

Liberty University

School of Music

**RURAL MUSIC PEDAGOGY IN MINNESOTA SECONDARY BAND CLASSES A
QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY.**

A Thesis Submitted to
the Faculty of the School of Music
in Candidacy for the Degree of
Doctorate of Music Education

by

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March, 2024

Abstract

Despite a vast amount of literature addressing issues and concerns regarding curriculum in secondary band classes, pedagogy in the rural classroom remains under studied. Music educators in rural public schools must employ a unique approach to maintain enrollment, and their public image, which vastly differs from those in suburban settings. Many educators in rural public schools find themselves alone, with no guidance and nothing like any coursework on how they were prepared to teach in college. This study examined the approaches of instrumental directors in rural towns that support a summer, street-style marching band and their approach to the classroom setting and compare them to those of successful suburban music programs in the Twin Cities Suburban Metro Area of Saint Paul and Minneapolis. Using a Qualitative Case Study research method, quantitative data was collected to be compared against the qualitative qualities of instrumental music programs in rural and suburban settings. Differences in how rural and suburban music educators approach performance-based education will be examined through existing literature. Understanding how students learn and teachers teach is vital to the content literature. This study is important because it will highlight rural band teachers' innovative and unique educational approaches. The study will encourage further comparison of different demographic research and add to the discourse of teacher preparation. In addition, it will open up conversations about what the actual normal is for educators entering the field in a rural setting and how to best prepare and share that knowledge across the discipline.

Keywords: Rural Music Education, Pedagogy, Minnesota, Marching Band

Dedication

To my Mom (Karen) for her hours of dedication and countless sacrifices for me to follow my passion of music.

Acknowledgments

Completing my thesis and earning my degree was a goal I set for myself many years ago. While life has a way of throwing curveballs, I am proud to say that I have crossed this accomplishment off my bucket list.

I would be remiss if I did not express my gratitude towards those who played a role in getting me to this point. The list is extensive, and although I cannot name every teacher, mentor, or individual who contributed to my journey, please know that your impact was significant and appreciated.

To my wife, Jenifer, and our girls, you have been my biggest supporters and motivation. Your unwavering patience throughout this process did not go unnoticed. I love and appreciate you all.

To my students, thank you for pushing me to be a better educator and for sharing your passion for music with me. Your success brings me immense joy.

To my drum corps, drumline, marching arts colleagues, and fellow alumni, I am grateful for the valuable life lessons, happiness, and sorrow that we have experienced together.

To the participants of my study, thank you for your willingness to help me achieve my goal.

Lastly, to Dr. Robert "Bob" Stacke at Augsburg College in Minneapolis, thank you for helping me find my way when I was a lost student. I wish I could have expressed my gratitude before your passing.

To all the professors and instructors at Liberty, thank you for pushing me beyond my limits and making this an unforgettable journey. I cannot wait to see what the future holds.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Background

The image of Rural America leads to visions of farmland, small, tight-knit communities, and an easier way of life. Wuthnow states, “the fact [is] that rural America is composed of small communities. Nearly everyone in rural America lives in or near a community. These are the communities they call ‘home.’”¹ Wuthnow continues his description by stating, “For most inhabitants of rural communities, the town limits are clearly marked. The town not only has a name but also in most instances has a school that goes by that name, and the school has athletic teams that play on behalf of the town and the teams have a mascot.”² Spring states, “Studies related to rural schools have reported that small rural elementary and high schools have characteristics that are very favorable for students, teaching staff, parents and community members.”³ However, even with this favorable accolades, rural education is not perfect, in fact, education in any setting has challenges for the educator to address and overcome. This study will examine secondary instrumental music teachers' challenges in pedagogical approaches in rural settings.

One of the most challenging things to do, regardless of application, is to define the term rural. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines rural as "of or relating to the country, country people or life, or agriculture."⁴ The National Center for Educational Statistics offers three different

¹ Robert Wuthnow, *The Left Behind: Decline and Rage in Rural America* (Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2018), 13.

² Ibid, 14.

³ Janet Spring, “Perspectives of a Rural Music Educator: A Narrative Journey through ‘Sense of Place,’” *The Rural Educator* 34, no. 3 (November 15, 2018):27-37, <https://doi.org/10.35608/ruraled.v34i3.397>, 29.

definitions for rural. Ratcliff states, "The U.S. Census Bureau defines rural as what is not urban—that is, after defining individual urban areas, rural is what is left."⁵ According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), "Census Bureau Defines Urban and Rural Areas on the Basis of Population Density."⁶ USDA also asserts, "Researchers and policy officials employ many definitions to distinguish rural from urban areas, which often leads to unnecessary confusion and unwanted mismatches in program eligibility. However, the existence of multiple rural definitions reflects the reality that rural and urban are multidimensional concepts."⁷ The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) offers yet another set of definitions for city, suburban, town, and rural.⁸ (see Table 1). This variety of ambiguous definitions shows the difficulty of labeling what is truly rural.

Minnesota consists of 87 counties with a population of 5,742,036.⁹ 55.4% of the population lives in the seven-county Metropolitan area around St. Paul and Minneapolis, with 44.6% living in the remaining 80 counties. However, that does not mean that all 80 counties are rural. Figure 1.1 shows a breakdown of counties into four different subgroups as defined by the state demographer's office.

⁴ Merriam-Webster.com Dictionary, s.v. "rural," accessed February 19, 2023, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/rural>.

⁵ "Defining Rural at the U.S. Census Bureau," Michael Ratcliffe et al., 2016, https://www2.census.gov/geo/pdfs/reference/ua/Defining_Rural.pdf.

⁶ "USDA ERS - What Is Rural?," USDA, 2018, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/rural-economy-population/rural-classifications/what-is-rural.aspx>.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ "NCES Locale Classifications and Criteria," National Center for Educational Statistics, 2022, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/edge/docs/locale_classifications.pdf.

⁹ "Latest Annual Estimates of Minnesota and Its Economic Development Regions' Population and Households," Minnesota State Demographic Center, 2021, <https://mn.gov/admin/demography/data-by-topic/population-data/our-estimates/>.

Table 1.1 Definitions of City, Suburban, Town, and Rural

Locale	Definition
City	
Large	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with a population of 250,000 or more.
Midsize	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with a population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.
Small	Territory inside an Urbanized Area and inside a Principal City with population less than 100,000.
Suburb	
Large	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with a population of 250,000 or more.
Midsize	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with population less than 250,000 and greater than or equal to 100,000.
Small	Territory outside a Principal City and inside an Urbanized Area with a population less than 100,000.
Distant	Territory inside an Urban Cluster that is more than 10 miles and less than or equal to 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.
Remote	Territory inside an Urban Cluster that is more than 35 miles from an Urbanized Area.
Rural	
Fringe	Census-defined rural territory that is less than or equal to 5 miles from an Urbanized Area, as well as rural territory that is less than or equal to 2.5 miles from an Urban Cluster.
Distant	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 5 miles but less than or equal to 25 miles from an Urbanized Area, as well as rural territory that is more than 2.5 miles but less than or equal to 10 miles from an Urban Cluster.
Remote	Census-defined rural territory that is more than 25 miles from an Urbanized Area and also more than 10 miles from an Urban Cluster.

Source: Data from NCES, 2022¹⁰

¹⁰ National Center for Educational Statistics, “NCES Locale.”

County categorizations based on rural-urban commuting areas

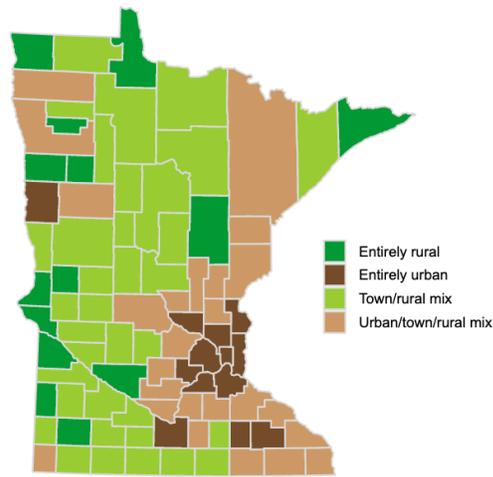


Figure 1.1 Minnesota Center for Rural Policy and Development, County Categorizations¹¹

The Minnesota Department of Education in 2019 states that there are 336 School districts with 695 secondary schools, grades 5-12, in Minnesota, with the following breakdown: middle school, 236; junior highs, grades 7-9, 14; senior highs, grades, 9-12 or 10-12, 225; and combined, grades 7-12, 220.¹² The Minnesota Office of Higher education lists 272 school districts as rural,¹³ or approximately 80% of all school districts.

Morrison and Cirillo state that "Minnesota is the only state in the nation with a dedicated state agency supporting arts education."¹⁴ The Perpich Center for Arts Education (PCAE)

¹¹"County Categorizations Based on Rural-Urban Commuting Areas," Center For Rural Policy and Development, 2023, <https://www.ruralmn.org/The-State-of-Rural-2023/>.

¹² "Minnesota Education Statistics Summary," Minnesota Department of Education, 2019, <https://education.mn.gov/mdeprod/groups/educ/documents/basic/bwrl/mdg3/~edisp/mde087765.pdf>.

¹³ "Rural School District List," Minnesota Office of Higher Education, April 20, 2022, https://www.ohe.state.mn.us/pdf/tslr_Rural_School_Districts_List.pdf.

“mission is to provide all Minnesota students the opportunity to develop, enhance, and integrate their artistic and academic abilities to their highest potential.”¹⁵ PCAE published a study focusing on the state of Arts Education in 2012. According to Morrison and Cirillo, authors of the study, “Arts Education in the State of Minnesota is alive and well.”¹⁶ Music is by far the most offered arts area in the state. Figure 1.2 shows the findings of the study and breaks down between grade delineations.

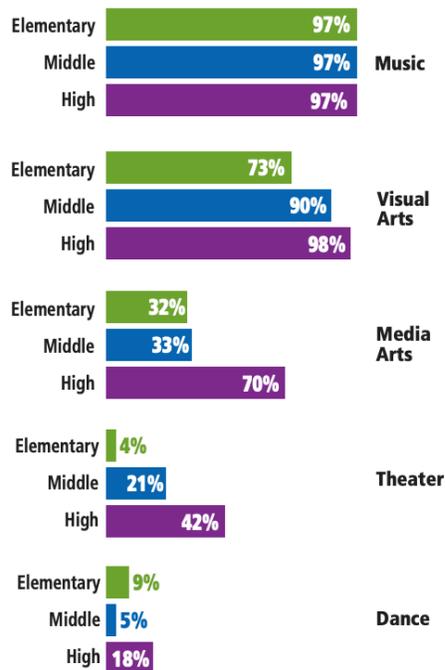


Figure 1.2 Percentage of schools offering courses in various arts disciplines.

¹⁴ Robert Morrison and Patricia J. Cirillo, “Building a Legacy. Arts Education for All Minnesota a Students,” Quadrant Research (Golden Valley, MN: Perpich Center For Arts Education, 2012), https://quadrantresearch.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/MN_2012_Artsed_Report.pdf, 3.

¹⁵ “About the Center,” Perpich Center for Arts Education, 2023, <https://perpich.mn.gov/about-the-center/>.

¹⁶ Morrison and Cirillo, “Building a Legacy,” 3.

With positive data regarding the arts in Minnesota, it deals in great generalities in the information presented. There is no breakdown geographically to examine the different types of school settings. The opportunity to explore rural, suburban, and urban educational trends must be examined in reports such as the one offered by PCAE.

The PCAE website describes and explains the Minnesota K-12 Art Standards:

The Minnesota K-12 Academic Arts Standards include a combination of foundational knowledge and skills in an art form with the ability to work in four processes fundamental to the arts: Creating, Responding, Performing/Presenting, and Connecting. The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in the Arts include five arts areas: dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts.¹⁷

The Minnesota Citizen for the Arts (MCA) is a group that focuses on the funding, policy and education in The Arts. This group has Partnered with PCAE to report and support on arts education in the state of Minnesota. Although not complete there data offers the most recent information regarding Minnesota and music education in the state. Figure 1.3 shows the art discipline and course selections. Furthermore it shows a gender break down of students participating in music.

¹⁷ “Arts Standards,” Perpich Center for Arts Education, 2023, <https://perpich.mn.gov/professional-development/arts-education-resources/mn-k-12-arts-standards/>.

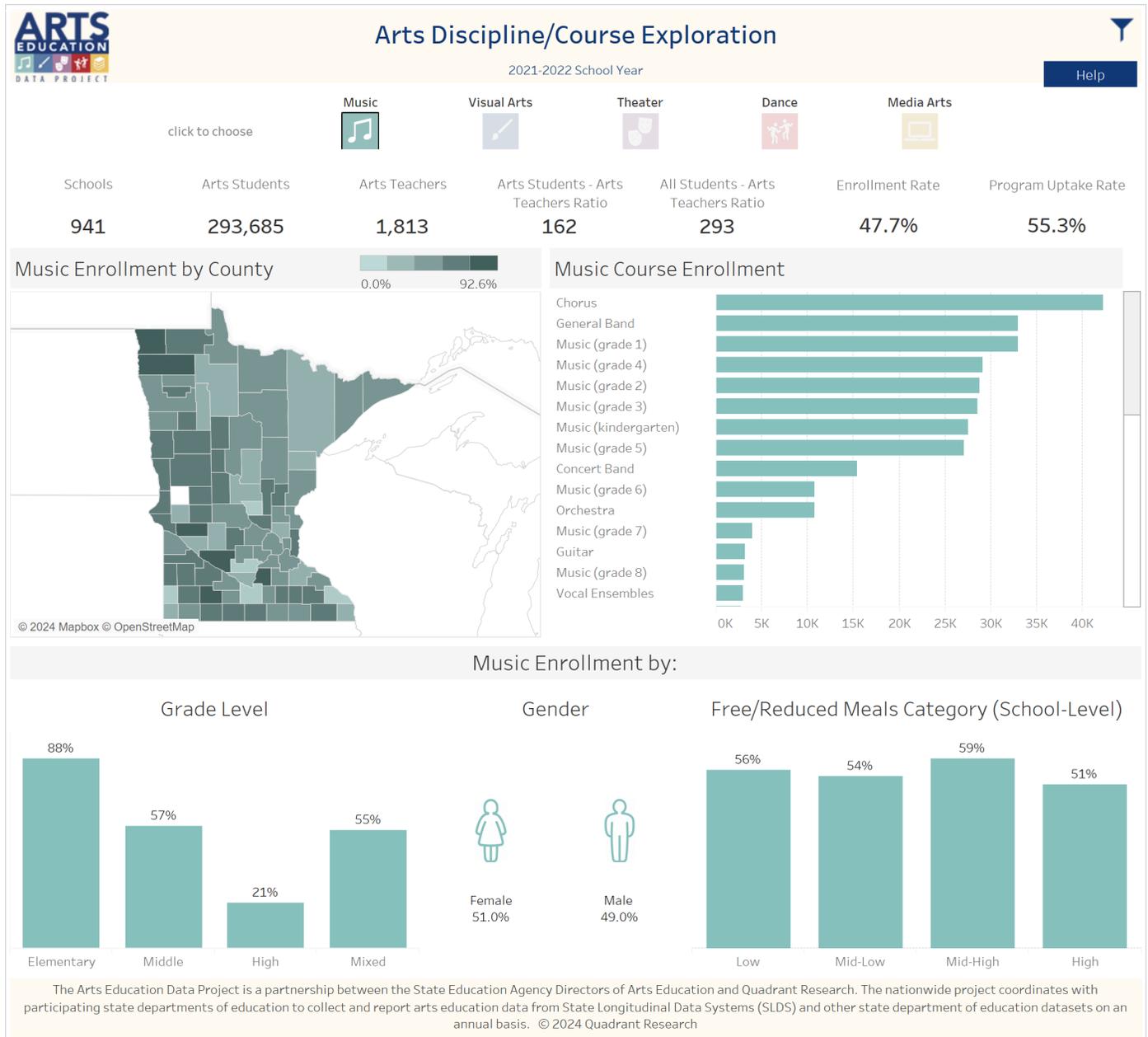


Figure 1.3 Arts Discipline/Course Exploration.¹⁸

¹⁸ Minnesota Citizens for the Arts, “Arts Education,” artsmn.org (MN Citizens for the Arts, 2024), <https://artsmn.org/resources/creativemn-research/minnesota-arts-education>.

The Arts standards in Minnesota are being updated and reimplemented in the 2023-24 school year. A complete set of the standards is located in Appendix E. This bears mention because these standards are something that all educators, regardless of location, need to implement. Examining the implementation and resources necessary to successfully meet these can cause pedagogy and instructional delivery challenges.

Learning the skills necessary to deliver the content is a primary focus of every teacher preparation program. McCabe states, “since the beginning of the school band program, there have existed both “courses of study” and “curriculum guides” or a combination of both in those school systems that advocate an “outstanding” instrumental program.”¹⁹ Instrumental music pedagogy is as vast and diverse as the people who are teaching. Secondary rural band directors’ teaching tends to focus on performance ensembles with public performances and responsibilities. Therefore, the music selected for performance heavily weighs into the curriculum. Denis suggests that there are “two general approaches to evaluating music for inclusion in the curriculum: technical and aesthetic. Technical considerations focus on pedagogical benefits and performance challenges.”²⁰

Looking at the function of instrumental music programs, McCabe asserts, “It is the function of instrumental music program to develop musical standards and to impart a basis for value judgement, resulting in the encouragement of sensitive musicianship with breadth, depth and permanence.”²¹ White takes a similar approach when she states, “Classroom musical

¹⁹ Donald McCabe, “The A.S.B.D.A. Course of Study and Curriculum Guide for School Bands (a Synopsis),” *Journal of Band Research* 7, no. 2 (1971): 10, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/s-b-d-course-study-curriculum-guide-school-bands/docview/1312125332/se-2, 10>.

²⁰ John M. Denis, “Choosing Band Literature for Success: A Structural Approach to Literature Selection,” *Visions of Research in Music Educaiton* 34, no. 1 (2019): 2, <http://www-usr.rider.edu/~vrme/v34n1/index.htm>.

learning should connect with how the learners experience music and facilitate collaborative working towards realistic and culturally relevant goals.”²² Historically and currently, instrumental music programs try to remain current and relevant to the students which they are teaching

The literature is full of many different sub-genres of pedagogy. Current exploration shows hot topics in the lexicon, such as inclusion, diversity, and equity. This is not to imply that these are not viable and important topics, but to highlight the focus in today’s literature. Gavish states, “Music has always been a tuneful force for political change”, and that “[t]hroughout history, music has mingled with the political.”²³ Examination of actual pedagogy is limited, theory is the overwhelming focus, or the word pedagogy is used as a synonym for the way we teach.

Statement of the Problem

Despite a vast amount of literature addressing issues and concerns regarding curriculum in secondary band classes, the focus on rural educational settings needs to be included at the equivalent rate of other subsections in the discipline. Part of the problem that exists is the definition of rural education. According to Spring, "the term 'rural' is defined as a statistical depiction, an unclear foundation for educators and researchers who attempt to portray an accurate representation of rural life, rural education, and more specifically, rural music

²¹ McCabe, “A.S.B.D.A. Course of Study,” 11.

²² Rachel White, “Authentic Learning in Senior Secondary Music Pedagogy: An Examination of Teaching Practice in High-Achieving School Music Programmes,” *British Journal of Music Education* 38, no. 2021 (December 17, 2020): 161, <https://doi.org/10.1017/s0265051720000297>.

²³ Eitan Gavish, “Music Has Always Been a Tuneful Force for Political Change,” Tribune Publishing (New York), October 9, 2009, <https://www.nydailynews.com/entertainment/music-arts/music-tuneful-force-political-change-article-1.381154>.

education."²⁴ Bates points out, "Not all rural music teaching positions are the same; if there is one quality that could apply to all small town and rural schools, it is, paradoxically, their diversity."²⁵

The study of rural music education or rural education is lacking compared to other demographics. Causby asserts, "Despite the nearly 17 Million rural students in America, research about rural schools is limited."²⁶ Isbell states, "This is surprising since two-thirds of all public schools in this country are, by some definitions, considered rural and are responsible for educating (one-quarter to one-third of all school-age children)."²⁷ Sherwood adds that "the rural American researcher appears to be something of an 'endangered Species.'"²⁸ Robinson and Russell add that "[a] ubiquitous theme in this research is that the success of a music program is largely dependent on the success and efforts of the rural music teacher."²⁹

Some have seen music education in a rural setting as a taboo placement for a teacher.

This idea is pointed out by Spring, who states:

The literature also presents negative aspects of rural teaching and rural schools. Particularly noteworthy are these factors: isolation from major centers, lack of professional development and resources for teachers, sub-standard facilities, lack

²⁴ Spring, "Perspectives," 29.

²⁵ Vincent C. Bates, "Thinking Critically about Rural Music Education," *Visions of Research in Music Education* 32 (2018).

²⁶ Melody C. Causby, "Instrumental Music Education in Rural North Carolina: A Descriptive Study" Ph.D. Dissertation, University of North Carolina, Greensboro, (2019), 4, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/instrumental-music-education-rural-north-carolina/docview/2272212564/se-2>.

²⁷ Daniel Isbell, "Music Education in Rural Areas: A Few Keys to Success," *Music Educators Journal* 92, no. 2 (November 2005): 30, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3400194>.

²⁸ Topper Sherwood, "Where Has All the 'Rural' Gone?," March 2001, https://www.ruraledu.org/user_uploads/file/Where_Has_All_the_Rural.pdf.

²⁹ Tiger Robison and Joshua A. Russell, "Factors Affecting Rural Music Educators' Career Decisions," *Contributions to Music Education* 46, no. 2021 (2021): 156.

of funds for extra-curricular programs, lack of privacy in and outside of school, and a feeling of inferiority when interacting in an urban social/musical milieu.³⁰

Many teacher preparation programs only focus on a large ensemble that provides the teacher adequate access to resources, capital, and students in which to provide the expected outcome. Causby points to the fact that "Many teachers in rural schools had pre-service teaching experience in urban and suburban schools, and unless they grew up in a rural area, they had little to no experience with the unique culture of rural communities and schools."³¹ Furthermore, standards in education exist to ensure content covered has a benchmark or specific levels of achievement. The problem lies within the model which these standards are based upon. Although the content is well presented, implementation for the music educator in a rural setting requires much creativity. While much of the literature focuses on the suburban urban and underserved, rarely is anything found that examines and focuses on the rural population. In addition, many of the standards require a Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staffing and access to resources that provide challenges to rural music teachers. This lens of inquiry focused on the success of the rural instrumental music teacher who, through innovative practices, delivers high-quality educational experiences for their students.

Bates argues that "making rural schools more and more like urban ones often meant that policies and practices developed for city schools were implemented in rural communities far removed from the particular problems, circumstances, and socioeconomic context originally

³⁰ Spring, "Perspectives," 29.

³¹ Causby, "Instrumental Music Education," 24.

envisioned and addressed.”³² Bates also states that “affluent schools and students, by virtue of their socioeconomic advantages, generally perform at higher levels than the less privileged do.”³³

The demands on some music educators in a rural setting place them in a losing battle. Nkambule states that “Researchers agree that rural schools face a unique set of working and social conditions such as attracting and retaining qualified teachers.”³⁴ Trying to keep up with larger programs can lead to frustration and burnout. In addition, most educators are not trained in college to deal with the unique challenges that a rural program has. Robison and Russell suggest that there should be “student teaching opportunities in a rural setting to gain experience with their practical realities.”³⁵ However, despite this fact, there are many rural programs that thrive across the country.

Nkambule states, “While quality education has been recognized as a basic human right for all, more work still needs to be done as rural schools continue to encounter difficulties in accessing quality education.”³⁶ Access to music education has been an issue throughout the history of music education. Sur, in his article from 1941, states, “Ability to enjoy, understand, and participate in music is the result of a slow, steady growth which starts in the lower grades and continues through the high school.”³⁷ More recently, Helton and Paetz reaffirm this stating,

³² Bates, “Thinking Critically,” 2.

³³ Vincent C. Bates, “Equity in Music Education: Back to Class: Music Education and Poverty,” *Music Educators Journal* 105, no. 2 (December 2018): 72, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0027432118803046>.

³⁴ Thabisile Nkambule, “Exploring Working Conditions in Selected Rural Schools: Teachers’ Experiences,” *South African Journal of Education* 42, no. 1 (February 28, 2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.15700/saje.v42n1a2013>.

³⁵ Robison and Russel, “Factors Affecting,” 163.

³⁶ Nkambule, “Exploring Working Conditions,” 6.

³⁷ William Raymond Sur, “The Rural School Music Problem,” *Music Educators Journal* 27, no. 4 (February 1941): 20, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3386134>.

“Equitable access to a quality music education for all students and healthy music class enrollment continue to be prominent goals for music teachers and advocates.”³⁸ Funding issues, the opportunity for classes in the school day, as well as student population to fill ensembles, remain an issue for rural music educators. Sur spoke with a gloomy outlook when he warned, “it must be remembered that any music program for the rural schools which involves the hiring of many specialists is, except in a small proportion of the rural communities, doomed to failure.”³⁹ This shows that the challenges faced by rural music educators are not new, but rather represents a theme that is still in need of addressing. Local involvement is vital in helping address access issues. As Helton and Paetz state, “teachers and local stake-holders know the needs of their student and communities intimately and, therefore, are the ones best equipped to define and solve their music access and enrollment problems.”⁴⁰ Although music education research is developing in many facets, some aspects of music education are understudied. For example, Causby states, “Literature regarding rural areas is limited, and research related to rural music education is even more.”⁴¹ Isbell states, “There is a substantial lack of literature to help teachers who choose to work in rural schools.”⁴² Bates argues that Music education research often “Direct their scholarly efforts toward school districts with greater resources or addressing equity for people marginalized based on race, ethnicity, sexual orientation or gender while ignoring social class

³⁸ Benjamine C. Helton and Allison M. Paetz, “Equity of Music Access and Enrollment in Ohio Secondary Schools,” *Contributions to Music Education* 46, no. 2021 (2021): 169.

³⁹ Sur, “Rural School Music Problem,” 20

⁴⁰ Helton and Paetz, “Equity of Music Access,” 172.

⁴¹ Causby, “Instrumental Music Education,” 6.

⁴² Isbell, “A Few Keys to Success,” 30.

and locale, thus excluding rural music programs." ⁴³ Literature over time has looked at rural music education in several different ways. However, the curriculum and pedagogies of secondary band teachers need more source material. Successful secondary band teachers in rural public schools have, in their situation, had to find solutions and be creative to build the success of their students.

Spring asserts, "Further studies to explore realities in rural music education that relate to place and sense of place may also shed light on contemporary rural music education programs and the issues that surround these."⁴⁴ Causby points out that "30% of American students are enrolled in rural schools, yet the majority of research in education has been conducted in urban and suburban environments. Rural schools have unique challenges that need to be investigated."⁴⁵ This knowledge needs study to find out what works "out in the sticks" and how future educators and those in practice can benefit from this knowledge.

Statement of the Purpose

This qualitative case study research examines pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota that have a competitive summer street marching band in effort to show the unique approaches that contribute to a comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan area, which have a competitive field show marching band, were also be examined

⁴³ Vincent C. Bates, "Sustainable School Music for Poor, White Rural Students," *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 10, no. 2 (2011), 4.

⁴⁴ Spring, "Perspectives," 35.

⁴⁵ Causby, "Instrumental Music Education," 7.

to create a second set of cases for comparison. Johnson states, "Large urban schools have one set of advantages. Small extreme rural schools have another set."⁴⁶

Pedagogical studies provide a deeper understanding for educators. Entz asserts, "How a teacher approaches instruction is an important area of inquiry, particularly how [they] choose to interact with learners, structure the classroom and deliver the content."⁴⁷ Cain and Cursley suggest that "experienced teachers, including specialist music teachers, have developed various ways of teaching – a repertoire of actions that are sufficiently flexible to be used, with variations, with different students and different subject matter. These actions constitute the visible aspects of their pedagogies that can be understood in the light of the thinking that explains them."⁴⁸ Examining the uniqueness of the rural music educators' pedagogy adds validity to the employed approaches. The National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM) reminds us that "Research expands understanding about the impact of music making and music education."⁴⁹

Significance of the Study

Despite a vast amount of literature addressing issues and concerns regarding curriculum in secondary band classes, the focus on rural educational settings needs to be included in the annals of the literature. This study adds to the body of research by examining rural education,

⁴⁶ D. L. Johnson, "Can an 'Extreme' Rural High School Band Program Be Successful.," *School Band and Orchestra* (2017): 29, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/magazines/can-extreme-rural-high-school-band-program-be/docview/1917279987/se-2>.

⁴⁷ Susan Entz, "Forum on Public Policy Why Pedagogy Matters: The Importance of Teaching in a Standards-Based Environment" (2007): 2, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1099138.pdf>.

⁴⁸ Tim Cain and Joanna Cursley, "Researching Pedagogy," in *Teaching Music Differently* (Taylor & Francis, 2017), 30.

⁴⁹ "Music Research," National Association of Music Merchants, June 10, 2014, <https://www.nammfoundation.org/what-we-do/music-research#:~:text=Research%20expands%20understanding%20about%20the>.

specifically rural music education in a secondary public school in Minnesota with a competitive street marching band program, and the pedagogical approaches and instructional techniques that rural music teachers use in their teaching. Research regarding pedagogy and instructional techniques benefits all educators. Rural and metropolitan music educators are charged with providing quality education within their own settings. Echoing the assumption of Cain and Cursly, “this study assumes that each teacher has his or her own way of teaching and his or her own reasons for this and furthermore, that these reasons are the best ways of understanding what is going on.”⁵⁰

Exploring Pedagogical techniques will allow other rural music educators to see what others in similar situations are doing for success. Gathering and continuing the study of metropolitan/suburban teachers will also add to the literature by increasing the data available. The delineation of the marching band as a qualifier fills another gap in the literature by offering a glimpse into the contribution made by these extra and co-curricular groups. This study can act as a guide for those new to the teaching profession, as a resource, or as a model for proven approaches that can improve their teaching. Cain and Cursly assert, “teachers think deeply about their teaching: what they do, their reasons for doing it, and the ethical and moral values that support these reasons. But the end result of their thinking is not necessarily a more coherent theory with no contradictions; it is high-quality teaching.”⁵¹

Providing another voice and another layer to rural music education research is essential to improve teacher knowledge and to lead to more acceptance of a different approach to teaching. Just because something is a 'rural' approach does not make it region specific or isolated.

⁵⁰ Cain and Cursley, “Researching Pedagogy,” 27.

⁵¹ Ibid., 195.

Likewise, the same can be said about finding in urban and suburban settings as well. The point is to increase the discourse and show how the juxtaposition of these ideas can lead to better teaching and learning by the students instructed. Morrison and Cirillo remind us that “the arts for powerful learning opportunities and pathways to a successful future.”⁵²

Research Question and Sub Questions

To examine and develop cases to do a comparative study, the following research questions led the research.

Research question one: What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools?

Research question two: How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota?

Working Hypotheses

During this research, research question one was answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis one: Pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools include more focus on ensembles that are considered niche, chamber ensemble style teaching given instrumentation, and music contributions to the community vs. high-quality wind band genre.

Band directors in a rural public-school setting have a toolbox full of unique and inventive ways to approach curriculum delivery that may seem unconventional to the status quo. However, Isbell argues, "Insufficient resources, geographic isolation from other music teachers, and other

⁵² Morrison and Cirillo, “Building a Legacy,” 6.

specific challenges of a rural setting can overwhelm even the most experienced music teacher."⁵³ Music education aims to provide students with a high-quality musical education to produce a lifelong love of music. Being a rural music educator requires creativity and ingenuity. Isbell states that success "requires a music teacher with immense talents and creativity, not to mention a strong sense of humor. Rather than lamenting these difficult conditions, effective rural music teachers find ways to make small-town life work in their favor."⁵⁴ Spring suggests that "the literature is full of stereotypical beliefs and contains inconsistent data representations and arguments that perpetuate a rural myth of being unique, and also as being backward and unrefined."⁵⁵ Bates argues, "A rural music teacher's willingness to take risks and try new approaches in organization and pedagogy, even if those changes seem radical at first, will keep the music program fresh and engaging year after year."⁵⁶ While necessary in rural situations, these innovative techniques could be refined for others to use.

During this research, research question two was answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis two: Pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota in terms of focus on secondary ensembles such as pep, jazz, and marching band, more in-depth relationship building with students, and involvement in the community for public relations and program validity.

While the goal of music education may be the same because of the number of students access to resources and the quality of instruction, music educators in a rural public-school setting

⁵³ Isbell, "A Few Keys to Success," 40.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Spring, "Perspectives," 28.

⁵⁶ Bates, "Equity in Music," 6.

use a completely different set of tactics to make their programs successful. Priest points out that "in a small rural school setting, if enough students do sign up for a music course for it to run, not all the students will be academically driven."⁵⁷ Simply put, Secondary music teachers in a rural setting have systemic issues that most metropolitan teachers do not.

Definition of Terms

Curriculum and pedagogy are the core concepts of this study. The curriculum is the 'what' or instruction content, while pedagogy is the 'how' or methods used to deliver the curriculum.⁵⁸

The term rural is an ambiguous word that is hard to define. Scholars have made this distinction very clear in the literature. DuBay states, "defining what constitutes has a rural school is not as clear-cut as the public would like to believe."⁵⁹ Mayo points out that there are "identified at least 72 unique definitions of the term rural being utilized by various U.S. federal and state government agencies and programs. Each definition is created for a purpose."⁶⁰ For this research, the focus will be given to those rural programs in Minnesota.

⁵⁷ Anita Prest, "The Importance of Context, Reflection, Interaction, and Consequence in Rural Music Education Practice," *Journal of Research in Rural Education* 28, no. 14 (2013): 4, <http://jrre.psu.edu/articles/28-14.pdf>.

⁵⁸ Graham McPhail and Jeff McNeill, "One Direction: A Future for Secondary School Music Education?," *Music Education Research* 21, no. 4 (April 16, 2019): 360, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2019.1605345>.

⁵⁹ Rachael DuBay, "A Musically Embedded Curriculum for Rural Elementary Schools" (MA Thesis, Liberty University, Lynchburg, 2020), 5, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/musically-embedded-curriculum-rural-elementary/docview/2414451146/se-2>.

⁶⁰ Whitney Mayo, "The Meaning and Value of Elementary Music in Rural Communities." (PhD. Dissertation, Michigan State, East Lansing, 2022), 3, ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/meaning-value-elementary-music-rural-communities/docview/2715684235/se-2>.

Another core concept is examining the standards and seeing how educators plan to implement new standards. Great Schools Partnership defines Learning Standards as:

Concise, written descriptions of what students are expected to know and be able to do at a specific stage of their education. Learning standards describe educational objectives—i.e., what students should have learned by the end of a course, grade level, or grade span—but they do not describe any particular teaching practice, curriculum, or assessment method.⁶¹

The curriculum goes hand and hand with standards. This research will examine the new standards for the arts implemented in Minnesota this year. Standards implementation could serve as a barometer of effectiveness or may show a disconnect between legislator and educator.

Summary

Secondary band directors in a rural public-school setting is a topic that is worth studying. The term rural, in its ambiguity, is the cause of the lack of research. Rural secondary band directors employ unique pedagogical and instructional techniques worth examining and studying. Bates states, "From a more rural-centric perspective, however, some of these challenges can be seen as advantages or possibilities."⁶² The pedagogical approaches used by rural secondary band directors may show advantages for all educators regardless of the area instructed. Rural instrumental music education is an understudied area in literature and lends credence to this study. Bates captures this idea when he states that:

Rural schools can be sites for innovation in music education. Just as people from metropolitan areas look to rural places for fresh fruits and vegetables, we might also look to these same places for innovative approaches to music

⁶¹ Great Schools Partnership, "Learning Standards Definition," The Glossary of Education Reform, February 4, 2014, <https://www.edglossary.org/learning-standards/>.

⁶² Bates, "Equity in Music," 5.

teaching and learning, "new" approaches, and pedagogies rooted in rural values and traditions.⁶³

This statement emphasizes the relevance and need for study of rural music education. The purpose of this research, along with the research questions and research hypotheses aid in the validity of this study.

⁶³ Bates, "Equity in Music," 5-6.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Introduction

Exploring the literature shows several topics pertinent to this study. This review of the literature will focus on the ideas of pedagogy and its study in the rural and secondary music education. There are a variety of topics that began to provide the framework for this review. To focus the research, the follow six topics are being discussed: Pedagogy, Rural Secondary Music, Common Issues, Marching Band, Competition and High Stakes Programs. These topics will provide a better understanding to the framework of pedagogy and the rural conditions in regard to music education. Furthermore, they will lay a base work for comparison by providing an understanding of common issues and phenomenon between rural and suburban secondary music education.

Pedagogy

The literature is rife with information regarding strategies and new ideas dealing with various topics relating to the secondary band class. However, finding specific pedagogy studies proved challenging. The lack of specific pedagogy studies is explained by Freer, who asserts that "music education occasionally conflates pedagogy with curriculum."¹ Pedagogy is the basis of teaching. Successful teachers have solid foundations in a variety of techniques to help students succeed. Linaberry states that "successful teaching requires much more than error-detection; the effective band director collects a wealth of efficient strategies and classroom processes and

¹ Patrick Freer, "Response to Graham McPhail, 'Too Much Noise in the Classroom? Towards a Praxis of Conceptualization,' *Philosophy of Music Education*, 26, No. 2 (2018): 176-98," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 27, no. 1 (2019): 87-88.

intuitively determines which ones to employ to help ensure the best experience for every band member.”²

There are standard music methods implemented in pedagogy. Music educators in their preservice learn the techniques of Kodály, Orff, and Dalcroze. While primarily focused on elementary applications, these methods have application to the secondary instrumental music classroom. Since the 1970s, the method that has been a primary focus of secondary music educators is the Comprehensive Music program. According to Mark, “This program unified the study of music by bringing together theory, harmony, ear training, counterpoint, form analysis, instrumental and arranging, and history.”³ This innovative approach added music educators’ instructional technique of teaching music elements through performance.

Concina authored a literature review that provided insight regarding effective music teachers and their methods, stating that "music education has shifted from a pedagogical paradigm based on the transmission of traditional praxis to an approach that is more focused on the overall development and personal growth of pupils."⁴ She explains that "the concept of an effective teacher in music is a complex task since this construct involves several interrelated dimensions."⁵ In order to better focus her study, she filtered through current and historical pieces written on the topic. After applying criteria for delineation, she worked the sample size to 36 articles. The findings led to her asserting, “Depending on the type of learning objectives in

² Robin Linaberry, *Strategies, Tips, and Activities for the Effective Band Director Targeting Student Engagement and Comprehension* (Milton: Taylor & Francis Group, 2021): 1.

³ Michael Mark, *A Concise History of American Music Education* (R&L Education, 2008), 147.

⁴ Eleonora Concina, “Effective Music Teachers and Effective Music Teaching Today: A Systematic Review,” *Education Sciences* 13, no. 2 (January 19, 2023): 107, <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci13020107>.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 2.

question, music educators may adopt different approaches and strategies to effectively reach the planned educational goals. Teachers must also adapt to specific learning contexts, which are characterized by different socio-cultural and economic backgrounds.”⁶ She also pointed out the change in students' role in the educational process and how that weighs in on teachers stating, "Pupils' learning outcomes and feedback are currently considered to be indicators of teaching effectiveness.”⁷ She summarizes her study by affirming that the pedagogical approach influences lesson structure and teacher-student relationship, with music teachers adopting strategies based on student, subject, evaluation, or lesson management.⁸

Warnet conducted a literature review on the verbal behaviors of music teachers in secondary classrooms.⁹ She states, "Teacher feedback, communication, and instruction are key elements of facilitating student learning. For this reason, how instrumental music educators use teacher talk during rehearsals has been a subject of research for many years.”¹⁰ Her review examines the pedagogical techniques of Direct Instruction, Sequential patterns and Rehearsal Frames, Feedback, Modeling, and Questioning.¹¹ She states, "Although they appear somewhat different, the terms direct instruction, sequential patterns, and rehearsal frames are used by researchers to represent a similar idea.”¹² She notes that feedback is essential, but less than 10% of expert teachers use it in their daily teaching.

⁶ Cocina, “Effective Music Teachers”

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid., 15

⁹ Victoria Warnet, “Verbal Behaviors of Instrumental Music Teachers in Secondary Classrooms: A Review of Literature,” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 39, no. 1 (June 2, 2020): 8-16, 9 <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123320924827>

¹⁰ Ibid., 8.

¹¹ Ibid., 11-14.

Bruin's qualitative study builds upon Warnet and Concina's ideas around teacher feedback. He asserts that feedback is essential to student learning by giving immediate information regarding the student performance, stating, "Feedback is widely viewed as an intervention to improve learner performance, providing a basis for which learners can be extended into higher levels of cognitive function."¹³ Feedback is alluded to as a guide to reach a common goal between teachers and students.

Bruin lists two different models for feedback: teacher and student-centered and dialogism. Asserting that many disciplines have adopted some feedback model, the most common is the "IDEA (Internalization, Distribution, and Explanation, and Action) Model."¹⁴ He suggests that music education teaching practices exemplify this model in action. However, this type of feedback intervention has drawbacks, stating "that feedback can have a debilitating effect on performance if it is delivered in a way that is unidirectional, tangential to students focus."¹⁵ The second type of feedback explored by Bruin is Dialogism. This type of feedback allows for a more descriptive approach. Bruin explains that "dialogic pedagogy can enhance a student's thought and creative process through the dialogic positioning to and relationships with teachers and collaborators."¹⁶ He concludes with the idea that feedback is another pedagogic tool that educators can use to offer immediate correction to student performance. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the feedback may be influenced by many different variables, including

¹² Warnet, "Verbal Behaviors," 11.

¹³ Leon R de Bruin, "Feedback in the Instrumental Music Lesson: A Qualitative Study," *Psychology of Music* 51, no. 4 (November 28, 2022): 1259–74, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03057356221135668>, 1260.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 1261.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 1262.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

student reception, cultural norms, and the teacher's comfort level and expertise with using feedback in their pedagogy.

