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Socioeconomics and music education in a Western Pennsylvania public school: a collective case study

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SOCIOECONOMICS AND MUSIC EDUCATION IN A WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA PUBLIC SCHOOL: A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY

by

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to all of those who made it possible for me to pursue music, and to all music educators, parents, and community members who continually do the same for low socioeconomic students.

I dedicate this study to my parents, Sandy and the late David Erb, and my grandparents, the late Robert and Maxine Young; thank you for the many sacrifices you made to ensure that I had opportunities that you did not. Thank you for teaching me that with hard work, dedication, and a little help from family and friends, I could be successful. Thank you for modeling how to be compassionate and supportive of those who are less fortunate.

I dedicate this study to my high school band director, Mr. Donald G. White. Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule many years ago to give me trumpet lessons during a time when my family could not afford to pay for them, for encouraging me to persist in my high school instrumental music ensembles, and for supporting me through my transition from high school student to music educator. You are an inspiration, a true role model, and a pillar of our community.

Finally, I dedicate this study to my wife Diana and my children: Jonathan, Benjamin, and Madison. Your support throughout the dissertation process was imperative, and you offered it without complaint. I love you all.

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ABSTRACT

Equal access to music education is a concern in public schools. Certain populations, including minority and low socioeconomic students, remain underrepresented in instrumental ensembles across America. This phenomenon has been well documented, and socioeconomics have been repeatedly identified as a reliable predictor of instrumental music participation in school ensembles. Research into specific and detailed ways in which socioeconomic factors and instrumental music participation intersect and best practices for alleviating any resulting negative effects on instrumental music participation are limited. Researchers often collected emic data from disadvantaged students in the majority of existing studies on these topics.

I collected both etic and emic data from seven parent/guardian study participants from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and from two instrumental music teachers in a school district that served a large population of low socioeconomic and minority students. I also compiled data from field notes, observations, and artifacts associated with the school district and town in which the study took place. I analyzed and interpreted the data, applying Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field.

My findings indicated that socioeconomic factors including cultural differences, community building, peer group relationships, ensemble travel, geographic location, socioeconomic segregation, parental bias, privilege, and prior family musical experiences all potentially affected students' decisions to participate in instrumental music ensembles. My research also indicated that attempts to assuage negative effects of low socioeconomics on instrumental music participation, including instrument loaner programs and fundraising, were sometimes undermined and did not completely address the problem.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Researchers have studied access to music education in public schools for many years, and it has been shown that certain populations do not have the same musical opportunities as others in public school settings. In particular, students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, English language learners, and minority students were underrepresented in high school music ensembles across the United States (Elpus & Abril, 2011). In this study, I examined the effects of socioeconomic status (SES) on school instrumental ensemble participation in a Western Pennsylvania school district that served a significant population of low socioeconomic and minority students.

Background for the Study

The National Association for Music Education's (NAfME) position on equity and access to music education is to "to advance music education by promoting the understanding and making of music by all" ("NAfME Equity and Access in Music Education Statement," 2015). This mission was echoed on NAfME's website:

> Music allows us to celebrate and preserve our cultural heritages, and also to explore the realms of expression, imagination, and creation resulting in new knowledge. Therefore, every individual should be guaranteed the opportunity to learn music and to share in musical experiences. (para. 1)

Many researchers and music educators agree that access to music education is important for all students. For example, Fortney, Boyle, and DeCarbo (1993) claimed the idea "that *all* public school students in the United States have an opportunity to learn to play a band or orchestra instrument is unique among the developed countries of the world" (p. 28, emphasis added). Although providing opportunities for *all* students to

study music was at the forefront of NAfME's agenda, the reality of what has occurred in public schools tells a much different story: Not all students share equal access to music education, and total enrollment in school instrumental ensembles is on the decline. This phenomenon will be discussed later in this chapter.

Participation in school instrumental music ensembles has been shown to benefit students in many ways. Instrumental ensemble participation aids in team building, critical thinking, and the development of a sense of community (Mantie, 2012a, 2012b; Regelski, 2000, 2002; Robitaille & O'Neal, 1981; Shelemay, 2011). Researchers have suggested that life-long participation in music ensembles improved the quality of life and perceptions of wellbeing (Carucci, 2012; Jutras, 2011; Mantie, 2012a, 2012b; Rohwer, Coffman, & Raiber, 2012; Shelemay, 2011) and correlated with academic success (V. D. Baker, 2012; Fitzpatrick, 2006a; Johnson & Memmott, 2006). Despite these noted benefits of instrumental music ensemble participation, recent statistics indicate a disturbing decline in the number of students participating in school ensembles (Costa-Giomi, 2008; N.A., 2004; Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011).

There appears to be a changing curricular landscape in public schools as a result of No Child Left Behind legislation and the redirected focus of schools on high stakes testing (Von Zastrow & Janc, 2004). According to Von Zastrow and Janc, this contributed to the sharp decline in instructional time in areas outside of those included on state standardized tests, as required by the No Child Left Behind legislation. As more time was dedicated to reading, writing, math, and science, instructional time was taken from liberal arts subjects. Schools serving large populations of minority students were

often impacted more than schools with fewer minorities. Von Zastrow and Janc (2004) noted, “of all academic subjects included in our survey, the arts and foreign languages seem at greatest risk, especially in schools that serve mostly minority students” (p. 16). Kos (2007) found that the implementation of No Child Left Behind and other educational policies had negative effects on school music programs. He noted that although these policies may not have directly affected music teachers, the indirect negative effects were quite noticeable. These included not only lost instructional time in music, but also in physical education and art.

Declining enrollment in school ensembles was indicated in several other studies as well. The National Endowment for the Arts suggested that the number of 18-year-old students reporting a background in the arts declined by 15% from 1982 to 2008 (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011). According to The California Music Project (2004), the number of California students participating in public school music courses between 1999-2004 dropped by 50% despite a 5.8% increase in overall student population. This was, in part, due to cuts to state education funding that resulted in a 27% reduction to the number of public school music instructors and a 47% reduction in the number of students enrolled in music courses (Costa-Giomi, 2008). Pellegrinelli (2012) estimated that 2.1 million children in the United States had no access to music education at all in 2009–2010, and Salvador and Allegood (2014) noted that at least 40% of Detroit area schools serving a high percentage of low-SES minority students offered no music education opportunities to their students. There are many potential reasons for the decline in instrumental music participation, the focus of my study. Perhaps some parents/guardians did not see the

value of participation in ensembles given the prevailing economic climate. Students and/or parents/guardians may have not related to, and therefore may have not been interested in participating in, instrumental music ensembles, as instrumental music is not prevelant in popular music. Socioeconomics also may have affected many of those who never participated in their school instrumental ensembles.

The effects of declining ensemble participation across the country were amplified for certain populations who were traditionally underrepresented in instrumental music ensembles. Elpus and Abril (2011) provided a demographic profile of high school music ensemble students across the United States and found significant correlations between music participation and factors including gender, race, socioeconomic status (SES), and ethnicity. Many groups, including low-SES, African American, and English language learners, were significantly underrepresented in musical ensembles across the country. In particular, low-SES and minority students regularly experienced obstacles that led to discontinuation in instrumental music study, despite the best efforts of music teachers to retain them (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998).

Participation in instrumental ensembles was shown to reduce stress levels in low-SES and minority students, improve their mental well-being, and improve their self-esteem (Ester & Turner, 2009). Ester and Turner noted that low-SES students generally reported being less happy and less confident than their wealthier counterparts before instrumental music study was introduced. Although these feelings did not completely disappear after participation in instrumental music study, the gap between low and upper SES students in regard to happiness and confidence was reduced to a level of statistical

non-significance.

Socioeconomic status has been identified as having a strong influence on test scores (Fitzpatrick, 2006b; Kinney, 2008). R. A. Baker (2012) noted that low-SES eighth-grade students who were involved in music scored, on average, seven points higher than students who were not actively involved in music on standardized tests. Although middle class and highly affluent students may have been able to address this lack of school-offered opportunities to study instrumental music through outside study, private lessons, or community ensemble involvement, low-SES and minority students may have struggled to secure similar opportunities. Economically disadvantaged students' opportunities to study instrumental music were not only affected by legislative and funding decisions, but also by SES factors that were equally beyond their control. Many low-SES and minority students who had the opportunity to begin instrumental music study often discontinued participation as a result of SES circumstances. The effect of SES on instrumental music participation was so profound, in fact, that researchers consider SES a reliable indicator of student retention in instrumental ensembles (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Kinney, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991). Klinedinst (1991) found that SES was a better predictor of student retention in instrumental music participation than was academic prowess or musical aptitude. Corenblum and Marshall (1998) noted that SES level accurately predicted both perceived parental support and musical interests, and that these, in turn, influenced students' decisions of whether to participate in instrumental music. If the notion of *music for all* is to be embraced, it is prudent to investigate "what the research suggests: students from low-SES backgrounds may have

greater difficulty gaining access to participation in instrumental music programs" (Albert, 2006b, p. 54). In this study, I sought to discover how and in what ways socioeconomics may have influenced students' abilities to participate in instrumental music ensembles.

Statement of the Problem

Compelling evidence that SES is a reliable predictor of instrumental music participation exists in current music education literature. Some researchers have explored SES-related factors that affect participation in instrumental ensembles, including home musical environment and financial considerations (Albert, 2005, 2006a, 2006b). Other researchers have identified ways instrumental music teachers have attempted to mitigate SES-related factors that might hinder student participation in their ensembles, including instrument loaning programs and fundraising (Ester & Turner, 2009). Despite these efforts, many low-SES and minority students remain underrepresented in school instrumental music ensembles. Research indicates that this continues to be a common problem in many public schools across the United States (Elpus & Abril, 2011).

Review of the Literature

Underrepresentation in School Music Programs

Many studies highlighted the inequality of access to music education. Costa-Giomi (2008) surveyed Texas elementary music educators who served a student body consisting of 71% minority and 53% economically disadvantaged students. Costa-Giomi identified economically disadvantaged students based on their eligibility for the state free lunch program, criteria like those I used in this study. Costa-Giomi found that schools

with smaller populations of minorities and economically disadvantaged students had more adequate facilities, instructional resources, more support from parents, and greater external funding than schools with larger populations of low-SES or minority students. Schools with smaller populations of low-SES and minority students also had lower student-to-music teacher ratios than did schools with bigger populations of low-SES and minority students.

Researchers have indicated that many music teachers do not feel adequately prepared to work with low-SES students. For example, Doyle (2012) surveyed music teachers from Title I elementary schools in the Southwestern United States and examined what the music teachers perceived as problems within their schools. Results indicated that many music teachers often felt unprepared to teach in urban settings. Many claimed their college experience did not prepare them to work with disadvantaged students, but rather "focused on teaching music in ideal situations" (p. 34). Teachers also felt unprepared to deal with cultural differences, conflict in the classroom, or disciplinary issues which arose in urban settings. Many new teachers indicated that they were uncomfortable and unprepared to handle the diversity within the schools, as they had not been exposed to students "whose social and economic circumstances differ from their own" (p. 34). Lareau (2011) found stark differences between low and mid- to upper-SES parents'/guardians' parenting styles, beliefs about education, and involvement in their children's activities and schools. Lareau noted that public schools often align more with mid- to upper-SES dispositions—what Bourdieu (1977) called habitus. Doyle's (2012) findings that many music teachers were uncomfortable and unprepared to work with

students outside of their own socioeconomic background reinforced Lareau's claim.

One potential explanation for some music teachers' discomfort with teaching low-SES and minority students may be the lack of experience teaching these populations due to their low representation in instrumental ensembles. Several researchers have documented problematic underrepresentation of low-SES and minority students in instrumental ensembles. Elpus and Abril (2011) provided a demographic profile of high school music ensemble students across the United States and found significant correlations between school music ensemble participation and factors including gender, race, SES, and ethnicity. Low-SES, African American, and English language learner populations were significantly underrepresented in school music ensembles across the country. Elpus and Abril concluded, "music students are not a representative subset of the American population of U.S. high school students" (p. 128).

Availability of string instruction varied between schools. Smaller schools often did not offer opportunities for students to learn string instruments. Those that did tended to be larger and situated in middle class settings. Leonhard (1991) indicated that small schools often lacked string orchestras and did not provide opportunities for students to learn string instruments. Smith (1997) surveyed 14,183 schools, of which only 2,268 (16%) offered string instruction. Smith noted that string instruction was offered least often in low-SES schools. Medium-sized and large schools serving middle class communities were most likely to offer string instruction. Gillespie and Hamann (1998) found similar underrepresentation in school orchestra programs across the United States. They suggested that larger schools were more likely to offer orchestral ensembles than

smaller schools. Within the schools that did offer orchestral ensembles, the vast majority of orchestra directors were White, as were 73% of their students. Orchestra participation by ethnic group included “9.6% for African American, 9.2% for Asian, 8.16% for Hispanic, and .04% for Native American” (p. 83). Conclusions drawn by Leonard (1991), Smith (1997) and Gillespie and Hamann (1998) indicated that existing string programs were mostly found in larger, middle class or highly affluent schools. Further, data from these studies indicate the vast majority of orchestral participants in schools that did offer string instruction were White, as were their directors.

In some cases, schools that served large populations of low-SES and minority schools did not offer the same opportunities for their students to take music courses when compared to schools that served higher-SES populations. Salvador and Allegood (2014) studied music access in 78 Detroit schools serving significant populations of low-SES and minority students. Only 31% to 60% of schools with large minority student populations offered any music courses. These schools were found to have fewer course offerings, fewer extracurricular activities, and fewer resources in general. SES and racial demographics strongly correlated with music access, particularly at the high school level. Brandstrom and Wiklund (1996) found that children from higher SES families were twice as likely than children from low-SES families to participate in traditional Euroamerican instrumental ensembles like band and orchestra.

Family musical background and experiences play a particularly important role in the musical experiences of children. Researchers have indicated that children from musical families were more likely to be musically active. Many musical families tended

to be from higher-SES backgrounds. For example, Phillips (2003) indicated that students from higher SES families were more likely to report musically rich home environments. Phillips further indicated that lower SES families might not be able to "afford registration fees, instrument rentals, private lessons, and other costs associated with participation in a school music ensemble" (p. 115). Low-SES families may make music in the home in a variety of other ways that do not conform to traditional school ensemble practices or format.

The inability to pay for instrument supplies and other musical necessities might deter low-SES students from participating in instrumental ensembles (Kinney, 2010). Kinney noted that the need to purchase reeds, valve oil, or other supplies in order to continue in instrumental music programs might have been a burden on low-SES families, led to non-participation, and perpetuated low-SES student underrepresentation in school instrumental ensembles. In many instances students were required to purchase their own supplies even if they used school-owned instruments, and that requirement proved burdensome in some cases.

In addition to low-SES and minority students, students with physical disabilities were also underrepresented in school music ensembles. Nabb and Balcetis (2010) indicated that there was a great need for "adapted instruments" (p. 308) within school instrumental programs in order to serve disabled students. Directors shared their concerns about the availability of such adapted instruments, as well as the cost of purchasing or adapting such instruments, noting that the financial commitment to buy or adapt instruments for use by students with physical disabilities might prove prohibitive.

Instrument cost, as Kinney (2010) pointed out, may be one of the most important factors in regard to inclusion or exclusion of certain student groups.

SES as a Predictor of Recruitment and Retention in Instrumental Ensembles

SES affected instrumental music directors' efforts to recruit and retain students into their ensembles, and researchers have documented ways in which SES and instrumental music study intersect. SES often correlated with instrumental recruitment and retention, and researchers have pointed to SES as one of the most reliable predictors of retention of instrumental students. Pruitt (1966), Young (1971), and Mawbey (1973) all suggested that SES was a strong predictor of retention. In a study of fifth- and sixth-grade students in an urban school district, McCarthy (1980) found SES and students' reading grade level to be significantly correlated to attrition from the music program, accounting for roughly 8% of student dropout. Klinedinst (1991) supported these findings, suggesting that retention of beginning band students was "best predicted by socioeconomic status, self-concept in music, reading achievement, math achievement, and scholastic ability" (p. 225). Klinedinst further claimed that these variables "predicted student retention with 97% accuracy" (p. 225).

Further investigation into ways in which SES accurately predicted student retention in instrumental ensembles uncovered influences beyond simple economic challenges that may have negatively affected students' ability to participate in instrumental music. Corenblum and Marshall (1998) developed and tested a model for predicting student retention in a high school band program, and their results indicated that SES and teacher evaluations predicted student retention both "directly and indirectly" (p.

128). SES often predicted “attitudes of significant others which, in turn, predicted intentions” (p. 136). Corenblum and Marshall, like Lareau (2011), described how SES includes more than economic shortfalls, but rather involves deeply rooted beliefs, values, and norms about school and education (habitus), and that these variables, in addition to financial barriers, might impact students’ decisions to continue or discontinue instrumental music study.

In more recent studies, researchers have linked ensemble retention of instrumental music students to SES. In a study of sixth-grade and eighth-grade students, Kinney (2010) suggested that academically higher-achieving students, students from higher SES families, and students from two-parent or two-guardian homes were more likely to remain in band. Kinney found that initial enrollment in elementary band was not hugely impacted by SES status, perhaps due to the fact that the specific school studied owned instruments that could be loaned to students through their junior high years; however, low-SES students tended to discontinue study after these initial years of participation.

Best Practices in Low-SES Schools’ Instrumental Music Programs

Many researchers have studied ways to attract and keep students in instrumental programs. Instrumental music directors who serve large populations of low-SES and minority students may face additional challenges in terms of recruitment and retention; however, some research has indicated that there are ways to begin addressing these challenges. Albert (2006b) studied three schools that served a large population of low-SES students and also boasted a high percentage of band participation. All of the schools participating in the study reported at least 50% of the student body as eligible for free or

reduced lunches. In addition, at least 25% of the student body at each school was actively involved in instrumental music. Albert (2006b) discovered four main themes regarding initial recruitment of band students: (1) exposure to the band program, (2) availability of a culturally relevant ensemble, (3) teachers' perceptions of students' perceptions of the band program, and (4) instrument availability. Seven themes emerged concerning retention of students: (1) teacher personality, philosophical values, and proactive process, (2) sense of family within the ensemble, (3) activities, (4) teacher qualities and practice, (5) stereotypes, (6) classroom management and expectations, and (7) positive personal contact and visibility. Albert discovered that the instrumental music teachers took a hands-on approach to recruiting new band members. The directors organized band performances for prospective members. Additionally, they held annual "instrument petting zoos" (p. 60) where prospective students could see, hold, and try instruments. The high school band also held several performances in the surrounding community. These performances greatly aided in advertising the band program to parents and other stakeholders in the community. The directors wanted prospective students to be attracted to the band program and hold a positive view of the ensemble. As one director stated, "it's all about being a part of something and being perceived as being a part of something that's cool" (Albert, 2006b, p. 61). Such "coolness" was exhibited through "fun" (p. 61), in part through performances by the drum line and personal interactions between current band members and prospective members.

Availability of culturally relevant ensembles was seen as an important generator of excitement among potential band students. Albert (2006b) noted that a marching band

that performed in the “culture of African American southern colleges” (p. 61) was a major draw for the school’s band program. Doyle (2014) noted that many directors are not prepared to offer such culturally relevant experiences, stating “pre-service teachers are generally trained in college to teach in the Western classical tradition and create music programs similar to those they have experienced” (p. 47). Doyle added that the Western classical tradition may not be the most “culturally relevant vehicle to incite musical interest” (p. 47) in certain populations who do not view their heritage as European-American. Low-SES families may have very different musical values than middle class or highly affluent families. For example, school concert bands, orchestras, and choirs tend to be populated primarily by white, middle class or highly affluent students and draw primarily on the repertoire from Euroamerican classical music. Low-SES families may enjoy rock bands, rap artists, or country music. When school music programs focus only on the musical preferences of the middle and upper class, they may be overlooking and omitting opportunities for low-SES students to make music. I discuss these trends throughout this dissertation.

Obtaining an instrument is a concern for many low-SES families according to Kinney (2010), Klinedinst (1991), and McCarthy (1980). Instrumental music director participants in Albert’s (2006b) study agreed that “having instruments on hand for students to use is crucial for student participation” (p. 62). Over 75% of the students in Albert’s (2006b) study used school-owned instruments, and obtaining used instruments through donations or “instrument round up nights” (p. 62) was a priority. Mixon (2005) noted that many urban schools must provide instruments for their ensemble members, but

budgetary constraints of the district often make purchasing additional instruments difficult or impossible. As a result, donation became a primary means by which many schools obtained instruments for their students. Studies that thoroughly investigated best practices in terms of instrument obtainment and distribution in schools serving large low-SES populations are few. Kinney noted there is a need for studies on this topic: “Like you, I have not found any studies that have systematically investigated how schools with underserved populations go about purchasing instruments and loaning them to students. I think this is an important question to ask” (personal communication, February 6, 2015).

Theoretical Framework for the Research

Music education researchers have sparingly applied Bourdieu’s concepts to studies when compared to their counterparts in sociology; however, Bourdieusian concepts seemed to have gained popularity within the field of music education in recent years. Burnard (2016) noted, “Bourdieu’s cultural sociology helps us to analyze music’s social functions, which are easily forgotten in an environment where everyone is engrossed in music” (p. 1). Musical and social interactions are often entangled in families with musical backgrounds, and students who study music often find their own social circles consisting of others who do the same. Bourdieu’s concepts provide a framework through which we can better understand this social fabric as it relates to instrumental music ensembles, schools, and the influences of SES on inclusion and persistence in these groups.

Bourdieu and Relevant Research in Education

Music researchers have used Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field to better understand the sociology of music in several contexts. Viewing data through a Bourdieusian lens can help researchers better see and understand the intersections of SES, race, gender, and music. For example, Reay (1995) applied Bourdieu's concept of habitus when studying two urban primary schools in England. One of these schools served a large population of working class and multi-ethnic economically disadvantaged students, 95% of whom required financial assistance. The other school, by contrast, served a large population of White, middle-class students. Although not a music-specific study, Reay observed interesting phenomena that are applicable to this dissertation. For example, Reay found that middle class students often displayed a sense of entitlement, whereas the economically disadvantaged students did not. Reay noted that less economically advantaged students often helped to "tidy up" (p. 363) their classroom at the end of the day when their teacher asked them to help. Middle-class students were much less willing to help clean up their classrooms, particularly if the mess they were asked to clean was not their own. Some students refused to help at all, and one was quoted as saying "they employ cleaners to do that" (p. 363). Reay discovered that many of the middle-class students considered themselves equals with the teachers, noting that their dispositions were a result of "the interaction of privileged habitus and a particular education field" (p. 364). Middle class and white privilege, discussed in Chapter 2, was an important influence in my study.

Reay (1995) also witnessed ways in which habitus and race intersected within the

middle-class school. When a new African English student joined the class, Reay noticed that most of the White students tended to ignore or look away from the new student. Their body gestures indicated non-inclusion within their social circles. Reay noted that students' "processes of social differentiation were acted out through their bodies . . . which signified that [the new student] was not important enough to notice" (p. 368). The perception of importance, or lack of importance, somewhat mirrored some of my middle class study participants' perceptions of low-SES families. I discuss this in greater detail in Chapters 5 and 6.

Brandstrom and Wiklund (1996) applied Bourdieu's concept of capital while studying ways in which Swedish students utilized optional music education opportunities. Their findings indicated that females were more likely to study music than males, and children from middle class or affluent families were much more likely to attend music school than children from economically disadvantaged families. Children who had at least one parent with prior musical experience, referred to in the study as a form of social capital (Bourdieu, 1977), were much more likely to begin musical study themselves. Brandstrom and Wiklund (1996) observed that music learning is "a social activity and never context free" (p. 39) and stressed that music educators should "recognize and create awareness of the sociocultural aspects of music education" (p. 39). The music teachers in my study not only appeared unaware of the sociocultural aspects of music education in some instances, but also sometimes exacerbated the middle-class leanings of many school instrumental ensembles.

Bourdieu's theories have also been used to help interpret data from studies of

musical taste and consumption. DeNora (2003) explored key social themes within the field of music, applying Bourdieusian concepts when appropriate. Themes included music and status consumption, the construction of talent and value in music, music as a way of being, music and emotion, and music as consciousness. DeNora's primary application of Bourdieusian concepts centered on Bourdieu's idea that "social distribution of musical tastes mapped onto and helped reinforce socio-economic relations" (p. 167). DeNora noted that Bourdieu considered culture a medium of interaction that sometimes causes those outside traditional social structures or boundaries to become socially and economically marginalized. Although DeNora did not conduct a study in schools or try to demonstrate these concepts in that setting, her study pointed to ways in which musical hierarchy tended to promote exclusion and social divide. The data in my study similarly suggested a social divide based on social class.

Researchers used Bourdieusian concepts to better understand culturally relevant adaptations to music curriculum and ways that certain adaptations might serve certain populations. Wright (2008) conducted an ethnographic case study in a secondary school, focusing on a music teacher and one of her classes consisting of 14-year-old students. The study tried to document the "lived [musical] experiences" (p. 389) of the participants in school and at home. Wright credited the success of the teacher to her ability to "empathize with her students' musical interests" (p. 389) and adapt the music curriculum accordingly. Wright observed the teacher's attempts to use culturally relevant music with her classes so as not to alienate students or reinforce the cultural divides that existed between disadvantaged families and middle class or highly affluent families who may be

more apt to hold affinity for high-brow music. The results of the teacher's efforts were positive, as many of her students expressed their enjoyment of music and desired to continue studying the subject. In my study, I uncovered some ways that the instrumental music teachers attempted to address issues of cultural responsivity and cultural reactivity, as well as instances where these did not seem to be of concern.

Researchers have analyzed data through a Bourdieusian lens to gain a better understanding of active musicians' lives and musical experiences. Coulson (2010) explored the professional working lives of various musicians who worked in a variety of positions and sought to uncover factors that contributed to their ability to earn a living in their fields. Coulson applied Bourdieu's concept of capital, noting that the sought-after factors were "understood in terms of various forms of social, cultural, and symbolic capital which musicians amass throughout their lives" (p. 255). Coulson found that the degree to which musicians accrued "musical capital" (p. 255) [Coulson's term] was associated with "the quality of the musicians' learning experiences" (p. 255). Coulson concluded that expanding the range of music teaching methods and legitimizing different types of music and ability could "encourage more young people to remain involved in music learning and give musicians clearer signposts for embarking on a career in music" (p. 255). I found that instrumental offerings in the school district where I conducted this study were typical of most schools: marching band, concert band, pep band, jazz band, orchestra, and chamber strings. The range of music teaching methods were not "expanding," as Coulson noted; rather, they had been reduced. One unique ensemble that, according to the directors, appealed to many low-SES students—a bucket drumming

ensemble—was eliminated. I discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Moore (2012) provided another example of how Bourdieu's concepts have been used to make sense of musical experiences. Moore studied undergraduate students' musical experiences in college and compared these to their pre-college musical experiences. Moore applied Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field throughout the study. Moore's findings indicated those students' musical habitus and cultural capital had a significant effect on their collegiate musical experiences. Moore found that students with non-western traditional musical backgrounds often struggled to find culturally relevant musical experiences within college music departments. Moore concluded that students with musical habitus that differs from the "dominant ideologies at play in higher education can be disadvantaged in regard to a perceived lack of relevant cultural capital" (p. 76). Concepts of capital and habitus, discussed in Chapter 2, emerged as strong influences in my study.

Although many music teachers may strive to prepare their students for participation in formal college or community ensembles, some researchers have questioned whether or not music educators are adequately preparing students for recreational music making. For example, Mantie (2013) studied 19 recreational music makers on a college campus, focusing on their musical backgrounds, self-reported reasons for musical engagement, and potential implications for music education. Mantie further delineated musical engagement into two categories: student-led and authority-led music making. Mantie applied Bourdieusian concepts throughout the study and concluded that students "who continue to be active as players or singers in collegiate

ensembles are the product of similar, privileged social histories" (p. 51). Mantie found it somewhat disturbing that so few students participated in recreational music making, linking this phenomenon to perceived problems within music education. He wrote, "school music alone appears insufficient for instilling the skills and/or dispositions necessary for continued recreational music making at the collegiate level" (p. 51–52). The instrumental music program in my study schools tended to focus on structured music making. Recreational music making was not a priority. There were most likely many reasons for this. For example, recreational music making may have been difficult to facilitate in large ensembles. Smaller ensembles may have presented better opportunities for recreational music making.

Researchers have indicated that students from musical families were more likely to be musically active in schools. Bourdieu's concepts have been used to help explain this phenomenon. Valenzuela and Codina (2014) utilized Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital when studying the "relations between family and musical cultural capital and optimal experience during compulsory primary school musical practice" (p. 505). Valenzuela and Codina explored the relationship between students' family history of musical cultural capital and whether it affected students' school musical experiences. They found that students from families with higher levels of musical cultural capital were much more likely to become musically engaged in school music programs than students from families with limited musical experiences. The researchers noted, "pupils coming from musical families scored higher in intrinsic motivation, absorption, enjoyment, flow average, playing an instrument, singing in a choir, and attending concerts as compared to

their peers from non-musical families" (p. 511-512). These findings support previous research suggesting that students from musical families were more likely to participate in music themselves (Albert, 2006a; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Klinedinst, 1991; Phillips, 2003). Similar findings emerged in my study, as several of my participants indicated past and/or present musical involvement and noted that their experience with music helped to shape their children's decisions to participate.

The above-mentioned studies present compelling cases highlighting influences that may affect low-SES students' decisions, abilities, or desires to participate in school music programs. Lack of cultural relevance in traditional instrumental programs, focus on Euroamerican music, heavily structured programs, and middle-class white privilege all played a role in my study. The above-mentioned studies utilized a Bourdieusian lens to make sense of these sociological issues. Bourdieu's framework allowed me to do the same, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to understand how SES-related influences affected students' ability to participate in instrumental music ensembles in a Western Pennsylvania School District that served a large population of low-SES and minority students, and to identify potential means by which any negative effects might be addressed.

Research Questions

In this study, I investigated the effect of SES on student participation in instrumental music ensembles. To this end, I addressed the following research questions utilizing Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field:

1. What SES-related influences, if any, affected students' participation in the instrumental ensembles in the school district selected for this study?

2. How were SES-related influences on instrumental music participation addressed in the school district selected for this study?

Rationale for the Study

This study is built upon previous studies, cited in Chapters 4 through 6, that examine the relationship between SES and instrumental music participation. Although much of the existing research identifies SES as a predictor of instrumental participation, there seemed to be a lack of studies delving deeply into the ways in which SES might influence students' decisions to participate in instrumental music. Understanding ways that SES influences participation in ensembles is essential if directors wish to design inclusive instrumental music programs that appropriately serve students from all SES backgrounds. Approaching my study from a sociological standpoint and using Bourdieu's concepts as a guide, I sought to uncover specific SES-related influences that may have affected students' decisions to participate in instrumental music ensembles.

Research suggests that low-SES and minority students' access to instrumental music education is an ongoing problem (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Kinney, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991). Despite NAfME's national call for *music for all*,

SES-related factors continue to affect the realization of this goal. Researchers have repeatedly examined the effects of SES on instrumental music participation (Chappell, 2013; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Costa-Giomi, 2008; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Fitzpatrick, 2006a; McCarthy, 1980; Pellegrinelli, 2012), and have suggested that financial limitations (Albert, 2006b; Kinney, 2010), cultural relevance (Albert, 2006b; Doyle, 2014), and teacher characteristics (Albert, 2006b) might be important factors in recruitment and retention of instrumental music students. These are important findings; however, they may only scratch the surface in terms of ways SES and instrumental music participation intersect.

Lareau (2011) found that differences between low-SES and highly affluent families went far beyond financial matters. Parenting styles, level of involvement with school activities, and varying levels of ability or desire to cultivate children's talents were all marked differences that affected how children's predispositions were formed. Lareau explained these phenomena through Bourdieu's (1977) concepts of habitus, capital, and field, which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2. Lareau also indicated that many schools operated on an assumed set of dispositions that aligned with those of middle and highly affluent families. Although Lareau's research did not specifically focus on instrumental music participation, her findings on the interactions and behaviors of families from differing SES backgrounds, and ways these behaviors aligned or did not align with expectations in schools, provided tremendous insight into potential interactions of SES and instrumental music participation within schools.

Much of the existing literature on the relationship between SES and instrumental

music participation focused on predicting future instrumental ensemble participation (Albert, 2006a; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Cowden, 1992; Kinney, 2008, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991) or on strategies to improve enrollment and retention in instrumental ensembles (Albert, 2006b; Humphries, 2002; Mixon, 2005; Nierman & Veak, 1997). Many prior studies found SES to be a reliable predictor of instrumental music participation or sought to identify best practices for recruitment of low-SES students. Although these studies successfully showed a correlation between SES and instrumental music participation, they did not always indicate why this correlation occurs outside of the monetary needs associated with playing an instrument.

