment plan that is valid,

reliable, and authentic. Moreover, they suggest that in order to be reliable a set of standards requires consistency and therefore, "[a] teacher must use identical procedures and have identical expectations for every student in every class" (p. 3). However, by dividing learning into cognitive tasks (such as standards or learning objectives), Harris (1996) suggested that this has led to an assumption that teachers can teach anything, regardless of their content knowledge base. Apple (1986) refers to this assumption as the de-skilling of teachers:

> I claimed that they were more and more faced with the prospect of being de-skilled because of the encroachment of technical control procedures into the curriculum in schools. The integration together of management systems, reductive behaviorally based curricula, pre-specified teaching "competencies" and procedures and student responses, and pre- and post-testing, was leading to a loss of control and a separation of conception from execution. (p. 199)

By applying this theory of de-skilled teaching and prescribed student learning to music (a product of limitless creativity), the result can only be music students with limited creativity and limited musical skill, as well.

The Saskatchewan band curriculum provides teachers with five foundational objectives which are further broken down into more specific learning objectives for each student to accomplish (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). The foundational objectives are: Aural Skills, Musical Literacy, Instrumental Technique, Attitudes/Values, and Interpretation/Appreciation/Decision-Making, and *working towards playing in tune on an instrument*, would be an example of the more specific learning objective (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). The guiding principles for teachers' evaluation plans as described in the curriculum suggest that evaluation and achievement is to be linked to the foundational and learning objectives (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). In addition to the learning and foundational objectives students must also meet the Creative/Productive, Critical/Responsive, and Cultural/Historical aims that are expected in Arts Education (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993).

The other side of the standards-based debate in music education sees it as simply a fight for legitimacy. Benedict (2006) compared music education to a marginalized society striving to attain the same status and respect of other subject disciplines. This "marginalized society," as Benedict (2007) referred to it, has adopted methods of the basic disciplines in an attempt to

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establish legitimacy and respect. In addition Miller (1994) suggested band teachers are under considerable pressure to bring home top results from music competitions and suggested that these results are reflected in job security. He said teachers who receive low ratings for more than one year are not assured a continued working relationship with the school and start looking for another job (Miller, 1994).

Eisner (2001) questioned the concept of core subjects stating, "Our idea of core subjects is related to our assessment practices and the tests we use to determine whether or not schools are doing well" (p. 329). Eisner (1985) believed both instructional and expressive objectives are needed. While instructional objectives may identify a particular skill or piece of knowledge students are intended to acquire, Eisner (1985) described expressive objectives as identifying a type of encounter students are to have. Eisner (1985) contended that "[t]o visit the zoo and discuss what was of interest there" (p. 55), was an example of an expressive objective and points out that this type of objective does not describe what the student will be able to do as a result of the activity.

Another perspective weighing in on the standards debate suggests a rewording of Bloom's taxonomy is all that is needed to give music education the legitimacy it craves. Hanna (2007) stated the current form of assessment in music education is informal and subjective which does not lend itself well to policy makers who use objective standardized assessment [evaluation] criteria to make decisions.[1] Hanna (2007) showed how the new revised Bloom's Taxonomy which essentially translates some of the nouns into verbs, can be used to turn music education outcomes into objective criteria demonstrating that music can be assessed and evaluated the same way as other subjects. For example, Hanna (2007) described one of the standards which is to "play by ear." She said the verb "play" indicates a cognitive process related to the category of "apply" and the subcategory "executing," because it is the "carrying out of an action" and is "applying a procedure to a familiar task" (Hanna, 2007).   Hanna (2007) believed music teachers need to play the language game of accountability by making notions of music learning explicit and understandable by non-musicians, which would allow them to participate as equals in the assessment [evaluation] arena.

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[1] At times authors refer to assessment when I believe they are actually discussing evaluation, and vice versa. When this appears to be the case, I have indicated the term as I have defined them in this thesis within squared brackets.

The discussion amongst music teachers on standards-based education and its implications for music education is one of the key debates in North American education today. The literature discussed above shows strong opinions for implementing standards-based assessment in music education, as well as strong opposition for caving into the need to legitimize. A revised taxonomy presented by Hanna (2007) offers opportunity for music teachers to engage in the assessment arena by simply changing the language.

A Holistic Approach

In contrast to the North American value for measurable learning, presented here is literature from the U.K. and neighbouring areas that appears to be moving towards support for a more holistic approach to assessment in music education. This approach acknowledges and values ways of knowing that are unique to the study of music. As will be discussed below, holistic approach is evident in the U.K.'s perspective of music education as a multi-dimensional experience, their focus on the overall response to the subject matter, and the value they recognize in differences.

Clarken (2006) described holism as "educating the whole person--body, mind and soul--to develop his or her fullest potential" (p. 10). Music is distinguished from the sciences, literature, and other arts in its strength of connection with personal and cultural histories (Swanwick, 2001). As mentioned earlier, Swanwick (2001) also identified music as a way of knowing, thinking, and feeling. A holistic view allows room for musical ways of knowing to be acknowledged and embraced in assessment of music education.

Music education in Sweden is viewed by some as a multi-dimensional experience. Thorgersen (2011) acknowledged that teachers in some contexts in Sweden are still assessing and evaluating music with connections to defined achievement criteria. In contrast, Murphy and Espeland (2007) said that when music's unique ways of knowing are broken down into descriptors, the spiritual, ephemeral or visual qualities of the artwork that is listened to are not always fully grasped. Thorgersen (2011) questioned *whose* concepts are used for such descriptors, and asked *why*. She also suggested assessing music holistically doesn't always happen, with the neglected areas being the creative, existential, emotional, and bodily dimensions (Thorgersen, 2011). Thorgersen (2011) blamed this neglect on the domination of the cognitive version of Bloom's taxonomy in education and suggested formulating goals and

achievement-level criteria that encourage holistic learning so the variety of musical knowledge and experience are all taken into account. Further, she discussed music education from the philosophical view of life-world-phenomenology based on the ideas of Merleau-Ponty, Heidegger and Dufrenne (Thorgersen, 2011), and saw music experience as a multi-dimensional phenomenon. This philosophy, she said, forms a basis for defining musical learning and knowledge, as well as leading to discussions about how assessment can become a part of musical learning (Thorgersen, 2011).

A holistic approach focuses on the overall response. Swanwick (1999), suggested music is a discourse, a form of interchange and requires an aesthetic response through feeling, senses, and imagination; not a critical one. In Finland, educational objectives focus on lifelong learning, and their goal within music instruction is to support students' 'overall growth' (Robertson, 2009). Their focus, in contrast to the academic and scientific subjects on achieving specific goals, is on the overall response to the subject matter (Robertson, 2009).

Embracing difference within assessment of music education appears to be encouraged more in the U.K. and surrounding area than in North America. Murphy and Espeland (2007) pointed out using language-based descriptors in the arts cannot always fully describe the art of the process or the meaning it communicates. Robertson (2009) suggested that judging art on similar criteria as the sciences leaves it accountable to foreign criteria and vulnerable to refutation. Acceptance of qualitative and not just objective criteria allows room for expressions of holistic musical knowledge (Thorgersen, 2011). Describing qualitative criteria has noticeable similarities to the description of holism presented earlier; Thorgersen (2011) said qualitative criteria is "parts of a whole that allow teachers to experience the levels of students' musical knowledge in the same way that musical parameters can be seen as parts of the whole that we experience as music" (p. 43). These parts within the whole seem similar to Eisner's (1985) idea of connoisseurship in education in which he draws a comparison to the judgement of a quality wine as being grounded in reasons that refer back to the wine's body, color, nose, aftertaste, bite, flavor, and other attributes; parts of the whole. Finally, in stark contrast to the Brasher et al. (1999) North American viewpoint that essentially contended that equal means the same (and not equitable), Thorgersen countered by citing Kvernbekk (2005, as cited in Thorgersen, 2011) who said that "equivalent assessment does not rest on similarities - but on differences" (p. 44).

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Thorgersen (2011) believed that equal assessment means different expressions can represent the same goals of musical knowledge in different ways, and should be assessed as such.

While North American literature seems to debate over the use of standards and objective criteria, literature from the United Kingdom and neighbouring countries appears to support a holistic approach to assessment in music education. This approach allows room for acceptance of ways of knowing that are unique to the study of music. Literature presented from the U.K. and neighbouring areas described a perspective of music education as a multi-dimensional experience, with a focus on the overall response to the subject matter, which values differences in learning and assessing.

Alternative Assessment Tools

While there may be significant differences in opinion regarding what should be assessed in music education, this section will show there is little argument within the reviewed literature that assessment tools departing from traditional testing methods are preferred. For the purpose of this study *traditional* will refer to paper and pencil testing and evaluation strategies that are not in line with current best practice methods. All methods outside of this will be referred to as *alternative.* Literature from both North America and the U.K. encourages the use of alternative assessment tools that make assessment in music education authentic and meaningful. Discussed below, music teachers attempt to achieve authentic assessment through the use of rating scales, rubrics, and checklists, as well as by implementing journal writing, providing feedback, and developing portfolios. All of these are used to assess tasks that have value outside of school and have purpose other than assessment itself, such as performing live at a club, composing original music, or creating a CD.

Authentic Assessment

Authentic assessment challenges the past practice of basing evaluation entirely on paper and pencil type assignments and tests. Authentic assessments use tasks that have value in the world outside of school, and are relevant to students' lives (Murphy, 2009). Examples of this, as it applies to music, include such tasks as performing in concert halls, producing a CD recording, and composing original music. Multiple ways of demonstrating knowledge, skills, and understandings are used in combination to generate an accurate reflection of a student's overall

learning. Kohn (1999) said that the more a teacher needs a formal test to determine how students are doing, the more something is wrong. Eisner (1982), believed meaning and knowledge can be represented and conveyed in a variety of ways. Students should be able to generate criteria for what a complete or final task should "look" like, which can then be used for assessing the learning within the task. Authentic assessment is meaningful, and relevant to the learning.

Authentic assessment detours from traditional paper and pencil grading systems. It can be argued that using rating scales, rubrics, etc., to determine a grade value might be missing the whole point of alternative assessment. However, for teachers required by their school system to determine a grade value for their students, the following tools can still be used to generate that grade, but will have more emphasis on how that grade value is determined. Suggesting that letter and number grades in school be abolished entirely, Kohn (2011), said "[c]ollecting information doesn't require tests, and sharing that information doesn't require grades" (p. 28). Eisner (2005) would agree with Kohn's point that exams are not necessary for assessment, and in addition views traditional grading processes as not only encouraging the extrinsic reward, but also encouraging students to be "point collectors" (p. 206). "Not everything that matters can be measured, and not everything that is measured matters" (Eisner, 2002, p. 178). Miller (1994) believed grades should not be assigned in subjective/aesthetic areas such as art and music.

Scales, Rubrics, and Checklists

North American literature indicates some music education programs are using various forms of rating scales, rubrics, and checklists as alternative assessment tools that make assessment in music education more authentic than traditional testing methods (Asmus, 1999; Brasher, et al, 1999; Burrack, 2002; Conway & Jeffers, 2004; Goolsby, 1999; Hale & Green, 2009; Lehman, 1998; McPherson, 1993; Saunders, 1989; Saunders & Holahan, 1997). All of these tools are based on some type of criteria. Criteria-based rating scales are used to generate objective evaluations of performance-based activities (Robinson, 1995). These scales are generally either continuous or additive. Continuous rating scales consist of a series of musical and technical criteria that increases in difficulty, and obtaining any particular rating is dependent upon meeting all previous criteria (Robinson, 1995). Additive scales differ from continuous scales in that they contain criteria of the elements being performed but not in a sequential order (Robinson, 1995). With an additive scale, attainment of any particular rating is not reliant on

achieving all previous criteria (Robinson, 1995). Additive scales are basically checklists with a rating applied to them by adding up the number of checks. A checklist simply identifies which criteria have been met at the time of reporting, and which ones have not.

Similar to North America, literature on alternative assessment tools from the U.K. indicates that music teachers are encouraged to implement alternative assessment tools such as rating scales. One popular type of assessment scale in England is the layer system established by Swanwick (2000). Swanwick's own long-term research in various countries has found it useful to think of music in what he established to be eight layers (Swanwick, 2000). Swanwick's layers (2000) are cumulative with each one including the preceding statements, similar to the continuous rating scales used in North America, and are described as observable criteria. Layer one, for example, describes a student as recognizing loudness levels, pitch differences, and change of tone color and texture (Swanwick, 2000). Layer eight describes a student as systematically developing critical and analytical ideas about music (Swanwick, 2000).

Regardless of what type of rating scale, rubric, or checklist one uses, the assessment tool is useless without authentic criteria to which to compare. In North America, teachers in general are recognizing that assessment becomes more meaningful and authentic when the students have assisted in developing the criteria to be assessed or evaluated (Gregory et al., 1997; Kohn, 1999). A model established by Gregory et al. (1997) for generating co-constructed criteria includes four steps; brainstorm, categorize, use the criteria in a t-chart, and revise. Having students co-construct the criteria for a task not only reinforces the students' learning, but also provides the students with the best understanding of what is to be expected of the task (Pisani, 2007).

Journals, Feedback, and Portfolios

Keeping a journal can be used as an authentic method for tracking student learning by having students do such things as write responses to their music, write assessments of their practice and performances, or identify areas needing improvement and the steps to be taken to achieve progress. Students can record in writing, various things related to their learning and teachers can enter feedback and responses accordingly (Robinson, 1995). The journal can then become a vehicle for improved student-teacher communication and offer insights into student's attitudes and understandings (Robinson, 1995). Along with journal writing, Robinson (1995) also suggested interviews with students can be a beneficial part of the learning and assessment

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process. The lack of literature discussing the idea of journaling as it applies specifically to the study of music should not limit the value of such a technique to music teachers. Every subject area is a language, so for some students, expressing their learning in writing can be helpful.

A common thread in all forms of alternative assessment is the inclusion of feedback (Burrack, 2002; Goolsby, 1999; Robinson, 1995). Of course, the above description of journals and interviews provides ample opportunity for feedback. Divinsky (2007) said a teacher can create a culture where learning and taking risks are safe, and the giving and receiving of feedback are valued ways to learn. By giving the students several opportunities to receive feedback and make revisions students have opportunities to act on the feedback without the pressure of a grade being attached to their initial work (Doane, 2007). This creates an environment where it is safe to present unfinished work, risk-taking is encouraged, and the focus has been shifted to the progress and learning that takes place over time (Doane, 2007). Stiggins (2007) would see this approach as a shift away from the negative emotional dynamics such as stress, anxiety, and fear often attached to and generated from traditional testing methods. Some music teachers provide regular feedback (sometimes weekly) using assessment recordings of student's music selections (Goolsby, 1999). These recordings are used not only to provide timely individual feedback, but are also used to seek out those who need additional assistance (Goolsby, 1999). Burrack (2002) suggested a recording process in which students record a selection as many times as they want to achieve their desired outcome, complete a self-assessment, and receive feedback based on a rubric. To do this teachers need appropriate studio space, since as Dkerf (1999) pointed out, music is learned through listening and space and a proper acoustical environment are critical for an effective rehearsal room. The literature on alternative assessment would suggest that assessment is useless without feedback, and that in fact, feedback is a part of the learning process regardless of the subject matter.

Portfolio assessment has become popular in many subject areas in both North America and the U.K., and some teachers are seeing its value in assessment in music education as well (Asmus, 1999; Burrack, 2002; Robinson, 1995; Russell & Austin, 2010). Portfolio assessment, like any other subject area, should be a reflection of a student's overall learning (Asmus, 1999). The portfolio can be a tool for recording process and product, and can contain items such as musical programs, teacher's evaluations, recordings, and self-evaluations (Asmus, 1999). The portfolio, like the journals discussed earlier, is a vehicle for providing feedback to students,

teachers, and parents (Asmus, 1999). Based on the literature available, the value of portfolios in music education may not yet have caught on to most band teachers. However, the effectiveness of it as an alternative assessment tool that could include students' journals, compositions, and recordings of both the individual and the whole band, should not be undervalued.

Alternative assessment tools provide teachers with widely accepted strategies that stray from paper and pencil testing and less acceptable evaluation methods. The literature reviewed from both North America and the U.K. support authentic assessment methods in music education. Authentic assessment can be achieved through the use of rating scales, rubrics, and checklists, and the inclusion of journal writing, feedback, and portfolio development. All of these tools can and should involve students in the process. Additionally, as will be discussed next, having students involved in self and peer assessment methods is another way to get feedback from students about their learning and involve them in assessment.

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The Role of Self and Peer Assessment

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Music teachers practicing alternative assessment strategies in North America and the U.K. support the inclusion of students' own perspectives in assessment (Burrack, 2002; Conway & Jeffers, 2004; Goolsby, 1999; Hale & Green, 2009; Loane, 1982 as cited in Swanwick, 2000; Robinson, 1995). Students can have input into their assessment through self and peer assessment strategies. In addition, Conway and Jeffers (2004) suggested teachers can go so far as involving parents in assessing their children's musical learning.

Student Self-assessment

Students can be involved in the assessment process through self and peer assessment activities. Self and peer assessment gives students a voice in the assessment process. In music education self and peer assessment allows students opportunity to develop critical listening skills, build musical understandings, and take ownership of musical learning.

The literature reviewed shows music teachers use recording and critical listening to help self and peer assessment. These activities allow students to assess their performance in an authentic way that is not possible while they are playing (Burrack, 2002). Students involved in a learning process of self-regulation including goal setting, planning for goal attainment, and monitoring progress towards goals tend to learn more and achieve better than students not

involved in such a process (Gregory, Cameron, & Davies, 2011). Eisner (2002) believed that "when students are in on the process, the opportunity to evaluate becomes a medium for advancing their own education" (p. 194). Researchers Andrade, Du, and Wang (2008) also supported self-regulated learning. These researchers conducted research on rubrics with elementary school language arts students and found that elementary school students ought to be actively engaged in self-assessment of their work as it is in progress. Although alternative assessment strategies generally absorb considerable time, Goolsby (1999) pointed out that committing time to such assessment strategies eventually saves time in class. Loane (1982, as cited in Swanwick, 2000) suggested that the process of engaging students in their own listening and self-criticism becomes an interaction between self-assessment and teacher-assessment.

Through one another students can identify areas of strength as well as areas needing further attention, set goals for achievement, and work off each other's feedback toward improvement. Students can learn much about what to do, and what not to do by reading other people's work (Pisani, 2007). Hale and Green (2009) suggested that as students begin to assess their own progress, they become independent musicians and astute audience members. Self and peer assessment is a vehicle for enhancing musical understanding (Burrack, 2002).

Self and peer assessment brings opportunity for students to have ownership in their musical learning (Burrack, 2002). Some music teachers allow students to have a voice in the grading process by including student self-evaluations as a part of the students' grade and combining teacher and student scores (Robinson, 1995). However, my own interviews with teachers would indicate teachers using student self-evaluations tend to find the students who take it seriously mark themselves too low, and the students who don't take it seriously mark themselves too high (to be described further in Chapter IV). I would argue that the problem in this type of exercise is not how to get students to evaluate themselves seriously and accurately; it is the fact that they are evaluating themselves at all instead of assessing only. Within my own classes, I have found that getting students to take self-assessment seriously is not as significant an issue when evaluation is not involved because there is simply no reason *not* to take it seriously. In addition, having recently been a student myself, I have had the misfortune of being asked to complete a group self-evaluation including a mark for myself which was later altered by the professor for non-criteria related reasons. I felt it was terribly misleading to provide students (at any educational level) with a voice, and then consider it to be invalid. According to Burrack,

(2002), ownership in the assessment process enables students to become self-sufficient musicians. Perhaps Burrack's conclusion would be somewhat different if he were talking about an evaluation process instead of an assessment process.

Students can have a voice in their assessment through self and peer assessment activities. Students have a voice in the process when they have contributed to the assessment. Using self and peer assessment strategies in music education develops students' critical listening skills, builds musical understandings, and allows them to take ownership of their musical learning.

Potential For Parent Assessment

While literature reveals some music teachers are using various types of student self and peer assessment strategies in music education, one particular pair of researchers suggest also involving parents in the assessment process. In the Conway and Jeffers (2004) report regarding parents' perspectives on assessment in instrumental music, a detailed music report card included an optional parent assessment form to complete with their child after listening to them play at home. Conway and Jeffers (2004) found most parents completed the assessment and found it to be a useful way of interacting with their child regarding their musical study. A parent assessment could be very motivating for student learning and could assist parents in understanding how to help their child progress in their musical study at home.

Conclusion

Although music is a unique way of knowing, involving such unquantifiable aspects as aesthetics, musicality, and creativity, music teachers are often required to objectively quantify and measure students' musical achievement and knowledge. A review of literature centering on alternative assessment strategies in music education reveals three themes: there is variation in what is assessed and what is evaluated in music education; some common assessment tools are rating scales, rubrics, checklists, etc., and some teachers include self and peer assessments. Determining what to assess and evaluate in music education and how best to implement the alternative assessment tools appear to be common issues in various types of school music programs, in both North America and the U.K.

Accountability demands by policy makers and the public have put added pressure on music teachers to measure music knowledge in ways that legitimize its value in the curriculum.

This creates concern and discussion over what to measure and how to measure it. The literature reviewed indicates the common past practice of including non-musical factors such as attendance in the grading of music students is being questioned in current literature. However, as Russell and Austin (2010) found, non-achievement criteria continues to be used, and often is given the most significant weight values of the overall grade. Russell (2011) pointed out that this has led to litigation situations in which students have been evaluated using unreasonable grading procedures, which have included non-achievement criteria. The U.K. attempts to break from tradition, and uses an eight-layer system established by Swanwick (2000) for assessing students' musical achievement. However I know from my own teaching experience, the North American attempt to replace grade values with detailed assessments has left parents and students struggling to interpret the information with the same accuracy and confidence that they believe a number or letter grade gave them.

As presented above, while most research reports on the categories music teachers assess and evaluate, and the assessment tools they use, there is little research discussing the rationale of teachers when making those assessment decisions. More research is needed to identify how and why teachers choose the assessment strategies they use, including how they attach categories of musical knowledge to various weight values to determine an overall mark. More research is also needed in non-North American countries on assessment in music education in the context of elementary and high school instrumental settings, as much of the literature contained in this review is American in context, with some comparisons drawn from Canada and the U.K.

Given the existing arguments discussed earlier (Benedict, 2007; Brasher et al., 1999; Eisner, 1985; Hanna, 2007; Russsell & Austin, 2010) over what should be assessed and/or evaluated in music education and what should not, it is safe to say that music education is assessed and evaluated with a lack of consistency amongst teachers. What we do not know is what teachers' rationales are that lead to such differences. The following chapters will describe research that attempts to identify what rationales and factors are considered by music teachers when determining how they will assess and evaluate their students. Results of this research may reveal common principles for consideration of music teachers that could produce an array of assessment strategies to choose from that are built on musical ways of knowing instead of arbitrary evaluative formulas.