Modeling is another topic that Warnet explores. Her findings state, "Teacher modeling coupled with student imitation is another teaching technique that has been recommended to enhance student learning. Modeling has been shown to lead to substantial student improvement, particularly in increased psychomotor, aural, and kinesthetic response skills."¹⁷ Her final topic of questioning, she suggests that wisdom and the literature make an argument for questioning an educator's and their methods¹⁸ The use of questioning can help improve students' problem-solving skills as well as the application of knowledge.

Ma and Hall explore the phenomenon of ensemble communal learning being essential to secondary education by stating, "In these settings, individuals learn to play a part, but much of their learning and almost all of the desired performance happen together."¹⁹ Their study focuses on a high school marching band where each individual must not only learn their part but understand and learn how it fits into the ensemble as a whole. While it may be assumed instrumental music ensembles focus on the group, the authors point out that "most contemporary schooling is organized around systems of assessment that pull apart what people have actually learned together in order to focus on individual performance."²⁰ Ma and Hall define it as "ensemble learning always involves emergent and negotiated understandings—interpretations

¹⁷ Warnet, "Verbal Behaviors," 13.

¹⁸ Ibid., 14.

¹⁹ Jasmine Y. Ma and Rogers Hall, "Learning a Part Together: Ensemble Learning and Infrastructure in a Competitive High School Marching Band," *Instructional Science* 46, no. 4 (May 21, 2018): 508, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11251-018-9455-3>.

²⁰ Ibid., 510.

assembled by participants concerning the meaning and future of their activity together."²¹ Their study focuses on the intricate infrastructure of a competitive high school marching band show. The authors spent time highlighting the multiple demands placed on performers and the multiple responsibilities that exist. Focusing more on the student learning perspective, the authors state, "Students must come to see each other as necessary for learning, activity, and performance."²²

There are several studies that focus on the idea that modern band pedagogy instruction for preservice teachers is deeply based on theory and practice. In their text, Colwell, Hewitt, and Fonder state, "The most successful teachers of instrumental music are those whose musicianship and knowledge enable them to produce good performances of good music, and whose understanding of student motivation encourages enthusiastic participation on the part of their students, leading to greater development of their musical skills."²³ Schatt further reinforces this idea: "The traditional role of the music teacher is to be the knowledge-bearer in the classroom."²⁴ McPhail adds that "decades of personal study by the educator have led to a wealth of technical, musical, and pedagogical knowledge that teachers desire to impart to their students with the best intentions."²⁵

Gaining the competency to teach is another theme found in the literature. In a study regarding band teachers in Texas, Denis quotes Colwell stating, "Music teacher education has

²¹ Ma and Hall, "Learning a Part," 509.

²² *Ibid.*, 530.

²³ Richard Colwell, Michael Hewitt, and Mark Fonder, *The Teaching of Instrumental Music* (Routledge, 2017), 11.

²⁴ Matthew D. Schatt, "Passing the Baton: Building Student Autonomy and Democracy in the Large Ensemble Setting," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 40, no. 3 (September 28, 2021): 50.

²⁵ Graham J. McPhail, "Developing Student Autonomy in the One-To-One Music Lesson," *International Journal of Music Education* 31, no. 2 (May 2013): 163.

typically centered on method courses, yet course presentation and content can be inconsistent across time and instructors."²⁶ He continues to point out that too much time is focused on history, performance practice, and educational philosophy leading him to assert that "music skills may be well represented in preservice teacher education, yet practical skills may be underemphasized."²⁷ This study calls to the forefront the discourse of preservice education courses and the lack of practical applications skills.

Another study by Denis and Tucker examined how in-service educators improve their skills. Findings indicated that there are two main areas for study: Musical and non-musical skills. They cite research that claims "no statistically significant difference between groups."²⁸ When looking at the perception of the source of acquisition regarding skills needed to teach, their research findings stated that "the complexity of successful competency acquisition for music teaching, which may affect music student learning, may make decisions regarding university curricula and district-level professional development difficult to navigate."²⁹ They also assert that teaching competency is the most difficult skill to obtain. These findings suggest more studies should be undertaken regarding teacher education programs to ensure training in pedagogy is accomplished for teachers both pre- and in-service.

The literature has vast information regarding achievement in secondary instrument music education. Many studies focus on adjudication and festival issues, such as respirator and equity

²⁶ John Michael Denis, "Novice Texas Band Directors' Perceptions of the Skills and Knowledge for Successful Teaching" (PhD. Dissertation, University of North Texas, Denton, 2017), 37, ProQuest.

²⁷ Denis, "Band Directors' Perceptions," 24.

²⁸ John M. Dennis and Oliva G Tucker, "Acquiring Competency in Music, Teaching, and Personal Skills Areas: A Survey of In-Service Teachers," *Contributions to Music Education* 46 (2021): 38.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 44.

in adjudicated events. Montemayor's study focuses on rehearsal effectiveness; more directly, he examines teachers' approach to rehearsal, specifically the language and behaviors of the teacher.³⁰ He states, "Researchers have identified many characteristics common to highly skilled teachers, particularly with regard to how expert practitioners are able to correctly diagnose student learning challenges and how they subsequently conduct activities with an optimal sense of pacing and automaticity."³¹ He cites challenges in generalizing what contributes to good instruction due to the multiple variables in a given rehearsal, including, but not limited to, the size of the ensemble, the talent level of students, instructor competency, and differences in teacher ability or skill set. He asserts that "best practices regarding teachers' use of particular rehearsal procedures (i.e., rates, frequencies, and/or durations of various teacher behaviors and various types of ensemble performance) might vary according to the type of error being addressed."³² Although he reaffirms previous research, he does advocate for learning to take place over time, positive rehearsal setting and outstanding teaching skills must be present

Rehearsal techniques can explain and show trends in pedagogy. Juchniewica, Kelly, and Acklin conducted research focusing on band directors who received superior ratings. Their findings show that music fundamentals, such as tone quality and production, balance blending, rhythmic accuracy, and listening or ear training, were most important to the directors surveyed. In their study, a respondent stated, "The most important aspect of any rehearsal is the production of great sound(s). If there is no concept of a great sound, nothing else really matters."³³ Other

³⁰ Mark Montemayor, "Evaluative and Behavioral Correlates to Intrarehearsal Achievement in High School Bands," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 62, no. 1 (March 20, 2014): 40, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429413520010>.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 34.

³² *Ibid.*, 35.

findings highlighted included keeping a routine, keeping students engaged, and developing good relations with students, all played into the surveyed direct responses of essential tools.³⁴ They conclude their study with the following suggestion, “Perhaps, the criteria of a successful band director may include the development of students’ music knowledge and skills, the motivation to participate in music making outside the classroom, or other aspects that are not measured by large ensemble adjudication scores.”³⁵

Matthews and Johnson researched the effects of instrumental vs. choral setting and how it influences pedagogy. Their study was a survey based of 40 teachers and found three major themes. They include Pedagogy, Student Motivation, and Classroom Management. Each theme had its sub-captions; with pedagogy, there were the themes of warm-ups, scaffolding, and assessment. Student motivation highlighted balancing challenges and success, creating a rehearsal environment, and teamwork. Lastly, classroom management states rules and consequences, strategies for management, self-reflection, and dealing with the unexpected.

Matthews and Johnson’s study continued to examine pedagogy techniques such as warm-up and the need for them as a tool for building technical competency, ensemble sound, tuning, and listening. Scaffolding was seen as the most valuable in ensemble settings. Matthews and Johnson state that the teachers "mentioned the importance of breaking down tasks, using slower tempi, focusing on small, attainable sections, and isolating challenging passages."³⁶ Another

³³ Jay Juchniewicz, Steven N. Kelly, and Amy I. Acklin, “Rehearsal Characteristics of ‘Superior’ Band Directors,” *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 32, no. 2 (February 12, 2014): 40, <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123314521221>.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 42.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Wendy K. Matthews and Daniel C. Johnson, “Instructional Decision Making among Expert Choral and Instrumental Directors: How Musical Setting Influences Pedagogy,” *Research and Issues in Music Education* 15, no. 1 (2019), <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1271612>, 12.

critical concept discussed was incorporating warm ups that focused on the hard or technical part of the piece of music: giving the students extra focus on a goal or concept for the day's lesson.

Lastly, in the area of pedagogy is assessment. The participants stated that “assessment ideas [are] tools to modify teaching according to student accomplishment and challenges.”³⁷ Matthews and Johnson summarize their work by stating that their results “indicated overlapping ideas, yet subtle differences emerged within each theme. These differences aligned with the specific pedagogies related to developing vocal or instrumental techniques.”³⁸ These findings give a more focused lens to the pedagogical techniques studied.

Pedagogy has had many forms throughout the history of music education. Music lessons have been given in many formats, via mail, radio, and television transmission, and more recently over the internet through services such as YouTube, Skype, and Google Meets. In the classroom, there has been historically a director-centric approach. The director or music educator is the source of all information and critique. The students gain all information and technical instruction from the person on the podium. Recently, the idea of student lead or student-focused instruction has been a researched pedagogical approach to foster the idea of musical independence.

Music independence in a large ensemble was the focus of a study by Weidner. He followed three music educators in different school settings to assess, define and give best practices for obtaining musical independence and define the theory for the literature. Defining music independence as “the individual’s ability to engage in musical activity on one’s own.”³⁹ The challenge lies in developing and installing this idea in a larger ensemble.

³⁷ Matthews and Johnson, “Instructional Decision Making,” 13.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 24.

Jardine strongly challenges the traditional band setting in her paper on alternative pedagogy and curriculum.⁴⁰ Opposition to traditional band instruction is a newer area found in the literature. The influx of popular music groups or stage bands has lent some to reevaluate the pedagogical approach in secondary music education. She states, "Alternative pedagogical approaches can be implemented to create student-centered learning environments, but educators must change their mindset and begin pushing back against the cultural expectations and longstanding traditions of band pedagogy."⁴¹ She believes that many music educators are unhappy with their classrooms and what they are teaching because of fear of breaking tradition. She argues, "Implementing band pedagogy that remains focused on achieving performance objectives has continued to perpetuate inflexible teacher-centered learning environments that have left many teachers dissatisfied."⁴²

A series of three studies by McPhail and McNeill focuses on aligning curriculum and pedagogy to meet twenty-first-century learners. This study employed a Delphi Inquiry to gather data. In their first study, they focus on data gathered from interviews. They argue that using improvisation to foster creativity, rather than traditional performance, should be used as a musical foundation and to include more diversity in lieu of western practices, finally, an all-encompassing approach where composition, improvisation, performance and critiquing music serve as a pedagogical basis.⁴³ They criticize current pedagogy and curriculum for not creating

³⁹ Brian N. Weidner, "A Grounded Theory of Musical Independence in the Concert Band," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 68, no. 1 (January 7, 2020):53-77, 002242941989761, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429419897616>, 54.

⁴⁰ Katelyn Jardine, "Moving Secondary Music Education Forward," *BU Journal of Graduate Studies in Education* 13, no. 3 (2021): 40-44, <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1306819.pdf>

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 40.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 41.

students that can be creative in the multicultural society which exists existing today. They assert, "Students have a right to access music education as music is a unique form of human activity."⁴⁴ Thus, music education is a diverse undertaking requiring a team of specialist teachers; and schools need to foster connections with the wider community – the music worlds beyond the school gates and that activity requires trained specialist who can make music education reach beyond the school walls.

Their second study continues the first they discovered four themes developed: purpose and goals of secondary music education, curriculum, pedagogy, and context. They note specifically that in educational practice, what (curriculum) and how (pedagogy) are closely intertwined, but there is a considerable advantage in theorizing them as differentiated dimensions. The two are often conflated, and student-centered arguments are better suited to pedagogical approach are often confused with the content itself.⁴⁵ They conclude the second portion of their study by asserting, "a picture emerges of the future secondary school music that is very similar to the present – panelists considering change very unlikely. But this lack of change disguises underlying unresolved strategic tensions in the premises upon which music education is constructed and its delivery within the sector."⁴⁶

The third and final installment continued with the participants responding to four scenarios and responding to each. McPhail and McNeill state, "The panelists' responses to the scenarios clearly indicate that there is no preferred 'one direction' for secondary school music"⁴⁷

⁴³ Graham McPhail and Jeff McNeill, "One Direction: A Future for Secondary School Music Education?," *Music Education Research* 21, no. 4 (April 16, 2019): 360, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14613808.2019.1605345>.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 367.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 440-441.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 443.

and “panelists identified the need for change; they saw little likelihood of change occurring.”⁴⁸

Rural Secondary Music

The body of literature on rural music education remains an understudied topic in music education. Pioneering researchers such as Prest, Bates, and Isbell have set forth a path for others to follow in rural music education research. Isbell is often credited with the first modern study of rural music education. In his article, *Music Education in Rural Areas: A Few Keys to Success*, he elicits a call to action when he states that “there is a substantial lack of literature to help teachers who choose to work in rural schools. This fact is surprising since two-thirds of all public schools in this country are, by some definition, considered rural and are responsible for educating one-quarter to one-third of all school-age children.”⁴⁹ Since this article, there have been numerous studies done; however, studies focusing on rural music education issues remain diminished.

Bates’s article *Thinking Critically about Rural Music Education* provides a lens through which to examine the rural music teacher. He argues that “not all rural music teaching positions are the same; if there is one quality that could apply to all small town and rural schools, it is, paradoxically, their diversity.”⁵⁰ He explores the life and culture of working in a rural setting, citing issues with policies developed for urban or suburban schools and the problems that exist when these policies are attempted to be used in a rural setting. He also explains the high turnover rate in rural music settings, as many teachers leave for non-rural settings. He argues that “rural schools can be sites for innovation in music education.”⁵¹ Facing the challenges that exist in a

⁴⁷ McPhail and McNeill, “One Direction,” 493.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 485.

⁴⁹ Isbell, “A Few Keys to Success,” 30–34.

⁵⁰ Bates, “Thinking Critically,” 3.

rural setting allows for innovation and creativity, which is emphasized by Isbell, who states, "A rural music teacher's willingness to take risks and try new approaches in organization and pedagogy, even if those changes seem radical at first, will keep the music program fresh and engaging year after year."⁵²

Foster and Causby conducted a descriptive study on instrumental music in Mississippi. In this study, they acknowledge rural educators' struggles compared to their urban and suburban colleagues. They conducted a survey to find a level of importance regarding contextual knowledge, specialized skills, attitudes and beliefs, and challenges and rewards.⁵³ Specialized skills results stated that the "eight skills deemed most important for rural music educators by participants were all nonmusical, except for having a deep knowledge of the fundamentals of playing instruments and focusing on the basics."⁵⁴ The study suggests that more training and preparation for music teachers must be explored. Citing the fact that nonmusical skills were essential to the success of the program, things like buying into the program, working with all stakeholders, and building relationships with students,⁵⁵ Pre-service teachers need to be exposed to these ideas. Acknowledging the limitations faced by most colleges, such as distanced, the authors suggest more significant use of technology to give pre-service teachers experience that will equip them with tools to be successful educators, regardless of assignment.⁵⁶

⁵¹ Bates, "Thinking Critically," 6.

⁵² Isbell, "A Few Keys to Success," 34.

⁵³ Constance J Foster and Melody Causby, "Instrumental Music Education in Rural Mississippi: A Descriptive Study," *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 33, no. 3 (July 7, 2023): 48–65, <https://doi.org/10.1177/10570837231182401>.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 58.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 61.

Preservice teacher education programs are covered in great detail in the literature. Applying a critical lens at preservice teacher programs, Prest aims to “illuminate the particular conditions of the rural music educator teaching in a small school in a small community and how these conditions might not reflect taken-for-granted assumptions about teaching music that are often discussed in teacher education programs and found in textbooks and other related literature.”⁵⁷ Looking deeper into aesthetic music education philosophy, she can identify areas of assumptions that are typically taught in preservice education courses. She then offers arguments on how these do not align with teaching in a small rural setting. Specifically, she highlights the ideas of class size, music festivals, less desirable than urban postings, multicultural education, and professional development.⁵⁸ Each topic mentioned has a unique approach that rural educators face. These topics require out-of-the-box thinking and problem-solving. She argues that aside from the normal curricula cover, “Teacher education programs might better prepare music teachers to teach in a rural setting through using university music education curricula that emphasize a praxialist orientation.”⁵⁹

Music education in rural areas can have difficulties, including low income, stressed budgets, and an outright lack of teacher resources. Brossette, for example, conducted a cross-sectional study on rural music programs, and his findings mimicked those of Prest. He states that “while validating previous studies, continued research may determine if the challenges of teacher preparation, bias, isolation, limited resources, funding, and professional development are unique to rural schools or if there is a correlation between the challenges facing music education in both

⁵⁷ Prest, “The Importance of Context,” 2.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

rural and urban schools.”⁶⁰ DuBay researched music at an elementary level and discusses issues regarding rural music education. She explains, "Music programs are in some cases non-existent, or in others, a music educator is spread between two or maybe three different schools to stretch the school funds.”⁶¹ She also affirms previously mentioned themes stating, “When music education programs in the rural schools are examined, some topics such as the quality of educators, funding, rehearsal space, and educator professional development come up far short in the rural areas in comparison to their counterparts.”⁶² Again this perspective shows a common trend in the literature on the significant topic of rural music education.

Gippin conducted a study historically addressing preservice teaching training for rural areas, looking at the theme of preservice teacher preparation. They asserted that “There is a current strong call for improvement of the preservice training of those who will teach in rural settings.”⁶³ This statement highlights that this is not a new phenomenon. Preservice teacher education has been a topic in the literature for well over 40 years. They state, "The results document a knowledge and attitude gap between rural educators and college faculty who train Teachers.”⁶⁴

A unique trait of successful rural music programs is the community involvement, tradition, and history of the program. Lacey in his ethnographic case study of music program,

⁶⁰ Jack Leroy Brossette Jr., "Rural School Music Programs: A Cross-Sectional Study" (MM Thesis, Tarleton State University, Texas, 2015), 42, ProQuest. <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/dissertations-theses/rural-school-music-programs-cross-sectional-study/docview/1803938193/se-2?accountid=12085>, 42.

⁶¹ DuBay, “A Musically Embedded Curriculum,” 5.

⁶² Ibid., 6.

⁶³ Pauline C Grippin, “How Far Is the Ivory Tower from Reality in Preparing Teachers for Rural Settings,” *Research in Rural Education* 2, no. 4 (April 1, 1985), 147.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 149.

emphases, location, cultural, students, administrators, community members are among the things that affect school music programs.⁶⁵ Lacey explains, “Local traditions, history, and politics can affect expectations and procedures in a music program, and trying to work against those—whether intentionally or unwittingly—may create challenges for [them].”⁶⁶ By creating his research, Lacey established a permanent record of the history of his rural school. This type of historical ethnographic research can aid in the importance of music education to not only the students that are served but to the entire community.

Common Issues

All types of secondary band directors face similar challenges. There are constant changes in policies referring to standards and student achievement. Minnesota is implementing new Arts standards as of the 2023-2024 school year. The Department of Education states, “Students build artistic literacy in an art form by applying foundational knowledge and skills while working in four processes fundamental to the arts: Creating, Responding, Performing/Presenting, and Connecting. The Minnesota K-12 Academic Standards in the Arts include five arts areas: dance, media arts, music, theater, and visual arts.”⁶⁷

The National Association for Music Education (NAfME) states that “[Musical] standards emphasize conceptual understanding in areas that reflect the actual processes in which musicians engage.”⁶⁸ The National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCAS) established the National

⁶⁵ Robert C. Lacey, “An Historical Ethnography of a Rural School Music Program: A Case Study” (MA Thesis, Brigham Young University, Salt Lake City, 2015), <https://scholarsarchive.byu.edu/etd/5738>.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 2.

⁶⁷“Arts,” Minnesota Department of Education/Arts, 2011, <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/stds/Arts/>.

⁶⁸ National Association for Music Education, “Standards - NAFME,” <https://nafme.org/>, 2023, <https://nafme.org/publications-resources/standards/>.

Core Arts Standards in 2014.⁶⁹ This redesign of the 1994 National Standards for Arts Education focuses on a longitudinal design across all years of student interaction, focusing on a progression of skills. They assert that "quality learning requires opportunity-to-learn conditions that create a rigorous and supportive learning environment. Standards are only one building block of quality arts education."⁷⁰ This new design focused on four major themes across all arts disciplines: create, perform, respond, and connect. Music, dance, and theater use performance; other art forms, such as media arts and visual arts replace performance with producing and presenting respectfully.⁷¹

NCAS standards development used known best practices. Furthermore, they included student achievement and research-based findings to guide and form the standards in each discipline covered in the standards. Participation from NAFME, colleges, universities, and other educational scholars and practitioners was employed to create the standards. The philosophy of the standards is based on the conceptual idea of artistic literacy. NCAS defines this concept as:

Artistic literacy is the knowledge and understanding required to participate authentically in the arts. Fluency in the language(s) of the arts is the ability to create, perform/produce/present, respond, and connect through symbolic and metaphoric forms unique to the arts. It is embodied in specific philosophical foundations and lifelong goals that enable an artistically literate person to transfer arts knowledge, skills, and capacities to other subjects, settings, and contexts.⁷²

⁶⁹National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, "National Core Arts Standards: A Conceptual Framework for Arts Learning" (New York: PDF, July 21, 2016), <https://www.nationalartsstandards.org/sites/default/files/Conceptual%20Framework%2007-21-16.pdf>.

⁷⁰Ibid., 7.

⁷¹Ibid., 9.

⁷² National Coalition for Core Arts Standards, 17.

This foundation offers a starting point on which all other benchmarks and anchor standards are produced.

Minnesota has historically been a leader in arts education and also with arts education standards.⁷³ Taking the lead National Core Arts standards as a foundation, a review of the 2008 standards was started in 2018.⁷⁴ The Minnesota Arts Standards were revised in 2018, with implementation to begin in 2020-2021. The Minnesota Arts Standards features a fifth anchor standard of foundations. Which is listed as “using foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic work.”⁷⁵ The foundation knowledge and skills idea does not have benchmarks like the create, perform, respond, and connect. Instead, foundational knowledge is mixed into meeting other standards and aims to build artistic literacy.

With revised standards prepared, The Perpich Center for Arts Education (PCAE) and The Minnesota Department of Education conducted a survey in 2019 of administrators, fine arts directors, teachers, and other stakeholders. This survey was used for professional development by PCAE to create best practices regarding implementation. Documentation from Barden stated that "the purpose of this survey is to seek input on types of assistance and resources that would be most helpful to you and your district's transition to and implementation of 2018 standards."⁷⁶ Barden provided information from

⁷³ Minnesota Department of Education, “Arts.”

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Minnesota Department of Education, “2018 Minnesota Arts Standards Foundations Overview What Are the Reasons for Handling Foundations This Way?,” accessed February 8, 2024, <https://perpich.mn.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/2018-Minnesota-Arts-Standards-Foundations-Overview.pdf>.

⁷⁶ Wendy Barden to Kelly Taylor, “Your Inquiry about MN Standards Implementation,” Email, January 29, 2024.

this survey that showed most educators and administrators in the area of music were concerned about sample assessments, including Minnesota American Indian Tribes and communities, and an explanation of the legislative requirements.

The survey results led to the creation of the recommended Minnesota Arts Education Standards transition timeline.⁷⁷ This plan outlined a two-phase rollout with separate tracks for arts educators, administrators/curriculum directors. Full implementation of the standards was to be in the 2021-2022 school year. However, in June 2021, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Minnesota State Legislature delayed the implementation of any standards not implemented by January 1, 2021, until June 1, 2023, to allow districts more time to prepare.⁷⁸

Exploring standards in this context is relevant to understanding and assessing pedagogy. Harney et al. state, "Standards-based education reform began in earnest at the federal level with the 1983 publication *A Nation at Risk*."⁷⁹ In their research, the authors assert that those in the frontline, teachers need more input into implementing standards. Gaining insight from directors, they found several issues with standard-based instruction. While every respondent acknowledged that the National Core Arts Standards have a place in pedagogy, implementation of the standards provides many challenges. Adopting all the standards is too much to ask of any class. One respondent stated, "There are too many performance expectations [such as] competitions,

⁷⁷ Minnesota Department of Education, "Recommended Minnesota Arts Education Standards Transition Timeline, 2019-23." St. Paul: Minnesota Department of Education, August 2021.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Kristin Harney et al., "A View from the Inside: Ensemble Directors' Perspectives on Standards-Based Instruction," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 71, no. 2 (October 3, 2022): 2, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00224294221126681>.

concerts, sporting events, parades, etc., to focus on the 'non-performance' standards as much as we should.”⁸⁰

Many of the teachers surveyed expressed similar feelings regarding implementation. They stated that the biggest challenge is more time in ensembles. This lack of instructional time and music educators needing more confidence in the standards have limited implantation. They explain that standard-based instruction can be an excellent tool for beginning teachers to help foster and lead them as they hone their pedogeological approach. There are still others who say standards come from best practices in teaching. Finally, the authors found that "school administrators' expectations regarding standards-based instruction varied between districts. Many times, teachers indicated that their administrators required documentation related to the standards as a part of the teacher evaluation process.”⁸¹ Although they question whether the National Core Arts Standards are unreachable, they state that for success in "standards-based instruction in ensembles, practicing teachers need access to targeted, relevant professional development.”⁸²

Several studies have investigated the effect of policy changes over time. Parulekar examined the evaluation of band directors by administrators and band directors. In his dissertation, he points to the following as a problem faced by all band (and music) educators:

Defining and measuring effective teaching in high school band programs poses a significant challenge. Band directors engage in various complex individual and group learning activities. In addition, a broad constituency places divergent expectations on band programs. Directors must provide students with opportunities for both musical and personal growth. Communities expect band programs to participate in local events, provide entertainment and perform culturally relevant music. Administrators and

⁸⁰ Harney et al., “View from the Inside,” 9.

⁸¹ Ibid., 13.

⁸² Ibid., 17.

legislators demand immediate quantifiable evidence of student growth with compensation, promotion, tenure, and even termination implications.⁸³

His research shows that band directors and principals have similar options based on the survey data. Both agreed that teacher attributes are essential, but given some administrators' novice level of understanding, it was unsurprising to see discourse regarding judged competition for raising effectiveness. He employs the educator to "engage in dialogue with district and building administrators to clearly define the role of adjudicated events in their music programs."⁸⁴

The COVID-19 pandemic affected all music education. Hash authored a study to examine band directors' practices, experiences, and perspectives during this historical period. He asserts, "Remote or distance learning has existed as an option for music instruction since the late 19th century when professional artists offered lessons through the mail."⁸⁵ He talks of the positivity of using distance learning for weather-related closures and how it can present educators with tools in a cross-media approach to enhance pedagogy using many different digital exchanges. The COVID-19 Pandemic brought challenges to all those in education. Hash suggests, "Music educators had to find ways of providing meaningful instruction in a subject that typically depends on students interacting throughout the learning process. [Remote Learning] provided during the COVID-19 shutdown was essentially emergency teaching rather than the implementation of curricula planned, organized, and designed for distanced environments."⁸⁶

⁸³ Marc Samir Parulekar, Parulekar, Marc Samir. "Determining Criteria for the Evaluation of High School Band Directors: A Survey of High School Principals and Band Directors in the State of Ohio." Order No. 3670741, (PhD. Dissertation, The Ohio State University, Columbus, 2014). 25. ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global; Social Science Premium Collection.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 138.

⁸⁵ Phillip M. Hash, "Remote Learning in School Bands during the COVID-19 Shutdown," *Journal of Research in Music Education* 68, no. 4 (December 7, 2020); 381, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429420967008>.

⁸⁶ Ibid, 384.

Flexibility is a must and distance learning is another tool that can be valuable for educators to embrace.

The pandemic also brought to the forefront the topic of student mental health. During the pandemic, educators were teaching music and being there to monitor students' mental health and provide some normalcy. Several studies existed before the pandemic, and one occurred during the duration. Koner and Weaver had to adapt their study from in-school to remote learning scenarios. They stated, "The COVID-19 pandemic and stay-at-home orders affected students' mental health and stress levels throughout the world."⁸⁷ They explored mindfulness techniques and found that mindfulness practices can be beneficial not only in times of crisis, such as the pandemic but by implementing these techniques into music classrooms, students may become comfortable enough with them to implement into stressful areas of their lives.

Studies by Edgar and Countryman and Stewart Rose related to students' mental health and preparation for teachers. Edgar focused on the preparation of teachers, warning that "students encounter myriad challenges affecting their daily functioning. These challenges can involve home life, peers, communities, and school and can have negative effects on social and emotional elements of their lives."⁸⁸ Defining a facilitative teacher, as one who may also take a counselors role, dealing with the whole student and not just the subject taught. While little is presented in preservice teacher preparation, music educators often see the same students from anywhere from 4-7 years or more, depending on the structure of the school they teach in. Edgar,

⁸⁷ Karen M. Koner and Abigayle Weaver, "An Exploratory Case Study of Mindfulness Techniques in a High School Band Program during the COVID-19 Pandemic," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 40, no. 3 (October 9, 2021): 72, <https://doi.org/10.1177/87551233211050011>.

⁸⁸ Scott N. Edgar, "Preparing High School Instrumental Music Educators to Respond to the Social and Emotional Challenges of Students," *Journal of Music Teacher Education* 24, no. 3 (December 19, 2013): 68, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083713514980>.

concludes by stating that experience may be the best teacher in these situations, but more time should be spent on student interaction in the preservice setting.

Continuing in their study, Countryman and Stewart Rose assert, "The lived experience of classroom practice offers profound insights into musicking's potential to address youths' psychological needs—needs that have been empirically established to address subjective wellbeing. These music educators gradually modify their practices so that students' psychological needs determine the pedagogy."⁸⁹ Using a self-determination theory lens, they state, "refines the articulation of human needs to competence, relatedness, and autonomy, which are qualities essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and wellbeing."⁹⁰ Through a unique perspective, they juxtapose a video game with the development of students. Looking at such things as achievements and mastery of levels, they conclude by suggesting that educators celebrate adolescents' authentic self-expression, personal growth, and transformation in classrooms, connecting with diverse peers for collective growth.

Social-emotional learning is an evolving area of study in post-COVID-19 education. Culp et al.⁹¹ conducted a study to examine pre-service education preparation on meeting students' emotional and social needs. They discuss the difficulty of students' needs changing throughout their years in school, not only cognitively but also because mental and emotional needs are just as important and need to be considered. They state, "Learners have socioemotional needs, and

⁸⁹ June Countryman and Leslie Stewart Rose, "Wellbeing in the Secondary Music Classroom: Ideas from Hero's Journeys and Online Gaming," *Philosophy of Music Education Review* 25, no. 2 (2017): 129, <https://doi.org/10.2979/philmusieducrevi.25.2.03>.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 131.

⁹¹ Mara E Culp et al., "Meeting the Social and Emotional Needs of P–12 Learners: A Descriptive Study of Music Teacher Education Programs," *Journal of Research in Music Education*, June 3, 2023, 002242942311746-002242942311746, <https://doi.org/10.1177/00224294231174606>.

meeting their socioemotional needs begins by understanding their SED. World events have led to an increased focus on social-emotional learning in schools in ways that promote well-being and equity."⁹² Their study highlights another area where pre-service and in-service teachers need more training to meet the needs of today's students successfully.

Sieglal conducted a study on "Situational belonging in high school band ensembles and high schools."⁹³ He states that "students' perceived belonging in academic spaces has emerged as a critical nexus of overall academic achievement, social-emotional outcomes (e.g., self-concept and self-efficacy), and engagement in K–12 schools."⁹⁴ His study shows that students have more sense of belonging in band than in other classes in school and confirmed previous research. His study findings suggest that students who feel a strong sense of belonging also tend to have increased self-esteem and self-actualization. He concludes his study by stating, "Increased understanding of the potential for music classes to function as environments which support the physical and mental well-being of young people is a task of the greatest importance."⁹⁵

Tucker conducted a literature review on teacher influences in improving student motivation and perceptions of self. She states that "music educators daily face the challenge of motivating adolescent students whose perceptions of self are forming and evolving."⁹⁶ She

⁹² Culp et al., "Meeting the Social," 18.

⁹³ Cameron R Siegal, "Situational Belonging in High School Band Ensembles and High Schools," *Psychology of Music* 0, no. 0 (December 12, 2023): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.1177/03057356231214499>.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 1.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 12.

⁹⁶ Olivia Gail Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence Strategies to Improve Secondary Instrumental Students' Motivation and Perceptions of Self." *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 36, no. 3 (September 21, 2017): 5. <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123317733109>.

outlines the following for study: Word Choice, Performance Experience, Intrinsic Motivation, and Environments⁹⁷. Word choice used by educators has a profound effect on students, with performance experiences in honor groups or other competitive situations also adding to the positive experience. Intrinsic motivation is highlighted in student autonomy and feelings of competency. Lastly, a teacher providing a cooperative and supportive classroom environment also gains positive student motivation.

Dagaz conducted an ethnographic study of two midwestern schools to look at the effects of marching band and the nonmusical skills developed. She states, "The process involved in participation in high school marching band show[s] how students created strong connections through participation in the activity and developed an interactional and affective commitment to the group that led to a high level of trust, acceptance, and self-confidence."⁹⁸ Taking the lead from historical research perspectives, she continues to examine adolescent peer social interaction and how participating in band class can develop social skills and other developmental milestones.

Her study finds that being in a marching band can help the student find and define their identity. She asserts that "marching band, which encompasses a dense friendship structure, can help an adolescent stabilize his or her identity as a member of the group and develop higher self-esteem and self-worth."⁹⁹ Furthermore, students involved in the programs studied gained a connection within the band community. She highlights the fact that the band is all-inclusive

⁹⁷ Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence," 6.

⁹⁸Mari C. Dagaz, "Learning from the Band," *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 41, no. 4 (June 13, 2012): 432–61, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241612447813>, 432.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, 436.

when it comes to study participation. She states, "All members of the marching band were considered important. There were no "stars," and no one sat on the sidelines in the two marching bands. Every participant had an active role in every performance."¹⁰⁰ She concludes her study by pointing out the substantial benefits of this type of activity, such as stability, support, acceptance, and self-confidence.¹⁰¹

Marching Band

Music has always marched. In her book on ethnomusicology, Morgan-Ellis states, "Music can have a powerful impact on the energy and coordination of marching groups. It not only keeps participants stepping in time but can provide them with motivation as they become tired. For this reason, militaries around the world have accompanied marching with music for untold centuries."¹⁰² Modern-day marching bands can be traced to military roots, closely followed by Drum and Bugle Corps. In the area of educational marching bands, a predominant figure is that of Dr. James R. Wells who was innovative in many facets of the marching arts. He was among the first to incorporate drum and bugle corps style with collegiate marching programs. Furthermore, he helped to influence many marching band directors from the 70s to the present with his unique approach, which focused on smooth movements rather than the picture, transition, and picture format used prior. He also focused on student leadership as well as helping to break the male-only approach of college-level marching bands. He focused his dissertation on marching band and stated, "marching band aesthetic was the coordination and harmonious

¹⁰⁰ Dagaz, "Learning," 450.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 458.

¹⁰² Esther M Morgan-Ellis, *Resonances: Engaging Music in Its Cultural Context* (Dahlonega, Georgia: University Press, 2020), 12.

agreement of auditory and visual elements inherent in a marching band performance and experienced both intellectually and emotionally.”¹⁰³

Marching band in a secondary school setting presents a unique juxtaposition. Carver, Robison, and Russell conducted a study on marching band directors' career impacts and longevity. Their study states, "Marching bands are often performance centerpieces and highly visible ensembles within the community of many public school music programs."¹⁰⁴ Marching band presents opportunities to all students and a unique team where there are no bench players. They continue by saying, "Marching bands in American high schools are often part of the band program. However, they often function differently than other aspects of the band program due to their co-curricular or extra-curricular nature and their association with school athletics."¹⁰⁵ They also state that "[m]arching band directors often have multiple teaching and administration duties that lie outside of the regularly scheduled school day."¹⁰⁶ Not only did they focus on director turnover in some programs, but they stated that "[r]esearch related to marching band director turnover and its relationship to marching band participation showed that as the amount of band teacher turnover increases, participation in marching band decreases."¹⁰⁷

¹⁰³ James R. Wells, "An Educational Model for Developing Comprehensive Musicianship through the Study and Performance of Selected Original 20th Century Band Compositions" (PhD. Dissertation, Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, 1974), ProQuest Dissertations. <https://www.proquest.com/docview/302724245/8CC08D2399AB4F2BPQ/1?accountid=12085>, 2.

¹⁰⁴ Joseph Carver, Tiger Robison, and Joshua A. Russell, "Factors Influencing High School Marching Band Directors' Career Decisions: The Roll of Professional Respect and Support.," *Journal of Band Research* 57, no. 2 (2022): 76, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/factors-influencing-high-school-marching-band/docview/2658285531/se-2>.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 60.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 61.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

Stern's study further examines marching bands' and groups' scores and socioeconomic status at marching band competitions. He reiterates that "marching band is one of the most visible manifestations of music education in American culture."¹⁰⁸ His research focused on competitive groups and the socioeconomic advantages of high school bands. He found many factors, including access to lessons when students are just starting their studies, the ability to hire additional staff, arrangers, and drill writers, and a direct correlation to student participation in competitive groups. He concludes by suggesting that competition may judge more than just a simple performance.

Competition and High Stakes Programs

Competition in music is a topic that has been researched and discussed in the literature for decades, both for and against. High school instrumental music programs have some form of competition in every state. O'Leary conducted a phenomenological study looking at meaning and infuses for individual students.¹⁰⁹ He states that awards from past competitions "symbolize the collective efforts of band members and directors current and past, communicate traditions of competitive activity, and demonstrate that competition, for many, was a significant facet of their band experiences."¹¹⁰ His finding point to the fact that competition is still a debated issue in music education, saying that "music educators continue to feel tension regarding

¹⁰⁸ Jordan Stern, "Correlations between Socioeconomic Status and Scores at Marching Band Contest," *Journal of Band Research* 56, no. 2 (2021): 1, <https://go.openathens.net/redirector/liberty.edu?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/correlations-between-socioeconomic-status-scores/docview/2531349555/se-2>.

¹⁰⁹ Emmett J. O'Leary, "A Phenomenological Study of Competition in High School Bands," *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education* 220, no. 220 (2019): 43

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

competition.”¹¹¹ Parallels are drawn to the idea of teaching to the exam seen in other disciplines with music educators teaching to the competition. Concluding his paper, he states, "Music educators would benefit from a greater understanding of what is meaningful about competing on a larger scale."¹¹²

Tucker presented a case study on teacher agency in specific programs. Her research stated, "High-stakes performance environments are contexts in which teachers perceive heavy expectations and constraints related to performance preparation."¹¹³ Given this expectation, she explored teacher agency, defined by LaFrance and Rakes as "The capacity of teachers to act purposefully to direct their professional growth, find solutions to challenges they face, and improve their practice."¹¹⁴ Examining how administrators may evaluate music educators through performance, Tucker offers the following, "Given the emphasis on students' creating and responding to music in the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) standards, the potential for administrators' use of performance scores and contest ratings in teacher evaluation necessitates research because measurement may shape the process and content of instrumental music teaching and learning."¹¹⁵ Furthermore, she states that "music educators in high-stakes performance environments might not have the room to maneuver toward more than reproduction of performance emphases, and the discourse around curricular reform requires greater

¹¹¹ O'Leary, "A Phenomenological Study," 55.

¹¹² Ibid., 58.

¹¹³ Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence," 387.

¹¹⁴ Diane LaFrance and Lori Rakes, "Teacher Identity, Growth Mindset, and Agency," in *Collaborative Approaches to Recruiting, Preparing, and Retaining Teachers for the Field*, ed. by Maria Peterson-Ahmad and Vicki L. Luther (Hershey, PA: IGI Global, 2022), 121, <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-9047-8.ch007>.

¹¹⁵ Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence," 387.

nuance.”¹¹⁶ The paradigm created here makes the music educator decide between teaching to standards or competitions. Tucker says, "If educators feel less pressure around performances, they might be more likely to address the creating and responding national standards in their large ensemble curricula.”¹¹⁷

Rawlings, continuing the competition's theme, performed a case study regarding large group adjudicated competitions in Kansas.¹¹⁸ His research reaffirmed previous studies sighting the positive influence of adjudicated events. He asserts, "Music teacher participants and their colleagues agreed that the process of preparing for large-group adjudicated events benefited student learning.”¹¹⁹ Although state-specific to Kansas, the information presented provided an easily adaptable reflective quality. He offers, "Within the broad conversation focused on standardizing music curricula and high-stakes music teacher evaluation, student music learning may or may not be the focus of adjudicated events.”¹²⁰

Summary

This literature review examined key areas of interest and shows the many facets that affect music educators pedagogical decisions in different settings. Through this process, examining pedagogy shows a variety of subtopics and approaches regarding pedagogy. The most common seen in this review is teacher feedback and how it applies to modeling, director

¹¹⁶ Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence," 401.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., 402.

¹¹⁸ Jared R. Rawlings, "Benefits and Challenges of Large-Ensemble Instrumental Music Adjudicated Events: Insights from Experienced Music Teachers," *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education* 37, no. 2 (May 30, 2018): 46–53, <https://doi.org/10.1177/8755123318777824>

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 49.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 50.

instruction framing and questioning. Investigating rural music shows a variety of challenges that rural music educators face such as limited resources, challenging instrumentation, and isolation. All music educators have similar challenges in educational issues such as standards, social-emotional education, and the COVID-19 pandemic. Lastly, the literature shows that marching band and competition have influence on secondary instrumental music programs is active in any setting. This can lead to additional challenges and rewards. Furthermore, it exemplifies the need for this study as the literature lacks information in areas of rural secondary music pedagogy, specifically in application and adaptations for the setting.

Chapter Three: Methods

Introduction

This qualitative case study research examines pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota with a competitive summer street marching band to show the unique approaches contributing to comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan area, which have a competitive field show marching band, will also be examined to create a second set of cases for comparison.

This chapter will outline the design of this study and restate and explore the research questions and hypotheses. The chapter will then discuss how participants were selected and the setting of each of the eight schools in the study. It will conclude by examining the instruments used, the procedures followed, and how the data was analyzed.

Design

This study is a qualitative case study research study. Creswell and Creswell discuss qualitative case studies and point to the fact they are used across disciplines and are helpful in evaluations, stating that “the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case, often a program, event, activity process, or one or more individuals.”¹ Qualitative research in this paper is used to understand and examine the musical pedagogy of the participating band directors in Minnesota. Given the vast differences in rural and suburban settings in the literature, a qualitative case study approach is the most fitting to gain a deeper understanding to answer the

¹ John W. Creswell, and J. David Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* (California: SAGE Publications, 2018), 14.

research questions. This method also allows for a more complete narrative from the experiences of those teaching.