My intent was to discover specific ways in which SES-related influences intersected with instrumental music participation in a school district that served a large population of low-SES students. I wanted to document any instrument-related monetary issues that may have affected students' ability to participate in instrumental music. I also desired to look deeper into not-as-easily-recognized SES-related influences that may chip away at students' ability and/or desire to participate in school instrumental ensembles. Identifying *why* and *how* SES-related influences affect students' ability and/or desire to participate in instrumental ensembles is valuable to instrumental directors and students, because knowing why students cannot or do not wish to participate in instrumental ensembles may help to inform director's recruitment and retention plans. Understanding SES influences that students cannot immediately change may allow directors to create policies, activities, and interactions that would encourage low SES students to begin and continue participation, create more inclusive instrumental music programs, and share the

benefits of studying instrumental music with the low SES community of students.

Researcher Interest in Socioeconomics and Music

The topic of my study is near and dear to my heart for several reasons. I am the product of a low-SES family and have experienced many of the struggles associated with low-SES. During my time as a public-school teacher, I taught low-SES students, witnessed their struggles, and struggled to retain many of these students in my instrumental ensembles. I hope this study helps to bring awareness to these important issues and initiates additional research into ways instrumental music educators can help underrepresented populations.

I was born, raised, and continue to reside in the rust belt area of Western Pennsylvania, not far from the research site. I was the first in my immediate family to complete a bachelor's degree, the only member of my family to achieve a master's degree, and the only member of my family to become a doctoral candidate. My mother did not work outside the home, but rather stayed at home to care for my older and younger brothers and me. My father was an electrician at a steel mill in the town where the research site was located. My family was never well off financially, but my parents did all they could to support us in our activities and schooling. My parents gave me an old trumpet that had been in our family for years as a gift when I had the opportunity to begin instrumental study in fifth grade, as they could not afford to purchase or rent an instrument. I played this instrument through ninth grade and began to show promise as a young player. My grandparents purchased a new, professional-level trumpet for me at

this point, as I had expressed my desire to go to college and study music, and my high school band director offered to give me free trumpet lessons after school during my last two years of high school.

The steel mill that employed my father closed in 1992, the same year I graduated from high school. My father, without a job, needed to collect unemployment benefits in order to provide for our family. Were it not for the scholarships that I had earned through academics and music, and my eligibility for other financial aid sources, I would not have had the opportunity to attend college. Throughout college, my grandparents regularly purchased my textbooks, as my parents did not have the financial capital to do so. I relied on student loans and scholarships for four years as I worked toward graduation, and I graduated with sizable student loan balances.

Upon college graduation, I began my teaching career near Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, instructing middle and high school band, choir, and jazz ensembles. I held this position for four years before accepting a job in a school district near my hometown. I taught elementary, middle, and high school bands there for 10 years. It was during these 10 years that I became interested in recruitment and retention of instrumentalists, as recruiting and retaining was the lifeblood of my program in a small district. This district served a sizable population of low-SES students, and I noticed that many of these students either discontinued the band program after a year or two, or they never joined despite their expressed desire to do so. As a result, I often found myself directing bands consisting mainly of children from middle class and highly affluent families. Low-SES students were tragically underrepresented in my program. At the end of my tenth year in

this district, I accepted a position as the Director of Bands at a small, liberal arts institution in Western Pennsylvania, and began my pursuit of a doctorate through Boston University. My wife and I are the parents of three young children, the oldest of whom began studying saxophone in fifth grade. Like my parents, my wife and I gifted an instrument to my son—an old alto saxophone that belonged to my wife.

I chose to conduct my study on recruitment and retention of instrumental music students in a low-SES school not only because of my experiences as an educator serving similar students, but also because I was a low-SES student throughout elementary, middle, and high school. Had it not been for the sacrifices that my parents and grandparents made for me, and for the compassion of my band directors, I would not have been able to achieve my dream of becoming a professional music educator and performer. I consider myself lucky, and I understand that most low-SES students are not as lucky. Although not all students, indeed most students, who participate in instrumental music study do not become music educators, many do continue to make music throughout their lives in college, community bands, churches, and at home. These experiences can be exceptionally meaningful and fulfilling; however, low-SES and minority students are often not able to or do not take advantage of the school training needed to enjoy this type of music making later in life.

I hold several biases due to my background, upbringing, and childhood habitus. First, having come from an economically disadvantaged home, I was still able to participate in many organizations and activities due to the financial assistance provided by extended family members. I was unaware of most of this assistance growing up, as my

parents attempted to hide the realities of our financial situation from us. As a result, I perceived my own experience as one closer to that of a middle class rather than a low-SES family. When interpreting interview data, I had to constantly remind myself to be objective, remember that my experiences were atypical, and not let those experiences color my analysis and interpretation of the data.

Looking back on my childhood, now knowing my family's economic situation and understanding how much differently my own life may have been had I not had help, I developed a tremendous sense of empathy for students in low-SES families. Although I generally consider empathy a positive trait, I had to assure that my empathetic views or feelings toward low-SES students did not impact my data collection, analysis, interpretation, or presentation. I nullified these biases to the best of my ability by having several colleagues who work in the field of sociology screen my interview questions, review my coding, and critique my findings, pointing out anything that may have seemed influenced by personal bias.

Definitions

The following terms are used frequently in this study. In this section, I offer definitions for each as they pertain to the study.

In this study, *low socioeconomic (SES)* populations were identified as those students who were labeled as "financially disadvantaged" on the Pennsylvania Department of Education School Performance Profile ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016).

Instrumental music study was defined as the opportunity to study a band- or orchestra-oriented instrument. These included woodwind, brass, percussion, and string instruments, all of which were available for student study at the research location.

Extracurricular ensembles were defined as music ensembles that rehearsed outside of regular school hours. In this study, these ensembles included jazz band, marching band, chamber strings, show choir, pit orchestra, pep band, and chamber singers.

Curricular ensembles were defined as music ensembles that rehearsed during regular school hours and for which students received a grade. In this study, these ensembles included concert band, orchestra, and concert choir.

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Bourdieu's theories of social class and social reproduction gained popularity in the sociological fields in the 1970s and 1980s, and by the 1990s he was one of the most frequently referenced sociological theorizers (Jenkins, 1992). Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field have been used to help describe and understand class, inequity, SES, and power. Lareau (2011) noted that Bourdieu provided "a context for examining the impact of social class position," drawing attention to "conflict, change, and systemic inequality" (p. 361). Bourdieu's concepts of *habitus, field,* and *capital* appeared in several of his and others' works (Bourdieu, 1977, 1990a, 1990b, 2010; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 2013; Grenfell, 2014; Jenkins, 1992), and these can be used as a means to understand various facets of class, social reproduction, and social actions. Given the sociological nature of my study, I chose to apply Bourdieu's concepts.

Habitus

Habitus involves a certain set of predispositions that are formed through long-term immersion in a culture, belief system, or set of operating rules. These dispositions affect practice and can be thought to be operating in the background of one's decision-making, actions, and thoughts. Bourdieu (1977) defined *habitus* as:

> a set of predispositions formed through immersion in a certain type of environment, and predisposed to function as structuring structures, as principles of the generation and structuring of practices and representations which can be objectively regulated and regular without, in any way, being the product of obedience to rules, objectively adapting to

> their goals without presupposing a conscious aiming at the ends or an express mastery of the operations necessary to attain them. (p. 72)

In simpler terms, Jenkins (1992) explained habitus as a "shared body of predispositions" (p. 71) and the "product of history" (p. 71). Habitus is created through the objective conditions in which an individual is immersed over time. Differences in long-term socialization produce different habitus with which the actors involved are comfortable and accept as natural (Lareau, 2011). In turn, these predispositions can affect the actors' practices (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 72). Bourdieu saw practice and habitus as intimately intertwined, for just as habitus influences practice, practice in turn creates habitus (Bourdieu, 1977; Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Grenfell, 2014; Jenkins, 1992). Bourdieu believed a social class' habitus tends to "reproduce the conditions" (Apple, 2001, p. 420) in which it was created, and it does so "unconsciously" (p. 420). Habitus operates in the background of one's being, informing thoughts, practice, actions, and decisions.

In this study, I explored how different habitus might influence decisions to persist or begin instrumental music study. Differences in habitus may have affected how students and/or parents/guardians perceived instrumental music study, how well students from diverse SES backgrounds functioned within instrumental ensembles, and ultimately may have affected continued participation within those ensembles for some students.

Field

Bourdieu's concept of field refers to the social setting wherein habitus functions. Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) described field as:

> a network, or configuration, of objective relations between positions. These positions are objectively defined, in their existence and in the determinations they impose upon their occupants, agents, or institutions, by their present and potential situation in the structure of the distribution of species of power (or capital) whose possession commands access to the specific profits that are at stake in the field, as well as by their objective relation to other positions. (p. 97)

Field is a type of social arena in which actors struggle for access to specific resources and positions of power. These resources, or *profits*, might include cultural goods, intellectual or educational merit, housing, employment, land, political power, social class, or other stature (Jenkins, 1992). The degree to which actors successfully obtain these profits determines their social position within that particular field. The field becomes a "structured system of social positions—occupied either by individuals or institutions—the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 77).

In Bourdieu's model, fields could be inter- or intra-institutional (Swartz, 1997). For example, educational institutions such as schools can make up a field wherein students struggle to obtain the profits of education, class rank, athletic standing, or other stature within the institution; however, schools can also be part of a much larger field of educational institutions which struggle for legitimacy via standardized test scores, athletic championships, and other markers of success. Swartz (1997) referred to fields not as institutions, but as "fields of struggle" (p. 121) and indicated that Bourdieu did not draw definitive boundaries between fields, but rather adopted a more relational view encompassing the "broadest possible ranges of factors that shape behavior rather than delimit a precise area of activity" (p. 121).

Field is an important concept in this study. A school district could be considered a field in which individuals play by a certain set of rules and jockey for social position. Smaller fields, one might argue, exist within this larger field. For example, music ensembles could be considered smaller fields. Marching band, for instance, while existing within the larger field of a school district, operates within its own set of rules, and band members often compete for social placement within that setting. Identifying how individuals from varying habitus function within these different fields was essential to this study.

Capital

Bourdieu (1986) defined capital as "accumulated labor (in its materialized form or its 'incorporated,' embodied form) which, when appropriated on a private, i.e., exclusive, basis by agents or groups of agents, enables them to appropriate social energy in the form of reified or living labor" (p. 241). Bourdieu (1986) further categorized capital into sub-categories: economic, social, cultural, and symbolic capital.

One form of capital, economic capital, involves access to money. Bourdieu (1986) wrote that economic capital was "immediately and directly convertible into money and may be institutionalized in the form of property rights" (p. 185). Jenkins (1992) described economic capital as the monetary means by which to provide goods, services, or other needs, wants, or desires. Lack of economic capital is the primary defining characteristic of low-SES families.

Bourdieu (1986) discussed social capital as another form of capital. Bourdieu noted that social capital was the

> aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a "credential" which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word. (p. 21)

Jenkins (1992) described social capital as various "kinds of valued relationships with others" (p. 77). In my study, social capital included relationships with others who had significant economic capital, musical skills, loanable instruments, or other means by which they might help to enrich someone else's musical life.

Another form of capital embedded within Bourdieu's theories is cultural capital. Bourdieu (1977) noted, "academic qualifications are to cultural capital what money is to economic capital" (p. 187). Jenkins (1992) described cultural capital as "legitimate knowledge of one kind or another" (p. 77). Although most of the students in the instrumental music programs in the Northwest Passage School District (pseudonym) were of similar educational backgrounds in terms of years of school completed, some may have benefitted from parents/guardians, relatives, neighbors, or other acquaintances who may have held degrees in music, education, or other related fields, or from acquaintances who had previous instrumental music experience.

The final form of capital is symbolic capital. Jenkins (1992) described symbolic capital as "prestige and social honor" (p. 77). Bourdieu (1989) wrote, "social world presents itself, objectively, as a symbolic system" and "social space tends to function as a symbolic space, a space of lifestyles and status groups characterized by different lifestyles" (p. 20). Bourdieu often referred to symbolic capital as "symbolic power" (p. 22), noting that perceptions of one's symbolic position within society can provide

opportunities for those recognized. Marketing professionals have recognized the benefits of symbolic capital, and often seek endorsements from celebrities, even if the celebrity is not an expert in the area being marketed. Advertisers understand that consumers may be more likely to purchase a product or service that is promoted by a celebrity, as celebrities carry a certain degree of symbolic capital.

Bourdieu noted that the various forms of capital could be converted into other forms of capital when activated. For example, Bourdieu (1986) wrote that cultural capital "is convertible, on certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of educational qualifications" (p. 243), and that "social capital, made up of social obligations ('connections'), which is convertible, in certain conditions, into economic capital and may be institutionalized in the form of a title of nobility" (p. 243). Economic capital, when activated, can produce social capital, cultural capital, or symbolic capital. For example, access to adequate economic capital may enable instrumental music students to take private lessons on their instruments. This may lead to higher placement within ensemble sections, opportunities to participate in band festivals, or otherwise become recognized for their accomplishments—a form of symbolic capital.

These various forms of capital may be "activated" (Lareau, 2011, p. 364) to gain favor, advance social position within the field, or obtain additional capital. For example, a recently unemployed actor in a particular field might have a relationship with the owner of a local store—a form of social capital. Because of this relationship, if approached by the actor, the storeowner might offer this actor a job at the store. In this scenario, the actor activated his or her social capital in order to obtain a new position and economic

capital. An example of symbolic capital might include a soldier in uniform being offered a free meal at a restaurant on Veterans' Day.

It is quite common for one form of capital to be converted into others. For example, individuals with more economic capital might convert it into cultural capital by sending their children to "better" schools, provide tutoring or lessons outside of the regular school day, or otherwise immerse their children in cultural resources that families with less economic capital could not afford (Apple, 2001). Access to capital may prove to be a major contributor to low-SES students' decisions to play or persist with a musical instrument. My study investigated access to such capital and the ways that instrumental music teachers addressed deficits in such access within their program.

Researchers have suggested that the current educational system in the United States favors certain classes over others. Lareau (2011), for example, suggested that the environment in which middle class children are raised better prepares them for school. Through their social interactions, middle class children possessed more highly developed vocabulary and language skills and reasoned with their parents. Middle class children often also learned to question authority or speak back to adults. This was due, in part, to a parenting tactic Lareau observed, where parents/guardians often asked questions of their children when they misbehaved, eliciting a response from the child. Additionally, middle class parents were more likely to intervene in their children's education, often activating forms of capital in order for their children to gain favor in some way. Middle class children, as Lareau indicated, were also often heavily consumed by organized activities. Students who were raised in a middle class or highly affluent family habitus may function

well in schools, as teachers often elicit responses from their students through questioning, request that students participate in organized activities within the classroom and require students to utilize reasoning skills.

Lareau (2011) indicated that the habitus for students from working class and poor families influences a very different upbringing, and therefore they develop much different predispositions. Middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians valued structured time and organized activities, and low-SES and working-class parents/guardians often valued unstructured time and natural learning. Consequently, low-SES and working-class children are not likely to be consumed by organized activities; their parents typically allow them to develop naturally through unstructured playtime. Language is often functional in these families. Parents often give their children short directives rather than promoting reasoning skills or conversation. As a result, working class children may not question adults directly as do middle class children. According to Lareau, these traits, representative of working or lower-class habitus, do not assimilate as easily into the current school system.

Lareau (2011) wrote:

> Bourdieu's work provides a dynamic model of structural inequality; it enables researchers to capture "moments" of cultural and social reproduction. To understand the character of these moments, researchers need to look at the contexts in which capital is situated, the efforts, by individuals to activate their capital, and skill with which they do so, and the institutional response to the activation of resources. (Lareau, 2011, Appendix B, Paragraph 8)

Bourdieu's model helps us to better understand why some groups tend to thrive in schools, while others struggle or are left out (Apple, 2001). For example, some

educational institutions seek out those who are most successful and instill upon them symbolic capital such as induction into honors societies, gifted programs, or other scholastic honors, a practice Apple (2001) termed “cream skimming” (p. 417). Similar occurrences happen within music education. As Nabb and Balcetis (2010) suggested, students with disabilities are often “excluded from participation in instrumental music programs” (p. 308). As researchers have shown, the same holds true for low-SES students (Albert, 2006a; Butler, Lind, & McKoy, 2007; Chappell, 2013; Costa-Giomi, 2008; Cowden, 1992; Fitzpatrick, 2006a; Kinney, 2008, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991; Nabb & Balcetis, 2010; Salvador & Allegood, 2014; Smith, 1997). Many of these studies are explored further throughout this dissertation.

I used Bourdieu’s (1977) concepts of habitus, capital, and field to analyze parents’/guardians’ perceptions of their children’s instrumental study and the potential hindrances to continued instrumental study. Bourdieu’s concepts provided the framework through which I sought to identify SES-related issues that affected students’ participation within instrumental ensembles. These concepts also helped to highlight power imbalances and cultural differences that may have influenced some students’ decisions about participation in the instrumental music program.

Privilege

The concept of privilege is not part of the Bourdieusian theoretical framework; however, privilege is, nonetheless, an important concept pertaining to the understanding of many of the phenomena in this study. Privilege—special advantages or immunities available or granted to particular individuals or groups—comes in many forms. Although

researchers have conducted many studies on various types of privilege, middle class privilege was the most relevant to this study. Reeves (2018) noted that “pretty much every position in the influencing business is in fact filled by a member of the upper middle class: journalism, academia, research, science, advertising, polling, publishing, the media (old and new), and the arts are, almost by definition, upper middle-class strongholds” (p. 155). Lareau (2011) found that middle class parents/guardians often strived to develop their children’s individual talents through private lessons, classes, organized groups, and other activities, a process she called *concerted cultivation*. Lareau noted that through concerted cultivation, middle class children tended to gain an emerging sense of entitlement.

Privilege is strongly associated with power, as those who are privileged enjoy, either knowingly or unknowingly, a type of power or advantage that others may not. Privileged individuals or groups will often do what they must to maintain such power, either consciously or subconsciously, as to not forfeit their privilege. Reeves (2018) alluded to this phenomenon, stating, “middle class power tends to be deployed to protect our own position and status, regardless of considerations of fairness. Having convinced ourselves of our own merit, we have become kind of selfish” (p. 155-156). Selfishness played an important role in this study.

Although middle class privilege often manifested in selfish ways, Lareau (2011) discovered that many low-SES and underprivileged students did not display the same characteristics as their middle class and highly affluent classmates, but rather developed an emerging sense of constraint. Lareau found that low-SES families often did not trust

certain institutions, including schools.

Socioeconomic Status and Race

It is impossible to discuss or study socioeconomic status without also considering its intersection with race, ethnicity, and minority status. Researchers have often linked SES and social inequalities to race. Bailey, Saperstein, and Penner (2014), for example, wrote "there is a relatively linear relationship between perceived skin color and per capita household income: lighter colors are associated with higher incomes, and darker colors with lower incomes" (p. 737). In an older study, Allen and Thompson (1990) found that rural minorities in the United States have historically been "economically and socially disadvantaged" (p. 1161), and Bhopal (2018) confirmed that these disadvantages continued to persist, noting "vast inequalities that continue to exist for black and minority people" (p. 143) in the labor market, housing, mental and physical health, and education.

This disparity in SES was concerning, as it often led to other social phenomena that further divided those who have and those who have not. Socioeconomic segregation, or income segregation as Reardon and Bischoff (2011) called it, is one such phenomenon, wherein high- and low-income households tended to be homogenously grouped and may be separated from each other by some distance. Reardon and Bischoff found that income segregation was "empirically entangled with racial segregation" (p. 1093) because of the intersection between race and socioeconomic status.

Iceland and Wilkes (2006) noted that some groups—particularly African American—faced additional challenges of the residual effects of income and racial segregation. Challenges created by racial and income segregation "in terms of schooling,

employment, exposure to higher crime rates, single parenthood, concentrated poverty, and even health and cognition outcomes" (p. 248) were documented. In this study, income segregation played a role in neighborhood formation, and the locations of some of the communities potentially affected some students' ability to participate in some instrumental ensembles. I discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 5.

The prevalence of white privilege over time has worked "to perpetuate the inferior and powerless position of black and minority ethnic groups—*to keep them in their place*" (Bhopal, 2018, p. 154). Bradley (2007) noted that white privilege has become institutionalized and white culture favored. Bradley calls these phenomena "institutional whiteness" (p. 147). Whiteness is characterized by "a privilege that goes unseen: an invisibility that in many ways places our oppressor outside the racial sphere, vested with a power and social advantage which they themselves need not consider" (Dei, Karumancherty, & Karumanchery-Luik, 2004, p. 84). White privilege is often unrecognized by those who benefit. Because white privilege has become so ingrained in everyday life, many White people find it difficult to recognize.

Education is not exempt from whiteness, and music education specifically often revolves around it. Bradley (2007) summed up music education's problem with whiteness, stating: "Many North American music education programs exclude in vast numbers students who do not embody Euroamerican ideals. One way to begin making music education programs more socially just is to make them more inclusive" (p. 137).

Even though most White people recognize that racial oppression is a problem, they are often blind to the fact that they may be part of that problem. Dei et al. (2004)

noted that White people often fail to see or understand that there is a “relational tissue” (p. 83) running between oppression and their power. The fact that some White people fail to recognize white privilege and consequently resist learning about it, sometimes even retaliating against professors via course evaluations when the subject is taught, exacerbates racial divisions and inequalities (Boatright-Horowitz, Marraccini, & Harps-Logan, 2012). Privilege played a role in in this study, as I discuss in Chapters 4 and 5.

CHAPTER 3: METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to examine recruitment and retention issues related to instrumental music students in a school district that served a large population of low socioeconomic students, focusing on socioeconomic-related and other factors impacting recruitment and retention in the school's instrumental music program. Through the study, I sought to address the following research questions using Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field:

1. What SES-related influences, if any, affected students' participation in the instrumental ensembles in the school district selected for this study?

2. How were SES-related factors on instrumental music participation addressed in the school district selected for this study?

Research Design

I addressed these questions through qualitative research and utilized a collective case study design. Qualitative studies are often "field focused" (Eisner, 1998), taking place in the locations where the studied phenomena occur. Case study research is often used when researchers "desire to understand complex social phenomena" (Yin, 2009, p. 5). Babbie (2001) noted the strength of qualitative field research:

> One of the key strengths of [qualitative] field research is how comprehensive a perspective it can give researchers. By going directly to the social phenomenon under study and observing it as completely as possible, researchers can develop a deeper and fuller understanding of it. (p. 275)

Case studies are regularly used in social sciences. Yin (2009) noted that case studies are commonly used in "psychology, sociology, political science, anthropology, social work, business, education, nursing, and community planning" (p. 4). Given the sociological nature of my study, I felt a case study design would be effective. Yin wrote that case study research "remains one of the most challenging of all social science endeavors" (p. 3); however, this particular methodology produces rich, in depth descriptions of certain phenomena as they occur in their natural environments. Case study research is situated toward addressing *how* and *why* social phenomena work.

I used collective case study design for this study. Miles and Huberman (1994) stated that one primary purpose of collective case studies was to:

> increase generalizability, reassuring oneself that the events and processes in one well-described setting are not wholly idiosyncratic . . . seeing processes and outcomes that occur across many cases or sites, and understanding how such processes are bent by specific local contextual variations. (p. 157)

Collective studies allow researchers "to preserve the multiple realities by using multiple participants and multiple methods of data collection" (Sarroub, 2001, p. 502). In my study, I collected data from multiple participants from diverse backgrounds and various SES levels. Documenting experiences from multiple participants greatly enriched the data and allowed me to identify patterns of behavior across cases. In addition, this design gave me the opportunity to see similarities between cases. Each parent/guardian and music teacher participant in this study represented a case. A total of nine cases were included in this study.

Role of the Researcher

I was responsible for conducting all parts of this study, including research design, participant recruitment, data collection, analysis, and composition of the dissertation. My interaction with the study participants took several forms. I was responsible for gaining permission to conduct the study from the study site's superintendent. This required a face-to-face meeting with the superintendent where I explained the purpose of the study and detailed my intended interactions with the study participants.

Although much of the data in my study were collected through interviews, I did collect additional data from other sources including artifacts, field notes, and observations. Triangulation, or the use of multiple sources of data (Yin, 2009) was essential to the strength and effectiveness of data collected in my study. I conducted member checks (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Padgett, 2008) once the interviews were transcribed in order to assure transcription accuracy and to give participants a chance to make any response changes they deemed necessary. I discuss the results of the member checks later in this chapter. Once data were collected and member checks completed, I did not further interact with the parent/guardian study participants. I did, however, email the music teacher participants after interviews concluded for clarification on several items including ensemble enrollment, rehearsal schedules, and daily schedules. Once I collected the data and transcribed all interviews, I coded the data and analyzed the results. I give a detailed description of this process later in this chapter.

Research Site

Selection Criteria

While conducting this study, I simultaneously worked as a full-time college professor. This position limited my ability to travel long distances to conduct research. As an educator in Pennsylvania who was familiar with the state school system, I sought a site within Pennsylvania in which to conduct my research. Out of necessity, I needed to select a research site that was within a reasonable driving radius. The preferred driving radius included most schools in the western third of the state.

My study focused on instrumental music enrollment and retention in largely low socioeconomic areas; therefore, the study site needed to be in a school district that served such a population. For the purpose of my study, I defined low socioeconomic students as those identified as economically disadvantaged by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Information about these specific demographics were obtained through the Pennsylvania Department of Education's School Performance Profile website ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016). The Pennsylvania State Department of Education determined economically disadvantaged status based on several factors including records of free and reduced lunch eligibility, participation in Medicaid, poverty data resources including Temporary Assistance for Needy Family cases, census poor, those supported in foster homes, and children living in institutions for the neglected or delinquent ("Student Reporting," 2015). In order to be eligible for this study, school districts needed to serve a population consisting of a majority (at least 51%) of low socioeconomic students. Additionally, the school district had to have an established

instrumental music program.

Site Selection Process

The selection process began by identifying all public-school districts within the readily accessible area. I then used the Pennsylvania Department of Education's "School Performance Profile" website ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016) to identify all public school buildings within this area and to research the socioeconomic makeup of each school within each district. This process was completed in approximately three weeks. Once I identified all student populations that met demographic requirements for this study, I then examined each eligible school district's website and identified those that maintained an instrumental music program. Band and orchestra were the most frequently identified instrumental ensembles; however, I did find some schools offering non-traditional instrumental music ensembles including bucket drumming, African percussion ensembles, and other percussion ensembles. I identified 42 schools in 16 school districts that qualified for the study.

Once the list of school districts meeting all study requirements was finalized, I emailed an invitation (Appendix A) to the school districts asking the superintendents to consider participation in the study. The initial emails generated three responses, all declining the invitation. Two weeks after these initial invitations were sent, I sent follow-up emails to the superintendents who had not yet responded. The follow-up emails did not generate any responses after two weeks.

Not having had success locating a research site through the email approach, I began placing phone calls to superintendents. I left messages with three superintendents

and spoke with two others who indicated that they would consider the study. One superintendent requested a face-to-face meeting to discuss the study, and that meeting took place in August 2016. After reviewing the study parameters and purpose, the superintendent graciously granted permission to conduct the study in his school district, pending approval of the district's instrumental music teachers.

Once approved by the superintendent, I contacted the instrumental music teachers in the school district, inviting each to participate in this study. Two instrumental music teachers graciously accepted the invitation to participate. I finalized the choice of school district in which this study was conducted once I received official permission from the school district superintendent.

Research Site Demographics

The school district in which the study took place is located in Western Pennsylvania. The district consists of three elementary schools housing Grades K–6, a middle school serving Grades 7–8, and a high school serving Grades 9–12. Although the middle and high school are considered separate schools, they are located within the same building, but in separate areas of that building. I refer to the three elementary schools within the participating district in this study by the pseudonyms *North Elementary, West Elementary,* and *East Elementary*. These schools, along with the middle school and the high school, served majority populations of low socioeconomic families. Eighty-eight percent of West Elementary School's 290 enrolled students were identified as low-SES students. Nineteen percent of the student population of West Elementary was comprised of minority students (African American, biracial, or Hispanic). East Elementary School's

enrollment totaled 342 students, 93% of which were low-SES, and 77% were minority students. Fifty-three percent of North Elementary School's 555 students were low-SES, and 34% were minorities. The middle school served a student population of 297, of which 63% were identified low-SES, and 38% were minorities. The high school population consisted of 553 students, of which 63% were low-SES students and 34% minorities ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016).

State performance profile scores from the 2015-2016 academic year indicated that all four schools in the district struggled academically. The Pennsylvania Department of Education rated every public school's academic performance on a scale from 1-100. These scores were based on indicators of academic achievement, closing the achievement gap, academic growth, and other indicators including attendance, graduation rates, and grade promotion rates. Scores were grouped into six categories: 1) 100, 2) 90–100, 3) 80–89.9, 4) 70–70.9, 5) 60–69.9, and 6) below 60. The higher the score, the more academically successful the State Department of Education viewed the school ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016). East Elementary earned a score of 65.4, West Elementary scored of 57.7, and North scored 65.2. The middle school score was the lowest of the four schools at 49.8, and the high school's score was the highest of the four at 67.5. All of the schools did, however, provide opportunities for their students to participate in band or orchestra starting in fifth grade. Two instrumental music teachers, one specializing in band and the other in orchestra, taught all lessons and ensembles at these four schools.

Research Site Description

To better understand the town in which the research site was located, I drove around the area for several hours, taking in the sites and noting my impressions. The research site was in a Western Pennsylvanian town once known for steel production. Most of those steel mills were gone, and the town had become part of an area often referred to as the "rust belt." Driving east to west down the town's main street, I saw smaller businesses including various restaurants and bars, a cigar shop, and other small shops selling knick-knacks, clothing, and shoes. As I descended the mile-long hill into the heart of town, I noticed several churches, a funeral home, and a community health club named after a prominent and locally historic family from the town. North Elementary School, the middle school, and the high school were also located on this hill, sandwiched between a large, round Catholic church and a residential area. The downtown area was lined with small businesses, including large clothing stores, an auto parts store, local restaurants, and several churches. A river that flows north to south under several concrete bridges divided the downtown area in half. This river had become the centerpiece of several summertime community gatherings, including several annual festivals at which the river was a central theme. These events provided the downtown area a bit of an economic boost. Located just outside and north of the downtown area, a large public park also served as a hub for additional social gatherings, activities, and concerts. Across the street from the park was a public nine-hole golf course. Beside that golf course was another golf course, owned by the country club located on the edge of the park, and a two-story brick bowling alley sat just behind the green on the third hole of the

public course. My initial impression of the area was one of financial stability.

I found the residential areas of the town to be economically diverse, however. Housing areas on the northern side of the town that border the neighboring city tended to be upscale, large houses. Multi-story brick homes were common along the streets surrounding the park and golf courses, many built on large lots with well-manicured yards. Homes were well kept, and many had multiple vehicles in their paved or cemented driveways. I researched home prices in these neighborhoods on a realty website and found the less expensive ones listed for approximately $200,000, and the more expensive homes well over $300,000. As I drove from the northernmost point of the town toward the downtown area, modest housing overtook the larger, upscale homes. Nicely kept but smaller homes lined most of the streets just outside of the downtown area to the north. Many of these houses were within walking distance of North Elementary and the middle and high schools. Children living on the north side of town attend North Elementary School, which was located beside the middle school and high school. North Elementary was constructed in 2013, replacing an older building that was subsequently demolished upon completion of the new facility.

Residential neighborhoods on the west side of the downtown area were quite different. Houses in these neighborhoods were very close together with little to no yard. I passed several houses that appeared abandoned—dilapidated and boarded up. Mostly older vehicles were parked along the streets, as garages were not a common addition to houses in this neighborhood. This area was home to many impoverished families. Home prices in this neighborhood were much lower than those on the northern side of town,

often listing for under $20,000. West Elementary School sat just at the top of the hill, and served the children living in the West Hill neighborhoods. A halfway house for early release convicts, mostly from the county prison, sat at the bottom of the hill, within view of West Elementary School.

The southeast side of town was also a financially distressed residential area. Many houses in these neighborhoods were also in poor condition, and I passed several that appeared abandoned. East Elementary School was located near the border of this and the neighboring town. Historically, there had been tensions between high school students and residents from these two towns, and these tensions may have been a contributing factor to an uptick in violence in this neighborhood ("City Rating," 2017). Many of these tensions arose from gang-related issues, and others from high school athletic competitions (Gwin, 2002). Higher levels of crime often correlate with high poverty rates (Harrell, Langton, Berzofsky, Couzens, & Smiley-McDonald, 2014). It appeared that may have been the case in these neighborhoods as well.

Participants

I sought to recruit participants with diverse SES and instrumental music participation backgrounds. I wanted to collect data from parents/guardians of students in the school district, as I hoped this data would reveal detailed information about family background, family musical experiences, and family habitus. Researchers collected data from students and/or music teachers in the majority of prior studies on instrumental music participation (Albert, 2006a; Chappell, 2013; Cook, 2013; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Deisler, 2011; Ester & Turner, 2009; Fitzpatrick, 2006a; Hartley, 1996; Hartley &

Porter, 2009; Humphries, 2002; Kinney, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991; Pruitt, 1966). Studies on SES and instrumental music participation where data were collected from parents/guardians were difficult to find. My hope was that data collected from parents/guardians rather than students might reveal aspects of family habitus that could otherwise be left uncovered if interacting with students only.