Questions guiding this research were: (a) What are the participants' rationales for the assessment strategies they choose and the evaluative measures they make for students? (b) What influences have led teachers to have these particular rationales?

CHAPTER 3
METHODOLOGY

Research Design

In order to determine what rationales and factors are used by band teachers a qualitative research approach was deemed appropriate. This study uses a grounded theory method to conduct emergent qualitative research. Charmaz (2008) described emergent method as being inductive, indeterminate, and open-ended. Further, she states researchers are not separate from their theories but construct them through their interactions with people, places, and research perspectives. This approach is preferred as this research study was expected to yield concepts and theories as a result of the data analysis, rather than proving or disproving an initial hypothesis which is typically more characteristic of quantitative methods. For this research participants were recruited through third party organizations for participation in semi-structured interviews that were designed to gather insight into teachers' perspectives.

A procedure for grounded theory was followed based on a suggested process by Glaser and Strauss (1967). Step one identified the substantive area, which in this case was the perspective of band teachers in regards to assessment and evaluation. The next step in the process involved the collection of data pertaining to the substantive area. In this case qualitative data was collected by conversing with individual participants. Next a process of openly coding data as it was collected took place, in which the main concerns became apparent and explained the behavior of the substantive area. Coding ceased when no new codes emerged, at which point categories were considered to be saturated. Brief memos were written throughout the process about the codes and their (potential) relationships to other codes, when applicable, and were used to help sort and organize the codes. Lastly, a theory came into clear view which has been integrated with literature and selected codes and is presented in Chapter V.

Qualitative research can be described as taking an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, as cited in Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). In qualitative research the researcher, among other things, can be personally involved with participants, studies the meanings that individuals create, studies human actions in natural settings, makes holistic observations, and discovers concepts and theories after data have been collected (Gall et al., 2007). Therefore to elicit the most reflective responses from teachers in regards to how they

think and how they perceive themselves in responding to the research questions, the open-ended interview technique was most suitable.

The use of emergent theory as method emphasizes the analysis process through the development of categories, instead of just focusing on the results of inquiry (Charmaz, 2008). In grounded theory, theories emerge from the data that then account for the data (Charmaz, 2008). Approaching a research study with emergent grounded theory as method allows for the researcher to enter into the study without preconceived expectations from the results. This leaves room for the unexpected to occur within the data that is collected and leaves the researcher open to seeing unanticipated themes emerging within the analysis. Unlike in other research settings where researchers are expected to remove themselves from the influences and conditions of their research, in a grounded theory approach the researcher aims to make these explicit (Charmaz, 2008). The researcher is embedded in the research process rather than simply existing as an outside observer of phenomena (Charmaz, 2008). A grounded theory method allows opportunity for the deep complexities of teachers' perspectives to be revealed and explored in order to produce rich understandings.

Role of the Researcher

In this particular study, the use of a grounded theory approach in which the researcher is embedded in the research is nicely coupled with the role of the researcher as an insider amongst the group of participants. Insider research is described as a situation when a researcher conducts research on a population of which they are also a member (Kanuha, 2000, as cited in Dwyer, 2009). By collecting data on other teachers who work in the same educational field as myself, I as the researcher would also be considered to be a member within this group of participants. It would be important to be aware of the implications this status could have on my participants as well as on the data analysis.

In the case of this research, I knew in advance that it was very likely that I might know many, if not all, of the participants who would end up volunteering to take part in the research interviews. I would estimate the population of secondary band teachers in Saskatchewan to be less than 75. It has been my experience that this group of teachers is a strong network because many of the teachers within it connect and work together in a variety of ways throughout the school year. Events such as beginner band start-up weekends draw on band teachers from all

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over the province to become weekend clinicians for other band programs. Many band teachers take opportunities to participate in professional development at the annual Saskatchewan Music Conference and will also be involved in provincial organizations such as the Saskatchewan Band Association and the Saskatchewan Music Educators' Association. As well, throughout the school year it is not uncommon for band teachers to call upon other band teachers to be special guests to run clinic sessions during class time or at events such as band retreats. Each year, band teachers around the province support the organizers of such events as the Saskatchewan provincial honour band and several other province-wide band student activities that take place outside of school. Band teachers also work together at local and provincial level music festivals. Additionally, when the school year appears to have come to an end, band teachers continue to get called upon over the summer to direct, and/or teach sessions at week-long band camps held at various locations throughout the province. It is through my own involvement in many of these activities over my teaching career that I can say at the very least I am acquainted with the majority of the approximately 75 Saskatchewan secondary band teachers. As a result as I entered into this research I anticipated being an insider researcher.

Being an insider researcher has not always been accepted as a positive when conducting research, and it would appear that there existed a time when at the very least insider researchers had limitations in how their work was presented. In Dwyer's (2009) article on insider-outsider research, she describes an author who as an insider researcher at one time had to write in an impersonal style and keep his own personal life experiences hidden and anonymous from the research he was writing about. This same author later produced a revised edition of his original work and indicated that nearly 20 years later, he was now at liberty to speak more personally (Dwyer, 2009). While I am grateful that this research is being conducted at a time where I will not be held back from writing in a personal style, this role of insider does not come without both advantages and disadvantages.

There is a particularly significant advantage to being an insider researcher. An insider researcher can often gain more rapid and complete acceptance from their participants which can result in participants feeling more open to share a greater depth of data (Dwyer, 2009). The research topic for this study is, for many, a controversial topic as well as a deeply personal one. It would not only be hopeful that I would gain acceptance from the participants, I believe it would be crucial to the research itself that the level of trust that comes with acceptance be

acquired. Being a member of the group automatically establishes a level of trust that would likely not otherwise exist with the participants (Dwyer, 2009). In the case of this research participants could expect that I would have shared experiences and common understandings with them. Certainly my status as an insider allowed me to understand the language of music used throughout the participant interviews and to further prompt with probing questions relative to having done the same job as the participants. I do not think I would have gotten the same meaningful responses from participants if I had not been an insider; perhaps it is even possible I would not have gotten any volunteers to actually participate in the research either.

While having insider status is certainly an advantage for some research, it can also be seen as a disadvantage and should therefore be handled with great care. When the researcher is an insider, participants will sometimes make assumptions of similarity that can result in a partially told description of their individual experience (Dwyer, 2009).   As data were collected for this research, the assumption of similarity did at times exist in the interviews. This was handled with attempts to probe for more detail that could usually elicit easy responses. Also affecting the research in a potentially negative way as an insider is the possibility of the researcher's perceptions and experiences shaping and guiding the interview instead of the participants which can in turn affect the quality of the data analysis, as well (Dwyer, 2009). To prevent this negative effect, a process of member checking (to be discussed later) was used in the data analysis process. Along with that, I have heeded the advice of Dwyer (2009), which is to give detailed reflection to the research process with a close awareness of my own biases and perspectives. She believed the status of the researcher as an insider is not the core ingredient, but the ability to be open, authentic, honest, genuinely interested in the experiences of the participants, and hold a commitment to accuracy are what matters to the research (Dwyer, 2009).

Although there can be potential for the insider status of a researcher to have a negative effect on the data collection as well as the analysis, I think these disadvantages are far outweighed by what can be gained from this status. As an insider researcher for this study, great care has been taken to ensure the participants' voices are embedded throughout the thesis. This study requires the insider researcher to be honest, authentic, and committed as described earlier, and I believe this research study lends opportunity to be just that.

Recruiting Participants

Following receipt of university ethics approval the next step was to recruit the participants through the assistance of third party organizations. A request for assistance recruiting the research participants was asked of the Saskatchewan Band Association (SBA) and the Saskatchewan Music Educators' Association (SMEA) of which I am a current member of both. These associations have access to the contact information of their memberships who would be the target population sought after for this research study. Both organizations were called upon as recruiters because most Saskatchewan band teachers will belong to one group or the other and often times both. This would ensure that most, if not all, Saskatchewan secondary band teachers would have had fair opportunity to participate in this study.

The SBA and the SMEA both responded favourably to my request for their assistance and immediately distributed the recruitment advertisement that I provided them with to their members as part of their regular outgoing e-newsletter (see Appendix A). This request for participants included the criteria and description of participants required for the study. Interested participants were asked to contact me directly for further information via home phone or e-mail contact. As a result of the province-wide recruitment notices that were sent out, I had three teachers contact me to receive further information regarding the research study. All three subsequently signed on as research participants. After no further responses were received, it was necessary to recruit further by calling on personal contacts. I contacted several secondary band teachers from a variety of places around the province and eventually had another five respondents who upon reading the research information signed on as participants, as well.

Interested participants were contacted in the same manner in which they first initiated contact with me. After discussing some of the specifics of the research study, respondents who expressed continued interest were sent a letter of invitation containing details regarding the general purpose of the research, the method to be used for conducting the research, as well as a description of the participants' rights to withdraw from the research (see Appendix B). After reviewing the invitation letters, all respondents indicated further interest, and were then sent letters of consent to be signed and returned to me (see Appendix C), as well as a copy of the research interview questions (see Appendix D). Before the respondents granted their consent to participate, each was fully informed of their right to confidentiality, privacy, and withdrawal from the research study at any time up until the results had been disseminated.

The Participants

A small sampling of eight participants, which is typical of qualitative research, was used to collect data for this research. The characteristics of participants as described below were intended to represent a wide variety of band teachers' perspectives on assessment and evaluation strategies. Presumably, variation in assessment and evaluation strategies used amongst band teachers could be attributed to factors considered within each individual's own decision making process. This research studied teachers who teach secondary instrumental band classes in Saskatchewan. It was intended that teacher participants would represent a range of experience levels within the field, and represent both rural and urban school settings. As a result of the recruitment process, several band teachers from a variety of backgrounds volunteered to participate in the interviews for data collection. As mentioned earlier, it would have been highly unlikely that I would not already be acquainted with some or all of the research participants, and in the end, I did personally know all of the participants.

A sample size of eight research participants was deemed to be an appropriate representation of teacher perspectives for this research study. This number was chosen to ensure data saturation within the research, and to obtain enough variety in participants' perspectives to generate a collection of rich, in-depth data. Research participants were sought who fit the following criteria for participation:

- must be Saskatchewan secondary school band teachers
- must implement assessment and/or evaluation strategies for students within their current classes

In addition, it was preferable that the overall sample group include band teachers from both rural and urban school settings, teachers with school assignments that are itinerant as well as teachers who are non-itinerant, and teachers who represent a variety of years of experience in the teaching field. Although it would have been preferable to have had most of the participants volunteer as a result of the third party recruitment advertisement, a benefit of completing the sample pool through personal contacts was that it lent opportunity to more directly recruit participants who represented a wide variety of teaching scenarios.

As this research was intended to provide results that will contribute to knowledge about assessment and evaluation of instrumental music education in Saskatchewan, it was important that research participants were selected within that same context so that results could be used for

maximum benefit. Because numerical grades are only required by the Government of Saskatchewan Ministry of Education at the secondary level, participants were selected who primarily teach secondary instrumental music at the time of the research interviews. As the most common secondary instrumental music context in Saskatchewan high schools is within the Band 10, 20, and 30 curricular courses, participants were selected who teach these classes.

A teacher's level of experience may be an influence on their decision making process as it pertains to their chosen assessment and evaluation strategies, whether teachers recognize it or not in themselves. A teacher having recently graduated from university may be more up to date on current trends in assessment than a teacher who has been in the field for many years. Perhaps a young teacher is more likely to be open to implementing alternative assessment strategies than a teacher who has comfortably evaluated using traditional methods for many years. To consider the influence that teachers levels of experience may have on their decision-making processes, it was intended that research participants would, as a group, represent teachers who have a wide range of years of teaching experience.   Recruitment of participants resulted in a sample of teachers who represent a range of teaching experience from 1-26 years.

A band teacher's particular school community and teaching context may have an influence on the decisions they make around assessment and evaluation. Band teachers situated in rural communities may determine their assessment and evaluation decisions based on different factors than band teachers in urban settings. Band teachers who teach in itinerant teaching contexts may be influenced differently than those who teach in non-itinerant settings. Community culture, values, and overall context of a teaching assignment may be influences on teachers' thinking when considering their assessment and evaluation decisions. To obtain data that explored the influences of a variety of teaching contexts, teacher participants in this research study were intended to be representative of both rural and urban school settings, itinerant and non-itinerant contexts. The sample that volunteered to participate in this research study was representative of both itinerant and non-itinerant band teachers, Public and Catholic band teachers, as well as both rural and urban band teachers.

This particular sample was expected to yield significant insights about the phenomena intended for this study as it drew from a wide variety of teaching experiences and perspectives. This research was carried out using participants within the teaching context of Saskatchewan secondary instrumental band settings. Research sample characteristics included those who are

Saskatchewan secondary band teachers; those who have a variety of years of experience in the field; those who teach in settings reflective of both rural and urban schools, as well as Public and Catholic schools (both types of schools are publicly funded); and those who teach in itinerant and timetabled contexts[2].

Qualitative research is most suitable for the theme-seeking goals of this particular research study. Further, this study has been carried out using the open-ended approach of emergent grounded theory. This approach has allowed for the research study to yield concepts and theory that could not have been anticipated. Participants in this study were recruited through the assistance of third party organizations for semi-structured interviews that explored teachers' perspectives. A description of the participants and their teaching backgrounds can be found in Table 1. To protect the identities of the participants, each has been identified throughout the study with a pseudonym to ensure confidentiality. School and community names were also given pseudonyms to further protect the identities of the participants and the schools they are employed in. Beside each participant's pseudonym, a set of parentheses indicates each teachers' number of teaching years, their current teaching position as either rural or urban, and their teaching schedule as *I* for itinerant, *T* for timetabled, and *T+* for mostly timetabled with some additional teaching outside the regular school day schedule. For example, Linda (13, R, I) indicate Linda has taught for 13 years, currently teaches in a rural school division, and is currently in an itinerant teaching situation.

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[2] A timetabled teacher is one who has their courses scheduled in conjunction with other courses during the school day. An itinerant teacher is one whose courses are scheduled such that students are pulled out of their regularly scheduled course to attend another course at that time.

Table 1. Participant Background

Participant (Pseudonyms)	Years Taught	Rural/Urban	Itinerant/Timetabled
Linda (13, R, I)	13	Rural	Itinerant
Kate (15, U, T)	15	Urban	Timetabled
Blake (8, U, T+)	8	Urban	Timetabled (with some outside the schedule)
Maria (11, U, T)	11	Urban	Timetabled
Nathan (1, U, T)	1	Urban	Timetabled
Carol (26, U, I)	26	Urban	Itinerant
Oliver (25, U, T+)	25	Urban	Timetabled (with some outside the schedule)
Andrew (13, U, T+)	13	Urban	Timetabled (with some outside the schedule)
8 participants (4 male, 4 female)	**1-26**	**1 rural, 7 urban**	**2 itinerant, 6 timetabled**

Interviewing

It was anticipated that this research study would produce data on phenomena not directly observable, so data were collected by conducting interviews with participants. Using interviews to collect data would allow for descriptive information to be revealed about each participant's thinking and the factors that influence it, to a level of depth not fully attainable by tests or questionnaires. The use of data collection instruments such as questionnaires, tests, or Likert scales are not fitting to this research project because the instruments themselves would limit the participants' responses. These types of instruments do not allow for opportunity to ask further probing questions of the participants or for more detail to be added to a response they've given. Using a semi-structured interview format does provide opportunity to ask additional probing

questions that can delve deeper into the participants' initial responses. In an interview setting one can use questions to continue probing until a picture begins to emerge (Schostak, 2006).

Interviews were conducted individually instead of in focus group settings. The preference for individual interviews in this study was to help ensure that each teacher's perspective remained genuine and uncompromised by any influence that could exist from the perspectives of others in a group interview setting. In addition, gaining insight into teachers' personal thoughts would require a relationship of trust and openness during the interview that allowed teachers to share in ways they may not comfortably be willing to do in a group setting. Schostak (2006) suggested that an interviewer needs to create a space within them for an interviewee to talk and address something of them. The relationship established in an individual interview setting allows opportunity to draw out complex, descriptive information that cannot be extracted from questionnaires and surveys, or from focus group settings.

During this research, comments made in the first few interviews by the participants led me to intentionally add certain probing questions to each of the remaining interviews. For example, it seemed apparent from some of the participants as they spoke that evaluation was seen as a requirement of the job, not necessarily a desired choice that was a part of their passion for their work. I started probing the teachers that if they had the perfect world and could choose whether they evaluated students or not, would they? This led to some interesting responses and discussions with the participants that had significant relevance to the other questions within the interview. Those discussions and the data that resulted out of it would have been an important missing piece to the research had another method been chosen to collect the data. It was only due to the personal interview method and the semi-structured style of the interviews that allowed for this type of information to surface in the research.

Inquiring into teachers' assessment and evaluation strategies can create potential for controversy or tension for some teachers. I approached the research interviews with as much sensitivity to the participants' prior existing personal feelings about the topic as was possible. In an attempt to create Schostak's (2006) space (referred to earlier) for participants to safely talk within, it was important to approach the interviews in a manner that would keep the goal of ultimately helping them become better teachers in the forefront. I did not want to make any teacher feel as though their methods were being judged as flawed or wrong. To me, regardless of the methods being used, asking teachers to open up and share about their reasons behind their

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assessment and evaluation strategies, felt similar to asking an acquaintance to open up their pocketbook and explain how and why they manage their finances the way they do. While I was sensitive to the subject matter I was inquiring into with my research participants, this sensitivity did not stop me from asking any questions that would contribute to the research. In fact, this sensitivity simply allowed me to create the safe space that was necessary for teachers to speak candidly within. As a result, I felt all teacher participants were generously open during the interviews about their methods, and their perspectives on assessment and evaluation.

Questions guiding this research were: (a) What are the participants' rationales for the assessment strategies they choose and the evaluative measures they make for students? (b) What influences have led teachers to have these particular rationales? A list of semi-structured interview questions can be found in Appendix D.

Data Collection

As described earlier, this research focused on data collected during individual interviews. Interviews were conducted in face-to-face settings and followed a semi-structured format. Utmost care to provide privacy and confidentiality to participants and data obtained was taken in accordance with the ethical standards of the University of Saskatchewan.

For the respondents who granted their consent to participate, I conducted face-to-face semi-structured interviews as described by Schostak (2006) with secondary band teachers from a variety of school divisions in Saskatchewan. Interviews lasted 45 minutes to two hours and were recorded so they could later be transcribed. When completing member checking, revisiting the participants in face-to-face settings was done when travel distance and participants' personal schedules allowed. For two participants who volunteered to take part in member checking, these particular conversations took place using the online medium of Skype.

A semi structured interview guide approach as described by Gall et al. (2007) was used to ask a set of structured questions that left room to pursue more probing open-ended questions, as needed. A pilot test of an interview was conducted using a set of guidelines for conducting research interviews as suggested by Gall et al. (2007) and was used to make adjustments to the process in preparation for conducting the actual research. This pilot interview allowed opportunity to test questions for ambiguity, clarity, and appropriateness to the goals of the research. The pilot interview also gave opportunity to test out the recording and computer

technology intended for use during the interviews. While conducting the pilot interview, I soon learned that some of the interview questions might require some clarification of what was meant in the form of examples. This was because participants were less familiar with the terminology used for this particular research topic. I added these as necessary for the interviews that followed. Outside of these clarifications, the questions seemed to work well and the sequence of the questions appeared to lead sufficiently to the main questions of the interview. I also learned from the pilot interview that the audio recording program I had originally chosen was not user-friendly. Due to the subsequent challenges that resulted from using this particular program, I then tried using the memo recording application on my telephone instead, and this worked very well for all the actual research interviews that followed.

The finalized interview questions used with each of the participants is in Appendix D. Interviews were conducted at the convenience of the participants over a two-month period during the summer of 2012. Each teacher participant was interviewed once for the initial data collection and second interviews to gather further details from participants were not found to be necessary.

Questions designed for the interviews in this research inquired into the rationales behind Saskatchewan band teachers' assessment and evaluation decisions for their secondary band classes. Interview questions identified the teachers' choice of items or categories that are assessed and those that are evaluated, their use of traditional or alternative assessment measures, how evaluated categories are weighted, and the known factors teachers consider when making those choices. Known factors and influences may include such things as school policy, political initiatives, and societal and personal value systems. Other questions yielded situation specifics that may uniquely influence teachers' decisions, such as the impact of rural or urban settings on teachers' assessment and evaluation decisions.

A set of interview questions was drafted for review by my research supervisor and revisions were discussed as part of the pilot interview. As mentioned earlier, interview questions were also provided to participants for review in advance of the actual research.

Cooperation of teachers was obtained by making personal contact with each teacher participant to discuss the research objectives, the potential gains from the research results, and the time commitment required to complete the data collection. Gaining access to teacher participants only required permission from the teachers themselves. Because teachers were

interviewed after their work day and outside of their school, and no personal information about students was required, authorization from levels of administration was not considered necessary.

Proper care and attention for the protection of the research participants was exercised throughout the research process. This research study was considered to pose minimal risk to research participants. In addition, the potential for harm or discomfort that could be anticipated throughout the research would not be greater than any normally encountered in everyday life. Participants' identities were kept confidential during the research and will remain confidential after the research is completed. Data were protected via passwords on electronic devices, and were stored and transported in a locked carrier at all times to maintain the confidentiality of the participants as well as the data they have contributed to the research.

Interviews with the research participants did produce data on non-observable phenomena. Conducting interviews as a method for collecting data allowed for descriptive information to be revealed about each participant's thinking and influential factors. A qualitative approach to interviewing as a data collection method was most appropriate for achieving the intended outcomes of this research.

Data Analysis

A process of interpretational analysis was used to closely examine data collected from the research participants' interviews. This type of analysis was intended to yield categories and themes that would explain or describe the research participants' thinking processes being studied. The qualitative analysis of these data involved coding and searching for relationships. Interpretational analysis can be carried out manually or with software programs suitable for such purpose.

The data sought after in this research was in response to the overall question: What are Saskatchewan band teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation strategies? A second important research objective was to determine what influences exist that impact teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales. Finding no prior research on music teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation strategies or the influence of factors on such rationales, I expect theory to emerge from the categories in the data. Determining what data are needed for analysis was not possible to predict in advance, as responses to these main questions and any subsequent

probing questions would present data to be analyzed as it emerged from the interview data collection process.

A process of interpretational analysis as described by Gall et al (2007) has been used for analysis of the proposed research. While use of analysis software was considered for efficient coding of the data, I chose instead to code the data manually. Coding the data manually allowed me as a visual learner to see the data and categories all at the same time on poster board that made analysis easier for me. I also felt that by doing the analysis manually the result was that I would know my data, categories, and patterns more intimately than I would have if a computer had generated some of that information for me. Once data were collected, I began the data analysis by coding responses and placing them into categories.