Creswell and Creswell discuss eight different characteristics of qualitative research. These include: Highlighting the natural setting in which the research takes place; The researcher is the key instrument in the study; using multiple sources of data; applying both inductive and deductive data analysis; examining participants meanings; allowing for the design to emerge during research; giving latitude for reflection of the researcher; and a holistic account to the entire topic studied.²

Qualitative data was collected because this research looked for phenomenological similarities and differences in rural and suburban secondary band director in Minnesota. For data collection, the most significant variable considered was the geographic location of each school. In the rural schools examined, geographical considerations were noted to ensure that schools were representative of the largest possible cross-section of the state. When dealing with those schools in the metropolitan area, a sample school from each portion (north, east, south, and west) was attempted to be selected.

Qualitative data collection focused on an interview with the respective directors of the programs in the study. The interview allowed focus on the actual work the educators are doing, and using open-ended questions allowed for a greater understanding and classification of data offered by the participants.

² Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 181-182.

Questions and Hypotheses

Two research questions were addressed in this study. (1) What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools?

(2) How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota?

During this research, research question one was answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis One: Pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools include more focus on ensembles that are considered niche, chamber ensemble style teaching given instrumentation and music contributions to the community vs. high-quality wind band genre.

During this research, research question two was answered with the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis two: Pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota in terms of focus on secondary ensembles such as pep, jazz, and marching band, more in-depth relationship building with students and involvement in the community for public relations and program validity.

Participants

Several choices were made to frame this study to reduce the number of possible participants. Geographically, this study is limited to secondary band directors in Minnesota. For a deeper focus of the study, details and data regarding general music, vocal music, and orchestra music were not covered in this study. Further, a limitation of those with a competitive marching program narrowed the number of qualified participants.

Information regarding possible participants was gathered from several sources. Tri-State Judges Association provided a list of schools (n=49) that support summer street marching

programs. Youth in Music's website was accessed (n=35) for a list of schools that support a competitive fall field show. The information was categorized by geographical location and then by school size. Prospective schools were contacted via email and asked to participate in the survey. The schools selected were purposefully selected. Creswell and Creswell list this as a key component of qualitative research stating the “participant will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research questions.”³ Of the schools contacted, four Rural schools agreed to participate in the research. Similarly, four metro schools agreed, with two other schools declining to participate. Following IRB protocols, consent forms were gathered from participants, and the survey link was emailed to them for completion.

Conscious attempts were made to cover as much of the state geographically as possible, regarding the rural schools. Similarly, schools from different geographical portions of the Twin Cities Metropolitan area were used. There was consideration not to include more than one school from a given school district in the metro area, as several districts had multiple schools with qualifying programs.

Setting

The study took place in the fall of 2023. Once consent forms were received, the participating directors were contacted for one-on-one interviews. Interviews took place in the evening and over the weekends, depending on the director's schedule within a two-week period—the interview directors via Google Meets from an office in the researcher's school and home office. The directors chose their place for our meeting.

The selected four rural schools were spread throughout central and southern Minnesota, while the metro schools are representative of compass points overlaid on the greater Twin

³ Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 185.

Cities metropolitan area of Minnesota. Table 3.1 shows the schools, along with the total number of students in the district, schools in the district, students in the high school, and grades the high school serves. This comparison shows the different sizes of schools sampled and the deviation in each school.

Table 3.1 School Settings

Rural or Suburban	High School	Total number of schools K-12 in the district	The total population of the school district	The population of high schools in the study.	Grades served in high school.
Rural	Case	2	819	375	6-12
Rural	Deere	2	1673	784	7-12
Rural	International	2	781	364	7-12
Rural	Kubota	2	1222	603	7-12
Suburban	Empire	13	11,307	3504	9-12
Suburban	Industrial	23	18,994	1980	9-12
Suburban	Complex	43	38,230	2981	9-12
Suburban	Freeway	8	6909	2212	9-12

Instrumentation

This Qualitative case study employed three different qualitative instruments for data collection. First a semi-structured interview was performed Then a survey was distributed to the participants after the interviews were completed. Finally, a course handbook/class syllabus were

obtained from the participating schools. What follows is the study design, the methodology, and each part of this study.

The course handbook/syllabus provided a starting point for obtaining information on the music program studied. While unique and different for each setting, they provide a basis of information that can offer insight in to the philosophy, grading and requirements. Creswell and Creswell state that qualitative documents, “enables a research to obtain the language and words of participants and represents data to which the participants have given attention.”⁴ Most of these documents are readily available and updated yearly to meet changing requirements or program goals. To protect the anonymity of those in the study, they documents are not included in the index.

The interview consisted of 16 open-ended questions, allowing a conversational situation. Creswell and Plano Clark state, "The types of data that researchers can collect are extensive."⁵ To limit the types of data gathered, the qualitative interview focused on the following themes: how the director came to their current position, their opinions on teaching in their setting, community, their approach pedagogy, other teachers, administration opinions, concert loads, recruitment, competition, and marching arts inclusion. A copy of the interview questions can be found in Appendix C.

Using Qualtrics Survey software, an eighty-one-question survey was developed. The survey was adapted from Causby’s Instrumental Music Education in Rural Mississippi Survey.⁶

⁴ Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 188.

⁵ John W. Creswell and Vicki L Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting Mixed Methods Research*, 3rd ed, (Los Angeles: Sage, 2018), 179.

⁶ Kelly Taylor to Melody Causby, “Requesting the Use Of ,” Email, August 7, 2023.

from her study with Foster.⁷ This survey focused on rural music teachers' experience. The survey was an adaptation of Causby's survey from 2019⁸ regarding rural North Carolina teachers. The survey was customized for this research to illicit data that would not only focus on the rural schools but also compare both types of schools studied. Because this was an adaptation of a survey used twice before, it was deemed valid and reliable. The survey was comprised 81 questions with the following categories: Teacher Demographics, School and Community, Music Program, Pedagogy, Necessary Skills, Beliefs, Success, and Insight. The survey, in its entirety, is located in Appendix B.

The data sought from the survey was to provide basic information regarding each school; this data was used to create broad facts about each type of school study. Providing information allowed each participating director to speak about the hard facts of their school, program, and student involvement. This offered another qualitative document for study showing trends among topics that may not have been able to be covered in a face-to-face interviews, furthermore it provided a data source that spoke in general about secondary music programs in the schools studied.

Procedures

First, instruments for the survey and interview questions were gathered. Next, following the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB), the application for approval of the study and all necessary permissions, authorizations, and survey instruments were applied for and received approval. (See Appendix A) Then, a list of potential directors was developed using the

⁷ Constance J Foster and Melody Causby, "Instrumental Music Education in Rural Mississippi: A Descriptive Study," *Journal of Music Teacher Education* (2023), <https://doi.org/10.1177/10570837231182401>, 48.

⁸ Causby, "Instrumental Music Education," 106.

researcher's contacts and the Tri-State Judges Association database and the Youth in Music Website for schools that support a marching program. Rural schools, the main focus of this study, were gathered first. The researcher's contacts also selected metro area schools for the study. Directors meeting the requirements of the study were identified and placed on a list of possible directors to reach out to for participation. After receiving IRB approval, the researcher emailed the chosen directors to confirm participation.

The first portion of the study to take place was the interview. Creswell and Creswell state that "interviews all participants to provide historical information" and "information that is filtered the views of the interviews."⁹ Due to geographic limitations and distances, in-person interviews proved problematic to arrange, so interviews were conducted over Google Meets. The meetings were recorded and transcribed, and the transcriptions were given to the participants to review for accuracy and clarification. Full transcripts of the interviews can be found in Appendix D. The participating directors were given the link to complete the survey upon completion of the interviews and asked to email a copy of their program handbook/syllabus.

Data Analysis

Two research questions were addressed in this study. (1) What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools? (2) How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota? Before beginning data analysis, pseudonyms were assigned, and names were changed in corresponding transcripts to protect the identity of the respondents. This allows for each response to be independent of the other. However, the data provides themes and concepts that aid comparison and findings.

⁹ Creswell And Creswell, *Research Design*, 180.

The qualitative case study model according to Creswell and Plano, analysis leads to the discovery of common concepts and then comparison thereof. Subsequent data is used to confirm, disconfirm, or expand each other, interpret, and resolve differences, and different procedures are used for transformation.¹⁰

Following the guide laid out by Creswell and Creswell, the analysis of qualitative data collected, first, the transcripts of the interviews were gathered and sent to participants for verification. Once verified transcripts were received, the transcripts of the interviews, the Short answers from the survey and syllabus/handbook data were uploaded separately to ATLAS.ti¹¹ software for coding and thematic identification. Coding then led to a review of the data, finding and examining, expected codes, surprising codes, and unusual codes.¹²

For the purposes of this study, the data was compiled to create two cases: metro schools and rural schools. These data sets were then used for integration and comparison.

¹⁰ Creswell and Plano Clark, *Designing and Conducting*, 222.

¹¹ ATLAS.ti Software program-<https://atlasti.com/>

¹² Creswell and Creswell, *Research Design*, 195.

Chapter Four: Results

This qualitative case study research examined pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota with a competitive summer street marching band to show the unique approaches that contribute to a comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan area, which has a competitive field show marching band, were also examined to create a second set of cases for comparison.

This chapter will focus on the data discovered during the research process along with information regarding the interview process, demographics of the participants, and themes that developed from the interviews, which are presented to help answer the two research questions: RQ 1. What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools? RQ 2. How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota?

Interviews

Eight interviews were conducted using sixteen open-ended questions. The interviews were semi-structured, conversational style, and were conducted over Google Meet. The researcher recorded and transcribed the interviews using the Google Meet recording and transcript option. Transcripts of the interviews were given to the interviewees for review, validation, and correction. The shortest interview lasted 26 minutes, and the longest lasted 75 minutes. The average interview length was 44 minutes.

Demographics

The eight educators in this study combined had 163 years of teaching experience, with an average of 20.4 years. Figure 4.1 shows the experience of the directors in the study. Of the rural

teachers (n=4), only one (25%) had experience in a metro/suburban teaching setting. Two (50%) of the directors in a rural setting have master's degrees. All rural teachers (100%) have no other teaching license outside of music.

Similarly, of the suburban teachers (n=4), three (75%) have experience teaching in a rural school setting. All of the suburban teachers (100%) have master's degrees and have no other teaching license outside of music. All of the rural teachers (100%) are stand-alone teachers, meaning they have no other full or part-time music educators assisting them. At the same time, half (50%) of the suburban teachers have more than one music educator.

Directors all report having a healthy program with a strong community, administration, and participation. Figure 4.2 shows the number of students enrolled in the school vs the number of students in band. Using rounded numbers, the average for rural programs studied revealed a student body of 500 and a participation rate of 250 (50%) of students in band. Conversely, the Suburban school's average student body is 2525, and a participation rate of 268.75 (10.64%) in band.

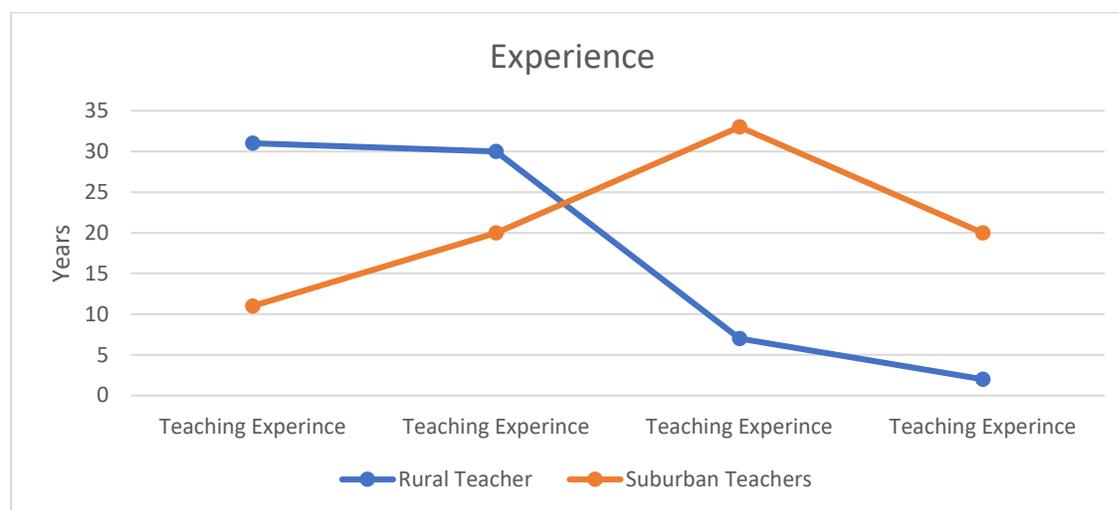


Figure 4.1 Teaching experience by participant

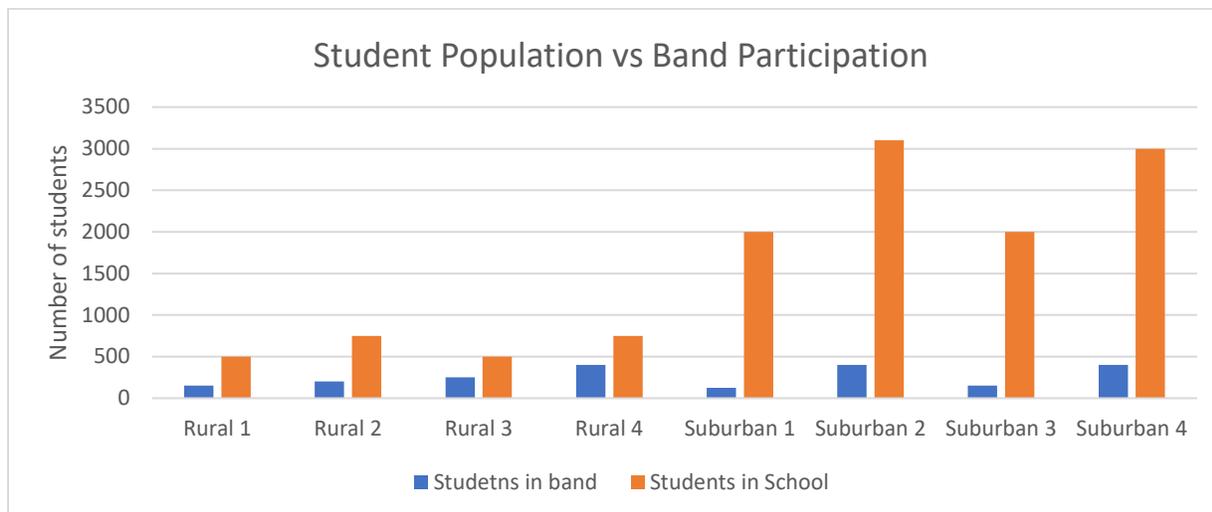


Figure 4.2 Student Population vs Band Participation

Data Treatment

Data from the interviews, syllabuses, and handbooks were treated in the following ways. First, edited and reviewed transcripts were uploaded to Atlas.ti¹ using their proprietary artificial intelligence for thematic coding. This process produced over 751 codes that served as a starting point for themes in the data. Next, the transcripts were uploaded into DELVE² for further revision and coding using the following techniques: descriptive coding, in vivo coding, and process coding. A complete code book with definitions can be found in Appendix E. The syllabus and handbooks were studied and coded in DELVE, as well.

¹ Qualitative data analysis web-based program AI Software program-<https://atlasti.com/>

² Delve Qualitative Data Analysis Software, <https://Delvetool.com/>

Results

Several themes began to emerge throughout the coding process, requiring further refinement and discernment of the ideas presented. The data provided the following three themes: Pedagogy, Culture, and Experience. What follows is the definition of each theme, accompanied by supporting documentation.

Pedagogy

The theme of pedagogy explores all data related to teaching. Several subtopics can be found in this theme; they include teaching philosophy and influence as well as activities and daily routines. The data highlights that teaching philosophy is explained by suburban director 1, who states, "My mantra is I teach life through the tool of music. And so that's always been my guiding principle." Rural director 4 added, "[band] is an expectation and a commitment thing, so I'm gonna try to make it so fun. And when you're good, they want to be part of it anyway, so I don't have to fight, and I know that's partly just because of my tenure here and the expectations. But that was my philosophy all along." Freeway High School handbook states, "Every aspect of music is treasured and given the attention it deserves as students progress in their musical development." Similarly, other schools' handbooks and directors outlined the keywords respect, self-discipline, hard work, commitment, trust, dedication, discipline, devotion, and teamwork.

Along with these statements, the data also show that performance is the basis for instruction. All directors point to performances as their primary source of instruction. Highlighting a busy concert season with the additional responsibilities of pep band, marching band, large group contest, solo and ensemble contest, jazz band, and chamber groups, a majority, if not all, of the instructional focus is performance-based.

Formal concert performances serve as a summative assessment for all directors surveyed. The frequency of concerts varies between schools. Suburban director 2 states, "There's always a concert coming up." Most schools demonstrated a concert per grading period, whether that be quarter or trimester. Suburban directors held the following pattern of concerts: fall/Veterans Day, a holiday/Christmas concert, a mid-winter concert that features music for large group contests, and a spring concert/pops concert. The data showed that all schools have a larger number of performances other than formal band concerts. Figure 4.3 shows a side-by-side comparison with the schools of their formal concerts and other performances, including pep band, marching band, jazz band, and pit orchestra.

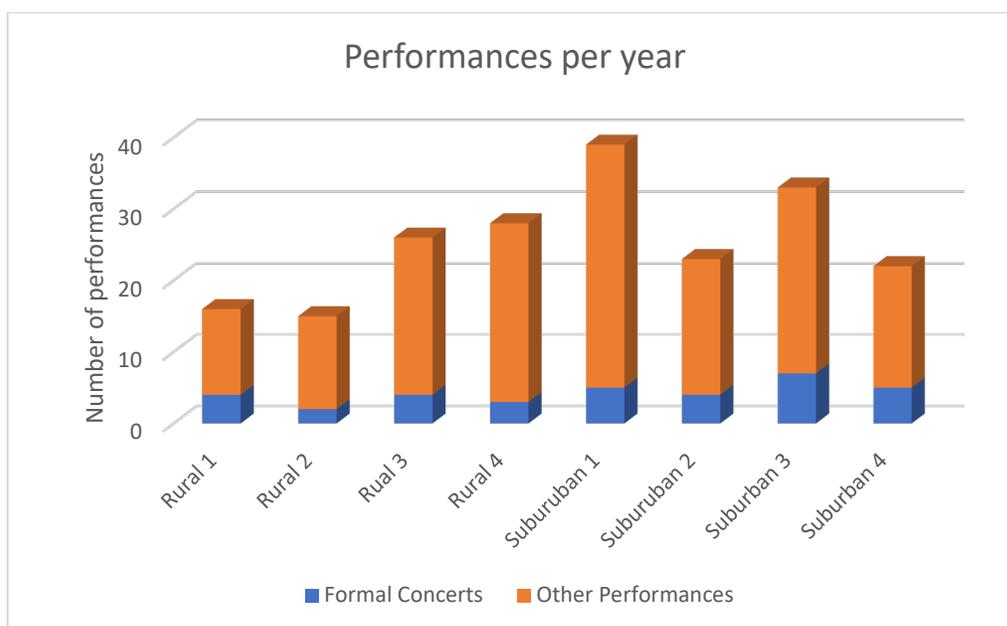


Figure 4.3 Performances per year by school.

Playing with students during rehearsals was a technique that was not only practiced by rural educators, but to a lesser degree, the suburban teachers also employed this pedagogical practice. It is important to note that the frequency of playing with students decreases as students' level of achievement grows. Suburban director 1 solidified this technique stating, "There's so

many foundational things. Articulation tone quality etc. that we can stand on the podium in verbally. Speak it 1,000 words to try to get your concept across. Or I can say no like this, and you pick up your horn, and you show them exactly what you want.” Suburban directors 3 and 4 added that they frequently demonstrate different instruments during their instruction. Rural directors state similar reasons for playing with students. Rural director 4 states, "I will just pick an instrument and just go sit down and play next to a student ... doesn't matter whether it's a good kid, even a struggling kid, I sit in the band, more than I direct from the podium, especially with the younger groups partly, it's funny partly because you forget what they're going through." This example highlights a common point of helping students by playing an instrument with them, found throughout the data.

Directors with more experience emphasized playing with students as a primary focus of their teaching. They expressed the importance of being a performer at a high level on your principal instrument. Suburban director 1 stated, "If you don't have the musicality inside of you as a musician--- you can't demonstrate musicality you don't have." Pointing also to the fact that "if you can't demonstrate and show more nuance in playing, then you have no chance of transferring it to the sick." Although this theme was seen from most directors, rural director number three, in contrast, stated, "I tend to stay pretty close to the podium. I like to help them come up with the answers instead of just giving them the answers. I don't want to just give them that rhythm right away or just play it for them and say, here's what you're supposed to sound.”

A commonality in the data among all directors, regardless of the teaching situation, is that the pedagogical approach to daily rehearsals is warm-ups. Warm-ups serve as the beginning of class periods to get students in to playing mode, and to work on fundamentals to build on basic skills of performance on their instruments. The following things were included as part of the

warm-up: long tones, scales, chorales, tonguing, theme and variations, and technical exercises. Most rural directors credit supplemental materials they have developed for use in the classroom. In contrast, three (75%) of the suburban directors employ the use of a method book for classroom use. Directors talked about repertoire for concert programming as part of their pedagogy, pointing to concepts they wanted to cover and the juxtaposition of warm-ups. Rural director 4 stated, "Programming is very, very methodical, a cut timepiece, six, eight pieces a lyrical piece. A march, a programmatic piece; it's really all about training for the future." when dealing with younger ensembles.

The data shows varied opinions of their usefulness and influence by the directors surveyed regarding the new arts standards Minnesota enacted in the summer of 2023. Six (75%) directors scoffed at the question regarding the implementation of the standards. All directors (100%) acknowledged their existence and expressed no urgency for applying them to their teaching. The data also showed no administration pressure or support for the newly enacted standards. Suburban director 3 stated, "I know that there's new standards now, but we haven't had any professional development on them. Our administration has not been talking much." Similarly, rural director 2 stated, "I've never had a conversation with [administration] about them and I haven't looked at them in depth.

Culture

The theme of culture emerged from the analysis of the data collected. Culture, in the terms of this study, examines all influences on the program. This will include two of the most prominent non-classroom commitments of pep band and marching band. This section will explore the culture and how it evolved through the analysis of the data under the sub-themes of administration, pride, competition, pep band, and marching band.

Administration

Administration refers to principals, superintendents, and activities directors. In this study, none of the schools in the sample had a specific building-level fine arts administrator. All of the participating directors claimed to have good relationships with their administrators. The data shows that the rural directors all have working relationships with their superintendents.

Conversely, the suburban directors did not mention the superintendent at all when discussing their administration support. Rural director 3 exemplifies the difference in relationships: "So my superintendent is very supportive, and a couple years ago, his kids went through the program, and they were in marching." No evidence was found in the suburban data to align with this type of response. This shows the closeness of administration and teacher in a rural setting which proved in the study to be common.

From a building-level administrative experience, the person with the most interaction with the surveyed directors is the activities director. The data highlights that most activities directors do not have arts experience. Therefore, especially in rural settings, the band director must advocate for their programs and fight for equality against other sporting activities. Rural director 3 adds emphasis to this idea by talking about a former activities director, "He didn't quite always understand, and he wanted to focus. He was technically an activities director, and so he wanted to be "activities," but oftentimes I felt like his priorities were more towards athletics."

Similar thinking can also be found in the suburban setting, with activities directors and all administrators. According to suburban director 2, "Sometimes it's educating them on how to support us. They don't always know our activity. The majority of their job is doing organizational things for athletic events, and they're hired with a background in athletics and do not know much."

Pride

The directors' opinions of what pride means to them were explored through the interview process. The data points to three ideas in the realm of pride. First is the idea of community pride. The data shows that both suburban and rural directors value community pride in their programs. Primarily found in the non-formal performance settings such as marching and pep bands. Directors referred to community pride as something those not participating in their programs felt. Data pointed to the community talking about the band or expecting the band at certain community events.

The second type of pride produced by the data was that of individuals in the program. Rural director 4 states, "[to me] Pride is having as many football players in my band and volleyball players." Stressing the students' versatility, rural director 4 went on to discuss that pride fuels a program in a cyclical nature; the hard work and dedication feed and help develop pride. Rural director 2 had a slightly different position, seeing pride as something others saw through the students. This pride thought focuses on routine and habit, seeing the students by in and taking part, calling that type of pride "contagious." Data showed that there are many levels of pride that can be seen in the programs studied.

Competition

The theme of competition presented itself in many different forms throughout the interviews. The survey data showed half of the directors (50%) placed competition as moderately important, while three (37.5%) listed it as moderately important, and one (12.5%) stated competition was not important. The data shows a repeated idea of competition amongst the group itself: being the best you can be every day. Suburban director 2 stated, "Not just to impress a panel of judges, but to be our best to perform and at the highest level of our preparation; so that

we peak as performers in performance.” Data also suggests there are ways to use competition in pedagogy with the idea of placement auditions and chair tests. Data also suggested that directors do not enjoy competition but embrace it as part of their job duties. However, several directors admitted that they themselves are very competitive.

Pep Band

Every director interviewed had an active pep band program. The data shows that rural band directors have pep bands for fall and winter activities, while suburban schools utilize Marching bands for football games and operate a winter pep band. Commitment level and the number of performances varied depending on the school. Overall, the average number of pep band performances was 16.875 per year. The data found a commonality of four football pep bands and, on average, eight winter sports performances. The number of winter and fall sports performances other than football increased significantly with rural programs.

Opinions on pep band varied from embracing to obligated. Results suggest that teachers' opinions of pep band change depending on the teacher's experience and the location of the teaching position. All of the schools surveyed had some pep band requirement in their syllabus. Suburban schools showed tendencies not to incorporate pep bands into rehearsal time. In contrast, most rural programs focus a large portion of the beginning of the school year on pep band preparations.

Marching Band

Marching band was a key qualifier in program selection for this study. The data shows an overall affinity for marching band in the programs studied. All directors were adamant in defending the marching band concept and marching arts as a valuable experience for their students. Those with more experience teaching expressed a love-hate relationship. Rural director

4 states, "I hate the time drain on my life and the fact that I spend, probably, more time on it than I should. But, at the same time, I know that I have students in my room right now that wouldn't be in my room if they couldn't be in marching band."

Regardless of location, the focus on a unique experience for the students was a recurring theme. The data did show some unique challenges in staffing and programming regarding budgets and staffing between the two settings. Rural programs, with competitive street programs, had less to say about budgets and staffing for their programs than the suburban teachers. Many suburban teachers highlighted mid-five-figure budgets and multiple staff members to assist with the instruction.

Experience

Geographic location was a focus of this study. The theme of experience evolved from directors talking about their experiences as students and as educators. Each setting, rural or suburban, has its influence on the educators. Each director was also asked to reflect on the opposite experience and give impressions. The data that emerged to form this theme is what follows.

Of the eight directors interviewed, six (75%) had experience teaching in both settings. The remaining directors had been either entirely rural or suburban in their teaching experience. There was an empathetic feeling of those in suburban settings regarding rural teachers. Suburban director 2, when asked about his take on rural settings, stated, "It all takes quite an investment, and I hear, of course, stories in outstate situations where they don't have, easily and readily accessible funds and provided by the school district to run their curricular programs and are doing things like fundraising, and soliciting donations to run a curricular academic program."

Similarly to the same question, rural director 4 stated, "rural director for me, especially

doing a K-12, I have to know every kid and what they can, and can't do and everything about all their instruments. So, just from a strict pedagogy standpoint as a rural director, I have to know so much more than I think my suburban counterparts do.”

The data also shows a tremendous amount of respect for each other positions. The data shows that while most directors had experience in a rural setting, those who were in a suburban setting were thankful for their time but had no interest in returning to a rural setting. Comparisons were made to opportunities at rural schools vs. suburban, especially in a non-musical class. Advanced Placement, IB courses, and College In The Schools were universal hurdles in most settings. However, suburban teachers point to more electives and specialized areas of study as an issue they must deal with.

Data show that all suburban directors mentioned having a well-supported budget for their programs. The data showed that not having to worry about repairs or replacement of items was another positive. Suburban director 2 stated, "If we need an instrument to be fixed, we send it out for repair without question. There's never that want that I haven't run across the situation where we're not able to do what we want to do based on budgetary restriction.” During the interviews, suburban directors all commented on budget challenges faced by rural directors. Comments focused on the lack of capital to maintain and purchase instruments, buy music, or provide other essential things for students in rural programs. However, the rural directors all commented that they feel they are financially supported very well by their districts. All directors' surveys mentioned the students' socioeconomic status as both a positive if the district was affluent and a negative if a rural director.

Interview data found that collaboration among directors is more prevalent in suburban settings. Half of the suburban high schools have multiple high schools in their districts.

Collaboration exists not only in the building in which they teach but also across schools in the district. Formation of Professional Learning Communities (PLC) was shown to be in effect at all suburban schools. While most of the collaboration and PLC comments were positive, there was some dissent regarding too many people, making it hard to agree and truly collaborate.

Rural directors report more autonomy during their instruction. Rural director 1, when asked about PLC, stated, "We don't have any of that stuff that takes away from our time. I can tell you as a band person here I feel like I've been told go teach band. Let us know what you need." Rural director 3 stated, "With the administration, there hasn't really been much restriction or much; they just kind of let me go and do what I need to do. I do try and kind of collaborate and work, a little bit with my choir colleague." The data remains consistent that the directors feel no pressure to conform to any preset notion or model, thus giving them the freedom to teach how they see best for their students.

The data also highlighted similarities in programs. Philosophical principles were common regardless of the setting. Critical concepts of student-centered positive experiences were central to programs. Furthermore, music was a complementary skill to aid in personal development. The data suggest that the directors focus on student development as a whole while using music performance as a vehicle to obtain those results.

Summary

This qualitative case study research examined pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota with a competitive summer street marching band to show the unique approaches that contribute to a comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul

Metropolitan area, which have a competitive field show marching band, were also examined to create a second set of cases for comparison.

This chapter focused on the data discovered during the research process along with information regarding the interview process, demographics of the participants, and themes that developed from the interviews presented to help answer the two research questions. The following three themes were discussed: Pedagogy, Culture, and Experience. These themes were defined, and specific examples were given of each. Chapter Five will synthesize all the data and provide a summary based on the themes discovered in this chapter.

Chapter Five: Conclusion/Discussion

Summary of Study

This qualitative case study research was conducted using a multi-question survey, examination of class syllabi and/or handbooks, and a one-on-one interview with the selected directors. Upon completion of the interviews, the edited transcripts, syllabi and/or handbooks were uploaded into Delve for thematic analysis. Figure 5.1 shows a representation of the theme development. The data was then filtered to provide answers to the research questions.

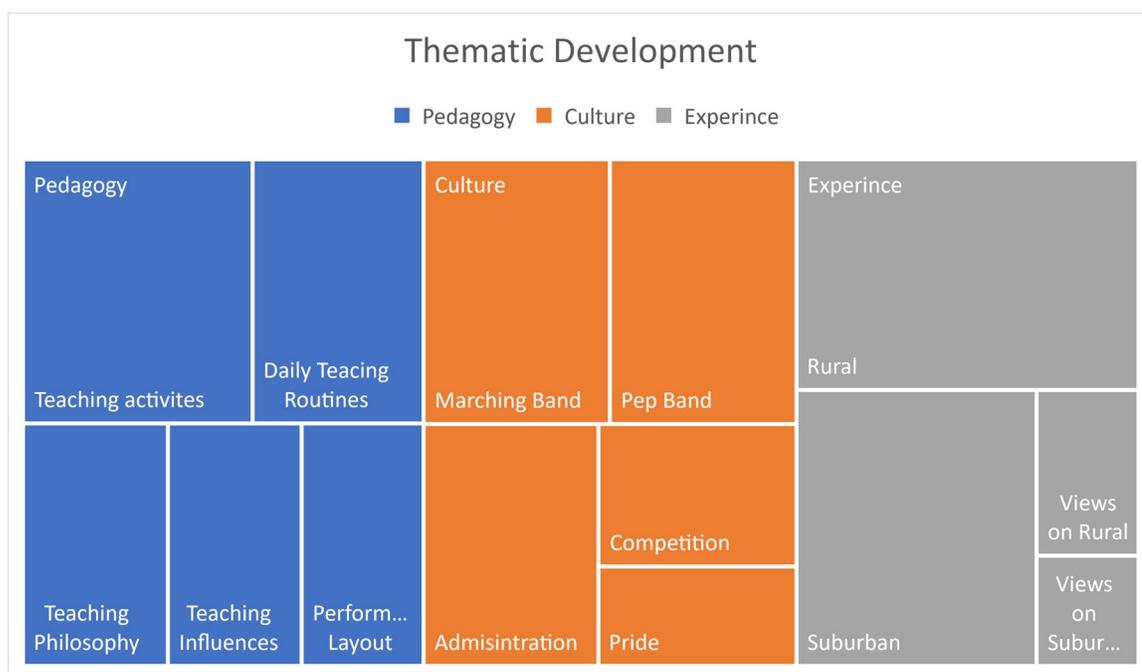


Figure 5.1 Thematic Development.

Summary of Findings

The study of rural music education or rural education is lacking compared to other demographics. Despite a vast amount of literature addressing issues and concerns regarding curriculum in secondary band classes, the focus on rural educational settings needs to be included at the equivalent rate of other subsections in the discipline. This qualitative case study research examined pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota with a competitive summer street marching band to show the unique approaches that contribute to a comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan area, which have a competitive field show marching band, were also examined to create a second set of cases for comparison.

There were two main research questions that were the focus of this study. RQ 1. What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools? The following hypothesis was used for RQ1: Pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools include more focus on ensembles that are considered niche, chamber ensemble style teaching given instrumentation, and music contributions to the community vs. high-quality wind band genre.

RQ 2. How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota? The following working hypotheses were used for RQ 2: Pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota in terms of focus on secondary ensembles such as pep, jazz, and marching band, more in-depth relationship building with students and involvement in the community for public relations and program validity.

This study examined the pedagogy of rural band directors in Minnesota. Each theme had various inputs with a good deal of information covered. The use of these themes was applied to answer the research questions. The findings were mixed regarding the hypotheses. Findings showed a similar approach to pedagogy by all directors surveyed, contradicting the hypothesis that rural directors would have unique approaches to pedagogy. They did not suggest a significant divide in pedagogical techniques as hypothesized. The findings supported the hypothesis that rural directors spend more time on niche ensembles and non-teaching-centered activities.

Although expected, a unique approach to instrumental music pedagogy in a rural setting was not found. There were however some situational influences in teaching practice and situations presented as a sub-theme. The age and experience of the teacher interviewed suggested more of a disconnect between teaching styles and approaches regardless of the teaching situation. The findings also showed a lack of training and exposure to the Minnesota Fine Arts Standards. While this study sought to find differences and uniqueness in rural programs, the findings suggest more solidarity than separation.

Interpretation of the findings

The findings of this study provided insight and helped to answer the research questions. Three main themes were produced through the interviews and analysis of the data. These themes included pedagogy, culture, and experience. The following explains each theme and its implications in detail based on the data.

Pedagogy

The theme of pedagogy includes all things relating to teaching or teaching activities. Subtopics included teaching philosophy, what the directors identified as important parts of their

teaching philosophies; teaching activities, which were descriptive accounts of things done in the classroom; teaching influence, anything that influenced teaching positively or negatively; a performance layout, and what performances they had in a given year. Pedagogy was the focus of this research; naturally, it had the highest code frequency during thematic discovery. Beyond these themes, patterns began to develop to aid in the understanding of teacher pedagogy.

This pedagogy study highlighted that teachers' daily approach to instruction, regardless of the teaching setting, are similar. It was hypothesized that there would be significant differences between rural and suburban settings; however, this was not the case. Teachers unanimously reported the same or similar setup for teaching. A warm-up period working on specific technical, scale and/or chorales before spending time working on music for performance, which aligned with Montemayor's study where he identified that highly skilled teachers optimize student engagement to increase student learning¹ and with Matthew and Johnson who focused on the use of technical warm-ups to reinforce learning concepts.² This sameness in approach reinforced the idea that the pedagogy used by rural directors is similar to their suburban counterparts.

These similar rehearsal techniques confirm the findings of Juchniewicz, Kelly, and Acklin,³ attributing success in contest performance to time spent on fundamentals such as tone quality, balance and blend, rhythms, and others is also an essential pedagogical decision for teachers in this study. All directors in this study echoed thoughts of good sound production and time spent on fundamentals. Rural directors expressed ownership in this, taking on responsibility

¹ Montemayor, "Evaluative and Behavioral."

² Matthews and Johnson, "Instructional Decision Making."

³ Juchniewicz, Kelly, and Acklin, "Rehearsal Characteristics of 'Superior' Band Directors,"

for the totality of the student education, placing the responsibility of student knowledge as their burden.

While looking for specific pedagogical techniques, most commonly, the directors surveyed fell back on the technique of modeling for their students. They suggest it is easier to demonstrate to students what is wanted than to use words to describe an articulation or other musical element. This finding aligned with Warnet's study on modeling and its effectiveness in enhancing student learning.⁴ Rural directors expressed the importance of playing with everyone as much as possible, while suburban directors leaned towards playing with younger students over advanced students.

Student lessons were presented as the main advantage found in rural music instruction by the directors surveyed. Citing the geographical limitation rural educators face, they are often the only music instructor students will have. With no one else to fall back on or offer additional instruction, rural music educators, as the data suggested, constantly explore new pedagogical techniques on instruments they may need more experience playing. This finding does show a difference in teaching instruction and adds another layer to the rural band director. This finding reinforces Concina who suggests that music teachers need to adopt different approaches and techniques that fit their specific setting.⁵

The Minnesota State Arts Standard's latest revision was placed into practice via state statute on July 1, 2023. Every teacher in this study expressed an apathetic reaction when asked about them. Rural directors acknowledged them and seemed to understand the purpose and meaning. Veteran educators referenced the previous three revisions and expressed opinions of

⁴ Warnet, "Verbal Behaviors."

⁵ Concina, "Effective Music Teachers," 107.

those writing the standards being out of touch with actual teachers in the field. The lack of adoption and enthusiastic support of the standards confirm Harney et al.,⁶ who found that educators feel overwhelmed and undersupplied with staff, time, and means to implement the standards as they are written. Furthermore, they pointed to the lack of resources and education by those agencies who are enacting these policies. They do not place any blame on the local administration due to the number of mandates that were enacted and put in place at the same time in Minnesota in the 2023 legislative session.

Culture

Culture developed as a theme when examining the data after doing a keyword delineation. In broadest terms, culture deals with the social aspects of the human collective. This theme examined all things that affected the culture of the programs studied. Subtopics included: administration, support, and guidance from administrators; marching band; a specific answer to a question in the interview, with thoughts and opinions on marching band; pep band, pertaining to pep band, the scheduled rehearsal, purpose and opinions thereof; Competition, views beliefs and approaches; pride, program, school, community, a reoccurring theme that most directors discussed in detail.

This data found a similarity between the rural schools in this study. All the schools had a similar setup with regard to staffing, with the directors having only themselves to rely on for teaching. Furthermore, the concert schedules, while not the same, showed thematic similarities. This finding may, on the surface, may look like a director contradiction to Bates⁷, the data did

⁶ Harney et al., "A view from inside."

⁷ Bates, "Thinking Critically."

show that each program had its unique personality. This uniqueness could be applied to the parodical diversity that Bates discusses.⁸

The socioeconomic status of students was another obstacle identified by all teachers in this study, which reiterates Brossette's⁹ findings about the demographics of rural areas and fits within the realm of culture. Repair and replacement of equipment, instruments, and other teaching items were mentioned as challenges. DuBay's¹⁰ research in rural music education is seen in this finding. Having means, not only as the district but also each student's family situation, led to challenges that the rural director in this study has had to overcome and be creative to solve.

Schools are products of the leadership that is running them. All the directors in this survey spoke very positively about their administration. Given the smaller size of rural school districts, it is unsurprising that all rural directors spoke favorably about their superintendents, building principals, and activity directors. Rural music educators mentioned that forming good relationships with people in these leadership positions helps them to be successful. These relationships lead to a foundation of culture and setting these programs up for success.

Marching band was used as a qualifier for participants in this study. This led to a question that forced the directors to defend their marching programs. What came to light in this part of the study is that although they are massive commitment of resources and time, marching programs in rural programs studied provide a great deal of community pride. More importantly, directors state the importance of social networks and musical outlets for students who are a part of the

⁸ Bates, "Thinking Critically."

⁹ "Brossette "Rural School Music Programs"

¹⁰ DuBay, "A Musically Embedded Curriculum."

band. This finding echoed with Carver, Robison, and Russell¹¹, who suggested that marching bands function differently due to their makeup and placement within the school and band program, and with Ma & Hall¹² who highlight not only the educational but social benefits of ensemble learning. Furthermore, in a rural setting, Stern's assertion of marching band is "the most visible manifestation of musical education in America"¹³ was exemplified by the study participants. The extra duties associated with the marching band and the challenges not only from logistics but financial, coordination, and planning confirmed more of the information presented in Carver, Robinson, and Russell,⁹ regarding the co-curricular/extra-curricular and administration duties.

Although the directors were unified about their feelings regarding marching arts, there were noticeable differences between the rural directors and the suburban directors. During the study, the rural directors spoke in a tone that was fond and prideful and boasted about the success of their programs. Suburban directors seem slightly more agitated and discussed the logistics of everything more than touting their accomplishments. These observations underpin the idea that the different nonformal ensembles have more weight in the hierarchy of rural music programs.

Pep band was selected in this study because of the unifying activity that it represented. Rural schools in this survey tend to spend more of the beginning of the school year working on pep band music during the instructional day. Citing the necessity of performing often for football games and other events, rehearsal time is well spent on this activity. In rural situations, it was

¹¹ Joseph Carver, Tiger Robison, and Joshua A. Russell, "Factors Influencing," 60.

¹² Jasmine Y. Ma and Rogers Hall, "Learning a part together."

¹³ Stern, "Correlations between," 75.

explained that more people would see the band in the stands at a ball game than at a formal concert setting. Therefore, the importance of sounding good every time you play was stressed.