I applied Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus and capital to data collected during this study, as I sought data on students' home environment, their family habitus, and to examine whether or not the intersection of students' family habitus and that of the school and instrumental ensembles may have affected their decisions to persist in instrumental music. I collected both emic and etic data during my study. Kottak (2006) explained that an emic approach to data collection provides information on how people native to an area think, perceive the world, and points out those things people consider important. An etic approach to data collection shifts the focus onto the researcher, providing an opportunity for the researcher to interpret, explain, and synthesize observations.

It was crucial to include diverse viewpoints if the data were to accurately indicate reasons for attrition or continuance in instrumental music study; therefore, I felt it important to include parents/guardians of current instrumental music students, parents/guardians of students who discontinued participation in the instrumental music programs, and parents/guardians of students who never began instrumental music study as participants. I invited low-SES, middle-class, and highly affluent parents/guardians to participate in the study. Emic data from these participants uncovered ways they perceived

the music programs, their place in the ensembles, and their views of different social groups.

According to both instrumental music teachers, the most noticeable drop in instrumental music participation occurred between sixth and seventh grade. The instrumental music teachers indicated that they believed the attrition between sixth and seventh grade may have been somehow related to students' transition from the elementary buildings to the middle school. This information led me to focus participant recruiting efforts on seventh, eighth, and ninth grade levels. Students in Grades 7 and 8 all had the opportunity to begin instrumental music study and have transitioned from elementary school to middle school. I included ninth grade in order to determine if similar participation trends existed after the transition from middle to high school. Students remaining in the instrumental music programs at all three selected grade levels decided to persist past the point where music instructors noticed the largest drop in participation, and those who had dropped out of the instrumental music program had done so within recent memory. For the purpose of my study, it was logical to focus participant recruiting efforts at these grade levels.

I began recruiting participants by contacting the instrumental music teachers. I emailed the band director and the orchestra director, informing them of the purpose of the study and asking if they would be interested in participating (see Appendix B). Both responded positively. Because I needed the teachers' help to recruit parents/guardians for the study, I sealed invitations/questionnaires for parents/guardians (see Appendix C) and a return envelope within blank envelopes. I gave these invitations to Mr. Smith

(pseudonym), Director of Bands, who then distributed them to the homeroom teachers of seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students. Homeroom teachers distributed the invitations to their students. Parents/guardians had 7 days to return the questionnaire in the sealed return envelope to the homeroom teachers, who then gave all returned envelopes to Mr. Smith. After 7 days, I met Mr. Smith to collect all returned questionnaires. In total, I distributed 359 invitations, and 76 questionnaires were returned, a 21% return rate. Of the returned questionnaires, 31 agreed to be interviewed, and 45 provided basic music participation information. Nineteen of the respondents agreeing to be interviewed were parents of current instrumental music students, 10 were parents of students who had discontinued instrumental music study, and 2 were parents of students who never began instrumental music study. Table 1 outlines the distribution and return rates of participant invitations.

Table 1. Participant Recruitment and Response Table

	Total Number of Invitations	**Return Rate**
Total invitations distributed	359	N/A
Total Responses	76	21%
Respondents who agreed to interview	31	9%

I placed the names of survey respondents from each of the three categories of participants on slips of paper and into an empty container. I then randomly selected names from that container. I contacted those selected to attempt to schedule interviews. If

I was unable to contact a potential interviewee, or if that person did not appear for the interview, I selected another name as a replacement. I repeated this process until all survey respondents were exhausted. In total, three parents/guardians of current instrumental music students were interviewed. I was unable to contact 11 potential participants, and five scheduled interviews but did not attend. I interviewed two parents/guardians of students who discontinued instrumental music study; I was unable to contact seven potential participants, and one scheduled an interview but did not attend. I interviewed two parents/guardians of students who never joined the instrumental music programs, representing all eligible parents/guardians in this category. Including the music instructors, a total of nine participants completed interviews. Table 2 outlines the number of invitees who initially indicated they would participate in interviews, how many actually did participate, and whether or not their child/children were active participants in the instrumental ensembles or not.

Table 2. Participant Category Responses and Participation

PARTICIPANT CATEGORY	INITIALLY AGREED TO INTERVIEW	COMPLETED AN INTERVIEW
Parents/guardians of current instrumental music student	19	4
Parents/guardians of former instrumental student (student has discontinued participation)	10	2
Parents/guardians of students who never began instrumental music study	2	1

Data Collection

I collected data through interviews, artifacts, observations, and field notes. I began data collection by accessing school demographic information through the Pennsylvania Department of Education website. I then drove around the town served by the Northwest Passage School district and observed the various neighborhoods served by each elementary school. During my exploration of the neighborhoods, I compiled field notes on housing, business locations, community resources, and distances between the various neighborhoods and the middle and high school buildings. I then researched home values in each of these neighborhoods using a popular real estate website. Data were also collected through local newspaper articles, the school website, school yearbooks, concert programs, photographs of instrumental ensembles from previous years, informal conversations, and through the questionnaire/invitation sent home to all potential participants.

Interviews with the music teachers produced background information about the instrumental music programs, various concerns of the directors, and other relevant facts related to the study. These interviews also helped me better understand the dynamics of the schools and instrumental music programs as they related to day-to-day operations and to SES. Through these interviews, I was also able to discuss the involvement of each music teacher with the research project, including assistance in distributing and collecting participant invitations. The interviews each lasted approximately 45 minutes and were scheduled at a meeting place of the participant's choosing or via telephone.

Through these interviews I sought data on the directors' perceptions of how SES-

related influences might have impacted their ensembles, teaching, recruitment, and retention of students. I also needed to see which, if any, SES-related influences the directors recognized as problematic and whether they or the school had attempted to address these. I wanted to gain a strong sense of the habitus of the instrumental music programs and determine the extent to which intersection of this habitus with that of the students' may have affected participation within the ensembles. (See Appendix D for a full list of initial director interview questions.)

Data were also collected via the participation invitation/questionnaires (see Appendix E). The questionnaires provided potential participants with the opportunity to accept or reject an interview and gave potential participants the opportunity to provide useful information regarding instrumental music participation. Some parents/guardians who did not participate as interviewees did complete and return the questionnaire, providing additional helpful information.

I collected data through interviews with parent/guardian participants. Each interview was approximately 30 minutes in length. Participants' preferences determined the interview locations. Four participants chose to meet face-to-face, and the remaining three preferred to be interviewed via telephone. All interviews were semi-structured and included a series of possible questions (see Appendix F) and follow up inquiries.

During the parent/guardians interviews I sought to obtain information on the participants' perception of the instrumental music program, their perception of their children's experiences within the program (if they had a child in the program), reasons for their child's discontinuation within the instrumental music program (if they had a

child who had discontinued participation), and reasons that their child may have decided to not begin instrumental music study (if they had a child who had not started instrumental music study). I also wanted to learn as much as I could about the participants' home musical environment, past musical experiences, and any SES-related influences that may have affected their child's musical decision. I asked open-ended questions about musical experiences within the family, instrument ownership, access to private instruction, musical involvement in the community, and their perceptions of various aspects of the instrumental music programs. (See Appendix F for a full list of parent/guardian participant interview questions.)

All interviews were recorded on a Zoom H1 hand-held digital recorder, and later transferred onto my laptop computer. I then transcribed all interviews in Microsoft Word using Express Scribe transcription software. This software allows the transcriber to adjust the speed of audio playback and control the playback with a foot pedal, freeing both hands to type.

Although the risk to participants in this study was minimal, it was not completely absent. The largest risk was the potential loss of confidentiality; therefore, the security of the data was a priority. To protect participants' identity and minimize risk, all interviewees were assigned a pseudonym. Some interviews were conducted in one-on-one, private settings of the interviewee's choosing, and on these occasions, only one interview per day was conducted to prevent participants from seeing other participants. Other interviews were conducted over the phone; I conducted several phone interviews on the same day in these cases, as the risk of participants seeing each other was not a

concern. Interviewees' names, pseudonyms, comments, and identifiers were never shared with other participants or non-participants. The names of the schools were also changed; the name of the research site was not mentioned in any documents pertaining to this study.

All electronic data were stored securely on a password-protected laptop and backed up on a password-protected external hard drive. This hard drive was kept in a locked file cabinet located at my residence. Once transferred to the laptop, all audio recordings of interviews on the Zoom H1 recorder were deleted, as there was no way to secure those files on that machine. All the returned questionnaires were scanned to PDF files and stored on the secured laptop. All the paper questionnaires were then shredded.

Data Analysis

I began the data analysis by revisiting my original research questions. I read each interview transcript individually several times and identified general codes in each transcript. Using NVivo software, each code was marked. Codes consisted of words or phrases that I believed were relevant to the research questions. In total, I initially identified 154 codes. Once coded, I reviewed the codes several times, grouping them into eight larger SES-related categories across all cases: transportation, economic issues, home musical environment, perceptions of others, instrumental availability, student musical experiences, cultural differences, and social interactions. I combined similar categories into four larger primary themes: sense of community, cultural differences, geographic location, and musical experiences.

I applied Bourdieu's theoretical concepts of habitus, capital, and field to this data by looking for descriptions, events, circumstantial evidence, and other factors within each theme and across themes that might be better understood through Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, capital, and field. As I analyzed the data, I began to notice differences in the habitus of low-SES and middle class families, ways in which capital was obtained and utilized for gain, and how power structures within the field of instrumental music ensembles, the school district, and the communities either promoted inclusion or exclusion of low-SES students and families. I tried to relate each new finding with those from existing literature as I drew conclusions. I gathered additional data from the school and state education websites, real estate websites, school yearbooks, concert programs, and collected field notes. The result is a highly descriptive analysis of particular SES-related phenomena affecting instrumental music participation in a specific school district; comparisons to prior research showed that many of the findings had been observed in other locations as well.

Reliability

Yin (2009) noted that reliability must be established in order to minimize the errors and biases in a study. To this end, I sent completed transcriptions to all interviewees for review and offered the opportunity to make any corrections or changes they deemed necessary, a process known as member checking (Creswell, 2009). One participant removed several curse words from the transcription but did not change any of the basic comments or data. Five participants left their interview data as transcribed, and three participants did not respond to my requests to review the data.

I shared my coding with two colleagues: a sociology professor at the institution where I currently teach, and a professor at a neighboring institution who regularly advises dissertations in the field of sociology. Additionally, I conferred with my dissertation advisor throughout the coding process. Feedback from these sources helped guide my codes while integrating theoretical concepts.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter I outlined the research procedures, focusing on research design, site selection, participant recruiting, data collection, and data analysis. To better envision the research site, I included a description of the town in which the site was located and discussed the demographics of the schools in which the study took place. In the following chapters, I present my findings and, through a Bourdieusian lens, address the research questions around which this study was based.

CHAPTER 4: INSTRUMENTAL PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Northwest Passage School District had an established tradition of strong instrumental and vocal music programs. Although overall enrollment in the instrumental ensembles had declined a decade before this study, the instrumental programs were once again growing. This growth occurred despite the large low-SES population that the district served, a population that, according to researchers, was less likely to continue participation in instrumental ensembles (Albert, 2006a; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Elpus & Abril, 2011). The district employed two instrumental music teachers. Mr. Smith taught all bands and elementary band lessons, and Ms. Jones taught all orchestras and elementary string lessons.

Overview of Instrumental Music Programs

The Northwest Passage School District had an established history of instrumental ensembles. Personal acquaintances that once attended Northwest Passage High School recalled a strong band tradition during the years they were in high school, and historical school records supported these claims. For example, school yearbooks from the 1950s included pictures of a marching band, concert bands, and orchestra among the school activities. Enrollment in the ensembles during these times was impressive. Pictures of the marching band from this era displayed a membership of over 200 students. These pictures were taken during a time when the steel mills located in and around the study city were in full operation and exceptionally profitable. My father worked in one of these mills most of his life. Most of the mills closed in the 1980s and 1990s, and unemployment was

widespread. My father was laid off several times leading up to the final closure of the mill where he worked, and once the mill closed, like many other families, he was out of work. I noticed a decline in the number of students in the instrumental ensembles in the photographs from the 1980s and 90s. Perhaps this was due to SES-related factors, or perhaps families simply moved out of the area to find work. Regardless, there seemed to be a correlation between the steel mills closing and decline in ensemble size.

These traditional instrumental ensembles continued to exist in the Northwest Passage School District at the time of this study. Both curricular and extracurricular instrumental ensembles were available to students. For the purpose of this study, curricular ensembles were defined as those that rehearsed regularly during normal school operating hours, and extracurricular ensembles were defined as those that rehearsed regularly outside of normal school operating hours. In addition to ensembles, fifth- and sixth-grade instrumental music students received weekly curricular instrumental group lesson. All ensembles, curricular and extracurricular, were open enrollment. Students were not required to audition for the ensembles; students were only required to sign up to participate. Table 3 shows all curricular and extracurricular instrumental ensembles offered at the time of this study, as well as the grade levels included in each ensemble.

Table 3. Instrumental Ensembles Offered 2016–2017

Ensembles	Curricular or Extracurricular	Included Grade Levels
High school concert band	Curricular	9–12
Eighth-grade concert band	Curricular	8
Seventh-grade concert band	Curricular	7
Three sixth-grade concert bands	Curricular	6
Three fifth-grade concert bands	Curricular	5
High school orchestra	Curricular	9–12
Eighth-grade orchestra	Curricular	8
Seventh-grade orchestra	Curricular	7
Three sixth-grade orchestras	Curricular	6
Three fifth-grade orchestras	Curricular	5
Marching band	Extracurricular	7–12
Jazz band	Extracurricular	8–12
Pep band	Extracurricular	7–12
High school chamber strings	Extracurricular	9–12
Junior high chamber strings	Extracurricular	7–8

Two instrumental music teachers taught all the instrumental music offerings in all five schools. The band director, Mr. Smith, taught fifth- and sixth-grade woodwind, brass, and percussion lessons and directed three fifth-grade concert bands, three sixth-grade concert bands, two junior high concert bands, senior high concert band, pep band, marching band, and jazz band. The orchestra director, Ms. Jones, taught fifth- and sixth-

grade string lessons and directed three fifth-grade orchestras, three sixth-grade orchestras, two junior high orchestras, and senior high orchestra.

The band and orchestra directors were active members of PMEA (Pennsylvania Music Educators Association) and regularly participated in the PMEA instrumental music festivals including district band and orchestra, honors band, and regional band and orchestra if students successfully auditioned into those festivals. Festival participation was considered extracurricular, although festivals did take place both during and after regular school hours and often required travel and hotel stays. According to the instrumental music directors, a small number of instrumental students from the high school were selected annually or auditioned into these festivals; however, those who participated were fully financially supported by the Northwest Passage School District and with necessary student and director release time. Although the financial support from the school district would have alleviated direct economic burdens that low-SES students participating in these festivals may have incurred, participation may have had indirect economic effects on low-SES students and their families, particularly if the students needed to work after school hours or on weekends to help financially support their families or stay with younger siblings while parents/guardians worked.

As the instrumental music directors were speaking about festival participation, I began to see how students from a low-SES background might feel a bit uncomfortable or out of place at these festivals. Participation in these events aligned more with middle class or highly affluent habitus than low-SES habitus. Participation in overnight festivals seemed connected somehow to concerted cultivation. Having taken students to similar

events throughout my career, it has been my experience that many students who participated in these festivals were also involved in private instrumental instruction of some sort. In some cases, concerted cultivation may have been an unspoken requirement to participate in honors festivals.

The instrumental music teachers noted that additional extracurricular instrumental music activities were offered in past years; however, these were not offered at the time of this study. These ensembles included a junior high jazz ensemble and an elementary bucket-drumming ensemble. According to Mr. Smith, the junior high jazz ensemble was eliminated due to a "lack of student dedication" (interview). The elementary bucket-drumming ensemble was offered for several years, although Mr. Smith could not recall exactly how many, and most recently during the 2013-2014 academic year. The ensemble consisted mostly of fourth-grade students who performed on plastic or metal buckets, garbage cans, and old pots and pans, and learned their parts by rote. A high school (non-music) teacher, amateur drummer, and music enthusiast voluntarily led this ensemble. Mr. Smith cited problematic rehearsal and performance attendance as the primary reason for the ensemble's elimination.

Because these ensembles were extracurricular, some students may not have been in control of their own attendance but rather may have been subject to their parents'/guardians' schedules and ability to pick them up after rehearsals ended. As previously mentioned, other SES-related influences, such as a junior high student needing to babysit younger siblings after school may have also played a role in the attendance issues. Lareau (2011) found that these types of scenarios are quite common in low-SES

and working-class families' and characteristic of their habitus.

Band was the larger of the two instrumental music programs offered in the Northwest Passage School District. More than twice as many students participated in band as did in orchestra. The band program provided more ensemble opportunities than the orchestra and served a larger student population. The orchestra program, although smaller than the band, served significantly larger numbers of low-SES students than the band (according to Ms. Jones). Countywide school district websites indicated that the Northwest Passage School District was one of only two districts in the county to include orchestra among their curricular instrumental offerings during the 2016-2017 academic year. Extracurricular offerings included pep band, marching band, jazz band, and chamber strings.

Band

The band program in the Northwest Passage School District began in fifth grade and continued through twelfth grade. Mr. Smith was responsible for all aspects of the band program, including initial band recruitment, band lessons, ensemble rehearsals, performance scheduling, arranging bus transportation to off-campus performances, festival coordination, and fundraising. Managing such an extensive list of responsibilities required a great deal of organization and cooperation between Mr. Smith, Ms. Jones, and classroom teachers.

Elementary Band and Lessons

Fifth- and sixth-grade band students left their regular classroom for instrumental

lessons starting in the first month of the academic year. This is often referred to as a pullout lesson format (Albert, 2006b; Wallick, 1998). Lesson groups ranged in size from three to ten students. Because the instrumental music teachers preferred homogeneously grouped lessons, lesson group size often depended on the number of students playing specific instruments. For example, if two students studied French horn, these students would likely take lessons together in a group of two; however, if 16 students studied flute, lessons may be organized into two groups of eight or four groups of four.

Students' class schedules and instrumental music teachers' availability also affected lesson group size, as the instrumental music teachers were only permitted to pull students for music lessons during administration-approved classes and times. Due to the instrumental music teachers' scheduled responsibilities in multiple buildings, they were only available to teach lessons in each school at certain times each day. Accommodating the music teachers' schedules often required the formation of larger lesson groups and sometimes resulted in non-homogeneous lesson groupings.

Mr. Smith indicated that on rare occasions some students were not permitted to attend elementary instrumental music lessons if their teacher felt they were struggling academically or if the teacher deemed that the material he or she was teaching at the time was more important. Situations like these were not regular occurrences and did not appear to be of major concern to the instrumental music teachers. Research indicated that pullout format has been a problem in some districts, however. Wallick (1998) noted four primary concerns that classroom teachers and administrators often had about pullout lesson format. These concerns included "(1) they are disruptive to whole class teaching,

(2) there is missed instructional time and time on task, (3) pullouts create teacher frustration and friction between staff members, and (4) students in pullout programs are believed to suffer academically" (p. 240). One might presume that the first and third concerns listed are more closely related to teacher convenience than student achievement, and that the second concern would be the root cause of the fourth. Wallick discovered that this was actually not the case, as no ill effects on academic achievement were observed in the vast majority of students involved in pullout lessons. Wallick wrote, "the evidence is compelling that students who were pulled out of regular academic classrooms for string instruction did *not* suffer negative effects in their academic performance, as measured by the Ohio Proficiency Test" (p. 243). This did not seem to be a trend in the Northwest Passage School District, as Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones mentioned that issues arising from students attending their pullout lessons were rare. The elementary teachers seemed to understand the importance of these lessons to the success of the instrumental music program. Mr. Smith noted that he and Ms. Jones conveyed the importance of these lessons to his teaching colleagues each year and were proactive regarding avoiding issues with the lesson schedule.

The fifth-grade band lesson schedule followed a four-day rotation that coincided with students' "specials" class rotation (physical education, art, library, computers). A student's instrumental lesson day changed each week due to this four-day cycle. The rotational nature of lessons did not seem to cause many issues for students, according to Mr. Smith:

> Having students rotate along with their specials classes actually helps a lot. The kid knows that when he has gym class, he also has band lessons. It

> is also nice to have the rotating days because we miss a lot of Monday and Friday lessons due to days off of school. The rotation assures that all students get roughly the same number of lessons. (interview)

The lesson rotation sometimes resulted in some students receiving two lessons in the same week, as those scheduled to take lessons on Monday also had lessons on Friday of that week, assuming school was in session Monday through Friday. Lesson groups were homogeneous in most cases, although some lessons were grouped according to instrument family.

The instrumental music teachers selected the fifth- and sixth-grade method books. Mr. Smith noted that he purchased a complete set of these method books for the classroom to accommodate students who could not afford to purchase their own copies. Many students in the band program used school-owned instruments (which will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5) and were charged a $10.00 fee yearly for the use of that instrument. The fee also covered the cost of the method book for that student.

Researchers indicated that expenses sometimes associated with instrumental music participation, including but not limited to the cost of obtaining an instrument, supplies, method books, and fees, can be a significant hindrance to participation (Albert, 2006a, 2006b; Ester & Turner, 2009). The provision of method books for the Northwest Passage School District students was another step toward removing this barrier for low-SES students; however, the $10 fee may still have proven to be burdensome for some families who may not have had the necessary economic capital available.

In addition to band lessons, fifth- and sixth-grade band students also rehearsed as full ensembles for 30 minutes every four days, following the same rotation as the lesson

schedule. Rehearsal days changed week to week due to this rotation, and some weeks the ensembles rehearsed twice—Monday and Friday—as a result of this rotation. Each elementary school had a fifth-grade band and a sixth-grade band, each with their own scheduled rehearsal times within the rotating schedule.

Mr. Smith expressed that he felt quite overwhelmed by his daily rehearsal and lessons schedule, as scheduling six elementary concert bands, two middle school concert bands, a high school concert band, and teaching fifth- and sixth-grade band lessons at three elementary schools was a daunting task that required him to be "as efficient as we can be" (interview). He noted that an assistant director would have made it much easier to accomplish necessary tasks and serve his students better. An assistant director position was not possible due to school budgetary concerns.

Concert Bands

Mr. Smith directed nine concert bands between the elementary, middle, and high schools. All concert bands were curricular, and letter grades for the ensembles were presented on students' report cards starting in fifth grade. The high school, seventh-grade, and eighth-grade concert bands performed two concerts per year. Traditionally, the first was in December and the second was in May. The fifth-grade concert bands performed a spring concert in May, and the sixth-grade concert bands performed a holiday themed concert in December and a spring concert in May. These concerts were performed during evening hours and on the high school stage. Students were required to find their own transportation to and from the concerts. Researchers have identified transportation as a limiting factor for some low-SES families (Solly, 1986). Finding transportation to and

from band events may have been a hindrance to some students.

The rehearsal schedule for the seventh- and eighth-grade concert bands were a bit convoluted and required sharing students with choir in order to maximize student participation and retention in these ensembles. Both junior high ensembles met four days each week: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. Eighth-grade concert band rehearsed during the first period of the day, and seventh-grade concert band rehearsed during the second period of the day. Seventh- and eighth-grade concert band rehearsals each lasted approximately 45 minutes.

Seventh- and eighth-grade orchestras rehearsed at the same time as the seventh- and eighth-grade bands. Because the orchestras consisted of string players only at the middle school level, this did not pose any conflict, as string players were not included in the bands, and winds and percussion were not included in the orchestras at the seventh- and eighth-grade levels. Because fifth grade students who wanted to begin instrumental study had to choose either a band instrument (woodwind, brass, or percussion) or an orchestra/string instrument (violin, viola, or cello) there were not any students crossing over between these ensembles and therefore no conflicts created by simultaneous rehearsals.

Mr. Smith pointed out that the seventh- and eighth-grade choirs also rehearsed at the same times as his seventh- and eighth-grade bands and Ms. Jones' seventh- and eighth-grade orchestras. Although there were no students who participated in both middle school band and middle school orchestra, many students in middle school band and orchestra sang in the choirs. The coinciding band, orchestra, and choir rehearsal

schedules created a conflict for any students wishing to participate in either band or orchestra and choir.

School administrators trusted the instrumental and vocal directors to find a solution to this problematic scheduling. To accommodate students wishing to sing and play in the bands or orchestras, the directors agreed that full instrumental ensemble rehearsals would occur on Mondays and Tuesdays, and full choir rehearsals would occur on Wednesdays and Thursdays. On Mondays and Tuesdays, students who sang in the choirs and played an instrumental ensemble attended the instrumental ensemble rehearsal, and the choir rehearsed these days without these students. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, these students attended choir rehearsals, and the instrumental ensembles rehearsed without these students. None of the seventh- or eighth-grade ensembles rehearsed on Fridays.

Given the large number of students in Mr. Smith's ensembles who also sang in the choirs, Mr. Smith often found himself using Wednesday and Thursday rehearsals as "sectional days" (interview) working with small groups of students, individual sections, and so forth:

> When you have that many kids gone, it's just hard to get a lot of ensemble work done. If you introduced anything new to the band with that many kids gone, you would just end up having to reintroduce it again when the full group was there. So, I feel the best use of that time is working with sections or groups of students on their section playing. (interview)

During sectional days, Mr. Smith insisted that all remaining students play their instrument for the entirety of each sectional rehearsal. During these times, instrument sections rehearsed their parts in small groups while Mr. Smith walked around offering

help, guidance, and advice. Mr. Smith noted that, to the onlooker, this might have seemed a bit chaotic given the cacophony of sound in the band room; however, he cited improved performance during full rehearsals, increased student confidence, and an increase in overall student understanding as indicators that sectional rehearsals benefited the seventh- and eighth-grade bands. Seventh- and eighth-grade students who participated in both band and choir, because of the rehearsal arrangements, did not have the opportunity to participate in band sectional days, potentially leading to these students falling behind those who attended both full band rehearsals and sectionals.

High school concert band rehearsals were scheduled daily from 2:00 p.m. to 2:50 p.m., 11th period of the day. This ensemble was the only one that Mr. Smith rehearsed every day of the week. Concert band rehearsals had few scheduling conflicts. Unlike seventh- and eighth-grade concert bands, high school concert band did not share rehearsal times with choirs. High school orchestra rehearsed at the same time as the high school concert band; however, no students participated in both ensembles, so sharing students was of no concern to the instrumental directors.

The high school concert band's December concert was a holiday-themed performance, whereas the May performance included traditional and new concert band repertoire. Repertoire choice for this and the other concert bands was something about which Mr. Smith was quite passionate. Mr. Smith took several things into consideration when selecting repertoire for his concert bands, including the instrumentation and ability of the groups for which he was programming, the variety of music on any given concert, and the musical concepts he wished to teach. When asked about programming and

literature selection, Mr. Smith provided insight into his thought processes:

> I try to think of the individual group that I have in front of me. I'm going to need something to open a concert with. I'm going to need something that's a little slower, something that will seem entertaining, but within that I try to make sure that I am actually teaching something with the pieces. For example, there will always be a piece in my eighth-grade spring concert that is in 6/8. Being able to play in 6/8 time is one of those things that they need to be able to know how to do. Another example of something I do: I make sure eighth grade band students learn to play four consecutive 16th notes that change pitch. I look for teachable moments like that within the music. I always ask, what are their strengths, what are their weaknesses, what strengths can I pull from to make sure they're successful, what weaknesses can I look at and improve without jeopardizing the overall product. (interview)

Interestingly, Mr. Smith did not mention or refer to cultural relevance (Ladson-Billings, 1995) or cultural responsiveness (Gay, 1994) as considerations for literature selection, but rather chose music based strictly on the inherent musical aspects of the pieces. Doyle (2014) noted that teachers who were college-trained in the Western musical tradition often model their own programs after their own experiences, focusing almost entirely on Western musical elements and literature. Doyle found that it might not be the "most culturally relevant vehicle to incite musical interest and participation for all populations" (p. 47). Blindness to cultural relevance and responsivity perpetuates the whitening of American instrumental music education, as pieces in Euroamerican styles become the only ones performed.

Mr. Smith did not require auditions for admittance into the concert bands, nor did he require auditions for chair placement within individual sections. Rather, he chose to rotate chairs and parts among students, giving everybody in sections with multiple parts—clarinets, trumpets, and alto saxophones for example—experience playing first,

second, or third parts when available. Sometimes students were simply placed on the parts that Mr. Smith believed would enable them to best contribute to the ensemble, excel individually, and from which they would grow as musicians. Effectively placing students in this manner required a great deal of knowledge on Mr. Smith's behalf—knowledge of how these students played, how they learned, and their potential for growth. Such knowledge was gained from what Mr. Smith called "investing [myself] in the student" (interview). Removing the competitive aspect from enrollment and chair seating may have helped to level the playing field a bit for low-SES students who could not afford private lessons, as they did not have to audition against students who did.

The choice to rotate parts among section members reflected Mr. Smith's desire to teach his students that every instrumental part was important and that all students needed to be ready to play any part within their section. Mr. Smith wanted to convey the message that every individual instrumentalist was important to the ensemble, was trusted, and was expected to contribute regardless of chair placement. Mr. Smith noted that he believed these expectations contributed to a positive experience for all students, growth, and a sense of importance within the band community. He indicated that the trust, respect, and expectations he held for every student was one of the keys to his success. Investments of time, resources, and attention were paramount in Mr. Smith's opinion:

> I make sure that I invest in the individual student. I am concerned with how they play and how they sound as an ensemble, but my first concern is who they are as people. If you want to have a successful program anywhere, you have to invest in the kids. (interview)

Albert (2006b) noted that teachers who are "dedicated to their students" (p. 62) stand a much better chance to gain students' "respect and trust" (p. 62), and

therefore retain those students within their ensembles. It appeared that Mr. Smith's decisions to invest in his students were based on similar conclusions.

Marching Band

The marching band was the largest instrumental ensemble in the school district. The marching band consisted of several student groups: instrumentalists, a dance line, majorettes, and a color guard. While the instrumentalists played, dance line members performed dances, often utilizing pom-poms and other props in their routines. The majorettes specialized in twirling batons, and the color guard specialized in spinning flags on long five- or six-foot poles, spinning rifles, and utilizing other traditional color guard props. All marching band members attended a mandatory band camp for 11 days in August, at which students learned music, marching drill, and routines for up to eight hours each day. Students provided their own transportation to and from camp and their own lunch each day of band camp. The marching band was considered extracurricular, rehearsing biweekly from the beginning of the academic year through the end of football season in November.

Of all the instrumental ensembles, the marching band required the largest time commitment, as it rehearsed after school several days per week, included a pre-fall semester band camp, and performed almost every weekend of the fall semester. This time commitment may have been a hindrance for some low-SES students. Students without transportation to and/or from rehearsals and performances, students who worked to help provide for their families, or students who needed to babysit younger siblings while their parents/guardians worked may have found the marching band schedule daunting and

unmanageable.

The marching band membership was unique to the instrumental ensembles, as it included band students in seventh through twelfth grades. A wide range of musical ability levels reflected the wide range of grade levels within the ensemble; however, Mr. Smith saw this not as a hindrance, but rather an opportunity for younger students to make connections, develop friendships, and grow. Further, he relied on the older students to take the younger ones under their wings, mentor them, be role models, and provide leadership within the ensemble. Mr. Smith believed this type of mentorship helped his students to develop community, relationships, and made marching band a fun experience:

> They have fun first of all, and whenever everybody's having fun, they become friends with who else is around them, and they want to be with those people. It's a positive snowball of people caring about other people and building each other up, working together, and just enjoying each other. And then when you add in the fact that you can make good music on top of that, it's so much fun that they just kind of get stuck on it. (interview)

The marching band may have attracted a larger number of students than other instrumental ensembles not only because of the wider range of grade levels involved, but also because of the multitude of unique opportunities that the marching band offered students. This ensemble was the most visible and well-known instrumental entity within the school district, participating in more performances than any other instrumental ensemble. The marching band performed at all Northwest Passage High School football games, many community events, local and regional parades, high school marching band festivals, and community holiday festivals. Additionally, the marching band traveled outside of the region every other year. (Ensemble travel will be discussed later in this

chapter and in Chapter 6.)

Marching band enrollment was bolstered by the addition of majorettes, color guard members, and dance line members, often referred to as frontlines. Unlike instrumentalists who generally needed to begin instrumental study in fifth grade in order to join the marching band in seventh grade, most frontline members could try out for any of the respective lines without prior experience. Majorettes were the exception, as majorette members typically had studied baton twirling privately or in baton classes offered through nearby baton corps. Baton corps were quite popular in this geographical area, and individuals paid to be members of these groups. An online search for "baton instruction" in the area produced four baton studios within 10 minutes of the Northwest Passage School District. Students at each of these studios participated in both individual and group competitions throughout the region. Low-SES students who could not afford to participate in private baton instruction may have found it difficult to become a majorette in the Northwest Passage High School marching band.