While reading through each interview transcript, responses were coded according to the most important aspect of what a participant was saying, and how it related to the research questions. I gave each code consideration and looked to see if other data from this transcript also fit with this code. I also examined the transcript for other codes such that in the end each paragraph or section of text was given a code. When moving on to the next transcript, I coded it in a similar manner, looking for new codes, as well as adding more samples to the already existing codes. By the end of the sixth transcript no new codes had emerged. Charmaz (2008) said "line-by-line coding forces the researcher to interact with the data" (p. 164). In addition, to facilitate the ease of retrieving the context of any particular segment, segments were coded in an identifiable way as to link them directly back to the interview transcript from which they were first generated from. Each section of text was identified with the participants' initials, the transcript page number, and the area of the page (top, mid, bottom) where the text could be found. As Charmaz (2008) suggested, I have scrutinized these coded responses to determine which best explain the phenomenon. I looked for those codes that would "carry the weight of the analysis" (Charmaz, 2008).

Each code was then placed under a category heading relevant to that particular response. For example the statement, "Well I'm fortunate enough that most of our classes are team taught," was coded with the author's initial (K), its location on the middle of page two in the transcript (2M), and its main idea (team teaching). So this quote was given the code K-2M-Team. Later this code and similar ones were added to the category on band program set-up. When appropriate each category was broken into subcategories to assist in the identification of

relationships. Categories were derived directly from their data on the principles of grounded theory.

Each category and coded segment was written out on a large bulletin board to make comparisons between categories easier to view. These were reviewed for accuracy, the existence of any overlap or irrelevancy, and categories of particular interest and value were brought to the forefront. Categories were compared and revisited as needed until category definitions reached clear distinctions from one another and the most important categories were revealed.   Once all the transcripts had been coded, the tentative categories that developed out of the coded transcript segments were reflected upon and discussed with my research supervisor. These categories were further developed by grouping related or similar categories and collapsing them into a set of themes. For example, the categories of *teacher-student ratio* and *teaching schedule* were collapsed down under one theme which became *teaching situation*. Categories and themes were then recycled back through some of the research participants for further validation as Lather (1986) suggested. Each category represents a type of phenomenon existing within the database that has emerged and been placed under a theme.

Themes emerging from the data for analysis were: the band program set-up, performance versus best practice, a conflict between subject legitimacy and teachers' own personal values, school division policy and expectations, and specific values held within music education. Conclusions were drawn by connecting how each of the themes addressed the overall research question. Based on these conclusions, a theory emerged to explain participating teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation plans.

Trustworthiness and Validity

Several factors were considered when determining trustworthiness of the data. Interviewed responses were considered to be trustworthy and credible due to the participants' current status as qualified, experienced, and active teachers in the research field as described. As this research was to examine teachers' own thinking processes, it is reasonable to expect their responses to interview questions to be an accurate reflection of what they actually do think, and would not be different were another researcher to conduct the interviews. Once participant interviews had been transcribed, each transcript was read and re-read to determine if the same themes were seen to emerge through the data. A selection of transcripts was also shared with my

research supervisor to determine if he too saw the same categories emerging that I saw. To obtain validity through triangulation a process was followed that allowed the research participants to assist with the data collection and analysis. Transcribed recordings of the interviews were used for review to ensure validity of the interview results. Interview transcripts were made available to each participant for review for accuracy and completeness. Upon review, participants were encouraged to add to, delete, or alter any parts of the transcriptions they desired to ensure the completed transcription accurately represented their true perspectives. When each participant had satisfactorily validated their responses to the interview questions, a data/transcript release form was provided to each participant for signing (see Appendix E). This process took place prior to data analysis.

Further to obtaining triangulation of results, a process of member checking was made available to each of the research participants. After all participant transcripts had been signed off, initial emerging themes and categories were then shared with interested participants to determine if they agreed with the categories I had interpreted from their data. Of the eight participants, five chose to further participate in member checking. I met with each of these members face to face when possible, or over Skype when travel distance was a barrier. In general, there did not seem to be any major discrepancies in the categories and themes I had derived from the data. However, discussions with both my supervisor as well as with the participating members provided further insight and clarity around the points I originally had listed under certain themes. This led to some shifting and reorganizing of some points. The added insight also led to a few suggestions and ideas I had not considered or noticed at that time which enabled further reflection. When member checking was complete and common themes had been agreed upon results were then determined to be valid.

Limitations and Delimitations

Limitations are influences that the researcher cannot control and I anticipated two such considerations. Because I studied teachers' own thinking and rationales, results are reliant on teachers being open and honest about their actual thinking. As the researcher I would have no way of knowing if teachers were withholding information, or being entirely open and honest with either me or themselves. Therefore, one limitation of this study was the extent of open and honest responses provided by the teacher participants. The second anticipated limitation lies in

the fact that all people will have a certain level of accurate self-awareness, as well as a certain level of unawareness about themselves. As a result this research may not fully reveal those factors and influences on teachers' thinking and decision making processes that which teachers are not fully aware may in fact be influences on their thinking.

This research has been delimited to study music educators who specifically teach high school instrumental music in the context of band. While instrumental music education can encompass a variety of genres of study such as guitar or orchestra, the context of band was chosen because it is at present the most common high school instrumental credit offering in Saskatchewan schools. This research is also delimited to study teachers experience as secondary school level band teachers. While band curriculum does exist for middle years students, it is at the secondary level that grade values are required by Saskatchewan Learning to measure student achievement.

A Personal Lens

Over many years of teaching music, I have often felt the pressure and frustration of coming up with a numerical value that best reflects students' skills, abilities, and understandings. Believing for a long time that fair meant having an assessment and evaluation procedure in place that was the same for everyone, the difficulty has always been when the mathematical calculation cranked out a number in the end that I did not feel truly was a reflection of a student's actual understandings. Music teachers and education decision makers need to stop insisting that the arts be assessed using methods designed for the maths and sciences. Rather, we need to start assessing music through artistic musical ways of knowing, we need to acknowledge and embrace different ways of learning and different ways of demonstrating that learning, and finally we need to give students and parents a new reference point for accurately interpreting alternative assessment reports.

In today's education system, learning typically has a numerical score attached to it. Even at a local music festival, children perform in a competition format in front of a small audience and adjudicator, after which each child's performance is reduced to a numerical grade. Yet, when would you attend a symphony orchestra or a jazz club and at the end of the performance assign it a numerical value? We use numbers to judge an art form, calculating categorical weight values, and using averages to come up with some form of final value that is supposed to

represent its overall quality. There has to be an allowance made for artistic views and musical ways of knowing to be used for assessing musical understandings. While using alternative assessment strategies such as rating scales, rubrics, etc. might be a positive alternative to traditional paper and pencil testing methods, are they not simply better tools for rationalizing that numerical final number? How about those of us who include the student's voice through self-evaluation, and then devalue that voice by averaging the students' self-given mark with our own. We in music education play these numerical games to fit into the demands of the education system and to rationalize our subject matter within curriculum. Perhaps what we should be rationalizing is the use of a numerical value system for measuring musical ways of knowing. As mentioned earlier, traditional testing and measuring methods may not be the most relevant way of measuring learning in any subject matter after all. Is learning a technique or an art? Perhaps it is both.

Students should have a voice not only in their assessment, but in the learning itself. In fact, students should have as much voice as possible. Over time I have learned that "fair" does not mean the "same." Students should be assessed on their musical understandings using their own best ways of demonstrating those understandings. Students can be given various options for evaluation procedures, ones that allow students to choose to be evaluated in ways that emphasize their own strengths. For example, if a student is strong in composition, more weight can be given to that category for grading, or if a student prefers to have their grade be a reflection of their performance skills, then weight values can be shifted accordingly. Though students may be graded using a variety of category weight values, common to each of them is the learning that they are demonstrating. Students should be allowed the opportunity to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and understandings in ways that are meaningful to them.

In North America most of us grew up in an educational system that reported our progress in school with a number. We were trained to use that number in reference to a predetermined passing value for determining how well we had done in each class. Sometimes the numbers were disguised as letters, but they had similar meanings and similar reference points. This presents a problem for teachers who have moved away from traditional grading values, and are implementing assessment-only reports, which although they include a great deal of detail about students' progress, they do not include numerical evaluations. In alternative assessments, parents have more information about their child's learning than they have ever been given

before, but without a reference point, parents often believe they can't interpret that information to the same degree they believe they had interpreted numerical reports in the past.

After reviewing all the information in an assessment with a few of my own students, some will still ask, "So how do I know if I passed or not?" The bottom line is parents want to know the same thing. It is not enough to make positive change in our assessment and evaluation strategies in music education, we need to train parents and students to accurately interpret them, so they can know how their child is doing in school with the same, although misplaced, confidence level they had in a number or letter grade.

It is not easy for music teachers to assess and evaluate musical learning. Education leaders need to acknowledge and accept less than traditional ways of knowing. We as teachers need to start assessing music through musical ways of knowing, we need to acknowledge and embrace different ways of demonstrating learning, and training must be provided to students and parents who need a new reference point for accurately interpreting alternative assessment reports.

The following chapter will detail the actual research analysis and explain further the themes that emerged from the data, including themes that were not originally anticipated to be found.

CHAPTER 4
ANALYSIS

This analysis chapter will present the data collected from the participants. In addition, rather than report my interpretations of the data in a separate chapter, repetition will be avoided by incorporating my interpretations and perspective as an insider researcher alongside the perspectives shared by the participants, when applicable. This approach allows data to be presented here as a conversation and reflects the allowable inclusion of personal experience that Dwyer (2009) spoke of which was described earlier in Chapter III.

Using a grounded theory approach for data analysis, categories and themes emerged directly out of the data. This type of analysis led to the identification of themes that were both originally anticipated as well as those that were not. Categories and themes were verified with the research supervisor as well as through the process of member checking as was discussed earlier. Analysis was first done to identify the teacher participants' current existing practices around the assessment and evaluation of students' abilities in school band courses. These were found to include a mix of both traditional and alternative methods which evaluated musical and non-musical criteria and included formative assessment. In addressing the research question, further analysis revealed teachers' rationales for implementing these particular methods, as well as the factors that influence teacher's rationales. The themes emerging from data analysis impacting teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales were found to be: the band program set-up, performance versus best practice, issues around subject legitimacy, school division policy, and values within instrumental music education. This chapter will present on each of the themes impacting teachers' rationales separately. However, first the stage must be set by identifying teachers' existing practice.

Existing Practice

To determine teachers' rationales for the methods they are using for assessment and evaluation, it is important first to determine what methods teachers are currently implementing in their band classes. Analysis showed teacher participants in this research are using a combination of traditional methods and alternative methods for evaluation and assessment. Traditional methods can be considered to be such things as paper-pencil tests and assignments, evaluating student behaviors, or the maintenance of teacher autonomy on evaluation decisions. Alternative

methods can include such things as the use of computer software like Smartmusic, use of student self-assessment and self-evaluation exercises, or providing students with choices within evaluation. While each of the participants described using methods that could fall under both the categories of traditional and alternative practice, they certainly varied in the degree to which they are implementing methods within each of these categories.

Most of the band teachers who participated in this research have established categories for evaluation based mostly, or entirely, on musical criteria similar to what was described earlier in Chapter II. Most of the participating teachers have students' marks largely based on performance categories such as: creative/productive, performance, or instrumental techniques. Other category titles being evaluated by teachers vary in name and weight value and include things such as: cultural/historical, written work, theory, aural skills, music literacy, ear training (aural skills), concert reviews, critical/responsive, attitude & values, effort, attendance, appreciation, engagement, and self-evaluation (See Table 2). While most of these categories would be considered to be evaluating musical criteria, there are a few categories that do include non-musical or behavior criteria, as well. In addition, most teachers are including student self-assessment and/or self-evaluation exercises as part of their practice.

Table 2: Evaluated Categories & Weight Values
(The vertical values represent percentage of weight assigned out of 100)
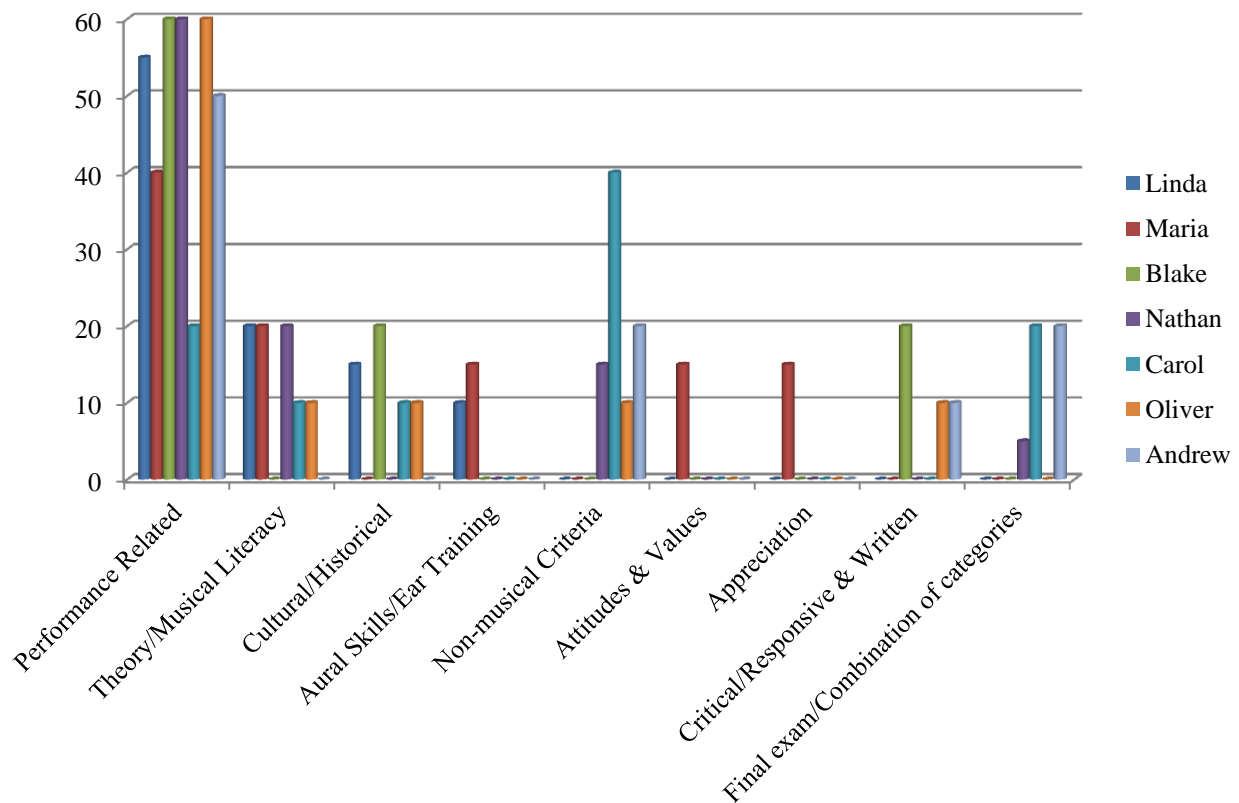
On Evaluating Musical Criteria

The musical criteria that teacher participants mainly addressed in regards to their evaluation practices included practices pertaining to performance related skills, theoretical concepts, and cultural and historical learning. Responses from the participants show that most teachers are using alternative evaluation methods including tools such as rubrics and checklists to evaluate student performance. Tools in the context of assessment and evaluation can be defined as being an object or template that assists teachers and students in determining an assessment and/or evaluation of learning. Examples of such tools can include rubrics, checklists, rating scales, and computer software. Theoretical concepts, which tend to be assessed in written work, are mostly evaluated using traditional workbook style assignments. Several teachers also

described difficulty building connections for students in the areas of theory and cultural/historical to performance.

Teachers were asked to describe specifically how they determine a mark for performance-related evaluations. Performance tasks that are evaluated by teachers involve students performing some or all of the following: scales, excerpts from band pieces, small ensembles or solos, recitals, and sectional group work. Most teachers described using criteria-based rubrics or checklists of their own design for these evaluations. Following are two stories that describe very different methods for evaluating performance.

Maria (11, U, T) is a teacher who has tried using rubrics but finds them to be extremely cumbersome, so instead she said, "So usually what I do, as a professional, I give them a holistic mark on how they did and the mark is usually out of five for each scale." Like Maria, several teachers are using a rubric or some form of what she refers to as holistic marking, to evaluate various performances. The holistic marking will often involve breaking down each performance into weighted categories such as tone, note accuracy, and rhythm accuracy to determine an overall mark on a single performance or skill.

Oliver (25, U, T+) uses a different approach when evaluating scales and other performance items. His students have a required list of scales to accomplish over the course of the year and that list is simply either complete or incomplete, and students can make as many attempts as it takes to complete them all. Oliver described his performance evaluation procedure:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): If you don't have it, go away and practice it and come back and play it. We'll have a test day but if you didn't get it, come back and get it when you can.

Catch me before class or after class; the idea being that I want them to finish them all. Further Oliver is one of the few teachers who indicated he allows opportunity to retest saying, "if you're prepared to retest, I'm prepared to mark it." Only two other teachers indicated taking an approach as described by Oliver which uses a checklist in combination with unlimited attempts in order for the students to fully attain the desired level of performance.

Several teachers are using written assignments or tests to assess and evaluate theoretical concepts. Andrew (13, U, T+) and Carol (26, U, I) expressed difficulty in building a connection between the practical performance concepts and the theoretical concepts for students. Andrew described the connection problem thusly:

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Andrew (13, U, T+): The theory and written work which is difficult to administer….It's often disjointed from the repertoire, and I know you want to always kind of, oh we're working on this and it has multiple key changes, so that should be our theory; key changes, but maybe you're at a different place, it just seems that it's always disjointed and poorly done.

Andrew's point here is that it can be difficult to relate performance concepts to coinciding theoretical concepts when students may be at a different place in their theoretical understanding at the time. Given Andrew's large student population (one class had around 60 students) it may be more challenging to meet a variety of levels of theoretical knowledge within one piece of music than in a smaller program such as Linda's. Linda (13, R, I) uses a different approach which has students working on theory assignments according to their own individual needs. She said, "they don't all necessarily do the same theory, but they do what they need to do to become a better musician wherever they are at." The difference between Andrew's and Linda's approaches appears to be the focus of the learning itself. While Andrew would like to see theoretical concepts connect to repertoire students study at the time, Linda's emphasis is on individual student needs which recognizes that her students are not at the same theoretical *place* to begin with. Ideally accomplishing both aims would be best. The concern for relevancy is also an issue in other non-performing categories of musical study.

Assessing and evaluating students on cultural and historical learning is an area that can be a struggle for teachers. Blake (8, U, T+) believed he struggles most with the cultural/historical category and making it relevant to student's learning. Rather than make students do research assignments, he has students do a lot of focused listening to key works from different periods of a composer's life and respond through a listening log. Blake explained, "I could give a fact based test, but I don't find that a very effective use of time. This is one area as a teacher I still struggle with." As another approach, Oliver (25, U, T+) spent some time having the students study music history by directing them to internet resources as much as possible which are accompanied by a worksheet to be completed. In addition, Oliver had students do concert reviews which contribute to the student evaluation.

Teachers collect marks on musical criteria for student evaluation using a variety of tasks and assignments. Areas of evaluation largely addressed by teacher participants include

evaluation practices centering on performance skills, theoretical concepts, and music culture and history. It is a different matter entirely for assessing and evaluating non-musical criteria.

On Evaluating Non-musical Criteria

In the past, teachers have been able to include behaviors, or non-musical criteria, as a part of students' evaluation. Current educational theory does not support this, but it remains a challenge for band teachers, to move away from this traditional method. As the data presented below will show, still remaining in some teachers evaluation plans are controversial items such as practice charts, attendance, effort, and attitude. While band teachers' in general appear to be progressing towards bringing some of these topics in line with current educational practice, attendance remains the largest struggle for some band teachers to get their heads around.

On the issue of evaluating practice charts, teachers like Andrew (13, U, T+) have reconsidered how practice charts can be used for student learning and for evaluation. Andrew has moved away from simply evaluating students' practice time at home and instead has students complete their practicing requirements at school. He found it to be a more valid way of crediting students for their individual work because the students have fewer distractions and more pressure to be on-task. There is also more support available to the students because he can pop in at any time to offer help and feedback. Andrew explained, "Parents like it because the pressure is off them; they're not signing any charts. I've kind of taken on that role of administering the practice." More importantly, Andrew was not simply expecting his students to just put in time; he also has students write down exactly what they have worked on during their practice in a practice log so students are accountable for what they are working on during that time. Some teachers continue to use practice charts to evaluate as has been traditional past practice. Other teachers, like Andrew, are moving towards using practice logs to change the evaluated focus of the practice chart. However, in some cases school divisions have taken away that choice altogether. Blake (8, U, T+) is a teacher in such circumstances. He stated:

> Blake (8, U, T+): I don't do practice records because our division doesn't encourage them. I'm not allowed to give a mark out for participation, so that's a big no, no. I'm also not allowed to give a mark out for attitude anymore. So everything has to be formative or summative.

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While this policy has affected Blake's evaluation, he is also supportive of the division policies in this regard and indicates that he is happy that this is not a decision he has to make anymore.

While Blake does not include attendance in evaluation, as laid out by his school division, other teachers are still able to incorporate attendance within evaluation in various ways. For some teachers, regular class attendance is evaluated; for others, it is attendance at students' own concert performances that is included in students' evaluation. Nathan (1, U, T) is a teacher who does not mark students for daily attendance, but does count student attendance for the concert performances that take place during the year within student evaluation. Carol (26, U, I), at the time of the research interview, had this to say about attendance:

> Carol (26, U, I): Of course attendance is a big part of what it is because it's a performance class because you can't perform if you're not there, but you can't really evaluate student's progress on just attendance, so you really walk a fine line.

Carol had marks for class attendance as well as for concert performance attendance. However, since the interview, including attendance in evaluation is a category no longer available within the school division's gradebook system. Andrew (13, U, T+) allocates 50% of students' overall total mark to a performance category. Of that 50 %, he sets aside 20% of this category specifically for festivals and concert performances. For the performances, students are expected to both attend and follow-up with a review of their group performance to acquire the marks for this particular section of the overall mark. Oliver (25, U, T+) described conversations he has had with students in regards to attendance:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): …in an ensemble, part of it is being there to play your part and contribute to the group. It doesn't help when you have a student who says; yes I'm ready for the concert next week. Yes, but you haven't been at the last four rehearsal. Yes, but I know my parts. But that's not good enough because we haven't had you there to fit your parts into the whole. So I still feel that, in a sense isn't that engagement? If I'm not coming to rehearsal, am I engaged in the activity that's going on?