Pep band perspective in rural directors focused on the student experience and community-building aspects. Given limited numbers, every student must be solid on the pep band selections. Unlike suburban counterparts, who have a larger pool of students and may offer a volunteer pep band, rural schools require students to participate. However, most rural schools find it is not an issue because "When you are in [the] band, you do band." This idea reinforces culture by showing how bands can also be used as a community-building tool.

Competition is a part of band programs across the country. Having a competitive marching program was a qualifier for this study. Therefore the way the directors approached, taught and handled competition presented as theme by default. There is not only a marching competition in which each band participates but also, in Minnesota, large group contests and other opportunities for adjudication by individuals and groups. Most of the responses regarding competition were negative or downplayed; however, a common philosophy existed. Competition is an inner battle, competing against us versus competing against another school. Being the best you can be for that day, doing what you (as the performer) can do to the highest standard and best of your ability.

These ideas seem to fall in line with O'Leary's¹⁴ study. Rather than discussing who was beat by the group, the awards and accolades are looked at by others as achievements the group attained in the past. Furthermore, from the results of this study, there is still an apparent debate as to the level, involvement, and purpose of competition in music education.

¹⁴ Emmett J. O'Leary, "A Phenomenological Study of Competition."

Although there was a downplay of competition, most directors always admitted that they were extremely competitive. The directors in this study echoed the idea of being judged on a grander scale than just performance. The idea is that not only is there a formal competition, but also community judging and evaluation can also play into the success or failure of a rural program. This idea provides more meaning in this study around culture because it shows another level of philosophic framework that band programs are built on. Tuckers¹⁵ case study and the questions it raised regarding the competition, teacher evaluation, and student performance-centered demonstrative standards are given reinforcement for more study.

The final subtheme of school pride developed in talking about the band's philosophical approaches and non-musical directing jobs. This data was an unexpected finding in this research. Although a specific question was presented, the depth in which directors responded was unpredictable. Pride is something that is used as a tangible measurement but is often difficult to account for. Creating a successful program can be dependent on student pride. The band can also be the basis for school spirit and pride. In most rural schools, the student section is right next to the band, if not made up of mostly band members. Some schools in this study do not have cheerleaders, so that job falls to the band program by default. These are not negative findings; they show the fringe and secondary things that rural band directors must be cognizant of, and that is how they impact this study.

Experience

The rural educator's experience is different than that of other educators. Seven out of the eight directors interviewed had some rural experience. This theme was defined as ideas,

¹⁵ Tucker, "Positive Teacher Influence."

opinions, and everything regarding the teacher setting. Subtopics included rural experience and suburban experience, along with opposing opinions in the other setting.

Experience is education that cannot be bought, rather, it must be lived. All directors surveyed, except for one, had teaching experience in a rural setting. Bates discussed rural teaching as a stepping-stone for some who enter the educational field.¹⁶ This idea aligned with the findings of this study. Those with rural experience who now teach in a suburban setting felt empowered to reflect on their time in a rural setting. There was a genuine fondness for their times in rural education. However, none were eager to return and were thankful for their suburban positions.

Rural music educators in this study all had a strong community involvement in their programs, similar to Lacy's¹⁷ findings, rural music educators surveyed spoke to the uniqueness of their setting. Rural directors felt pressure not only in the classroom but also in the community. By examining the data, it was clear to see the traditions and unique teaching situations set forth by the two rural directors of this study, who both have over 30 years of experience. Their extended tenure has created a sort of folklore surrounding their programs.

This unique saturation of directors with rural experience gave some unique ideology. It may have been expected for suburban teachers to shy away from teaching in a rural setting, but quite the opposite was found. The only director who seemed standoffish about the rural setting was the one director who had never been in a rural setting.

Citing a lack of training in preservice education courses, rural directors alluded to the idea that experience has taught them how to be successful in their settings. This thought agreed

¹⁶ Bates, "Thinking Critically."

¹⁷ Robert C. Lacy, "A Historical Ethnography"

with Denis,¹⁸ Isbell,¹⁹ Prest,²⁰ and, Brossette²¹ who examined the preservice education programs and their lack of preparation for teachers to be successful in rural settings. Findings in their studies address issues like isolation, limited resources, low income, and lack of teachers. This study found similar topics among the rural secondary instrumental music teachers interviewed. Although this study shows the perseverance of the directors interviewed, all directors acknowledged the difficulties of the rural educational setting and questioned the lack of preparation for new teachers.

Those directors in a rural setting currently highlight the communities in which they lived, the high level of autonomy, and the relationships not only with students but also with generational relationships of students from the same family, which contributed to overall satisfaction in their position. Overall, the directors showed a high level of respect for the directors in the opposite settings.

Limitations

This study was limited by the size of the survey population and those willing to participate. Furthermore, the requirements of a competitive marching program also contributed to the small sample size. The case study form of research used might have led to more of a comparison of the two settings examined rather than an exploration of pedagogy. The research done in this study might show more significant outcomes and more disparity if the sample

¹⁸ Denis, "Novice Texas Band Directors'."

¹⁹ Isbell, "Music Education in Rural Areas."

²⁰ Prest "The Importance."

²¹ Brossette, "Rural School Music."

section size was increased. This study's limited size and scope may not represent all secondary rural instrumental music educators in Minnesota.

The data was collected using scripted questions but may have proven too general in responses. The survey used proved to be too long and too vague for the research conducted, with most of the questions having little to do with the research at hand. The director's viewpoints and experience heavily influenced the reliability of the data. Given the limited number of respondents used in this survey, external validity is difficult to make generalized statements or opinions based on findings.

Recommendations for Future Study

This research adds to the body of research by examining an understudied area of rural music education. Specifically, this research opens conversations about rural instrumental music educators in Minnesota. Secondary instrumental rural education is a unique teaching assignment. Although pedagogy used in any setting is relatively the same, outside factors could be examined and used to the advantage of the educator in a rural setting.

Future studies in Rural Music Education in Minnesota and other geographical areas are numerous. During this research, several topics arose beyond the scope of this study that could be explored. A deeper understanding may be made by looking at the skill set that rural directors need to employ in non-pedagogical issues. The data suggested that more general knowledge is needed to be an effective educator not only in music but also in finance, public relations, and interpersonal relations. Of those interviewed, all stated a variation of life skills, such as teamwork, practice, and perseverance, as indirect outcomes of teaching music.

Data also suggest that the influence of community and community relations offers a greater understanding of the rural music teachers' experience. The longevity of the rural teachers

surveyed, with half of them having over 30 years of experience, tend to show a benefit of strong community support and, as one director states, "being a bit diplomatic" regarding support for their programs.

The literature features a plethora of information on marching band, and expands greatly when looking at collegiate band programs, the topic of pep band, or sports band is nonexistent. The fact that there is little information in the literature is need of examination. Every director surveyed when asked about pep band, had opinions on and experience with it. It was found that pep band is a major part of secondary music education regardless of educational setting. This part of secondary music educators' responsibilities may have implications that would be worth studying.

Implications for Practice

This qualitative study examined the pedagogical techniques of rural secondary instrumental music educators to expose unique approaches used by directors in this demographic. The results of this study exposed limited differences in pedagogical approaches between rural and suburban secondary instrumental music teachers in Minnesota. Further, routine, modeling, and feedback are employed across teaching situations studied. This study expands the literature on rural music education. For the teacher in practice, it provides insight into the similarities of secondary instrumental music educators across Minnesota. Furthermore, the research emphasizes the distinct methods rural teachers surveyed implement in their daily teaching practices. It also recognizes the significance of not only pedagogy but also the culture within the school, the teacher's experience, and their geographical location.

Summary

This qualitative case study research examined pedagogical techniques used by secondary band directors in rural public secondary schools in Minnesota with a competitive summer street marching band to show the unique approaches that contribute to a comprehensive music education. Along with these findings, suburban band directors in the Minneapolis/St. Paul Metropolitan area, which have a competitive field show marching band, were also examined to create a second set of cases for comparison.

Two questions guided this study's research: What are pedagogical techniques unique to secondary band directors in rural public schools? Research question two: How do pedagogical techniques used in a secondary band in a rural public school vary from those used in metropolitan areas in Minnesota? Qualitative research was conducted using individual interviews, a demographic and program information survey, and gathering artifacts for review. The information was then examined for thematic coding. The coding process produces three themes: pedagogy, culture, and experience.

These questions have been answered in this study in the following ways. To answer research question one, the data found limited uniqueness in rural secondary instrumental music pedagogy. Research question two was answered with the data showing no substantial differences in the pedagogical techniques used by rural instrumental music educators when comparing them to suburban instrumental music teachers with competitive marching programs in Minnesota.

The research in this study was limited by sample size and demographics. Given the limited sample size, variations that were hypothesized to be there were not present. Additional research might show a more significant variation of the pedagogy approach if the sample size was increased. Findings in this research and the literature review suggest there may be more to

examine in a qualitative study regarding the rural music educators' nonmusical-based interactions with administration and the community in which they live.

Rural secondary instrumental music educators face unique challenges in their daily teaching assignments. This research has highlighted a small sample in Minnesota of the quiet majority of educators nationwide who serve as their students' sole instrumental music educators. More study is needed to bring awareness and notoriety to educators in these situations. The innovation, creativity, and education they provide are essential, and this research, as shown, is rewarding.

Appendix A: Institutional Review Board Approval

LIBERTY UNIVERSITY

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

September 21, 2023

Kelly Taylor
Jerry Newman

Re: IRB Exemption - IRB-FY23-24-239 Rural Music Pedagogy in Minnesota Secondary Band Classes

Dear Kelly Taylor, Jerry Newman,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under the following exemption category, which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:104(d):

Category 2.(iii). Research that only includes interactions involving educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior (including visual or auditory recording) if at least one of the following criteria is met:

The information obtained is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that the identity of the human subjects can readily be ascertained, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and an IRB conducts a limited IRB review to make the determination required by §46.111(a)(7).

For a PDF of your exemption letter, click on your study number in the My Studies card on your Cayuse dashboard. Next, click the Submissions bar beside the Study Details bar on the Study details page. Finally, click Initial under Submission Type and choose the Letters tab toward the bottom of the Submission Details page. Your information sheet and final versions of your study documents can also be found on the same page under the Attachments tab.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and any modifications to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty University IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by completing a modification submission through your Cayuse IRB account.

If you have any questions about this exemption or need assistance in determining whether possible modifications to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,
G. Michele Baker, PhD, CIP
Administrative Chair
Research Ethics Office

Appendix B: Survey Questions

Music Pedagogy in Minnesota

Q1 What is your highest level of education?

Bachelors Degree

Masters Degree

Doctoral Degree

Other _____

Q2 What tier license do you currently hold?

Tier 1

Tier 2

Tier 3

Tier 4

Q3 What is the scope of your license?

Instrumental Music k-12

Vocal Music K-12

General/ Classroom Music Music k-12

Q4 Do you hold and other teaching/administrative licenses?

No

Yes

Q5 If yes, please list the scope of your other licenses.

Q6 Do you hold a license in another state besides Minnesota?

No

Yes

Q7 If yes, what state(s)?

Q8 Which best describes your current teaching situation?

Urban School Setting

Rural School Setting

Suburban School Setting

Q9 Which best describes your school district?

Public School

Private/ Parochial School

Charter School

10 How many years have you been teaching, including this current year?

- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31+

Q11 How many years have you taught in a RURAL school?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31+

Q12 How many years have you taught in a suburban school?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31+

Q13 How many years have you taught in a urban school?

- 0
- 1-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26-30
- 31+

Q14 What type of school did you attend as a K-12 student? (If you attended more than one type of school, please select the one you spent the most amount of time in).

- Rural
- Urban
- Suburban

Q15 If you attended an urban or suburban school yourself, how much of a challenge has this presented to you as a rural teacher?

- No challenge
- Not much of a challenge
- Neutral
- Somewhat of a challenge
- A great challenge
- This does not apply to me

Q16 Why did you take your current position at your school?

- Because this was my dream position.
- Because I attended this school or one in the area, and I wanted to continue living in this community
- Because I did not get a job in a different setting
- Other (please specify) _____

Q17 What is the approximate population of your city that your school is located in?

- Under 500
- 501-1000
- 1001-2500
- 2501-5000
- 5001-7500
- 7501-10,000
- greater than 10,000

Q18 What is the total number of students in your school grades 6-12?

- Less than 250
- 251-500
- 501-750
- 751-1000
- 1001-1250
- 1251-1500
- 1501-1750
- 1751-2000
- More than 2000

Q19 What is the total number of students in Instrumental (Band only) music?

- Less than 50
- 51-75
- 76-100
- 101-125
- 126-150
- 151-175
- 175-200
- 201-250
- 251-300

301-350
 351-400
 More than 400

Q20 Does your school or district have a fine arts administrator?

No
 Yes

Q21 Please, describe their duties in their position

Q22 Approximately what percentage of the students in your school qualify for free or reduced lunch?

0-25%
 26-50%
 51-75%
 76-100%

Q23 Do you live in the neighborhood/community in which you teach?

No
 Yes

Q24 I know a lot about the history of the community in which I teach?

Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

Q25 My school facing pressure to implement the New Minnesota Art Standards.

Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

Q26 I understand the new Minnesota Arts standards.

Strongly disagree
 Somewhat disagree
 Neither agree nor disagree
 Somewhat agree
 Strongly agree

Q27 I have been given access to the new Minnesota Arts Standards and training on the implementation of them.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q28 Students' use of languages other than English present a challenge to you as a teacher.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q29 What is the TOTAL amount of FTE for Secondary music at your school.

Q30 How is the FTE split in the music department

- Band (1) _____
- Choir (2) _____
- Orchestra (3) _____
- General Music (4) _____

Q31 How many hours do you teach ensemble groups during the day?

- 0
- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8

Q32 What Courses does your Music program offer

	Offered (1)	Not Offered (2)	Would like to offer (3)
Concert Band	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Jazz Band	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pep Band	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marching Band Summer (Parade)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Marching Band Fall (field show)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pit Orchestra	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music theory (Separate Course)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Chamber Groups (Trios quartets Etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Popular Music (Rock band)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Music History	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Choir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Show Choir	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Orchestra	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Guitar Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
ukulele Class	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Percussion Class/World Drumming	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Independent study	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q33 Do any of your classes/ensembles meet before school or in a zero hour?

- No
- Yes

Q34 If yes, what classes/ensembles?

Q35 Do any of your classes/ensembles meet after school or in the evening?

- No
- Yes

Q36 If yes, which classes/ensembles

Q37 Are any of your ensembles audition based?

- No
- Yes

Q38 If yes, how do you audition your students?

Q39 Does your school offer any Advanced Placement, College in the schools, or International baccalaureate courses?

- No
- Yes

Q40 If yes, what course(s)

Q41 Do you teach at multiple schools?

- No
- Yes

Q42 How well do you agree with this statement: I receive support from your administration.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q43 How well do you agree with this statement: You receive support from other teachers within your school.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q44 How well do you agree with this statement: You receive support from the parents of your students.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q45 Are you asked to teach subjects other than music. (Year long, semester, trimester, or quarter. Do not include hourly coverage such as subbing.)

- No
- Yes

Q46 How well do you agree with this statement: Lack of funding is a challenge to the success of your program.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q47 How well do you agree with this statement: Disrepair or lack of instruments a challenge to the success of your program.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q48 How well do you agree with this statement: Facilities in which you teach adequate for your needs.

- Extremely inadequate
- Somewhat inadequate
- Neither adequate nor inadequate
- Somewhat adequate
- Extremely adequate

Q49 What effect have school counselors had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- Extremely negative
- Somewhat negative
- Neither positive nor negative
- Somewhat positive
- Extremely positive

Q50 What effect have specialized programs (such as AP or IB classes) that your school offers had on your efforts to recruit students to your music program?

- Extremely negative
- Somewhat negative
- Neither positive nor negative
- Somewhat positive
- Extremely positive

Q51 Approximately what percentage of your rehearsals will you lose to district/state testing and test preparation?

- 10% or less
- 11-20%
- 21-30%
- 31-40%
- 41-50%
- over 50%

Q52 What is the approximate amount of funding that you received this year from your school/school system?

- Less than \$1,000
- \$1001-\$2500
- \$2501-\$5000
- \$5001-\$7500
- \$7501-\$10,000
- More than \$10,000

Q53 What is the approximate amount of money that you fund-raised this year?

- Less than \$1,000
- \$1001-\$2500
- \$2501-\$5000
- \$5001-\$7500
- \$7501-\$10,000
- More than \$10,000

Q54 Do you charge your students a participation fee?

No

Yes

Q55 If yes, how much is charged?

Q56 Approximately what percentage of students require the use of a school/district owned instrument?

0-10%

11-20%

21-30%

31-40%

41-50%

51-60%

61-70%

71-80%

81-90%

91-100%

Q57 Select all that apply which competitions does your marching band compete in?

Summer parade Yes

Summer parade no

No Summer Parade band

Fall Field Show Yes

Fall Field Show No

NO Fall Field show

Q58 How important is competition in your music program

Not at all important

Slightly important

Moderately important

Very important

Extremely important

Q59 Approximately what percentage of your students' parents are involved with the program on a regular basis? (Involved means they participate as chaperones, assist with fundraising, etc.; more than just attending concerts).

- 0-10%
- 11-20%
- 21-30%
- 31-40%
- 41-50%
- 51-60%
- 61-70%
- 71-80%
- 81-90%
- 91-100%

Q60 Which best describes your teaching in your instrumental class

Director Centered-from the podium

Student led-students bring forth issues and suggest items to work on

model and repeat you play a passage for students to hear and play back to you.

other _____

Q61 Are Individual or group lessons part of your curriculum?

- No
- Yes

Q62 If yes, Please describe the lesson process in your school. IE Length, how often, during school etc.

Q63 How important is pep band in your school?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q64 How many pep band performances do you have in a given year?

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 25+

Q65 How important is Marching Band in your school?

- Not at all important
- Slightly important
- Moderately important
- Very important
- Extremely important

Q66 How much time do you spend in regular rehearsal working on Pep band Music?

- None at all
- A little
- A moderate amount
- A lot
- A great deal

Q67 How many formal concerts do you have in a given school year?

Q68 How well do you agree with this statement: Most people in the community see my band in a formal concert setting.

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q69 How well do you agree with this statement: Formal Concert band is the best way to judge the success of a music program

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q70 Do you use chair placements in your ensembles?

- No
- Yes

Q71 What is the most beneficial thing for you in implementing the Minnesota Arts Standards?

Q72 What is the most challenging thing for you in implementing the Minnesota Arts Standards?

Q73 I attend Music Specific professional development yearly

- Never
- Sometimes
- About half the time
- Most of the time
- Always

Q74 Select all that apply, I am a member of which of the following

- NaFme
- MBDA
- ABA
- Other(please list) _____

Q75 How well do you agree with this statement: I regularly read journals and trade magazines to improve my pedagogy

- Strongly disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Somewhat agree
- Strongly agree

Q76 How well do you agree with this statement: I physically write out all my lessons plans

- Never
- Sometimes
- About half the time
- Most of the time
- Always

Q77 How well do you agree with this statement: I often try new things in my classroom that I read about, or learn about at conferences or meetings.

- Never
- Sometimes
- About half the time
- Most of the time
- Always

Q78 To what extent do you believe the following skills are important to succeeding in a your teaching environment?

	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important
A strong work ethic	<input type="radio"/>				
Providing a sufficient level of challenge	<input type="radio"/>				
Focusing on the basics	<input type="radio"/>				
Having a deep knowledge base of the fundamentals of playing an instrument	<input type="radio"/>				
Having a strong philosophy for why you teach music	<input type="radio"/>				
Walking into the classroom fully prepared with a good plan	<input type="radio"/>				
Balancing the demands of district/school policies with the needs of your program	<input type="radio"/>				
Being creative with the resources that you are given	<input type="radio"/>				
Developing relationships with your students	<input type="radio"/>				
Demonstrating love for your students	<input type="radio"/>				

Showing concern and care for your students' lives outside of school	<input type="radio"/>				
Demonstrating respect for students	<input type="radio"/>				
Spending personal funds to help your students	<input type="radio"/>				
"Selling" the importance of your program to students, parents, administrators, and community	<input type="radio"/>				
Getting students to "buy into" the program	<input type="radio"/>				

Q79 To what extent do you believe the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The students in my program are academically more successful than other students in the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student attitude and work ethic is more important than musical talent	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Being able to make music is very valuable to my students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My students are better behaved than the other students in my school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My students are very dedicated to my program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

My students need more help getting motivated than urban or suburban students might

I have better disciplinary control over my classroom than other teachers at my school

Very few people could successfully teach band or orchestra in rural area

If I took a position in an urban or suburban school next year, I could easily succeed with the skills I have developed teaching in a rural school

If an urban or suburban instrumental music teacher took a position in a rural school, they could easily succeed with the skills developed in their urban/suburban school

I maintain very high expectations for my students

My program provides a haven for my students away from problems in the rest of the school

My program provides a haven for my students away from the problems they face at home or in the community

The reputation a school has is usually representative of what actually happens in the school

My school is a clean, orderly, and safe space

I was more motivated to do my best when I started teaching than I am now

I believe the definition of success for my program is the same as any director's definition of success

Q80 To what extent do the following indicate success within your program?

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
The students have fun within my classroom	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That I cultivate a sense of pride within my students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That I cultivate a strong work ethic within my students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students learn to work together	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students develop leadership skills	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students will become productive citizens	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students successfully perform high quality music	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students receive good ratings at festivals and contests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my program is well respected by my colleagues in music education	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That my students will go into music as a career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q81 In order of importance, please list the top three things that you MOST NEED for your program to succeed.

Q82 In order of importance, please list the top three things that are MOST REWARDING to you as an instrumental music educator

Appendix C: interview Questions

1. Why did you apply for and accept a position at _____
2. Please describe your typical rehearsal.
3. What would you say you spend the most time on during your instruction throughout the year?
4. What are your thoughts on Pep Band and do you use class time to work on it?
5. Where does your administration place your program in level of importance in your school.
6. In your opinion, what is something you do in your school that someone in a (rural or suburban) school doesn't do or wouldn't understand.
7. What are your thoughts about teaching in a (opposite than their own) School?
8. What is your biggest instructional challenge you face in your day-to-day teaching?
9. What is the community's opinion of your band program?
10. How is implementation of the New Minnesota Arts standards going for you?
11. What is your biggest luxury being a teacher at _____
12. Please talk about program pride and what that means to you as an educator; and how is that seen in your teaching?
13. How would you describe your pedagogy?
14. Tell me about your recruitment procedures.
15. What is the level of autonomy that you have in your school?
16. How do you approach competitions?
17. Some have said it's a time a resource destroyer, and marching band is outdated. Share with me your feelings to that statement. Why is marching band a part of your curriculum/offerings?

Appendix D: Interview Transcripts.

Edited Transcript Suburban 1

Kelly Taylor: So this first question is this and it's, why did you apply and accept your position at #####?

Suburban 1: I left Concordia College in 1983, and when I came out of there, there were no metro school positions available. There was a flood of teachers on the market and I knew that I wasn't going to get a job in the metro area. So, long story short, I went to California for eight years and taught middle school for 6 years and also went back to get my Master's Degree in Trumpet Performance, for two years full-time. I also got married, but we felt California was falling apart and we said "let's get out of Dodge" and returned to Minnesota. Had I known it was going to take two years to do that, I don't know if I would have done it and that's what led to the part-time position at ##### High School, when ##### went back to the U of MN, but I knew he was going to return, but I had a great year at #####. I think that's when I met you at some point in there, but I knew that I was going to have to leave after a year. I then taught at Burnsville High School for two years and then returned to ##### when ##### moved to the Perpich Center and #####, moved up to the head position, which allowed me to return to ##### for the next seven years. When ##### High School was built, ##### went to ##### HS and I went to ##### High School, and since I had graduated from ##### High School, it was a natural transition and I've been there now for 22 years.

Kelly Taylor: Wow.

Suburban 1: how I got there. and to be honest with you, the great irony in my life is how did I leave to go to California and never intended to come back to Minnesota? And yet I've gone full circle and came back to where I started.

Kelly Taylor: just hearing the stories of how everyone has evolved in their position, when you taught in California,...

Suburban 1: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: were those big city schools, suburban schools, rural schools,

Suburban 1: Very rural. In fact, it was the San Joaquin Valley near Fresno, right in the center of the state where they grow fruit. I taught in Hispanic migrant worker communities, but you could say, Bruce, why did you leave Minnesota? So, here's my answer to that when you say rural town, Minnesota, you're talking about a thousand people or less. Small town in California has 10,000+ people. So, the size and number of students in the music programs was significantly larger and it was a very unique teaching experience. Most were kids of migrant workers, but it was a valuable experience and was not the reason I left California. One thing led to another and I call California the dysfunctional state, so my wife and I realized the writing was on the wall and it was time to get out before it all crashed. I have no regrets about leaving.

Kelly Taylor: good idea. in regards to your pedagogy and your teaching style and what you do daily, can you describe a typical rehearsal in your classroom?

Suburban 1: I guess philosophically, I've said this for many years, I take this to heart. My mantra is "I teach life through the tool of music". That's always been my guiding principle and I think my students know this. When I'm on the podium, I tell them, I have my band directors "hat" on and it's time to get down to business, and we have a job to do. When I was younger, I thought that teaching and success as a director, was similar to Dr. Tim's philosophy which emphasized the relational aspect. When I was younger, I thought it was 70% music and 30% relational. Over time as I have gotten older and hopefully wiser, I would say it's more of a 50% music and 50% relational. This became really clear during Covid.

I try to build on the relational aspect when I step off the podium where I ask questions and show that I want to know about my students and what's going on and hear all their jokes and life stories. I've also seen how the more I dig into those things, the more students want to build a relationship with an adult they trust and they begin to want to know more about me. After 30 years of teaching, you see how many people we have influenced and made an impact. The greatest compliment I can be given, is when a student has had a quality experience in my band, and then they decide they want to do what I do. This is why it's an honor and privileged to be a band director. We get to build relationships over years, rather than just a semester.

I want to help any student who says they want to go down the same path, just as much as I was helped when I chose to become a band director at ##### High School in my 10th grade year. So, now it's kind of a pay it forward philosophy. For the students who aren't going into music as a career, it's still the relational side that really becomes valuable and important. These are the two most important pieces and I think Covid made that even more apparent.

Suburban 1: Yes, because we were teaching asynchronously and they still had to believe in you and trust you and there's some interesting lessons I learned during that time too.

Kelly Taylor: It wasn't difficult thing for sure.

Suburban 1: It wasn't about the music at that point it was what you had established with them prior.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely absolutely. Looking at the scope of your instructional year, what would you say you spend the most time on? An individual concert performance is a contest? Is it during music things like that? You have specific concerts throughout the year, the schedule of concerts that you try and follow or

Suburban 1: There's always the four or five concerts that you build towards throughout the year. Obviously those are still always a priority and important. I am proud of the one thing that I brought to ##### over the last 22 years is our Spring Theme Concert. Many directors do a traditional Pops Concert. I never wanted to follow this tradition, because of the quality the music and the trend of the times. I just never wanted to get caught up in that. Our theme concerts are new and unique thing that I do with our top Concert Band. It's been different every year, from from an Irish "River Dance" theme, to "Video Games Live", and several other themes. For the last couple years I've hired an artist to participate and he literally drew a painting while we performed the music along with narration.

Every year is different, so it is stressful to include student input, as you want the students to make an investment in the program. So, we start planning in January, where we discuss ideas and potential themes. However, it takes a while to get them to all agree on a concept and the best musical choices. In spite of the stress, I've realized that the process is important, and I have to be very careful to guide and direct, facilitate and steer the direction. I always tell them that I still have veto power, but in order for it to be successful, I need students to "buy in" to the overall concepts. Fortunately, the end product has always been worth it. It has been very rewarding and our seniors have taken it very seriously and want to make their final concert a memorable moment. After 22 years, the hard part is trying to find something new and unique that hasn't been done before.

Suburban 1: For example, last year we did a theme on Mount Vesuvius and Pompeii. We found a script that went with that storyline and then found music. I hired a professional videographer who put it all together. Once he knew the storyline, he was able to put together an entire visual media to go along with it. My boosters provide funds to produce this show at the end of the year. This concert is always the most creative and energizing but stressful at the same time..

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely, how much time would you say you devote to everybody's favorite activity pep band?

Suburban 1: Pep band is a 1950s concept we have held onto over the decades, which is a band tradition. Students still enjoy it at ##### HS, because it's a different musical outlet and a "social" event for them as fellow students. For the most part, I have been fortunate to have positive student involvement.

Suburban 1: And when you have a larger program like we used to, it's a chance to have 200 kids all in the same page, playing the same music, having fun, playing that pop music from 9-12 grade. I see a lot of synergy that happens within the group and enjoyment of it for that reason. The music educator side of me asks why are we asking busy band students to give freely of their time to be cheerleaders for a sports team, as they do nothing to support the band. In our day of "equity" and doing what's best for students, this is an outdated activity. Students and directors are more busy, but the expectation is the same. We are expected to provide school spirit, but there's no benefit for the band students. I also give lettering points for participating, I find it difficult to continue to motivate them to attend by attaching a grade for their attendance. I justify this to students and parents, by saying it is a performance and whether it is on the stage or in the bleachers, it's a "concert". So, that's how we sell it professionally, fortunately, I haven't had much pushback from parents. The main thing that has saved us is that we practice pep band music during the school day, so it's a part of what we do. However, if you remember back to the ##### HS days, there was a

time when we practice music outside the school day and then kids voluntarily came to that rehearsal and fortunately, in our larger suburban schools, we had the numbers to get away with that. It was still viable. However, I would say we continued to do the volunteer after school that plan would not be viable any longer. Here's the other problem and I still wrestle with this a lot. If I was going talk to an administrator I would say: "You want me to take time out of my curriculum, like music theory and higher more music educationally sound things, to do pop music, to support your sports teams and you want to rob me of my class time to go do that?"

My biggest argument is that there was a time when we had four period schedule. When we had 85 minutes every day and those were incredible times, but we don't have that anymore and the time keeps getting trimmed down, but I'm supposed to still figure out how to fit pep band into that picture and still teach more valid items. I don't know how to resolve it, obviously, it's never probably going to be resolved in my career. It's really been a grind on me personally to justify why I'm giving time during the school day when the demands and expectations and accountability has increased.

Kelly Taylor: All right, so in your opinion, what is something that you do at your school? That someone in a rural school wouldn't do or wouldn't understand of why you do something the way you do it. If you think about, a luxury, you have or a challenge that is specific to your school. That if you went into a rural school and said We do this, they look at you like, the third eye grown out of your head.

Suburban 1: This would include the international tours we've done over the years. This is a unique idea to me, but a privilege that I have in a large suburban schools. When I went from ##### to #####, I started a three-year rotation of doing tours. The first one was to San Francisco because that was my first venture at ##### to see how the response would be. Then we started going to Europe and they became popular and kids and parents and the community began to expect them every few years. Now I have freshmen coming in saying; "where's our trip going to be?" The gamble when organizing international tours is that you're not going to get everybody to go, so you hope to have enough for quality performances. I tell students in the spring of the year, when I introduced a tour, there are two conditions; one do we have enough people that want to go and number two, do we have the right instrumentation, because music is always the reason to go. If we couldn't do a quality performance, then we weren't going. I always stuck to my guns on that, but I was fortunate that I never had to cancel a tour. I'd have to say that's probably the major thing that I have been privileged to be able to do.

Kelly Taylor: The next question, you've got a little bit of experience in this even though it was back in the Dark Ages. But what are your thoughts of teaching in a rural school? What do you think about that experience or, is there anything that shies you away from that or that you would look forward to the challenge of doing?

Suburban 1: I have to go back to my California days in my first years of teaching. I taught six years of middle school, I got three years and one community went to grad school for two years and then came back to the same area that wasn't much different than the first district I taught in. Both were in rural communities and I found I especially enjoyed my first job where I found a strong sense of community, where you get to know the parents and families much more. I was able to build closer relationships with families and students because you become the guy in that community. If you have a positive reputation they trust and want you to take care of their kids and provide positive experiences. It's can be less personal when you're dealing with so many students in large metro suburban schools. In rural districts it is harder to convince people why you have to buy a \$3,000 marimba, so finances and budgets are tighter and expensive items are harder to justify.

Kelly Taylor: Kind of leading in the same way going back to your setting what is the biggest instructional challenge that you faced in your day-to-day teaching?

Suburban 1: Maintaining the numbers and quality of the band program.

Suburban 1: Can you be more specific? we'll give it,

Kelly Taylor: I mean Are you faced with any issues in regards to? You can go student population, you could go instrument needs, you could talk. just not having the numbers or, if you were to break down if I just had this, my program would be better.

Suburban 1: Pre-Covid, we had 220 students in the program, but post-covid we were down to 120 kids, so we lost a hundred students. I think this was more detrimental for the band program because we have so many more parts that need to be covered, compared to the four parts that are needed in choir and orchestra.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 1: We lost the tubas, bassoons, oboes, horns, etc. For the first time in my career, I don't even have enough trumpets coming into the program! As we have been coming out of Covid, we are trying to get back to “normal”, but that is probably not even realistic. I would not even venture to set that goal before I retire, as that would be an unrealistic goal. More realistic goals are to try to recreate a healthy environment again, make it a place kids want to be, etc. Unfortunately, there are so many forces working against you, so I feel since covid, our programs have been crippled. Programs are built over time, so when you lose one hundred kids in the program, your expectations must change.

Since I don't have some of these specialized instruments, I must keep in mind one of my favorite saying, which is: “I can only play the cards I'm dealt” from the middle school. The high school director is at the mercy of what the middle school program is able to send to the high school, and there's nothing I can do to fix it. They are also just trying to get the basic instruments off the ground, which means they don't have time to start those instruments. I taught middle school, so I understand, but I am at their mercy. Unfortunately, without some of those instruments, the band is never complete.

I hope after I retire, it can be revived and get back to where it was. When you talk about rural versus suburban, there are also so many more elective choices that students have to pick from along with various “magnet” programs. ##### High School is a magnet program for engineering. Because of this, I don't even get some of my students until December, because in their ninth and 10th grade year, they are doing engineering classes that requires more science and math. I have to compromise with this because it is better to have some, rather than none. Hopefully, by their 11th grade year, most of them are able to join band full-time and still be an engineering student. So that's a unique thing at #####. Not every school has that, but nowadays every high school seems to have their own magnet program of some kind. That is probably another unique aspect that rural schools don't have to deal with.

Kelly Taylor: But there's things out there as well. I mean, we're heavy into trade education and things like that. But that's for another study as they...

Kelly Taylor: Here's the next loaded question for you. And I asked this question, and then I've gotten many responses. How's the implementation of the new Minnesota Art? Standards. Going for you?

Kelly Taylor: What I'm looking at here is, I'm looking at the standards that they push to us that went into effect. July 1st of this year with the New Year. The region three work. I'll give you a hint, the new standards are one of my appendix in my paper for reference.

Suburban 1: We all have dealt with The Ivory Tower, where there seems to be people at the state level who need something to do. There are things that sound good in theory, but are not practical or realistic in the classroom or under the circumstances or schedule or lack of staffing, etc. I used to wonder why older teachers are so cynical or just roll their eyes when the next latest craze came down the pipe. Now, I am one of those older teacher's and I can look back and I see all the different “educational fads” that come and go, like OBE, No child Left Behind, etc. So, three or four fads later, I can look back over 30 years and see all the attempts and how many things didn't continue. It feels like they have a need to continue to add more hoops to jump through, but the real evidence of success can be seen on the stage. Unfortunately, that's not enough any more, so now now they add standards and I have to fit more into the curriculum. They want more than what you put on the stage, but nobody's else puts the results on display with a public performance. There are expectations to provide music for events like Veterans Day, Pep Band, Pepfest, etc. but there is no understanding and instead they continue to put more on our plate, nothing ever comes off the plate. Another big issue is created when there is a loss of staffing. They still expect the same “product”, but this is when each director must prioritize and determine how much they are able to do and not feel guilty for doing less.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely.

Suburban 1: There is a strong emphasis for remedial education, but when you're the only person and you have more people in your classroom than anybody else, it is impossible to do this within the class time. Especially, if you had an assistant that worked with you, but is now gone and I am the “Lone Ranger”. If you're in a rural area, you may say; we always have that issue, and you're right, so I understand that nobody's going to feel sorry for me. However, administration/state puts these things on our plate and we're supposed to figure this out on our own. I do

the best I can to include some of those concepts. Most of it is to satisfy the administrator who's observing you and checking off the boxes.

Kelly Taylor: All That's fine. Art. We'll go a little more positive Okay.

Suburban 1: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: What do you think your biggest luxury is teaching at #####?

Suburban 1: It is an affluent community, so I've never had to complain about financial issues or budgets. ##### has a pretty good mix of people and a pretty good work ethic. It has been one of the largest high schools in Minnesota with a student population of around 3,100 students. When I returned to Minnesota, I was fortunate enough to be able to come back to a large metro school. It's kind of what I knew and what I had as a mental image of being a band director. In spite of some negatives, I still consider my career at ##### to be a blessing and a privilege.

Kelly Taylor: Some cramp. can you talk a little bit about program pride and what that means to you as an educator and maybe how you see that in your teaching?

Suburban 1: My answer to that has to do with the various options we offer. It is a "healthier program" when we include: two jazz bands, percussion ensemble, Pep Band, Marching Band, etc. The spokes of the band wheel is the "during the day" concert bands, as this is where they learn the basic to become better musicians.

Kelly Taylor: The next one talks about your pedagogy when you're teaching from the podium. Are you one of these who do you play along with the kids as you're doing stuff? Or are you more of just a dictate and talk a little bit about your approach when you're on the podium in front of your ensembles?

Suburban 1: I think my approach is very different from what I do with freshman band versus my top group. I do teach with my trumpet in my hand, especially with freshmen. There are so many foundational things that are easier to demonstrate, rather than verbalize, like: articulation, tone quality, dynamics, etc. I think the efficiency of doing is a thousand times more effective. I see more immediate results. I also think it's important to role model and demonstrate that I am a "real musician". As my bands, get better, I demonstrate less, unless it's some kind of stylistic thing or articulation. I weaned myself from using my horn and being a role model as the skill level of the student increases. I think it also adds credibility as their teacher to show I can do what I say. So much credibility is gained by demonstrating and being a musical role model. I don't understand director's that do not, because you're missing out on the efficiency of what you can do by showing rather than saying. I am still an active performer and I play in the Northern Symphony Orchestra, which is a community orchestra in #####.

If I was going to talk to younger conductors, I would tell them you can't take your groups beyond where you've been, because if you don't have the musicality inside of you as a musician and you can't demonstrate that musically on your instrument, how do you expect to demonstrate it as a conductor with the baton? I think there is a strong link.

Kelly Taylor: what are your procedures look like for recruitment? How do you recruit for your program?

Suburban 1: I have two middle schools right down the road from #####, but I must be careful because some call my visits are "recruiting". My argument is that I'm not recruiting, I'm simply talking to the kids who are currently signed up for band and want to help them transfer to the high school level to continue their music education.

Other efforts include inviting them to join our Fall Concert on the ##### stage and we're going to do a combined number and I found that to be beneficial over the last couple years. Hopefully, having them come to ##### High School and playing on the stage under the lights gives them a better idea of continuing. I trust I'm getting more kids because of this, but I can't prove it.

Only one of the middle schools comes over, the others does not because he's preparing all fall to march in the ##### Halloween Parade. He says he doesn't even have enough music prepared to put it on the stage, so I can't get him to come. I have one middle school who doesn't march, but can only put two numbers on the stage and then I got another one who won't come because he's put all his time and energy into marching band for a parade. Since we want them to marching band experience too, but both are needed.

No middle school band director wants the high school band director telling them what they should do. Speaking for ##### ##### ISD, everybody has autonomy and they are the "king of their own castle". However, this breaks down all continuity from one level to the next. Everybody is allowed to do their own thing to the best of their

abilities in their own building. But we're all kind of defeating missing the "big picture" and purpose, which is to provide a complete and comprehensive music education experience. Unfortunately, some middle school directors don't feel any responsibility for what happens beyond eighth grade. This allows no accountability. There's not much more can I do, as the system doesn't allow me to do more.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, you just answered in the next question. Believe it or not. Which is what is the level of autonomy that you have in your school?

Suburban 1: ##### is the largest district in the state, and I grew up in it, but it's gotten much worse, since you were here. You have the five high schools, and on one side of the coin we are told each high school must do the same thing and you can't add anything unless everybody can do the same. Then on to the other side of the coin, each high school has their own magnetic program, which allows them to be autonomous.

Kelly Taylor: I believe it was said to me, one time that everybody in the school, brings everyone in the different high school breathes, the same air. Mm-hmm.

Suburban 1: Yeah, but it's double speak. If I could do it over again, I may have made a different choice. Bigger is not necessarily better. I have been proud to say I teach in #####- #####. However, the bureaucracy of the district is terrible. If I was going to do it over again, I would choose a two high school district, because it's nice to have another to collaborate with, but trying to do that with five high schools and getting them on the same page is impossible. You might have a chance with only one other high school.

Meeting ended after 01:15:07 🙌

Edited Transcript Suburban 2

Kelly Taylor: So first question I have for you is why did you apply for an accepted position at #####?

Suburban 2: Goodness. You want the Cliff notes version, or you want. Yeah, yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, Cliff notes. That's fine.

Suburban 2: So I taught at ##### High School for five years which is in the same school district. And this was about 10 years ago now I guess this is my 11th year at ##### High School. When the position at ##### came available they had just built the school three years prior, beautiful facility. A lot of my friends from ##### teachers, I should say, teacher colleagues had made the jump over to ##### and had a lot of people trying to Me to come over. And so they successfully recruited me over to ##### and the rest is history.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, can you talk a little bit about where you were before ##### and

Suburban 2: So I taught five years at ##### High School right out of college. And then I taught for five years of ##### High School Both situated.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: The first situation at ##### is the assistant band director. And then at ##### High School is the only director at first. It was 10 through 12 band job at about a hundred students in the program and then it became a 9 through 12. Band job. When we made the switch from junior highs to middle schools and so then the enrollment upped to about 150.

Kelly Taylor: All right, next question for you, this Can you describe your typical rehearsal if I was sitting in your room? What would I experience?