Marching band enrollment was open to all instrumentalists. There were no auditions required for instrumentalists to join the ensemble, but Mr. Smith sometimes auditioned drum line members for placement within the drum line, and drum majors were also chosen by audition. Although instrumentalists did not have an audition requirement in order to participate, majorettes, color guard members, and dance line members did. Mr. Smith noted that frontline members were judged at their tryouts by frontline advisors, cheer coaches, and other qualified individuals serving in similar capacities at neighboring school districts. Mr. Smith took special care to assure that, to

the best of his knowledge, the judges were impartial, unbiased, and did not know or have any pre-existing relationships with any of the students trying out for the frontlines. Although students auditioning for the majorette line needed to possess a specific skill set obtainable only through private instruction, students auditioning for the color guard and the dance line were not required to have had any special training; however, those students who did have private dance lessons or classes may have held an advantage over those who never received such training. Making the majorette line is another situation where concerted cultivation was an unspoken requirement for participation and another example of how the band's habitus more closely aligns with that of middle class or highly affluent families.

Marching band trips provided unique performance opportunities and unique educational, historical, and extra-musical components to students. Mr. Smith mentioned that he was considering a trip to Washington, D.C. or Chicago during the 2017–2018 academic school year, and he wanted to include on the itinerary a historical tour, museum visitation, and cultural events in addition to a premier performance. The marching band traveled to Disney World in Orlando, Florida, every other trip (once every four years), and participated in parade performances at the Magic Kingdom, Epcot Center, or Disney Hollywood Studios. According to Mr. Smith, the travel opportunities that the marching band provided had a large impact on retention of band students, despite the overall cost of such travel.

Although the school district fully funded marching band performances that were tied to school functions or community events such as football games, parades, band

festivals, and holiday festivals, the district did not provide funding for events that were not related to school functions or community events, including marching band trips to Disney World or other distant locations. Marching band members were responsible for providing their own funding for these trips. The cost for a student to participate in band trips varied depending on the trip destination, length of the trip, price and means of transportation, number of students participating in the trip, number of included meals, and other variables. Mr. Smith noted that the cost to participate in the previous Disney trip two years ago was approximately $1000 per band member. Although some parents/guardians were able to pay for their children's trip, some students had to fund raise to cover much of the cost, and still others were unable to raise the necessary funds and could not afford to participate. I discuss SES and fundraising further in Chapter 5.

Researchers found that ensemble directors, students, and parents often viewed ensemble travel as beneficial. Holcomb (2003) studied five band programs in Michigan, each of which traveled regularly. At each school, Holcomb interviewed the band director, an administrator, band parents, and 105 students collectively. Holcomb found the top two reasons students enjoyed traveling with the ensembles were for the travel experience itself and for the social interactions they experienced while traveling. Some parents expressed concern over the cost of these trips, but they also recognized the benefits their children gained from participation. The directors indicated the primary benefits they experienced from these trips included recruitment, retention, performance opportunities, educational experiences that can only be obtained through travel, cultural experiences, and the bonding that students experienced.

Ensembles from the schools in Holcomb's (2003) study, like those in the Northwest Passage School District, traveled not only because of the benefits listed above, but also because the directors felt that travel was an obligation. Mr. Smith noted that travel had been part of the Northwest Passage marching band's tradition for years, and that other school bands tended to travel. Holcomb also noted that some of the directors interviewed during the 2003 study also felt pressured to travel, as they were trying to "keep up with the Joneses." Although travel was part of the band habitus, travel may not have been part of low-SES families' habitus due to the economic capital required. Ensemble travel aligned more closely with middle class and highly affluent family habitus.

Stone and Petrick (2013) pointed out that a 2008 study by the Student Youth and Travel Association named travel as an essential part of a child's education. Low-SES students may have difficulty paying for travel experiences, and further, may not feel comfortable participating even if economic capital were provided, as travel may not be characteristic of their habitus. This begs the question: are educators denying low-SES students an essential part of their education if these students do not wish to or cannot travel with their middle class or highly affluent classmates?

Holcomb's (2003) findings indicated that music directors considered travel important, and that students who participated in those opportunities benefited from the experiences. Ensemble retention apparently also benefited. These studies do not directly address questions or concerns about students who could not afford to participate in these experiences, other than noting that they offered fundraising opportunities and sought

community grants to help those who struggled financially. The question of *who* ensemble travel helped to retain is also important.

There were a lot of similarities between the schools in Holcomb's study and the Northwest Passage School District regarding ensemble travel. Although ensemble travel did seem beneficial to those who participated, concerns about *which* students got to participate in ensemble travel, *which* students received the benefits from these excursions, and *which* students were left home because of SES-related factors beyond their control, therefore missing out on an "essential part" of their education, seemed to remain unanswered. As travel was used as a community building activity in all of these schools, one must wonder if students who were not able to participate felt included in or left out of that community. If they felt left out, how did that impact their decisions to persist within the ensembles? Participation in instrumental ensembles has been shown to be psychosocially beneficial to low-SES students, as it helps to mitigate the effects of low-SES on self-esteem (Ester & Turner, 2009); however, one might logically assume that potential embarrassment experienced by students who have to stay home from ensemble trips because of SES-related factors may undermine these benefits, perhaps even leading to discontinuation in the ensembles.

Before Mr. Smith began teaching at Northwest Passage, the marching band traditionally had traveled to Disney World every two years. Parents and colleagues within the district informed Mr. Smith that this travel schedule placed a very heavy financial burden on many families, and that fundraising efforts, for many families, did not produce enough money to adequately defray the cost of the trip. Participation in the Disney World

trips prior to Mr. Smith's arrival and during his first several years teaching at Northwest Passage was an issue. Students backed out of the trip for financial reasons up until a few days before departure, and the decreasing numbers in the ensemble impacted the performance and experience of those who did participate. In response, Mr. Smith changed the travel schedule to include a Disney World trip once every four years, and a smaller, more affordable trip every two years, between the marching band's Disney World appearances:

> The band trip is completely student funded. The band flew to Disney World every two years. Funding a $1000 trip to Walt Disney World every other year can kind of get a little expensive, and because of that the list of participants was constantly changing. We had to wait until the last couple of days before departure to see what type of performance we were going to be able to do. Moving forward, we are going to go to Disney every four years. We need to be a little bit more conscientious of the cost. We're still going to travel every two years but understanding that the Disney trip is going to be every fourth year and then do something smaller—something that's a little bit more affordable. (Smith, interview)

Mr. Smith did not indicate how much the "smaller" trips might cost; however, I have organized similar trips for my high school bands in past years, and the prices of those trips were between $600-$750 per student. The cost of these trips, even if lower than my estimates, might prove to be overwhelming for low-SES students. For comparison, Holcomb (2003) indicated prices for ensemble trips in the schools that she studied ranged from $500-$2300.

Mr. Smith received assistance with many organizational and logistical aspects of the band program, including fundraising for travel, chaperoning band events, operating the band concession stand at football games, and purchasing items for the band that would otherwise not be affordable in the limited band budget from a band booster

organization. According to Mr. Smith, were it not for the efforts of the band boosters, marching band trips would not have been possible. All parents/guardians of marching band members were invited to be part of the band booster organization; however, Mr. Smith indicated that only a few of the parents became highly involved. Others helped if asked, but did not volunteer otherwise, and some parents/guardians chose to remain uninvolved.

Lareau's (2011) research may help explain why some low-SES parents may not have become involved with the band boosters: The author found that low-SES and working-class families often did not become involved in school activities, but rather separated their home lives from their children's school lives more so than did middle class and highly affluent families. This might have been out of necessity, as some low-SES parents/guardians may have had to work several jobs in order to make ends meet. Interestingly, there were also quite a few middle class and highly affluent parents who also did not participate in the booster group, but rather, according to Mr. Smith, the same small group of parents seemed to do everything within the boosters despite the fact that all students in the band benefitted from the boosters' efforts. Middle-class privilege and a sense of entitlement may have played a role in middle class and highly affluent parents' decision not to be involved, thus allowing their children to benefit from the hard work of others.

The band booster organization existed almost exclusively to assist the marching band and appropriated all finances to that ensemble. The marching band was the most expensive ensemble in the district and required more financial assistance than did other

ensembles. This was in part due to marching band trips, uniform maintenance and replacement, and instrument repair and replacement due to the excessive wear and tear that instruments endured throughout the unpredictable weather of football season. Mr. Smith indicated that he paid for as many repairs and maintenance items as he could from his budget, but there were times when he had to ask the band boosters for assistance.

Jazz Band

The high school jazz band was an extracurricular ensemble that rehearsed once per week and included students from Grades 8 through 12. These rehearsals began once marching band season ended in November and continued through the spring semester. The jazz ensemble performed a yearly concert as a "café style thing" (Smith, interview) each spring, and has played at local and regional high school jazz festivals in the past. Instrumentation of the jazz ensemble followed that of traditional big bands, including a saxophone line, trombones, trumpets, and a rhythm section consisting of drums, bass, guitar, vibes, and piano. There were years when Mr. Smith included additional instruments such as clarinet, baritone, and flute. This was done for several reasons. First, Mr. Smith noted that he wished to give students opportunities to have musical experiences, even if that meant breaking away from traditional ensemble instrumentation. Second, Mr. Smith sometimes needed to include additional instrumentalists to fill the ensemble and cover parts. This required unconventional instrumentation.

In some years, Mr. Smith formed a junior high jazz ensemble in addition to the high school jazz ensemble. This ensemble consisted of similar instrumentation as the high school jazz band but included students in Grades 7 and 8. The decision to form the

junior high jazz band was based on student interest and ability to attend rehearsals regularly. There was no junior high jazz ensemble during the 2016–2017 school year. According to Mr. Smith, there was not enough student interest or commitment to form the ensemble. Mr. Smith had formed the junior high jazz band the previous academic year.

Mr. Smith chose repertoire for the jazz ensemble based on several criteria. These included the overall ability level of the student musicians, ability to prepare the repertoire given the limited rehearsal time of the ensemble, and exposure to different types of jazz idioms including swing, rock, funk, jazz standards, and Latin jazz. It appeared that a greater diversity in terms of musical styles was associated with the jazz band than the concert or marching bands. As jazz was originally an African American form of music, it made sense that this ensemble played music by African American composers. I found it refreshing to see this diversity.

Pep Band

Pep band was an extracurricular ensemble that performed at home basketball games, pep rallies, and school events, and consisted of volunteer instrumentalists from Grades 7 through 12. This ensemble did not rehearse regularly, but rather assembled "before the basketball games and practiced for 20 minutes" before the games started (Smith, interview). Marching band music from the last few marching seasons often doubled as pep band music. Most students in the pep band were also members of the marching band and were familiar with the repertoire, therefore reducing the amount of rehearsal time necessary.

The pep band was the only band treated as a service ensemble. In other words, the purpose of the pep band was to provide music and entertainment for basketball games, enhance school spirit, and excite the crowd. There was no set curriculum for the pep band; repertoire was borrowed from the marching band, and the purposes of the short rehearsals before the games seemed to be to ensure that everyone was familiar enough with the music and that the ensemble would be able to perform the selections without major issues. Although the marching band also served similar service-related purposes at football games, Mr. Smith used the marching band as a teaching ensemble, focusing on musicality, expressiveness, and technical ability; the pep band was approached much differently. Pep band was an opportunity for students to utilize the skills that they had honed within the other ensembles in a fun, energized, and relaxed atmosphere.

According to several parent/guardian participants, the pep band was a favorite ensemble of many students. Although the pep band did not rehearse regularly or often, they did perform at many basketball games, which occurred during evening hours on weekdays. On game days, pep band members would go home after school and then have to find transportation to the school before the start of the game and transportation home after the game concluded. Students who were unable to secure transportation to the school and back home may not have been able to participate in the pep band.

Enrollment

Mr. Smith began teaching in the school district in 2013, and between 2013 and 2017, enrollment in the bands increased. The high school concert band included 25 students in 2013, Mr. Smith's first year at Northwest Passage High School. During the

2016-2017 academic year, the high school concert band included 36 members, representing a 44% increase in enrollment over three years. The marching band included 40 members consisting of 30 instrumentalists and 10 frontline members (color guard, majorettes, and dance line) in 2013. Marching band membership had grown to 100 members, an increase of approximately 233%. The 2016–2017 marching band included 70 instrumentalists and 30 frontline members. The eighth-grade concert band included 15 instrumentalists in 2013, and enrollment increased to 25 members during the 2016–2017 academic year, a 67% increase in enrollment.

To better understand enrollment trends within the band program, I tracked concert band enrollment records over a four-year time frame, from the 2013-2014 academic year through the 2016-2017 academic year, per Mr. Smith's records contained within concert programs. The eighth-grade class was the first class that Mr. Smith taught as fifth graders, and therefore these students never had a school band director other than Mr. Smith. Mr. Smith noted that instrumental student enrollment in the classes which he had started as fifth graders was notably higher than enrollment in classes which had started instrumental study as fifth graders under the former director. Table 4 shows concert band enrollment broken down by grade level for the 2016–2017 academic school year.

Table 4. Concert Band Enrollment

Grade Level 2016–2017 Academic Year	Number of Band Students in Grade
5	55
6	36
7	30
8	25
9	15
10	7
11	8
12	6

Orchestra

The Northwest Passage School District's orchestra program mirrored the band program in many regards. The rehearsal schedules for seventh grade, eighth grade, and high school orchestra were identical to those of the band and held during the same class periods on the same days. Elementary string lessons, fifth grade, and sixth grade orchestra rehearsals were scheduled around the same four-day rotation that band lessons and rehearsals followed. Like elementary band lessons, orchestra lessons were structured as pullout lessons. The four-day rotation sometimes resulted in some students receiving two lessons per week. Some weeks the schedule provided the opportunity for two orchestra rehearsals due to this rotation. The band and orchestra programs included curricular and extracurricular ensembles and performance opportunities, and both

programs gave students opportunities to travel.

Because of the pullout format of the band and orchestra lessons, the administration's desire to keep students in the classroom as much as possible, and the conflicting rehearsal times starting at the seventh-grade level, students who wished to play an instrument had to choose either a string instrument or a band instrument. There was very little crossover between the ensembles at the high school level, and no crossover at the elementary level. The majority of crossover that occurred at the junior high and high school levels involved the orchestra and extracurricular bands. Some string players participated in the marching band frontlines. Other orchestra members participated in the jazz ensemble, as the instrumentation of this ensemble included string bass and guitar players.

Although the majority of crossover occurred between orchestra and extracurricular bands, there was limited crossover between concert band and orchestra. Ms. Jones noted that she desired to work toward more collaboration between high school orchestra and concert band and had begun to select some pieces that included woodwinds, brass, and percussion. Ms. Jones and Mr. Smith started to collaborate accordingly during the 2016–2017 school year. "We've started combining with the band to do full orchestra works in Grades 8 through 12" (Jones, interview). Because of the simultaneous rehearsal schedules, such collaboration required Mr. Smith to share students and grant them permission to miss some of his rehearsals to attend the orchestra rehearsals. Neither Mr. Smith nor Ms. Jones indicated how often band students attended orchestra rehearsals; however, sharing students was never an issue for Mr. Smith: "I do a

really good job of sharing kids, and I have no problem saying that I do" (interview). Concert band students who participated in both concert band and orchestra did so voluntarily. They were permitted and able to officially schedule only one of these ensembles, and therefore could not receive academic credit for orchestra.

Elementary Orchestra and Lessons

Like elementary band students, elementary string students were pulled out of classes for their lessons. String lessons were grouped homogeneously, and group sizes varied based on the availability of the teacher, the students' academic schedule, and the number of students on each instrument. Orchestra rehearsal and lesson schedules followed the same four-day rotation as band lessons and rehearsals. Beginning orchestra students chose from one of three instruments: violin, viola, or cello. String bass was not introduced to students until at least seventh grade, and only to those students who were physically capable of handling the larger instrument. The string basses used in the orchestra program were school-owned, limited in number, and aging. They were also large instruments, sized for high school students. The elementary schools did not own smaller basses that would have been more suited for smaller students, and the school budget did not permit the purchase of any. Ms. Jones did not mention whether or not she ever pursued obtaining smaller basses for elementary students.

The elementary orchestras performed publicly in the high school auditorium. The fifth-grade orchestra performed one concert each year, in May. The sixth-grade orchestra performed a December holiday-themed concert, and again in May. The orchestra concerts took place during evening hours, requiring additional transportation to and from the

school on the evenings of performances. Providing transportation to and from orchestra events may have created a burden on some families.

Facilities played an important role in lesson size. Although elementary orchestra students from North Elementary School, which was located within a few steps of the high school, often took their lessons in the high school facilities, East and West Elementary schools were located too far away to utilize the high school facilities. Costa-Giomi (2008) found significant differences in the quality of school facilities between low-SES and more affluent schools; lower SES school facilities were often not on par with those of their more affluent counterparts in terms of modernization, technology, layout, and equipment. This seemed to be the case in the instrumental music spaces of East and West Elementary Schools with those located in North Elementary School. Space in East and West Elementary schools was limited, and there was no regularly available, dedicated space for orchestra:

> North Elementary School is right next door [to the high school], and so those students tend to get the best lesson experience. I don't teach in the elementary building. I open my high school door, elementary students watch for me from the elementary door, I give them a waive, they come over, and I teach them in my high school space where all of my supplies are, where my office is, where my phone is, where my computer is, where my stereo is. If I need extra copies of something, [the copier] is there. In East and West Elementary Schools, "room" is probably a really generous term for my space—closet is probably accurate. In those two other buildings, I can't teach more than five or six kids at a time, simply because there's not enough space. We often have to go looking for other available spaces. That lack of continuity, I think, is disruptive and distracting. (Jones, interview)

Most of the low-SES families served by the Northwest Passage School District lived in the outlying neighborhoods of the town, and children in these neighborhoods

attended East or West Elementary Schools. In many cases, these families could not afford to live in the wealthier neighborhoods served by North Elementary School, and therefore did not have the same opportunities to have the "best elementary experience," as Ms. Jones mentioned above, as did the children from families who could afford to live in the wealthier neighborhoods. Students living in disadvantaged neighborhoods located several miles away from the school may have faced challenges getting to the school or home after extracurricular activities, as they lived too far away to walk to the school and may not have had readily available transportation. I discuss the impact of geography and SES in greater detail in Chapter 5.

Various neighborhoods in the Northwest Passage seemed to be segregated by race and SES. Areas served by East and West Elementary Schools were home to many low-SES and minority families, and areas served by North Elementary were home to many middle class and highly affluent families. Researchers discovered compelling evidence that SES segregation within communities leads to similar segregation within schools and affects behavior, achievement, attainment, and participation in activities (Bruch, 2014; Iceland & Wilkes, 2006; Palardy, 2013; Reardon & Bischoff, 2011). Low SES-students who lived in the outlying neighborhoods may have had issues with extracurricular participation due to lack of transportation, the need to supervise younger siblings, or the necessity to work and help support the family. Students from these areas may have also struggled to attain as they progressed from elementary school to middle and high school. Palardy (2013) found that attainment was closely linked to peer influences, which "tend to be negative in low socioeconomic composition settings" (p. 714). Participants in my

study noted that peer groups from the three elementary schools tended to remain intact through middle school and into high school. These groups struggled to socially integrate and remained somewhat segregated by race and SES. I discuss ways in which this phenomenon manifested in the Northwest Passage School District in Chapter 5.

Ms. Jones noted that she utilized several different method books from two separate series as her instructional materials with the fifth- and sixth-grade string students, and incorporated practice assignments, playing tests, and a reward system into her teaching. This reward system served as an extrinsic motivational tool, as each time students passed a landmark playing test, they received a different color ribbon and attached it to the scroll of their instrument with a rubber band or ponytail holder. Ms. Jones indicated that this reward system, at the fifth- and sixth-grade levels, was highly effective:

> By the time you're done with book three of both series, [students] have this gigantic "poof" of all of these wonderful colors. Everyone at every concert can see all of your accomplishments. (interview)

Fifth- and sixth-grade orchestra students used a total of six lesson books, contrasting the elementary band experience, which included only one lesson book. Ms. Jones prioritized ensuring that her students had access to these books and understood that requiring families to purchase six books might create a financial burden that could potentially alienate some students from the program. Books were provided in several ways. First, students utilizing school-owned instruments, which included the vast majority of orchestra members, were charged a $10.00 fee. This money was used, in part, to purchase additional method books. Low-SES families that lacked the economic capital

to pay this fee may have found it to be a burden. Ms. Jones also committed a portion of the orchestra budget for the purchase of method books. Finally, those who could afford to purchase their own books were encouraged to do so:

> When I start my kids, if there is money in the school district budget, I get as many new books as I can. If we don't have enough, or if you lose the one I have given you, then we just start Xeroxing. I hate doing that . . . it's not right. (interview)

Ms. Jones' unsolicited admission to copyright infringement and acknowledgement that such actions are "not right" indicated the lengths to which she was willing to go to assist low-SES students who had no way of otherwise obtaining lesson books. Although copyright laws are in part meant to protect intellectual property, in the above-mentioned scenario, these laws contribute to the disadvantaging of low-SES students. Inadequate school funding, the actual cause for the need to photocopy lesson books, is to blame for these inequities.

Middle School Orchestras

The Northwest Passage School District had two middle school orchestras: a seventh-grade ensemble, and an eighth-grade ensemble. The middle school orchestras performed two concerts each year: a December holiday themed concert, and a spring concert in May. The rehearsal schedule of these orchestras mirrored those of the seventh- and eighth-grade bands. Ms. Jones was satisfied with this rehearsal schedule, as it allowed students to participate in both instrumental and vocal music.

The availability of rehearsal space for seventh- through twelfth-grade orchestras was a concern. Although the bands regularly rehearsed in a dedicated band room, the

orchestras did not have a dedicated rehearsal space. Rather, the orchestras rehearsed on the auditorium stage. Using the stage had advantages and disadvantages. The orchestras benefitted from being able to rehearse in the space where their concerts occurred, and consequently were well adapted to the acoustics of the auditorium and comfortable with the lights, stage setup, and conditions in which they performed. The orchestra sometimes lost rehearsal time when other events were scheduled in the auditorium. Ms. Jones explained that the orchestras "use the auditorium as a classroom . . . If there's something going on in the auditorium, we lose that classroom, and then we lose that rehearsal time" (interview). When other events required the use of the auditorium, the orchestras were relocated to a non-music classroom that resulted in a study hall for orchestra students.

High School Orchestra

Like the middle school and elementary orchestras, the high school orchestra's rehearsal schedule mirrored that of the bands, rehearsing daily and at the same time. The high school orchestra traditionally consisted of strings only; however, Ms. Jones and Mr. Smith intentionally included winds and percussion on some pieces during the 2016-2017 academic year to expand the orchestra's repertoire and offer more diverse orchestral experiences to string, percussion, and wind players. This required student sharing during the rehearsal times. The directors devised a rehearsal schedule for certain students that permitted them to cross over between these ensembles.

The high school orchestra performed two concerts per year: a holiday themed concert in December, and a spring concert in May. The orchestra also provided service music for high school graduation each year. Members of the high school orchestra had

opportunities to perform outside of regular orchestra rehearsals and concerts. Chamber ensembles, discussed later in this chapter, were formed from members of the high school orchestra, and Ms. Jones was an advocate of orchestral festivals, guest conductors, and other outside performance opportunities:

> Interspersed among our regular performances, we do optional events. We host the county orchestra festival. We're participating in an orchestra festival in October this year, and that's optional. We're doing another one in February. The kids have the option to go to the PMEA district, region, and state orchestra festivals as well. (interview)

The optional festival experiences, like those offered through the band program, seemed to be more closely aligned with middle class and highly affluent family habitus. Some of these experiences required hotel stays or travel, and some, such as PMEA district, regional, and state festivals, tended to favor students who studied privately (concerted cultivation). Low-SES students may have felt uncomfortable or been unable to participate in some of these events.

Travel was traditionally a highly anticipated and motivating aspect of the high school orchestra. Ms. Jones saw orchestra trips as an opportunity to expose her students to unique performance opportunities, to improve the ensemble through adjudication, and as a motivating factor that aided in student retention. "Sometimes I take a road trip, and we do an assessment festival in an amusement park. Every other year we go on the road and do Disney or New York" (interview).

Ms. Jones not only valued the musical development aspects of orchestra trips, but also the life skills that students learned from traveling:

> When we went to Disney, we flew. We felt that was really important. A lot of our kids have never been on an airplane before. We were going on a

> music trip, but we were also teaching you how to navigate the airport, how to travel with a group of people, how to be away from your parent for seven nights, how to not lose your luggage, what to do when you do lose your luggage. All of those things go beyond simply making musicians. We are making responsible human beings, and we really consider all of that when we do the trips. (interview)

Ms. Jones prioritized convenience and the opportunity to offer the experience of flying to students above any economic concerns; however, she did attempt to alleviate financial burdens through fundraising efforts. Traveling by airplane rather than buses pushed the per-student price of the Disney World trip to over $1000. Expensive trips such as these posed financial challenges for many of the orchestra students according to Ms. Jones. Holcomb (2003) and Helsel (2015) found that many families were concerned about ensemble trip affordability. Many orchestra students' families struggled with the significant expenses associated with these trips, according to Ms. Jones. Fundraisers were imperative, and Ms. Jones provided plenty of opportunities for students to raise funds to help defray the costs of such travel. Fundraisers consisted mostly of various sales, as the orchestra did not have the benefit of a parent booster program, and therefore large-scale fundraisers such as concession sales at sporting events, spaghetti dinners, and the like, were not easily organized. Ms. Jones explained:

> I run a candy bar sale. We're not allowed to sell them during the school day, so I don't. I have the boxes in my office, and every so often I will walk into my office and the boxes will be open, and there will be a pile of dollar bills on my desk. The money goes into individual student accounts, so if you fundraise . . . your Disney trip payment can be cheaper. (interview)

It appeared that Ms. Jones did what she could to alleviate issues that low-SES students had regarding economic capital and ensemble travel; however, in some cases,

fundraising efforts were not enough. The orchestra's habitus, particularly when it came to ensemble travel, aligned more closely with that of middle class and highly affluent families.

Ms. Jones and Mr. Smith viewed ensemble travel as opportunities to build community but presented travel opportunities as non-mandatory to their students. Students made payments on the trips throughout the school year; however, at times students were unable to produce the necessary funding to meet certain payment deadlines. Flexibility in regard to trip payment was a key factor in maximizing student participation in these trips and performances. Ms. Jones explained that parents/guardians of her students sometimes had to delay trip payments until they had the funds available to cover the installments:

> Our trips are opportunities. We take the fifth and sixth graders to the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame; we take the seventh and eighth graders to the Pittsburgh symphony; we take the high school kids on those big, long road trips, but we also try and do something with everyone every year. You are not required to go with us. (interview)

Although orchestra trips appeared to aid in student retention, Ms. Jones pointed out several other factors that she believed led to continued student involvement in her high school ensemble. These included the joy students felt when playing their instruments, the desire for students to participate in an activity with their friends, résumé building, and the fact that orchestra had become routine and a regular part of school life for many students. Ms. Jones noted several additional factors that potentially led to student retention:

> I think some of them genuinely like playing their instruments. For some, their friends are there, so they stay with their friends. I think, some of

> them have always done it, so they are not going to quit now. They want it on their résumé for every year. Some of them know if they can hang on long enough, I'll take them to Disney World. That's a big hook. Without sounding egotistical, I think I am the closest thing they have to a parent. I am their safe place. (interview)

Ms. Jones acknowledged that having "friends there" was a contributing factor to orchestra member retention. Researchers have indicated that relationships between students have been a contributing factor to retention (Albert, 2005; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Deisler, 2011; Justus, 2001; Kruth, 1964). Relationships and social connections as facilitating factors in retention of instrumental music students reinforce the importance of the social aspect of instrumental ensembles.

Chamber Strings

Two chamber strings ensembles existed in the Northwest Passage School District, one at the junior high level, and the other at the high school level. These extracurricular ensembles rehearsed regularly after school and performed several times throughout the year. Ms. Jones noted that the chamber string ensembles went through several "transformations as the years necessitate" (interview). This was to say that the ensembles provided service music for school events in addition to their concert repertoire. The chamber strings often provided ceremonial music for special occasions within the school and at outside events. The ensembles also performed at the annual holiday concert in December, and at the coffee house style performance along with the jazz ensemble in May. These performances took place during evening hours at the high school, and students were required to supply their own transportation to and from the events. This may have created a burden for some families.

The repertoire Ms. Jones selected for the chamber strings tended to be more advanced than the repertoire she selected for the school orchestras. She noted that the high school chamber strings were working on a Vivaldi string quartet, and that some of her high school students were "begging to play Brandenburg [Concerto]" (interview). Ms. Jones believed that all students participating in the high school ensemble should, at some point, experience certain pieces:

> I want everybody to leave playing a *Brandenburg*. I want everybody to leave playing *Eine Kleine*. I want everybody to leave playing Pachelbel at least once. I try to give them breadth and scope, slow and fast, and a good representation of all the historical styles. (interview)

Interestingly, throughout my communications with Ms. Jones, each piece she mentioned as important—*Eine Kleine, Brandenburg Concerto,* and Pachelbel's "Canon" for example—came from traditional European orchestral repertoire. The orchestral music mentioned displayed little cultural diversity.

Enrollment

Enrollment in the orchestras has remained steady throughout most of Ms. Jones' tenure in the Northwest Passage School District. Ms. Jones began teaching in the Northwest Passage School District in 2005, and students have become accustomed to her systems of recruitment, rehearsal, teaching, and personality. Student familiarity with the director and the director's consistency to the program contributed, in Ms. Jones opinion, to "stable enrollment numbers" (interview). Although fewer students participated in orchestra than in band, Ms. Jones did not seem to have any concerns about enrollment numbers or instrumentation. She did note that from time to time, she adapted repertoire

scoring to accommodate the instrumentation of the ensembles. Ms. Jones mentioned orchestral ensembles enjoyed a certain flexibility that bands did not, due to the manner in which much of the repertoire she selected was scored:

> There have been some years where we've used third violin parts because we don't have enough violas. But with strings especially, there are only four parts, five if you want to count the bass, which sometimes you have and sometimes you don't. With the little kids, sometimes composers only include one violin part. It's a different animal than the band world. (interview)

The orchestras' enrollment trends mirrored the bands', as larger instrumental classes appeared in the lower grades and smaller instrumental classes in the later grades. A steady decline in enrollment numbers from fifth grade through twelfth grade was clear during the 2016–2017 academic year. Table 5 shows orchestra enrollment by grade level.

Table 5. Orchestra Enrollment

Grade Level 2016–2017 Academic Year	Number of Orchestra Students in Grade
5	44
6	32
7	32
8	17
9	14
10	10
11	6
12	5

Additional Ensembles

Although this study focused on instrumental music participation, it is worth noting that a strong choral tradition also existed within the Northwest Passage School District. Choral ensembles played a role in instrumental ensemble retention in some cases, as scheduling conflicts between instrumental and choral ensembles sometimes arose. The curricular choral ensembles offered open enrollment, while the extracurricular choral ensembles were auditioned. Many instrumental music students participated in one or more of the choral ensembles. Table 6 shows the various choral ensembles offered in the Northwest Passage School District, whether they were extracurricular or curricular, and the grade levels involved in each ensemble.

Table 6. Choral Ensembles

Choral ensemble	Curricular/extracurricular	Grade levels
High school concert choir	Curricular	9-12
Junior high concert choir	Curricular	7-8
Elementary choir	Curricular	5-6
Show choir	Extracurricular	9-12
Chamber singers	Extracurricular	9-12

Instrumental Music Student Recruitment

Direct Recruitment

Organized recruiting activities were focused at the fifth-grade level; however, students learned to play recorders and studied the instrument families in fourth grade. Mr.

Smith and Ms. Jones both viewed these activities as essential and the beginning of students' preparation for instrumental study in fifth grade. Ms. Jones noted that the instrumental music teachers have "really good relationships" (interview) with the elementary music teachers. These relationships were crucial to recruitment of instrumental music students, as the elementary music teachers taught recorder to the fourth graders, allowed the instrumental music teachers to visit their classrooms to speak to students about instrumental music study, and encouraged students to join the band or orchestra. The instrumental ensemble directors' visits to the elementary music classrooms provided younger students with exposure to the instrumental ensembles and provided information about the programs and generated excitement about joining. Albert (2006b) found exposure to instrumental ensembles to be "a major element in [instrumental music teacher] recruiting strategies" (p. 60).

Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones organized instrumental music recruitment events during the first few weeks of the academic school year. These events were directed toward fifth grade students and were held at all three elementary schools. During these events, fifth grade students were gathered together in a large room, and the instrumental music teachers spoke to them about the instrumental music programs, demonstrated the instruments, and answered questions. The instrumental music teachers ended the meeting by distributing a sign-up form and letter to parents/guardians explaining the elementary band and orchestra program, expectations, and other pertinent information. Students needed to return the completed form to sign up for instrumental lessons. Although transportation to and from recruitment meetings may have been a burden for some

families, the directors made extra forms and sign-up sheets available to students who were unable to attend these meetings. Students only needed to ask their teachers to obtain them. Lareau (2011) found stark differences between low-SES and middle class and highly affluent family parenting styles. One of these differences included the ways parents/guardians influence their children's responses to adults. Lareau noted that middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians typically taught their children to speak to and with adults, while low-SES parents/guardians often did not. This particular characteristic of low-SES habitus may have affected some students' willingness to ask for these forms if unsolicited.

At past recruitment meetings, Mr. Smith noted that he sometimes had high school music students demonstrate the instruments for the fifth-grade students, and in some cases had permitted fifth-grade students to try band instruments. This was not the case at the 2016 recruitment meeting. He did not believe that the lack of student demonstrations or opportunities for fifth-grade students to try the instruments negatively affected enrollment:

> Interestingly, this is the first year that we had no time to let anybody try the instruments, and our fifth-grade enrolment is up by about one-third. I can't figure that one out. You would think if they had a chance to actually get their hands on instruments that they might be a little bit more excited about it. Out of a class of 150 or so, I have 65 fifth graders signed up to play instruments. (interview)

Ms. Jones provided instrument demonstrations for the fifth-grade students at recruitment meetings; however, rather than having high school students demonstrate the instruments, she demonstrated the instruments for prospective orchestra members. Fifth-grade students were not permitted to try the string instruments at the meetings, but Ms.

Jones did engage them in the demonstrations through a type of "name that tune" game:

> When I do my instrument demonstrations I try and find a hook. On the violin I play *Eine Kleine*. Fifth-grade students all know it because it was on the TV show, *Little Einsteins*. They think it's great. On the viola, I play *A Whole New World* from *Aladdin*. On the cello, of course, we play the theme from *Jaws*, because everybody knows that. We play name that tune and try to get them to identify with an instrument. (interview)

Although director demonstration of instruments provided potential recruits with a sense of what the instruments sounded like, Albert (2006b) noted that allowing students to touch and try the instruments was often cited as a recruitment technique that helped convince students to join instrumental ensembles.

Indirect Recruitment

The directors considered the organized recruitment meetings at the fifth-grade level their primary method of attracting students to their programs; however, they also noted that recruitment was an ongoing process and inclusive of multiple grade levels. Visibility in the hallways, at school events, and within the community was noted as important aspects of student recruitment, as these led to student familiarity with the directors and instrumental music programs. The quality of the high school program, particularly the marching band, was also seen as important to recruitment:

> Our elementary students are often at football games, and they notice our marching band. I know this because even when I am in the elementary schools, students will walk past me in the hall and say, "hey, you're that band guy. You're that guy at the football game." I think it is important to acknowledge that, because if you just show a little bit of interest in them in those moments, when they get to be in fifth grade, they're going to be in my program. (Smith, interview)

Ms. Jones concurred, noting that visibility and interaction with elementary students before the formal recruitment process took place was an important primer for the fifth-grade students:

> We pop in and out of class, "hey, what are you guys working on today," or "hey, can I sing that song with you?" Kindergarteners have this birthday song, and I would pop my head in the door and wiggle my hands when it was my birthday month. The entire student body comes to our spring and Christmas concerts every year, so they see us, they know who we are. (interview)

Ms. Jones cited family relationships as an important recruiting factor. She indicated many of her orchestra students had older siblings who were current or former members of the orchestra. She alluded to the fact that younger siblings sometimes mentioned that their older siblings communicated to them that they liked the teacher. Ms. Jones explained that she relied "a lot on 'oh my sister played that, and she liked you, and I like her, so I'm going to play that too.' That is a primary recruiting tool, I think" (interview). Data from my study indicated that positive relationships between students and between students and the music instructors were primary factors contributing to recruitment and retention of students into the instrumental music programs. This seemed to support prior findings on instrumental music participation and relationships. Mixon (2005) noted the importance of these relationships, particularly within the low-SES community. "Relationships are important to people who live in poverty, and active involvement in areas outside your classroom and specialty will help in your recruiting efforts, as students will get to know you and will be more comfortable with joining your group" (p. 18). I discuss the effects of relationships on recruitment and retention in detail in Chapter 5.

Parent/Guardian Participants

Researchers presented compelling evidence that SES, family background and habitus affect students' decisions to participate in musical ensembles (Albert, 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Ester & Turner, 2009; Kinney, 2010). In my study, family background and SES appeared to be linked to student participation in instrumental music ensembles. Several parent/guardian participants were musicians, and every current instrumental ensemble member was middle class or highly affluent and White. Bull (2014) indicated that White people not only tended to be the majority of classical music makers, but also that the traditions of classical music tend to reinforce and reproduce that particular culture. That pattern seemed to be represented in the cases that follow.

Jack Green

Jack Green was a middle-aged, Caucasian male, married, with two sons in the Northwest Passage School District. Mr. Green was a college sociology professor at a local liberal arts college, specializing in the sociology of music. Both of his children were members of the instrumental music program at the time of this study. The eldest was in 11th grade, 16 years old, and played the baritone saxophone in the band; the younger child was in eighth grade, 13 years old, and played the trumpet in the band. Both of these students joined the band in fifth grade while attending North Elementary School. In addition to their band instruments, Mr. Green's sons also played a variety of other instruments, including piano and bass guitar. Both students were also involved in other activities: church youth group, school soccer, and a hockey league.

Having attended a fine arts high school in Canada, he noted that music had always been a part of his life:

> When I was in high school, I sang in choirs. We didn't have a band. I did take music, but I went to a fine arts high school . . . I had studied trumpet and cello as part of my music program. I actually took several years of piano outside [of school], and then I switched to guitar because I wanted to be cool. And I was self-taught on guitar. I didn't take a guitar lesson until I was about 40. (interview)

Mr. Green believed that his background in music influenced his relationship with his children, and he was pleased to see that they had developed a great love for music. He viewed music as way to bond with his children, a family unifier. Music had been a part of Mr. Green's sons' lives since birth. Mr. Green noted, "one thing that I bond with my kids with is my music" (interview).

Mr. Green's previous musical experiences and lifelong love of music seemed to have helped to form his sons' habitus, as they appeared to share his love of music. Mr. Green's children grew up around music and musical instruments, and he confirmed that his family had multiple musical instruments in their home. Corenblum and Marshall (1998) considered family instrument ownership as a sign of middle class or highly affluent SES. By these same measures, and by Mr. Green's own admission, the Greens were considered middle class and displayed many characteristics of middle-class families and habitus. For example, in addition to multiple instrument ownership, Mr. Green favored concerted cultivation of talents over natural development (Lareau, 2011), having involved his children in multiple music lessons and independent hockey leagues.

John Plant

John Plant was a middle-aged, Caucasian male, married, and a father of four children. Three of the four children were students in the Northwest Passage School District at the time of the study; one had graduated and attended college where she majored in music education. The second oldest was a sophomore and played bassoon and bass guitar; the third oldest was in sixth grade and played trumpet, and the youngest was in fifth grade and played oboe.

Mr. Plant and his wife were both musicians. John played the saxophone, and Mrs. Plant played flute. Both held undergraduate degrees in music education. Mr. Plant worked in the computer science field, and Mrs. Plant was a stay-at-home mother, caring for their children, one of whom needed a wheelchair for mobility.

Mr. Plant exposed his children to music from a very young age. He credited his children's musical interest to the musical experiences he and Mrs. Plant provided to the children, relationships with other musicians, and the culture in which he raised his children:

> I have a music degree, my wife is a musician, and our children are constantly exposed to music. From a young age, we have taken our children to symphony orchestras, operas, parades, and drum and bugle corps shows. My sixth grader has been talking about being in the band since kindergarten. Our fifth-grade child has wanted to play oboe for two years . . . my family has influenced them, the community has influenced them, those with whom we associate have influenced my kids. We have a lot of friends who are musicians. (interview)

Like the Greens, the Plants displayed many characteristics of middle-class habitus, including the ownership of multiple instruments in the home, concerted cultivation of talents, and possession of multiple college degrees. Mr. and Mrs. Plant

continued to actively participate in music making and involved their children in many of the same music making opportunities. The Plant's family habitus clearly included not only an appreciation for music, but also the belief that active participation in music was a "normal part of life" (interview).

John Kline

John Kline was a middle-aged, Caucasian, married father of two sons. His eldest son was in eighth grade and played alto saxophone in the band. The youngest was in seventh grade, played violin in the orchestra, and sang in the choir. Both children attended North Elementary School through sixth grade.

Mr. Kline indicated that both he and his wife had limited backgrounds in instrumental music study. Regardless, they supported their children's desire to participate in instrumental music study. Mr. Kline worked as a history teacher in a nearby school. He and his wife encouraged their children to explore many academic and extracurricular areas including music, as they believed that such exploration and study led to a well-rounded educational experience. In addition to band and orchestra, Mr. Kline's children participated in little league baseball, which he coached, as well as football, robotics, and the gifted program.

The Klines "encouraged [their children] to join [band or orchestra] but told them if they didn't want to join one or the other, they had to still do something musical" (interview). The Klines had multiple musical instruments in their house, including a piano, and encouraged their children and each other to utilize them:

> I took piano for two or three years, tried to learn the guitar on my own, but did not have much success. I really don't have a musical ear. We do have a piano in our house, and I am trying to get my wife to take lessons. My wife played violin for a couple of years when she was younger. (interview)

The Klines displayed many middle-class habitus characteristics. They owned multiple musical instruments, had earned advanced college degrees, and were actively involved in their children's activities—Mr. Kline in particular, as a coach. Although neither Mr. nor Mrs. Kline had any formal music training beyond Mrs. Kline's violin experience while in school, they dabbled in music at home, attempting to self-teach certain instruments. The Kline family musical habitus was not as pronounced as the Green's or the Plant's; however, the Kline children did experience musical instruments in their home on a regular basis. Even though Mr. and Mrs. Kline did not perform publicly, they modeled instrumental music learning and enjoyment by trying to teach themselves instruments. They also encouraged their children to study music in school and recognized the value of such study.

Julia Thompson

Julia Thompson was a middle aged, Caucasian, married mother of two daughters in the Northwest Passage School District. The youngest child was in sixth grade and played fluted in the band. The eldest daughter was in eighth grade and did not play an instrument in the band or orchestra; however, she sang in the choir and took piano lessons from a private teacher outside of the school setting.

Both Mrs. and Mr. Thompson were high school educators. Mrs. Thompson taught seventh- and eighth-grade science at a neighboring school district, and Mr. Thompson

taught art at another nearby school. The Thompsons noted, “a well-rounded educational experience is essential to [their] children’s development” (interview), and they expected their children to participate in rigorous academics, music, athletics, and art.

Like the Greens, Plants, and Klines, the Thompsons owned several musical instruments, including a piano. Mrs. Thompson and her daughter practiced on this instrument regularly. A family piano had been part of Mrs. Thompson’s life since childhood:

> I was in the choir growing up, and then I also played the piano from the time I was young, so we had a piano in our house when the kids were born. And I used to accompany the choir when I was in high school also. (interview)

The Thompsons also displayed many characteristics of middle-class habitus, including owning multiple instruments and earning advanced college degrees. Mrs. Thompson self-described her family as middle class, noting that she grew up in a well-off family who had been heavily involved in elected offices in the region and owned several small businesses. In addition to school music ensembles, the Thompsons practiced concerted cultivation of talents by involving their children in private music lessons, sports, and advanced academic competitions.

June Morris

June Morris was widowed, African American, in her late 60s, and her eighth-grade grandson’s guardian. She mentioned that she had also served as the guardian of two other grandchildren who had graduated from high school; however, she did not indicate if those children were siblings of her eighth-grade grandson. Ms. Morris did not consider

herself to be musically experienced and had never been part of formal music ensembles in school. Her grandson attended East Elementary School and was a member of the choir and an aspiring athlete. He played the trumpet in fifth and sixth grade, but discontinued band participation in seventh grade. Ms. Morris noted that he also participated in the bucket drumming ensemble as a fourth-grade student, before the ensemble was eliminated from the extracurricular offerings. Ms. Morris indicated that he enjoyed the bucket drumming ensemble. Researchers suggested that offering culturally relevant ensembles can help to generate interest and excitement for music making in schools (Albert, 2006b; Doyle, 2014). The bucket drumming ensemble may have served this very purpose in Ms. Morris' grandson's case, as the ensemble tended to be less structured than concert band, repertoire was rhythmic, centered on popular music, and did not require any formal training or lessons for participation. The bucket drumming ensemble's habitus may have aligned with that of low-SES students or others who may not have been interested in traditional instrumental ensembles. Ms. Morris noted that her grandson attended East Elementary School during his fifth- and sixth-grade years only, as they had moved from another school to East after his fourth-grade year. The school from which they moved was part of the Northwest Passage School District but had been closed due to declining enrollment and the deteriorating condition of the building.

Athletics played an important role in her grandson's life, and she was pleased with the opportunities he had to play baseball and basketball. She was also pleased with the choral experiences that he had. She noted that her grandson loved to sing and "has a pretty good voice" (interview). When asked about her grandson's decision to discontinue

band after sixth grade, Ms. Morris responded, “I don’t think it was offered to him” (interview). Ms. Morris indicated that she did not follow up with the school or the band director to see if it was possible for her grandson to participate in the band as a seventh grade student, but rather assumed he was finished playing after sixth grade. Mr. Smith indicated that he offered the opportunity to continue to participate in band to all students, and that he sent a letter home explaining how to sign up for band the following year. Ms. Morris did not seem to remember receiving such a letter from her grandson.

Lareau (2011) found that low-SES and working-class parents were often hesitant to become involved in their children’s schooling or activities. Ms. Morris seemed to display this and other characteristics of low-SES or working-class habitus described by Lareau and other researchers. For example, she did not own any instruments and was not college educated. Finances were clearly a concern for Ms. Morris, as she mentioned money or cost several times during her interview. She indicated her hopes that her grandson could participate in an after-school tutoring program, but that she had to check first and see if it was free. She also mentioned that she would like to send her grandson to a private Catholic school in a neighboring town but that he would have to get a scholarship to play basketball there or else she could not afford to send him. Ms. Morris was the only low-SES parent/guardian participant in this study, as explained later in this chapter.

Monica Adams

Ms. Adams was a middle-aged, Caucasian, married mother of four children, and worked in the office of a local business. The two oldest children had graduated from

Northwest Passage High School; the second youngest was in ninth grade and the youngest was in third grade. None of Ms. Adams' children played instruments in the school's instrumental music programs; however, Ms. Adam's ninth-grade daughter was a member of the marching band's dance line—one of the auxiliary frontlines that performed with the marching band. She was also a member of the choir, tennis team, Spanish club, biology club, show choir, and participated in competitive cheerleading with a cheer organization that was unaffiliated with the school district.

Ms. Adams did not consider herself to be musically adept; however, she did participate in choir when she was in high school. She also twirled baton with the majorette line in her high school marching band. Ms. Adams' background as a twirler and high school singer may have played a role in her daughter's decision to sing and join the frontlines of the marching band.

Ms. Adams expressed her appreciation for her daughters' elementary school, North Elementary, noting that she believed they had a much better experience there than they would have at either of the other two elementary schools:

> There are a lot of social economic variances between schools. There are differences in economics, and family standards and expectations. There is a difference in parent support for teachers versus parents having negative attitudes towards teachers. You have more single-family homes, more blended families at East and West Elementary Schools, and I think there is more family involvement at North Elementary. (interview)

Ms. Adams believed that the elementary school a child attended affected their participation in activities at the high school level, noting, "when you look at the band at the high school level, you can see what kids stick with the band and choir and what kids do not" (interview). Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones also indicated that the majority of the high

school band and orchestra members had previously attended North Elementary.

Ms. Adams displayed characteristics of middle-class habitus. Although she did not indicate that their family owned any musical instruments, she did practice concerted cultivation of talents, involving her daughter in the marching band, sports, multiple clubs, and competitive cheerleading. Ms. Adams' daughter was involved in activities similar to those in which Ms. Adams had once been involved, indicating that the family valued those particular activities. A similar phenomenon was observed in the Green, Plant, Kline, and Thompson families.

Ms. Adams' perception that North Elementary School was academically and socially superior to East and West Elementary Schools indicated her acceptance and approval of the SES segregation (Bruch, 2014; Iceland & Wilkes, 2006; Palardy, 2013; Reardon & Bischoff, 2011) created by the neighborhood school model of the Northwest Passage School District. Ms. Adams' views of the East and West Elementary Schools, students who attended these schools, and their parents/guardians indicated perceived superiority and privilege. These perceptions were not uncommon among middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians. Lareau (2011) suggested that low-SES and working-class parents/guardians were often less involved in their children's school activities. This lack of involvement may be perceived as lower "family standards and expectations," as Ms. Adams said; however, this lesser degree of involvement does not imply that low-SES and working-class parents/guardians care for their children any less than middle class or highly affluent parents/guardians.

Nick Luska

Mr. Luska was middle-aged, Caucasian, married, and a father of six children. He held a bachelor's degree in communications and worked as a talk radio show host on a local radio station. His eldest two children had already graduated from high school, his youngest daughter was in third grade, his second youngest was in Grade 8, and his other two school-age children were both in high school. His four daughters participated in vocal and instrumental ensembles. The youngest four children all attended West Elementary School; however, the older two did not, as he and his family had moved into the Northwest Passage School district in 2010.

Mr. Luska did not consider himself to be particularly musical; however, he noted that his grandfather and his wife's grandfather were both musically talented. His eldest daughter, when in high school, played violin in the orchestra during her freshmen year, but then discontinued participation as a sophomore. Mr. Luska cited negative experiences with the orchestra director as a primary factor: "My daughters all played musical instruments, and they're still involved with choir, but one of my daughters had an unpleasant occurrence, and it made us shy away from the orchestra in the school" (interview).

Mr. Luska elaborated, stating that his daughter became frustrated with the amount of time that she perceived as being wasted during rehearsals, and that she believed the director treated certain students favorably and others unfavorably. He noted that his daughter was a very serious student and that many of the orchestra members in class with

her were not as serious. This frustration led to confrontation and eventual discontinuation in the orchestra.

Mr. Luska's tenth-grade daughter had a similar experience as an eighth-grade student. Mr. Luska noted that she was an exceptional drummer and wished to play the snare drum in the marching band. The director placed her on cymbals instead, as the older students on the drum line traditionally played the snare parts. Disney (2018) determined that gendering of percussion instruments (particularly marching percussion) was common. Disney noted that battery percussion instruments tended to be viewed as privileged and masculine, and mallet instruments tended to be viewed as feminine. Disney theorized that dividing a percussion section into gendered zones and assigning instruments based on that division was harmful to the ensemble and particularly to those students in the percussion section. The band tradition in the Northwest Passage School District may have been based on age or years of experience rather than gender; however, it appeared that the battery instruments were viewed as privileged and reserved for those who have been here the longest, regardless of ability. This format frustrated Mr. Luska and his daughter and ultimately led to her discontinuation in the band program.

Mr. Luska self-identified as middle class. The Luska family displayed signs of middle-class habitus, supporting his claim. For example, Mr. Luska was a college graduate and tended to become involved in his children's education, particularly when he felt his children were being unfairly treated. He also held his children's abilities in very high esteem and admitted to "pushing them" (interview) academically, musically, and in their activities. Mr. Luska also displayed a clear sense of entitlement and privilege by

"shying away" (interview) from band and orchestra and supporting his daughters' decisions to withdraw from those programs because he believed that the other students' ability levels or passion for music were not on par with his daughters'.

Summary

The Northwest Passage School District included three elementary schools. Attendance at each of these elementary schools depended on the neighborhood in which students resided. The various neighborhoods were segregated by SES, and in most cases, race. Because of this, two of the elementary schools (East and West) served very large populations of low-SES and minority students, and North Elementary School served the majority of middle class and highly affluent students. As I will discuss in Chapter 5, the neighborhood school format may have created negative social outcomes.

Six of the seven parent/guardian study participants were Caucasian, middle class, married, and five of the seven lived in the boundaries of North Elementary School. Five of the seven participants had musical backgrounds to some degree, and two of the parent/guardian participants did not. One of the participants who did not have a musical background was the only low-SES and minority participant in this study. The children of the five participants with musical backgrounds were all still active within the instrumental ensembles in some way within their school. The children of the two participants who self-identified as non-musical were no longer active in instrumental music ensembles within their school. This phenomenon aligns with prior findings, which indicated that students from musical families were more likely to be musically involved (Albert, 2006a; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Phillips, 2003). Of the six middle-class

parent/guardian participants, five had children who were still active in the instrumental ensembles. This phenomenon also aligns with prior research suggesting that middle class and highly affluent students were much more likely to be involved with instrumental music study than low-SES students (Albert, 2005, 2006a, 2006b; Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Corenblum & Marshall, 1998; Klinedinst, 1991; Phillips, 2003).

Despite sending study participation invitations home to all parents/guardians at the noted grade levels, only one low-SES parent/guardian both accepted the invitation and followed through with the interview. As discussed previously, Lareau (2011) found that low-SES parents/guardians were less likely to become involved in their children's schooling and activities. Perhaps the dearth of low-SES responses and participation in this study is indicative of this phenomenon. The lack of input from low-SES parents/guardians made data collection a challenge, as most data was provided by middle class, Caucasian, instrumental music students' parents.

CHAPTER 5: ANALYSIS

My study revealed some interesting potential influences on instrumental music participation. Many influences that emerged from my study, including home musical environment, sense of community, and access to various types of capital, have been identified in previous research; however, some seemed somewhat unique to my study. I used Bourdieu's concepts to further outline and highlight these SES-related influences.

Enrollment and Demographics

Seven parents/guardians from diverse backgrounds participated in the study. Five parent/guardian participants had multiple children in the school district, and in two cases, one sibling participated in instrumental music and one did not. Therefore, parents/guardians with multiple children sometimes represented more than one of three participant categories: (a) parents/guardians of current instrumental music students, (b) parents/guardians of former instrumental music students, and (c) parents/guardians of students who never began instrumental music study. Five participants had children who were active participants within the instrumental music programs at the time of the study, four participants had children who discontinued instrumental music study, and two had children who never began instrumental music study.

Although all three elementary schools were represented in the data collection, five of the seven parent/guardian participants' children attended North Elementary. Underrepresentation of study participants from East and West Elementary Schools correlated with elementary school representation within the instrumental ensembles at the

high school level; Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones noted that 81% of the high-school orchestras and bands consisted of former North Elementary students (Smith and Jones, interviews). North Elementary School served 47% of the total elementary population in the Northwest Passage School District. Figure 1 shows the breakdown of the total enrollment within the three elementary schools in which this study took place ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016).

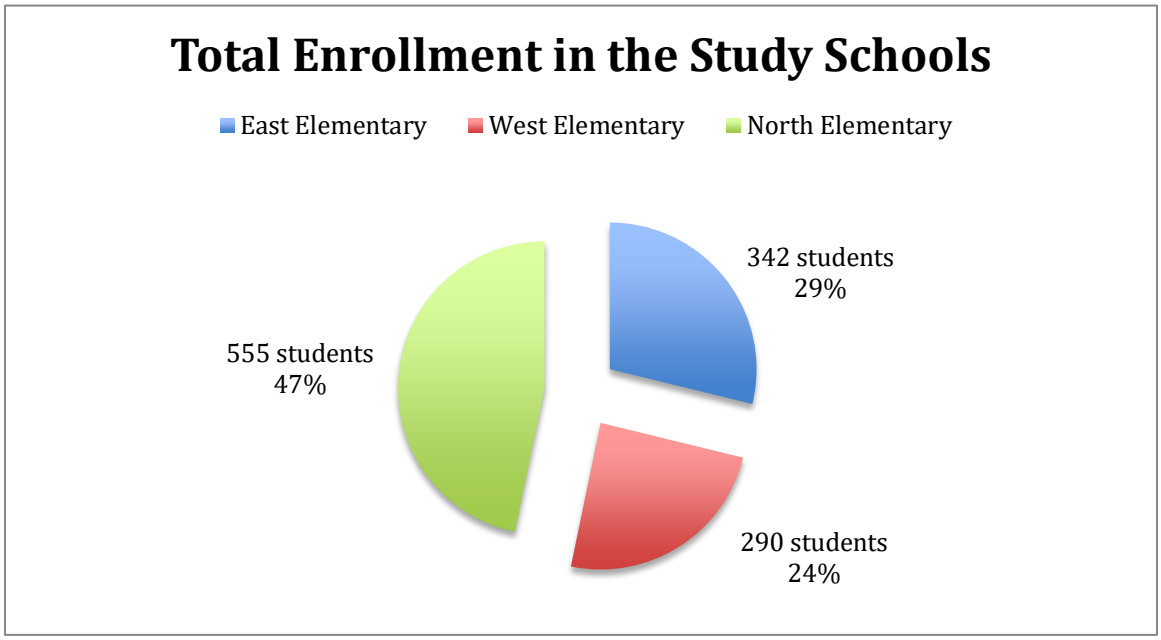

Figure 1. Total Enrollment in the Study Schools

North Elementary School served a significantly higher number of students than both East and West Elementary Schools. Forty-seven percent of the total elementary population attended North. Instrumental ensemble enrollment did not mirror overall enrollment trends; rather participation in the high school instrumental ensembles was heavily skewed toward former North Elementary School attendees. Figure 2 displays the

breakdown of elementary school representation within the high school instrumental ensembles.

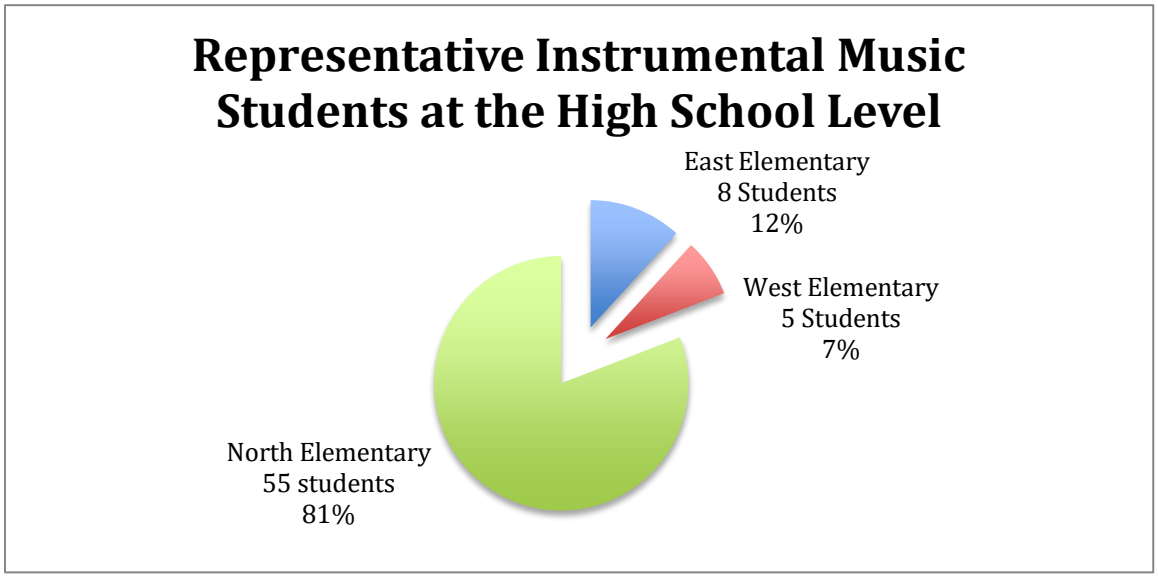

Figure 2. Study School Representation in High School Instrumental Ensembles

North Elementary School served a significantly smaller population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students when compared to East and West Elementary Schools. Figure 3 shows the breakdown of the total population of socioeconomically disadvantaged students who attended each elementary school ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016).

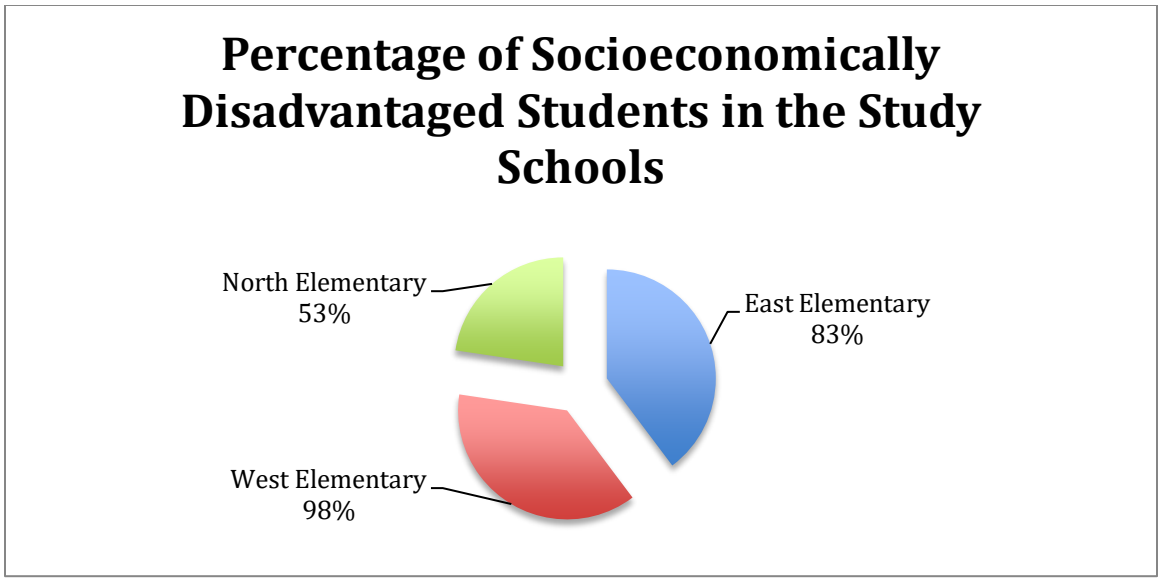

Figure 3. Socioeconomically Disadvantaged Population in the Study Schools

The majority of students participating in the instrumental ensembles in the Northwest Passage School District came from North Elementary School, which served the largest population of middle class and highly affluent students. The number of students from East and West Elementary Schools participating in the instrumental ensembles was significantly lower than those from North Elementary. East and West Elementary Schools each served large numbers of low-SES students. Phillips (2003) noted that low-SES students might not be able to afford registration fees, equipment, supplies, or other items necessary for instrumental music participation. Inability to pay the $10 fee levied on each student utilizing a school instrument may have contributed to East and West elementary schools' underrepresentation in the middle and high school instrumental ensembles.

Researchers have identified SES as a reliable predictor of student participation in

instrumental ensembles. McCarthy (1980) and Phillips (2003) found that students classified as “higher SES” (p. 40) trended toward longer instrumental music participation than their lower SES classmates. Klinedinst (1991) found that SES was a significant predictor of student retention, and Albert (2006a) noted that SES was a “better predictor of retention than measures of academic competency or musical aptitude” (p. 40).

Additionally, Corenblum and Marshall (1998) indicated that SES was a valid predictor of parental support for instrumental music programs, which, in turn, was a reliable predictor of student retention. Children of higher SES parents were twice as likely to play an instrument than their lower SES peers according to Brandstrom and Wilkund (1996). Data from my study supported and reflected Brandstrom’s and Wilkund’s claim. Of the parent/guardian participants, five out of seven had children who were active in the instrumental ensembles. All five of these participants had previous musical experiences of some sort: Mr. Green, Mr. Plant, and Ms. Thompson all had prior band instrument experience, Mr. Kline had several years of piano lessons, and Ms. Adams twirled baton with her high school marching band. Mrs. Adams’ daughter was on the dance line at the time of this study, and the Kline, Green, Plant, and Thompson children were all instrumentalists. The other parent/guardian participants, Ms. Morris and Mr. Luska, both had children who started instrumental study but discontinued participation. Neither Ms. Morris nor Mr. Luska had any prior instrumental music experience.

Researchers have long indicated that underrepresentation in school instrumental ensembles was a predictable occurrence (Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Corenblum &

Marshall, 1998; Cowden, 1992; Elpus & Abril, 2011; Kinney, 2010; Klinedinst, 1991; McCarthy, 1980). Considering the large number of low-SES students served by two of the three study schools, underrepresentation from those schools might be expected. Data from this study was consistent with these previous findings, as representation from each of the three elementary schools within the high school instrumental music ensembles paralleled the size of the low-SES populations that each school served. Large low-SES populations in an elementary school translated into fewer instrumental music students at the high school level in the Northwest Passage School District.

Additionally, North Elementary also served a smaller population of minority students when compared to East and West, as seen in Figure 4 ("Pennsylvania School Performance Profile," 2016).