Andrew (13, U, T+)'s reference to the phrase, *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*, is a truly fitting description of what a band is. As teachers pointed out, although we evaluate students as individuals, the performance is accomplished as a group. While it is possible some students may perform well as individuals and yet poorly in a group, from my own teaching experience I would say it is more common that students will perform better as a group than they

will as individuals. Blake (8, U, T+) speaks of a similar experience in classes. He has student evaluation include an overall group evaluation, and describes it as, "I also give the band an overall grade for their performance so that counts as their summative evaluation." Further Blake explains the impact of the group evaluation on individual evaluation as, "mark(s) will be bumped up due to our overall performances, because generally as an overall mark, with our concerts and stuff, that comes up usually pretty good because my bands play." This would suggest Blake's students tend to be more successful in performance as a group than as individuals.

Andrew (13, U, T+) sums up the value of the group and class attendance by saying, "it's difficult to do the course by correspondence. It's pretty much a 100% group work all the time." This approach has led some teachers to consider how they might maintain the value of attendance in their classes and still fit within educational trends.

As mentioned earlier, band teachers are affected by school division policy on assessment and evaluation. Andrew (13, U, T+) and Oliver (25, U, T+) described categories for evaluation they use in an attempt to adapt what they do to meet their school division expectations. Oliver described his adaptation:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): Ok, there's 10%, now I have a thing in there called Evidence of Engagement, and what is that? Well really, that's me sitting down thinking are they on-task in rehearsal, are they prepared for rehearsal, are they trying to make it better and be better every day? They might be one of the weakest members of the band, but they are focused and they're putting forth their best effort every day. They are on time, they can be depended upon to come and if they're not, you find out what the reasons are, and if there's something that looks like a good reason, not an excuse but a valid reason not to be there, then you say ok we can work this out.

Further, Oliver points out, "If I'm not coming to rehearsals, am I engaged in the activity that's going on?" Similarly, Andrew has taken the category of attitude and adapted it to now be daily improvement:

> Andrew (13, U, T+): I think what we have to adapt are the terms, that's why I've gone to daily improvement. Well does the student have all their materials, are they taking care of their equipment, do they have their music, do they have all their parts, are they prepared?

These are but two adaptations teachers have made to comply with school division policy.

Carol (26, U, I), prior to recent changes in her school division, didn't adjust the category name, but rather had generated a rubric for student effort and attitude which was given a small weight value of 5-10%. From Carol's perspective, effort and attendance are linked; "Effort is attendance, too: the effort to get there." Whether teachers include attendance in students' evaluation or not, discussions with teacher participants clearly show that in band class attendance means much more than simply showing up.

Emerging from the data presented here on non-musical behavior evaluation are the tensions that teachers have regarding attendance of their band students. Of the research participants, five incorporated attendance within student evaluation in some format and all of these five addressed tensions around the issue. Two of the teachers who did not describe concerns over attendance issues were both in teaching situations in which their classes were entirely timetabled.

From my own experience it is apparent that including behavior criteria in students' evaluation is becoming less and less acceptable by school divisions as they move towards generating policy or simply discouraging such practice. However, implementing this does not necessarily address the tensions that exist that generate the reasons why teachers, in past or present practice, evaluate these areas to begin with. While some teachers are finding ways to adapt their practice to fit with current educational trends, other teachers are having trouble removing practice charts, attendance, effort, and attitude from their evaluation altogether.

Use of Formative Assessment

All of the teacher participants held high value for teaching situations which involve assessment only. Several teachers described scenarios where some student work is assessed but not evaluated. Teachers also talked about conversations involving ongoing feedback that take place with students. Teachers' assessment practices include using formative assessment up to a reporting period, use of recording and online technology, and ongoing feedback.

In several cases, teachers are assessing student learning using rubrics or checklists up until an end point such as term reporting, at which point learning is then evaluated. In Linda (13, R, I)'s classes, theory work is an area that is assessed, feedback is given, and corrections are done as needed without any marks attached to the work. At the end of a particular unit or reporting period the test that comes at the end is what is evaluated. For performance skills,

Linda does something similar in allowing for much in-class non-marked preparation, and when the students are ready to be evaluated she uses a checklist to determine an evaluation for their learning at that time. Kate (15, U, T), Oliver (25, U, T+), Blake (8, U, T+), and Andrew (13, U, T+) also described similar practices of assessing skills up until the time of evaluation, at which point tests for evaluation are given.

Some teachers are able to use recording and online technology as tools for assessment in their classes. Blake (8, U, T+), Oliver (25, U, T+), and Andrew (13, U, T+) are using an online program called Smartmusic in their classrooms. This online computer program allows teachers to create assignments for students who then record themselves playing the assignments. The software provides the student with instant feedback which measures accuracy of notes and rhythms played. However, the software does not provide feedback on musicality; for this, the teacher is still needed. Students can listen to their recordings, take the feedback and continue to record themselves as many times as they want. Once students are satisfied they can then choose their best *take* and submit that to their teacher for further feedback or for evaluation. Blake can have several students at a time recording tests or assignments on Smartmusic while he continues to teach the rest of the class: "It doesn't interrupt the teaching, it allows them to do that and I can give them continual feedback." Andrew described the impact of Smartmusic on student learning in his classes:

> Andrew (13, U, T+): Now with Smartmusic when they get some feedback, and they determine which assignment goes in. I have students doing it 40 or 50 times, even 60. Now I'm getting their best playing, before I was getting their assignment done; now I'm getting their best playing.

Oliver (25, U, T+) has also seen a positive impact on students' learning since implementing Smartmusic:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): For some kids, boys especially, it's like a video game, it's like, oh I got a 68, I can do better, I can get a high score, and they'll actually go in with a buddy and they'll go after each other head to head, yeah new high score, I beat you. So it's kind of fun that way.

While Smartmusic doesn't assess all the elements of a performance, it is clear that some teachers still find it to be a very useful tool for assisting student learning that doesn't require as much teacher time those more traditional methods would to assess the same skills.

Providing ongoing feedback is perhaps where band teachers excel when implementing current educational trends. All teachers spoke about the giving and receiving of feedback when working with a band as simply being what band teachers do. It would virtually be impossible to direct a band rehearsal without the ongoing use of feedback. Blake (8, U, T+) explained, "We do a lot of formative evaluation [assessment] that doesn't show up on the report card throughout the term." Oliver (25, U, T+) spoke about the need for feedback to be specific, saying, "In terms of feedback, effective feedback, they need to know what steps they can take to get better, and just saying your tone needs improvement doesn't help if you can't tell them how." Oliver further explained:

Oliver (25, U, T+): The feedback is really quick in what we do and ongoing. They need to be regular and ongoing, and formative, and formative assessment can be used in summative assessment, but every time we stop to provide feedback we're helping them to get better.

It is the immediacy of the ongoing feedback approach that Oliver likes.

The other participants also spoke of the importance of providing ongoing feedback to students. For example, Maria (11, U, T) also saw the value of feedback not only for the students but for herself, as well:

Maria (11, U, T): Well, it plants how you're going to instruct them, it plants how we're going to give them the next sentence out of our mouth, completely depends upon what we hear and what we see, but that's just continually. I think we are constantly shaping our decisions based on the information we receive from the students so the students can move forward and become better musicians themselves.

In similarly positive terms, Linda (13, R, I) said:

Linda (13, R, I): I do assessment all class, every class. Every time the students stop playing I either assess how it sounded, what they've done, or I get them to self-assess themselves or peer assess each other. So there is ongoing feedback because that's what makes them better.

Nathan (1, U, T) described how well he gets to know his students through the use of ongoing assessment:

Nathan (1, U, T): …I feel especially if I get about more than half way through the year I feel very comfortable that I know what each one of my students is capable of. I can't put

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a mark on that, but I know where they are so if I give something to them, I know kind of beforehand what we're going to have to do here, I know this, and I know this student is going to need extra help with this.

Andrew (13, U, T+) uses his daily improvement category as a source of feedback through a self-assessment exercise using a rubric. Sometimes the students fill it out, sometimes Andrew fills it out, and sometimes he adds comments for feedback, which often leads to back and forth communication between teacher and student. This exercise is completed without a number attached to it until reporting time at which point the rubric is used to evaluate the students' overall daily improvement.

Formative assessment strategies are highly valued by band teachers. Using formative assessment up until term reporting, use of technology for assessment, and incorporating ongoing feedback into classes are methods band teachers need no convincing as to their effectiveness. In particular, ongoing feedback is a significant part of running a rehearsal.

Analysis showed that the teacher participants are implementing a variety of current practice assessment strategies such as rubrics, check lists, and feedback to assess and evaluate musical criteria. Some teachers are also incorporating non-musical criteria under weighted categories for evaluation. Table 3 provides an overall view of the various types of assessment and evaluation methods teachers identified as being used within their individual practice. Most teachers base the largest portion of their evaluation on categories of performance, and are attempting to incorporate student self-assessment exercises (to be discussed later) in one form or another. An area of assessment that band teachers seem to value and perhaps excel at is the use of ongoing, descriptive feedback. There is less uniformity when the participants discussed the rationale behind their practice.

Table 3. Assessment and Evaluation Methods[3]

Method	Playing Tests	Theory History	Concert Reviews	Practice Charts	Comp-osition	Attend-ance/ Behavior	Rubrics Criteria Check	Aural	Self-Eval	Self-Assess
Linda	•	•					•	•	•	
Kate	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	
Blake	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•
Maria	•	•					•	•	•	
Nathan	•	•	•			•	•		•	•
Carol	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•
Andrew	•	•	•			•	•			•
Oliver	•	•	•			•	•		•	

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Rationales Behind Existing Methods

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Analysis of data has revealed several emerging themes which explain these high school band teachers' rationales behind the assessment and evaluation strategies they choose. There are several factors that not only impact what teachers choose to do, but also what teachers feel able to do. Factors considered in the teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales include their teaching situations, determining categories and weight values, external influences and factors, and student influences.

Teaching Situation

The impact a teacher's particular teaching situation has on the choices made for assessment and evaluation, while anticipated to be a factor, turned out to have more impact on

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[3] Since some teachers include attendance, effort, attitude, etc., under a variety of category names and in several different ways, for the purposes of displaying the information in chart form, these are included under one heading of Attendance/Behavior.

As it is difficult to contain all the details of teachers' methods and combinations of methods within a simple chart, what is indicated above reflects the majority of the methods teachers' described currently using in their classes. It is likely other methods exist in teachers' practices, but may not have been identified during the interviews.

teachers' decisions than first expected. In fact, it appears as though this has impacted teacher's rationales more than they themselves had even realized. In particular, analysis shows there is a connection between selected strategies and instructional contact time, class size, facility, and timetable. While these factors influence decisions related both to assessment and evaluation, they have had a particular impact on teachers' decisions regarding evaluation of behaviours such as attitude, effort, and attendance, as well as the use of practice charts.

Because I did not want to make assumptions about what would impact teachers' rationales and what would not, teachers were asked to describe the socioeconomic conditions of their school population. While socioeconomic conditions may be a factor for some teachers in some teaching scenarios, it was not found to have an impact on the rationales of the teachers who participated in this particular research.

Instructional time and class size

Looking at the teaching situations of the teacher participants one can see how instructional time and class size impact their assessment and evaluation decisions. Within the stories of these four teachers there are three very different teaching situations, and each impacts assessment and evaluation decisions in different ways.

Kate (15, U, T) and Maria (11, U, T) are in very similar teaching situations, and were the only teachers of the research participants to be in a co-teaching scenario, which has its own implications on teachers' rationales (to be discussed later). Both Kate and Maria described having large classes and large overall band student population, and would have instructional time timetabled with each of their classes every other day. Kate described her class sizes:

> Kate (15, U, T): We are very fortunate at George Bryant Secondary School, we have a huge program. There are 500 students in the music program so we have two full grade nine bands and in each of those sections I would have probably 30-35 kids per section. In grade ten I have about the same, well actually about 40 kids per section next year. Grade 11 we have three sections of about 30 kids each, in grade 12 about the same, about three sections of about 30.

The situation was similar for Maria (11, U, T). Notable about the teaching scenarios of Maria and Kate is that they can rely heavily on the use of ongoing feedback for assessment. Both Maria and Kate (who are each co-teaching with another teacher) described situations in which

one teacher can be floating around the class listening, assessing, and providing feedback and support to students while instruction from another teacher continued. Kate explained:

> Kate (15, U, T): So between the two teachers that are usually in the room at the same time, we assess a lot just by kind of listening to the kids or sitting in among the sections and kind of mentally earmarking which ones need a little bit more help than others, or which ones are doing really well, and one of us can pull them out and kind of help them that way.

A co-teaching situation allows opportunity for more immediate and effective individual assessment, feedback, and support for students that one teacher on their own in a band class would not be able to accomplish with classes of this size.

> Linda (13, R, I) teaches in a very different situation. Linda currently teaches band in a rural itinerant setting with six schools and communities, half a day a week in each school. Unique to Linda's perspective is that prior to the eight years she has spent teaching rural band she also taught three years in one urban school setting. Her unique perspective of having taught in both rural and urban settings is indicated in the following excerpt:

> Linda (13, R, I): Teaching in an urban school in Wernerville with many students, I had to mark very differently than I do when I moved to the rural setting and I had much smaller class sizes and different amounts of time with the kids, so that had a very big change on the amount of assessment I could do as well as the amount of evaluation.

Further Linda explained more specifically the impact of class size and instructional time on her assessment and evaluation methods:

> Linda (13, R, I): If I had to go back to what I was doing in my previous job I wouldn't do the assessment I did as a 1st, 2nd, 3rd year teacher, and evaluation as well. I'm much better at both of them, I understand better the difference between them, but I couldn't do anything close to what I'm doing now with my smaller class sizes. I can do far more assessment and evaluation just because I'm dealing with less students. The students get a lot more of my time and energy and feedback therefore than if I had a class of 30 every 45 minutes, so it is going to be very dependent on the number of students, and the program you're in, and the students' abilities.

Notable about Linda's story is that although she only sees her students for one class a week, she believes she can accomplish *more* assessment with her students due to the smaller class sizes.

This further supports the implication of Kate (15, U, T) and Maria (11, U, T)'s co-teaching scenarios on the effective use of assessment as it pertains to student-teacher ratio.

Like Kate (15, U, T) and Maria (11, U, T), Blake (8, U, T+) and Andrew (13, U, T+) also teach in urban, one-school settings. Andrew, with a Band 10, 20, and 30 combined class of 65 students described how his school administration has recognized the effect a class of this size can have on his teaching practice by considering it to be two class sections taught at the same time. As a result, his administration gives him a class off in lieu of teaching two in one. Blake spoke about the effect limited instructional time would have on his rubric co-construction practices if he wasn't in the timetabled situation that he is. In particular he connects those limitations to outside performance expectations saying, "yes, if you see your kids once a week, there's no co-construction going on, because there's a community expectation that your band plays; it's not like math class." Further, while teachers in itinerant positions did indicate that they do incorporate theory and aural skills assessment and evaluation in their teaching, Blake does believe his assessment practices in these areas would be significantly impacted by reduced instructional time, and again connects his reasoning to performance expectations. On incorporating theory and aural skills assessment in a non-timetabled setting, Blake says, "it's hard though if you only see students once a week, you're not going to do that because your job is predicated on that performance whether you like it or not."

Timetable and facility concerns

In addition to teacher instructional time and the teacher-student ratio being factors which affect the assessment and evaluation strategies teachers choose, other significant factors emerging through data analysis are the effect of band classes being timetabled and the band room facility. Timetabled band schedules and proper facility space may go hand in hand. The teacher participants in this research who are in timetabled band classes also have appropriate band room space with multiple attached practice rooms. Teacher participants who were in non-timetabled itinerant positions have limited or no access to similar teaching spaces. These factors not only have an effect on what type of assessment and evaluation strategies teachers feel they can implement (including use of practice charts), they also factor into teachers' reasoning behind evaluation of student behaviors, particularly attendance.

Timetabled band schedules influence teachers' assessment and evaluation decisions in several ways. In a timetabled semester setting, band teachers will see their students every second day for a class period. With such frequent instruction at school, there is less need for teachers to rely on regular at-home practice, and therefore practice charts, in order for students to make gains in their learning from week to week. Most of the teacher participants work in such settings, and none of them reported using practice charts at the high school level. However, for the itinerant teacher who has far less frequent instructional time with their students, requiring students to do regular at-home practice is not only a difficult requirement to move away from, it is (as even band teachers acknowledge) also difficult to administer and assess. As an itinerant teacher, Carol (26, U, I) has used practice charts to support her in-class time. She describes how she incorporated these charts as:

> Carol (26, U, I): A couple days a week I made them a practice chart that they had to follow and then they had a couple days a week they had just practice times, they were all assigned to different places to go work on their stuff.

In fact up until just a few years ago, I myself had used practice charts to record required at-home practice. It is important to note that band teachers do not use practice charts because they believe these time charts are the most informative or even valid evaluation tools for student learning. I believe band teachers have used practice charts because they have not felt they had better options for tracking students' practice and crediting them for this work.

Perhaps one of the most interesting themes to emerge from data analysis was the impact of timetable scheduling on how teachers manage attendance evaluation issues. Nathan (1, U, T), Maria (11, U, T), and Kate (15, U, T) were the only timetabled teachers whose full teaching assignment is entirely placed in the regular school timetable. While most of the teacher participants had timetabled settings, several of them still had some teaching assignments taking place outside of the timetable. Band teachers are teaching classes in the early morning before regular classes begin, over noon hours, and after school. All of these times compete for access to students with noon hour clubs and activities, morning and after school athletics programs, driver's education programs, student jobs, and students' own family lives. Some teachers are in settings which lend some options for managing the attendance issue, such as Blake (8, U, T+). Blake does not evaluate students on participation or attendance, which as discussed earlier is also a policy within his school division. While Blake's classes are timetabled, his full band

classes/rehearsals still take place over noon hours. The following conversation between Blake and myself describes Blake's situation, his class attendance issues, and how he manages them:

> Blake (8, U, T+): Each of my bands is separated into two sections. So I have anywhere between 20 and 30 students per section depending on the year and depending on the grade. The students get one hour of instruction every other day, on a two day cycle, and they also get about a 45 minute rehearsal at noon once a week, which they are required to attend.

I asked Blake if his noon hour rehearsal/class is considered part of the timetable or if it is considered extra-curricular; to which he responded:

> Blake (8, U, T+): Well it's kind of a grey area. By administration it's considered extra-curricular but that's the only chance I get to get the students together for a full rehearsal, so I make it mandatory. What the administration has allowed me to do, is with my grade 10's, 11's, and 12's, is the kids bank a spare, so the kids come to five noon hour rehearsals and then they get a spare in lieu of that. So it all kind of works out hours-wise.

While this administrative flexibility acknowledges the students' time I wondered if they also recognize Bake's time. He said, "no, all the main rehearsals that I do are all considered extra-curricular, so I put in over 1100 hours of extra-curr last year." Further, in discussing teaching a class over competitive times such as noon hour, Blake added:

> Blake (8, U, T+): Also we have driver's ed that runs at noon, so my grade nine's and ten's, I'm missing half my band sometimes. I can't punish them for taking a course that they need credit for and I've learned to live with it and that's just kind of the way it is.

Aside from just having learned to live with it, Blake also has a system in place to help minimize the impact of students missing classes, "…my policy with my students is if you miss a noon hour rehearsal you make up a rehearsal, so they have to come in and do a practice in one of my practice rooms." While a student cannot entirely make up for a missed rehearsal by later making up the missed time, it does minimize some of what is lost. In Blake's case his urban setting and band room facility lends itself such that he is able to get students in on their own time to make up for some of this.

The situation is different in an itinerant situation, particularly rural, as the type of solution used by Blake is far less likely to be an available option. This is because outside of school time

access to students is limited, and practice rooms are not likely to be available in all locations of an itinerant situation.

Carol (26, U, I)'s high school band classes in her urban itinerant setting, took place twice a week for an hour over lunch time and while the time was counted as instructional time for the teacher, students were attending class during their free time, and at a very competitive time of day. Attendance was a large enough issue that Carol believed it necessary to attach a large portion of evaluation to it. Carol feels that marking student attendance distinguishes it from the other various things going on during competitive student free time and on the need to mark attendance said, "yes, to give it validity; it's not just an activity." Further Carol explains how students absent from band can't make up that experience or replace it with substitute assignments:

> Carol (26, U, I): …music happens through time, it's what's happening as you go. Well if kids aren't there to experience that they can't write a whole bunch of papers and say I passed band with 80%, and I was only there for the concert. They've got to be there experiencing that.

> Oliver (25, U, T+) is in a timetabled semester setting, but also has some classes taking place outside of the school day. Within his story and experiences, he made similar points to Carols' in regards to the importance of attendance in band and the need for validation. Oliver, when referring to how his high school band classes are mostly timetabled rather than *pull-out,*[4] commented,"…it's also, not at the high school level, pull-out anymore, so that validates it right there." Further, he supports Carol (26, U, I)'s comment made earlier when she pointed out that students need to be there experiencing the music making at the time. Oliver puts it as "…in an ensemble, part of it is being there to play your part and contribute to the group." Andrew (13, U, T+), who has a before-school class (early bird) connects attitude to attendance which is a part of his daily improvement category, and says:

> Andrew (13, U, T+): …and that is so necessary to administer our program especially early bird, I need the kids to be there so this is part of it. If you look at the curriculum, it talks about developing attitude. Attitude is in there.

Clearly attendance is an issue in band whether teachers are in timetabled settings or non-timetabled settings. While evaluating attendance may no longer be acceptable practice, it

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[4] Pull-out programming pulls students out of other classes to have band during that same time.

remains an issue without a blanket solution. As Andrew referred to earlier, attendance has an increased value in a class that relies pretty much entirely on group work. From my own experience as a band teacher, I would concur with this.

In addition to his thoughts on attendance, Oliver (25, U, T+) brings up another perspective on the effect of having his senior class rehearsals early in the morning, outside of the regular school day:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): Frequency of instruction: our senior band which is 20 and 30, grade 11's and 12's, meet three times a week at 7:30 in the morning, on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. I find it works well for our grade 11's and 12's because of a perceived credit squeeze. They believe they need all their maths and sciences, and calculus included in there, and they're counseled to keep their options open which actually means dropping a lot of the electives. So we found that by putting band at 7:30 in the morning a lot of those kids, they appreciate it. For them generally the attendance is quite good, because they want to be there, it's something they've chosen to do. I wouldn't do that with the grade nine's and ten's because I don't think they've developed that same passion for it at that point, and plus they don't drive like the grade 11's and 12's do, those kinds of issues.

From this description Oliver makes two points of particular relevance; first is the perceived credit squeeze he refers to, which has an impact on scheduling classes outside of the school day, and second is the fact that Oliver has the ability to carry out classes at 7:30 am because his students are urban and many have driver's licenses and have access to cars or public transit.