Suburban 2: Sure, I teach two bands and a percussion class. So the percussion class is quite different than the regular wind band rehearsal. So I assume we'll stick towards the wind band rehearsal.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, that's right. Wherever you want to go?

Suburban 2: Typically day would start with some sort of an attention grabber. Whether that's a topic for discussion or a video, or something that's gonna break the ice and start things off with rehearsal. And then I'd say, your typical class period would definitely be a formal rehearsal, starting with warm-ups.

Suburban 2: Variations on a theme, if you will of exercises in Tonguing and technique, That would then use You want to know about? The method books, we use in our district, or

Kelly Taylor: You can talk about that. Absolutely.

Suburban 2: So we use the Tradition of Excellence series and by Grade. We're using the third book of that. that has a combination of warm-up activities scales and then familiar or what should be classic melodies that we play in unison across the band. That are skill building. And, in nature. Then after a solid warm-up, we invest quite a bit of time I'd say. 15 to 20 minutes in your average rehearsal in warm-up and technique and skill building. And then we move on to concert repertoire because there's always a concert coming up. And For instance, we had about a four week or five week, turnaround from the beginning of the year. Our fall band concert was last night.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: And so, the rest of the rehearsal be split between combination of three to three to four concert band tunes that they play for the next performance.

Kelly Taylor: What would you say during the year you spend your most instructional time on is a concert band. Is it? Different things that you do. I mean, some have talked about concert schedules, what your schedule looks like for concert contest, etc.

Suburban 2: Yeah, always geared towards the next performance. Would be our primary objective teaching music through performance. So cert we have all of the other aspects of our program are curricular so Jazz band pit, orchestra chamber music. All of various Sizes and shapes that all occurs voluntary and outside of the school day. In our format. So, it's concert bands and...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: our concert cycle. Works something like this, a full concert in early a Veteran's Day program in, the right around Veterans Day, in mid November, A combined music department concerts in December.

Suburban 2: That takes a mild holiday theme to it and that is a combined effort so our program combines into one insanely, large concert band. And then a percussion ensemble separately and then All the choirs combine and all the orchestras combined and perform for that. So that's our co collaboration concert in December. Then we move into January and February preparing for our conference festival. A winter band concert in mid-February. Large group contest and a festival that we host in March, And a spring band concert at the end of May.

Kelly Taylor: You said a mild holiday themed here, December concert or any of your other concerts themed in any way.

Suburban 2: No traditional not.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: We perform intentionally a healthy balance of contemporary and traditional wind band music.

Kelly Taylor: Talk a little bit about your pep band and how that works and you do any of it during the school. how does that work?

Suburban 2: Absolutely. Our pep band is required part of our band program. So if you're in band, you're part of the pep band. We host, eight regular season games during the winter season so that all corresponds with our second trimester of the school year, we're on that trimester system. So the winter athletic system is all Inside that second. Trimester we perform select athletic events between hockey and basketball. And of those eight events, students have to pick four to perform. And then they can go more to earn points. A letter award in band. In addition to those regular season events, our sports teams are quite successful unfortunately which means we go to the state tournament regularly. Whether that is in the fall season outside of the regular winter seasons activity. We only play for fall or winter. So we don't do any state tournament stuff for Even though our baseball team wins the state tournament, I'd say three out of five years.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: So that means we play for games after section final game if Allows and then all of the seat turn of events, we follow them all the way through in the winners bracket. Prior to the winter season, the fall season. volleyball and football, marching. I should say Soccer in volleyball. The marching band would perform at halftime for one of their event or Our show pregame for volleyball and we do that as our schedule allows is as long as their game is during one of our already planned rehearsal. We'll swing by, or in the case of Soccer, it's a great chance to get on the varsity field so we'll run out and do our fall field show. But Our marching band wraps up at MEA and we pack it up for the season and we do not perform as a marching band after that. If our football team or soccer team makes it the state tournament, it's the pep band. We rehearse pepe and... music during the school day. With our advanced band a very rare occasion. Friday, just for fun. With our younger ensemble, we call varsity band. I,

Kelly Taylor: Cool.

Suburban 2: This time of year, we just got done with our fall concert. We've got a nice month and a half before we have another performance with that group. So we'll take the next three weeks to dive into the pep band folder, for our new incoming members to really get a grip on the 35, 40 charts that we have In the Flip folder.

Kelly Taylor: Where does your administration place your program in level of importance in your school?

Suburban 2: in level of importance. we are both a curricular activity. We are often invited to perform for various school functions. Whether that's the regular PEPFESTS during the school year or anytime a state, anytime a athletic team goes to the state tournament, we do a state, send off pepfest. We also perform for the Veterans Day program that happens during the school day, On our schools quite invested in our music program and growing it. They do things like bus all of the fifth graders from our entire school district, to one of the three high schools for See a concert during the school day of our top band, choir and orchestra so that when they make the decision of what they're going to choose in middle school, it's an educated decision and they do only have the choice of opting for band choir or orchestra as one of their electives starting in sixth grade.

Suburban 2: As far as value, I feel well supported from my administrators and activities director. Sometimes it's educating them on how to support us. They don't always know our activity. I often are activities director. the majority of their job is doing organizational things for athletic events and they're hired with a background in athletics and don't know much. But I've been real fortunate that even the folks who don't know much about the arts are willing to learn and want to be supportive. They just don't always know how right away.

Suburban 2: Are building principal. since I've been in #####, there have been three. and all three of them have been hugely supportive of music and band and our marching band program just That our principle of the last five or six years was previously, the principal at #####, High School. So, came well indoctrinated by your friend and mine ##### up there. And so he came with an understanding and appreciation for what we do?

Kelly Taylor: Okay. Awesome.

Kelly Taylor: So this question here, it's an Question in your opinion, what is something that you do in your school that someone out in the rural areas wouldn't understand? Or doesn't do that? You think you little unique to your setting?

Suburban 2: goodness.

Suburban 2: That's a tough question. I don know. I certainly don't think that we do anything in our program that someone from a role setting wouldn't understand know about

Kelly Taylor: Or wouldn't do that. They wouldn't understand, but doesn't do or wouldn't other people.

Suburban 2: wouldn't do.

Kelly Taylor: Let me ask you this. I know you're having a little bit difficult time with that. But do you think,...

Suburban 2: Sorry.

Kelly Taylor: do you think? That's because your experience has been mostly Metro. And you haven't had the experience out in the rural area.

Suburban 2: Potentially. Yeah, yeah.

Suburban 2: my experience has been completely suburban. Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Don't fret about it, that's perfectly fine. But what are your thoughts about teaching in a rural setting? What scares you of it? What sounds exciting to you, Is there any benefits? cons etc.

Suburban 2: sure, as it a teacher my understanding is that often in a rural setting teachers are asked To teach larger, spans of grade level. So often in the music, setting a band director might, instead of just being a high school director, be both the middle and high school director or potentially the K-12 music instructor. I've had many influential, people that I look up to in the music world, tell me that that's, a great way to start your career and to really figure out if that's what you want to do in a great way to learn quickly is to see students from the moment that they begin their instrument all the way through to their senior year, high school and through their high school program. There is a lot of benefits in community building. When it's a one-person show. and I think also, there, often from stories that I hear, and from colleagues, who do teach out state, I hear about tremendous community support. For what they're doing. That families and Businesses and just the greater community is more involved with in supporting their program. Then perhaps what we see in suburbia or in the urban setting, often I see band programs really celebrated their achievements, in the rural setting, when it's a great avenue for local and regional and even national recognition in music and in the arts.

Suburban 2: Also, I hear of stories of rural band directors, really struggling with things that in terms of budget in support of, there are activities, it can be a very expensive one. No more so than any upper echelon, science or STEM areas. But instruments require substantial investment. And then the ongoing money for curriculum, sheet music, repairs of those instruments; It all takes quite an investment and I hear, of course, stories in outstate situations where they don't have, easily and readily accessible funds and provided by the school district to run their curricular programs and are doing things like fundraising. And soliciting donations to run a curricular academic program.

Suburban 2: Whereas we in #####, the fundraising that we're doing or the business solicitations we do for support are absolutely to boost our program, that's already funded and supported at a core level by our school district.

Kelly Taylor: Great answers. Thank you. what would you say, what is your biggest challenge that you face in your day-to-day teaching?

Suburban 2: Day to day. Okay.

Suburban 2: Biggest challenge day to day.

Suburban 2: Is it telling that I'm having a hard time coming up with the day today, I'd say, my immediate responsibility, my challenges are more ongoing with the setup of our program overall Scheduling our program of studies.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: Our course, guide for students being on the So I guess if we're to talk really specifically about it on a day-to-day basis, it's our schedule having enough time with our students to balance preparation for concerts and fundamentals and everything that needs to go on behind the scenes to have a successful man program, we operate on a schedule right now, it's supposed to be a Six by three schedule.

Suburban 2: But we have a lot of variation to that we've implemented Some schools call it a win time or what I need time, or we call it. Our ##### RNR retest and relearning time, Tuesdays and Thursdays. So twice a week, they're dedicating an hour of time at the end of the school day just so that teachers can request students to retake tests and relearn material. And so, it's strictly, very much geared academically for credit recovery and not just credit recovery something else all together, but just retaking tests and relearning academic materials, but it really does take a substantial amount of time away from, otherwise, our long classes, we're down to 40 minutes or so. And then, in addition to that, we also have advisory days sometimes on Wednesdays, where that's another hour out of the day, missing, and since the beginning of the school year, up to this date, we counted that there were only seven Full school days where we met with our students, for the duration of the regular class period.

Suburban 2: And I put on a concert with that limitation. Already. So yeah, I'd say that's my biggest struggle right now. but going back to bigger problems. It's the fact that my students have in order to stay in music throughout their high school career. They can't just take a regular schedule. There are graduation requirements in place that fill their schedule. And even a student if a student was willing to only take core classes in music for the year their entire high school career, they wouldn't be able to stay in music that whole time without doing something creative, like taking an online class. I doing PSEO (Post-secondary enrollment option.)

Suburban 2: Doing some sort of an independent study doing something outside of the norm. Just because of the limited schedule that we have and how many required courses there are.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: All right.

Suburban 2: So, my seniors are all. Augmenting, their high school experience in some way, shape or form, so that they couldn't have stayed in band throughout their high school experience. Which takes some pretty tremendous family support, some know-how to navigate the system. Etc. Etc.

Kelly Taylor: All Next question for you, this is a loaded question. I've gotten some grumbles and some did off this one, but

Kelly Taylor: How is the implementation of the new fine arts standards going at your program?

Suburban 2: Just The same way, the previous art standards have been going in our program.

Kelly Taylor: Have you been getting PD time on these or have you studied them have? You looked at them or

Suburban 2: No.

Kelly Taylor: They're not.

Kelly Taylor: All right. Now we've talked about problems. What would you say? Your biggest luxury is teaching at your school.

Suburban 2: All biggest luxury. I know. having a come from #####. And then helping build the program in so washco we're very well supported budget wise and of course, Speaking with colleagues regionally here and, also friends from grad school and all over the country, if we need an instrument to be fixed, we send it out for repair without question. there's never that we haven't run across the situation where we're not able to do what we want to do based on restriction budgetary. We're to the point where with curriculum, we can purchase new sheet music on a regular basis. I'd say that's the biggest luxury that we're for an also parent support. All our students are very well supportive.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: I teach in a very affluent. Community, I should say. What's considered a very affluent community. We have a very widespread gap though in income. our spread is quite wide because we serve multiple communities. Some of which are in areas where houses are a million plus in some of which we're right across the street from the building Section 8, housing, but overall, the parent support of the students who are in my band. Classes is overwhelmingly supportive students come from very supportive households. That's a huge luxury, I think.

Kelly Taylor: All right. can keep in the Community, What is the communities opinion of your band program?

Suburban 2: That's a good question.

Kelly Taylor: Or do you know I guess?

Suburban 2: school community or general community.

Kelly Taylor: General community outside the school walls.

Suburban 2: I'd say not as celebrated as we see in other communities.

Suburban 2: We're often compared in ##### to other affluent schools on the ##### Side that far more highly value the arts. In general. socioeconomically were often compared to #####. So and also school size sometimes. #####, that's sort of area. But I don't see many similarities in terms of support for the arts.

Suburban 2: Yeah. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, all Can you talk about program pride and what that means to you as an educator and kind of let us know how it's seen in your teaching.

Suburban 2: Program Pride, in school Pride, Well pride is a really different thing than it was even five years ago or certainly. When I started teaching school pride they're so many more popular individual. activities then there are group activities. I'll give you. Couple of examples in many communities, Friday football nights. Huge cultural and community event. The dance team performs the cheerleaders are lined up on the sideline The marching band is playing pepe and songs throughout the game and choreographed with the comments from the press box and there's a lot of investment in that community event to bring it all together. At #####. And from what I've noticed from a lot of suburban communities is that cheerleading. Now we have a hard time fielding a sidelines cheer team because all of our cheerleaders, want to be a part of the competitive line that tours nationally and frankly wins at nationals in Florida. Almost every year there are 15 lever levels of cheerleading teams at our school, but they can barely get enough to field eight that would stand on the sideline for a football game. Our dancers are so incredibly dedicated to their studio dancing. That we don't have a dance line at #####, High School. The studios are so incredibly competitive and intense with their schedule, that there is no dance line at our school. And the marching band activity has really changed a lot over the years.

Suburban 2: To, further towards the competitive marching band scene. Further towards, competitive pageantry, And so the focus is not on supporting the football team or performing for the Community event. It's more geared towards the competitive show they Hours, and hours to preparing and designing. So that on Saturday, ##### Field show competition where the marching band is in a venue that's completely geared towards their performance. And not a side performance for the football team or for the football game.

Suburban 2: So all this rambling is related to school pride and Pride, we have a lot of pride in our programs within the arts at #####. Our theater program is hugely. Successful in celebrated our orchestra program is performing ##### convention this year. Our choir program is stellar and collaborates regularly with outside groups Professional ensembles in our band program is touted. we provide all sorts of awesome opportunities for our students throughout their high school career in all aspects, jazz band, marching band pep band the works. So we're really proud of our own accomplishments and the people connected to our program certainly recognize all the efforts of our students and staff to make those things happen. But it's just not quite the same-- that community pride feeling that I've seen in other places when for instance, the marching band comes back from their trip to wherever and the whole community is there waiting back at school with the fire trucks and the police cars lined up to escort them home from representing their community abroad.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 2: Very hard.

Kelly Taylor: that's a good one. All right. Gonna switch gears anywhere. We're getting to the end here. So I won't keep you too much longer.

Kelly Taylor: But how would you describe your pedagogy? And by that, I mean, how do you teach, Are you a guy that's gonna be podium heavy or you walking around, you playing with your kids? If an instrument your hand, you will harmony director knots here.

Suburban 2: Yeah. I try to do it all and I can't say that I do it all super well, but I try to be a little bit of all those things. My upbringing was in musical art form and conducting as an artist. And I really believe strongly that there's a place for that. In the high school classroom, making art at the highest level with my students. But I'm also a realist in realized that. I need to be at a rehearsal technician as well. And that doesn't necessarily always mean waving my arms is pretty, as possible.

Suburban 2: So, yes, I am demonstrating on nearly every instrument regularly. when we work together, I teach percussion class and I have really successful percussionists. that is not something that I knew how to college in my first 10 years. Teaching. When I did my master's degree, I went the American Band College route. And I found that to be incredibly helpful in my woodwind player as a tuba player in my what would win pedagogy. I demonstrate clarinet. Saxophone, flute. The works at a high school level and so I'd say I'm. I try to be well balanced On with them, in rehearsal walking around the class specific technique. I also try to be a rehearsal technician and helping them build ensemble skills. And then I also try to balance that time with Artist.

Kelly Taylor: You talked a little bit about it, with your fifth graders, but can you tell me about your recruitment procedures and how that works, how you kids in the program and keep them in the program?

Suburban 2: Yeah, I'm with that. So it's something that we've really analytical about and tried to find our main points with and figure out exactly what's going on to keep kids in our program. So recently, during covid, That first year of all distance learning all of our elementary band teachers were sent to be general music teachers at one of the 16 elementary schools in our artist Elementary. In our district. So they joined forces with the already existing general music educators at the elementary level and then the following year they decided to cut the program entirely. so, On the fly. We were suddenly starting sixth graders instead of starting fifth graders. At the middle school level. So, that was a big deal, I could go on and on about how we hired John Benham to fight for our program. We Initiated, grassroots, efforts amongst band booster. Organizations and nothing would stop our administration from cutting the program supposedly due to funding and budget concerns. But concerns and funding have been a strength for us. Not a problem. It's really about classroom time. from pulling out of core classes during elementary school. The fact that it was no longer just banned but it was band and orchestra. The fact that it was no longer. Just fifth, grade Bandit was fifth, grade band, plus, fourth grade, orchestra, and fifth grade orchestra, Our program grew to the point that it wasn't sustainable of elementary level. According to our administr, So we now start in sixth grade. They start in instrument classes. At all four of our middle schools.

Suburban 2: From there So all of sixth grade is in instrument classes, they are required to be in band choir or orchestra for sixth and seventh grade. We have a very high percentage of students as you'd imagine who stay in band both of those years. Although, there isn't a very high attrition rate, but there is a pretty high rate of students who switch between one or the other because that's still all students who originally signed up for choir and then decide that they hate choir and want to try band because choir was so awful. Students who started in band and then want to do choir because we're playing instrument isn't working out for them.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 2: So the numbers don't drop very much but in eighth grade they have to make a choice between Are you ready for the list?

Suburban 2: Spanish for high school credit. Phy Ed, Music, College and career readiness. And I'm blanking on the fifth one. But they can only choose one of those options. And so we lose. A high percentage of students for whom their families. Think that earning that high school credit for the middle school, Spanish class that they're taking is going to make or break their high school career or college potential acceptance.

Suburban 2: So that's our first high attrition rate. Moment is between seventh Then eighth to 9th grade. I talked a little bit about this with our requirements in addition to the required courses. So if a student were to just only take required courses and want to be in music throughout their high school career, they would still have to do

some sort of extra thing in order to fit in music. For some of them, it's as easy as just taking Jim online. That would fill up a space for others. It's a little bit more complicated but that's only for a very low percentage of students, who want to give up taking any other elective throughout their entire high school career, and we have some super attractive electives. Our language programs are We have AP Cis, International Baccalaureate. You name the acronym. We've got it, including one called Project Lead, the way (PLTW), for short project lead. There is a national stem elective path. That's in our community. Highly subsidized by 3M. We have a lot of 3M employees that live in our district. Whenever I send out a mass band, email, I'd say a solid third of the email addresses are at MMM.COM. So it's really attractive to families who work in STEM settings to want their students to take stem courses. And those are above and beyond, core and science classes. So, even if they take one of these PLTW classes, That doesn't fulfill us a science credit, it's just an additional stem class. In their top-notch, everything from. I mean they've got a class that's crime scene investigation that were there. I mean, it's right out of CSI, Miami setting up crime scenes and doing lab reports civil engineering, engineering principles of engineering all the way through a capstone course. So, some of those highest performing students academically, the top players in middle school, are not involved in music and high school or some of them stay in orchestra and play in mis, or Seas or other outside of school opportunities but don't perform as part of their high school program.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, all right. What level of autonomy? Do you have in your school? I mean, are you really stuck to a curriculum or they just kind of let you get out your way. Let's teach or

Suburban 2: There Is a ton of autonomy in what we do in many ways.

Suburban 2: We're fortunate to have. Some really great colleagues across the district. And we meet twice a month every other week. As a Six through 12 band. That's a relatively new thing. It was one of our successions from having our elementary program ripped out from under us. So they pay us stipend time voucher time to meet twice a month for an hour. As a professional learning community as they like to call us, even though that's not what this is. Are you familiar with the professional learning community model? Of course we are. This is not what that is but they like to call it that In that model we are able to meet together and hold each other accountable.

Suburban 2: On also, collaborate a ton. So we're doing things like this kind of ties to your last question about what are we doing to recruit and retain students? We are doing an eighth grade honor band every year. Where the high school directors. Direct the best kids from across all four middle schools in an honors ensemble. we do a district, marching band showcase? Which, a little bit about where we invite all the We invite all middle school band. Students to attend for free. The eighth graders perform with the high schoolers. also, in an effort to make it more about Lifelong learning have a collegiate, ensemble perform that day as well. We've had The University of Minnesota marching band in the past. It's been the University of Mankato Eau, Claire Minnesota, Vikings. School line came out and performed lots of Opportunity. There we also do a district solo ensemble contest for our 8th and 9th graders. So an opportunity to perform a solo for an adjudicator and then also interact and see what ninth graders are doing, with those alongside, the eighth graders, who are at the middle school level. there are a lot of intentional things that we're doing to form connections with middle. Schoolers, in addition to just the high schoolers being a presence in the middle school rooms. Like I mentioned, we're on the sixth period day. I teach three of those six classes.

Suburban 2: The other high school teachers on the six by three schedule or teaching five out of six classes. So I have two periods, one prep. And then two periods where I'm either teaching lessons of my students at high school level or I have the complete autonomy to visit other schools. Do other necessary work during the marching band season through the first month of school? I'm almost exclusively catching up and following up with, marching band and coordinating that program and Things like that but there's a lot of autonomy. To do what we want in those capacities. So I guess the original question about autonomy in our program in many ways a ton. In others. It's really hard to make changes in a big system.

Suburban 2: We'll meet as a committee to talk about any given one of these events and Changing any little thing about it or adding anything to it or taking away anything from it, I really needs to be a unanimous decision shared with the whole team which is only appropriate but also makes it pretty cumbersome to make quick moves. For good for better, or for worse.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. All right, two more. How do you approach competitions?

Suburban 2: good question. So we really aim to have a balanced rehearsal schedule and realistic life, and marching band balance schedule. That doesn't allow us to be fully competitive. The point of competitions to attending field show competition for us and in marching band is the only venue where we've been competitive as a band program.

Kelly Taylor: You don't do large group or solo and ensemble.

Suburban 2: We do both large group and solo and ensemble. humble contest but those are not necessarily placed event That's adjudication from a clinician or a, feedback from an adjudicator festival style as opposed to truly competitive in nature, where there's placings and rankings and awards for various captions etc.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: Do you want me to talk about both avenues?

Kelly Taylor: Please.

Suburban 2: we approach contest and a whole ensemble contest at large group contest the same. Way, we approach festivals that we attend and host where it's non-competitive in nature. The only group that we're competing against is ourselves. And we're out there to do our very best. Not even necessarily just to impress a panel of judges, but to be our best to perform and at the highest level of our preparation. So that we peak as performers in performance, which I think is an important life skill.

Suburban 2: When it comes to, Marching band Venue type Sort of take the same approach. The difference is that the goal of going to a marching band? Competition is yes, for

Suburban 2: Feedback and from a panel of, really accomplished educators and get valued feedback from them So it's to expose students to things. Outside of our school district. So throughout a student's middle school and high school career, there are very few opportunities where they're seeing what is going on. Side of our school district, we collaborate as a district marching band for summer parades. We host a field show where we show each other. the Fall field Show programs.

Suburban 2: we host festivals within the district. And we're always seeing the ##### in ##### bands, performing for each other. When we go to a regional competition, this year was the ##### and Past Years and #####, marching show. It's to really see what else is going on in our region and in the activity and at a higher level. Groups that are far more established who have been competing for. decades this year, we performed in our fourth ever field show competition and for many of the bands that were attending the same competition, it was Fourth that season. So we approach the competitive field as a learning experience, an opportunity for our students to get energized and excited about the activity as a whole. To see what other things. Other student schools are doing and to be inspired by it.

Kelly Taylor: All last question that I have for you. It's kind of a statement and a question. Get your action off something in just kind of let's talk a little bit about it but It has been mentioned by some,...

Suburban 2: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: that marching band can be a time and a resource destroyer. And in fact, I've seen places where it's been called outdated and not really appropriate for music education anymore. Can you share with Your feelings on that statement and then kind of close with why you marching band is a part of your curriculum offerings that you have there at your school.

Suburban 2: Marching band is a pretty ridiculous activity. Let's take. Instruments. That were not designed to be performed outside. and let's take a bunch of really uncoordinated teenagers and have them trapes around and put on some sort of a theatrical. So they both are experts and highly skilled performers as musicians and visual artists. Of which they are. Are neither So it's a pretty ridiculous activity in the pageantry arts in general, but it is a thing and it's a valued thing and it has a huge tradition behind it. And the benefits of marching band. Far outweigh some of the concerns that you mentioned as in Program Destroyer, it depends on how you go about How well it's balanced within the band program overall. And really the interest level of the students and families in your community. so, going back to

Suburban 2: Going back to.

Suburban 2: The. Forgive me. What was the first point on?

Kelly Taylor: Time and Resource destroyer.

Suburban 2: I think it's really important in what I've found to be successful for the programs that I've run. Is that the Curricular band program is the core of The band program, all other things, including marching band, but not exclusive to Marching pep band Pin orchestra solo ensemble contest. Private lessons. Everything's are nearly extensions of the concert band program. Students learned. Artists and fulfill the state and national standards in the arts through. The curricular band program that's where they're learning to play their instrument and become a skilled musician and performer.

Suburban 2: Marching band is one extension of that a school that's investing more in their marching band program than they are in their curricular concert band program is misguided and that's how I could see easily falling into that circumstance where it's a program destroyer or a time and money wasting place, right? that said, I'll echo what I said before, musical activities are not a cheap activity. They require an investment. Especially to be done at a really meaningful and high level. something that the students are going to benefit the most you get out of what you invest in the music in the performing arts. I think a really really

Suburban 2: Great return on the investment. And in fact more so than many other subject areas. So the tie to the curricular concert band program I think the key is the most important point there.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 2: I mentioned also. I'm Balance of time in resources, not just budget-wise, but, time. There are marching band programs where it is healthy and sustainable for them to have A staff of two dozen. Or more dedicated staff members that rehearse the band four nights a week, Friday, football games, and then Saturday Field show festivals. And that's the community and the program that they've built and they have a high level of buy-in and year after year, hundreds of students from their community choose to be a part of that program.

Suburban 2: we also have everywhere in between that and very low key ensembles, where maybe at the low end, there's only one director that does all aspects of the band program and only a few dozen, students are able to commit. A very little amount of time due to their family situations and community situations. Whether they're working a job or they're involved in other activities, or it's just a program where the arts have never been, valued. so, I think that

Suburban 2: Our school district and at ##### High School were in the middle of those two things. Right now were at it's a 2000 suburban high school with very supportive families. But there are also very over committed time wise, so we rehearsed twice a week. We do a one-week camp week and at the beginning of August, and we do four home football games, and three other community events, our district show.

Suburban 2: What else? we're really intentional about how we schedule to allow throughout the summer. Our rehearsals are on Tuesdays and Thursday nights, so that the long weekend still exist for our families to travel We're in a situation where we're able to ask a level. I think that's a high level of time, commitment to be there. It's also an activity where it doesn't work. If half the group isn't able to commit fully to the activity, So you can't have students who just flake out for a week here and there for family trips or so we're really conscientious about the length of our season and how much time we ask of our students and then also how much extra it takes out of their pocketbook to pay the activities fees on. Purchase uniform, parts, and T-shirts and accessories, and instrument things, all that sort of stuff. So it's a balancing act.

Suburban 2: But I think the benefits far outweigh, any potential problems.

Meeting ended after 00:56:46 🙌

Edited Transcript Suburban 3

Kelly Taylor: So first question I have for you is why did you apply for an accepted position at #####?

Suburban 3: Basically I had over the course of the previous few years wanted to move to a larger school and be closer to the metro and I had been in a couple smaller schools like a true rural school experience. I had up in ##### for eight years and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 3: and I was down in ##### for four years, which is a bigger town and a bigger school, but it's still a very, sort of rural community here.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: I just wanted to be closer to the Metro and that when the job at Suburban 3 popped up that was the only job I applied for and I, fortunately got it. And that was eight years ago but it's kind of funny because I know you're gonna ask about marching band and I prior to coming to Suburban 3 had very little marching band experience.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: and it was actually, one of the things that almost kept me from taking the job, it was the one thing that I had to I asked a lot of questions about because it was not my number one thing in terms of just teaching philosophy and...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: then I had no experience and I was like I can't be Single-handedly in charge of this marching band because I don't want to do that and be, I don't know how to so yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, so just kind of talking about, your day-to-day classroom teaching.

Suburban 3: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: What is a typical rehearsal at #####? Look like if I were sitting in the back.

Suburban 3: So all of our class periods are 60 minutes long, so they're a little bit longer than a traditional class period. And we have four concert ensembles some years. We have five just kind of, depending on what our enrollment is at different grade levels. But it's a pretty traditional band experience. I mean, we're gonna spend 15 minutes at the the hour doing, warm-ups and fundamentals and then get into our concert repertoire. We do not practice any marching band. During school day, we do, very little pep band. We will with the freshman, spend a week or so learning, some pep band songs when you get closer to the winter season. But it's very much a focus on the core concert band experience.

Suburban 3: And we're on a trimester system. So we do concerts with all of our groups every trimester, but then some of our top groups like the symphonic band, the Wind Ensemble Jazz One. They sometimes have additional concerts which is pretty normal and then Jazz is curricular here. It's in the zero hour before school but we have usually around 90 or 100 kids in jazz band and they meet depending on which group they're in anywhere from three to five days a week and so Aaron Holmes and we kind of tag team this year we have three jazz bands some years we have four depending on instrumentation.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: But that's all gonna happen before school but it is for academic credit is technically a zero hour, so it is a transcript, grade-based class.

Kelly Taylor: You just knocked out, three questions in a row there. Where does administration place your program in level of importance in your school, in your opinion?

Suburban 3: I think in my opinion our administration really does support and value our program. For example, when they build the schedule every year, the first thing that goes on, the schedule are a music classes and they build the rest of the schedule around those now, doesn't mean that there aren't conflicts. I mean, there's always conflicts,...

Kelly Taylor: Of course.

Suburban 3: especially, with singleton classes and AP classes. But what's nice is that, when they put those music classes on the schedule, first, they can put the AP US history and the AP psychology in a different hour of the day because they know that the kids were going to take AP Psych and Apush are generally abandoned choir kids

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 3: So I would say that that's really great. I think another sign of administrative support is the fact that we have 90 to 95% of our marching band rehearsals on the main field on the turf, whether it's summer, whether it's fall. The only time we ever get bumped from the turf is if there's a soccer game happening. it's not like, the football team gets the football field and the marching man has to be on the practice field. it does mean that practice later in the evening, we practice from 5:30 to 9:00 at night. but that's also so students can be in cross country and volleyball.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely.

Suburban 3: Football and still do the marching band, so that works out really great, but I know in a lot of schools, it's kind of like you're marching band is relegated to some grass field on the edge of campus with no lights and...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: they actually just built us a new practice field, even though we only use it a handful times of each year and they took a parking lot and they lined it for football and marching band and they put lights in, but they made sure the lights are around the perimeter of the parking lot. There aren't any holes in the middle.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: So there seems to be good administrative support. I wish there was more money especially at the district level. We still have to do a lot of fundraising everyone.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: But generally speaking, our basic needs are taken care of

Kelly Taylor: Cool.

Kelly Taylor: Is there something that you would have in your opinion that you do that? Somebody and say a rural setting would find unique or odd or wouldn't have the not access to but same clarity or go that doesn't fly here type

Suburban 3: Yeah. we have the luxury of just an all volunteer, pep band, for example, in the winter and I know for a fact that in teaching in smaller schools is like You need your whole band to show up or at least certain kids. Otherwise you're not going to sound good and...

Kelly Taylor: right.

Suburban 3: When I taught in ##### and ##### it was like

Suburban 3: Required to come to a certain number of pep bands for everyone. So that not only everyone got that experience, but that way we always knew that we would have at least the basic instrumentation, right? Because when I was in ##### and I only had 60 kids in the entire high school band. It's like I need half of them to show up to pep band otherwise we're not gonna sound good. And here we get a hundred kids to show up to pet band every time we have pet band,...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 3: no matter. And we don't have to bribe them with pizza or anything, but we have over 300 kids in our program. So, it's hard to explain that to someone who teaches in a small school because it's so different.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: I think the other thing that's really different is just having lots of audition based concert ensembles, like I said when we only have four concert bands this year, some years ago five and that's definitely A strange luxury that you don't have a small school. You have your high school band or maybe if you're lucky, you have two. and...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 3: we can have auditioned groups and then we keep all of our ninth graders together but otherwise all of the other groups are auditioned Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Ability based, All right. Everybody has What would you say your biggest instructional challenges that you face in your day to day teaching?

Suburban 3: The biggest. Instructional challenge.

Suburban 3: It's probably like phones and iPads and Airpods. every single day, I have to remind kids to put their phones away or take the airpods out and they know that we're gonna play and they know that they're gonna get yelled at. But the technology is so pervasive. And I think, especially post covid it became so reliant upon That it's like somebody's kids are really literally addicted to their phones and we're an iPad school. so every kid not only has their iPad with them all the time. But all of their assignments and resources are on the iPad band is one of the only classes, they go to where they actually most days. Don't use their iPad at all and it's hard for them to put it down.

Kelly Taylor: I'm agreeing with you because we have the same problem out here. they've started in our high school.

Suburban 3: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: They got cell phone hotels for our classrooms. And our encouraging us to use them.

Suburban 3: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: So, That's kind of a nice little option thing that we have out here, but

Suburban 3: Cool.

Kelly Taylor: what would you say? The Communities opinion is of your band program.

Suburban 3: I think that the band program is really valued and well respected here. we have really good community support, both from those really dedicated members of the community, like, our band booster club, but also, just the community. In general, we work really hard to do. Lots of community performances and kind of be out there and give lots of, concerts and attend events and do volunteerism. So, I think that it's definitely one of the programs that is respected. Not only for, the actual core like inherent music, education thing, but also for the community service component that we have, as well as just our success, we've had a lot of success, whether it's been the growth of the Mar

Suburban 3: And program or being selected to perform at Mmea and people see that and know that we're not only active and involved but we're actually, teaching the kids, lots of good stuff too.

Kelly Taylor: Next one's a loaded question. I've gotten some grumbles and some earth when I ask it but I'm just gonna put it out there. And that is...

Suburban 3: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: how is the implementation of the new Minnesota art standards, going for you?

Suburban 3: Yeah, it's enough for us. It's like a non-issue. I saw that in the survey and I was like, my I know that there's new standards now, but we haven't had any professional development on them. Our administration has not been talking much.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: There's been I know at our middle. I only teach nine twelve. And there's a little bit of discussion at the middle school level,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: about the new standards and different ways that schools could do some things to reduce, offerings or requirements, especially at the 8th grade level I have to admit. I don't know anything about that. So it's like,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: it's kind of been a non-issue for me and I know they were supposed to come out a couple years ago and they were delayed and so I honestly don't even know where we're at with them.

Kelly Taylor: All Fair enough. All right.

Kelly Taylor: Everybody has that one thing that they say, I'm lucky because I teach here and it's because of this. What would you say your biggest luxury is in Farmington.

Suburban 3: I think the biggest luxury that I have is being part of a team, I've always enjoyed when I first started teaching it was, kind of like 512 can do it all. I was even teaching some elementary general music. Then when I went to #####, I was just high school, nine twelve. But I was the only band director and it doesn't matter. If

you're the only music teacher in your school or if you're the only band director in your community or whatever, when you're the only one it's isolating. And when I came to Suburban 3 and all of a sudden, I was part of a team, Aaron and I all we do is high school band. So we're here together. Team teaching all of our classes all day long. We also have two awesome choir directors here and for a while we had a third band director and then post covid, we lost that. But

Suburban 3: that's the biggest thing and that extends also I would say to our marching band staff. One of the I told you how I was very apprehensive about taking this job because my previous experience when you're the only band director is like, now I'm in charge of the marching band and you have to know everything and it's like even if it's just a glorified pet band walking down the street from one end to the other. It's like,

Suburban 3: you are the percussion instructor, you are the color guard instructor, you are everything. And when I came here, I was like, Okay, I'm one of the lead directors, but I mean, we have a whole team. I mean we've got a marching band staff of, ten or twelve and so that's a real game-changer. And again, when you're part of a team like that, you have people who have their different strengths and you have people to bounce ideas off of, and I never feel like I'm on an island and that was one of the things that burned me out of my previous two jobs.

Kelly Taylor: Pretty answer. Can you talk a little bit about program pride and what that means to you as an educator? And how we would see that in your teaching?

Suburban 3: Yeah. the first thing is that we talk a lot about

Suburban 3: Music isn't just about music. coming to band is all about band and it's not about band at all that it's about creating a community around music but learning teamwork and collaboration and it's building leadership skills. And it's training kids to be good future leaders and citizens of the world knowing that most of them aren't gonna play beyond high school and very few of them will ever pursue music as an actual career. So the one thing that I take great pride in is that our groups play at a really really high level but it's not the be all and end all like we don't do marching band to go win competitions, We go to do our best and try to do better than Suburban 3 did the year before, or at the previous week's competition, we don't go to Solo Ensemble contest to get a perfect 40, I don't go to send kids to solo.

Suburban 3: A large group to go and win and get superiors over other schools. it's a learning experience and I want kids to just really love the music that we play, but also value the friends they make and the leadership skills that they attain by being the band and I think

Suburban 3: Think our kids really have bought into that. They know that they believe that. In fact, I saw one one of our drum majors was getting interviewed on our weekly news show right here on TV and like she said it more perfectly than me and they interviewed and they're like you've got this big competition coming up. Are you excited to try and beat these other schools? And she's like that's not why we do this. We don't go to chase scores, we don't go to beat other schools, we go to share our program with people who've never seen it before, and a cheer for other bands who are there. And I was perfect that they understand what this is really about.

Kelly Taylor: How would you describe your own pedagogy? what I mean by that is Are you a tyrant from the podium? Are you a walk around the room? Do you play with the kids, you demons talk a little bit about what that looks like.

Suburban 3: Yeah, yeah. So I definitely am. it's very traditional in the sense of I'm on the podium a lot of time especially with our upper groups I teach our symphonic band which is our second group and those kids are pretty well advanced and I say on the podium most the time because they have the rehearsal discipline and etiquette for me to do that. But when I'm working with our ninth grade band, I am walking around the room a lot more. I'm also Demonstrating different instruments constantly. I have all my instruments lined up in the front of the room and I'm at the ninth grade level. It's still one of those things where I think that modeling is really important and I'll play along with the kids or I'll demonstrate a technique. And of course, those kids at the ninth grade level, I can still demonstrate the technique at

Suburban 3: on their music, at a proficient level on all instruments. sometimes the older kids, they're practicing for their allstate auditions and I'm like, I can't play it. so I would say that it really varies depending on the ensemble.

Kelly Taylor: Very good speak. A little bit about your recruitment procedures. How do you get kids in your program?

Suburban 3: Yeah, we work really closely with our eighth, grade band, directors, we go over and visit the eighth grade bands. We do a concert in the fall. two concerts throughout the course of the year, where the eighth graders collaborate with the high school, we send students over there both to just perform for them, but also to sit in on rehearsals or to one of my favorite days is where we send.

Suburban 3: A bunch of high school students over the eighth grade bands, and then all the teachers, leave the room, and we're like, Okay, ask me anything, right? And it's can ask the high school kids. What does Bandit actually like, What's hard about it and they can give them honest. Answers about what they love about band or how band is different at the high school and is it the middle schools? Because we have two middle schools here in Farmington. So they're kind of coming from a couple different cultures or experiences. But we do also work hard to make sure that our eighth graders, regardless of which school they're at, are kind of getting the same type of experience.

Kelly Taylor: And what grade do you all start banding? Fifth grade, okay.

Suburban 3: Fifth.

Kelly Taylor: All right, and what level of autonomy do you have at your school?

Suburban 3: I'd say it's upper middle class. We definitely are a urban type of school. I know are free and reduced. Lunch number is 10%, It's pretty low. So

Suburban 3: Yeah, so I would say it's Probably above average, affluence there's a wide range,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 3: we've got a lot of kids who Play on school instruments because their family, doesn't have the means and we are seeing especially more of that at the younger grade levels. We've been trying to reach a larger demographic, students who may be previously weren't in band.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: and in Suburban 3is slowly growing in diversity, as the Metro grows, you...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: we used to be very, white even before I came in 20 years ago, farm community, it's becoming more diverse and with that a diversity of economic levels as well.

Kelly Taylor: Yep, I realized that from personal experience. I'm from Anoka originally.

Suburban 3: Okay. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: And going to Anoka is not the anoka. I grew up in.

Suburban 3: Yeah, exactly.

Kelly Taylor: Not a bad thing at all, but You talked a little bit about this, but we're down to kind of the last couple questions here. But can you talk a little bit more about...

Suburban 3: No.

Kelly Taylor: how you approach competition? I think you've given good ideas with that but maybe there's anything specific to that idea you want to talk about.

Suburban 3: Yeah, first of all one of our phrases we use with the students is beat Farmington. So we don't worry about the other schools that we're competing against we go and we try to put a better product on the field than we did the previous week or the previous year and hopefully our scores reflect that, but that's not the be all and end all. And we don't spend a lot of time talking about the judging or the scoring. But also we don't go to nearly as many competitions we only go to three competitive festivals every fall. we go to youth and music.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: And we always go to ##### and then we go to one other, it's usually ### or #####, but we try to space them out because we don't want to be competing every Saturday. We don't ever want to have a marching band that is curricular.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: We don't ever want to have a marching band program where it's kind of like all the wigs, the dog and there's nothing against that. I mean, we're obviously right next door to #####and they are like

Suburban 3: And so is ##### now, ...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 3: just all in with the competitive field marching and we're never gonna have a program like that because we,...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 3: we value all of the things like we want to start jazz band on the first day of school, we want kids to be in a concert ensemble on the first day of school and the kids who want to do marching band, it's gonna be extracurricular and we're going to be as good as we can with an extra curricular marching band and we still go to some parades in the summer but they're not competition parades. We're not going to ever get into that circuit either because there's bands that do that and they do it very well and we're gonna leave that up to them. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: All So the last question I have for you here today is, there's a statement and then kind of a couple questions with it. So regarding marching programs, some of said it's a time and resource destroyer. And it can be a little outdated as far as a teaching model. Can you share your feelings with that? In kind of just talk about why you still have marching as part of your offerings there.