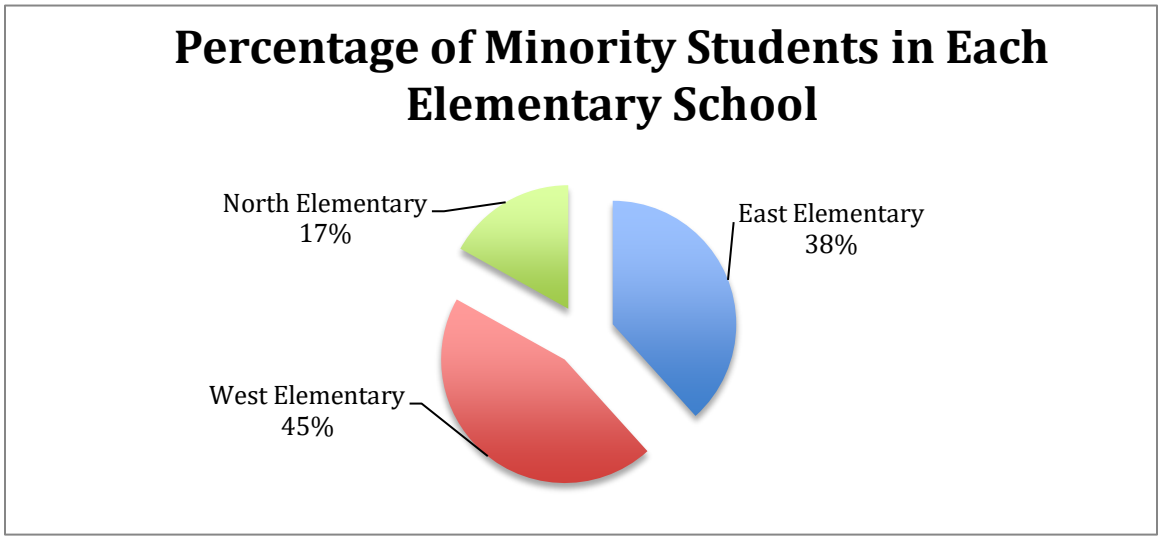

Figure 4. Percentage of Minority Students in Each of the Study Schools

Although the focus of this study was the effect of SES on instrumental music participation, it is important to recognize that most low-SES students in the Northwest

Passage School District were also minority students. Race and SES are intimately intertwined (Bailey et al., 2014). Elpus and Abril (2011) indicated that the underrepresentation of minority students in music ensembles was a common problem across the United States, stating, “White students were a significantly overrepresented group in school music ensembles” (p. 141).

My analysis of the data revealed possible factors that affected recruitment and retention of low-SES and minority students in the school’s instrumental music programs, as well as other influences that potentially led to underrepresentation of low-SES students in the Northwest Passage instrumental ensembles, particularly in the middle and high school settings. These influences included relationships, sense of community, geography, director personality and flexibility, instrument availability, scheduling, and parent/guardian perceptions of the instrumental music programs. I will address each of these in detail in the following sections of the chapter.

Relationships, Community, and SES Inequalities

Data indicated that relationships, sense of community, and community-building activities played a large role in the recruitment and retention of instrumental music students in the Northwest Passage School District. All of these contributed to an overall sense of family that most study participants clearly perceived, particularly those with children still participating in the instrumental music ensembles. Albert (2006b) indicated that retention within instrumental music ensembles was directly related, in part, to a “sense of family” that was “promoted in the instrumental music teachers’ environments” (p. 63). Data from this study indicated a similar relationship between sense of community

and retention. The instrumental music teachers noted the importance of a family atmosphere and discussed their efforts to foster such an environment. Although community building contributed to retention within the Northwest Passage School District's instrumental ensembles, SES continued to play a very important role in *who* was able to be part of that community.

Relationships

Study participants often cited students' relationships with other instrumental music students with whom they attended elementary school as a primary driving force behind decisions to begin instrumental music study. Some participants cited friendships not only as one force behind their child's desire to play an instrument, but also as a reason for choosing a specific instrument: "My son really didn't know what to play, and one of his friends was going to be playing alto sax, so that is what my son picked" (Green, interview). Selecting the same instrument as your friend not only guaranteed that the students would be in the same class together, but also that friends would have close proximity to each other while in the class.

Positive relationships and friendships contributed to student retention within the instrumental ensemble. Ms. Jones recognized this phenomenon, noting, "I think, for some students, their friends are there, so they stay in the program [to be] with their friends" (interview). Students who persisted in the instrumental ensembles often did so, in part, because their friends also participated.

Parent/guardian participants agreed that the bonds made through instrumental music ensembles were an important aspect of the programs. Mr. Kline shared a belief that

his son "gained friendships that he would not have had. [Band] widened his circle of friends" (interview). Mr. Plant concurred, stating that his children were "getting a lot of friendships, a lot of comradery out of [band and orchestra]" (interview). Mr. Green added, "there is a very strong friendship circle [within the band]. Kids have a strong sense of belonging to the school, through the friendships they've made through band" (interview). It appeared that some of the parent/guardian participants recognized and valued the social aspect of ensembles.

Ms. Adams had several daughters who were either in or had graduated from the Northwest Passage School District. None of her children ever joined the instrumental music ensembles. She indicated that her children never had an interest in playing instruments; however, they were interested in singing and joined the choral program. Although this study focused specifically on instrumental music programs, it is worth noting that Ms. Adams cited friendships as a primary reason for her daughters' decisions to continue or discontinue participation in the choral programs:

> My daughter's friends did not do the choir the last two years of high school, so that factored into her decision to quit. My third daughter's friends are currently all in it, so it seems like an automatic decision for her to stay in the choir. (interview)

Although friendships emerged from the study data as an important influence on students' decisions to join and persist in instrumental ensembles, other influences—including a sense of community, geography, peer groups, and access to facilities—also may have played a role in such decisions. The sense of community that was fostered within the ensembles also influenced students' persistence in ensembles.

Sense of Community

Albert (2006b) indicated that a "sense of family" (p. 63) within instrumental music ensembles represented a primary factor that influenced students' decisions to persist in the ensembles. The relationships formed between instrumental music students in the Northwest Passage School District and the sense of belonging to a much larger circle of peers provided some of the basic building blocks that led to an overarching sense of community within instrumental ensembles. Data from this study indicated that belonging to a strong community of peers factored into retention of instrumental music students. Mr. Green, Mr. Kline, Mr. Plant, and Ms. Thompson all mentioned friendships, peer groups, and the desire to participate in instrumental music with friends as contributing to their children's decisions to begin and/or persist at instrumental music study. Ms. Jones and Mr. Smith both stressed the importance of community building to retention within their ensembles.

Mr. Green mentioned the importance of his children's friendships within the band several times during his interview. He noted that his family was "fairly middle class," and that his "kids don't hang out with lower working-class kids. They have on occasion, but they weren't in band. Most of the kids they hang out with are similar economically" (interview). Mr. Green's quote not only highlights the fact that friendships within ensembles are important, but also that his children's friendships were with other middle-class students. Low-SES students, as he noted, were "not in the band" (interview), and therefore may have not had an opportunity to form relationships with middle class and highly affluent students. Mr. Green's comments reflected the social segregation that

appeared to remain intact from elementary school through high school. Mixon (2005) noted that "relationships are important to people who live in poverty" (p. 18), just as they are to middle class and highly affluent students; however, data from my study indicated that students formed friendships mainly within similar social classes. This phenomenon was exacerbated by the disproportional representation within the instrumental ensembles, where many friendships and bonds were formed.

When asked to list factors that he believed influenced his children's decisions to remain in the band program at Northwest Passage High School, Mr. Green acknowledged that he perceived the Northwest Passage School District's instrumental ensembles as micro-communities, and that the sense of community was a leading factor in student retention:

> One thing that's really important is friendship. Band is my kids' circle of friends. Almost all of their friends are in band. My eldest's girlfriend plays trombone in the band. So, it's become a sort of a center of their life. Their social lives revolve around band. (interview)

Albert (2006b) indicated, "making the rehearsal area a 'safe space' is vital to retaining students in a low-SES environment" (p. 63). Albert (2006b) found that effective music teachers in low-SES environments fostered a sense of "family" (p. 63) in their classrooms and rehearsal spaces. The instrumental music directors in the Northwest Passage School District reported that they continually fostered a strong sense of community within their ensembles through outside travel opportunities; they supported students in their non-music endeavors through attendance at events, and referred to their ensembles as "family" (interview) that created a "safe space" (interview) and offered a family atmosphere where students thrived without the fear of failure, judgment, or

alienation. Both instrumental teacher participants acknowledged that this type of community building was essential to their respective programs. Mr. Smith noted that he tried to eliminate any sense of competition within his ensembles by stressing the importance of every member of the band, individual contributions to the ensemble regardless of placement, and the desire to see every member excel and succeed within the band "family":

> I don't do a lot to foster competition in my ensemble. I know some directors are real big on chair placement tests to see where you're going to chair your ensemble. I take that energy and I focus on how is everybody going to contribute to that ensemble. Competitive placement in the ensemble is, to me, a way of saying that some kids are more important than others, and I really don't believe that. (interview)

Competition within ensembles can perpetuate inequality in masked ways. Hendricks (2018) wrote: "competitive performance structures in which students are ranked against each other often carry a 'hidden curriculum' of their own" (p. 129). The "hidden curriculum" tends to favor students who already *have* and punish those who *have not.* For example, students who have the economic capital required to study privately are more likely to win an audition over low-SES students who do not have the necessary economic capital to study privately. Competitive structures within ensembles can, as Bull (2014) noted, reinforce the status quo of inequality and, as Bradley (2007) wrote, the "institutionalized whiteness" (p. 147).

Although Mr. Smith believed that a non-competitive approach helped foster a sense of community and contributed to student retention within the ensembles, Mr. Luska noted that this approach, in part, led to his child's discontinuation in the band. Mr. Luska indicated that, in his opinion, his eighth-grade daughter was an accomplished drummer

and was excited to participate on the drum line in the marching band. Mr. Smith placed her on cymbals. Eighth-grade drummers were traditionally assigned to the cymbal line in the Northwest Passage drum line, and students in upper grades were traditionally placed on snare, bass, and tenor drums. Mr. Smith indicated that he determined which instrument drummers would play based on their experience in the ensemble, their grade level, and his personal knowledge of their musical abilities. Mr. Luska was not pleased that drum line assignments were not based on the results of an audition and believed that such a placement system led to the director "playing favorites" (interview). He felt that his daughter's talents were being wasted; she was not given the opportunity to meet her potential, and ultimately, she quit the ensemble:

> She wasn't given an opportunity. In a sport you would never play the second quarterback if he sucked. They always give you a chance to play, and they see who the best members are, and they allow that best person to play. (interview)

Abeles (2009) and Zervoudakes and Tanur (1994) noted that musical instruments were often perceived as gendered. Zervoudakes and Tanur indicated that drums were perceived as highly "masculine" (p. 60) instruments, along with trumpet, guitar, string bass, tuba, and trombones. Abeles (2009) studied this phenomenon further, finding that there was a slight reduction in traditional instrument gender associations within college musicians in the 1990s; however, there was little to no difference in instrument gender associations found in middle school musicians, noting "girls played predominantly flutes, violins, and clarinets, and most boys played drums, trumpets, and trombones" (p. 127). According to Mr. Smith, the decision to place Mr. Luska's daughter on cymbals was based on the tradition of younger players playing cymbals before moving to drums in

later years; however, instrument gender association [unknowingly] may have also influenced this decision. Cymbals seem to lie within a gray area in terms of Disney's (2018) gendered percussion zones. Cymbals are not truly battery instruments, identified as masculine instruments within a marching band percussion section, nor are they mallet instruments—identified as feminine instruments in Disney's study. Cymbals tend to lie somewhere in the middle. The Northwest Passage Band's traditional method of instrument assignment within the percussion section seemed to be based more on age and years of experience than on gender. Ability level only seemed to come into play when determining which of the older students were assigned to snare, tenor, or bass drums.

Mr. Luska's daughter's experience was unique among the participants in this study. Other participants indicated that both Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones treated students fairly and sought to build community. The instrumental music teachers shared a philosophical belief that their duties reached far beyond teaching music. Rather, they were in the "people business" (interview) and had a responsibility to develop students into good people above all else. They also reiterated that such a philosophy, they believed, naturally led to retention within their programs:

> I make sure that I invest in the individual student. I am concerned with how they play and how they sound as an ensemble, but my first concern is who they are as a person. That's something I am very passionate about. I learned that from a lot of people throughout college, and it is proven to work time and time again. I don't think that is a socioeconomic thing at all either. I think if you want to have a successful program anywhere, you have to invest in the kids. (Smith, interview)

Ms. Jones discussed why she believed students persisted in her orchestra program: the enjoyment of playing the instruments, friendships, and travel opportunities. Then Ms.

Jones took on a much more pensive and concerned tone, as she recounted some personal experiences that she had with her orchestra students which, she believed, fostered a sense of family in a much more personal way:

> There are days I get to school, and kids come running to me in tears because something has happened in the last 24 hours. They need me. This morning, as an example, I was sewing a student's pants that had torn. This eighth-grader didn't know how to sew, so I did it. Students know that I am there for them and won't give up on them. I think that resonates with a lot of my students. And the stability that students experience from having me as a teacher from fifth grade all the way up through high school, I think, anchors a lot of students. (interview)

Participants specifically named other community-building activities as important to their children's overall experience within the instrumental ensembles. Many participants referenced travel opportunities. The instrumental music directors understood that they had opportunities to provide experiences to students, and that students would most likely not receive these opportunities through any other school organization. The directors viewed these trips not only as opportunities for students to experience once-in-a-lifetime performances, but also as opportunities for students to strengthen their musical community. Helsel (2015) found that directors often used ensemble travel as a means of experiential education but also as a means of retaining students within their ensembles. Helsel noted that, in one of his case studies, a particular band that traveled every year experienced 100% retention from students who regularly participated in these trips; however, Helsel explained that the cost of these trips was routinely mentioned as a major concern to parents, noting that affordability was the primary factor that prohibited some students from traveling with the ensembles. Travel, in the case Helsel described, seemed to be reserved for those who could afford it, and consequently, those were the students

who were regularly retained within the ensemble. This may have contributed to the ongoing problem of underrepresentation of low-SES students within the ensemble, as low-SES students may have been left out of these once-in-a-lifetime performance opportunities and band community-building events. Feelings of disconnection from the community may lead to discontinuation in some cases.

The instrumental music directors also understood the impact that these trips had on the sense of community and connection that students formed through participation, and the positive impact that these excursions had on retention (Helsel, 2015; Holcomb, 2003). Ms. Jones admitted that some of her students remained in the orchestra because of the opportunity to travel. Group travel became a much-anticipated recurring event within the instrumental music program because of the positive effect it had on retention, moral, and community building (Helsel, 2015; Holcomb, 2003). “Last February and the beginning of March we were down in Orlando, Florida, in Disney World for a week. We are looking into heading to either Washington, DC or Chicago for a band trip next year as well” (Jones, interview).

Some parent/guardian participants also spoke of travel opportunities, noting their importance to the overall experience of their children. Travel emerged as a tremendous retaining factor for the instrumental music programs and a highlight of many instrumental music students’ overall experience: “Students in the ensembles have gone to amusement parks to play in the past. They are always going to band shows, and last year they went to Florida. My kids love the trips” (Plant, interview).

Although friendships, sense of community, and community building activities like

group travel appear to have positive outcomes regarding instrumental music student retention, socioeconomic factors at play must also be considered. Questions about *which students are retained* and *which students are left out* as a result of these activities need to be addressed in order to formulate a deeper understanding of the socioeconomic forces that often go unnoticed. Bourdieu's concepts provide a framework for such understanding.

Geography, Peer Groups, and SES

Bourdieu links relationships, a concept he referred to as *kinships*, to habitus. Kinship, according to Bourdieu, was a necessary and sufficient condition of group unity (Bourdieu, 1977). Relationships gave rise to groups, and groups "continue to exist only because they have been kept in working order by their very use and by maintenance work and because they rest on a community of dispositions (habitus)" (Bourdieu, 1990b, p. 170). Participants indicated that peer groups formed during elementary school often continued to exist through the middle school transition, and often into high school. These elementary school peer groups often remained segregated from peer groups from the other elementary schools and struggled to assimilate with the peer groups from the other elementary schools into a single cohesive middle school class. Mr. Kline explained that peer groups from the different elementary schools "don't mix well right off the bat. East kids stick together, West kids stick together, and North kids stick together" (interview). Peer groups formed along elementary school lines, and once they transitioned into the middle school setting, often struggled to meld into a single cohesive class. Mr. Plant observed: "The kids tend to get territorial. 'I'm from here, you are not,' and I've seen that

this situation has caused fights once they get to the junior high level" (interview).

Territorialism, so called by Mr. Plant, may have been a result of the prevailing SES segregation between the communities served by each elementary school. Bruch (2014) wrote that people continue to be separated by several social attributes, noting, "friendship networks are typically composed of people who share the same aspirations, family backgrounds, race, and education" (p. 1263). Bruch found peer groups, often formed due to SES segregation of neighborhoods, continued to influence students' friendship decisions and peer relations after middle school, and peer groups often consisted of like SES classmates. For example, Mr. Green noted that his sons, now in high school, continued to associate mainly with other middle-class students and did not have any close low-SES friends. SES segregation can have negative effects on students who belong to low-SES peer groups. Palardy (2013) found that SES segregation heavily influenced high school graduation rates and college enrollment. Palardy also found that peer influence heavily affected student attainment, and although middle class and highly affluent peer groups experienced positive influences, peer influences in low-SES settings were often negative.

Ms. Thompson seemed to believe that the low-SES setting within certain neighborhoods affected students' decisions to join or persist in instrumental ensembles: "knowing the demographics of the city and where people live, I'd say poverty has a part to play" (interview). As Ms. Thompson noted, the geography of the town—where people lived—affected instrumental music participation.

The neighborhoods served by East and West Elementary Schools experienced

tremendous poverty. Although North Elementary also served socioeconomically disadvantaged students, a much larger population of middle class and highly affluent students were present in that building. Housing in the neighborhood served by North Elementary was, on average, much more expensive than housing in the neighborhoods served by West and East Elementary Schools. Considering the overwhelming number of students attending West and East who were socioeconomically disadvantaged, one can logically conclude that the vast majority of residents in these neighborhoods could not afford to live in the neighborhoods served by North Elementary. Mr. Plant, who worked in the school district for a short time, noted that this segregation continued into the middle and high school levels:

> I saw it on a daily basis when I was in the school district. You can tell the students that are almost segregated. The East students are here, the North students are here, and the West students are here. And they don't integrate very well." (interview)

Costa-Giomi (2008) found that the geographic location of a school could potentially affect low-SES students' ability to participate in music. Costa-Giomi wrote, "teachers believed that geographic location of the school determined the type of community resources available to them and the ability of parents to participate in music activities" (p. 25). I found it interesting that Costa-Giomi named parent participation as a potential influence on student participation in music. Although Costa-Giomi does not specifically indicate specific ways in which parents may or may not participate, the fact that participation was tied to geographical location was interesting. If students were unable to walk to and from the school due to their geographical location, lack of or difficulty securing transportation to and from the school may be one explanation for the

lack of parental involvement. Parents/guardians who cannot afford a vehicle, who do not drive, or who keep busy work schedules may have found it difficult to transport their children to and from ensemble rehearsals and performances or from volunteering with booster groups.

Study participants indicated that geographical issues might have created several instrumental ensemble participation issues for students living in the neighborhoods served by East and West Elementary Schools. For example, marching band, jazz band, and chamber strings rehearsed after school hours. The district did not provide transportation home from these rehearsals; therefore, students in these ensembles were responsible for their own transportation. Many students in the outlying and poor neighborhoods would have had to walk several miles to get home from these rehearsals. Mr. Plant explained the issues with participation in after school programs created by these distances:

> We are a walking school district. In September it's not too bad, but come November it gets cold . . . Some kids are walking quite a distance. If they want to participate, they have to walk all the way from the West side of town, which can be three miles or more in order to participate in the organization. (interview)

Facilities

In addition to the geographical location of the various neighborhoods within the school district, the physical location and condition of each elementary school potentially affected students' instrumental music experiences at the elementary level. Ms. Adams offered her opinion of North Elementary School: "It is fabulous. Newer building. You should walk through it. It is absolutely beautiful" (interview). I took Ms. Adam's advice,

and I walked through North Elementary. In addition, I toured East and West. The differences in the buildings were noteworthy. North Elementary School was a relatively new building, having been constructed just a few years before this study. The new building was architecturally modern, consisted of an open floor design, was air-conditioned, bright, and colorful. New desks and other furnishings were installed in each classroom. This building was also located next to the middle/high school building. Students could walk from North Elementary to the high school in under one minute. East and West Elementary Schools were several miles away from the middle and high school and were older buildings. West Elementary had been renovated two years before this study and was in good condition. East Elementary School was in fair condition but had not been recently renovated.

Researchers have found stark differences between schools in low-SES and middle class/highly affluent areas. Facilities and resources were often problematic in low-SES schools. For example, Costa-Giomi (2008) noted:

> In general, schools with fewer minorities or with lower proportions of economically disadvantaged students had more adequate facilities and instructional resources, more supportive and active parents, and better access to external sources of funding than schools with a higher proportion of minority students or disadvantaged students. (p. 25).

I discovered a similar scenario between East/West Elementary Schools and North Elementary School. North Elementary had dedicated rooms for music instruction. Instrumental music lessons always met in the music room, which was nicely decorated with posters, music notes, and other musical knickknacks. The room was big enough to accommodate full ensemble rehearsals in addition to group instrumental lessons. North

Elementary School had just recently been constructed, and as a newer building, included many updated features. Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones were able to share this room due to their rotation lesson and rehearsal schedule.

Ms. Jones recognized the impact that these differences between the three elementary schools had on her program. She indicated that she needed to "do things much slower" (interview) at East and West than she did at North. In particular, she referred to the rate at which her students progressed through the method books. She recognized that elementary students at North had an advantage over their peers at East and West when it came to elementary instrumental lessons, and she understood that this advantage was due, in part, to the close proximity of North Elementary to the high school where her office, supplies, copier, and other equipment were located. Ms. Jones often had elementary string players from North walk across the parking lot and to her high school office, where she would teach their lessons.

SES Segregated Schools

Although it is impossible to change the physical location of the elementary schools, participants did suggest that some things could be done to help assimilate students from the three elementary schools before they reached middle school. The Northwest Passage School District held a daylong orientation for all sixth-grade students that included games and activities designed to get students from all three elementary schools to work together; however, study participants indicated that it was ineffective. Mr. Kline recommended that the school district should plan "several days of activities for the sixth-grade students so they get used to each other" (interview). Although this might

help with student familiarity with one another, it does not solve the overarching problem of SES-based segregation among elementary schools and the strong peer groups that formed as a result.

Study participants commonly cited grade-level building structure as a way to potentially address SES segregation within the elementary schools. “Grade-level buildings would help, but it would be a lot of bussing kids around. If they could figure that part out, it would help the kids to socialize a bit better” (Kline, interview).

Mr. Plant took this idea one step further, suggesting that grade levels should be consolidated, but rather than utilizing all three elementary schools to accomplish this task, the district should “close two of the elementary schools. It would benefit all programs because you’d have everybody in the same area” (interview). The instrumental music teachers agreed that combining all students district-wide at grade level would benefit many:

> One of the biggest things that I think would benefit the entire district K-12 is one elementary system . . . to have kindergarten through sixth grade in one building. I think that keeping the kids separated does them a disservice. Currently, by the time they get to seventh grade, their friend groups are formed, their interests are formed, their habits are formed, and it’s really hard to break in, even if you want to. (Jones, interview)

> I would get rid of those neighborhood schools and put them into grade-level buildings so that I knew that I was going to go to one building, and one place, I was going to have my entire 5th grade ensemble, and my entire 6th grade ensemble there at the same time. (Smith, interview)

Smith’s suggestion to eliminate the neighborhood school structure and replace it with grade-level buildings has merit. Researchers have made similar recommendations. For example, when Palardy (2013) examined the effects of SES segregation on student

attainment, he found that integrating schools and abandoning the neighborhood school model may help to alleviate some of the negative effects that students often face in low-SES schools. Palardy wrote that school integration would "provide students from low-SES families with increased opportunity to interact with more affluent peers at school" (p. 745). Palardy found that peer influence and school effects were two "prominent mechanisms [that] mediate the effects of SES on attainment" (p. 746), noting that peer influence is the stronger of the two. He also found that, in low-SES settings, peer influences tended to be more negative than positive, and in higher SES settings, peer influences tended to be more positive than negative. Integrating schools and providing low-SES students opportunities to interact with higher SES peers might also result in important and effective positive peer influences.

Capital

Data from this study indicated that there were significant differences in capital between participants from North Elementary School when compared to participants from East and West Elementary Schools. Specifically, participants from North indicated that they had not only had more capital, but that they had a wider variety of forms of capital than other participants. Access to capital may have played a role in recruitment and retention of students within the instrumental ensembles.

Economic capital. Differences in economic capital emerged as a contributing factor to instrumental music participation. The data indicated that participants displaying higher levels of economic capital often provided opportunities for their children to own

their own instruments, take private music lessons, attend live concerts and performances, pay for and participate in the performance trips to Disney World and other locations, and explore music through dabbling in non-band and non-orchestral instruments such as guitar, bass guitar, and drum set. These types of opportunities enhanced students' overall musical experiences, their investment in the music program, and aided in establishing music as an everyday part of the students' routines and lives.

Some study participants who had the necessary economic capital purchased instruments and had these readily available in their homes. Researchers have found that children from families that owned instruments and had prior music experiences tended to be more involved in school music, including instrumental music study (Albert, 2006a). Albert noted that students from families with musical instruments in the home are more likely to be exposed to music making at a young age and therefore are more likely to value music and begin instrumental music study. Some of my study participants reported having pianos, guitars, and other instruments in their homes. Mr. Kline, for example, noted that his family owned a piano, several guitars, and a violin. Mr. Green owned a piano, bass guitar, several acoustic and electric guitars, saxophone, trumpet, ocarina, harmonica, and a Theremin. Mr. Plant's home included several saxophones, flutes, trumpets, and a bass guitar. Mr. Plant also noted that his family had purchased many used instruments over the years from yard sales and online auctions and donated them to the school band program. Ms. Thompson noted that her family owned a flute and a piano.

Economic capital was also a contributing factor to the geographical issues, primarily a result of SES segregation, discussed earlier. Children of parents/guardians

with the economic power to live in the more expensive neighborhoods attended the elementary school with many other middle class and highly affluent students. Those without such economic power were limited in terms of affordable neighborhoods, and most lived in the poorer neighborhoods.

Interestingly, obtaining an instrument for school ensembles was not an issue for most students at all three elementary schools. The Northwest Passage Schools owned a large inventory of orchestra and band instruments, and students were permitted to lease these instruments for the entire school year for ten dollars. This fee also provided lesson materials for elementary students if needed. Mr. Smith recalled various ways the district stockpiled so many instruments:

> Six or seven years ago, the school district held a big instrument drive, looking for people in the community to donate instruments or money to buy instruments. They were very successful. They called it the "Loud and Proud Program." In addition, East Elementary was awarded a Mr. Holland's Opus Grant, and those instruments are fantastic. So, we do have a very large stockpile of instruments. (interview)

The majority of instrumentalists, including the middle and highly affluent students in the district, utilized school-owned instruments. I address the impact of convenience borrowing of school-owned instruments by upper- and middle-class students in greater detail later in this chapter.

Parents with economic capital at their disposal were also able to provide musical opportunities outside of school ensembles for their children. Lareau (2011) might consider these opportunities—private music lessons, music classes, and community ensembles—as forms of concerted cultivation. According to Lareau, low-SES families were generally not as concerned with concerted cultivation, perhaps because of the

financial burden that such activities might place on them. Examples of concerted cultivation, including private music instruction, were common among many of the study participants from North Elementary School. For example, Mr. Green noted that his eldest son "did take piano lessons for a while. He also took alto sax lessons from a local teacher as well. Then he really wanted to switch to bass, so he studied that privately for a few lessons" (interview). Other outside music experiences that led to the musical enrichment of many of the participants' children included attending concerts, watching older siblings participate in the school ensembles, and watching parents perform in community ensembles or church musical organizations.

Additionally, those with economic capital were often able to pay for their children's participation in ensemble travel, including trips to Disney World. Fundraising activities were always available to parents/guardians, and most consisted of selling items including t-shirts, candy, and other consumables. Although many parents/guardians with disposable income or access to others with such economic capital still fundraised in order to defray the cost of these trips, fundraising was potentially more difficult for low-SES parents/guardians. Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007) found a significant difference in fundraising participation and results between schools serving large low-SES populations and those serving higher SES students. Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007) found fundraising efforts in low-SES schools to be insufficient in many cases, noting, "schools with low minority representation also reported having parents who were involved in fundraising activities" (p. 14). Specifically, Costa-Giomi and Chappell found that fundraising efforts in a low-SES school produced approximately a quarter of the funds

generated through fundraising in a higher SES school. These phenomena may have also been present in the Northwest Passage School District. The middle class and highly affluent participants in my study indicated that they associated with other middle class and highly affluent families and lived in wealthier neighborhoods, thus providing access to others with the economic capital necessary to purchase fundraising products for sale. Economically disadvantaged parents/guardians in the Northwest Passage School District may not have had access to as many neighbors or family members who could afford to support large-scale fundraising efforts, and therefore might have struggled to produce the economic capital necessary to participate in ensemble travel opportunities.

Social capital. Access to social capital was a contributing factor to continued participation in the instrumental ensembles. Bourdieu defined social capital as "various kinds of valued relations with significant others" (Jenkins, 1992, p. 77). Such relationships, according to Bourdieu's theories, can be utilized to further one's position within a field. Analysis of the data uncovered several instances of access to social capital as an influence in students' decisions to join or persist in instrumental music study. Some examples of social capital included access to the economic capital of others. For example, potential instrumental students' relatives or friends who owned instruments sometimes loaned those instruments to the student wishing to study instrumental music. Other examples of social capital from this study included parents who provided musical opportunities, cultural exposure, or access to musical performance to their children. Data from this study indicated that peer groups from North Elementary School possessed larger amounts of social capital than peer groups from East and West Elementary

Schools, as every parent/guardian participant from North Elementary with a child currently or formerly involved in the instrumental music programs noted examples of social capital when interviewed.

Several participants advised that they first obtained their child's instrument from family members or friends. Ms. Thompson's daughter, for example, began studying flute in fifth grade, and her instrument choice was guided by the availability of an instrument. "I told my daughter that her cousin has a flute, so choosing flute would be awesome. We knew we already had an instrument available for her" (interview). Ms. Thompson did not indicate whether flute was her daughter's first choice of instrument. Her daughter discontinued instrumental music study several years later.

Northwest Passage School District provided this type of social capital advantage to all of their students through their instrument loan program. Because the district owned so many instruments, most students who could not obtain one outside of school were able to utilize a school-owned instrument for $10 per year. Many instrumental music students used school-owned instruments and paid the $10 rental fee. The fee, however, did add an additional burden to financially struggling families who lacked the economic capital to take advantage of the program. Although this fee was less expensive than renting an instrument through the local music store, which cost between $35-$50 monthly, even a minimal fee had the potential to create a hardship for low-SES families, particularly if the fee was due at the same time as rent, utility bills, medical bills, or other inconvenient times.

Convenience borrowing. Mr. Smith indicated that, although many students "play school-owned instruments because that is the only way that they're going to get an instrument—that is legitimately the only way that they could afford to get one" (interview), SES did not seem to come into play when deciding to whom instruments would be loaned. Most instrumental music students in the Northwest Passage School District used school-owned instruments, regardless of economic status. Thus, families who might have been able to afford to rent or purchase an instrument from a music store used school-owned instruments for a $10 annual fee. Mr. Smith noted that some families wanted to "just wait and see if their child is going to be dedicated and if band is going to be a thing that their child does" (interview) before spending money on instruments of their own.

Data from my study indicated that many middle- and highly affluent SES families continued to utilize school-owned instruments well into high school, after it was clear that their child planned to persist in the ensembles. "My daughter, when she started, used a school violin even though she had her own" (Luka, interview). Mr. Smith indicated that this was a common occurrence, noting: "a lot of times, parents will just say that they want to use a school-owned instrument just because it's just a little bit easier financially for them, even if they are well-to-do" (interview). The desire to get ahead financially may also be associated with middle class and highly affluent family habitus, and utilizing a school instrument may not only be convenient, but also presents a way to help those who already have, have more.

Convenience borrowing was common in the Northwest Passage School District,

and data from my study indicated that this practice affected lower SES students wishing to join the instrumental ensembles. Utilizing school instruments was a convenient means for parents to obtain equipment for their children, with little risk of financial loss if their child decided to discontinue. Although access to the school district's financial capital constituted a form of social capital for those with access, it was also a means for middle class and highly affluent families to preserve their own existing economic capital. Low-SES families may not have had the economic capital to invest in their own instruments, and therefore low-SES families, who truly needed the benefit of school-owned instruments, were negatively affected by middle class and highly affluent families' convenience borrowing. Although capital, or the lack thereof, seemed to be the driving force behind low-SES families' need to borrow instruments, habitus seemed to be the driving force behind middle class and highly affluent families' desire to use school-owned instruments. Interestingly, convenience borrowing may have negatively affected middle class as well as low-SES student retention. Mr. Smith noted that some middle-class students who decided to discontinue participation may have done so in part because they and their parents were not financially invested in the program. In these cases, parents had nothing to lose if their child discontinued. Some parents expressed to Mr. Smith (and most likely to their children) that they wanted to use a school instrument in case the child did not like it and wanted to quit. This message not only conveys that quitting is not a big deal, but also that the parents/guardians may not actually value the instrumental music experience enough to make an investment. If students perceived that their parents/guardians were not sure if instrumental music study was important, they may

have had doubts that influenced their decisions to discontinue in the program.