As I did in Blake (8, U, T+)'s interview, I also asked Oliver (25, U, T+) how the morning classes are factored into his own timetable as far as time in lieu. He said, "I should get a second prep, but I kind of gave it away this year because of the move, they would have had to cancel the special music course in first semester." Further I asked, "So your time at 7:30 in the morning is recognized as part of your FTE, but it's recognized as prep time, not as free time?" Oliver's response:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): That's a good question; I've never split hairs with that. Some people would say well your day starts at 7:30 in the morning so you should be done at 2:10 rather than 3:10 that kind of thing, and I guess in one sense it could be or should be but I've never pushed the point because I've always got enough to keep me busy anyway. It hasn't been an issue for me.

Access to an appropriate band room facility is the last emerging factor on assessment and evaluation in regards to the band teaching situation. The band room facility impacts teachers' decisions for assessment and evaluation strategies in that an appropriate band room allows teachers access to space and resources less likely available in an itinerant band setting. With proper space, and practice rooms, teachers Maria (11, U, T) and Kate (15, U, T) in co-teaching settings can have one teacher teaching the class, and another teacher floating and pulling kids aside to help them as needed. Maria and Kate can also have a class divide into sections (like instruments), and send the groups to different work spaces to work on areas of music needing attention specific to their group.

Andrew (13, U, T+) can use his band room space and adjacent practice room space to have his students complete required practicing right at the school rather than at home. Like Oliver (25, U, T+), Andrew (13, U, T+)'s urban setting provides access to students outside of the school day, and his facility is such that students can work individually or in small groups, all at the same time. There are two main differences between these settings and an itinerant band setting. First an itinerant teacher does not have access to most students outside of the school day, particularly in rural areas, because students are often reliant on school buses for their transportation to and from home. Secondly an itinerant teacher will usually have one central location with an appropriate band room facility for weekly rehearsals, but will not have access to such a teaching space for day to day teaching. From my own experience as an itinerant teacher, I have taught classes in everything from boot rooms to kitchens. When these are the type of classrooms available for teaching, it is certainly unlikely that there would be sectional or practice rooms available for doing individual or small group work.

Finally as described earlier, Blake (8, U, T+), Andrew (13, U, T+), and Oliver (25, U, T+) incorporate the use of technology like recording of the bands and then listening to it back for assessment and feedback, as well as the use of a popular online program, Smartmusic. Blake describes how he uses Smartmusic for assessment in his classes:

> Blake (8, U, T+): So for example, if they do a playing test, I use Smartmusic, so they'll do a playing test, and I listen and then give them some feedback, send it back to them and they can use that descriptive feedback to improve.

Blake records his bands often, plays it back and has students do critical reflections on what they've heard. He has also started using an online composing program. Again having

appropriate band room space is a necessity for incorporating such tools. Boot rooms and kitchens are generally not equipped with such equipment. Also, Smartmusic is an online program and in some cases internet access is not available in all the teaching spaces for an itinerant teacher. This impacts not only what band teachers can use for assessment and evaluation in their classes, it also impacts how they carry out their assessment and evaluation. In particular the result of using recording systems on a regular basis and the online Smartmusic program is that students can record tests and assignments as many times as they like. They can then choose which recording they wish to submit to their teacher, an option largely unavailable in an itinerant setting without the necessary space in each school and internet access. In Linda (13, R, I)'s itinerant situation, she would never have enough time to have each student attempt an exercise several times before evaluation, so she is limited to only give students repeat chances when absolutely necessary. She describes her protocol for retries as:

> Linda (13, R, I): Not unless it's a total disaster. The odd kid if they really crash and burn for some reason or they were kind of sick that day and couldn't actually breathe or something, but if I said every kid could retry, I'd spend all my time evaluating and that's not the purpose.

Instead Linda's evaluation reflects a picture of where a student is at, at that particular time.

A teacher's specific band program set-up has a significant impact on what assessment strategies can be used, as well as how the teacher carries out assessment and evaluation of their students. In summary, data analysis identified instructional time, class size, facility, and timetable to be factors which, individually or in combination, influence teacher's decisions made for assessment and evaluation practice. Of particular note, is the impact of timetable on teachers' decisions regarding evaluation of behaviours such as attitude, effort, and attendance.

On Categories and Weight Values

Part of teachers' rationales for evaluation decisions are revealed in the categories and weight values they establish for students' evaluation. Data analysis identified two main influences on teachers' thinking: how instructional time is distributed, and the view of band as a performance-based class. Other factors included the impacts of being a first year teacher, school division policy, and working in co-teaching scenarios.

Most of the teacher participants in this research view band as a performance-based class which influences how they spend their instructional time and how they weight their evaluative categories to determine students' marks. Categories for evaluation are established by the school division for Linda (13, R, I) and Blake (8, U, T+). They are to use the Arts Education Aims as their categories for evaluation, which are: Creative/Productive, Cultural/Historical, and Critical/Responsive. Under those categories, Linda establishes weight values according to the time in class she spends instructing topics within each of those categories. Similarly, Oliver (25, U, T+) equates the most weight value for evaluation to the areas he spends the most time on in class. He explains his rationale:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): I think the largest mark, the 60% around performance, and again I don't mean playing a performance, but anything that you do is a performance when you put your horn to your face, but the development of those performance skills. That's by and large what we do in the class, so I think I by and large put the most marks on that.

Although teachers such as Linda (13, R, I) and Oliver (25, U, T+) use a weighting system based on time spent in class, not all teachers are in a position to use this approach.

For Maria (11, U, T) and Kate (15, U, T), determining evaluation categories and weight values is not an individual decision, since they are both in co-teaching settings that involve three band teachers. Together, they have decided to base their evaluative categories on the foundational objectives in the Band 10, 20, and 30 curriculum. Their categories are aural skills, music literacy, instrumental technique, attitudes and values, and appreciation. Maria explains how the performance-based curriculum influenced the largest weight value allocated to evaluation:

> Maria (11, U, T): But the 40% one for instrumental technique, we really made a conscious decision to make that one worth the most because that's the practicalness of our curriculum, that is what we are doing with our performance-based curriculum and you can't progress, at least we thought, in that performance-based curriculum unless you have the individual instrumental technique to facilitate musicianship which is the music literacy, the aural skills, all of that kind of gets put together to create this product; our performance.

It would seem that one thing these teachers were in full agreement on was that skills directly related to the actual performance should carry the most weight value within student evaluation.

Blake (8, U, T+) would agree that the technical, practical skills are key to progress. He explains, "There's basic fundamental things that all music students need to be able to do otherwise you can't go to the next level." Carol (26, U, I) points out that if performance is most important, attendance must therefore also be important, and says "…it's a performance-based class, so being there for the performance and preparation of the performance is most important. That's why I think I can support using attendance as a valid way of evaluation for performance." Andrew (13, U, T+) also views band as a performance class. "Then the most weight for me lies in the technical and practical skills, so that's 50% is their playing which is really what I think we're doing in band; it's a big part of it." Further Andrew explains his overall rationale as:

> Andrew (13, U, T+): I think the rationale comes from the foundation of our job is to read the curriculum and interpret the curriculum. It's a document, but depending on how you read it or what your views are, that develops your weighting.

Andrew (13, U, T+) recognizes that his rationale for his decisions comes from his personal views combined with his own interpretation of the curriculum.

Nathan (1, U, T) is in a unique situation compared to the rest of the teacher participants and offers a realistic viewpoint on how his evaluation plans were established. As a first year teacher he entered his first job on a replacement contract for another teacher and therefore chose, for the most part, to maintain what the previous teacher already had in place. Further to this rationale, Nathan adds, "I think if I was taking over even full-time in that position, I probably would have done the exact same thing because you're so busy that first year just trying to figure out everything." I had the same experience myself in my first year of teaching. I started with what already existed and gradually implemented adjustments over following years.

The teachers established categories for evaluation in different ways: by school divisions, as a group of team-teachers, and individually. A teachers' perspective of band as a performance-based class is the most significant factor contributing to most teachers weighing performance skills and abilities at high values for evaluation. Also impacting teachers' rationales for establishing categories and weight values are the new teacher status, division policy, and co-teaching scenarios.

External Influences and Factors

Teacher participants were given a list of potential external influences and asked to describe how they might impact their assessment and evaluation rationales. This list of potential influences included: societal values, recent political pressure for both teacher accountability and for measurable learning, subject legitimacy, school division policy, parents, personal values, and educational research. While societal values appear to have little influence on teachers' rationales, several of the other influences listed impact teachers' thinking to varying degrees. Of the items listed, the most influential was almost unanimously one's own personal values.

School division policy and expectations

As discussed earlier, Linda (13, R, I) and Blake (8, U, T+) have had their assessment and evaluation strategies influenced by policy established by their school divisions in this regard. Carol (26, U, I), at the time of her research interview, felt unmoved by division policy. She explained, "School division policy, I've learned to disregard that over the years. Really, just because somebody at the division comes up with an idea doesn't mean it pertains to you." Since the interview, she has had her evaluative decisions affected by what a computerized grade book system allows and does not allow. Conversely, Oliver (25, U, T+) believes that although he is not currently directed under official policy, expectations are enough:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): I say even small p policy like you've written it there, it's not the threat of somebody waving a stick, the school division is expecting it of its teachers and the province Sask Learning through curricular things, and it's good practice too, it just seems to be good practice.

Carol and Oliver hold very different views on what is required of them and what is expected of them.

Accountability and subject legitimacy

When discussing political accountability for measurable learning and subject legitimacy, the two topics appeared to be related, and nearly all teacher participants felt influenced by both. Many of the teachers had made some interesting comments on this point. Kate (15, U, T) spoke about accountability and legitimacy saying:

> Kate (15, U, T): So I think mostly to legitimize things a little bit, and make sure that what we're doing like I said has some accountability to it. So and so didn't meet this criteria

and this is what happens when you don't meet the criteria this is your mark, and it's all

laid out and it's very easy to back up.

Similarly Blake (8, U, T+) talked about how the lack of value for Fine Arts generates a struggle

to be considered amongst the core subjects, which influences how he determines evaluation.

Blake put it as:

Blake (8, U, T+): Depending on the community that you're in I think as music educators

we're always fighting to say we're core, and arts are core. So I have tried to legitimize or

at least make my assessment more legitimate because of that. From the administration

standpoint, I feel pressure to show that these are concrete marks, this a concrete

evaluation process, this is a concrete assessment process, I can rationalize my job, my

program, and my kids' marks, and the reason for our existence.

As an itinerant teacher, Linda (13, R, I) at times has to actually respond to people that she is a

real teacher, and says "and it is a class, and I'm a teacher." Having been an itinerant band

teacher myself for over 13 years, I too at times have had to point out that I am indeed a real

teacher teaching a real class. In fact last year I was asked by a fellow staff member whether I

even had a teaching license. While nearly all participants spoke to their rationales having been

affected by accountability and subject legitimacy issues, Nathan (1, U, T) holds an admirable

level of confidence in this area:

Andrew (13, U, T+): …I feel very strongly that I can walk very confidently with what I

do and defend it in any way and not because I feel like I really have to dig in and find

something. I feel like if someone has a question about something, I will prove the

significance of this without feeling like I'm just dying or having trouble bringing up

something.

Andrew perhaps summed it up best with his thoughts on accountability and how it affects

legitimacy. He said, "The political accountability, that's what I was getting to, we've got to just

figure it out as the trends change. We have to fit those trends, otherwise we lose our integrity;

we lose our subject." The idea of teachers having to "figure it out as trends change" is one that is

likely affecting teachers in *all* subject areas.

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Parents

Most teacher participants expressed that parents also have an impact on their assessment and evaluation rationales. In particular, teachers feel accountability pressure from parents not only to justify students' marks, but also to produce fine, quality performances. Kate (15, U, T) described the pressure for performance quality as: "That performance to me is like the Grammy's, it needs to sound good because that's what the parents hear, and that's what your administrators hear, and that's what they base their opinion on." Even in only his first year of teaching, Nathan (1, U, T) has felt the pressure of performance. He explained "Of course the group here at the school, the community, if you go to a competition it always looks better if you bring home gold."

The following exchange with Blake (8, U, T+) shows how being accountable to parents has impacted his perspective on evaluation:

> Blake (8, U, T+): I stay away from placing judgement on attitude, attendance, anything that can't be quantitatively marked. I just think if you can't rationalize it to a parent, when a parent comes to me and says how did my kid get their mark? I don't want to say, I just picked a mark.
>
> Kendra: So you have to go pretty objective on everything?
>
> Blake (8, U, T+): That's what I try and do. This is what we do, here's a mark, here's a mark, here's a mark this is where your kid is at, if you want to ask me about their attitude and attendance, I'll tell you.

From this exchange, it can be seen that parental involvement is a factor in the current trend around teacher accountability.

Maria (11, U, T) identifies what she believes to be a factor behind parent pressure when it comes to evaluation and says:

> Maria (11, U, T): Parents want to know information so that they can help their student succeed, parents want to know information so that their students can get the scholarships, especially in band they have a huge demand of having a mark over 90% in band.

Parent pressure can be an influence on band teachers to both produce high quality performances, and simultaneously maintain solid evidence in the form of measurement data to justify students' grades. Ironically, all those who listen to a performance by a band and determine whether the

band performance was moving or out of tune, do so with their ears and their emotions, not their calculators.

Professional development, research, and colleagues

Several of the teacher participants acknowledged professional development experiences such as the Saskatchewan Music Conference, educational research and professional reading material, and fellow colleagues as having an influence on their assessment and evaluation rationales. Andrew (13, U, T+) said, "most of my readings would probably be on music education research." Maria (11, U, T) specifically credits conversations resulting from research as an influence. She puts it as "What is good assessment, what are good assessment practices; and those dialogues that come out of the research has greatly influenced me." Blake (8, U, T+) also does a lot of professional reading, but was the only participant who credited his mentors and colleagues as being the *most* influential on his thinking. Blake, who put in over 1100 extra-curricular hours last year, explained:

> Blake (8, U, T+): I think I'm lucky with the schedule that I have that it affords me the ability to do some of the things that other programs don't have the chance to do. So I'm nothing special, I'm just in a fortunate position, and my mentors and the people that I've surrounded myself with have allowed me to become the teacher that I am now.

Maria (11, U, T) also highly credits her peers as being influential on her thinking; in particular, she said that she has learned much about assessment and evaluation from having taught other subject area courses besides band throughout her career.

Personal values

All but one teacher participant responded that personal values had the most influence on their assessment and evaluation rationales: for some personal values referred to those they held in music education, while for others they referred to values they held for children. Teachers' personal values shape their teaching philosophies, and influence how they interpret the curriculum. Maria (11, U, T) says:

> Maria (11, U, T): Personal values; that is probably the most influential I think, especially when you're first starting because you have this philosophy in music education. This is what I believe, this is what I want my students to believe, and how does that affect your

assessment? It hugely affects, because what you believe is important is going to be

assessment, is going to be weighted heavily, all those biases come in to there.

Maria's point about the influence of personal values particularly when a teacher is early in

his/her career appears to be true for Nathan (1, U, T), as well. He claimed, "I have a feeling this

will probably change as the years go on, but right now it's probably personal and educational

values, just because that is what I'm most familiar with now." It would be interesting to see if

this does indeed change for Nathan as he gains experience, given nearly all the other teachers

who are either mid-way through or late in their career at this point still indicate the most

influence comes from their own personal values.

In fact, Linda (13, R, I) would indicate that her personal values became more of an

influence the further she progressed in her career:

Linda (13, R, I): The most influence is probably, as I've gotten older and more confident

as a teacher, is my personal values; what I think is important, what I want my band to

sound like, and what I need to do to get them to that point…

Further through member checking, Linda described how her values impact her approach to

teaching. She says she is not teaching kids to be professional musicians. Rather, she is teaching

them to work as a team, be respectful, be better people, and be better community members. She

also believes her students will cope better in life because they know how to manage their time,

work with other people, and will work to a higher standard. A contrast appears to exist here as

Linda's first comment refers to her personal values within music education, while later her

values reflect more of what she wants for children in general.

Carol (26, U, I) would also indicate that her personal values are still a significant

influence even late into her career, "Personal values, to me my personal values have shaped the

way I evaluate." When discussing this particular idea during member checking, Carol linked

personal values back to legitimacy and validity, saying, "it is possible that part of our personal

values is to hold validity in what we do." She continued to suggest that when teachers talk about

legitimacy, they are really saying they want others to validate what we do.

Andrew (13, U, T+) explained how his personal values and interpretation of curriculum

works in combination to form his rationale:

Andrew (13, U, T+): Personal values; probably the greatest power for the rationale of

assessment is personal values or I guess my interpretation of the curriculum…What I

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read and what I view as the main parts then becomes part of my rationale for assessing and evaluating and then what I think the program needs. That's really my job is to take those things and blend it together, the curriculum and the program, and figure out what should be assessed and evaluated.

Oliver (25, U, T+) pointed out that music is much more than playing the notation correctly:

Oliver (25, U, T+): It is possible to play the notes, rhythms, articulations, dynamics, and phrasing correctly and not make a whole lot of music. And the dangerous thing is (it's not my saying), we assess what we value, and that's a damning indictment because ultimately musical expressiveness is none of those things.

While nearly all teacher participants indicated they believed their personal values had the most influence on their rationales for assessment and evaluation, there was one participant who indicated otherwise. Blake (8, U, T+) described his largest influences as, "I would honestly say that my musical mentors have had the most influence on my thinking, and then second to that current educational practice." For Blake, personal values wasn't even in a close second.

There are many external influences that impact a teachers' thinking. Impacting teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales are: political accountability pressure for measurable learning, subject legitimacy, school division policy, parents, personal values, educational research, and added by the participants, mentors and colleagues. Of the influences listed, the most influential for all but one of the teacher participants is their own personal values.

Student Influence and Involvement

Students contribute to assessment and evaluation in band classes both directly and indirectly. Teacher participants indicate students are involved with the feedback and assessment process in rehearsal settings, through self-assessment and self-evaluation exercises, and in some cases are given choice within their tests or assignments. In addition, analysis revealed a common desire amongst teachers to ensure all students feel successful about their learning. This appears to have an indirect influence by students on teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales.

Student involvement through feedback

All teacher participants spoke about involving students in the assessment process through the use of feedback, particularly in full band rehearsal settings. Some teachers are also including

students by using co-construction techniques to generate rubrics used in evaluation, and some collect specific feedback from students for the purpose of bettering students' overall classroom experience. Some teachers described how the students impact their assessment and evaluation rationales more than the students likely realize.

In a band rehearsal setting, it would be nearly impossible to not include students in a process of ongoing feedback. In fact, communication between the conductor and the musician is so imperative to the overall success of a performance I would suggest that involving students in a rehearsal is rather automatic for the band teacher. That's not to suggest students cannot be involved more. Carol (26, U, I) described this automatic method of interaction, "Well evaluation, you don't think of it in that way, but we do use students' input all the time during rehearsal time, so that's immediate." Oliver (25, U, T+) talks about how he involves students in the rehearsal and the affect it has had on his thinking in regards to assessment and student learning:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): So involving them in the rehearsal process is good, even in so far as stopping a rehearsal and rather than fixing it, I'll say ok why did we stop? Why should they make musical decisions if we never give them the opportunity? That causes us then to think, we have to change the way we think. If its performance based, I can rehearse them much more efficiently than they can rehearse themselves. So am I prepared to let go of that in the interest of them gaining those skills?

Similarly, Nathan (1, U, T) also discussed exchanging efficient rehearsing for effective student learning and poses the question, "Do you tell them what's wrong, or do you ask them what was wrong?" Further, Oliver described one of his objectives of involving the students is to get them listening more to one another and less to him:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): You can tell people what to do or you can just say; folks we need to listen here. Can you hear the melody? Because I can't hear that at the front here and just make them more in tune to listening not to me, but one another.

Blake (8, U, T+) explained how his view of the role of students in the class compared to the role of the teacher has changed over his career, "I used to think it was 90% of the director and 10% of the kids, and now I really believe it's 90% of the kids, and 10% of the director." While teachers are involving students in the assessment and feedback process during rehearsals, sacrificing

efficient rehearsals for effective learning becomes increasingly more difficult for teachers as performance dates draw closer.

Four teachers, Nathan (1, U, T), Kate (15, U, T), Blake (8, U, T+), and Maria (11, U, T) described having used co-construction techniques for developing rubrics with students. Maria described her role in the co-construction process, "I mean I help guide, but we kind of do a brainstorm on what's important in a musical performance, and then I kind of group what they've come up with." For Blake co-construction is a frequent exercise incorporated into his classes. However, for other participants, students are not involved in this process as often as teachers would like them to be.

Regarding use of co-construction techniques in his classes, Nathan (1, U, T) said:

Nathan (1, U, T): Yes, I try as much as possible, or at least if we can't design it together, I'll show them well beforehand what I'm looking for, they should have a good idea as to how they got the mark that they got.

From all of these excerpts, we can see that the co-construction method can be effective for student learning and a fun way to include students' voices in the assessment process. However, the dilemma of efficient teaching versus effective teaching as described earlier, can also be a factor in considering the use of this technique as well.

Andrew (13, U, T+) is influenced by drawing on feedback from his students in a unique way. Here he describes how the students impact the decisions he makes in an effort to better their overall learning experience in his classes:

Andrew(13, U, T+): The kids are an influence. They probably don't see it because I kind of trick them with the last part of the final assessment; what was your favorite piece, what was the worst piece that we studied? Then I get into, what would you do if you were the band director, what would you do differently; which really gives me a picture of their ideas and what they want to see happen, or ask them straight out, what pieces would you program? It gives me a lot of good feedback, how would you do the practice assignment, is the practicing too much? So I get a lot of good ideas, but they probably don't feel like they have a voice; but they do. I have the impression that I'm working for them, I know I'm hired by the school division, that's my contract, but I'm working for kids, I'm providing a service for them, so they're my employers really.

Whether the students are aware of it or not, Andrew values their input which has not only influenced his practice, but it has also influenced his rationale for the decisions he makes in his practice.

Student choice

Some teachers are giving students opportunity to influence their own assessments and evaluations. As mentioned in Chapter II, Burrack (2002) believes that providing students with this voice allows them to have ownership in the assessment and evaluation process. Teachers are incorporating this in various ways. For example, Linda (13, R, I) has small areas of evaluation that she allows the students to determine a weight value for:

> Linda (13, R, I): At times I have given the older students a few, their theory can be worth whatever they decide as a class, but not more than 20%. I've given them a few, not more than 20 not less than 10, I've given them some small windows, but generally I believe I'm the one who's trained to set up this evaluation, and I'm the one who knows what I'm trying to get in the end, therefore I'm probably the best one to set up the way it's done.

Linda defers to her own professionalism on the issue of student input into the evaluation process. Other participants have different reasons.