Suburban 3: Okay, yeah. I would say, 10 years ago, I believed in that quite strongly I was because I was never Big into marching band and I'd never had a lot of marching band experience. And I really thought that was like, what, some of these programs are spending so much time and so much money and so much effort on marching band. And now that I

Suburban 3: Have gotten more involved in it. I see the benefits of it. The leadership, the discipline memorization and, attention to detail, making, every note and every phrase and every articulation accurate, regardless of the environment, in which you're playing, what's really, our good musical skills to learn but it's not for everyone. We have a lot of students here who don't want to have anything to do with marching band and that's totally fine. And the kids who love it, they love it and they spend a lot of time doing it in the summer and early fall. But 10 days from now, we're gonna be done with our marching band season. And I'll be happy to hang up my whistle and not thinking about marching band for a few months. You...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 3: I don't want to be one of those schools that does it all first semester or wants to be marching The Rose Parade on.

Suburban 3: New Year's Day. I'm excited. I look I've grown to love marching band but I'm really excited for the season to be almost over. So I think all things, in balance

Kelly Taylor: All right.

Suburban 3: And I don't think it's outmoded or old-fashioned. The marching arts. I think have Quite a Renaissance. And in some ways have become almost like, two modern with their focus on dance and technology, but there's the community loves it. 90% of the people in Suburban 3 Judge, our entire band program based on the field show we put on on Friday nights and...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 3: or the parade that we do at our summer celebration, which is due days. And that's really important that that's a PR component that is really valuable.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. All right. like I said, that's the end of the question that I have. I'm just going to stop recording and I'll let you go after that.

Suburban 3: Awesome.

Meeting ended after 00:26:13 🙌

Edited Transcript Suburban 4

Kelly Taylor: All right, Cool. We're going So the first question I have for you it's pretty basic and, talk about how you want, but What I want to know is, why did you apply for and accept your position at Minneton?

Suburban 4: So this is my second year in #####. I actually taught in ##### for nine years and...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: I'm actually still live in #####. so yeah, I taught nine years before that, honestly, it was the big thing contractually wise, with our school board and our administration, it was getting pretty frustrating the last, five, six years of teaching, in #####, on And then I looked at the gig at the time it was a 10 12, high school gig taking care of the top jazz band and directing marching band and no pep band, which was kind of nice too. So it was just a lot less work and then looking at their contract, a lot less work for a lot more money too. So

Kelly Taylor: Money's a big factor. I totally get that.

Suburban 4: Yeah, yes,...

Suburban 4: it is.

Kelly Taylor: Just...

Kelly Taylor: how long were you at Nine years, okay.

Suburban 4: I was in ##### for nine years. Yeah. And then I taught in a small rural school in ##### for five years before prior to that.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: So, I would hear when you told me the topic of your dissertation or I don't know if it's a dissertation or your project or whatever it is.

Kelly Taylor: Faceless. Yeah,...

Suburban 4: It's yeah.

Kelly Taylor: it's a thesis but

Suburban 4: Yeah, It intrigued me and I thought, and my first five years, it was a town of 1500 and there was 40, it's per class. And then moving up to #####,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: which is 225 kids per class and now in ##### which is 3600 kids and the or 900 kids in class and 3600 kids, 9 12. So it's been a growing. So yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, yeah for sure moving upwards and onwards as they say. As far as teaching can you in a concert band setting wherever you want to go with this? But how would you describe your typical rehearsal?

Suburban 4: A pretty standard rehearsal I guess I'm probably looking at it from the concert standpoint right now just...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Suburban 4: because you just had our first sampler concert but it just getting kids into it. we always start with exercises, warm-ups site reading and do a lot of through sight, reading factory as well and then just kind of dig in rehearsals. Have your game plan and go. whether it's on one piece or I mean, it's kind of the standard rehearsal things that I always grew up with.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, Yep. Kind of the same old, the way I was taught where you're gonna be taught.

Suburban 4: Yeah. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Said a puppy. I see behind you there. yeah,...

Suburban 4: yeah, she's all perked up there. So Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: great. What would you say? You spend the most time during your instruction throughout the year? Are you more concert band focused? I mean right now you're in your marching band part of things, Do you have a specific focus throughout the year? Looking at concerts or themed concerts things like that?

Suburban 4: I don't do too much of the themed concert concept of it, when it comes to programming for concert band, my big thing is just making sure that representation of my students is Adequate and equal. when I inherited bullet, while both the ##### gig and the ##### gig, it was just a lot of Old white, dude, composers. And so it's trying to diversify the libraries, all of both schools, and then making sure that my students are represented.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 4: So that's kind of where, when it comes to concert rep. Picking that kind of stuff out. If that's yeah.

Kelly Taylor: you come and you said no pep band. Is there not a pep bandit ##### or how does that work?

Suburban 4: Yet there's a point five teacher at the high school and he splits his all the point five at one of the middle schools and so he runs pet band. So, ...

Kelly Taylor: One of his additional duties.

Suburban 4: so in this year, we kind of went through a kind course, load shift. last year, I was strictly 10 12 and then I taught music theory on top of it both intro in AP. And then this year, I'm just doing all of the band. So now I'm actually doing grade band through 12th. So I have two sections of 9th grade band. there's two a concert band and it's symphonic band that are joined up in the same section right now. And then our top group is a wind ensemble.

Kelly Taylor: So it's a total of five bands.

Suburban 4: So, four bands, it's kind of can five bands total but two of the bands are combined into one for concert.

Kelly Taylor: Any day do they stay combined for performance or...

Suburban 4: Yeah. Yep,...

Kelly Taylor: Oops.

Suburban 4: for class. And for performance,

Kelly Taylor: All right, that makes sense. Okay.

Kelly Taylor: one of the next questions that I have, where does your administration place your program and level of importance in your school?

Suburban 4: That is a pretty, big deal in #####. They hold it pretty, highly up there. It's one of the first ones to get scheduled out. Obviously, there's the competition of the APS and IBS, and all the advanced collagen schools programs. but of the three schools, this is by far the most supported, I felt as from the administrative team, sort of financially,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: as well as I mean, they're coming to concerts they're checking in. They come into our rooms frequently just to kind of get away from the administrative stresses. So

Kelly Taylor: And the big fights that break out in your school and stuff like that. I saw that for us.

Suburban 4: Yeah, yeah. that was an interesting one. I didn't know it was happening because it's just such a big school until some kids told me about it. And so, yeah, that's crazy.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. Yeah, I saw it Bring me the news yesterday. And I kind of chuckled...

Suburban 4: Mm-hmm

Kelly Taylor: because my God I'm gonna talk to Suburban 4 tomorrow, I'll be interested.

Suburban 4: Yeah, I didn't know anything about it. there's a handful of kids that were late to class and they came up and sorry, Suburban 4, we date. We had to go around all the junk that was going on. I'm like, what do you mean? And yeah, there's a big fight and then that's the extended got to it until one of my senior band kids came in and of course, they always know all the ins and outs of it. So,

Kelly Taylor: Yep. I understand that. you'll probably have a little different opinion on, or a different view than some of the other people, I've been talking to. But in your opinion, what is something you do in your school, that someone in a rural school doesn't do or wouldn't understand?

Suburban 4: Who I think the big one I never had this until I went to ##### is a private lessons are requirement in ##### for 10 through 12th graders and I never even dreamed of having that when I taught in ##### or even in ##### because there's nobody around. I mean, Did you?

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: I mean there's been a handful of kids when I was a ##### that they were able to take lessons virtually but it was definitely not a requirement with a specific person outside of me. The band rector where now it's a requirement for the kids to do that. So that was a big, cultural mind shift for me as well when I got that position.

Kelly Taylor: And is that the students responsibility pay for it is a school bring people in? Or are they like to pull out lesson or...

Suburban 4: ...

Kelly Taylor: how does that work? Okay.

Suburban 4: it is outside of the school day. the problem that I have with it I grew up in a small community, graduated 40 kids myself the problem I have with that is finances. Like you you brought up, it's the kids who have to pay for it and then Okay, if they aren't financially able to pay for it, they can still take lessons through me and that will satisfy that requirement. one thing I'm working on with my boosters right now is to apply for some grants

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: so the kids don't have to pay for them and then that would be more bringing them in during the hour. and okay, today, this week Tuesday, Trump, you guys are gonna have lessons with and so, whoever would

Kelly Taylor: Right. Okay.

Kelly Taylor: Again, you've had a lot of experience. But In your position. Now looking at past.

Kelly Taylor: Obviously we've talked about a lot of luxuries that you have, what are your thoughts teaching? two years a minute ##### versus teaching in a rural setting, out here in ##### or, back in Sodak

Suburban 4: Yeah, It's different. when I taught and watch and in ##### you really get to know the community and get to know not just your band students where it just doesn't happen in #####. So there's that, divide of it. And it's the other, I remember, When I was teaching in ##### at small, rural community, my wife was doing volleyball score and we just had our first kid and I was doing pet band and she would always look over and say, where's our kid and parents would be passing our daughter around because You just take care of each other and the smaller communities. Where if that were to be in #####, I don't think that would happen.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: So, I mean, it's weird. it's definitely a different vibe and it's almost more focused on. I'm just gonna do my job and do what I can with these kids while I'm there, as opposed to being an active member of the community as a whole Yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay. Yeah, no.

Suburban 4: that makes sense. I don't know. I kind of on a random

Kelly Taylor: No, a lot of what you're saying is kind of in line for what I mean, there's not a lot out in literature as far as rural education issues and things like that. There's a couple people that have kind of championed a few things and a few point articles that everybody refers to but most of the research You find out there when you're looking into, this is, inner city biopic, those type of things. Those are the hot button topics. Yet, We're out here swimming along creating good musicians, doing everything else.

Suburban 4: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: So, it's the drive for me to do this and then look at doing this topic was kind of When I started in Lynch, I went to Mma.

Kelly Taylor: and I hadn't been to Mmea in 15, 20 years, probably I was,...

Suburban 4: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: I had a short skint as a funeral director, 15 years but I walked around Mmea and I saw the East View people and the 196 people and all these people walking around like they're the cat's ass and it's too all this and I'm like, that's great, you've got all this but don't nose down those of us out in those sticks here, that are still doing this. And I think, my bias in this research is that We may not be playing Grade, 5 Grade, 6 literature. And having all stick kids all the time but we are still giving a holistic music education to these kids and...

Suburban 4: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: also that sense of community pride that you just Talked about, it's hard to get that in a big city.

Suburban 4: That's what I'd like, Why I told you right away. I mean, that's kind of why I want to help you out on this one because I do have those small school experiences. And I've kind of ran the gamut of school sizes. yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: At that I remember when I was in a coral director and I would go there and kind of would have the same feelings of Our acquired mark and I know lich they sang at Mmea. they all saying they're able to do that and I was actually there watching Joel's MMA performance What was it 10 years ago or...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: whenever it was? I go? And just as good as any other one of course it was. So yeah.

Kelly Taylor: So yeah, that's now you have my whole bias on this whole thing. So,

Suburban 4: Yep. I'm with you there, man?

Kelly Taylor: What would you say is your biggest instructional challenge that you face in your day to day teaching?

Suburban 4: It would be scheduling. There's just a minute talking.

Kelly Taylor: Schedule.

Suburban 4: There's so many opportunities and so many. Then I hate to say, but cool opportunities, too. this year, they started in aviation course to learn how to fly. So it's just like, okay, you can either go play a band instrument or go learn how to fly a plane for free. and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: then it's the API Scheduling, it's pretty intense there.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: I mean you have kids who are doing the whole IB. I'm not super familiar with the Ivy, but I be diploma and getting that by the time, they were juniors in high school and It's scheduling is a nightmare I lose.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: I lose so many of my kids to scheduling just because of the way that it is Actually,...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: yeah, it was one right now. I'm splitting a kid And that's an all-state clarinet player. He's splitting class because he's taking differential equations and numeric values or some course like that. And it's just like, And so where we've worked out a schedule where he comes in, and he's still participates in band because he didn't want to give it up, but Yeah, it's off.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, I can relate to that here. I mean, with what we have, we have similar things. so As far as scheduling. What would you say? Who runs the scheduling it music? Is AP is at IB, Is it? who's kind of the controller of that?

Suburban 4: I don't know the answer to that question. I know they tell us that they try. And, I mean, music plays a big part of it because we pull so many kids out of everything, but there's still only so much you can do in a school day and...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: when you're offering, I think there was one day of the AP test, there was 1500 kids out of the 3600 that we're taking and I ap test that day. So, you talk,...

Kelly Taylor: Wow.

Suburban 4: we had to cancel school, and offer online. School for that day because there was going to be so many kids and not enough space because of all the testing going on. So I I don't think it's one thing that runs it,...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: it's just everything, it's just there's so much.

Kelly Taylor: Sure, I noticed that you guys do online classes for theory and things like that. are those just offered as a non-hour for you or do, you actually have physical classes that meet or

Suburban 4: So that's that point five, the other director. I don't do any of the online classes,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: so what his position is. He does the theory, so a semester of intro to and then a semester of AP theory, then he also teaches a guitar ensemble class, that's a year long or two semesters, you can sign up all with that. And then he also has a music technology, but on top of that, he gets paid extra to do music appreciation. And that's the big online class. there's a couple different online classes. Those are mainly taught in the summer. For kids.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: So not there they do happen during the school year but it's not as many kids that take that. And so it's crazy because it almost seems like ##### ran like a little mini college because they are offering. There's so many summer classes that are offered. There are so many While we even tell our band kids, all right, take summer summer health so you can be in band for four years.

Kelly Taylor: Sorry, right, like mad too. what would you say in the community opinion is of your band program.

Suburban 4: no, that's all good.

Suburban 4: Pretty supportive. there's a lot to support but the People that are very bad support of. They definitely show their support that way. you have your football boosters that I mean obviously support that. I don't feel like we're not supported by the community. we do, Halloween parades. We do the homecoming prayer, like we're out in the community doing things on and...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 4: it's received So, I've never felt like it's a negative or a bad. Not on supported thing.

Kelly Taylor: All right, the next one's a loaded question and I've gotten a lot of different,...

Suburban 4: Okay, ready.

Kelly Taylor: a lot of different responses to this one. So I'll just say it like this. How's the new implementation of the new art standards going for you?

Suburban 4: I haven't felt much of the difference on them. I'm just kind of doing my thing. We started digging into them. This last Song, August. it really digging in.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: So there hasn't been much of an impact on us yet with The other thing with it though, too, with the standards and There's a lot of Opportunities for these kids to get their art standards outside of. Band as well. So, yeah, I haven't had too much of a impact on it. Bird has not an impact on me. So excuse me.

Kelly Taylor: Alright, I think I know the answer this one. But what would you say your biggest luxury being a teacher at Minnetonka, is

Suburban 4: The Crowley the private lessons and...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Suburban 4: it's crazy. I mean,...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. Yeah. You

Suburban 4: And I honestly like, it was one of those things when I found out that I'm like, holy s***. that would never be a thing when I taught out and #####, ...

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely.

Suburban 4: it was I mean I had I said, a couple kids that took virtual lessons or they drove up Saint Cloud or into the cities to take lessons once in a while but it was never even just so with the lessons to the requirement is for them to have per semester for hours. So it basically works out to every other week, a 30 minute lesson. So

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: Very cool.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, so you talk a little bit about program pride and what that means to you as an educator. And kind of a follow-up to that too. how is program pride seen in your teaching?

Suburban 4: are you like me personally or at the ##### level or Both.

Kelly Taylor: Both first you as an educator and then your program, I guess I would say.

Suburban 4: and I think pride is in order for the kids to participate, they have to be proud of what they want to do and it's kind of that whole circle thing. where I think it's one of those things that the kids enjoy being there. They have fun. They're proud of what the product that they're putting out there. It's only gonna enhance numbers and it's only going to drive the cart. now when I inherited the ##### gig, it was a broken wheel and it's trying to instill that the sense of pride there. It was they actually in the reason why the concert bandans and symphonic banner joint up right now is because numbers had dipped so much.

Suburban 4: There's a lot of people who say, covid hit it. I personally think it was a lot more than covid. It was just some negative negative teaching that, not necessarily negative towards the kids, but it is just a bad

atmosphere. Not the kids didn't feel that sense of pride when they walked into the ##### Music band department. so in kind of growing or trying to cultivate that culture. now. So, it drives everything culture and pride does.

Kelly Taylor: All How would you best describe your pedagogy? And if you need a little more clarification on that, are you an orator from the state from the podium? Are you grabbing an instrument sitting next kids and playing during class things like that. That's kind of at the direction of that.

Suburban 4: Yeah, that's our. So When I first started it was always one of those and I don't know if it was what it was, but it was just like, don't play with the kids. don't let the kids listen to any music it that have them create their own thing. And then when I started doing my grad school work, it was just like why wouldn't it? he's even before that but it was just like, why wouldn't you want your kids to listen to Alan, Visoudi play the trumpet and trying To be like, Alan Visoudi for me I don't play too often with the kids in #####.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: I did a lot more in #####inson especially with my younger groups, just because they had just to get that sense of rhythm and pitch and everything. last year, I maybe played with them five times total, but then again, they were all upperclassmen, who kind of had that already instilled into them and also, I mean, They have private features that do that. So it's a lot more from the podium that I do Then I used to do.

Kelly Taylor: So it's probably a direct result. The fact that you don't have to do that because they have that one-on-one time with people better than us,

Suburban 4: The exactly and and there's a couple of the kids that they've asked play with this? why don't you play flu with us? because you're better at playing flute than I am because I'm a brass guy. I can play flute.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Suburban 4: But you sound better on flute than I do and it kind of hurts the ego a little bit. But at the same time it's like, yeah.

Kelly Taylor: after the first quarter with me and beginning band, you're already a better flute player than I'll ever be so I totally hit that. All right, let's see Talk about your recruitment procedures. What do you guys do to get kids involved? And where does that start? And

Suburban 4: All we'll be here for the night. No. so I am a firm believer that two things. The kids need to know me especially coming from last year was ninth grade to 10th grade, to keep the retention. but also that eighth to 9th grade year, because that's such a easy time for kids to quit is that 8th grade? So I try and get down to the middle schools as much

Suburban 4: As I can, I did a lot more in ##### just because it was more convenient because it was a half a mile away and...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: not a 15-20 minute car drive away. so it's just getting the kids to know me as a person and as educator. So a couple of things we do in ##### and I did not start this. So I can't take credit for this one. we do some joint concerts so we have one concert where it is, our eighth grade bands, joins up with our wind ensemble, and then we do a joint piece with them.

Suburban 4: And that we rehearse. And then we also do jazz band concert that's joint as well. So both of the middle schools, bring their jazz bands to the high school and both of our jazz bands play with it. So it's a district level jazz festival and then that eighth grade went ensemble. Concert is a couple things that I've done in the past, whether a ##### or #####. Is, I think the biggest thing for recruitment is for those middle school kids to hear the high school kids talk about why they should do it. Because, I mean, every director knows that I can talk until I'm blue in the face and it's not gonna affect that 8th grader being in there. But if they see a tense 11th 12th grader, who they kind of

Suburban 4: Idolize or they hear play, then all of a sudden it's maybe I should do this. And so it's bringing the drumline down, to the middle schools or last year we were trying to do this, but we weren't able to do it to do a mini tour with our jazz band and went ensemble to go to the two middle schools and maybe some of the elementary schools. So that's the things that I've done in the past to do groupment.

Kelly Taylor: When you all start band in #####, Fifth...

Suburban 4: Fifth grade. Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, new numbers in fifth grade. You have any idea how many you start and giving here?

Suburban 4: if you give me a second, I can actually pull up last year's numbers. I just had them pulled up.

The other day.

Suburban 4:

Suburban 4: off to dig here in my Google folder here.

Suburban 4: There we go. Last year.

Suburban 4: And I'm gonna have to fifth grade band we started. It's gonna be incomplete because we don't have three of the fifth grade numbers in here.

Suburban 4: So, let's see, 21, 22, fifth grade numbers would have been

Suburban 4: Let's see, 168, plus 139, whatever, that would be.

Kelly Taylor: When they 297. Okay.

Suburban 4: And then last year's numbers, they were already bigger because there's a class, one of them has a hundred and thirteen in there. So I'm guessing it's probably right around that 300 to three thirty-ish. So,

Kelly Taylor: All right.

Kelly Taylor: what?

Kelly Taylor: what would you say the level of autonomy you have at your school is

Suburban 4: What do you mean by that? Sorry.

Kelly Taylor: Autonomy is basically. Freedom to move and...

Suburban 4:

Kelly Taylor: do what you want to do. and not have. Somebody say Give me a lesson plan. Give me this. Give me that.

Suburban 4: I completely odd. I don't have to do any of that, if I were to go to the middle schools or anything, it's just a simple email to the assistant principle about it is assigned to the music and just say, Hey, I'm gonna go to and so,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: yeah, I can move around, I can Come and go pretty freely. I don't have to turn in lesson plans. yeah.

Kelly Taylor: do you have a district set curriculum of things that you need to follow? Or is it kind of? They just let you do your thing. Teach music. Talk to us later.

Suburban 4: That kind of both to where we have a district level stuff but no one checks it and it's just kind of New band.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, are you a PLC school or no? Okay.

Suburban 4: Yeah, we are. And so, we

Kelly Taylor: And how does that work for you?

Suburban 4: So last year, we did six twelve plc. So it was it wasn't a full instrumental. It was one of the band teachers at one of the middle schools in the two band teachers at the other one in myself. So, we were able to do a lot of vertical alignment last year. they're doing so...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: which it was great. in #####, we were plc's and we kind of, our way through all the plc stuff because it was me in the choir guy and it was just

Suburban 4: There was nothing we could really DLC about...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: because we had our own programs and we were doing our own thing and we would come up with some common assessments that we would do on to satisfy the PLC gods, but that was about it. But last year, was actually one of the first years that I actually felt like PLC was super beneficial. for my teaching this year,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: the #####s kind of remodeling their plc's and how they're doing it. and so now, they're discouraging any inner inter campus movements, so where we have to stay on campus with our PLC. So it's me and

the high school choir teacher and we were supposed to have be our second PLC meeting today, but I was sick. So that didn't happen.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 4: But we could the choir director and I were talking yesterday and I think it's gonna be a good thing for us as well. So

Kelly Taylor: Do you think it's easier and a bigger district to be effective. When you're not an Island?

Suburban 4: so, Yes. I think so. The other thing so when I was in #####, it was all right. You had to have x amount of minutes, every month to satisfy your plc goal and blah. Were at #####, we have set meetings once a month for our PLC on Wednesday morning. So it's a lot more. The district is more plans out better the time for us and allows us the time to do the PLCs, as opposed to...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 4: where it Just do it on your own after curriculum hours or All, right? If you stay 15 minutes, 30 minutes later, you can leave 30 minutes early the next day. But as much as I do, that doesn't always happen because you have kids in your band room or lessons or there's a football game going on or something like that. So That's the one thing and kind of going back a couple questions within Ministratation. I've noticed him into talk, they really value our time and they don't schedule anything outside of seven to three our contract hours, which is Really nice.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: And if it is outside of it, we get compensated for it.

Kelly Taylor: All right, just a couple more and yeah. How do you and...

Suburban 4: Yes, it's all good.

Kelly Taylor: your program? How do you approach competition?

Suburban 4: And we're at a divide right now with that because what were the most part, I love competition and I was just having this conversation with one of my ninth grade clarinet players but I love competition. but honestly when it comes to marching band numbers and everything It's so subjective that I always tell them don't I did this in hot and it's starting to take place in ##### but don't put any stock in the number. All it is a number. It's a judge's perception of you for that seven eight minute show that you put on there and you just have to go out and do the best you can. And we will ultimately, what we were talking about the clarinet kid yesterday. I told him, we were talking about competitions. And it was like, all right, Rosemont, do you think they go out and they care about a number?

Suburban 4: No they don't even think about a number. They just go out and try and get better every single day and so we have to get out of that. All right, we're good. Get out of that mindset of the numbers and it changes from week to week. I mean obviously it's supposed to get better but you have one bad judge in there and all sudden it tanks the scores and It happened to me in ##### when we were doing the street circuit, I actually end up calling Lane Paul and saying, All right. what happened with this? This judge last week scored us this I felt it was a better performance and then they dropped us by X amount of points. I can't remember what it was. It's just

Suburban 4: I don't know, I don't put a lot of stock in there. the one thing I try and tell my kids a lot is go out and just beat yourself be better than what you were last week, get a little bit better, fix one thing every rehearsal and then by the end of the season it's huge. how much growth that there's going to be So I mean I like competition.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: I think it gives the kids something to drive for and look forward to but it shouldn't be the end, be all of program.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, this is off script but did you march anywhere?

Suburban 4: I never marched in my life it was a small splash.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: I shouldn't say, we marched for homecoming, basically walking down but it was not offered as a high school when I was in high school. and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Suburban 4: then I went to ##### which doesn't have a marching band and...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Suburban 4: then by the time I realized that DCI was an actual thing. I would have already aged out and so it was my first gig was my first marching experience in ##### so it was a Go learn by fire.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: There was a lot of things where I went and I observed, a lot of good programs and a lot of directors and learned from them, but I've told my kids you've watched more than I ever have. Really. Yep.

Kelly Taylor: It happens. all right,...

Suburban 4: It does,

Kelly Taylor: last question I have here is kind of just I'm gonna give you a statement and ask a question to it, but ...

Suburban 4: Kept.

Kelly Taylor: reading some would say that marching band is a time and resource destroyer. And it's outdated. What are your feelings on that and why is marching band a part of your curriculum and offerings?

Suburban 4: That's a question there. Can I say yes and...

Kelly Taylor: I know, right?

Suburban 4: no to that same question at the same time?

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely absolutely.

Suburban 4: Yeah and kind of going back to The other thing with #####, that's just crazy looking at the budget that we have and the money that we put into marching band. Could be used for such better. Educational purposes. to help the whole student body or the whole band Department because right our marching band it's extracurricular in it, it only hosts about 25 to 30% of our kids, something like that, in March that are in marching band. So, we're spending so much money for a pretty small chunk of Our band program as a whole now, I also think in order to kind of go back to the competitive,

Suburban 4: Aspect of it, it's getting so outrage that you have to spend that amount of money to even consider being competitive. And going back to my ##### days. I didn't have a budget. It was going to the boosters and begging for.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Suburban 4: All right, I need color guard uniforms. That will have put into a rotation. So they'll be used every three years or whatever. So, can I take that? And then at the end of the year, go into the activity to director and say, Hey, do you have 1500 bucks? So I can buy music for marching band. So it's just big borrowing and stealing from everywhere. We're in #####. it's not that so, yeah, it's a pretty big time suck. the good side of it though. It's one of the most visible bands that we have. It's where we march for the homecoming period that just happened last week downtown, Excelsior, it was a mile maybe in each side of the street was packed with Three, four, five rows, deep of kids, and parents and everything. So it's

Suburban 4: A good recruiting tool for kids as well because they can see it and they see it at football games that they see it, they hear it. When we're practicing At the school. It's just I don't know. I struggle with this, as you probably see my answer because I could think of the so much better things to help the program as a whole to spend that money. But at the same time,...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Suburban 4: if you don't spend that money. All so now you don't have the recruiting tool of marching band. So it's kind of this catch 22 situation, so yeah. Yeah, and...

Kelly Taylor: Like it.

Suburban 4: then what else? There was something.

Kelly Taylor: I saved the thick question to the end but why do you still have? I mean, I think you've answered it but it was the people that say it's Time Reese Time and Resource Destroyer and it's outdated. And then question was,...

Suburban 4: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Why is marching me a part of your curriculum? And I think you just answered that.

Suburban 4: Yeah, and...

Kelly Taylor: .

Suburban 4: yeah, it's one. And I look at it from my personal standpoint, too. Someone who would never marched. I'm kind of envious of those kids because I,...

Kelly Taylor: it's

Suburban 4: March I enjoy coaching marching men. I enjoy teaching everything about it but it's Crazy.

Kelly Taylor: Cool. That is the questions that I had for you tonight. I'm gonna stop the recording.

Suburban 4: sounds good.

Meeting ended after 00:41:44 🤝

Edited Transcript Rural 1

Kelly Taylor: All right, we're going. So we'll go with it. Alright? So the first question I have for...

Rural 1: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: why did you apply and accept the position you teach in today?

Rural 1: Speaking. that's a complicated story. at its core. I think I wanted to be back in central Minnesota. I'm originally from ####, And I was living in #### and teaching in ####. And it was very difficult to see family, because #### was two and a half hours from ####, no matter what, because you had to drive through the metro area. There were some things that I was unhappy with at ####.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: I had been teaching there four years and things had gone real well, and they had kind of said to me, that they would eventually hire some additional staff per year comments earlier and they just clearly weren't gonna do that. and we also had a teacher strike there my last year. And so we spent,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: I spent I think 17 days walking up picket line and after that, it really became a not very fun place to teach for us. I mean I was tenured but I was the low person on the band tree and they gave me a pink slip saying, I'd be back at point nine and nothing had changed in my numbers. They did that to every teacher that was beneath a certain number of years and I frankly got really angry about that. that I had told my principal there was whisperings that they were going to do that and I said to him if you do that I'll be gone very quickly. And so I've gone out about this job and there's many blessings about it. I really like being here.

Kelly Taylor: All in regards to just a daily routine, can you just describe a typical rehearsal in any of your groups?

Rural 1: Rehearsal or my schedule for the day.

Kelly Taylor: The rehearsal just your actual instruction time with kids.

Rural 1: So we're on a seven period day and we have 47 minute rehearsals. I teach three different bands. I teach the eighth grade band every other day. I teach Master band which is mostly ninth graders with a few students that don't qualify for our top end. And then my topping and I treat all three of those rehearsals really differently. So with the top group, we're doing music, that's hard enough. That we probably spend a majority of our time working on that music. So the warm-ups are short geared towards the particular scale passages. We do all the time and some corral, and some listening, and some tuning. And then we spend most of the hour on band music, with the younger group at the high school. I spent a significant amount of time of that probably 15 to 20 minutes a day on fundamentals. Using a number of things that I've written over the years as well as some group method books.

Rural 1: And so when I do that, mostly from the piano. So I do kind of accompaniment, boom, truck stuff. I'm not a piano player. To play. But I know how to do a few things that can, get them going. And then the same concept applies to the eighth grade except unfortunately because every other day I have to spend a little less time on fundamentals. A little more time. I'm getting the music learned. So, you can perform.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely understand that. What would you say, your focus is? Does it shift throughout the year? Do you have one general area? You talked about fundamentals and in band music, but throughout the year, do you spend a majority of time on different parts? I mean, you have major concerts through the year that you prepare for or what does that look like?

Rural 1: We're pretty old fashioned here. We have a pretty simplistic performance schedule. So our top group performs the most that band performs. For Veterans Day, a big program during the school day and the past couple years we've been going to a fall. Festival in Brainerd. So we did that last year, we'll do that this year and then we play a winter concert, which is mostly serious music with a little bit of holiday stuff toss. And then we prepare for larger contests and usually solo, ensemble. Contests, so our focus becomes, two or three pieces that are kind of significant, we do that contest with both of our high school bands, And then, once that's done, it's graduation music preparation which we do a little bit of an extensive pre commencement concert using. A lot of the songs are younger band has played throughout the year with all the leftover kids in our graduating.

Rural 1: And then we will start our marching The marching Bandit ##### is It's sort of integrated into the school day and I say Sort of I'm gonna assume you're going to have questions about that eventually.

Kelly Taylor: But eventually yeah,...

Rural 1: So we'll get Up.

Kelly Taylor: we'll get to that.

Rural 1: But yeah, so it's pretty old fashioned. when I taught at Blaine High School, there were one concert per quarter four, major concerts a year plus contest. When I taught at Red Wing is three or four major concerts here. Here, it's really with the high school bands. It's two concerts a year. It's a winter and a spring with contest in the middle. And then I try and find other performance opportunities for our top end.

Kelly Taylor: How important would you rate say pep band in your daily life?

Rural 1:

Rural 1: It's pretty important so that I kind of was remiss With that. We will spend the first three to five rehearsals with my top band, just on pep band music in the fall. and then we get away from it They don't come back to it, maybe hardly ever. And then,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: with the younger group, we will spend the first three to five rehearsals on Pep band and then we continue to season it during the week. I'll maybe do a day a week of pep band music. If we have a pep band the kids,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: they like to practice that music and I'm always surprised at how the 9th graders, the beginning of year, really can't play that music and by three or four weeks in, they can play almost all the tunes. It's really interesting and...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: it doesn't matter how good or bad they are Seems like they can pick up on that. So I think pep band is really important. And I think that directors that don't consider it really important need to reevaluate that because it's an important cog in the wheel.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. next question, I am for you is where does administration place your program in level of importance in your school?

Rural 1: Probably number one. there's a

Rural 1: No, I mean, I really do, within reason, get what I asked for. I really don't have budgets as such. if I need something fixed I get it fixed. If I need a piece of music, I buy it. I don't get big ticket items very easily. we have giant stuff tubas and whatnot that are really wearing out. and we have not got those but I also haven't pressed really hard for them. So I think maybe that's something I need to talk about.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 1: But, we use electric pianos in our facility because we just don't like tuning and mine in the band. Room, died. The other day and I started my principal. Hey, I got order piano. He said Yeah, go ahead. It wasn't great expensive...

Kelly Taylor: Very nice.

Rural 1: but stuff like that. they treat us really well. The level of support is very strong.

Kelly Taylor: so, one question I'm asking, everybody is what is something that you do in your school that someone in a suburban setting school doesn't do,

Rural 1: I think we have lessons tonight. When I taught at #####, we didn't have any lessons at all. We had two band directors per hour. So we could have done lessons. I think we kind of chose not to I,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: We have more individual student contact, because of the seven period day. and the fact that our campus is all one building So the elementary through the high school is just one really long building. So I walk down the hallway.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 1: Since 17. He said, fifth sixth and seventh graders, they know who I am, which I think is pretty cool. I don't know them. But they know me and I think that matters in the big picture. So they think the lesson component is probably the biggest part that the concept that major Metro schools,

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: every kids taking private lessons. I mean, that's a myth. That's not true. And so I think we have more individual student contact, which is pretty cool.

Kelly Taylor: I would agree with that one. And that,...

Rural 1: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: having a similar setup here with, ##### and I sharing a hallway and, that relationship I just personally think is huge to the success of the program.

Rural 1: yeah, I think that's a really Great way that when they redid the building that way and put the banner is back. I think that was genius.

Kelly Taylor: All the next one I got for you is what are your thoughts about teaching in the suburban area? you have experience.

Rural 1: That,...

Kelly Taylor: So I mean

Rural 1: I mean, I haven't done it for so many years. I think it's Hard for me to know what it's like anymore. I didn't mind it when I did it. We were on a block schedule and I'm not a fan of any type of black schedule for music scheduling, it worked for us because there were so many kids in the building like it ##### we had 3,300 kids in the building 9 through 12. So at one point I think we had 350 kids in band and that's not 10% of the band. if I had 10% of the high school here at #####, I'd have 43 kids in band.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: so we can't do that as so.

Rural 1: I will say. my friends who still teach in ##### are subject to a lot of Meetings and plcs, and all kinds of things that are designed to make us better teachers, right? And I think teachers would tell you the reality is of that,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: that none of it makes you a better teacher. It's all things that take away from your commitment to teaching. We don't have any of that our PLC system, here is very much that we're required to submit a PLC plan. and it basically done written rule is, it has to apply directly to In your classroom, it has to be something you're doing already. Make it fit so we don't have those kind of meetings.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: We don't have any of that stuff that takes away from our time. I can tell you as band person Here. I feel like I've been told Go teach band. Let us know what you need. thank you. And that's really, really valuable.

Kelly Taylor: What would you say, your biggest instructional challenges that you face on a daily basis?

Rural 1: The socioeconomics of our area are very very poor and I think I underestimate how actually significant that is our school districts. Really big kids are coming from a great distances to school so it's tough to do morning. Rehearsals parents. Don't always have the resources to get the kids there. My kids play on bad instruments there are no kids that upgrade to a nice horn it just does not happen it.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: So we're constantly dealing With a clientele that it I use the word poor? I don't know if that's a fair word to use but certainly they want good things for their kids but they can't always provide them and our band program Does provide a place for those kids to we bill many repairs to the school. That should be paid by a kid. ...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 1: it just happens. And so that's I mean, Our band program here is I'm really, really proud of it. Because what we're doing with the kids in the Places that are coming from here. I talk with my wife who teaches guard all the time about this. It's very different. and I come from the town, you're teaching and I can tell you It would be like getting the ##### marching band to 80% the level of #####...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: because I always feel that's where we are. We're about 80%. What you guys are.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 1: But you'd be doing that with. one of the smaller schools That's frustrating to me sometimes.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. Yeah. It's just, I can relate because with the fifth grade class that I do here and just getting instruments and whatnot for everything. I'm on goodwill.com. I'm going to pawn shops and Applying for grants,...

Rural 1: Yeah, yeah.

Kelly Taylor: but...

Rural 1: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: What would you say the community's opinion is of your band program?

Rural 1: Boy, they think really highly of it. I think. It's kind of a point of pride in the community there's a long long history of people and band members in the community. And so and I think they identify it is the whole program I think they really like the concert band. They really like the marching man. Historically, I think it's kind of a marching band town. But there was a period of time...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: where the marching band didn't exist for quite a few years where it went away and...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: #####, brought it back. So, yeah, I think we have a pretty good level of support..

Kelly Taylor: All This is a loaded question. How's the implementation of the new Minnesota Art?

Rural 1: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Standards. Going for you?

Rural 1: I have a slide in my PowerPoint that lists what they are, and I put it up now and then

Kelly Taylor: Okay. Right now.

Kelly Taylor: If someone were to ask you this question, I guess is the next one. What is your biggest luxury that you have at #####?

Rural 1: I think Administrative support There's a high level of trust That we're given that we're gonna, do our best for kids every day.

Rural 1: Yeah, just a high level of trust.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: So the administrative support is off the charts.

Kelly Taylor: All this is probably piggybacks off the other one that I just asked,...

Rural 1: Yeah, working with the silk and...

Kelly Taylor: but your biggest challenge being a teacher at #####.

Rural 1: socioeconomics a little bit of a staffing issue just in that. my eighth grade band this year is 44 and it's usually between 40 and 60. But I have to do all those lessons in on. Because that's the only time I have because I'm also doing lessons for the high school kids that Wednesday's 8th grade lesson day and I kind of have to get them when I can get them. And so it's not always You...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: it might be eight kids that play different instruments. I try to group them in woodwinds and brass And I'm mostly successful with that. So I can't always get to a kid That really needs, individual attention. It's just happened.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: But I also been teaching public school for 31 years. So I realize that that doesn't always happen. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: What would you say just kind of going after that as far as among other teachers when you're doing pull out lessons and things like that for teachers that are not teaching other academic areas. What is the reception of that? Is that something that's welcome? Do you get pushback a lot? Or can you talk about that a little bit?

Rural 1: Yeah, I think for the most part, everybody's on board with that process, the 8th graders are weekly. The high school kids are on an eight-day cycle. Once every eight days they'll have a 25 to 30 minute lesson with me. And so I've reduced the frequency for the high school. there are little falls just down the road here, has a really terrific high school band program and he's still weekly lessons with all the high school kids doing the rubank books. And it's been that way...

Kelly Taylor: Really. Sure.

Rural 1: since the ##### days they're wonderful that's still on that. I think if I wanted to do that I probably could I know I don't have a lot of teachers that push back. There are some teachers who are less receptive than others, to kids coming out of their class. But I kind of understand that. sometimes the science teacher will say, Look, we do labs, and sometimes the fire teacher will say,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: Look, we're going to be outside. and I get that. So we make it work, it isn't very often than a kid gets stressed out and comes in crying because they can't get out of a class ever. But it does happen. and...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: then sometimes I'll have a kid who's a senior. And they're really loading up on college and schools classes and this and that and they'll say to me, None of the hours you're available. We're working Rural 1. Can I just come down and Practicing independently while you're doing concert band and I'll let them do that. Like I said about you before, take what you can get be flexible.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. no in dealing in your actual classroom procedures things that you do while you're teaching if you had to label your pedagogical style? What would you say that is? Are you yelling Screamer? Are you a demonstrator? Are you a rote style?

Rural 1: I've been teaching 31 years. I spent probably the first 15 is an angry man. I mean I could get pretty mean and pretty brutal and To be honest. I look back at some of those band recordings. Those are some pretty good bands but I was really shocked that I had some alumni I am very fond of for one particular class and they would stop in. And one of them said to me, one day, man, you were really mean. and I kind of thought why you're kind of one of my favorite kids. How could you be perceived that I was mean. I mean that's all mean I was it and...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 1: I remember distinctly 12 13 years ago, I'm a big list guy. I keep a notebook on my desk with things to do and I wrote on the top of the list, one day, I wrote be positive all the time. I just wrote that and I tried to really live that and I think I'm getting better at it. And I think that maybe my bands, maybe don't play as well as they used to when I was really, really mean. But it's only a degree that I can recognize no one in the audience can recognize that degree. And I think even some of my music colleagues don't recognize it because we've been scoring several forties lately at contest the past few years and...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: but I don't feel like we necessarily do but I'm not sure it matters. It's more important to be as kind as you can. I think especially with today's kids. So I think I am a demonstr.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 1: And I try to be a nurturer. I try to provide a positive place for kids to be. I did at work,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 1: we were practicing on peace today called Incandescence. Which we hope to play at the convention. It's like a grade three and a half to four.

Kelly Taylor: You're right.

Rural 1: It's an African-American composer. it was commissioned by this giant group of Minnesota bands. I want to say Be like Jay Rod Hill or...

Kelly Taylor: Okay. Yeah.

Rural 1: something like that. it's awesome and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, I don't.

Rural 1: the kids love it. But I have my trombones come to the front row because we're trying to play these and my second trial modes. I can't believe you guys can't play in tune. Like you and I think, 12 years ago I had fried. Those guys I had just crushed them in front of the hole because that wasn't teaching. You...

Kelly Taylor: You right?

Rural 1: it's like whose fault is that? They can't play in tune? it's kind of mine.

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 1: I'm their teacher. You can't yell at him. who's your teacher? it's you. So, I grabbed my trumpet and I'm standing next to it. We're playing it. We fix this. We fixed that we get done. What we get done bell rings come back tomorrow.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Just making a note here. All right. I'm stretch.

Rural 1: It's all good.

Kelly Taylor: all right, so Every program has to recruit for the future. what does that look like in your school recruitment for getting kids involved?