As the supply of a specific instrument was distributed, it was sometimes necessary for students to play an instrument other than the one they wished to play. Mr. Smith noted that he sometimes had to "pull names out of a hat" to determine who would get the remaining instruments, and that some students "might not get that instrument" (interview). Sometimes, upon hearing that their child may not get to play their instrument of choice, middle class and highly affluent parents would "go out and rent and/or buy their child an instrument so that they make sure that they have the instrument that the child wants" (interview). This may not have been an option for low-SES parents with limited economic capital. Often, low-SES students just beginning their instrumental music study had to play an instrument that was not their first choice; some did not begin instrumental study at all.

Middle class and white privilege cannot be overlooked as contributors to the unfairness that some students may have experienced. Those who made use of convenience borrowing seldom saw it as a problem. Reeves (2018) wrote that middle class parents often perceive these types of actions as "just working hard and doing the best they can for their kids" (p. 156). Middle class privilege seems to be a blinding force that sometimes distracts those in its grasp from seeing how their actions affect those less fortunate.

Empirical evidence suggested that playing a school-owned instrument may be a factor in "reducing the negative effects on personal happiness and intellectual self-esteem that result from lower socioeconomic status" (Ester & Turner, 2009, p. 68). Ester and

Turner further found no significant difference in overall achievement between low and high SES students when low-SES students were provided “loaner” (p. 68) instruments. The practice of convenience borrowing may limit or eliminate some students’ opportunities to learn an instrument, boost morale, develop intellectual self-esteem through instrumental music, and lifelong music making.

Maher and Tetreault (2009) wrote that privilege was “often silent and unseen” and “works for or against individuals or groups” (p. 17). Convenience borrowing is associated with privilege, which is strongly associated with power (Reeves, 2018). Reeves noted that it is often difficult for the “upper middle class to admit that we are part of the inequality problem” (p. 155). Reeves mentioned that a sense of entitlement among middle class and highly affluent White people has resulted in a degree of self-centeredness that served to preserve the status quo. Bhopal (2018) pointed out the connective tissue between upper middle-class privilege and white privilege, noting that whiteness “works to maintain white privilege” (p. 154) and power. Bhopal concluded, “a system of privilege is maintained so that whiteness and white privilege are reinforced and continue to be self-perpetuated” (P. 154). Convenience borrowing had a negative effect on low-SES and minority students in the Northwest Passage School District. This phenomenon warrants additional investigation.

Habitus

Only one of my study participants displayed characteristics of low-SES habitus, and the rest of the participants displayed distinct characteristics of middle-class habitus. The Northwest Passage School Instrumental Ensembles tended to align best with middle

class or highly affluent habitus, perhaps creating an uncomfortable environment for low-SES and minority students. Differences in habitus manifested in various ways. Intersection of habitus and instrumental participation is outlined in the following section.

Home musical environment. Most participants from North were predisposed to music making and music appreciation. Lifelong access to instruments within the home, musical experiences provided outside of the school environment, and family history of music making all contributed to the development of these dispositions. Many of the factors contributing to the habitus of the study's participants from North Elementary School were results of the utilization of economic or social capital.

Mr. Green, whose children attended North Elementary, spoke of ways in which he and his wife helped to shape his children's dispositions regarding music. These included attending performances of various types, listening to music with their children, and encouraging them to explore musical styles. The Greens often bonded with their children through music. In addition to attending musical performances, Mr. Green served as a musical model for his children, performing on various musical instruments in the home and for his children. He played guitar, piano, and sang regularly with his family, and encouraged his entire family to become involved in amateur music making. The predispositions that the Green children exhibited were an extension of Mr. Green's, which he formed while attending an arts school during his high school years. He recalled art and music as being regularly taught and as important subjects during his school years, and he admitted that he wished his own children to develop a similar fondness.

Phillips (2003) suggested that a "positive correlation may exist between a

family's SES level and its home musical environment that may affect children's attitudes towards music" (p. 110). Phillips went on to say that students from mid- to high-SES families often can provide a richer musical home environment than their low-SES counterparts, and that musically rich home environments can affect students' attitudes toward musical study. Phillips considered activities such as "playing instruments, taking private lessons, collecting CDs, going to concerts, singing in the home, and participating in a band" (p. 110) when evaluating home musical environment. Although Phillips' language implies that low-SES families do not make music in these ways at home, many low-SES families may make music in many other ways. Informal singing, listening to music on the radio, and Karaoke are possible music-making activities that may enrich the lives of low-SES families. Low-SES families may also have guitars, pianos, or other instruments in the home as well. Informal musical practices including playing jazz, gospel, blues, or improvising on these instruments may enrich these families' lives; however, such practices tend not to align with tradition school music ensemble practices or values.

Mr. Kline, whose children attended North Elementary, provided evidence of a home environment that might have contributed to his children's decisions to begin and persist at instrumental music study. Mr. Kline mentioned that his family possessed several instruments including a violin, several guitars, and a piano. He also noted that Mrs. Kline had participated in music while in school and that he had some instrumental musical experiences, including two or three years of piano lessons. Mr. Kline also noted that his children's grandfather was musically gifted, and that the grandfather shared

musical experiences with his grandchildren:

> My son's grandfather played the guitar. When my son was in third grade, we bought a child's guitar, and he took lessons for about a year, and then lost interest because I don't think he was progressing as quickly. He would, however, still go sit with his grandfather when he would perform. About a year ago, my son decided he wanted to play again, so we got one of his grandfather's guitars. He used it for a little bit, and then he found an electric guitar and uses that now. (interview)

Parental support. Parental support for instrumental music study has been found to be another predictor of student participation in instrumental music study (Corenblum & Marshall, 1998). Researchers indicated that parental support for music study was tied to SES, as higher SES households often provided more opportunities for musical exposure and activities in the home due to availability of economic capital necessary to fund these activities (Phillips, 2003). Data from my study indicated that musically active parents/guardians often had children who were also musically active. Musical activity within the family fostered a family habitus that was conducive to musical participation. This seemed to be the case with the Plant family, whose children attended North Elementary: Both Mr. and Mrs. Plant were not only consumers of music, but also actively involved in musical performance. Recounting his family's musical endeavors, Mr. Plant noted:

> I've been playing saxophone since I was in the fourth grade. I've had instrumental musical experiences at my high school, in college, marching band, concert bands, and jazz bands. I participated in Warren Junior Military Band, in Warren, Ohio. It was like a mini drum corps. I was in Phantom Regiment's B corps for a year. Instrumental music has been a major part of my life. Currently my wife and my two oldest kids participate in three community bands as well. (interview)

Mr. Plant understood that his home was not typical, and that their music

experiences, preparation, and training were uncommon when compared to most parents/guardians in the Northwest Passage School District. He was convinced that the family's exposure to and perception of music as an important aspect of life led to his children's participation in instrumental music:

> Our house is a little bit different than most. I have a music degree, my wife is a musician, and my kids are constantly exposed to music. We've taken them since a young age to symphony orchestras, to operas, to parades, to drum and bugle corps shows. For example, my sixth grader has been talking since kindergarten about how he wants to play in the band. It was just something that he developed a desire for on his own. My child who is just starting band instruction this year has wanted to play the oboe for two years. (interview)

Developing a desire to play in the band "on his own," as Mr. Plant stated, might be better understood as a decision he made freely and without being forced; however, the habitus of the family surely included dispositions about music and music participation that influenced his decision. When asked about these and other factors that he believed influenced his children's decisions to participate in instrumental music, Mr. Plant responded that there was a great deal of "family influence and community influence from those with whom we associate. We've got a lot of friends who are musicians. My kids have been to a lot of musical organizations, and they see music as something that is fun" (interview). Access to other musician "friends" was a form of social capital that contributed to the formation of the Plant children's habitus.

Other participants who had musically active children also expressed that they or members of their family had experience with instrumental music, and that these experiences may have contributed to their children's decisions to participate in instrumental music study. Mr. Luska, whose children attended West Elementary, noted

that he had a “little bit” of past musical experience:

> my grandfather and father and my wife’s grandfather and father were all extremely musically talented. My dad played four instruments, all self-taught. My wife’s dad played two instruments. I am sure my children got [their musical abilities] somewhere from the family. (interview)

Mr. Luska’s children discontinued instrumental music study within the school; however, they continued to be musically active outside of the school setting. Similarly, Mrs. Thompson, whose daughters attended North Elementary School and played flute and piano respectively, noted her musical background as potentially influencing her children’s decision to participate in music, noting that she “played the piano from the time I was young, so we had already had a piano in our house when our kids were born. I used to accompany the choir actually when I was in high school also” (interview).

Mrs. Adams, whose children attended North Elementary, was the only parent/guardian participant without a child who had started instrumental music participation in elementary school; however, her daughter participated in the marching program as a band front member. Mrs. Adams had no instrumental music experience but had sung in the choir in high school. She noted that, like her daughter, she was a member of the marching band front lines—a majorette—when she was in high school. Likewise, Mrs. Morris was a choir member when in high school but had never played an instrument. She noted that her grandson loved to sing and participated in the junior high choir but no longer played in the band. His participation ended after sixth grade.

The cases discussed in this study revealed evidence that habitus affected students’ decisions to begin, continue, or discontinue instrumental music study in the Northwest Passage School District. Decisions were often tied to SES factors, and peer groups

formed along SES lines at the elementary school level. These groups persisted into middle school and struggled to assimilate into a larger, singular class consisting of students from all three elementary schools and from varying SES backgrounds. Higher SES students remained involved with instrumental music while lower SES students not. This problem may have been exacerbated by the alignment of middle and high school instrumental ensemble habitus with the habitus of middle class and highly affluent families. Ensemble members were expected to participate in music making in a very structured manner, and the directors practiced a sort of concerted cultivation through lessons, rehearsals, and concerts. Expensive band and choir trips, the need for students to provide their own transportation home following after-school rehearsals, and fundraising activities relying on selling candy or other merchandise, presented potential challenges for lower SES students. Elpus and Abril (2011) expressed concerns over the cost of obtaining instruments and other SES-related issues that affect low-SES students: "other financial costs of continued music study that affect both instrumental and choral ensembles exist: transportation to rehearsals and concerts that occur outside the school day and private instruction, just to name two" (p. 139). Students who remain underfunded and underserved will also remain underrepresented.

Convenience borrowing was another characteristic of middle class and highly affluent family habitus, which often exemplified a privileged lifestyle. Middle class and highly affluent habitus is entangled with upper middle class and white privilege, characterized by a sense of unrecognized entitlement (Bhopal, 2018; Maher & Tetreault, 2009; Reeves, 2018). In my study, middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians

seemed to believe that their children deserved the same access to school-owned instruments as low-SES students, and in some cases might have claimed these instruments before they could be offered to low-SES students. In doing so, middle class and highly affluent parents may have taken opportunities away from low-SES students who may have had no other option for obtaining an instrument. These are all characteristics of middle class and highly affluent family habitus. The argument could be made that the public school setting is, as a whole, more aligned with middle class and highly affluent families' habitus than that of lower SES families. Lareau (2003) summed up this concept:

> when children enter institutions such as schools and health care settings, the strategy of middle class child rearing of concerted cultivation is far more in compliance with the current standards of professionals than is the approach of the accomplishment of natural growth. There are signs that middle class children gain advantages, including potentially in the world of work, from the experience of concerted cultivation. Working class and poor children do not gain this benefit (p. 2).

As I thought about my study, my own experiences as a band director, and attempted to imagine myself in the shoes of the underrepresented, I realized how uncomfortable it must be for someone from a low-SES habitus to attempt to thrive in a middle class or highly affluent habitus. I kept asking myself if someone from a low-SES background would even want to enter that field if they understood the challenges they would face. I realized that students who love music and wish to learn an instrument wish to do so might have no other option. School band and orchestra habitus align with middle class or highly affluent habitus, and the traditional practices that many ensembles follow—auditioned seating, gendering of instruments, and unspoken requirement of

concerted cultivation, for example—tend to perpetuate instrumental music whiteness, favor those who *have,* and reproduce, year after year, ensembles that continue to be for and by middle class and highly affluent students (Bull, 2014).

Parents/Guardians Involvement

Data from my study suggested that North Elementary School parents'/guardians' bias toward parents/guardians and/or students from East and West Elementary Schools may have played a role in the formation of peer groups and influenced their children's habitus. Some parents/guardians whose children attended North Elementary School perceived the parents/guardians whose children attended either West or East Elementary Schools as somehow less involved in their children's school lives or otherwise unsupportive of their children. For example, when asked about students from East and West Elementary Schools, Mr. Kline expressed his observation that there was "a lot of poverty. Many kids from those schools don't do well once they get into middle school. There are exceptions, but a lot just don't have the same upbringing or support at home that others do" (interview). Elaborating on "support at home," Mr. Kline expanded, noting:

> Parent involvement in the school. We push our kids to do well. Some parents don't. That isn't necessarily the students' fault, but if the parents don't expect the kids to do well in school, the kids probably won't do well. (interview)

Similarly, Ms. Adams named family involvement and differing family expectations as contributors to the lack of representation of East and West students in instrumental ensembles:

> Family expectations and parents supporting the teachers versus parents having negative attitudes towards teachers are big differences. You have more single-family homes, more blended families at the other two schools. I think there is more family involvement at North versus the other two schools. The list can go on and on. (interview)

Ms. Thompson also perceived less parent/guardian involvement from East and West Elementary schools:

> Parent involvement, I would assume, is down in those schools compared to North. North has more parents involved, and I think where you have more parent involvement, you're probably going to see kids also being more involved in the school district. (interview)

Participants noted several means of parent/guardian involvement with the instrumental ensembles, including volunteering in the marching band concession stand during football games, chaperoning band and orchestra events occurring off school grounds, organizing fundraisers, serving as band booster members and officers, and assisting in obtaining used instruments for the instrumental music programs. Opportunities to participate in many of these service capacities arose only after parents'/guardians' children had already made the decision to persist in the instrumental music programs at the middle school or high school levels. The dearth of low-SES parent participation in these service opportunities was partly due to the lack of low-SES students in the instrumental music programs at the middle and high school levels. Additionally, Lareau (2011) indicated that low-SES parents were less likely to become involved in their children's school activities than their higher SES counterparts. Lareau observed that middle class and highly affluent families perceived that "the boundaries between home and institutions [as] fluid; mothers cross back and forth, mediating their children's lives" (Kindle location 3250). In contrast, Lareau noted that low-SES parents/guardians tended

to draw a distinct line between their parental duties at home and outside of the home.

Other researchers also found that low-SES parents/guardians were often less involved in their children's school, musical, and extracurricular activities outside the home. Corenblum and Marshall (1998) linked student-perceived parental support of music participation outside the home to SES. Low-SES students overwhelmingly perceived parental support for music participation as negative, and middle class and highly affluent students perceived parental support for music participation as positive. Corenblum and Marshall noted:

> For individuals in privileged positions within the culture, the belief that people should be encouraged to excel at and continue in music and scholastic endeavors seems the right thing to do. To do otherwise would seem inconsistent with beliefs these students may hold about the value of talent and the nature of individual achievement. (p. 136)

Bodovski (2010) found support for Lareau's assertion that concerted cultivation was common in middle class and highly affluent families. Concerted cultivation requires parental involvement in and out of the home, often taking the form of student private lessons, participation in extracurricular activities, and other organized events. Bodovski also linked concerted cultivation to higher scholastic achievement and discovered some interesting details about concerted cultivation, that African American parents/guardians, regardless of social class, "are less engaged in the process of concerted cultivation of their children compared with white parents" (p. 152). Bodovski's findings contradicted Lareau's (2011), who found little difference between middle-class family behaviors regardless of race. Bodovski appeared to make race a determining factor in behavior, lending support to the idea that concerted cultivation may not be a product of social class

only; rather it may be a product of social culture that is heavily influenced by race. Lareau found the behavior to be cultural and heavily influenced by SES.

Scheduling

Analysis indicated that students who persisted in the instrumental music programs into middle and high school faced different challenges that influenced their decisions on whether to persist in instrumental music study than did students moving from the elementary schools into the middle school. These new challenges included scheduling conflicts, athletic conflicts, and academic choices. The instrumental music directors took several measures to try to negate the impact of such factors and were successful in many cases.

Cowden (1992) and Klinedinst (1991) indicated that academic achievement was a reliable predictor of student persistence in instrumental music ensembles; however, some high achieving students in the Northwest Passage School District discontinued instrumental music study once they reached the high school level. Schedule choices that these students made sometimes eliminated the ability to fit instrumental ensembles into their daily schedule. Academic scheduling conflicts sometimes occurred between advanced courses, often taken by high achieving academic students, and instrumental ensembles. Ms. Adams, for example, noted that her eldest daughter, who desired to pursue a physician's assistant program in college, dropped out of choir after her sophomore year to focus on advanced math and science courses that she believed were necessary to such a pursuit. Academically advanced courses were often scheduled at the same time as choir, band, and orchestra rehearsals.

Ms. Jones recognized that academic scheduling affected orchestra retention, noting that students who failed to achieve adequately on standardized testing were often placed into remediation classes, and in many cases, those classes replaced orchestra in the students' schedules. She also stated that advanced placement courses, dual enrollment courses, and vocational education, which occurred off campus at a specialized school, created conflicts for students who wished to take orchestra. High achieving juniors and seniors often competed for positioning in their class rank and the titles of valedictorian or salutatorian. Some students dropped orchestra, band, or choir from their schedules in lieu of academically weighted courses that could potentially boost their grade point average and improve their class rank. The desire to bolster grade point averages and the master schedule of courses ultimately resulted in fewer high academically achieving students in the instrumental ensembles.

Summary

Analysis of data from this study indicated that SES continued to influence participation in the instrumental ensembles of the Northwest Passage School District. The instrumental directors took steps to try to alleviate some prohibitive issues affecting lower SES families. Generally, these measures addressed economic capital—providing school-owned instruments and instruction books for a low fee, for example. Other measures, including fundraising opportunities, were also offered as a means of easing the financial burden associated with community building activities such as band and orchestra trips. Despite these efforts, low-SES students were still underrepresented in the instrumental ensembles at the high school level. Social and economic capital, habitus,

community, relationships, parent/guardian perceptions of each other and the programs, and scheduling were also identified as factors affecting participation in the instrumental ensembles. Conclusions drawn from this research, limitations of this study, and the need for additional research about the effects of SES on instrumental music participation are discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Although the instrumental programs in the Northwest Passage School District experienced an increase in enrollment over the five years leading up to this study, SES continued to affect participation in the instrumental ensembles. The instrumental music directors were cognizant of the many socioeconomically disadvantaged families served by the school district, and consequently made efforts to alleviate socioeconomic-related barriers that may have hindered participation in instrumental music for some students. Despite efforts to nullify burdens associated with obtaining instruments, lesson books, and other necessary supplies, low-SES students remained underrepresented in the Northwest Passage School District High School instrumental ensembles. This suggested that other influences may have played a role in students' decisions about participation in the instrumental ensembles.

SES Influences Related to Student Participation in Instrumental Ensembles

Several influences emerged from my study, including cultural differences, ensemble travel, interpersonal relationships, and family background; each of these influences was tied in some way to SES, habitus, or capital. The following discussion addresses Research Question 1: "What SES-related influences, if any, affected students' participation in the instrumental ensembles in the Northwest Passage School District?"

Cultural Differences, Community, and Habitus

There was a clear cultural difference between East/West Elementary Schools and North Elementary School. The percentage of minority and low-SES students who

attended East (93% of school population) and West (88% of school population) was much greater than North (53% of school population). North Elementary School served several upscale neighborhoods, and all the participants with children who attended North Elementary were upper or middle class. In contrast, neighborhoods served by East and West Elementary Schools were largely impoverished.

From my interactions with the instrumental music directors, I gained a strong sense that many community building efforts, opportunities for students to participate in after school and weekend instrumental activities, and the manner in which the programs were set up favored students from a middle class or highly affluent family background. The children of affluent or highly affluent parent/guardian study participants had participated in as well as anticipated future expensive ensemble travel. In addition to touring expenses, after-school rehearsals and weekend performances required students to provide their own transportation to and from the school; however, these activities may have proven difficult or impossible for low-SES students. Although the directors were cognizant of the needs of lower SES students and tried to remove some of the financial burdens created by these activities, they were seemingly unaware that some of the remedies were ineffective. Selling consumables as a fundraiser, for example, may have been much easier for students living in affluent neighborhoods and harder for students living in low-SES areas due to the community-wide lack of financial capital.

Most of the study participants lived in middle class or highly affluent neighborhoods, and their children attended North Elementary School. Consequently, much of my interview data reflected middle class or highly affluent family perspective

and habitus. As I discuss later in this chapter, the demographic makeup of the participants was a limiting factor in this study. Regardless, participants', students', and directors' perceptions of the instrumental ensembles as a micro community and the experiences, community building activities, and friendships that resulted from these experiences emerged as primary influences leading to retention of mostly middle class and highly affluent students in the instrumental ensembles. The building and strengthening of this micro community was intentional, as the directors recognized the importance of community to retention in the ensemble. Low-SES students, however, may have been left of out of some of the activities used to build community due to SES factors. This did not stop these activities from occurring or the community from strengthening. It did, however, help to shape exactly who was part of the community.

The instrumental music directors repeatedly referenced ensemble travel, fun, friendships, and a family atmosphere as important aspects of their ensembles. The instrumental directors also noted that they perceived themselves not only as musical leaders, but also as quasi-parental figures to many of the students, providing students with services above and beyond normal music teacher job descriptions. These included mending torn clothing, counseling students, and providing transportation from the school to home for some students, many of whom were identified by the directors as economically disadvantaged students who had attended West or East Elementary School. All of these actions led to the building of a sense of family and community within the ensembles, according to the directors.

Ensemble Travel

Study participants recognized that periodic ensemble travel to Disney World and other locations helped attract and retain students in the instrumental ensembles. Mr. Smith and Ms. Jones both indicated that their students greatly anticipated these trips. Ms. Jones noted that the trips were, perhaps, the primary reason that some of her students decided to remain in her ensembles. Parent/guardian participants of students who participated in ensemble travel confirmed that ensemble trips were a contributing factor to their students' decisions to continue participating in the ensembles. Students were responsible for their own costs to participate in these trips. Depending on the destination, trip expenses could range from $500 to over $1000 each time.

The existing literature I found on ensemble travel predominantly addressed the positive effects that travel had on ensemble members. Helsel (2015), for example, discovered that one of his study participants, a high school choir director whose ensemble traveled every year, documented 100% retention of his traveling ensemble participants. Helsel noted that the student body in the school where this individual taught was not culturally diverse; however, the study body was socioeconomically diverse. The director indicated that 45%-80% of his choir members participated in ensemble travel from year to year. Deductively, 20%-55% of his students did not participate in travel experiences. Helsel did not discuss the socioeconomic breakdown of choir members. Although this director enjoyed 100% retention of traveling choir members, Helsel did not address retention trends of the 20%-55% of students who did not, or were not able to, travel with the choir.

The financial cost of ensemble travel was found to be a primary concern to many directors and parents/guardians (Helsel, 2015; Holcomb, 2003). Low-SES families may have struggled to meet the financial responsibility needed to participate in these trips. Consequently, some low-SES students may have not been able to participate in this aspect of the micro community. Reardon and Bischoff (2011) found that SES inequalities not only manifested as large-scale neighborhood segregation, but also as small-scale SES segregation within social contexts. It appeared that ensemble travel was one microcosm where small-scale SES segregation occurred, albeit not purposefully. Consequently, ensemble trips may not have helped retain those students who could not afford to participate in the trips.

Relationships

Friendships and a sense of family within the ensembles also emerged as a factor affecting students' decisions to persist in the instrumental ensembles. Albert (2006b) found that a strong sense of family and caring for each other was an influencing factor in ensemble retention. Albert's findings seem consistent with my own. Data from my study indicated that some of the friendships emanating from the middle and high school instrumental ensembles started in elementary school, perhaps before students began instrumental music study. The question of how many of these friendships were generated through instrumental music study was not addressed in this study, although some participants noted that their children made the initial decision to begin instrumental music along with their fifth-grade friends. According to study participants, peer groups from each of the three elementary schools were clearly formed by the time students were ready

to enter the middle school.

These peer groups did not socialize well or initially integrate into a larger cohesive class upon moving into the middle school, according to study participants. Consequently, once in the middle school, peer groups from each of the three elementary schools often disassociated from peer groups from the other two schools. This frequently led to discipline problems, fighting, and occasional violence. Researchers have documented this type of behavior. For example, Kreager (2008) noted that "disadvantaged boys are often able to gain some forms of peer status through violence" (p. 445). Kreager also explained: "disadvantaged boys with high status in violent groups are at much greater risk of high school dropout than other students" (p. 445). Although Kreager's study focused on factors contributing to school dropout, similar circumstances might also lead to music ensemble non-participation. Kraeger found that students who were "disconnected from peers may have higher rates of school failure because they are less likely to participate in classroom learning activities, teacher-initiated class requirements, and athletics or other extracurricular activities" (p. 447).

Although participants noted that some students decided to remain active in the instrumental ensembles because of the friendships they had formed and the peer groups to which they belonged, it is possible that the same peer group dynamics negatively influenced instrumental music participation. Over half of the instrumental music students in the high school ensembles attended North Elementary School. If discord existed between peer groups from the different elementary schools and within the ensembles, students from the smaller school peer groups of East and West Elementary Schools may

have felt outnumbered or out of place when combined with the much larger peer group from North Elementary and immersed into the middle-class habitus of the larger ensemble. Although the middle school's habitus may have been comfortable for or familiar to middle class or highly affluent students, low-SES students may have struggled or been uncomfortable in this setting (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977; Jenkins, 1992; Kreager, 2008; Lareau, 2011). This may have affected their decisions about whether or not to actively participate in instrumental ensembles or other activities associated with the middle school.

Parental Bias

Middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians may have perpetuated the social divisions experienced between peer groups from the various elementary schools, thus possibly contributing to low-SES student discontinuation in the instrumental ensembles. Several participants with children who attended North Elementary spoke of East and West Elementary Schools and the children and families from those schools in negative or condescending terms, noting that they felt parents from East and West Elementary were uninvolved, unsupportive, and had lower standards for their children. Middle class and highly affluent family participants primarily associated with other middle class and highly affluent peers and rarely associated with people from lower SES neighborhoods. Low-SES study participants, on the other hand, did not seem to express any negative perceptions of middle class or highly affluent parents or students.

Student Habitus

Differences in students' habitus and the ways in which those intersected with the schools' and the ensemble's habitus also may have played a role in ensemble participation. Kreager (2008) noted that some students from low-SES backgrounds might not be prepared to function in a school system that is "oriented toward middle class values" (p. 448). The group habitus of the instrumental ensembles more closely aligned with that of middle class or highly affluent habitus. Weekly lessons, regular rehearsals, and periodic performances within a highly structured schedule reflected concerted cultivation (Lareau, 2011). Extracurricular ensembles often required students to arrange for transportation to and/or from rehearsals and performances; therefore, participating in extracurricular ensembles may have been more difficult for low-SES students who may not have access to transportation, lived too far away from the school to walk, had to work to help support their family, or had to be home after school to help take care of younger siblings.

Many of the community building activities that the directors planned only included the extracurricular ensembles, which were largely populated by middle class and highly affluent students. The marching band regularly participated in community building activities. These types of experiences may have been commonplace to many middle class and highly affluent students; however, low-SES students may have come from backgrounds that included much more unstructured time and fewer organized activities (Lareau, 2011), and, as Kreager noted, may have not been prepared to function in middle-class settings.

Geography and Location

Geographical factors, particularly the location of the elementary schools and certain neighborhoods, may have also affected participation in the instrumental ensembles. Students attending North Elementary, according to Ms. Jones, had the best instrumental experience for elementary students. North Elementary was located within a few steps of the middle and high schools, and some elementary instrumentalists were able to take their lessons at the high school facilities. According to Ms. Jones, the high school facilities were superior to those in the other two elementary schools, as the teachers had access to supplies, materials, copiers, and other equipment located in their offices. North Elementary was also a much newer building. The music facilities in North, used for rehearsals and some lessons, were in better condition than those in East or West. Costa-Giomi (2008) and Costa-Giomi and Chappell (2007) found a large disparity between facility qualities along SES lines. Low-SES schools serving large populations of minority students often lacked the quality facilities, equipment, and resources that schools in higher SES areas had. The early exposure to and familiarization with the middle/high school facilities that some North Elementary instrumental music students experienced through instrumental lessons may have increased their comfort level in the middle school setting, making the transition from elementary to middle school easier for them than it may have been for students from East and West Elementary Schools.

The locations of various neighborhoods may have created transportation issues for students wishing to participate in extra-curricular ensembles. Although North Elementary School was centrally located and on the main street of the town, East and West

Elementary Schools and the neighborhoods they served were located on the outskirts of town, several miles away from the middle/high school. Many of these neighborhoods were low-SES. Mr. Smith noted that some students needed to walk several miles to get home after extra-curricular activities. The distance between the middle/high school building and the outlying neighborhoods may have deterred some students from participating in extracurricular ensembles, as families living in the outlying neighborhoods may not have had access to transportation after rehearsals ended.

Prior Musical Experiences

Past musical experiences and exposure, as well as parents'/guardians' musical experiences, may have influenced students' decisions to participate in the instrumental music programs (Brandstrom & Wiklund, 1996; Klinedinst, 1991; Phillips, 2003). Study participants whose children were active participants in the instrumental music programs had often themselves previously studied music or were still musically active. Most of these same parents/guardians also had at least one, and in many cases, several instruments available in their homes. Some provided opportunities for their children to hear live performances regularly.

These experiences helped to form students' habitus, as children from these families were often surrounded by music in various forms—performances, instruments, lessons, etc. Parents/guardians with musical backgrounds often viewed music as a normal, regular, and important aspect of life, and therefore projected those beliefs onto their children. Parent's/guardian's provision of certain types of concerted cultivation were evident in the middle class and highly affluent families participating in this study.

As Lareau (2011) noted, private lessons or instruction and participation in organized activities were all examples of concerted cultivation and part of the middle class and highly affluent family habitus. In addition, middle class and highly affluent family attributes identified in this study included the existence of musical instruments in the home, access to performances, and parents/guardians with musical experience, knowledge, or training.

Addressing SES-related Influences

In this section, I address Research Question 2: "How were the effects of SES-related influences on instrumental music participation addressed in the school district selected for this study?" The instrumental music directors in the Northwest Passage School District made efforts to alleviate the negative impact of low-SES. The directors noted multiple examples of instances when they went out of their way to help low-SES students who wished to participate in the ensembles. Providing fundraising opportunities, offering transportation to students, providing instruments, and mending clothing represent ways the directors tried to help their ensemble members and encourage continued participation.

Instrument Loaner Program

Making school-owed instruments available to students was of great benefit to many students. Over the years leading up to this study, the directors had been able to secure and stockpile many instruments in an effort to help any student, regardless of SES, to participate in the ensembles. The impact of the instrument loan program was partially

negated, however, when families who could have otherwise afforded to rent or purchase an instrument chose to utilize a school-owned instrument, a phenomenon I refer to as *convenience borrowing*, an extension of middle class privilege and an example of the resultant sense of entitlement that many middle class families displayed. Lareau (2011) and Reeves (2018) recognized how the sense of entitlement within some middle class and highly affluent families marginalized low-SES and minority students. Reeves indicated that it was often difficult for middle class and affluent people to admit that they were sometimes part of the inequality problems plaguing American society. Reeves noted, "upper middle-class power tends to be deployed to protect our own position and status, regardless of consideration of fairness" (p.155-156). Convenience borrowing was an extension of this entitlement and an ongoing problem in the Northwest Passage School District. Although I did not uncover any type of policy meant to address convenience borrowing through my research, such a policy might positively affect recruitment and retention of low-SES students into the instrumental ensembles.

Fundraising

The Northwest Passage School District instrumental music directors tried to assist those who could not afford ensemble travel through fundraising efforts. Most of the fundraising events implemented involved asking students to independently sell consumables. Although this was an effective means of fundraising for students with access to friends and family with the financial capital to purchase these items, it may have been difficult for low-SES students living in economically disadvantaged neighborhoods to successfully raise the funds needed to make ensemble travel affordable.

In some cases, fundraising did not provide the necessary economic capital that some students needed to participate in certain community building activities like ensemble travel.