Because Nathan (1, U, T) didn't want to make too many changes for the students during his year on a replacement contract, when there were changes he felt were necessary he sought input from the students first. Oliver (25, U, T+) allowed his students in grade 11 and 12 to choose to either play in a small ensemble or play a solo as part of their final evaluation, and upon request considers their requests for the particular piece they would even like to play. Lastly, for the teachers who are working with Smartmusic software, the software in itself allows students choices that will impact their own assessment and evaluation. Earlier Andrew (13, U, T+) described the impact of the choices available to students through the use of Smartmusic when he talked about students recording themselves 40, 50, or 60 times before submitting their assignment. Further to that he said:

> Andrew (13, U, T+): They determine what gets sent in, so they have an important role to play because they're doing the evaluation, but they also have a chance to decide what is evaluated; this is my best, here, this is what I have.

The use of Smartmusic software not only gives students opportunity for choice within their own evaluation, it also appears to self-motivate students to work to their best. Allowing students to contribute when determining weight values for evaluation, types of performance assignments, and which assignments are turned in for evaluation are all ways in which students can take ownership in their own learning process.

Self-assessment versus self-evaluation

Students are having an influence on teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales through self-assessment and self-evaluation exercises. While most teachers attempt to incorporate students' views through the use of this practice, a dissatisfaction with the results and effectiveness of it emerged from the data. Several of the teachers using self-evaluation indicated concerns over some students that evaluate themselves too harshly, while other students do not take the exercise seriously at all. Because of this dissatisfaction, teachers are influenced to keep any weight values attached to it very low, and struggle to buy-in to the practice itself.

Teachers are using self-assessment and self-evaluation exercises in a variety of ways. Linda (13, R, I) had her students evaluate themselves and although she had weighted it very low, she did use the marks the students gave themselves exactly as they gave them. However, she was one of the teachers dissatisfied with the overall effectiveness of the process:

> Linda (13, R, I): The successful students were really hard on themselves, the ones who really work hard were too hard on themselves, and the ones who didn't care enough were too easy on themselves. Therefore the marks were somewhat skewed as to what actually happened.

Maria (11, U, T) does it a little bit differently. Sometimes she had students give themselves a mark, and sometimes they assess and give feedback only. Further, Maria went on to explain the process she has for generating a mark with the students for self-evaluation:

> Maria (11, U, T): One of two things happen, either they give themselves five out of five on everything because they realize it's going to affect their mark on their report card, or we have the super keeners in band right? And they're so hard on themselves and that's why I try to give them my feedback as well and where I see them in the class.

Maria would take the student mark and then compare it to hers, and if she marks the student higher than they marked themselves, she will always give them the higher mark. I probed further

and asked what happens if the student mark is higher than hers. Maria explained how she handles this particular scenario:

> Maria (11, U, T): …I say if it's really close within a mark or two, I will average the two out, that's just kind of how I work it. I said if it's any more than a mark or two, you and I are sitting down with our rubric and we're going to say ok, can you explain to me why you thought this, and I'll explain why I thought this, and maybe we'll come to a better understanding as to what the rubric is actually saying, maybe I'll need to go back and adjust the rubric later on, or maybe you need a little bit more guidance as to what's expected within class so you can make a more informed decision; so I approach it that way.

By using a rubric for self-evaluation, Maria is hopeful that the students will give themselves a mark that would be similar to what she herself would give them. If it's not, Maria looks to make the standards described within the rubric clearer for students to understand.

Blake (8, U, T+) incorporated a combination of self-assessment and self-evaluation strategies and in the case of self-evaluation, also has students use rubrics to determine that particular mark. He described the various exercises he uses thusly:

> Blake (8, U, T+): It depends; it could be something as simple as an exit slip where I'll do, at the end of rehearsal, an exit slip will be on their music stand at the beginning of the rehearsal, what's one thing that went great today in rehearsal? What's one thing that we could do better in rehearsal? That's it. Or it could be a rubric like a self-evaluation rubric after a performance. There may not be a mark attached to that or it may be a very small mark attached to it but it gives me their thoughts. I always change the questions at the bottom; I always have the rubric and then two other questions that they actually have to philosophically write their thoughts on what's going on.

Similarly, Carol (26, U, I)'s strategy involves students answering some reflective questions as well as giving themselves a mark based on a rubric. Carol also feels generally students are too hard on themselves in evaluation. She believes, "most kids are pretty honest when it comes to self-evaluations, in fact they're harder on themselves than you are." In addition, Carol has students respond to questions about what they have learned that semester.

Oliver (25, U, T+) too finds students to be over critical of themselves which is the primary source of his dissatisfaction with the practice so far. He made the following comment on this point:

Oliver (25, U, T+): I've tried this and I'm not happy with how I'm doing with the self-assessment. One of the dangers I perceive is the kid's not taking it seriously, sometimes seeing it as an opportunity to pick up a mark. I find generally when I've done it the kids are harder on themselves than I am.

Nathan (1, U, T) used recordings for students to do a self-assessment of themselves upon hearing the recording back. Using a co-constructed rubric he said:

Nathan (1, U, T): It's basically just a check mark box, sometimes I got them to evaluate themselves right after, sometimes I did it, sometimes we videotaped and they watched it. So lots of different opportunities for them, from not me doing the check marks, but for them to listen to it and really think where they are. Then 99% of the time I just took exactly what they did unless they were way too hard on themselves.

Having incorporated this practice of self-assessment into my own teaching, I have found the focus of self-assessment to be different than that of self-evaluation, which I think impacts the overall effectiveness of the practice. Nathan, in addition to using self-evaluation checklists and marks, also had students complete some self-assessment exercises that do not include a mark, usually after something like a concert performance. Again using recordings and playing them back to the students, Nathan pointed out that in an assessment only scenario pressure is removed and puts the focus on the learning, not marks. He told the students, "There's no pressure on this, just listen. Where do you think our group needs to do the most work on? Articulation, tone, that kind of stuff." Andrew (13, U, T+) has also found the use of self-assessment to be more effective than self-evaluation. He said, "I find students are critical of themselves. They always look for, what am I missing, or what could I get out of it yet? They mark themselves harsh I think." Further to that point, Andrew explained both his rationale for using self-assessment instead of self-evaluation as well as the goal achieved in doing so:

Andrew (13, U, T+): It depends on your rationale. My rationale is I want students self-assessing and thinking through this, not being silly or whatever I put, that then that's my mark. That's not the process that we want, we want students thinking about their playing.

Intended or not, students will perceive the goal of self-evaluation to be to generate a mark for themselves. I believe this changes not only the point of the exercise, but also changes the desired results. By having students complete self-assessment exercises, the pressure of coming up with a mark no longer exists, and there is no reason for students to be anything less than serious and honest about their own thoughts.

The influence of student success

Throughout data analysis an unanticipated theme kept surfacing throughout statements made by the teacher participants. Many of the teachers spoke about the need to ensure students felt successful or empowered about their performance abilities. Initially it was unclear how this factored into teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales; however, through member checking it was determined that this could be considered an indirect student influence on teachers' rationales.

Teachers are not only working towards students' success according to teacher standards and audience standards, they are also working towards students acquiring their own internal feeling of success. Linda (13, R, I) described several times during her interview how important it was to her that her students feel successful about their own playing. This feeling is to be based on a student's own standards for themselves, and could be different for each student. Kate (15, U, T) described how working toward this impacts her assessment and evaluation rationale:

> Kate (15, U, T): So I think for them to feel successful and to feel like they're always improving on something you have to just give them that assessment constantly, and then when they have a good chance of being very successful on the test, that's when you give them the evaluation when I think they are ready to.

When discussing this theme of student success through member checking with Kate, she further described it as attaching more focus to student improvement, or musical growth, rather than their actual final achievement. Maria (11, U, T) made a very similar comment when discussing this theme during member checking. She pointed to the impact of teaching band students for multiple years and building such strong personal relationships as an influence on teacher's values as they pertain to wanting students to feel successful, hold a high standard for the band, and to see growth in the students.

Carol (26, U, I) also spoke to her desire that her students feel successful whether in a rehearsal setting or in an evaluation setting. She said, "to me a good rehearsal or when I'm evaluating kids, you want them to leave feeling good about what they've done, feeling they've accomplished something…." Further, Carol puts words to the overarching objective of her class, which is, "…but really you want kids feeling good about what they did so they come back and want to keep playing music." While I would hope that this is the overarching objective of any class, for band teachers the future success of their classes relies on it.

Blake (8, U, T+) pointed out that students' feeling successful is not based on achieving a gold medal performance:

Blake (8, U, T+): I still think putting a quality performance out is important, I want the kids to feel successful with their performances and feel successful playing the music the way we interpret it, whether that's a gold medal or a bronze medal, I don't really care.

Further, Blake stated that he will make adjustments to his assessment practice to ensure that even the struggling students feel successful. He explained:

Blake (8, U, T+): …I try and do my best to keep even those students who maybe struggle in my program. I may adjust my assessment practice with those students in order for them to feel successful so I do allow students with special needs in my band, I do allow students who need differentiated instruction in my band, and I use the adaptive dimension in order for them to feel successful, and quite honestly I don't think that takes away from the legitimacy of what I do.

It may seem strange for Blake to use the word *allow* when it comes to having students with varying needs in his classes, but there was a time when *disallowing* students with special needs to participate in the performing arts was far more common practice than it would be now.

Lastly, Maria (11, U, T) and Oliver (25, U, T+) referred to this feeling of success as a sense of empowerment for students. Maria described it in the following manner:

Maria (11, U, T): My idealistic way would be for the students to grow and reach their potential no matter what that is for them; that's what I want for my kids, that's what I want for them, and I want them to feel good about it and empowered by it.

Oliver said that he requires students to play all 12 scales for their final exam partially to build the opportunity for students to feel successful, right into their evaluation. He explained how the

important part is not performing the exercise itself, but how the accomplishment makes students feel afterwards:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): Then more importantly, I'll say, how do you feel? They'll say it feels great…but it gives them a sense of empowerment, like I can do this, I feel pretty good about this. That's sort of the key thing, the harder you work, the better you feel about your playing.

Building student empowerment for all students through assessment and evaluation strategies is a lofty goal for teachers, and yet one I believe these teachers are doing without intentionally thinking about it.

The teacher participants in this research are influenced by their students both directly and indirectly. Teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales are influenced by involving students in the feedback and assessment process in rehearsal settings, through self-assessment and self-evaluation exercises, and at times are given choice within their tests or assignments. Perhaps the most student influence on teachers' rationales stems from a teacher's desire for students to not only be successful, but to also feel success and empowerment about their own performance.

Credit/No Credit Idealism

One of the final interview questions asked participants to describe how they would like to assess and/or evaluate their students differently from their current practice but are at present limited in doing so. The responses indicated that many teachers would like to see band move to a credit/no credit system. However, while teachers believed this method would be better educational practice and more practical for their students, most teachers almost immediately qualified this response with the effect a credit/no credit system would have on subject legitimacy.

Analysis of the transcripts revealed that nearly all teachers believed marks themselves to be a hindrance or restriction on their assessment practice. Carol (26, U, I) explained how marks can't always fully represent student performance saying, "Well you're so restricted by the mark, and the mark doesn't always reflect, isn't always attached to the performance." Linda (13, R, I) goes a step further indicating that if she had her way her students would only receive assessments and not evaluation. She described her perspective:

Linda (13, R, I): If I had my way it would be all assessment and no evaluation. I think having to spend time putting an actual grade on everything just to be accountable or just to make an evaluation to put on a report card isn't the most valuable use of my time. It's the assessment; it's the feedback that the kid gets that makes it a far better use of time or makes the student play better which is the ultimate goal.

Linda sees the value of assessment over evaluation. However, unlike most of the other teachers who felt the same way, she did not seem to have the same concern for a loss of subject legitimacy in moving away from evaluation. Other teachers spoke of fears of losing subject legitimacy almost immediately upon expressing their desire to see less emphasis on evaluation and more on assessment. Kate (15, U, T) was one such teacher who expressed a desire to do assessment only for students, but felt evaluation is needed to add legitimacy to the subject.

Some teachers were more specific regarding assessment only strategies and expressed a desire to see band be evaluated using a credit/no credit system instead of numerical evaluation. Again however, this idea was nearly immediately followed up with the impact this system could have on the legitimacy of the subject. This is clear in the following statement by Blake (8, U, T+):

Blake (8, U, T+): So I would love to go to a pass/fail and get away from that pressure of that percentage for kids, but the Ministry and the division just won't let that happen with a credit class, and I want my classes still to be considered credit classes.

As long as governing bodies require marks for evaluation in credit courses, Blake feels his hands are tied. In addition to government and school divisions requiring marks for evaluation, Oliver (25, U, T+) points out that it is also difficult to get parents to accept assessment without evaluation. He put it as, "A class without marks would be interesting, but that's very difficult given that kids have been in the school system and parents expect marks."

Andrew (13, U, T+) also believes a credit/no credit system would be better educational practice, but could result in a loss of subject legitimacy. He explained his perspective and rationale:

Andrew (13, U, T+): I would be pass/fail, that would be great, that would be my ideal; pass/fail. It hits us a little bit on the subject legitimacy because all of a sudden, oh you're pass/fail, you're not the same as English or Math, so that would be a big challenge to overcome, but to do group work 90% of the time, and then assign an individual mark, I

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don't think is the right practice. Because really we're working on so many group

dynamic things, and then when it comes down to the paperwork, its individual marks. I

would like to see pass/fail; you have met the requirements or you have not met the

requirements. Black and white; that would be great.

Most interesting within Andrew's explanation is that he believes a credit/no credit system

presents a black and white method of evaluation. This seems ironically contrary to the popular

notion that *a number* is representative of a precise evaluation. In discussing this perspective of

precision with a committee member, she pointed out that numbers in actuality tell us very little.

She put it as, "They are precise, but what are they precise about?" In averaging all the factors

that go into a final numerical evaluation; musical expressiveness, theoretical understanding,

appreciation, technique, etc., a number may be precise but actually tells us very little about a

student's understanding of music. In particular a numerical evaluation does not tell a student

what specifically they know well or what they could improve on.

Further to the discussion on credit/no credit systems, during member checking, Andrew

(13, U, T+) expressed his belief that, "every subject should be pass/fail." If every subject area

were to implement a credit/no credit, or assessment only system, the pressure to maintain subject

legitimacy would not only be off, it would likely also have less influence on teachers' decisions

made in regards to assessment and evaluation.

Summary

Data analysis was conducted using an emergent grounded theory approach. Themes and

categories were identified and then confirmed through a process of member checking. Emerging

themes identified current existing practices to reflect the use of both traditional and current

methods. The largest influences affecting band teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales

were identified as being the band program set-up, external influences and factors, and the

students themselves. Socioeconomic conditions were not found to have an impact on the

rationales of participating teachers.

Prior to determining teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation decisions, it

was necessary to determine what practices band teachers are implementing. Data analysis shows

the teacher participants are largely evaluating musical criteria. Assessment and evaluation tools

used in existing practices include the use of feedback, rubrics and checklists, and self-assessment

or self-evaluation exercises. While weight values for evaluation varied amongst the teacher participants, most of the teachers described the practical or performance aspects of student learning as being most important to students' evaluation. Most of the teacher participants have struggled to move away from including non-musical criteria within evaluation, with the most discussion generated around the inclusion of student attendance in evaluation.

Data analysis identified band program set-up as an influence on teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales. Teachers' strategies are impacted by the amount of instructional time they have, their class size make-up, the type of teaching facility they have access to, and how their classes are scheduled. These influences are factors in the type of assessment methods used as well as how evaluation is set up and carried out. Of the factors involved in how a band program is set up, most notable is the impact timetabling has on teachers' rationales for evaluating behavior criteria, particularly that of attendance.

Teachers' categories and weight values for evaluation are established in a variety of ways. Teachers view band as a performance-based class, and this view leads most teachers to weight performance categories significantly high in comparison to other categories. Teachers' weight values were also found to be influenced by factors such as being a first year teacher, school division policy, and co-teaching scenarios.

A number of external influences and factors were found to impact teacher's assessment and evaluation rationales. Teacher participants identified being influenced by political accountability pressures, the struggle for subject legitimacy, school division policy, parents, personal values, educational research, and mentors and colleagues. Nearly all teacher participants identified personal values as having the most significant influence on their rationales.

Students have a role to play in influencing teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales. Students are involved in assessment and evaluation practices both directly and indirectly which impact how teachers determine further assessment and evaluation. Students are involved in the feedback and assessment process in rehearsal settings, through self-assessment and self-evaluation methods, and in making choices within assignments and tests. In addition, the data analysis yielded the notion of students indirectly influencing evaluation. Teacher participants' rationales for assessment and evaluation are influenced by a drive to not only ensure students are

successful in their learning, but to also ensure that students themselves have an internal feeling of success.

Data analysis indicated that most teachers believe band students would benefit from a credit/no credit evaluation system. However, while teachers believe this method would be better educational practice and more valuable for students, most teachers readily disqualified the idea because they believe implementing such a system would lower the legitimacy of the subject in the eyes of others. A better solution would be if all subjects were evaluated on a credit/no credit or assessment only system.

In sum, data analysis has revealed themes of band program set-up, performance versus best practice, conflict between subject legitimacy and personal values, school division policy, and values held within instrumental music education, as impacting teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation strategies. Emerging from these themes is the reluctance for some teachers to totally adopt best practice methods. The next and final chapter will discuss the patterns which emerged from the data analysis and emergent theory to explain the phenomenon. As well, I will suggest ways in which these findings can and should impact curriculum.

CHAPTER 5
CONCLUSIONS

While Saskatchewan secondary band teachers are implementing several current alternative assessment and evaluation methods in their classes, it is easier for some teachers to implement these methods than others. To have *all* teachers, band or otherwise, buy in to current best practice assessment and evaluation strategies requires more than top-down policy implementations. Through understanding the assessment and evaluation rationales and the influences that impact the thinking of band teachers, a revised curriculum may adequately address the barriers that currently exist for some teachers. This study's findings suggest that by addressing band program set-up, performance pressures, teachers' inner conflict between subject legitimacy and personal values, school division policy, as well as the values belonging specifically to instrumental music education, secondary band teachers should be better equipped to implement best practice methods throughout their assessment and evaluation strategies.

Findings

The research findings reveal unique insights into teachers' thinking that created the rationale for their assessment and evaluation decisions for their courses. In considering these decisions, Saskatchewan secondary band teachers are juggling multiple pressures which impact their thinking as they determine how best to assess and evaluate their students. In selecting their methods, teachers are impacted by and perhaps limited by the set-up of the band program itself, the pressure of performance versus best assessment practice, balancing subject legitimacy with personal values, school division policy, and holding to values specific to instrumental music education.

On Band Program Set-up

Asking teachers to describe their teaching assignment and class set-up was initially intended to simply be a background question for establishing context. However, these responses on band program set-up had a direct connection to and influence on teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation decisions. This was the case even if they did not realize it themselves. The influence of timetable scheduling, student-teacher ratio, available instructional time, and band room facility were all influences that factored into teachers' rationales. Rationales were not

found to be built on any one single influence, however, but rather on a combination of these influences. In particular, best practice assessment hinges on two combinations. First is the combination of instructional time and student-teacher ratio. If a teacher had a small class (comparative to other subjects areas or fewer), or is in a co-teaching situation, current practice assessment was more feasible even when instructional time is minimal. Linda (13, R, I), having taught in both rural and urban school settings during her career acknowledged that she would not be able to implement her current methods in her former urban position. She explained:

> Linda (13, R, I): I can do far more assessment and evaluation just because I'm dealing with less students. The students get a lot more of my time and energy and feedback therefore than if I had a class of 30 every 45 minutes…

Even though Linda has less instructional time with each of her classes than she did in her urban teaching setting, she still believes she can accomplish more assessment with her present students due to her smaller class sizes.

Second, and most influential, was the combination of timetable scheduling and band room facility. Dkerf (1999) pointed out that music is learned through listening and says that space and a proper acoustical environment are critical for an effective rehearsal room. In this study assessment feasibility was increased when a band room exists that has sufficient space and attached practice or working rooms equipped with recording and studio technology. Timetable scheduling directly impacted teachers' decisions to evaluate behaviors, particularly that of class attendance. Teachers who have band courses happening outside of the regular timetable face attendance issues. For those who are not yet bound to policy in this regard, scheduling band during competitive times does impact whether teachers choose to include attendance within evaluation, in one form or another, or not. Oliver (25, U, T+), who has some band classes at 7:30 am and has attached attendance to an evaluation category called *engagement*, described his perspective for doing so as "…in an ensemble, part of it is being there to play your part and contribute to the group." Andrew (13, U, T+), who also has a before-school class (early bird) includes attitude and attendance under an evaluation category called, *daily improvement* and said, "…and that is so necessary to administer our program especially early bird, I need the kids to be there so this is part of it." In addition, a timetabled band schedule reduced the battle for subject legitimacy and adds validity to the class. Oliver, in referring to how his high school band classes are mostly timetabled rather than pull-out commented, "…it's also, not at the high school

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level, pull-out anymore, so that validates it right there." In other words, Oliver believes that scheduling band within the timetable earns it validity because it implies band is valued the same as other timetabled courses.

In sum, to facilitate best practice assessment methods and meet current evaluation expectations, secondary band classes should be set up to maintain a workable combination of instructional time and student-teacher ratios that would be comparative to other subject areas. Classes should also be timetabled and have appropriate rehearsal and studio space to facilitate performance-based assessment and evaluation for a performance-based class. When these contexts do not exist, band teachers can be reluctant to incorporate assessment practices that will take more time and resources than what teachers have available to them, particularly if they feel the group performance level could be sacrificed as a result. Band classes need to be set up in such a way as to eliminate the need for teachers to work within and students to learn within a *learn to live with it* environment.

Performance Versus Best Practice

Band teachers are under significant pressure to implement current assessment methods, provide students with marks that contribute to acquiring scholarships, and maintain high standards of performance all at the same time. However, as teachers pointed out, although we evaluate students as individuals, the performance is accomplished as a group. In the Saskatchewan band curriculum, both the foundational objectives and learning objectives are largely written for the individual student to accomplish (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). The foundational objectives include: Aural Skills, Musical Literacy, Instrumental Technique, Interpretation/Appreciation/Decision-Making, and Attitudes/Values (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). Learning objectives include such examples as: work towards playing in tune on an instrument, use musical notation to interpret and express musical ideas, and activate the *inner ear* to facilitate interpreting written musical ideas (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). As well, listed as one of the guiding principles for teachers' evaluation plans is that evaluation should be linked to the foundational objectives and should determine the extent to which learning objectives have been achieved (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). Within these learning and foundational objectives students must also meet the Creative/Productive, Critical/Responsive,

and Cultural/Historical aims that are also expected out of Arts Education (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993).