Rural 1: We do a fourth grade preview concerts with one of our high school bands, whichever Available when we get the fourth graders, I think last year, we used our younger group for that. I can't remember if we used that but We have a little auditorium, the seats, 250 people. So we bring the whole fourth grade class in that's usually about 110 kids and we play for them we do the school song in a couple pep band tunes and some pop tune or something. and then we demonstrate all the instruments so that theoretically gets kids to sign up. Like I said, I think we have about 90 95 kids in the fifth grade this year. Which is a pretty good percentage. I think if you get more than that, you're dipping into the talent pool enough that it isn't that a struggle? you want to sign up every kid, but boy at a certain point you're using resources on kids that are never going to work out. and so,

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 1: So we recruit that way. when it comes to retention and getting kids to stick with it, we try to have high school, kids come in and talk with the younger bands towards registration time about what they love about band. we do a lot of Posters and billboards in our van hallway. So kids are walking by Kids. Uniforms and doing cool stuff. I wish we did more. I think we could do more but there's only two of us. It seems to me that we're all in one building. We could have kids going out and playing all the time. For those younger kids and I wish that'll be for the next guy, they'll be one of the things I'll tell them to do that. They need to do that. So it's good. every program, I wish our retention was higher.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: You've touched on a little bit, but what would you say the level of economy is that you have

Rural 1: Yeah, it's low I don't know what the statistics are and I don't know if there is a free and reduced lunch anymore. Now that everybody's lunch is free with the new system, but it used to be really, really high. and then, the number of kids that have IEPs in our building is really ...

Kelly Taylor: sure.

Rural 1: My sister was a parent ##### and I told everyone. So yeah. A slide about how many kids have an IEP in our building And she said, That's crazy. That's unbelievable. And I kind of where we're at. So, yeah.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 1: It's a tough area. And in addition to that, people struggle financially individually. But as a school district, Because there is so much state land in #####. which is untaxable land. And then, in addition our local government has been fighting a legal battle with the ### #####. For several years now and it has cost millions and millions and millions of dollars to the taxpayers of our community. And I'm not stating one side or the other here. I'm simply saying that that has happened and people's taxes. Have gone up catastrophically, especially in town. I live in ##### in which is a thriving suburb of America.

Kelly Taylor: I know where that is.

Rural 1: Especially in town that. I mean, if you've got a little quarter acre lot with a three-bedroom house on it, you might be paying 4,500 bucks a year in taxes right now. Yeah, so you can't and a lot of that was according to what I read the newspaper. Has been due to this legal fight and...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 1: there's no end in sight to this. And so it makes it really hard for us as a they'll leverage everything they can but in terms of passing a referendum I'm not sure we've ever passed one in 31 I've been 21 years.

Kelly Taylor: Wow.

Rural 1: I've been here There might have been one but I don't know. I don't remember. so there's that,

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Kelly Taylor: Generally the last question I have here is just getting different views on competition. there's people that say it's bad for kids to compete music because there's different levels, it's an individual thing, and we should shy away from comparing apples to oranges. Can you talk briefly on how Your program, forgive me, views, competition, and how it is instructed to the kids to handle competition.

Rural 1: Competition I think it's valuable, I think It can be. A way for kids, to Achieve a higher level. Performance. I really do not just band necessarily. So, there's that.

Rural 1: I want my kids to be the best When we go to contest. We openly talk about, we want to be the best band there today. And I'll say to my younger group, I want you to be the second best man here today. I mean, and Sometimes I think kids develop a little eye of the tiger. Not every kid is competitive. even in my own household I have two daughters. One of them is really competitive, the other one is less competitive but they're both. There. So we talk about competition. With the marching band we do have a competitive philosophy. But it's tempered to some effect. We do I tell them word for word is that folks if there's a competition, if there's a trophy if there's a first place you should want to get that. You should want that.

Rural 1: But if you don't get that, you have to be able to accept that and then you get, till the next day to get over it and move on with your life because you can't get better if you don't do that. So we know we've had some years where we've been really successful competitively and we've had some years where we haven't been successful competitively and I really don't think It's in the experience that the kids got. Isn't that interesting? my marching band is trending. Little bit smaller over the past couple years. Our class sizes are getting smaller. So it kind of makes sense, but we've had two of the most successful competitive years we've ever had in a row right now and that will have no bearing on kids, signing up. it not here that they're not so concerned about that. And part of me is okay with that, that they're not so good. I mean that's

Rural 1: Right, I did have one parent say to me this year that she was signing, All three of her kids up from Archie, man, because you guys win all the time and I think I felt like whoa. Yeah, no we gotta win, right? Yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, don't want that pressure.

Rural 1: so I don't know, so yeah, we're pretty competitive, my wife and I we basically kind of run the whole band and I think we're both pretty competitive. but They have to be able to teach, we want a great performance, you're always working towards a great performance. I know there are guys who at least say that they never talk about competition with their kids. They never talk about it. I don't know if I believe that.

Kelly Taylor: yeah, I don't know if I've ever boots on when they're talking about that,

Rural 1: That's a good line. I'm gonna use that. That's good.

Kelly Taylor: Rubber boots and save the seat goes, boys.

Rural 1: There you go. Exactly. Yeah. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: cool, I mean that's really the extent of things that I need to do with you here. You see I can stop this recording.

Edited Transcript Rural 2

Kelly Taylor: All Perfect. Yeah,...

Rural 2: Or transcribes for you too, that's cool.

Kelly Taylor: and then I just feed that into this program called Atlas TI and...

Rural 2: Awesome.

Kelly Taylor: does all the coding for me. So yeah, cool thing. So, the first question I have for you is why'd you apply for and accept the position at #####?

Rural 2: In a school I had five twelve. And kind have been there.

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: I had been there for, seven years. and that was my first job out of college and we really liked it there but I had added a couple more parades with the marking band and a junior, high jazz band and Lots more kids were going to contestants, it was just kind of growing. And we were gonna have a family started, having a family and then they asked, if I would teach a little General music. And it was like, I think we'll try something else. And so just kind of was looking around.

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: What was on? I applied.

Rural 2: Just a handful of places. Because don't you once I kind of kept my resume going, and I just kind of put it out to a couple of different places and ##### is a little bit closer to my parents. and my wife's parents and that was applied for a seven through ninth grade position, and it was just a little bit more. Manageable. And

Rural 2: it's those three years ago. So

Kelly Taylor: Okay, and realize you only been there three years.

Rural 2: Three years. Plus this, I mean, just started me third year. And the...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: my first year, I did that seven through ninth grade. And then we had somebody retire. And she was.

Rural 2: Half-time elementary band 5th and sixth grade. And then The other half was general music and...

Kelly Taylor: What?

Rural 2: they didn't replace her when she retired. And so then now I do fifth through eighth grade And ##### does nine twelve.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: So we can

Rural 2: Flip the difference and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: that's been good because I got It just kind of felt like it streamed line. I mean you hate to see Fte get cut but I had a 9th grade advisory they took off my plate and They took all the way all my supervisions or anything, and kind of said that was my travel time Because it's a two different buildings now,...

Kelly Taylor: There's millions.

Rural 2: too. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: But you're high school building. That's 7-12 or 6-12. okay.

Rural 2: 7-12 is right? Yep. I do junior high band over there and then 5th and six, a fifth and sixth grade band. Each of the elementary school And...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: then lessons. And that's so Actually, if I'm being honest, I kind of like that. Way a little bit better than my and the gig I was hired for. so, I worked out.

Kelly Taylor: I get that. so,

Kelly Taylor: What can you describe in your teaching a little bit? what you're typical rehearsal. Looks like if I was sitting in your room, what would I see?

Rural 2: It would. Yeah, I

Rural 2: I always have a similar thing written on the whiteboard or chalkboard in the elementary bedroom and we always kind of have the beginning. Band. Class routine. We do some stretching and breathing, and Tuning. It's a couple of year or two ago, ##### and I really started. Using our harmony directors, a lot, I get a drone on at the beginning and get tuning, and Just got a list of. the warm-ups and the repertoire, we're playing on the board with if we're doing a certain section, what measures And that kind of stuff is going to be on the board, and

Rural 2: I try to get off the podium a lot.

Rural 2: We leave. An aisle in the middle of our band so you can kind of go through the middle and circle around and I like to do that. Even in some rows at the elementary school I have. A little bit of Am#####an walk, not every row, but they can walk down. The line of, clarinets and cam position and stuff like that.

Rural 2: Yeah, and my student sixth grade groups are. just, 30 minutes twice a week, but junior high is 49 minutes every other day so the pacing is

Rural 2: I don't know. I think it's probably kind of the same because the fitness sixth grade lessons are One lesson, just two days. So I guess I would say I pacing I guess.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: Isn't that different? I try to go real fast.

Rural 2: We're not real fast, just efficient.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. No that's perfect.

Rural 2: Yeah, I think is that kind of

Kelly Taylor: I'm not gonna cut you off. I'm gonna let you talk until you kind of like,...

Rural 2: Yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: hey, I don't want You...

Rural 2: I think that

Kelly Taylor:

Kelly Taylor:

Kelly Taylor: Stunt anything that you're gonna say, so I don't want to cut you off at all, but

Rural 2: And what can you sit there? Can you say it was just, what would you see?

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. What would describe your typical rehearsal setting and You did that. So no thinking both,...

Rural 2: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: as a department for middle school, high school. What is your concert cycle look like, what do you spend the most time on during the year? Is it getting ready for a specific concert? You have theme concerts What does that look like for you guys?

Rural 2: it's depends on the Elementary School fitness 6th grade. We have two concerts a year.

Rural 2: one in, it was like, Last year, I just did it. How it been done in the past. It was one in December and then one at the end of the year, but this year,...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: Since I don't always do that much, winter, or Christmas specific music on, I pushed it to the end of the first semester, which is January so winter concert in one, Spring Concert. At the elementary school. And Junior It's the band concerts at the high school 7 through 12 building or All on the same night for band and that we don't have any joint kind of concerts right now with Bannon choir. So it's just being Choir concerts,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: and That has been done in the past though. I'm told. But not in recent history. and that is,

Rural 2: a December concert, a March Spring concert, and then A end of the year concert. In May, which is kind of Build is a pop's concert.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: And then, every year I've been here I brought The junior high. band to this a couple, Festivals. So, we go to #####. April. And then,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 2: We actually host one in ##### in February, so that kind of Fills up. The spring.

Kelly Taylor: Of.

Rural 2: and I haven't had, just kind of doing my third year and then with my position changing and everything It really hasn't exactly been a normal. Yet where I feel and Because I've just kind of gotten through. Everything. we're like once I did it once my first year and then I'll change. And now I did that once. So yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 2: last year but that's gonna good. I think, for the junior high kids, it was And then we have the Junior, High Band Festival here in #####. In February concert in March, going to Farmington in April. and then in May we got our Pops concert so they had a performance each month, a lot some of the same repertoire, but

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: Yeah, so I guess that that's Probably gonna. like I said, I haven't exactly figured how that feels? But last year, I think it went, okay. I just kind of kept one old piece from the December concert on, for the February Festival but then, did a new New one and...

Kelly Taylor: Repeat.

Rural 2: then kind of staggered it later. little bit and then

Rural 2: That worked. Okay. I think I don't remember exactly what we did off the top of my head, but There was a...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: what we call sounds that they called sounds of the stadium concert The fall that we did.

Rural 2: My first year I was here and had been done for a while. Couple decades, at least. kind of a

Rural 2: pep band, They sort of did a field show in the gym. the high school band did but then the junior high and then There's a cadet band, so Yeah, we got the high school, 10, 12 group, and then a Junior high seventh and 8th grade and then. The eighth graders, get split between the junior high band and it's basically a ninth grade band. But then just some eighth graders, get pulled up to this cadet. So they kind of combined to form one big junior high band for the sounds of the stadium concert. and that was I mean, all the percussions played marching percussion

Kelly Taylor: Okay, kind of similar to indoor.

Rural 2: Yeah, just with, some more There was always the theme, though. It was We just did that one year and I wasn't there because I was quarantined with Covid. first year, I was there first concert and I hadn't had covid yet. And so, Anyways, but then that was one thing. We were like, we had to take something off our plate if you're cutting a position. So this concert, which I was in favor of, because it was like, You based all the seventh graders are still basically sixth graders.

Kelly Taylor: Great.

Rural 2: When they get into your bedroom and it's like, all Put on these quads. And they've never even seen marching percussion before you have a concert in a month and...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 2: a half.

Rural 2: so, not to mention any I don't, And so I'm okay with that. But that was that one and then the Pops. Concert in the spring or Feel a little bit different, but then December. And March, once are pretty. Standard bank.

Kelly Taylor: Standard wind repertoire.

Rural 2: Yeah, basically. Yeah. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: you mentioned a little bit, but as far as again, thinking about the whole program, How much time would you say, you guys devote to have band? And is it something time on in the classroom? Or is it an after school thing? Or what's kind of the growing philosophy with that in your way?

Rural 2: Think.

Rural 2: So I don't have that much to do with that sometimes I go and play, but Not usually.

Rural 2: I think it's pretty fall. Heavy is what ##### does?

Rural 2: And then we just had homecoming up until homecoming. It's kind of like pep band, and

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: They can't bring back The summer, marching band music. And then kind of teach it to everybody...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: who wasn't in some of marching band. And We kind of tried. that's evolving too. It was less involved with this year, just kind of play one of the tunes and then move to a new set. And then play and then move. So a little bit less than it has been in the past and a long time ago.

Rural 2: Going ##### wasn't on the summer circuit. I think they just did field shows.

Rural 2: Is that you want to learn a little bit more about the history of the program each year? But yeah, they and I've seen a budget, ##### Has a budget from whatever year. It was the 90s or something. and the band budget was 25,000 or something like that and...

Kelly Taylor: .

Rural 2: 90s, and then just a big chunk of it was like,

Rural 2: Fall Field Show. Music equipment, blah. and I think that's kind of where,...

Kelly Taylor: Mmm.

Rural 2: The sounds of the Stadium. And kind of came into play, just to get more mileage out of that, and

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 2: But now we just had home coming. So I think the high school group will start to focus more on the repertoire For the December concert and...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: the schedule is the high school band is the only band in the district that meets every day. And then the junior high groups are On every other day.

Rural 2: Yeah, and then elementary is twice a week.

Kelly Taylor: All next question, I have for you is where does administration place your program in level of importance in your school?

Rural 2: That's a great question.

Kelly Taylor: And they'll never hear this. So you can speak honestly.

Rural 2: Yeah.

Rural 2: I can our budget is.

Rural 2: 4200, I think for the 712. Aspect.

Rural 2: And it was a little surprise at that when I first came because that's for seven 12 and for Five twelve. And ##### ahead including I think that was close to Sixers. Semi and kind of fluctuated six to eight. Thousand a year. And this is just 4,200 for

Rural 2: some repairs and things. we have it sort of

Rural 2: There was no capital included in that. it was just...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: if you had something, you could request it and then Sometimes it would get approved, and

Rural 2: That's lower than.

Rural 2: Than some, Because we are about just a sheet by department and we can see What? and that's one plus a budget is

Rural 2: Square was to priorities, how you're going to prioritize your spending. So I was a little surprised at some things were higher than It's because bands, just a really expensive thing.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: So a lot. Am I guess what I'm trying to say is a little bit lower. From a budgetary for perspective, then. I think it should be.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: But we did our Our superintendent. Give us a Side of the. High school budget. We got some Funds at the last couple years,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: it was 5,000 this year and 10,000 last year. which is nice but they also cut a FTE that year too. So it was like

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. Where's the community? Yeah, there's all enough.

Rural 2: Right there. Get something.

Rural 2: Yeah. I principal our high school principal. Is.

Rural 2: other people it's not big. Change guy.

Rural 2: So just overall probably a little bit lower than I would like, I think a lot music teachers would probably say that And then it didn't help that year ago. When that position got cut that doesn't make you feel Super important.

Kelly Taylor: No.

Rural 2: So, last year, I asked, to first some theft staff development monies to go to the Midwest Clinic and that I initially got to know for that. We didn't end up going but When I first came our lessons were.

Rural 2: Were 10 minute long ban lessons? Yeah, that's the face.

Kelly Taylor: Engagement together.

Kelly Taylor: Plano put it away. Yeah.

Rural 2: that's, Yeah,...

Rural 2: yeah exactly. Especially for Sixth grade clarinet player. It's like and I asked when I first met at the end of my first I asked kind of right away. And he said, once you try it, She could just to kind of figure out how it goes in the system and we'll talk again later. So then at the end of the first semester, I asked again, And he said, no.

Rural 2: But now we got 15 minutes because that was the rationale With the FTE getting cut. It was like, our lesson groups have to be bigger so they have to be Hunger and...

Kelly Taylor: Longer. Yeah.

Rural 2: that made sense as his math teacher. So I guess that made sense.

Kelly Taylor: Data.

Rural 2: Yeah, data. So I just, Feel like I get no a our new justice here. We got a new superintendent who was a trained as a music teacher.

Kelly Taylor:

Rural 2: She did a couple years of elementary general music in ##### I think. then she was an elementary principal.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: He most recently in Elementary Principal. So I've kind of Hope. And There's a Winds of change are coming.

Kelly Taylor: And it's always good when you have a super who's been in our shoes, Yeah.

Rural 2: Yeah, just somebody who gets it because kind of understand so generally not great, But I don't know. Importance. sometimes I think they

Rural 2: value Parts of the program that we put less value on.

Rural 2: it kind of cut back on. Not as many pep bands.....did and the past couple years and that they really get decided not to do soccer pep band anymore. and, that was a big deal. Whereas the sounds of the stadium. It was like we don't think we can do this concert anymore, but then it's like we really, really want to talk about Bandon.

Rural 2: But I mean then there's a couple good things too, like they did. there was some people who thought maybe I could teach a section of general music or something and I know behind closed doors are the high school principal did. kind of put his foot down and say No we hired him here at ### to do band, so he's not gonna do any general music. So,

Kelly Taylor: That's good to get your back that way.

Rural 2: yeah, I mean, I guess that's me and not as much banned, but I know they know it's a big part and the music boosters are Organization in the community. And that there's been a number of really impactful music teachers in this community, like Paul Holland and peek in there. And so I think they get that.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: just, Little things here and there it's like, come on. So I guess that's all I'll say about that.

Kelly Taylor: switching gears a little bit but in your opinion what is something you do in your school that someone in a suburban school doesn't or wouldn't understand?

Rural 2: And I went to school and saw smaller towns and I've taught and small towns. So, I don't know that I

Rural 2: Would I think that I would?

Rural 2: In. I don't know if I know what they don't know. That makes sense,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 2: maybe the

Rural 2: I don't know that.

Rural 2: That they get to do as many. Like I do, most of my day is lessons a small group or individual essence. and I, Don't know. And I had that in ##### too and in my student teaching. I don't know how I could. that just makes such a big difference because I know, and some schools if you're taking private lessons, you don't Have to do lessons with the band director. I don't know if I could do that, just from a relationship standpoint. And also just

Rural 2: just getting everybody on the same page, you kind of standpoint to So maybe that's one big thing that.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 2: I guess now I'm a little bit and I know, the more people I get to know the longer I teach the It's like, I guess not everybody does because I get to see, all whatever it is, 130 am. if they all come to their lessons, which is usually pretty good

Kelly Taylor: Good.

Rural 2: But yeah, just a little check in and

Rural 2: Just check those fundamentals, and Hey, how you doing? And Yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: I don't that be just kind of strange. I have that if I guess, I'm assuming I know it's some teachers do, but I know that.

Rural 2: There's some places that don't so that would be hard for me.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: And maybe that's okay for them.

Kelly Taylor: All right, what kind of a follow-up? What are your thoughts about teaching in a suburban or urban school? How would you approach that? Was that something that would interest you or Giving your experience are you more? Apt to the small town type feel of things.

Rural 2: Yeah, I think we're going to be in a small town.

Rural 2: I know some people don't like it, but I like to be. in the town. Where I'm teaching? and see people and

Rural 2: have people see me and kind of, it's like, you're

Rural 2: Kind of an investment in the community to also be part of the community.

Rural 2: that's not to say that. And that's kind of lifestyle choice almost I think and that, everybody's got different lifestyle choices. Some people that doesn't work for them but That. Works for us and I'm, excited to Teach my own kids, one day and

Rural 2: yeah, it

Rural 2: I like the I guess relationships are kind of a big deal and so seeing people

Rural 2: That's important to us. So, Yeah. I don't know if we'd make that move but

Rural 2: I think we're good for now.

Kelly Taylor: what would you say your biggest instructional challenge is that you face in your day to day teaching

Rural 2: Biggest instructional challenge.

Rural 2: I said, I think. Feel like I got pretty good setup. Right now. And so, I don't know. I think that I think.

Rural 2: Things are going. Okay, it's not really a challenge but Things are going okay right now and I just want to do this. Keep it how it is for A few years. and kind...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: Stay on this course. I would like, Some more time With the fifth and sixth grade groups. I just see. last year it was A double So, last year, I just saw the full fifth grade being once a week.

Rural 2: 30 minutes. Then a one and a third. Because they had a woodwind sectional. And then brass section on percussion. and so every three weeks they'd have been in their sectional And...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: then their lesson. but I always felt like, So I just asked the classroom teachers this year. They'd be okay if we just did another full group band instead of a sectional, Because the percussion one was useful but to just kind of talk about how to play The kielbasa or whatever, we had going that they'd never seen before or to get assigned percussion parts, or that kind of thing. Teach everybody how to tune the symphony at once or Like that. But in the woodland and brass ones, it was like

Rural 2: we're basically doing the same thing. Especially at that. Early, I guess I win the brass sectional. I could have them buzz a little bit more just for pitch but it's meant this year. it's been better. So now I haven't twice a week on adjacent days. So, I just get seen the next way, for another week, but I'd like to see that a little bit longer. I'd like to and then I guess I'd like to see, so I guess I'm saying a little bit more large group rehearsal time.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: Yeah, I don't know. It's I mean Most of the fifth and sixth graders. Instruments from. The local music store and

Rural 2: yeah, I think. Can't complain Kelly.

Kelly Taylor: No way, right? next one's kind of a loaded question and...

Rural 2: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: I've gotten a lot of groans and grumbles when I asked this one. So I'll just throw it out there to be like this. How's the implementation of the new Minnesota Art standards. Going for you in your program?

Rural 2: Yeah. I know about them.

Kelly Taylor: I guess the follow-up is. Are you getting pressured by administration you go after him?

Rural 2: Right.

Kelly Taylor: And, I don't know if The big buzzword I'm hearing from everybody else is PLCs and things like that. So I don't know if you have anything like that or if you're feeling the pressure to jump into them or

Rural 2: No no, we're not being press. But that I mean got our elementary school just got new reading curriculum this year. So it's like all hands on deck for that.

Rural 2: But I they know about it though because that are one of our Beginning of the year meetings at the elementary school, at least. there's actually been some legislative things that have affected. Stuff like recess and can't keep kids in at recess and...

Kelly Taylor: yeah.

Rural 2: Things like that and a detention. So,

Rural 2: so, they went through all of that and then one of the bullet points was new Art standards. And the next thing is, so it was like, they mentioned it.

Kelly Taylor: There's a

Rural 2: But I've never had a conversation with them about it. When I look at them. And I haven't looked at them in depth for a while, but I feel pretty comfortable about. I guess I'm not being asked to justify, but I think I feel like I can take a lot of the boxes with Many things that I'm doing.

Rural 2: And maybe the high school principal Eros is maybe they know about him. I guess it's probably not. so,

Kelly Taylor: What would you say your biggest luxury is being in #####? what would you say? Your biggest luxury is teachers there?

Rural 2: I think right now I'm feeling pretty lucky to that, my gig is

Rural 2: just lessened and band rehearsals and Driving between buildings. And we got permission to start a 6th grade jasmine this year. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: very cool.

Rural 2: Yeah, I'm I mentioned before that kind of came about when they let us kind of choose how we're gonna do it. Got to revamp. We lost FTE. So we could kind of put out we wanted to and

Rural 2: That's pretty cool, because I know a lot of other people have many extra things, like study halls and

Rural 2: Hallway, supervision. And Home room every.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, lunch detail and all that crap.

Rural 2: So Yeah.

Rural 2: I think I like that.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, fair enough. let's see here.

Kelly Taylor: What does program pride mean to you as an educator. And how's that seen in your teaching?

Rural 2: Why hope that?

Rural 2: just kind of how I have my expectations on a daily basis that The kids.

Rural 2: Realize that. You don't band is a Place where you are expected to. it's not participation is an effort or not optional and

Rural 2: When everybody's got by in, it's not only, is it better, it's also more fun.

Rural 2: Really feel good about that with my fifth and sixth graders to the two groups that I got to start. From scratch these past few years. When I started doing beginners in this district, and so,

Rural 2: And I always feel like that kind of stuff is easier to build, because I think we're kind of in a building, just with really wasn't that long ago that Paul Holland passed. and then ##### did take on that role and then there was a gal who had my position for a year before I came and Now, I'm here. And I think we're both gonna be here for a little while, and So that's I think being defined on basis.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: but I,

Rural 2: If the kids, say Can you just throw my track here? Can you say the question again?

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, what does it mean to have program pride? And how is that senior teaching?

Rural 2: So yeah. just,

Rural 2: I hope that when people would walk into my room and kids would say and that they can. see the expectation in the pride, just from how People act and treat each other in a rehearsal setting.

Rural 2: And I think it's super important because if I think that kind of pride is contagious. And so, when the kids, Have that. And act like that. And it just becomes a habit. Then that really

Rural 2: fosters itself and starts in a snowball and then you do that for a few decades and you got something really special. Basically, I think is the recipe.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. All right, we're on the home stretch here just so tell me a little bit about...

Rural 2: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: how your recruitment procedures work. how do you go about getting membership and making sure continues up and through the time kids graduate

Rural 2: Yeah.

Rural 2: so that I feel like I have a pretty set procedure with how I do have tweaked a little bit, but I You come in around spring break, Easter time. You can send out.

Rural 2: welcome letter. And I guess I do it by email.

Rural 2: Because posters just kind of expensive. So I like to mail things, but email too many things and then. The bean counters Get mad at you for using too much, postage for mailing, and welcome to band letter to every family in the district.

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 2: So it's in the letter and then I do instrument fittings, I would send that to all the fourth graders in the spring and then What's sign up for? time to do an instrument fitting and last year, Going to help. I hope we can

do it again. We brought the entire Grade. over to the high school for a performance by the band and kind of demonstrate the instruments and Baltimore to the big high school auditorium and then,

Rural 2: Then I had the open house that next night. So I thought that was a good way to do it.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: I think that's the first time I did it with that timing. So have the open house.

Rural 2: But before the open house, I kind of set up these instrument fittings and Where kids come in? I was trying to push for the parents to come to and I just have them. Parents in the back and have three or four kids. Sign up for a time. So you got a little group there and then go through and just have every kid. Try each mouthpiece. Just to try all of them even if they have an idea of what they want to play.

Rural 2: And then I give them a little sheet and circle. If they did really well, they give them a couple tries on each head joining some of them can't for whatever reason you can't make. A sound on the Head joint. Or The trumpet mouthpiece or whatever and Make a note, if they've had piano lessons for percussion, and It's nice to have the parents in there to see that, because if they Susie's gonna play trumpet because we have a trumpet but then The parent gets to see them. not, you can't get a sound on this instrument. maybe we should try something else and...

Kelly Taylor: Mmm.

Rural 2: they can be in the room when that happens. That's been helpful.

Rural 2: I think it starts to kind of build a rapport with the parents too. make you...

Kelly Taylor: Turn.

Rural 2: crack jokes that just appearance will find funny and kind of start to Build that and then that my goal for that night is to send the kids and the parents away with two different instruments. That they would be okay playing their top choice in their number two choice. Either one will be fine. And then I go through.

Rural 2: And kind of figure out instrumentation. Of everybody who signed up. And then I send out a With what, I recommend that they Call me if you have questions. Here's a number for our. Local music store. I open house on whatever day.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: and then in, August. I've pretty much always done three weeks of Beginning band Camp, I call it. And so they come in. every day for instrument group lessons, For three weeks.

Kelly Taylor: For three weeks. Is that part of your contract and...

Rural 2: Four days a week? Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: just wondering,

Rural 2: That's no, it's not. I wish and When I first started I did for free. but now I hear I do it through community, Ed So,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: I get paid for it. Unfortunately, the parents are paying for it. But there's, a couple different places where It's like what we can't afford to pay that community at Fee. I just send who it is. And that I've talked to the parent off to this community, it's called Peter's Memorial Fund. It's almost always covered.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: And that's for it's and then the past two years I'd love for it but just backtrack I'd love for it to be part of the contract, just like a stipend or a nine month, contract kind of a thing. I think that would make so much sense. And then I could just be free for anybody who wants to come. So that's my Wish list. and I think that would be a pretty easy sell to people just give me I would do it for Whatever, I don't know. Anyways.

Rural 2: because those people that miss With they got and I always tell people, that's no big deal, just sign up and If you're gone a week, I'll meet with your kid. One on one A couple times to get him caught up so you still get your money's worth or whatever it is.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 2: And then the past couple years we did just a little 25 minutes. Beginning Band Camp Concert. Where we are just all get matching T-shirts and the music boosters. Do cookies and They? Can't go through the progression. They start with their mouthpieces and then Counting and then the grand finale is Cross buns. but, Exactly.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, vote login. Pony show for the parents.

Rural 2: And then yes, this year I asked our new superintendent to MC so that was kind of cool. And I mean it's just I mean there's 300 people there because they're all grandparents and everybody comes and

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: it's super fun.

Kelly Taylor: I may just start this year.

Rural 2: there was 39 that came to beginning band camp, and then. Fell. 10 11 More. there's been one or...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: two more every week, this fall like bring my friends.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: So we're just at right under 50. And then sixth grade is 50.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: One, I think go right on 50 or something like that which is about 50% of the class. I'd like it to be a little bit higher, but

Rural 2: and then, as far as retaining them,

Rural 2: I just don't really talk about. How to drop the hand?

Kelly Taylor: You don't know. It doesn't exist.

Rural 2: No, it's just like I'd name the fall. I send ary the list. For a fifth grade band. I was here, sixth grade band. because there's no form or anything, but you have the elementary school Which is kind of nice. I wish it was a little bit more formal, but just to have recognition that it's an academic class but it's also nice because I can just be like A office. Can you add? Johnny to band. Thanks done. Nice and it doesn't have to sign a form or anything.

Kelly Taylor: Perfect.

Rural 2: and then if they not going to do band, Their parent has to figure out how to do that. Either, and I mean, that's a hard, they just,...

Kelly Taylor: Right. Yeah,...

Rural 2: but they have to go that step.

Kelly Taylor: the effort in.

Rural 2: By either calling the office or sending me an email, and then I just forward it to the office and they take them off and I say, Thanks Welcome back. anytime, and then it doesn't like Because I just feel like, if you

Rural 2: Are like okay, fifth Gr. Here's your sign up list. For sixth grade band next year. Make sure you fill it out and have your parents on it and bring it back. That you're just going to lose people, because that the form is not going to make it home or, you...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 2: it's just like unless you tell me You're in.

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 2: And that is kind of going to seventh grade too. Their middle school. Counselor. it's, February or whatever. Can you send me the sixth graders so I can put them in seventh grade band? Yep. Here you go. and then, There's a

Kelly Taylor: do you have any problems with kids dropping throughout the year in middle school?

Rural 2: no, not really. We've had some our special in our middle school, counselor. It's been in so many The past two years. this Stayed on. So,

Rural 2: this year, there was one Yahoo wanted to One seventh grader, who wanted to join band. And drop choir. That was already passed the first week of when they could drop classes officially.

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: It made her stay in choir but she could join band. so, I would assume that would be the same like Now, you have to stay tough semester. Is what I'm guessing their philosophy is this year.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah because we had similar problem out here when I first started where kids would just the windward blow they'd want to drop band and it was just And so we actually have put it now where it's a long

commitment you're in for the whole year because you don't get your dropper math class just because you don't like it. So, I was a,...

Rural 2: Right. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: it was a monumental changer and I've got one parent, who's pushing back on me right now on it, but, That's where you go to admin who told you to put the claws in your book and say. So

Rural 2: Yeah. Yeah, this is what it is.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah. All right.

Kelly Taylor: I think the last question I'm going to ask you here tonight. How would you describe your pedagogy as a teacher when you're in your rehearsals? are you addicted from the podium or you run around the room playing with kids? Do you have an instrument in your hands or you have several instruments that use? How does that look?

Rural 2: Yeah, I've got instruments up front. and I should mention just as I just start because just me doing beginning band, I just start

Rural 2: the Fab Five fluke,...

Kelly Taylor: Yep.

Rural 2: not trumpet, trombone baritone, percussion and then after the first concert they can, Then we talk about French Bassoon saxophone kind of thing. And so that those are the instruments. I have up front, the elementary school and I can't try to play. Then just if I'm going to play this rhythm, play it on something or Grass, make sure. You're playing this, your one shot flow. Make sure it's up here. I can play b it on their instrument, we've got the Harmony director,...

Kelly Taylor: Good.

Rural 2: I just use incessantly. I think that's making a pretty big difference.

Kelly Taylor: Mmm.

Rural 2: So after a year of just using that religiously, just like every lesson, And Metronomon. To, I don't. Yeah.

Rural 2: I'm like, could move to Texas, probably drones and...

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 2: but I don't know.

Rural 2: A yeah, I like to. try to be really efficient, so,

Rural 2: Yeah, there's not a lot of downtime. I mean, I don't have that much rehearsal time either, and so, I'm, trying to

Rural 2: It's like ideally we can do warm ups without me having to say anything. because I can just like this is next and this is next or I can and if we're gonna do it a little bit different, as it relates to what we're playing today, I can show that with my conducting. And then, that can be more efficient. So I don't like the more they can be not that I always do this, but the more they can Unless I can be talking, the more they can be playing. I think is something I believe in,...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 2: but it's probably if I recorded my rehearsals, I think I do really bad at that, but

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 2: I definitely like to use kind of silly stuff So sometimes I'll say fart in sixth grade band, and That kind of thing. And Yeah,...

Kelly Taylor: I get that.

Rural 2: because that's the shortest who's that? I think it's a quote. It's the shortest.

Rural 2: the shortest, Distance to a relationship between two people is humor.

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 2: And I like, Dad jokes, and I tell jokes at concerts and

Rural 2: Yeah, I definitely like to move around the room, get back with percussion when I can.

Rural 2: But I've always got. Course. Open on the podium.

Rural 2: Yeah, I guess maybe. I probably talk pretty fast. I hope Looks like I have. A pretty solid routine to spend a lot of time setting that up at the beginning of the year. so,

Kelly Taylor: especially with the limited time that you got to make every second count. So

Rural 2: yeah, and I feel like I really was trying to force myself this year to last week we just started playing one of our just at the beginning because I was like, it's October. But all of September, I mean, we didn't have full group band the first two days of school. But once we got to the first four week, with fifth and sixth grade, it was like, these are the routines. The first two days were just going through routines like walking through stuff.

Rural 2: And then tuning. position or posture. all that kind of stuff and a warrant five note warm up and hold notes. With, the stain width of. this is color Harmony Director. Here's how we're going to use it. He's just sounds like All that, and then we only have half an hour. The fifth graders. that took a month. And he still have some days, they are bad at it or I'm bad at it and it's like, Okay, let's take remember, this is what we're gonna do this. So just try that again. If we need to do that again.

Rural 2: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: All I'm gonna hit the stop button here.

Meeting ended after 00:56:10 🙌

Edited Transcript Rural 3

Kelly Taylor: All right, and we're All good. So, can you tell me why did you apply for and accept the position of ####?

Rural 3: When I was coming right out of college looking for jobs and my hope was that I would find somewhere that was not necessarily like a starter program. I was hoping to get something that had a little bit of an established program. And so, I was throwing out applications pretty much everywhere. Just trying to get my first job and this one came up. I threw an application out. And I looked at the stuff they had online. I looked through their websites and I saw that there was a good-sized marching man. I saw that looked like, a lot of students were involved here and involved in music. And so, as I could kind of get that vibe from what I had seen on websites and stuff. And then during my interview, the people who are part of my interview mentioned, how big the music culture is here at this school and so that kind of

Rural 3: Made me excited and made me kind of interested in trying the school out and so then after the interview, then I accepted and here I am.

Kelly Taylor: And are you in your second year for sure?

Rural 3: Yes, this is my second year.

Kelly Taylor: Bring here, I couldn't remember. how long you've been there but all right, so Can you describe for me, what a typical rehearsal looks like for you? If I were just a quite sure, church mouse sitting in the back room, what I'd see, and what it experience.

Rural 3: Yeah, I start with warm-ups, so I always do a couple scales and then I do different variations on the scales, some articulation, some dynamics stuff. I'm trying to get them a little bit further into a couple sharp key signatures, just explore that, they're pretty used to be flat through a flat key signatures. so we're working on some scales so we do a little bit of that, we do some Skills and then tune and then I normally have a list up on the board of a couple songs that we're working on for our concert. And so it's normally about sometimes three songs and I had a time I've already kind of picked out the spots I want to rehearse whether it's something new or kind of review, And then I will start on that spot.

Rural 3: Listen around a little bit. what needs practice. I'll isolate. I like to do a lot of woodwinds play this here, let's work on this rhythm. I'll break some things down. I do a lot of All this spot is challenging. So I'll slow it way down so that they can kind of work their way back up to feeling where the actual tempo is, and then we'll go and then just keep building on from there. So I'll do that for one song and then I kind of repeat the same process for at least, I normally try and get at least two songs during one rehearsal and sometimes I can get three so I'll do that. Kind of repeat the process there.

Rural 3: Sounds good. Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: All Can you tell me what you see? It's been the most time on during your year. I know you're in your second year there. But I mean what is your concert schedule look like, do you have bigger concerts different parts of the year that require a lot of attention.

Rural 3: So right now We do like a little indoor marching concert. And so we're getting ready for that. That's kind of our big one. It's the first music event of the school year and so I am kind of getting ready for that. That's always kind of really exciting one that students in the community really like a lot. So I've been hitting on that hard. and then a couple weeks right now, I'm also working on our Band. We're doing the sound of music for This fall. So that'll be taking place in November. So I'll do that. And then I don't have a Christmas concert, the choir does a Christmas concert. So the concert band will have a break from

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 3: Our margin concerts end of October and then our next concert is beginning. A march? So, quite a big stretch in between when the concert band is going. But between there, we do have a lot of pet band. So, right now, we're kind of ending out the fall season for pet band and then winter season. We'll get started here and about a month or so. So we'll have that throughout the winter and then March, we'll have that the next concert large group and then the end of the year is also pretty busy. may we have another concert in May, so that's kind of a quicker

turnaround going from beginning of March to about beginning of May. And then we also do in May. We also have the Memorial Day and then in Sundberg there's a little like Norwegian

Rural 3: Of all that the marching man always goes to. So we get ready for that too. And we do a little parade there. And graduation. We play at that at the end of the year, too. And then we're in a marching band season after that. So right after graduation, we're pretty busy. The first few weeks of June and then parade season after that.

Kelly Taylor: How you touched a little bit on it, but can you talk a little bit more about your pet in? How much time you spend on that, and what that looks like that in that.

Rural 3: That band.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, for Pep band.

Rural 3: Yeah, so at the beginning of the school year the only real rehearsals that we do for pet band are the first maybe two or three times that we have banded at the beginning of the school year. Because a lot of the songs are just repeated and so the seventh and eighth graders are the younger ones. And so I just encourage them to start coming to more pet bands and then that's how they kind of learn the music and then they go from there. So we get started with that and then, we're pretty much play at All the home football games. And then I think there was five volleyball games this winter.

Rural 3: And so we keep volleyball and football games kind of try to keep them even. And then same with boys and girls basketball, that'll kind of be our next season boys and girls basketball. I think there's four or five. I have scheduled for each and I try and make it about once a week, so there's not a ton happening at this on the same week. So they only are giving up one of their nights per week, sometimes that doesn't work. Exactly perfect. But I try to do about once a week.

Kelly Taylor: Is that anything? They're graded on? Is that a requirement of the program or

Rural 3: Okay, so for the senior high, which is my nine through twelve, it's required for them to come to Pep band and if they have a conflict, if something comes up, then that's fine. I'm pretty lenient on if it affects their grade or not, but they do get a little grade. It's not much point, but a couple points in the gradebook. but one thing I do tell them is that I'm giving you the schedule now at the beginning of the school year. So if you have a part-time job, work, is not an excuse, you have plenty of time now to get these days off. And so I don't consider work an excuse. But then the 7th and eighth graders, I have them come to at least one of pet band during a season. So for the fall season, the volleyball and football, I just have them come for one and then if they throw in a couple extra credit points, For them.

Kelly Taylor: In regards to your administration, where do they place your program in level of importance in the school? In European. I will say this they're never gonna see this or hear it so you can speak freely.

Rural 3: Okay, so in terms, it depends on the administrator. So my superintendent is very supportive and a couple years ago, his kids went through the program and they were in marching man, they were the kids doing all the extras, I believe they were in piano lessons. So all of them were just really musically inclined and so he always understands the need and the time and anything that's related. So anytime I have something coming up that or if there's something that becomes an issue, he's pretty much always got my back, regardless of what I need. My principal. He tends to just kind of float around and I don't know the best word for it. He

Rural 3: He wants to be supportive, but it doesn't always come across that way and He doesn't always understand. I think what necessarily is needed for band. And what I,...

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Rural 3: what I'm going through what the students needs are. I don't think he quite gets it. And so often times will have to explain this is why I need This is why I was kind of having to walk him through that, so He tries but doesn't always come across the right way. We also just got this year. We have a new ad. and so our last one was very similar to our principal He didn't quite always understand and he wanted to focus he was technically an activities director and so He wanted to be activities but oftentimes I felt like his priorities were more towards athletics and...

Kelly Taylor: Mm-hmm

Rural 3: but he's no longer the activities director. So got a new guy and he also came out at the beginning of the school year and said that he was activities and wanted to support all the activities in the school. And that also

didn't necessarily come across. I've already in the first couple weeks of school have had to be down here. no, I need you to do this for me. I need you to help me with this. I need you to do this and he hasn't quite understood each of those things either. So it's been kind of a process kind of training him that no act band and choir. And everything is also just as important as having these days on the calendar is important as having this football games on the calendar. So, please, Those on the calendar and stuff like that.