Limitations of and Problems Arising During the Study

Most participants in the instrumental ensembles at Northwest Passage High School previously attended North Elementary School. Parents/guardians of former North Elementary School students indicated that SES factors were not obstacles to their children's participation in the ensembles. Parents/guardians from all three elementary schools were invited to participate in this study, yet the distribution of participants was skewed heavily toward parents/guardians of students from North. Participants from East and West were underrepresented in this study, just as students from East and West were underrepresented in the instrumental ensembles. Only one participant had a child who attended West Elementary, and only one participant had a child who attended East Elementary. Additionally, low-SES participants were underrepresented in this study. Only one participant, whose grandchild attended East Elementary, identified as low-SES. All other participants identified as and displayed characteristics of middle class or highly affluent families.

Several limiting factors arose during this study, potentially affecting the data. Of concern was the makeup of the study participants. I originally sought representative parent/guardian participants from diverse economic backgrounds and from all three elementary schools in the Northwest Passage School District. I sought to include parents/guardians whose children were instrumental music participants, discontinued

instrumental participants, and those who had never participated in instrumental music. Such diversity within the participants was necessary in order to gain a broad perspective of SES influences that affected participation in instrumental music. Although all parents/guardians of children in seventh- through ninth-grade were invited to participate, the majority of respondents were from North Elementary School whose children were current participants in the instrumental music program. Of those respondents who agreed to be interviewed, only one represented East Elementary, and only one represented West Elementary. Consequently, the interview data that was collected primarily represented the experiences and opinions of parents/guardians of students from North Elementary School.

Socioeconomic diversity between participants was also an issue with my study. Phillips (2003) indicated that students from low-SES families were less likely to have musical experiences stemming from the home including private music lessons, access to instruments in the home, and opportunities to attend concerts. Phillips found that these experiences were more commonly provided to students from middle class and highly affluent families. This is not to say that all low-SES families are devoid of music-making, but rather that some may enjoy forms of music making that do not align with traditional school ensembles—playing the banjo, guitar, singing hymns, or improvising the blues on piano come to mind.

All but one of the parent/guardian participants in this study displayed these characteristics of higher SES families, and, although participants were not directly asked to identify their income levels, all but one parent/guardian displayed characteristics of

being from middle class or highly affluent backgrounds. These characteristics included activities in concerted cultivation, possessing multiple musical instruments in the home, and, in some cases, the revelation of the parents/guardians' vocation. Consequently, low-SES participants were underrepresented in this study's data. Secondhand accounts from the directors and middle class or highly affluent participants were often used when identifying factors that may have influenced low-SES student participation in instrumental music.

Higher SES participants sometimes displayed biased opinions of the neighborhoods served by East and West Elementary Schools, as well as strong opinions about the students and parents/guardians from those neighborhoods. Firsthand accounts from low-SES parents/guardians would have provided much more authentic data on influences affecting low-SES student participation in the instrumental ensembles. The lack of low-SES participants made it difficult to collect firsthand accounts.

Instrumental ensemble enrollment data from the Northwest Passage School District used in this study was only a snapshot of what might or might not be long-term enrollment trends. Although instrumental ensemble enrollment data was accurate and covered all grade levels, it only covered ensemble enrollment during the year this study occurred. Enrollment data spanning several consecutive years would have provided a more detailed picture of enrollment trends. Longitudinal data spanning several years may have provided information about attrition at specific grade levels and potentially helped to identify additional influences affecting instrumental ensemble participation.

Implications for Music Education

Findings from this study pointed to several issues that educators and school officials might take into consideration. Understanding the effects of SES on instrumental ensemble participation is essential to addressing the underrepresentation of low-SES and minority students in such ensembles. Teaching informed by such knowledge might allow directors to better reach low-SES students who may appear disinterested or withdrawn.

Acknowledging and examining the existence and effect of middle-class privilege experienced by many middle-class instrumental music students and seeking ways to offer similar advantages to all students, may help to level the playing field in instrumental ensembles. Convenience borrowing was a problem in the Northwest Passage School District. When families that could otherwise rent or purchase an instrument borrow school-owned instruments, opportunities to participate in instrumental music study and/or instrument choice might be taken away from students who truly need access to those instruments. Addressing convenience borrowing is one way that directors may provide low-SES students the same access to instruments as middle class and highly affluent students.

Although community-building activities within ensembles is an exceptionally important aspect related not only to the overall ensemble experience, but also to recruitment and retention, directors need to carefully consider how they build their communities. Directors need to consider who is able to participate fully in the community, and whether or not middle class and highly affluent students have an advantage over their low-SES counterparts in community building activities. Finding

ways to assist low-SES students to allow and encourage them to participate in extracurricular ensembles—for example, assistance with transportation to and from rehearsals and performance or offering financial support when ensemble travel occurs—is very important to their complete inclusion and immersion into the ensemble community.

Finally, pre-service music teachers need to understand how to teach low-SES students just as much as they do middle class and highly affluent students. Too often students' teacher placements may be made in wealthier school districts, with predominantly white students, and working only with traditional ensembles. This is, perhaps, due in part to their preparation to teach in such environments. Colleges, universities, and schools of music could do a lot to alleviate the equity gap between the middle class and low-SES and minority students simply by teaching future music teachers about class differences, cultural differences, and placing student teachers in situations where they can gain experience working with these populations. Further, pre-service music teachers need to be thoroughly trained not only in Euroamerican music, but also in popular music, musical cultures beyond Euroamerican or western genres, and alternative ensembles. We will never achieve true equality in music education if we continue to focus strictly on White middle-class music.

Grade Level Buildings

Researchers have indicated that changing buildings—moving from elementary school to middle school, or from middle school to high school—can have a negative effect on ensemble retention (Solly, 1986); however, Hartley (1996) discovered that

students who had already experienced changing buildings, in these cases from fifth grade to sixth grade, were more likely to remain in the instrumental program upon transitioning to seventh grade. Were the Northwest Passage Elementary Schools organized into three grade-level buildings, students would have moved buildings two times before joining the instrumental ensembles. The transition to the middle school might be more comfortable for students who had already experienced these building changes.

Fink (2016) pointed out those school districts that have moved from community-based schools to grade-level buildings have seen many benefits:

> Grouping students into schools by grade levels rather than by neighborhoods is known as the Princeton Plan, so-called because the city of Princeton, New Jersey, experimented with grade-level grouping over half a century ago in an effort to increase diversity. (Fink, 2016, para. 7)

Fink (2016) further found that organizing schools based on grade level rather than neighborhood had positive effects not only on diversity, but also financially and academically. As an example, the superintendent of a school district in New York transitioned the district's elementary school format from neighborhood schools to a grade level building design. Fink noted that, after moving to this model, the school district saved close to $500,000 each of the first five years this model was implemented, as school staff were able to work more efficiently (Fink, 2016). The superintendent of this school noted that they were able to positively adjust class sizes, allowing the school to eliminate duplicate classes. Although this resulted in a reduction of teaching staff, it also saved the district a substantial amount of money, which was then reinvested into the schools.

The negative effects on ensemble participation, difficulties melding into cohesive grade-level classes, and conflicts between students that occurred when the peer groups that had formed at the three elementary schools entered the middle school as seventh-grade students, could be alleviated to some extent if, as suggested by several study participants, the school district reorganized the elementary schools into grade-level buildings rather than neighborhood schools. For example, one elementary might house kindergarten, first, and second grade, another might house third and fourth grade, and the third might house fifth and sixth grade. Keeping entire grade levels together through elementary school would give students a chance to form bonds with all their classmates rather than just those living in their neighborhood. Grade-level buildings might promote better understanding and acceptance of and between students and parents/guardians from economically diverse neighborhoods and may influence the perceptions about economically disadvantaged families expressed by some study participants.

The instrumental music directors in the Northwest Passage School District cited the transition from sixth to seventh grade—moving from the elementary schools to the middle school—as particularly troublesome in terms of ensemble retention. Data from this study indicated that retention problems might have been due in part to the uncertainty that some students had regarding the makeup of the middle school ensembles and potential nervousness over the merging of peer groups from the three elementary schools. Study participant Mr. Plant mentioned that conflicts between peer groups from the various elementary schools were problematic in the past. Grade-level buildings might help to alleviate these issues, as students in the ensembles would then already know those

with whom they would be participating in seventh-grade ensembles. This may improve ensemble retention at the seventh-grade level and beyond.

Other Socioeconomic Considerations

Several socioeconomic issues affecting student participation in the Northwest Passage Instrumental ensembles emerged during this study. Although instrumental music teachers were unable to act or address some of these factors, including geographical location of the elementary schools and economically disadvantaged communities, some could be addressed in a manner that provides additional opportunities to low-SES students wishing to participate in instrumental ensembles.

Ester and Turner (2009) found similar achievement levels between students playing loaner instruments and students playing instruments they owned, regardless of SES level. Ester and Turner's findings imply that SES had little to do with achievement as long as all students had equal access to proper equipment, instruction, and the ability to practice (Ester & Turner, 2009). Ester and Turner also noted that low-SES instrumental students might benefit in ways different from middle class and highly affluent instrumentalists.

It may be helpful for instrumental music teachers to evaluate the ways in which school-owned instruments are distributed. The Northwest Passage School District had made tremendous efforts to obtain a large stockpile of instruments through grants, community donations, instrument drives, and purchases, and these instruments were well maintained year to year and available for student use. The practice of convenience borrowing by affluent families reduced the number of instruments available to students

who truly had no other means of obtaining an instrument. Low-SES students might benefit from instrument distribution practices that took this into account. Directors might consider surveying students prior to official recruitment to determine what instruments students wished to play, which students had access to instruments in the home, which students might rent, and which students needed to use school-owned equipment. This would, at the least, provide valuable information on immediate instrument need.

The instrumental music directors noted that they instituted a $10 fee for students borrowing instruments from the school. This fee not only covered the cost of the instrument, but also provided a method book (for elementary students), basic instrument maintenance, and simple repairs. This fee, which was intended to close the gap between the funds needed to maintain such a large stockpile of instruments and the limited operating budget available, might have also placed a financial burden on low-SES families. Some low-SES students would be better served if directors waived this fee for those students who did not possess the means to pay.

Instrumental directors might also consider evaluating the community-building activities used to enhance teamwork, a sense of family, and retain students. Data from this study indicated that some of these activities, ensemble travel for example, although well-intentioned, favored middle class and highly affluent ensemble members who could better afford the cost of the trips. The financial effect of large-scale ensemble travel proved to be overwhelming for some students, according to the Northwest Passage instrumental directors. Although fundraising opportunities were available to help offset

the cost of these trips, many required selling consumables, a difficult task for low-SES students in impoverished communities.

Directors might be able to increase participation in the trips among a low-SES population if additional funding streams were made available. Fundraisers that did not require individual students to sell items to their families and community members—perhaps car washes, benefit concerts, or other large community-wide events—could be held more frequently. Corporate sponsorships or donations from businesses or community members could be directed toward those students who lack the economic capital to fully participate in expensive community-building events like ensemble travel. Community or regional grants may also be available to further alleviate the financial burden associated with ensemble travel for low-SES families. Further, limiting large-scale travel to every four years rather than every two would provide additional time to secure the funding necessary to cover the cost of ensemble travel involvement.

It was necessary to schedule rehearsals for certain ensembles after regular school hours because there was insufficient available time to schedule all existing ensembles during the school day, given the confines of the schools' master schedules. After-school scheduling of extracurricular ensembles may have hindered some low-SES students from participation. Students who lived in the impoverished communities located several miles away from the Northwest Passage High School facilities similarly may not have participated in after-school music ensembles because of lack of transportation from the school to their homes after extracurricular rehearsals concluded.

Some study participants noted that they perceived many low-SES

parents/guardians as uninvolved in their children's school activities. Parents/guardians from differing social classes sometimes value different parenting styles. This variance in value may have created middle class parents' perception that low-SES parents/guardians were uninvolved; however, low-SES parents/guardians may have also perceived middle class parents/guardians as pushy. Lareau (2011) noted that middle class and highly affluent parents/guardians valued concerted cultivation of talents and involvement in their children's schooling, activities, and often preferred to involve their children in structured activities, and low-SES families often valued natural growth and unstructured time. Some low-SES parents/guardians may also work several jobs in order to make ends meet. Participating in school activities or booster groups may not be possible for parents/guardians in this situation, as their free time may be limited.

Mr. Smith noted that transportation was often a concern to some students in his ensembles, noting that he had given students rides home in his personal vehicle on occasions when they did not have other transportation options. Although Mr. Smith transported students in this manner from time to time to accommodate their participation in extracurricular ensembles, it is not generally recommended for teachers to transport students to or from any event in their personal vehicles, as this could raise issues regarding insurance or liability. This practice may also create a situation in which a student and teacher are alone in a vehicle without other witnesses, leaving students vulnerable to potential abuse and teachers to accusations, which can be neither proved nor disproved. Instead, directors may suggest that students consider exploring options to carpool with other students or perhaps approaching the school district and request some

sort of school transport.

Suggestions for Future Research

Research on the effects of SES on instrumental music participation is widely available. However, this study uncovered several key areas that, if investigated, may further the causes of inclusion, recruitment, and retention in instrumental music ensembles. Additional research into the influence of instrument choice and instrument assignment on recruitment and retention in instrumental ensembles within a low-SES setting would be beneficial.

Convenience Borrowing and Instrument Distribution

Most students in the instrumental ensembles in the Northwest Passage School District utilized school-owned instruments. Convenience borrowing was shown to have influenced instrument choice in some cases; thus, some students were assigned instruments other than the one they wished to pursue, due to lack of instrument availability related to the practice of convenience borrowing. Whether or not a student can study their instrument of choice may have an influence on that student's decision to participate in the ensembles in subsequent years.

For example, Bazan (2005) noted that gender bias has a critical effect on instrument selection. If a student who needed to use a loaner instrument and who wished to play an instrument traditionally seen as a "male" instrument was forced to play an instrument traditionally seen as a "female" instrument, such as a flute, that student may be at greater risk of quitting lessons or not starting at all. Bazan noted correlations

between instrument study persistence and student enjoyment of playing instruments, and that perceived future enjoyment of playing specific instruments might impact a student's decision to begin study. Students who are forced to play an instrument that they do not wish to play might not foresee as enjoyable an experience as if they played their choice instrument. Finally, Bazen added, "certain instruments may be more or less suited for specific physical characteristics such as body size and embouchure type" (p. 10). Convenience borrowing had a negative effect on school-owned instrument availability to low-SES students in the Northwest Passage School District. Additional research on the impact of convenience borrowing on low-SES students' access to instruments should be investigated.

Although many directors, including Mr. Smith, try to offer opportunities for beginning instrumental music students to play the instrument of their choosing, some directors may use students' need for an instrument as an opportunity to place some students on instruments they did not choose in order to balance the ensemble or meet traditional instrumentation needs. Directors' beliefs about the importance of ensemble balance versus a child's desire to learn a specific instrument, ways in which those beliefs affect recruitment and retention, and driving forces behind these beliefs—ensemble assessment festival expectations, for example—would be exceptionally valuable.

Grade Level versus Neighborhood School Building Format

This study implicated the potential positive impacts of grade-level elementary school buildings on retention of instrumental music students. Although evidence from this study suggests that a grade-level structure would positively affect retention in the

instrumental music programs, there is a dearth of research to further support such a claim. A comparative investigation between school districts with grade-level elementary building structures versus school districts with neighborhood school buildings may provide insight about the effectiveness of these structures on instrumental music student retention.

Community Building Activities

I referenced community-building activities many times in this study. Research supporting the importance of a sense of community or family within ensembles was documented in this study; however, I found little research pointing to the impact of specific types of community building activities on student persistence in instrumental music ensembles. Much research focuses on the sense of community or family atmosphere formed through ensemble participation (Albert, 2006b; Mantie, 2012a, 2012b; Regelski, 2000, 2002; Robitaille & O'Neal, 1981; Shelemay, 2011). These studies were most often presented from the perspectives of students who had chosen to persist within the ensembles, and therefore were most likely positively influenced by such activities. I did not find any investigations into potentially negative effects of certain community building activities on low-SES or minority students who were unable to participate in the activities—ensemble travel for example—due to SES-related factors. Investigation into potential negative impacts of certain community-building activities on low-SES students might help to identify whether non-participation in these activities due to SES-related factors might adversely affect ensemble retention and participation.

Parent/guardian Perceptions of Other SES Groups

Some middle class or highly affluent parents/guardian participants demonstrated negative perceptions of minority and low-SES parents/guardians, noting they perceived low-SES parents/guardians as uninvolved within the school, holding low expectations of their children, and generally unsupportive of their children's educational experiences. Middle class and highly affluent students often reflected their parents'/guardians' attitudes, as some participants indicated that their children's friends were also upper or middle class, and that they did not associate with low-SES students. Negative perceptions of underprivileged minorities and low-SES families as a collective class are manifestations of privilege, as those holding these views attempt to maintain their own social power (Reeves, 2018).

Negative perceptions of minority and low-SES families, perpetuated by a lack of contact or socialization with low-SES and minority students and families, may have facilitated many of the peer group issues discussed previously in this study and ultimately affected persistence in the instrumental music ensembles. Additional investigation into the perceptions that parents/guardians from diverse SES backgrounds have of each other, how those perceptions contribute to their children's perceptions, and how these perceptions influence persistence in instrumental ensembles is warranted.

Low-SES Participant Recruitment

One of the limitations of this study was the disproportionate number of low-SES and middle class/highly affluent parent/guardian participants. Recruiting low-SES participants for my study was difficult, as most did not respond to my invitation to

participate, and many of those who did respond did not follow through with the interview process. Researchers wishing to include low-SES students or parents/guardians in their studies would benefit from examining different techniques and methods of communication that may be used to recruit low-SES participants.

Longitudinal Studies on Low-SES Instrumental Music Participation

Finally, my study was conducted over a somewhat short period of time spanning a few months. I believe a lot more may be discovered were a similar study to be instituted longitudinally over several years. Such a study would provide more accurate recruitment and retention numbers and indicate trends in these areas. A researcher could potentially follow an entire class of instrumental students from the beginning of their training in fifth grade through their high school year and identify additional influences that may have affected participation decisions. A longitudinal approach might also provide more opportunities for low-SES participation, particularly if low-SES study participant recruitment was also studied.

Concluding Thoughts

I vividly remember experiencing the effects of low-SES as a child growing up in a small, rural, Western Pennsylvania town. I remember eating cereal and drinking water for breakfast, lunch, and dinner during those times when my father was laid off from his job in the nearby steel mill. I recall instances when I was bullied in school because of the clothes I was wearing—hand-me-downs—the only clothes I had and that my parents could afford. As a young boy, there were times that I helped my father cut and split

firewood so that he might burn some to heat the house, selling the rest to help put food on the table and pay the monthly bills. According to Bourdieu and Passeron (1977), the odds of my being ensnared by the cyclical nature of poverty were high, and I was lucky to have broken that cycle. I have many people to thank for that. Among the most important to me are the music teachers who gave me the opportunity to study instrumental music in school. I remain thankful for generous grandparents and other family members who provided access to a family-owned trumpet, and I consider it fate that I just so happened to have a desire to learn to play that instrument. I am forever indebted to my high school band director, who just happened to attend our church and was a family friend. His willingness to offer me free private trumpet lessons provided the thrust I needed to pursue my passion for instrumental music. Without his guidance and my grandparents' financial assistance, I may never have been able to afford a college education, become a successful music educator, and ultimately break the cycle of poverty that had plagued my family for generations. Now, as I conclude this dissertation process, I am proud to be the first in my family to earn a doctorate degree. While I would not consider this a "rags to riches" story, I would say that I was somehow able to navigate the difficult waters of moving from one social class to another.

I admit that I was lucky. Most low-SES students do not enjoy the same privileges as I did, and despite the best intentions of instrumental music teachers, not all low-SES students enjoyed equality of access to instrumental music education, privilege of instrument choice, or opportunities to continue participation in instrumental ensembles. Writing this dissertation not only brought back a flood of childhood memories and

emotions, but also reminded me of the power that music had on me and can have on others. I am evidence that music can be, for some, the vehicle through which one might escape poverty; however, this escape is difficult without assistance from others. My findings have reinforced the notion that we have a long way to go as a society in the struggle to achieve true equality in education, particularly regarding access to instrumental music study.

As I wrote this dissertation, I came to the realization that there is little that low-SES students and families who wish to participate in instrumental ensembles can do to improve their circumstances. They cannot control the location of school buildings, elementary school structure, the cost of housing, peers with whom their children attend school and associate, or the availability of school-owned instruments. Most low-SES families must rely on those with the power to implement change, approve school policy, and promote social justice if they wish to achieve equality in our educational system. Neither this dissertation nor studies like it solve the problems low-SES families face; however, they do point to deeply rooted and complex issues that often perpetuate and augment these problems. Recognition and diagnosis of problems is the first step toward solutions, and it is my hope that this study helped to identify issues that face students from low-SES families who may wish to participate in instrumental ensembles. I encourage instrumental music teachers, school administrators, school board members, and local government entities to consider similar issues that may affect low-SES students' abilities to equally participate in instrumental music in their school district.

APPENDIX A: SCHOOL DISTRICT RECRUITMENT DOCUMENT

Dear Superintendent _____,

My name is Andrew Erb, and I am currently the Director of Bands at Thiel College, in Greenville, PA. I am also pursuing my doctoral degree in Music Education through Boston University and am currently in the dissertation phase of that degree.

My dissertation research seeks to understand the following in schools with large populations of economically disadvantaged students and minorities:

- reasons why students decide to begin or not begin instrumental music lessons,
- why some quit after a time, and
- potential hindrances to future participation of current instrumental music students as perceived by parents or guardians.

These data will be collected through interviews with parents and music directors, and will not involve any direct contact with the students.

I have identified your school district as a potential site for this study, and I am reaching out to you to ask your permission to conduct my study in your district, pending Boston University's IRB approval. Again, this study involves parents and music directors only, and will not interrupt or inconvenience students, classes, or rehearsals in any significant way. The extent of student involvement will be to take a letter explaining the study and study participation form home to their parents or guardians, and return the form to their teachers if they are interested in participating in the study.

I believe this to be a worthwhile study that will hopefully shed some light on why certain populations tend to be underrepresented in instrumental music ensembles, a trend that is noticeable across the country. I will be happy to share and present the final results of this study with you, your teachers, your school board, and any others that might be interested if I am able to conduct this study in your district.

If you have any questions about this study, please do not hesitate to contact me at ***-***-****, or email ****@******* or my dissertation supervisor, Dr. Deborah Bradley, ***-***-****. Her email address is ******@*****. I appreciate your consideration, and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Andrew S. Erb

APPENDIX B: MUSIC TEACHER RECRUITMENT EMAIL

Dear Mr./Ms. _____,

My name is Andrew Erb, and I am currently the Director of Bands and Chair of the Performing Arts Department at Thiel College. I am currently pursuing a Doctorate in Music Education through Boston University and conducting research that will be used in my dissertation. I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview and share your thoughts and feelings on recruitment and retention of students in your instrumental music program, particularly focusing on perceived hindrances to their initial or continued participation in instrumental study. The results of the interview will be used as part of my dissertation work through Boston University. Participation in the interview is voluntary, and you may stop answering questions at any time. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes and will be held at a private location of your choosing. The risk of participating in this study is the potential loss of confidentiality. Your interview will be audio recorded for later transcription; however, your participation in this study will be anonymous, as you will be assigned and referred to by a pseudonym to help protect identity and confidentiality. If you have any questions regarding this study, you can contact me at ***@******, or call ***-***-****. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Deborah Bradley, at *******@*****, or call ***-***-****. You may obtain further information about your rights as a research subject by calling the BU CRC IRB Office at 617-358-6115.

If you would like to participate in this interview, please reply to this email

expressing such interest.

Sincerely,

Andrew S. Erb

APPENDIX C: PARENT/GUARDIAN PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT LETTER

Dear Parent/Guardian,

My name is Andrew Erb, the Director of Bands and Chair of the Performing Arts Department at Thiel College. I am currently pursuing a Doctorate in Music Education through Boston University and conducting research that will be used in my dissertation. I am writing to invite you to participate in an interview and share your thoughts and feelings on student participation in your school's instrumental music program as part of this research.

Parents/guardians of current instrumental students, former instrumental students, and students who never joined the instrumental program are all invited to participate in this study. I am seeking a maximum of 5 parent/guardian participants in each of the 3 above-mentioned categories: parents/guardians of current instrumental music students, parents/guardians of former instrumental music students (students who have discontinued in the program for some reason), and parents/guardians of students who never started in the instrumental music program. If more than 5 in any group indicate the desire to be interviewed, 5 will be selected randomly.

As part of Boston University's IRB procedures, I am required to inform all potential participants that all interviews are voluntary, and participants may stop answering questions at any time. An interview lasts approximately 45 minutes, and will be held at mutually agreed upon location. Although participating in this study carries exceptionally low risk, the potential loss of confidentiality does exist. Measures, including password protected computer files, the use of pseudonyms, and locked storage, are in place to protect all participants from any such loss of confidentiality.

Interviews will be audio recorded and transcribed; however, your responses will be anonymous, as you will be assigned and referred to by a pseudonym at all times. If you have any questions regarding this study, you can contact me at ***@*******, or call ***-***-****. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Deborah Bradley, at *****@*****, or call ***-***-****. You may obtain further information about your rights as a research participant by calling the BU CRC IRB Office at 617-358-6115.

If you would like to participate in this interview, please complete the entire attached survey, seal it in the provided blank envelope, and return it to your child's teacher within 7 days. I will then contact you to schedule the interview. If you do not wish to be considered for an interview, I would greatly appreciate your answering the first two questions on the survey, sealing it in the included envelope, and returning it to your teacher within 7 days. Thank you for considering participation in this study.

Sincerely,

Andrew S. Erb

APPENDIX D: MUSIC DIRECTOR INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- Tell me about your instrumental music program at your school.
- What are the rehearsal and performance schedules like with the instrumental ensembles?
- What are your roles and duties within your music department?
- What additional roles and duties, if any, do you have outside of the music department?
- Do you have any sort of curriculum or method books that your department uses when teaching ensembles or lessons?
- Do students provide their own method book, or does the school provide them?
- Talk about how you go about selecting music for your ensembles. What do you take into consideration when picking music?
- Tell me what you know about the recruiting process that you or your colleagues follow when trying to convince new beginning instrumental students to begin instrumental study.
- Talk about the process of instrument selection or assignment in regards to new students.
- Does your school provide "loaner" instruments to students who want to play the larger, more expensive instruments or to students who may not have the means of obtaining any instrument at all?
- Tell me about the process of how school-owned instruments are distributed.
- Do most of the beginning instrumental music students continue playing after beginning in fifth grade?
- At which grade levels do you notice the majority of those who discontinue participation make the decision to quit?
- What are the primary reasons that you believe students discontinue participation in your ensembles?
- Can you tell me about interactions between yourself and a student or students who wanted to or did drop out of the instrumental music program?
- Have you ever had contact with parents or guardians of students that wished to discontinue participation? Tell me about those conversations.
- How successful have you been in the past at convincing students who wish to discontinue participation to continue in the instrumental program? If this has happened, talk about a specific instance when you were ultimately able to convince the student to continue with instrumental study.
- Other than the ones you have already talked about, are there other factors that you feel contribute to students' decision to discontinue instrumental study?
- Why do you think students who continue to be active in the instrumental music program do so?
- What reasons for remaining active in the instrumental program have students or parents expressed to you in the past?
- In your opinion, what are the strengths of your instrumental music program?

- Do you think these strengths contribute to the recruitment and retention of students? If so, how?
- Are there any changes that, if made, would increase initial enrollment and retention in your ensembles? What are they? How do you think they would impact the program?

APPENDIX E: PARENT/GUARDIAN RECRUITMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Instrumental Music Survey

Please circle YES or NO for each question

1). Does your child currently participate in (band, orchestra, or other instrumental ensemble) at school? YES NO

2). If you answered "NO" above, did your child ever participate in the (band, orchestra, or other instrumental ensemble) in the past? YES NO

3). Would you be willing to participate in an interview as part of this study? YES NO

If you answered "YES" to #3, please continue. If you answered "NO" to #3, stop here.

4). What is your name:_____

5). Please fill in the following contact info (all information will be kept confidential):

Home Phone Number:_____

Cell Phone Number:_____

Email Address:_____

Which day(s) of the week work best for you for scheduling an interview?

Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday Friday

Would you rather hold the interview in the:

Morning Afternoon Evening

APPENDIX F: PARENT/GUARDIAN INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Questions for Parents of Current Instrumental Music Students

- Tell me about your child's participation in the instrumental music programs at the school. What is his/her role within the group?
- What do you think your child enjoys the most about playing an instrument in the band or orchestra?
- Did or do you participate in music in any way? Tell me about your thoughts on those experiences.
- Talk about the time your child first decided to join the band or orchestra. What do you remember about this event?
- What led your child to make the decision to join the band or orchestra?
- What were your thoughts and feelings about his/her decision?
- Did you encourage your student to participate, or did you leave this decision completely up to him/her?
- Did your child have the opportunity to choose which instrument he/she wanted to play when they joined the program? How did they make this decision?
- How did your child obtain an instrument?
- What do like the most about the instrumental program?
- What, if anything, do you feel your child has gained from participation in the band or orchestra?
- What do you see as the purpose of the band or orchestra?
- Are you or have you ever been involved at all with helping the ensembles? Perhaps as a chaperone, fundraising, etc.? Tell me about those experiences.
- Do you foresee your child continuing in the band or orchestra throughout high school? Why?
- Are there any foreseeable reasons that your child might not continue in the band or orchestra? Why and how would these prevent him/her from participating in the future?
- How might you react if your child told you one day that he/she is quitting the band or orchestra?
- Is your child involved in any other school music groups? Which ones? Talk about your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue to participate in these groups in the future? Why or why not?
- In what other activities does your child participate? Tell me your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue participating in these groups? Why or why not?
- Are there things about the program that you would change or improve? If so, what are they?
- Which of the 3 elementary schools did your kids attend?

- Tell me what you see as the biggest differences between the three elementary schools.
- Are there any other comments or thoughts you would like to share about the band or orchestra?

Questions for Parents/Guardians of Former Instrumental Music Students

- Tell me a bit about your child and his/her interests.
- Tell me about your child's participation in the band or orchestra. What was his/her role within the group?
- Were there aspects about the band or orchestra that your child enjoyed?
- Talk about the time your child first decided to join the band or orchestra. What do you remember about this event?
- What led your child to make the decision to join the band or orchestra?
- What were your thoughts and feelings about his/her decision?
- Did you encourage your student to participate, or did you leave this decision completely up to him/her?
- How did they make this decision?
- How did your child originally obtain an instrument?
- Did or do you participate in music in any way? Tell me about your thoughts on those experiences.
- What did your child like the most about the instrumental program?
- What, if anything, do you feel your child gained from past participation in the band or orchestra?
- Are there things about the program that you would have changed or improved? If so, what are they?
- Do you think that your child would have remained in the band or orchestra if these changes had been in place? Why?
- What do you see as the purpose of the band or orchestra?
- Have you ever been involved at all with helping the band or orchestra? Perhaps as a chaperone, fundraising, etc.? Tell me about those experiences.
- Why did your child decide to discontinue participation in the band or orchestra?
- Did your child discuss quitting the ensemble with you? Tell me about those conversations.
- Did you leave the decision to discontinue study up to your child alone, or did you become involved in the decision in any way?
- Is your child involved in any other music groups? Which ones? Talk about your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue to participate in these groups in the future? Why or why not?

- In what other activities does your child participate? Tell me your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue participating in these groups? Why or why not?
- Which of the three elementary schools did your child attend?
- Tell me what you see as the biggest differences between the three elementary schools.
- Do you have any additional thoughts or comments you would like to share with me about the band or orchestra?

Questions for Parents/Guardians of Non-instrumental Music Participants

- Tell me about your child. What are his/her interests?
- Do you remember when child was presented with the opportunity to join the band or orchestra?
- Do you remember his/her reaction when he/she was presented with the opportunity to participate in the band or orchestra?
- What factors impacted your child's decision to not join the band or orchestra?
- What were your thoughts and feelings about his/her decision?
- How would you have reacted if your child had decided to join the band or orchestra?
- Did you encourage your student to participate, or did you leave this decision completely up to him/her?
- Did or do you participate in music in any way? Tell me about your thoughts on those experiences.
- What are your thoughts about the instrumental program?
- What do like the most about the instrumental program?
- Are there things you would like to see changed?
- Do you think that your child would have joined the band or orchestra if these changes had been in place? Why?
- What do you see as the purpose of the band or orchestra?
- Is your child involved in any other music groups? Which ones? Talk about your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue to participate in these groups in the future? Why or why not?
- In what other activities does your child participate? Tell me your thoughts on his/her participation in these groups.
- Do you believe he/she will continue participating in these groups? Why or why not?
- Which of the three elementary schools did your child attend?
- Tell me what you see as the biggest differences between the three elementary schools.

- Do you have any additional thoughts or comments you would like to share with me about the band or orchestra?

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