While it is possible some students may perform well as individuals and yet less so in a group, drawing from my own teaching experience, it has been more common that students will perform better as a group than they will as individuals. The holistic phrase, *the whole is greater than the sum of its parts*, is a truly fitting description of what a band is. Andrew (13, U, T+) alludes to this as he described the impact of a student's absence on the band, "Yes, but you haven't been at the last four rehearsals. Yes, but I know my parts. But that's not good enough because we haven't had you there to fit your parts into the whole." However, implementing methods of assessment that focus on student learning can mean sacrificing the efficiency of group productivity for effective learning of the individual. While alternative assessment strategies generally do take more instructional time, Goolsby (1999) pointed out that committing time to such assessment strategies eventually saves time in class. Attaining stronger players as individuals is important to the overall band, but because the band performs together as a group, the band teacher has a time constraint applied to the complexity of teaching music. This creates a tension for the band teacher who must ensure all students are simultaneously becoming better as individual players *in addition* to also becoming better players as a group. While I believe that in the long run, attaining stronger individuals throughout the band does eventually make the whole that much more productive, band teachers and their students can be under significant time pressures to help make that happen.

A concert performance in front of administrators, parents, and community members is quite likely to arrive before the sum of parts has become whole. However, the audience still expects the bands to produce a quality final performance. Kate (15, U, T) described these performance expectations as: "That performance to me is like the Grammy's, it needs to sound good because that's what the parents hear, and that's what your administrators hear, and that's what they base their opinion on." The performance standard of the band and the band teacher would be highly questioned if teachers and students came out on stage and only played portions of pieces because they hadn't finished learning the whole thing yet, or if the band performed a piece played by several soloists while the other children simply wiggled their fingers and lips but did not contribute any actual music making to the performance. The band curriculum does stipulate that performance should be part of the educational *process*, not the ultimate *product*

(Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993). However, saying so does not mean the ears of parents, community members, and administrators will agree.

Miller (1994) described the pressure on band teachers to bring home top results from music competitions and suggests that these results are reflected in job security. He said teachers who receive low ratings for more than one year are not assured a continued working relationship with the school and start looking for another job (Miller, 1994). When discussing the incorporation of theory and aural skills assessment in a non-timetabled setting, Blake (8, U, T+) echoed Miller's beliefs on job security and described how performance expectations would impact his practice, "it's hard though if you only see students once a week, you're not going to do that because your job is predicated on that performance whether you like it or not." Metaphorically speaking, one could think of the final band performance as a standardized test. Intended or not some can perceive the final student band performance as not only an opportunity for the audience to judge how the students are doing, but also how the teacher is doing. While in the U.S. this situation might result in a teacher dismissed and another hired, in Saskatchewan the anxiety around job security rests in the more likely case that a band program would be cut altogether and no new teacher hired.

Oliver (25, U, T+) described the tension he feels regarding the development of students' final group performance versus the development of students' own individual learning:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): Why should they make musical decisions if we never give them the opportunity? That causes us then to think, we have to change the way we think. If its performance based, I can rehearse them much more efficiently than they can rehearse themselves. So am I prepared to let go of that in the interest of them gaining those skills?

This same time crunch to meet expectations can be felt when reporting time is approaching. Even performance preparations can be set aside to meet the deadline for reducing each student's skills and abilities to a number on a piece of paper.

As a teacher myself, it is an overwhelming experience to listen to students individually or in small groups as they are working out their parts, and then to hear the difference when they are put together and the students are supported by all those who sit around them. There is no number that can quantify that. In sum, I surmise that teachers' movement towards full adoption of best practice methods only goes as far as their fears of producing a less adequate group performance allows let them.

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An Inner Conflict

When determining their assessment and evaluation strategies and methods, band teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales reflect influences that teachers are both aware and unaware of in their thinking. It would seem that while teachers seemed largely aware of influences that impact their thinking, they seemed unaware of an existing conflict between subject legitimacy and personal values. While discussing with teachers what their ideal scenario would look like for their band classes, most teachers indicated their interest in seeing band classes go to a credit/no credit evaluation system. Miller (1994) also supported the idea that grades not be assigned in subjective/aesthetic areas such as art and music. However, teachers' responses in this research were almost always immediately followed up with concern that in doing so band courses would lose their subject legitimacy and integrity. Benedict (2006) compared music education to a marginalized society striving to attain the same status and respect of other subject disciplines.

While subject legitimacy was indicated to have influenced their rationales, *nearly all teachers believed their personal values held the most influence on their thinking*. This would indicate two things: first, the issue of subject legitimacy may have more influence on teachers' rationales than they themselves even realize; and second, teachers are balancing two very different perspectives when determining their assessment and evaluation methods. Research exploring teachers' personal values and professional values in England found that a tension exists between teachers' personal values and those that schools demonstrate in practice (Sunley & Locke, 2012). While subject legitimacy would suggest thinking objectively and adapting methods that blend in with or are similar to those of the core subjects, the influence of personal values suggests maintaining uniqueness, subjectivity, and personal preferences. These two influences seem to be polar opposite viewpoints, and while discussing this during member checking, teachers participating in this research seemed to have been unaware of the pull that exists between the two.

The tension that exists between the band teachers' values and the issues they face around subject legitimacy is an interesting phenomenon. Teachers in this research were pulled towards satisfying subject legitimacy concerns even at the expense of their own personal values, despite most participants thinking these values had the most influence on their rationales. The fear of loss of subject legitimacy had a strong hold on band teachers and I surmise that this fear is

generated from a larger fear of cuts to funding for the band program, or even worse, losing the band program all together.

School Division Policy and Expectations

Three participants have had their evaluation practices affected by implementation of policy or procedures by their school division. Policy for these teachers has eliminated their ability to include behaviour outcomes such as attendance or attitude as part of student evaluation. Blake (8, U, T+) is one of the teachers affected by school division policy, "I'm not allowed to give a mark out for participation, so that's a big no, no. I'm also not allowed to give a mark out for attitude anymore. So everything has to be formative or summative." Dzubay (2001, p. 29) described a request for teachers to change the way they teach as "akin to asking them to change who they are, what they value, and how they think."

At the time of her interview, Carol (26, U, I) felt there are times when she feels warranted in disregarding policy. Dzubay (2001, p.4) indicated this perspective is not uncommon amongst teachers and says, "If a teacher receives training in a particular approach to instruction that does not interest her or reflect her current philosophy of teaching, she is unlikely to integrate the new approach into her practice." However, post interview Carol's school division implemented grade book software which does not include behavioural evaluation within it. For teachers to integrate outside regulations with their personal views, they need to understand the importance of this to achieving their own personal goals (Eghrari & Deci, 1989, as cited in Dzubay, 2001). Putting controls in place to determine teacher behavior simply isn't enough. Dzubay (2001) believed teachers need the necessary information and time to internalize the rationale behind new ideas and regulations and to build connections to existing values and beliefs.

As teacher participants have wrestled with the attendance issue in their band classes, some have had more difficulty ridding it entirely from their evaluation strategies than others. Carol (26, U, I), Andrew (13, U, T+), and Oliver (25, U, T+) have all redefined attendance to justify its fitting within their school divisions expectations. Oliver described how he has adapted the term attendance:

> Oliver (25, U, T+): Ok, there's 10%, now I have a thing in there called Evidence of
> Engagement, and what is that? Well really, that's me sitting down thinking are they on-

task in rehearsal, are they prepared for rehearsal, are they trying to make it better and be

better every day?

Further, Oliver showed how attendance is part of this category saying, "If I'm not coming to rehearsals, am I engaged in the activity that's going on?" Carol (26, U, I) had a similar adaptation of the word attendance and described it as, "Effort is attendance, too: the effort to get there." Andrew (13, U, T+) was a teacher who has adapted the term *attitude* to fit school division expectations describing it as, "Well does the student have all their materials, are they taking care of their equipment, do they have their music, do they have all their parts, are they prepared?"

Oliver's (25, U, T+) perspective on the controls or expectations placed upon him was "…the school division is expecting it of its teachers and the province Sask Learning through curricular things, and it's good practice too, it just seems to be good practice." Oliver believes that although he is not currently directed under official policy to follow current assessment trends, the expectations of his school division and the province are enough. However, while Oliver's desire is to adhere to the expectations of his school division and to implement current assessment practices, he was also one of the teachers still struggling to entirely eliminate attendance from student evaluation. Lehman (1998) suggested that non-musical criteria should be reported to parents separately from the academic report.

In sum, behaviors such as effort, attitude, and in particular, attendance, not only have an impact on the individual students' learning, but also on the band performance as a whole. The adaptation of behavioral terms into more current acceptable terms shows that reluctance exists for some teachers to entirely eliminate evaluation of these types of behaviors from their practice. I would surmise that this again comes down to a fear of presenting a performance lacking in quality which could lead to a loss of the band program either in part or in its entirety.

Values Within the Band

Throughout the analysis of data, it became apparent that band teachers hold strongly to certain values that impact band courses in more significant ways than perhaps they do in other subject areas. Band teachers value a standard of near perfect for all students in the band, behaviors such as attendance and attitude, and students' internal feeling of success. How are these values different from other subject area teachers? Music is distinguished from the

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sciences, literature, and other arts in its strength of connection with personal and cultural histories (Swanwick, 2001). Further, another difference lies in the fact that although student evaluation is individual, each student's learning and accomplishments impact the accomplishments and success of the entire group. A band that performs with 95-99% accuracy will sound reasonably good, a band that performs less than that as a group sounds terrible. With the performance pressures that exist, band teachers are *not* working towards ensuring all students pass their class, or even getting most students performing well most of the time. Band teachers are working towards *all* students performing well at every performance.

The high performance standard is what drives the value of attendance for teachers. As mentioned earlier Kate (15, U, T) compared the pressure for performance quality as preparing for the Grammy's because it is the performance quality that will factor heavily into the opinions formed by those who judge, in particular parents and administrators. When students are absent, it affects the accomplishments and achievement level of the entire band. One of my thesis committee members probed further about the impact of student absence on the band performance. My response was that the band performance is likely to suffer if there have been student attendance issues. Because a performance is a team effort, it requires each member of the group to be depended upon to not only prepare their part, but to also be in attendance during practices and performances to play that part. Rather than encourage students with attendance issues to drop band, teachers should tackle the reasons behind the poor attendance instead. When students are absent from either class, rehearsal or performance, they not only miss out on being able to contribute to the group, but they also miss out on their own musical experience. Carol (26, U, I) indicated in her interview and reiterated again during member checking, "music making takes place in time." Students who are absent cannot go back in time and experience or contribute to what has already transpired.

Lastly, teachers' desire for *all* students to have an internal feeling of success is attached to their high performance standard. According to Swanwick (2001, p. 35), "Music is a way of knowing, a way of being in a culture, a way of thinking and feeling." If the band sounds good, the students will feel successful about their performance. Analysis of the data showed that students who care to do well, when involved in self-evaluation methods in their band classes, tend to be over-critical of themselves. Andrew (13, U, T+) was one teacher who indicated his students tend to be over critical of themselves, "I find students are critical of themselves. They

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always look for, what am I missing, or what could I get out of it yet? They mark themselves harsh I think." This would indicate that the students also have high standards for themselves. From my own teaching experience, I would say students are very adept at determining whether they sound good or not. After all, they know first-hand what they sound like when they begin to learn a piece, what it sounds like when it is perhaps 50%, 75%, and 90% of the way to being performance-ready. Perhaps the biggest difference between holding these values in instrumental music education compared to holding them in other subject areas is that it is not just the teacher who holds these values and expectations: the students expect these standards and values from each other, as well.

Emerging from the data presented here on non-musical behavior evaluation are the tensions that teachers have regarding attendance of their band students. Of the research participants, five incorporate attendance within student evaluation in some format and all of these five addressed tensions around the issue. Two of the teachers who did not describe concerns over attendance issues were both in teaching situations in which their classes were entirely timetabled, therefore attendance would be significantly less of an issue.

Band teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales reflect influences that teachers are both aware and unaware of in their thinking. Saskatchewan secondary band teachers' rationales for selection of methods are impacted by the band program set-up, the pressure of performance and best practice, balancing subject legitimacy with personal values, school division policy, and held values specific to instrumental music education. A finding of this study is that while teachers seemed largely aware of influences that impact their thinking, they seemed unaware of an existing conflict between the influences of subject legitimacy and personal values.

Most prevalent in the overall findings is the existence of reluctance by teachers to fully buy in to anything impacting their practice in which they fear could take away from producing a quality group performance. Teachers are aware of the areas of their practice that are not in line with current educational trends and expectations. However, while I would say most of these teachers see the value in these trends, they still remain cautious to change accordingly, whether it is evaluating student behaviors, incorporating more student voice in rehearsals, incorporating student voice in assessments, or satisfying subject legitimacy concerns. Like the fears teachers might associate with the results that can come from high stakes standardized testing, the same types of fears can exist for the future of the band program. The overall theory that emerged from

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this research is that a band teachers' reluctance to fully adopt best practice methods is based on fears of producing less than adequate group performances which is a response to a fear of losing the band program all together.

Implications For Instrumental Music Education

If it is desirable for band teachers to fully embrace and fit in to current assessment practices, at least some teachers will need some guidance to succeed at doing so. Further the findings from this research reveal that band program set-up (timetabling, class size, and access to appropriate facilities) affect teacher ability to implement appropriate assessment for learning. Research findings indicate that band program set-up impacts both assessment and evaluation goals as well as performance goals. Lastly, the findings indicate that changes in evaluation are necessary to mitigate the inner conflict for band teachers in regards to subject legitimacy. The findings also imply that changes need to take place to minimize the impact of an existing inner conflict between subject legitimacy and one's own personal values on teacher rationales. Band teachers should be making assessment and evaluation decisions based on what will make students successful in both their learning and their performance, rather than basing them on limitations of the program set-up or to satisfy subject legitimacy pressures.

While there are advantages and disadvantages to having band courses timetabled within the school day schedule, this research found that the benefits of a timetabled schedule far outweigh the disadvantages regarding the decisions made by the teachers' assessment and evaluation. A timetabled schedule for band classes along with an appropriate music teaching facility allows teachers the ability to incorporate in-depth and frequent assessment methods within their practice. Additionally, the timetable and facility itself lend some legitimacy to the subject, and removes some, if not all, of the perceived need to evaluate attendance and other behaviors not acceptable in evaluation practice today. As the analysis showed, even for the teacher participants with timetabled classes, most of them still had some additional teaching that took place over competitive, non-timetabled periods. Blake (8, U, T+) was one such teacher describing part of his timetable as, "The students get one hour of instruction every other day, on a two day cycle, and they also get about a 45 minute rehearsal at noon once a week, which they are required to attend." Perhaps it is idealistic to suggest that all band classes need to be a part of the regular timetable, but I believe these courses need to be timetabled at least to a significant

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extent. This is not just for the purpose of satisfying subject legitimacy, nor for convenience or efficiency, but absolutely for the sake of student learning.

Band teachers need to be free to make assessment and evaluation decisions for their students that support their learning without the pressure to compromise for the sake of legitimizing their subject matter. Legitimizing music as a subject area, however, appears to be such an automatic part of teachers' rationales that teacher participants did not seem to have an awareness of an underlying conflict between balancing legitimacy concerns and personal values. Blake (8, U, T+) noted how subject legitimacy impacts his rationale:

> Blake (8, U, T+): From the administration standpoint, I feel pressure to show that these are concrete marks, this a concrete evaluation process, this is a concrete assessment process, I can rationalize my job, my program, and my kids' marks, and the reason for our existence.

It would be impossible for most teachers to be completely objective and not be influenced by their own personal values. After all, teachers are not robots. In fact, Andrew (13, U, T+) credited one's personal values as having power, and said, "Personal values; probably the greatest power for the rationale of assessment is personal values or I guess my interpretation of the curriculum." One of my thesis committee members pointed out that these teachers have a "gut" instinct, but the hegemonic belief that only that which can be counted counts interferes with their ability to enact what experience and gut feelings, tell them. I would agree with that. By minimizing (if not abolishing) the need to legitimize their subject area teachers can be allowed to establish assessment and evaluation practices directly connected to student learning and less to a conflict between subject legitimacy and those valuable teacher gut instincts.

Assessment and evaluation expectations are no different for band teachers than for other teachers. It can be a challenge, however, for some band teachers to meet uniform expectations when band programs are not set up in uniform ways. Band teachers' assessment and evaluation practices need to be removed from limitations attributed to their band class schedules and concerns around facility. As well, these pressures associated with balancing the influences of subject legitimacy and one's personal values need to not be part of a band teacher's rationale around student assessment and evaluation. The research findings imply that it is not enough to expect band teachers to adopt recent assessment strategies without addressing the issues that inhibit them from implementing such practices to begin with. A blanket policy simply covers the

underlying issues and does not squash the fears associated with producing a less than quality band performance or the survival of the band program. The band curriculum can be a starting point for acknowledging and addressing these issues.

Implications For the Band Curriculum

The most recent band curriculum was written in 1993. Consequently, it is anticipated that this subject area will undergo curricular renewal in the near future. The findings from this research should be of value when this occurs. For example, curriculum developers should consider how the revised document can address the issues revealed in teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales so that teachers are supported in meeting current education goals and expectations. Curriculum needs to address issues concerning performance pressure versus best education practice, acknowledge and address values specific to instrumental band, and provide non-traditional examples of assessment and evaluation strategies. Each of these will be discussed in turn.

Performance and best practice

The current band curriculum indicates that the learning process of performance should be emphasized over the product (Saskatchewan Education, p. 18, 1993). While this statement in the curriculum would be in line with current educational expectations, now 20 years later (Russell & Austin, 2010), it appears as though that statement was mere rhetoric. It is simply not enough to say one is to be prioritized over the other, for two reasons. First of all, prioritizing one over the other may be interpreted to imply that curriculum recognizes it is not possible to succeed at both. As described earlier, it is quite a challenge for band teachers to meet learning and performance expectations at the same time. As described earlier Oliver (25, U, T+) discussed the dilemma he faces in sacrificing the efficiency of rehearsal for gains in individual student learning asking himself, "So am I prepared to let go of that in the interest of them gaining those skills?" Here, Oliver is really questioning the purpose of music education by asking, is it about the final performance or is it about helping students learn to be musicians? Students *can* contribute to their learning and assessment through self and peer assessment strategies; they need to learn to learn. Hale and Green (2009) suggested that as students begin to assess their own progress, they become independent musicians and astute audience members.

Secondly, to aid teachers in evaluation of students and meet performance goals at the same time, the curriculum should reflect more group learning outcomes in addition to individual learning outcomes so that group achievement is not left out of student evaluation. In the Saskatchewan band curriculum, both the foundational objectives and learning objectives are largely written for the individual student to accomplish (Saskatchewan Education, Training & Employment, 1993), and yet the performance is accomplished as a group. By making adjustments to the current Saskatchewan band curriculum, I do believe it is possible to accomplish both learning and performance goals.

Research would indicate that students involved in a learning process of self-regulation including goal setting, planning for goal attainment, and monitoring progress towards goals tend to learn more and achieve better than students not involved in such a process (Gregory, Cameron, & Davies, 2011). Blake (8, U, T+)'s teaching situation was one example of this. He not only has most of his instructional time in the regular timetable, but he also has a band room facility that sets him up to succeed at implementing methods that will lead to both successful student learning as well as quality performance. Because Blake has several practice rooms attached to the band room he uses the online software program, Smartmusic, to have several students at a time recording tests or assignments while he continues to teach the rest of the class: "It doesn't interrupt the teaching, it allows them to do that and I can give them continual feedback." This type of process is supported by Burrack (2002) who suggested a recording process in which students record a selection as many times as they want to achieve their desired outcome, complete a self-assessment, and receive feedback based on a rubric. Doane (2007) suggested that assessment shifts the focus to the progress and learning over time, and includes opportunities for students to receive feedback and make revisions without the pressure of a grade being attached to their initial, unperfected work. As described earlier, Smartmusic software allows such a process so that students can reflect on their work and continue to record an assignment until they are satisfied with the final product. The research of Andrade, Du, and Wang (2008) also supported the inclusion of self-regulated learning. These researchers, upon conducting research on rubrics with elementary school language arts students, concluded that elementary school students ought to be actively engaged in self-assessment of their work as it is in progress. If band teachers are set-up for success by addressing timetable and facility concerns

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it certainly increases the opportunity for band teachers to achieve student learning goals through best practice methods and produce quality performances.

Second, a band teacher will work towards both process and product regardless of which is to be prioritized because they have to. Performance pressure and expectations from parents, administrators, and community members, were described earlier. Blake (8, U, T+) pointed out just how high the value of performance is when he said, "… your job is predicated on that performance whether you like it or not." However, perhaps those who the band teacher strives to meet performance expectations for the most are the students themselves. Carol (26, U, I) indicated that if the students feel good about their own performance they will continue to have a desire to be in band, "…but really you want kids feeling good about what they did so they come back and want to keep playing music." This would indicate that students have a desire and an expectation to sound good in performance, as well. In fact, based on my own teaching experience, I believe students value a quality performance as a group even more so than their own performance as individuals. Essentially when band teachers sacrifice the performance, even for educational benefits, there is a high risk that they, in turn, sacrifice the students themselves. Students want to be a part of a band that will sound good, be a group they can have fun being a part of, be challenged, and has an atmosphere they can learn in, but a band only exists if there are students in it. The curriculum must address ways in which the only results from the learning process are that which lead to both student learning and quality performance.

Recognizing an artistic value set

It became evident upon analysis of the interview transcripts that a specific set of values exists amongst band teachers. Most band teachers value some or all of the following: attitude, attendance, a performance standard of near perfection, and students' inner feeling of success. As described earlier in the chapter on data analysis, band teachers' rationales are built in part upon these values. While most teachers likely hold similar values (reflected in their evaluation methods or not) for their students, these values appear to be held up by band teachers to a unique degree. The reason these values seem to be held so dearly by band teachers is because these behaviors have a deep and significant impact on the learning and the success of all the members of the band, not just the individual. Andrew (13, U, T+) described the focus on the group rather than the individual as, "it's difficult to do the course by correspondence. It's pretty much a

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100% group work all the time." Further, attendance in band means far more than simply showing up for class. Carol (26, U, I) linked attendance to effort, "Effort is attendance, too: the effort to get there." For some band teachers, attendance, effort, and attitude also means being reliable and responsible to the band and it means coming prepared so that one can contribute to the group's music making experience. Andrew described it as, "Well does the student have all their materials, are they taking care of their equipment, do they have their music, do they have all their parts, are they prepared?" It is virtually impossible for a student to come to a band class and not participate in the group.