Kelly Taylor: I love how you said I had to train him, that's good. In your opinion,...

Rural 3: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: what is something that you do at your school that someone in a suburban or urban setting doesn't do? Or wouldn't really understand?

Rural 3: One thing. I've been dealing with this a lot right now so for our marching band, we're going to Nashville in the summer. So even though that's marching bands such a long ways away, I'm trying to get numbers and commitments down for marching band right now. And so the recruiting aspect of trying to not just keep kids in concert band but also keep them involved in the extra curricular stuff. Making sure that these because the kids that I have it's a good size chunk of the school population and so When one of my experiences for student teaching, I was at a really big school near #####. And there was a really good group of students.

Rural 3: Who were all about band. They love band. They were going to show up to all of the band activities. They're all about it but they were really large school population where I have a really large percentage of a small school population. So numbers wise it's pretty comparable to that school but I need all of these kids to be invested even if they're here I need them to be in marching band. I need them to be at Pep band and so I feel like I'm doing a lot of recruiting and encouraging and keeping them involved and invested in the program.

Rural 3: It's definitely a lot different kind of. Like I said, at the last question, I just feel like I'm really glad that I've got such of a large number of the student population that's interested in band. and so I really enjoyed that aspect that they are invested in that program. And so I like seeing that number that. Okay, here's what I've got compared to the entire school population. and so having that smaller group or the smaller school, but still a really good sized band I think is really cool.

Kelly Taylor: What is the biggest instructional challenge that you face in your day-to-day teaching?

Rural 3: Keeping everyone interested involved during rehearsal. I feel like every time Turn to give a piece of advice to this section over here. I get so distracted. If people on this side of the room, start talking. And so, I've tried so many things to try and keep majority The majority of the kids engaged in the class and what I'm talking about. and I've even said, if you must Talk just whisper to the person next to you, instead of actually talking to them so I can actually still focus on what I'm doing over here. And so just that engagement and just keeping students doing something during the classes is something that I keep thinking about. And Working on throughout the year.

Kelly Taylor: What is the community's opinion of your band program?

Rural 3: They love the band program I get a lot of community members at the concerts. When we're at parades they all go to the Benson parade to watch us because that's kind of the closest one to us. But I saw a ton of the community members at a bunch of parades. Even just all of them. Basically they've all been super supportive and they all loved Pam before me. And so they have all been super supportive of me coming in. So, That's been really good.

Kelly Taylor: Okay, the next one's a loaded question, you can answer it however you want. But I've gotten a lot of grumbles from other people. I've brought this up to, and I just ask, this, How is the implementation of the new Minnesota art standards going for you?

Rural 3: Yeah. that's been something that We've been trying to talk about In our ples with me and our choir teacher and then ##### still working at the elementary school. So we have meetings and then our elementary music teacher. So the four of us Meet. And we've been trying to talk about those and Involve those in our classroom too. the difficult part that I found is actually not necessarily

Rural 3: We have to switch our mindset a little bit. So I'm trying to kind of wrap my head around all that but the thing with at least my school and my district is they're trying to really put a lot more intention behind our PLC meetings. And so we've had our principal stopping in and Not even knowing what we're talking about but

trying to be involved. And we're trying to work through what this means and what this is, but we've just had a lot of people who don't even really understand music, kind of getting in a way. and so,...

Kelly Taylor: Understand.

Rural 3: So that's just like on top of getting all the Minnesota standards in mind, we are also just kind of dealing with that. So I'd say would be,...

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 3: the biggest challenge is just people who don't understand music, trying to help us.

Kelly Taylor: All What is your biggest luxury being a teacher ###?

Rural 3: Luxury.

Rural 3: I really enjoyed a lot of the student engagement, just the interactions I have with students is just really cool. I get to even if I don't have this group of kids in band, they still know who I am. I've learned a lot of their names. I see them at the basketball games in the volleyball games and stuff. And so being here I felt like it's a really nice community and a really good group of people that have really helped and supported me as I kind of start off my career.

Kelly Taylor: All Can you talk a little bit about what program pride is in what it means to use an educator?

Rural 3: yeah, I think about The pride and the amount of work that we do to really make a good program. I think about that quite a lot and oftentimes I'm thinking about What can I do to help these kids be excited and be proud of what we've accomplished and the things I like to try and be an encouraging and give lots of positive feedback as well as constructive feedback. So that students are really able to grow and see the progress and really appreciate and understand all the work that we've been putting in. And so that's one thing and I still could think I could do more of that, just kind of getting the students more invested in that pride and just that excitement of our program and things we've accomplished.

Kelly Taylor: All How would you describe your pedagogy, Are you a tyrant from the podium? Are you walk around the room or you play with the kids? how would you best put it?

Rural 3: during a rehearsal, I tend to stay pretty close to the podium. I've actually have been exploring kind of walking around the room a little bit and trying a little bit of that I do. Tend to stay pretty close to the podium. One of the things I always hit on first, when teaching, something new is the rhythm, I always try, I focus on the rhythm and getting that down. And so I'm always having them Work together or work with their section and clap this something, so that we can build that foundation of that rhythm. And then I often times do that standing in front of the room and writing stuff on the board. And so I do a lot of that. I do have lessons where I do a little bit more playing with them too so I will kind of help guide them that way but I like to

Rural 3: To help them come up with the answers instead of just giving them the answers. I don't want to just give them that rhythm right away or just play it for them and say, Here's what you're supposed to sound. Now you do it, I like to break it down and figure out what, they know, so I can help them grow from there.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Kelly Taylor: Can you tell me a little bit about your recruitment procedures and what you guys do to get kids in the program and keep them in the program?

Rural 3: Yeah, so when they start in fifth grade and so Pam still kind of has that and I was able to help with that at the beginning of this school year as well. the last two weeks of summer She has this band camp where kids come in and that's when they learn their instrument. So it's these all incoming fifth graders, She just goes one right after the other. And so it was flutes trumpets and then, just ran a random order of one that came in. So they would all come in. We would start them off and then they would then start with lessons and they have one week or once a week. They meet as a full group over at the elementary school so they start there and then I get them when they come over to seventh grade. And so what I try and just

Rural 3: To keep students involved in band, I try and make it more fun and upbeat. If I can, I try my best to do some things, that'll just kind of keep them thinking that band is fun. Not something that they want to quit and then I have had students who have Out quitting or even ones that have quit and I always try and have at least a conversation with them just so I can kind of see what they're thinking, see if there's anything I can improve on. There's anything that we can still do to kind of help out the group. And so I always try and at least kind of talk

through and figure out what is happening and why students would be interested in quitting. but yeah, in general, that hasn't been a crazy issue but it's been

Rural 3: It's been fun to just kind of still find new ways to keep them involved and a lot of them really like pep band, a lot of them like being in marching band so that kind of keeps them involved in band throughout the year. So that's kind of nice.

Kelly Taylor: can you talk about the economy or the freedom that you have as a teacher? In your school, did you say, you got people breathing down your neck, all the time. Or are you kind of left to just do band?

Rural 3: in terms of my administration, I would say, Yeah, they just kind of let me go a lot of my administrators don't know much about music and so they just every time I principal's been in here, he just kind of stands there and dance looking like he knows what I'm talking about but he has no idea and so I've heard a lot of other teachers saying yeah, he's in my class all the time. Always trying to talk and always trying to do this and

Rural 3: So for me with administration there hasn't really been much restriction or much, they just kind of let me go and do what I need to do. I do try and kind of collaborate and work, a little bit with my choir colleague. And so we've done a little bit of stuff to kind of try and help each other out. And so, that is kind of nice to have another music teacher, right? Next door that we can always chat and stuff, but yeah,

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. All right, just couple more questions left just so we're our cooking. But How do you approach competition?

Rural 3: I understand the reasons for competition but I don't love competition because I think band is something that everyone should be a part of and there shouldn't be not that there shouldn't be but the whole ranking or the whole getting a score for something like I just band to be fun. I like band to be a positive and an experience. If you don't get the score you want then you're sad. And I don't want everyone to be all sad about all. We didn't get this score and stuff, but then obviously we had large group and we've got solo ensemble. So we do all those things with competitions throughout the years. And so I try and make it as light-hearted as we can we'll get a score for this, but I just want you to know that you're

Rural 3: We've all come a really long way. This has been a great last couple weeks working on these pieces and you all have worked super hard and I'm really excited to show this piece off and yes we'll get a score but I don't want you to worry about score. Let's just go and give our best performance and see what judges have to say and we'll go from there and take their comments and keep getting better from there. So I kind of try to have that conversation as we get closer to some kind of competition.

Kelly Taylor: All Then the last one is a little bit of a statement and then just reaction and your thoughts on it. So said regarding marching band that it is time and resource destroyer, and it may even be a little outdated, can you share with me your feelings on that statement and also tell me maybe why marching band is a part of your curriculum or you're offerings.

Rural 3: I do I think marching band is super important. and not only are you getting better as a musician as coordination, there's so many those things but you're also learning leadership, You are learning accountability and you're working learning, teamwork, you're learning all that stuff, that can be transferred to a different subject area, or whatever that might be. And so I think Yes, we're learning music. Yes, we're learning all this other stuff that's curricular, but it's not just curricular, we're learning a lot of Stuff and I have gotten. So one of the nice things about my superintendent is with last year being my first summer of marching band. I would go to him and say I've got this idea but I need some money and he'd be like Yep here you go. I've got so That was always really nice that he was willing to

Rural 3: Provide those resources and help me out and go from there. So I think That was a really good spot to start so that I can kind of work on building that so even though yes it costs money, I think it has been a great time and a great way to just keep students involved, keep them from getting in trouble. I have a couple parents that came up to me that were like, my son gets in quite a bit of trouble in the summer and marching man, just keeps them involved in something. And so I know he's gonna be here and I know he's not out doing something, he shouldn't be, or whatever that might be. So it really is, I think a good experience and a good thing that kind of keeps students involved.

Kelly Taylor: I'm just gonna stop here. Give me a second.Meeting ended after 00:27:54 🙌

Edited Transcript Rural 4

Kelly Taylor: So, the first question I have for you is why'd you apply for and accept the position at #####?

Rural 4: I was 23 and they offered me a job. So it was honestly, honestly, just trying to find a place to start teaching. And I got a little late start on it, because I traveled through Europe after seeing after my senior in college. So, the interviews and jobs were done and this one opened up

Kelly Taylor: Crap.

Kelly Taylor: Are you still there Brock?

Rural 4: I'm here, you froze up, but I'm still here. I don't know.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 4: It doesn't. If we're still recording or not, I can't.

Kelly Taylor: Yeah, we are. It wants me to relaunch. I'll be right back.

Rural 4: That's fine.

Kelly Taylor: And I'm back. All...

Rural 4: All right.

Kelly Taylor: My camera. Will start here in a second but there we go. All right

Rural 4: Got it.

Kelly Taylor: If you could Second question, is this? Can you describe your typical rehearsal for your group?

Rural 4: are we talked about summer, marching band stuff.

Kelly Taylor: After your classroom.

Rural 4: so my classroom typically, depending on age, the older, the group, the less warm-ups we do. so my junior high is probably about 60% fundamentals and warm-ups and scales and so on and about 40% or even less of actual content or literature that obviously, pendulums when we're getting close to a concert, my senior high group is maybe 20% corrals and scales and finger drills and 80% of literature, mostly because we play more often when between pep bands and more concerts and just more public appearances, we just need more reps at literature and my beginning group, my sixth graders is literally 100% fundamentals and we rarely get to literature. It's special this time of year.

Kelly Taylor: All right, what would you say? You spend the most time during your instructional year? I mean, do you have a specific concert series that you do throughout the year? Or what does that look like for you guys?

Rural 4: Yeah, again the older group my high school groups, we start out the fall more in a kind of a pep band mode, just to get ready for all the activities that happen. And it also just got a good acclimation for the freshman as they show up and join us. So just kind of a lot of it learn by learn, by osmosis, kind of, when the younger students show up the older kids and so it's a good way to get them back in shape, so to speak and get, the kind of the juice flowing and kind of the energy back in the room. Starting in September with Holst is really not that fun for kids and so it doesn't work so much. So we'll spend about a few weeks with old stuff and then the next few years with new stuff, I do much like other schools that you may know. I do an indoor marching concerts in the fall. And so we usually pick a theme and have some

Rural 4: Erotics, things. some new pep band things, and then a theme. Again, that just really gets the year started then, the winter concert is a programmed, for winter, especially in my situation. I don't hesitate to program not necessarily religious music, but certainly Christmas music and holiday music. and that's not a problem.

Rural 4: for my community then we slide into March and that's more worthy upper level Category, 2 or category 1 depending on the year type literature. And then the spring concert is a little more poppy, a little more, contemporary and style. But still hopefully has some meat to it to say that we're at the end of the year, junior high. it's really all about training for the future. So the programming is very, very methodical, a cut time piece, six, eight piece a lyrical piece. A march, a programmatic piece, I mean, just exposing them to as many things and I try honestly with junior, high band, just because they get bored with music so fast. I'll only put on the concert stage about half or

Rural 4: Less than of what we're rehearsing. And I'll pick three or four marches of different levels, and then we get close to the concert. We'll decide which of those marches fits the band the best. But I get so tired of playing the same four pieces with the junior high band every day and so we'll play music, that's beneath them, we'll play music, that's way, above them. And then tried try to find that Goldilocks center when it comes time for the actual concert. So That's how that works. So it's kind of a concert series, but it's far more if I can say educational in the junior high and more audience based in that, senior high, if that makes sense.

Kelly Taylor: Yes, it does. You touch briefly on your pep. Band is Japan requirement for your kids and...

Rural 4: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: it sounds like you spend a fair amount of time on that going in the yard.

Rural 4: Yeah.

Kelly Taylor: I was in you take on that.

Rural 4: It's funny, I get questions about that all the time from area directors. And I've been here long, long time in my tenure. And so young directors asked me that honest often, I put it in the grade book so it looks like a requirement. I very rarely heard a student's grade because especially if they've told me why we live in a small community and for example, every single check out girl, at the grocery store is in band and so if pep band night they'd have to shut the grocery store down. And so I know I mean we work together. So when students communicate, typically if it has to be a mathematical thing, if we're doing six and say we're doing eight pep bands in the fall, if they come to six out of the eight, they can have two for free that. They don't have to make up but I also downplay it as much as I possibly can. And make sure that

Rural 4: It's just the thing to do. I mean, you're in the van, you sign up for band, you show up for band we're playing and unless you're on the court or away at another game, you better have a really good reason and so I don't have a problem with it and typically a kid that doesn't show up for band that is their greatest suffering for other reasons too. It's not the pep band that's making it. That might be a secondary symptom. So when you say Do I grade it? I mean, do I require it? Yes. But no, it's a culture. it's an expectation and a commitment thing So I'm gonna try to make it so fun. And when you're good they want to be part of it anyway. And so it' I don't have to fight and I know that's partly just because of my 10 year and the expectation. But that was my philosophy all along and it took a little while to get there, but that's where I am.

Kelly Taylor: Where does your administration? Pray place your program and levels of say importance in your school.

Rural 4: Pretty Other than staffing, So you can tell them that. I

Kelly Taylor: It will not over here. They'll never hear this.

Rural 4: Yeah, I'm on an island. I mean I started out this job 30 years ago as just a senior high. And now I'm 6 through 12, I'm the entire program part of that is numbers of are just our school, but mostly it was just a budget cuts. and the fact that when you're competent, and you can do more things, they ask you to do more things, but other than staffing, my program and my department it's very highly So scheduling students band typically, get scheduled first and so I'm not fighting up against a calculus class or, an upper level required class. I don't usually have any issues that way, but Terry budgetary, I mean, I don't have an open checkbook, but I don't suffer for wanting music. I don't suffer for wanting

Rural 4: Appointment when I show the need and so on. So maybe I feel very supported both, structurally and financially other than I would love to have a partner.

Kelly Taylor: All In your opinion, What is something that you do being in a rural setting that a suburban director either doesn't have to deal with or wouldn't understand the way you do it. It look,

Rural 4: I grew up and I'm not Kelly. I don't know where you're from, but I grew up in ##### Minnesota. So I'm ##### Boy,...

Kelly Taylor: I'm gonna know the boy.

Rural 4: I grew up and went to school in the Wayne Roamer. Dave Hagner years. And we marked with 350 kids on the football field. And so, I mean, a huge program and so as a trombone player

Rural 4: My teacher never taught a woodwind or a brass or percut or woodwind or percussion lesson. He was a brass player, the Woodland players had woodland, teachers the bread, the percussionists had percussion

teachers and so on, they were able to focus on the needs of the group in front of them. And so, rural director from me, especially doing a K-12. I have to know every kid and what they can, and can't do and everything about all their instruments So just from a strict pedagogy standpoint as a rural director, I have to know so much more than I think. My suburban counterparts do.

Rural 4: Not that they're not capable. I'm not making any kind of judgments on what their capabilities. It's just their day-to-day, they're not trying to fix a flute. They're not trying to try to learn flam rudiments and so on when they're just teaching low brass or whatever, I know that may be simplistic but the second thing is

Rural 4: I spend a whole lot more time, but I think this is a positive for me, not a negative, and that I spend a whole lot more time involved in the instrumentation of my program from top to bottom, then they are able to, I don't know what your age when I don't know. If you're a ##### or ##### kind of guy, exactly and so, They got what was handed to them, whereas I can manipulate a little bit and say, I really need some clarinets this year because my clarinets last year didn't pan out and so I can either one start the right kids or push them the right direction, but the negative is and Scott Rebel and I have this conversation a lot, I remember having a conversation with the district 196, which is where ##### is, I think they started 400 clarinet players in one year in the fifth, fourth, fifth grade.

Rural 4: even though they have four high schools, if you do the math and they've got 40 stud clarinet players by the time, they're seniors and you divide that and there's if you had 10 stud clarinet players, a seniors, what could you do with that? And so, when you start that many kids you can get the cream of the crop to stick around now. I know that's simple math. But when I start for clarinet players, in a class I can't live on 10%. I gotta have at least 50 to make it all the way through and I hope to get a hundred and so I get four clarinet players a seniors. So the math is just harder, to maintain instrumentation. That makes kids feel like they're in a real band that then the math is critical and so as a suburban director, you can be a little less forgiving of and patient where I got to keep

Rural 4: That tuba player got to keep working with that two player and just hope that eventually she finds their pitch or finds their love or finds their whatever. So that when it's all said and done, they're still there. whereas I don't think that ##### and ##### I mean They're fine. If they can get 10 to the players in the high school that they're good. So I don't know...

Kelly Taylor: That.

Rural 4: if that's enough, The only other thing is that I think they're more.

Kelly Taylor: No, it's great, it's great. Kind of a follow-up question.

Rural 4: Especially at that top of the pyramid. They have to be a little more politicians than educators unfortunately, but I know I feel in the small town, I'm still a public figure no matter where I go and when I go and so there's similarities there.

Rural 4: No.

Kelly Taylor: Side note about me. I'm in my side hustle right now, licensed, mortician, I work for a woman down Southern Minnesota, as a side hustle. So, That was all.

Rural 4: Nice. People think I'm weird having a band director and...

Kelly Taylor: That was.

Rural 4: tennis job. I'll point them your direction.

Kelly Taylor: Absolutely. I think we were the only ones who have a full-time on staff license morticians.

So,...

Rural 4: And I kind of handy.

Kelly Taylor: I have a jar in my room that says ashes of problem I was gonna ask you about that. Going back to your instrumentation question.

Kelly Taylor: What's your opinion? This is just off the cuff here. What's your being of the?

Rural 4: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: The flexible instrumentation things that have kind of been all the rage lately, Flex band stuff. Do you use them? Do you try not to

Rural 4: Not at all. I've never used them. in fact, I bought a piece last year by mistake that had it and I hated it. So it's more confusing to me.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 4: No, I program and teach to the kids I have in the room and I really work hard on instrumentation and maintaining good dissertation. Moving kids around when I know that either I need them to be moved or they just

Rural 4: It better somewhere and try to make suggestions, I don't start anything. I start pretty simple this is back to the Louis Larson Springfield days, I I start, just the three woodwinds flute, clarinet and saxophone alto and don't touch anything else for better or worse. I don't move them to tenor or Barry or oboe or bassoon until they've shown me that they've got an ear and they can handle other things. I start baritones and tubeless trombones there, trumpets and horns, but then I slide them around where, if a baritone player seems to fit better at Tuba or trumpet player seems to fit better at baritone will slide pretty fast.

Rural 4: I know and I put a fair amount of time into the classroom teachers. And I know these kids because I'm obviously in the community for a long time that I'll really try to hand pick my French horns pretty quickly on which ones have a good year and good singers and have a good attitude that aren't going to give up. When they just can't find the right pitch and kids that I know are a little more marginal and in interest and I speak as a low brass player. So I don't feel bad about saying this but on the baritone when it's a little more user friendly at the beginning so you can get a kids interested in not have to fight the trumpet mouthpiece or the French horn. Pitch recognition.

Kelly Taylor: What would you say your biggest instructional challenges day to day, teaching that you have to deal with?

Rural 4: Okay, too many kids, you're some of the victim of your own success too many kids and not enough time and Yeah, I just can't get the Care to all the kids that need me. And so you bail out mostly on your really good kids because they'll just get it anyway but then they don't get to be really really good because they just don't kind of on their own both in the junior high and high school. So you're spending a lot of your time trying like I said save or remediate kids so that you can have depth in your program and just hope that the high flyers the ones that get it the first time just or doing it still doing okay?

Kelly Taylor: All right. What is the community's opinion of your band program?

Rural 4: Very supportive, which is also a victim of your own success. when things, No, you saw my marching band, I still have a very strong and I think competent marching band, but it's about 20, 25 kids smaller than it was before covid. And so what happened to the band like This, it's still really good. And it's still really big based on the numbers of students we have and the percentages. And so, I mean, they're very supportive, but there are expectations are all so pretty high just because of the history. And so it's a little bit of a double-edged sword because you want to maintain that and it's harder and harder than today's educational climate to maintain, what was, normal in 2010,

Rural 4: But as far as the very supportive concerts are well attended. We're in the paper. A lot that kind of stuff.

Kelly Taylor: All right, the next question, when I ask you, I've gotten kind of mixed reviews from everybody on and I've gotten groans and I've gotten just fine, so it is somewhere serious question. But how is the implementation of the new Minnesota art standards going for you out in #####?

Rural 4: Again, so you're saying that my administrators won't hear this.

Kelly Taylor: No, not at all.

Rural 4: it's funny. I Consider myself a very good teacher and I don't say I say that with confidence that I teach kids how to play, I teach kids how to listen, I teach kids how to care about music. The standards are just built into my Psyche, in my world I get frustrated when people outside my world. Want me to quantify and document and change change. What? I'm already inherently doing. That being said, My administrators don't put a whole lot of time in

Rural 4: Verifying. And so, I mean, I have a very extensive curriculum map, I have. And very extensive methodology on which standard I teach where, but I don't follow it that way, if that makes sense, but I would chat, I would challenge any Department of Education music person and I mean, I challenge Mike Buck to come and watch me teach, and watch my bands and tell me which standard on which standards I'm missing. Did I teach an indigenous day music lesson the other day? No. I didn't.

Kelly Taylor: Okay.

Rural 4: but I'm also long in the tooth and if anybody wants to I got other things to do. I say, when I was 25 God, they might fire me for that. And I can go ahead, fire me for that. and don't that flippantly. I just mean that. I know that I'm teaching what I teach and I'm good at teaching. What I teach I'm not saying that the standards are bad and I'm not saying that I'm important for but there and they're just in my classroom.

Kelly Taylor: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: the biggest luxury is to teaching in #####,

Rural 4: You cut out there first and you froze, it was the question. What's the biggest luxury?

Kelly Taylor: Yeah.

Rural 4: You'll see it in a couple weeks...

Kelly Taylor: What's your biggest luxury teaching? In #####?

Rural 4: but because you don't think you've ever been here, we just build a new facility. And so I mean, I'm sitting in my office that's bigger than the principals, probably almost bigger than the superintendents. I have a brand new band room that's state of the art in just absolutely gorgeous. And then we have a performing arts center which is just across the hall that is out of this world probably the best in any. I put it up against any rural Minnesota, So the biggest luxury now is facilities before, Of that is just that the fact that this community does value music. and so I feel

Rural 4: For the most part, valued some but sometimes taken for granted because of the success, but valued and then the other luxury is more just created that this is like I said my 33rd year teaching here and so I don't have to justify myself to most of my parents because they were my students as well. And so they know what my classroom looks like and they know what my expectations are. And so a quick phone call home, which will happen tonight. In fact to a instant that happened in class, it doesn't take me it was when I was young they'll know. So that's a luxury. But that was created more than just showing up

Kelly Taylor: Can you talk a little bit about program pride and what that means to you as an educator?

Rural 4: Without a doubt, again, coming from a big school, like, ##### and ##### is the same. You definitely have to kind of carve out your niche of what a band kid was. And what a football kid was and what a drama kid was and all those kind of things. And so I came with a

Rural 4: not necessarily a chip on my shoulder, but it's just an awareness of You've got to make sure that kids in your room. Feel like this is important and they're not secondary. And I carried that through pretty heavily until it became just, I mean, the band kids are good, kids academically, the band kids are good kids and of character band kids are good kids in the community. And so that kind of pride matters to me. And so we spend a lot of time talking about who they are as much as what they're playing that matters. and the pride of hopefully having as many football players in my band, and as many volleyball players and obviously, tennis players as well as, other activities. So that's not us and them kind of thing in a rural community. That's a killer, it's an absolute killer.

Rural 4: And so when I go to many places where, you go and you watch the band, there's 15 kids playing at a basketball game and there's, 50 kids sitting right next to them in the student section and ours is exactly the opposite. There's maybe five kids sitting in the student section until the band is done and then they go and slide over and sit with them. But that perception of this is who we are. This is what we do. is important to me that comes with a lot,...

Kelly Taylor: Right.

Rural 4: a lot of work and That's a daily constant, not struggle, but it's in the front of your brain all the time. but then that builds the pride and then it's cyclical. I mean The Pride then comes back and so the better you are the more kids want to be part of The better your program the more kids want, me to it just keep spiraling spiraling.

Kelly Taylor: All right, next question. I got for you here. How would you describe your pedagogy and by that, The way I've qualified this for other people, I've talked to you are you from the podium? 100%. Are you walking around the room? Do you play with your kids? Are you a Harmony Director Nazi?

Rural 4: I thought about buying it,...

Kelly Taylor: He's like, Hey,

Rural 4: but I thought that just wait to way too much stuff. it's funny. I taught my seventh and 8th graders today. I taught the entire time from the Trombone section. I played trombone and taught from behind the entire hour.

quite often I will just pick an instrument and just go sit down and play next to a either that doesn't matter whether it's a good kid, Even a struggling kid, I sit in the band, more than I direct from the podium, especially with the younger groups partly, it's funny partly because you forget what they're going through, And

Rural 4: I go back and sit and play the trumpets like, my God, this part's really boring, or realize, wait a minute, these guys have this. Why are we still Or my God, I thought they knew this then really really bad and so you hear different things that their ownership changes, So you kind of spread the love a little bit. And then I also love to keep my own chops in shape so I play with my kids. a ton and not because I'm teach by wrote just because I want to be a little bit more closely identifying with what they're doing. again I said, I had this really nice room. I have a huge smart board that I can project what we're doing.

Rural 4: I have a wireless mic system that, just right here by my cheek, and a great sound system, so I can be anywhere. I mean, I don't even have to be in the band room and I can talk to them and they freak out and so I can be anywhere and communicate, does that make sense? So I don't have to shout so I mean, I can teach from anywhere, so I wander the room. When I sit in the middle of the room, the dynamic of the behavior for sure and junior high changes high school. I again, depends on the time of the year. I like,

Rural 4: I like giving ownership of the pulse, I like giving ownership of the breathing to the band. And so I will set a tempo and walk away and say What happened? why did that fall apart? Why aren't you listening across and who you should be listening to, and that kind of stuff, obviously when we're doing category, one kind of music in March, I'm on the podium. we're chopping wood far far more often, but right now, I mean, I think today, we know, we went through our indoor marching, we just went straight through the program just to see how their chops would feel. I wanted to see if my first trumpets can make it. And so, I don't think I lifted my baton four times. I started the tempo. my drumline is a fantastic drumline this year and so I put the ownership on there and I just walk around the room and listen and so it changes but I know I have a metronome on my podium just to make sure that they're

Rural 4: I'm staying honest and true to where I thought I was and then I can prove to them, but no, I don't direct nearly as much as I used to. I used to direct all the time when I was younger and I was like, Why are you doing this? You can't hear anything. You can't see anything and they're not watching my four pattern. that's a long answer. Probably to your question but

Kelly Taylor: No, not it, perfect. Tell me about your recruitment procedures. How do you start kids in the band? How do you try and keep them in the band?

Rural 4: we start in the spring of their fifth grade year interviewing that, as far as an introducing. So their first, time. They're in band is in sixth grade. So, back that up in fifth grade, I'll bring The entire fifth grade class comes over because they're not in our building. And they attend the sixth grade band rehearsal, we just have rehearsal on stage and so I'll walk them through, what it looks like each instrument, each section plays for them. We talk about all those, what, it sounds like and the play some songs obviously, and do the whole a year ago these kids didn't know anything. And here they are. That's what they sound like that kind of speech and then I'll walk through a separate time. Just the more logistics slideshow kind of. this is the brass instruments and this

Rural 4: what I'm looking for? That's what you have to do to play a brass instrument. This is what you have to do to play a flute and that kind of thing. And then when that's all done, they all choose. Sorry, although that are interested, which is really, mean, in the 10% are either parents that I had didn't go well or just they just know that this is not going to go well for their own educational reasons. then the others, they choose three instruments and when Mom or Dad signs it saying? Yeah, we're on board, I interview them. And the interview is really simple. I'm kind of group the

Rural 4: So if student one, two and three all chose flute, clarinet saxophone, is there one, two, three. Probably, I'll bring them in together because they have just saves time. So I don't explain the instruments. I hope this doesn't get out into the general public, but I'll take the top students that I know in the fifth grade. And so, okay, this girl wants to play French horn, on this girl wants to be a percussionist. This girl wants to play trumpet. I bring him in first and they get their first, so I literally will go in reverse order from high flyers to the students. I know they're going to struggle.

Rural 4: that's a luxury. I have based on my longevity and also, my connection and communication with elementary teachers, I know what kind of students they are and what kind of parents they have and what kind of families they come from this girl is going to stick this out all the way through French horn. this girl is probably gonna last maybe a year. She can be one of my 10 clarinets, and we'll just hope for the best. So there's a little bit of that if I know but then the other is instrumentation based. I mean I have a chart that if I know I'm starting 45 kids, this is what the band's gonna look like it is, it's gonna have seven trumpets, it's gonna have, I mean it was on and so when I get can I get my quota of the kids? I really want. Then I start kind of

Rural 4: Nudging tly So gently to other instruments that are underrepresented. Like I said earlier, If I know that the Trombone section is just really weak in the fifth graders, I'm gonna try to find some good trombone players to balance that out. So that when they're in high school, I don't have three classes in a row with no trombones so it's a luxury that I have because I'm my own feeder program, but I can't yell at My feeder program.

Rural 4: And he doesn't listen so, If that does that, is that where you're going with that a little bit?

Kelly Taylor: All right. Yeah, absolutely, that's perfect. The next question, This is just the questions about competition, but it's all competition. I don't want you to limit to marching band or...

Rural 4: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: just but everything like that. How do you approach competition in your program?

Rural 4: I squelch you this much as possible. I avoid it in this. maybe not that not true. I used to have Auditions and challenges, and chair assignments. And first chair, and last year, and all that kind of stuff. Again, I came from a very competitive program.

Rural 4: And I mean, the hierarchy at a school with mine was intense and then I went on to sandal of college, which was extremely extremely competitive as far as being, you had to work hard just to maintain and that's that. And so I started that here I found that both because of the kind of kids I had and also because the numbers I had that was pushing too many kids away and not valuing the mid level students that provide value. I don't even remember who I can't steal this because I can't but I can't remember who. This is going to bother me now, I'm gonna go home and be mad that.

Rural 4: Just constantly rotated, their trumpet section there drove to dollar sections. And so instead of having three. So for example if you had nine stud trumpet players or nine, trumpet players, let's say you're three studs. your three average weren't on second year. Three weakest. Weren't on third. You had one ud on first one stud on one said, on third, and then you rotated that group. So on this piece, you played this on this piece, you played this and so on and rotated, especially clarinets, and trumpets because of the rain, because they have three parts but I really tried it to make sure that all my kids from top to bottom are feeling valued. So, in the micro competitive world, I downplay it because I really up play that the moment you make sound in my room. You're on the court. You're part of the team. I can't put you on the bench just because you don't sound good. I have to make you sound good.

Rural 4: So that's the macro, I guess I'm lying. I push the competition. Only in the sense of being prideful in. Who don't let anybody whether it be marching band or any other large group contest or whatever, don't want anybody beat you because they work harder than you and because if the cadets are going to beat you, the cadets are gonna beat you and that's fine. We're not the cadets, we're not Litchfield, but we're be the best. We're gonna be and so there's a competitive fire in me saying, That's not good enough. We're better than that kind of thing, but we don't go to a parade and say, if we're not first and then we know, we're not trying hard enough. that only makes me feel horrible and my kids don't.

Rural 4: Respond to that for worse. And so if I was waconia and I was going up against the cadets, every other weekend, or whatever, I would feel differently and I might do it differently but it doesn't work in my town, it doesn't work for my kids. And so I scrapped that years ago,

Kelly Taylor: All right, last question I have it's a statement followed by just you sharing your feelings on it...

Rural 4: Sure.

Kelly Taylor: but the way of delivered it is some of said that marching band is a time and resource destroyer and the model of marching man just doesn't fit with today's modern kids, can you share with me? Your feelings on that statement and also talk a little bit about why you offer a marching program.

Rural 4: I need you to clarify. When you say a time stealer? Do you mean a time sealer for my time or kids time or as a post?

Kelly Taylor: For educational time.

Rural 4: Got it.

Kelly Taylor: We're spending too much time on marching men and not getting kids under band rep. And what?

Rural 4: I think that's a snobbish way of looking at it. And I think that's a very short-sighted. I've explained it to many students, many people this way, and I got to make sure I qualify. I both love and hate marching band I'm not shy about saying that, I hate that the time drain on my life. and I hate the fact that I spend, probably more time on, Mark, the six weeks or five weeks of marching band. Then on what any one thing in my program but at the same time, I know that I have students in my room right now that wouldn't be in my room if they couldn't spin a flag in the summer and so, if I can get the spin a flag for five weeks, and they can play the saxophone for nine months,

Rural 4: That's an absolute win but I have the same comment with the snobby directors who say the pep band's. not worth it. I've got kids that if you took away Pep band, they drop my class crazy, in my school, and my community. I mean, and I don't mean to keep referring to hold, but you get the point, I can teach them whole so they can play the first sweet and they can come out of here with some knowledge of what a beautiful Granger piece feels like and sounds like Because they'll do that for me because I let them play, I have the tiger, And so you got to have some balance. and I know that because

Rural 4: I was that kid and I love Granger, but I also love jazz band and I love being on the football field for a marching band. And I think if you stripped away, those things that you're gonna strip away kids and you're gonna let me left with your core. And that's fantastic. But you can't survive on a core. You have to survive on the depth. And so I know I have kids in my program who With it and play contest music, and might play a solo at contest because they got to play. The same song for five weeks in a row in June, what I like to be doing something else with my June with out, a hundred percent doubt. but I know exactly, but I know that my day to day life,

Rural 4: The rest of my life would be impacted in such a Why I didn't start this program. And I don't know that. if I walked into this program, would I started marching band? No I would find another way of getting those kids. fired up about being in the band. My community as, is super supportive with our Flag Day parade and other things super supportive with the finances and so, on of my program. And so the community, Somewhat demands it. If I shut the program down, I'd have to move. it just would be a bad thing. I recognize that. So it's both my favorite and least favorite part of my job. And sometimes you just have to ask me on the right day.

Rural 4: I mean I love watching my kids succeed and I love and so on as far as an educational drain I think that's crap too. there's so much I can teach about the pedagogy about time and balance and tone and so on, if you do it, right, there's so much I can teach about and so much, you can teach about working towards a goal and for being precise and working as a team and all those kind of things that mean. You tell me I'm not teaching and I will fight you forever on it. do I think that playing the same piece, for five weeks? No, I mean, musically not so much. once you get there, you get there. And there's not a whole lot of growth after that. But at the same time,

Rural 4: There's so much more upside than downside. And those who don't believe in it. Either had a bad experience or just not paying attention. That being said,...

Kelly Taylor: All right.

Rural 4: I hate it.

Kelly Taylor: Perfect. I'm gonna stop this here.

Rural 4: All right.

Meeting ended after 00:44:23 🙌

Appendix E: Minnesota Arts Standards.

Standard	2. Create	2. Create	3. Present	3. Present	4. Respond	4. Respond	5. Connect	5. Connect
<p>1. Use foundational knowledge and skills while responding to, creating, and presenting artistic work.</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Improve musical sounds in response to teacher cues.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Choose a musical sound to share.</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Change selected musical sounds using teacher feedback.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate moving, singing, and playing instruments with others.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Identify musical repetitions while listening to and interacting with a variety of music.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Sing or play instruments using a familiar song that you have learned.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Sing, play instruments, or listen to music from various cultures.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Sing, play instruments or listen to music from various cultures.</p>
<p>2</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Generate musical ideas using a limited set of rhythms or pitches.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Choose musical ideas to share using a limited set of rhythms or pitches.</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Change selected musical patterns using teacher feedback.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate moving, singing, and playing instruments with others.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Identify steady beat while listening to and interacting with a variety of music.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Identify an emotion expressed when singing, playing instruments or listening to music.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Sing and play instruments from different genres of music from various time periods and places.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Sing, play instruments or listen to music from various cultures, including Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.</p>
<p>3</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve rhythmic or melodic patterns containing long sounds, short sounds and rests.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Organize chosen musical patterns into phrases using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Arrange musical patterns using feedback from others.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Refine vocal and instrumental skills to perform a variety of music.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Identify and describe elements that make contrasting musical selections different from each other.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Describe a memory, feeling, or story associated with music that is learned or performed.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Describe context/cultural uses of music from different time periods and places.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Describe context/cultural uses of music from different time periods and places.</p>
<p>4</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve melodic phrases using specific rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, meter or chord changes.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Organize chosen musical phrases into a short composition using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise a musical composition as a group using feedback from others.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Apply developing vocal and instrumental skills to improve performance.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Identify and describe elements that make contrasting musical selections different from the same musical selection.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Describe emotions experienced when performing or listening to a personal experience.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Compare and contrast musical uses of music from different time periods and places.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Compare and contrast cultural uses of music from different time periods and places.</p>
<p>5</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve rhythmic or melodic phrases using specific rhythmic, melodic, harmonic, meter or chord changes.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Organize chosen musical phrases into a short composition using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise a musical composition using feedback from others and self-reflection.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate vocal or instrumental skills to perform a variety of music.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Identify the musical elements used in a musical selection to convey its available intent.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Apply self-reflexively described and teacher-provided criteria to evaluate musical selections or performances.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Describe relationships of musical genres to cultural or historical contexts.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Describe relationships of musical genres to cultural or historical contexts.</p>
<p>6</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve musical ideas that can be combined into a melody with expressive elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Develop a composition consisting of a melody using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise a musical composition using self-reflection.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Collaborate as an ensemble to refine and prepare music for performance.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Describe how musical elements contribute to meaning in a musical selection.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Apply self-reflexively described and teacher-provided criteria to evaluate musical selections or performances.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Explain ways that music is used to represent cultural identity, including Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Explain ways that music is used to represent cultural identity, including Minnesota American Indian tribes and communities.</p>
<p>7</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve musical ideas that can be combined into a melody with expressive elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Develop a composition consisting of a melody with expressive elements using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise a composition to include expressive elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate pitch, tone and expression in performing musical selections for performance.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Analyze and discuss the use of elements in musical selections to convey meaning or possible intent including cultural or historical contexts.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Identify and use a variety of techniques to evaluate the quality of a musical performance.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Describe how processes, knowledge and skills relate to personal, social and emotional experiences.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Identify cultural or historical influences on musical compositions.</p>
<p>8</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Create or improve melodic or harmonic musical ideas that include expressive elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Develop a composition consisting of a melody with expressive elements using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise a composition that includes expressive elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate pitch, tone and expression in performing musical selections for performance.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Analyze and discuss the use of elements in musical selections to convey meaning or possible intent including cultural or historical contexts.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Describe how processes, knowledge and skills relate to personal, social and emotional experiences.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Describe how processes, knowledge and skills relate to personal, social and emotional experiences.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Describe how processes, knowledge and skills relate to personal, social and emotional experiences.</p>
<p>9</p> <p><i>The benchmarks are integrated across the substandards, high/light in bold.</i></p>	<p>3.0.2.2.1-3.0.2.2.2</p> <p>1. Improve, arrange, or modify phrases that demonstrate an understanding of musical elements.</p>	<p>3.0.2.3.1-3.0.2.3.2</p> <p>1. Select multiple musical ideas, original or existing, to create a short composition using a system of notation or recording technology.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.4.1-3.0.2.4.2</p> <p>1. Revise or arrange a composition to become a complete musical work using concepts in technology (as available) to prepare the composition.**</p>	<p>3.0.2.5.1-3.0.2.5.2</p> <p>1. Perform contrasting musical selections for an audience, conveying meaning through interpretation of the musical elements and expressive qualities. For example: audience being a classroom, friend, online platform, or a large group.</p>	<p>3.0.2.7.1-3.0.2.7.2</p> <p>1. Interpret musical elements and cultural or historical contexts embedded within a musical selection to express possible meanings of the composer or performer.</p>	<p>3.0.2.8.1-3.0.2.8.2</p> <p>1. Evaluate music performances using commonly accepted standards, to demonstrate an understanding of musical elements. For example: MOHS, adjudication forms, student-generated criteria, rubric, or rating scale.</p>	<p>3.0.2.9.1-3.0.2.9.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate an understanding of how musical selections are influenced by or impact personal, societal, cultural or historical contexts.</p>	<p>3.0.2.10.1-3.0.2.10.2</p> <p>1. Demonstrate an understanding of how musical selections are influenced by or impact personal, societal, cultural or historical contexts.</p>

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