Likewise, students' inner feelings of success are critical to the overall positive attitude and atmosphere of the band, which in turn has a direct impact on productivity. When all students feel positive and successful about their learning, the resulting product can also only be positive. Maria (11, U, T) used the word *empowered* to describe this:

> Maria (11, U, T): My idealistic way would be for the students to grow and reach their potential no matter what that is for them; that's what I want for my kids, that's what I want for them, and I want them to feel good about it and empowered by it.

The empowerment of the individual further adds to the empowerment of the group which can only add to the achievement level of the group. Blake (8, U, T+) said, "…I want the kids to feel successful with their performances and feel successful playing the music the way we interpret it…." Students' inner feeling of success or empowerment is reliant on them meeting the standards they set out to achieve.

The current curriculum provides a sample unit plan as well as guiding principles for students' evaluation. The developers of the next curriculum should consider the addition of guiding principles for formative assessment and templates, as well as examples of non-traditional, workable assessment and evaluation plans. Nearly all teachers identified credit/no credit evaluation as being an ideal preference over traditional evaluation. Although for most teachers, this ideal was also teamed with a concern that to do so would lower the legitimacy of the subject area. Blake (8, U, T+)'s comment specifically addressed this concern:

> Blake (8, U, T+): So I would love to go to a pass/fail and get away from that pressure of that percentage for kids, but the Ministry and the division just won't let that happen with a credit class, and I want my classes still to be considered credit classes.

As a credit class, band has gained legitimacy by being *included* in that coveted, valued group. Teachers do not want to do anything that could undo that. Andrew (13, U, T+) proposed a solution that would eliminate the hold that subject legitimacy currently has on teachers and said, "every subject should be pass/fail." This might look like outcome based reporting in that outcomes are checked off for the student as they are achieved with the assumption that all outcomes would be achieved by the end of grade 12.

Andrew (13, U, T+) suggested during member checking that giving students a grade range for their mark such as 85-90 accompanied by a descriptive rubric for that grade range, might be a more accurate way of representing band students' academic standing. This type of evaluation would then perhaps satisfy post-secondary institutions' and scholarship decision makers' requirement for numerical evaluation to determine admission and award recipients. Even breaking evaluation down into sample categories and sample weight values might at the very least be of benefit to beginning teachers looking for a workable starting point. Examples of non-traditional plans can provide more than a specific strategy for teachers; they can provide an example of the *outside-of-the-box* style of thinking that should go into an assessment and evaluation plan. One example might be for teachers to consider stepping away from tradition and evaluating students using a variety of evaluation plans to determine an end mark, rather than evaluating the entire class using the same plan. More so than examples such as this, it is this type of thinking within the provided examples that should be mirrored by teachers as they create their own strategies.

Emerging from the literature review were two main themes which warrant consideration in a renewed band curriculum as well. Curriculum developers need to examine the European holistic model which assesses the overall musicality of a student's (or a band's) performance, versus the current North American practice of breaking student performance down into many individual standards that the student (or the band) must meet. With all the different outcomes and standards teachers have to attend to, I think band teachers desire to reach that holistic summary and assess student musicality, but can get so locked into accountable measurement and meeting performance standards that the ultimate goal of musicality can, for some, get lost in the process. I am not suggesting here that one approach is more effective than the other, but perhaps a review of both approaches would bring out the best of each in a renewed curriculum.

While I believe teachers need to move away from the inclusion of behavior within student evaluation, curriculum must acknowledge the existence of these values and offer support in addressing the underlying issues within these values. Understanding teachers' rationales for their assessment and evaluation strategies should provide valuable input to curriculum developers indicating what teachers need from curriculum. Developers of the revised band curriculum should consider how this document can support teachers in meeting learning goals without sacrificing performance quality. Curriculum should support band teachers by addressing the need to meet performance expectations through best practice methods, create outcomes that among other things could address values specific to band, include assessment templates and samples of non-traditional evaluation strategies, and consider what can be gained from each of the European and North American existing models.

Suggestions For Future Research

As a result of the findings within this research, future research should investigate five questions. One question should inquire as to the effect of evaluating band courses using a credit/no credit system, or (as suggested by a member of my thesis committee) consider identifying course outcomes and granting credit based on having either met or not met those outcomes. While studying the impact of these types of evaluation on student learning and performance would be very valuable for determining if either is a system that should be pursued in Saskatchewan schools, finding band programs that currently use it could be a challenge. To research this particular issue would likely require a researcher to study band programs outside of Saskatchewan, and possibly include sample cases at the post-secondary level. Another option would be to find school divisions and band teachers willing to pilot a credit/no credit system in their band classes for case studies. Of course, band teachers would have to maintain *shadow grades* for students to meet the legal requirement of submitting grade values for secondary students. So the teacher could, for the purpose of the case studies, communicate to parents and students that students would have a grade submitted to the Ministry of Education at the end of the year to meet legal requirements, but students would not receive assigned grades over the course of the school year.

The second question emerging from these findings would be to inquire about what student's value in band. This question could identify whether students share with teachers any,

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or all, of the identified values specific to band that were described earlier. This question could be studied by providing a sample of students with questionnaires or perhaps by conducting focus group interviews. It could be very valuable to teachers, school divisions, and curriculum developers to know what student perspectives are on the value of behaviors such as attendance, effort, attitude, and inner feelings of success. The same questions could also be asked of non-school music students and further inquiring of them if they value music and why they aren't currently engaged in band or other school music programming. This would be information which could support the Ministry as it develops the new curriculum.

The third question should further investigate the inner conflict identified in the findings that exists as teachers build educational decision-making rationales on professional values and influences, and their own personal values. Research needs to explore the tension that Sunley and Locke (2012) found between teachers' personal values and those that schools demonstrate in practice. In particular the two influences of subject legitimacy and subjective personal values on teachers' rationales would seem to create opposing perspectives, yet teachers participating in this research seemed largely unaware of any pull or tension between the two. Further research needs to explore this lack of awareness, pull on this tension, and attempt to break it apart.

The fourth question would be to further investigate the theory presented in this thesis as it applies to other areas of the performing arts. Understanding how other teachers within the performing arts manage their assessment and evaluation strategies while balancing performance demands and the issues associated with performance. Inquiring into this topic within other artistic areas could offer band teachers some ideas that could assist their practice. Further research on this topic could also identify whether or not the same fears proposed here in theory for band teachers also exist for other teachers within the performing arts areas.

Despite the current focus on objectivity in education through standardized testing (Orlowski, 2011), I invite curriculum writers to lastly consider the value of Eisner's idea of expressive objectives (1985), or what I call subjectives, as it applies to the performing arts. Eisner (1985) believed both instructional and expressive objectives are needed. While instructional objectives may identify a particular skill or piece of knowledge students are intended to acquire, Eisner (1985) described expressive objectives as identifying a type of encounter students are to have. I propose that it is impossible to quantify learning within the performing arts with an objective perspective given the influence of personal values and the

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acknowledged existence of subjective interpretation within the curriculum and within assessment and evaluation of students. Further, I suggest that no amount of measurable objectives can fully encompass what it means for students to demonstrate such skills as musicality, expressiveness, or feeling, which serve as the essence of being a musician. Eisner (2002), supported this and puts it as "Not everything that matters can be measured, and not everything that is measured matters" (p. 178). Further, Eisner (1985) suggested there is a connoisseurship in education which he compared to the judgement of a quality wine being grounded in reasons that refer back to the wine's body, color, nose, aftertaste, bite, flavor, and other attributes. Subjectivity exists regardless of how objective we make curriculum or our assessment and evaluation practices. Perhaps curriculum renewal can embrace a musical way of knowing and teach students the value of both objectives and subjectives.

Too often, students validate their own opinions of their performance by comparing it to the value we as teachers put on it. Subjectives can not only teach students to form their own opinions of their performance based on musical knowledge and experience, but can also allow students the opportunity to recognize and respect theirs and other's own subjective opinions. In fact, the current band curriculum contains several objectives which would likely not be acceptable in today's educational language. Objectives such as activating the inner ear to facilitate creating and expressing musical ideas, or applying technical abilities as a means to musical expression are objectives with a subjective ring to them. These types of objectives (or subjectives) tend to recognize the creative aspect of the performing arts and allow opportunity for creative expression that sometimes objectives alone can stifle or limit. A renewed band curriculum should reflect both musical objectives and subjectives.

Final Thoughts: My Own Assessment and Evaluation Practice

As mentioned earlier, I have experimented for the last two years with a less than traditional evaluation plan for my students. In the past I had believed that all students had to be evaluated in the same manner in order to be fair. However, I have learned that fair does not mean the same. In other words, equity does not mean equality. In fact, the more I learn about assessment and evaluation, the more I think evaluating students in the same manner is anything but fair. Since students' individual grades mean little to me, I decided to evaluate students in a way that would allow students' unique ways of learning, unique strengths, and unique interests to

be reflected in their overall mark. I also wanted to implement a system that allowed opportunity for students to have choice in their evaluation.

I created three evaluation plans which use different categories and weight values to calculate a final mark. Students reviewed each plan with their parents, and chose the plan that reflected their interests. Students also had opportunity to negotiate adjustments to any plan, so that in the end they really had chosen how their own mark would be determined. The fairness aspect of this strategy was three-fold. First of all, regardless of the evaluation plan choice, all students completed the same learning tasks, assignments, or skills. Second, each plan required the same amount of time, effort, and work from every student, even though they may have perceived a plan that matches their particular interests to what was easier or in their own best interests. Last, it is my opinion that each plan allowed equal opportunity for students to achieve the mark they desire. So while all students, for example would complete technical skill testing and writing their own compositions, students who excel at performance may have chosen a plan that weighed heavily on performance, and a student who excels at theoretical work but is a nervous performer, may have selected a plan that places more emphasis on composing and less value on performance.

After the first year of implementing this method of varied evaluation, I asked students for their feedback. Students were quite happy to not only have opportunity to be evaluated in ways that would highlight their own unique strengths, but also to simply have a say in and take ownership of their own evaluation. Parents were also quite happy with the new options for evaluation. For me, I believe my students' marks are a more accurate reflection of their learning and abilities than it was in prior years, and I no longer have to explain to students why I *gave* a certain mark to a student; they own it, and they know why they got what they did. While I do not believe this new system of marking fully represents the sound of a student playing their instrument with a warm, dark tone, or playing with such expression that the listener is left with a lump in their throat, as long as numerical evaluation is required, this new system is simply much fairer for my students.

In closing, I think back to the historical context that has led schooling down a path where all roads lead to measurable data. While artists *are* needed and *do* contribute much to today's economy, this seems to go largely unnoticed by government. I wonder what if social expectations had been reversed and political powers had identified a demand for artists,

entertainers, and musicians in the workforce? Evaluation as we know it may never have come to be. The arts would have a prioritized place in society and schools would hold pep rallies for the bands and choirs as they are about to embark on tour. Perhaps band would be a core subject and would be scheduled as such within the school day. How would the sciences adapt to holding classes over noon hour, after school, or at 7:30 in the morning? How would physical education classes adapt to having class without access to a gymnasium? How would other subject areas adapt to adding multiple performances of students' skills and knowledge for parents, community, and administration to all the other demands of the school year? How would English teachers deal with recruiting their students and then have the future of their classes (and perhaps their jobs) depend on retaining them? How would the itinerant French teacher cope with asking themselves each morning as they enter a different school than the day previous, *which of today's colleagues will find me to be an inconvenience to them as I pull students from their classes in order to teach my classes?* What if music was still considered to be one of the mathematical sciences? What if the academic success of students had been established through artistic or more subjective assessment methods? What if the value of assessment far outweighed that of evaluation?   Perhaps *all* students would enjoy their schooling experience more than they currently do. What if…?

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APPENDIX A
PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT ADVERTISEMENT

Dear (Saskatchewan Band Association or Saskatchewan Music Educators' Association) members,

A research study in fulfillment of requirements for a Master's Degree in Education, Curriculum Studies, requires teacher participants for individual interviews. It is anticipated that participants would be interviewed once for approximately 60-90 minutes. Research intends to study the influences on Saskatchewan secondary band teachers' assessment and evaluation rationales. In particular this study will seek to address the questions: (a) What assessment and evaluation methods are being implemented, and why? (b) What has influenced teachers to have these particular rationales?

Research participants need to be current Saskatchewan secondary band teachers who are implementing assessment and/or evaluation strategies with their students. A sample of eight participants is intended for the study, and it is hoped that this sample will include teachers with a variety of levels of experience, teachers who teach in urban settings, as well as teachers who teach in rural settings, teachers who teach in one school and teachers who teach in multiple schools.

Please express your interest to consider participation in the study by responding as soon as possible to Ms. Kendra Worman (researcher) with your contact information. Expression of initial interest does not confirm your commitment to participate in the study. Interested participants who match the participant criteria will receive a letter of invitation to participate in the research study and will have opportunity to consider all the information about the study prior to giving consent to participate.

Please contact Kendra Worman at kew994@mail.usask.ca, or by phone (306) 374-9810 or (306) 220-2634.

APPENDIX B
LETTER TO INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS

Date:

Dear _____,

  My name is Ms. Kendra Worman and I am a graduate student at the University of Saskatchewan. I am writing to invite you to participate in a research study I am conducting to fulfill the requirements of a Master's Degree in Education, Curriculum Studies. The purpose of this research study will be to determine the rationales of Saskatchewan Band Teachers' Assessment and Evaluation strategies and the influences on their thinking and beliefs around this issue. The main topics to be addressed in this study are: (a) What assessment and evaluation methods are being implemented and why? (b) What has influenced teachers to have these particular rationales?

  As your interest in participating in this research study has been expressed I would like to proceed, after receipt of your signed written consent, by inviting you to participate in one face-to-face interview to be scheduled at a time and location with consideration of your personal schedule, needs, and preferences. It is anticipated that the interview could last between 60 and 90 minutes depending on the amount of material you share about your particular experiences. With your permission, your interview would be audio recorded for the purpose of then preparing an accurate transcript. You may at any point request during the interview that the recorder be turned off. Once the transcripts have been prepared you will receive a written copy to make any additions and/or deletions before returning a Data/Transcript Release Form. Enclosed are two copies of the participant consent form and one list of semi-structured interview questions for the first individual interview. Follow-up questions in a second interview, if needed, will be developed from responses to questions of the first interview. Throughout the data analysis you may also be contacted for member checking purposes to confirm emergent theme category placement.

  This research study is intended to benefit all secondary band teachers who use assessment and evaluation strategies for their students. I am hopeful that teachers' responses in the interview will generate potential guiding points for all band teachers to consider when determining their future assessment and evaluation strategies.

  All interview responses will be kept strictly confidential. Full confidentiality will be pursued to the greatest degree; however, due to the small number of secondary band teachers in Saskatchewan and the high level of networking that exists amongst them, it is possible that information obtained in the interview may identify you to some of your colleagues who know of your particular teaching circumstances. To provide the greatest amount of confidentiality possible your identity, school identity, and geographic location of your school will be coded to protect your privacy. In addition, in compliance with the Behavioural Research Ethics Board (Beh-REB) at the University of Saskatchewan, you have the right to:

- not participate
- withdraw from the study at any time without penalty up until results have been disseminated

- opt out without penalty and any collected data withdrawn and not included in the study up until results have been disseminated
- privacy, anonymity and confidentiality as much as is possible within the context of this particular study. As mentioned above, it is possible that others may be able to identify a participant based on the participants' responses to interview questions.

Before the interviews begin I will again remind you of your rights as described above.

Data will be used for publication in the form a thesis and may be used for publication in scholarly journals or for presentation at academic or professional conferences. All electronic documents will be stored in password protected files, and any paper documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. You will be notified when the research is complete and provided with a summary of the results and guided to where a complete copy of the finished theses can be obtained. University of Saskatchewan guidelines require the department of Curriculum Studies to hold and secure all data obtained for a minimum of five years, at which point all data will be destroyed.

Your participation in this study will be voluntary, you will not be charged in any way for your part in the study and you will not receive any reimbursement for your time and/or travel expenses. You are under no obligation to participate, and there will be no negative consequences should you choose to withdraw.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at home 374-9810, cel 220-2634, or kew994@mail.usask.ca or my faculty advisor, Dr. Paul Orlowski, 966-6907, paul.orlowski@usask.ca if you have study related questions or problems. Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please complete the enclosed consent form and return in the provided self-addressed stamped envelope. Consent forms will be stored separately from the data.

This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office ethics.office@usask.ca (306) 966-2975. Out of town participants may call toll free (866) 966-2975.

Sincerely,

Ms. Kendra Worman
62-331 Pendygrasse Road
Saskatoon, SK S7M 4R3

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Dear _____,

Please carefully read this consent form for participation in a research study as described below. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions about the study.

Project Title: Influences on Saskatchewan Secondary Band Teachers' Assessment and Evaluation Strategies

Researcher: Ms. Kendra Worman (Graduate Student), Curriculum Studies, University of Saskatchewan, (306) 374-9810 or (306) 220-2634, kew994@mail.usask.ca.

Supervisor: Dr. Paul Orlowski, Department of Curriculum Studies, University of Saskatchewan, (306) 966-6907, paul.orlowski@usask.ca

Purpose(s) and Objective(s) of the Research: The purpose of this research study will be to determine the rationales of Saskatchewan Band Teachers' Assessment and Evaluation strategies and the influences on their thinking and beliefs around this issue. The main topics to be addressed in this study are: (a) What assessment and evaluation methods are being implemented and why? (b) What has influenced teachers to have these particular rationales?

Procedures: Once I have received your signed written consent, I will contact you to arrange a face-to-face interview to be scheduled at a time and location with consideration of your personal schedule, needs, and preferences. It is anticipated that the interview will last between 60 and 90 minutes. In the case of large travel distances, interviews will be conducted using an online video and audio medium such as Skype. With your permission, your interview will be audio recorded for the purpose of then preparing an accurate transcript. You may at any point request during the interview that the recording device be turned off. Once the transcripts have been prepared you will receive a written copy to make any additions and/or deletions before returning a Data/Transcript Release Form. A list of semi-structured interview questions for the first individual interview is included for your review.

With your permission I will contact you for follow up questions in a second interview if needed and for member checking purposes to confirm emergent theme category placement throughout the data analysis. Follow-up questions in a second interview, if needed, will be developed from responses to questions from the first interview. Please confirm your willingness to be contacted for member checking and to participate in a brief follow-up interview if necessary:

I agree to participate in a follow up interview   Yes   No

I agree to be contacted   Yes   No

Please feel free to ask any questions regarding the procedures and goals of the study or your role.

Potential Risks: There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research study.

Potential Benefits: This research study is intended to benefit all secondary band teachers who use assessment and evaluation strategies for their students. I am hopeful that teachers' responses in the interviews will generate potential guiding points for all band teachers to consider when determining their future assessment and evaluation practices.

Confidentiality: All interview responses will be kept strictly confidential. Full confidentiality will be pursued to the greatest degree; however, due to the small number of secondary band teachers in Saskatchewan and the high level of networking that exists amongst them, it is possible that information obtained in the interview may identify you to some of your colleagues who know of your particular teaching circumstances. To provide the greatest amount of confidentiality possible your identity, school identity, and geographic location of your school will be coded to protect your privacy.

Storage of Data: All electronic documents will be stored in password protected files, and any paper documents will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. University of Saskatchewan guidelines require the department of Curriculum Studies to hold and secure all data obtained for a minimum of five years, at which point all data will be deleted and/or destroyed.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation is voluntary and you can answer only those questions that you are comfortable with. You may withdraw from the research project for any reason, at any time without explanation or penalty of any sort up until you have signed off on the data release transcript form. Should you wish to withdraw prior to this time all data collected to that point will be destroyed upon your request. After this date, it will not be possible to withdraw your data.

Follow up: Participants will be notified when the theses has been published and will be provided with a summary of results and informed as to how to find a copy of the full theses should they wish to read it. Results will also be provided in summary form to the Saskatchewan Band Association and the Saskatchewan Music Educators' Association for distribution should they so choose.

Questions or Concerns: Should you have any questions about the study, please contact me at any point. I can be contacted at the numbers and e-mail as listed above. This research project has been approved on ethical grounds by the University of Saskatchewan Research Ethics Board. Any questions regarding your rights as a participant may be addressed to that committee through the Research Ethics Office ethics.office@usask.ca (306) 966-2975. Out of town participants may call toll free (866) 966-2975.

Consent: My signature below indicates that I have read and understand the description provided; I have had an opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. I consent to participate in the research project. A copy of this Consent Form has been given to me for my records.

_____   _____
(Name of Participant)   (Date)

_____   _____
(Signature of Participant)   (Signature of Researcher)

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Background: How many years have you been a secondary band teacher? Where have you taught? What grades do you teach for band? How many schools do you teach in? Please indicate which of these schools would be considered rural, and which would be considered urban. What is your current FTE percentage?

2. Please indicate how many students you teach per band class and your percentage of teaching assignment dedicated to teach these band classes. Describe any other teaching related duties for band that take place in addition to your assigned instruction time (ie: noon hour rehearsals).

3. Describe the socioeconomic conditions of the community(ies) you work within.

4. Describe your current methods of assessing and evaluating your secondary band students. Please include any category weight values for evaluating.

5. If we consider the term assessment to be defined as, the ongoing collection of data on student performance (Gregory, Cameron, & Davies, 1997); indicate any strategies within the above described method you currently use that would fit the description of assessment.

6. If we consider the term evaluation to be defined as, making judgments on student performance data such as for periodic report cards (Gregory, Cameron, & Davies, 1997), indicate any strategies within the above described method you currently use that would fit the description of evaluation.

7. Describe your rationale for how you determine what gets assessed and what gets evaluated. Describe your rationale for the specific weight values given to categories that are evaluated.

8. How has your rationale, thinking, and beliefs about assessment and evaluation been influenced by any, or all, of the following:
    a. Society's values?
    b. Political accountability pressure for measurable learning?
    c. Subject legitimacy?
    d. School division policy?
    e. Parents?
    f. Personal values?
    g. Educational research?
    h. Other?

9. Of the influences you have described above, which has had the most influence on your thinking, and why?

10. Throughout your teaching career thus far, how often have you altered your assessment and evaluation strategies? In what ways? What influenced your desire to make these changes?

11. In what (if any) ways are students involved in the decisions made around assessment and evaluation in their classes?

12. In what ways (if any) would you like to assess and/or evaluate your students different from your current practices, but choose not to due to limitations or restrictions? Under

what conditions would you feel you could competently implement these types of strategies?

APPENDIX E
DATA/TRANSCRIPT RELEASE FORM

I, _____, have reviewed the complete transcript of my personal interview in this study, and have been provided with the opportunity to add, alter, and delete information from the transcript. I acknowledge that the transcript accurately reflects what I said in my personal interview with Ms. Kendra Worman. I hereby authorize the release of this transcript to Ms. Kendra Worman to be used in the manner as described in the consent form. I have received a copy of this Data/Transcript Release Form for my own records.

_____   _____
Name of Participant   Date

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Signature of Researcher