

Quality of Experience in Mainstreaming and Full Inclusion of Blind and Visually
Impaired High School Instrumental Music Students

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation study is dedicated to the loving memory of Mr. Frederick Moss Sr. who was an extraordinary husband and father and who somehow somehow knows that it is complete, though he was not able to remain physically on Earth to share the moment.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the present study was to report on the mainstreaming and full-inclusion experiences of secondary school instrumental music students who were blind or visually impaired. Four research questions addressed the following topics: (a) informant's motivations for participation in instrumental music; (b) the extent to which informants' abilities to develop learning strategies for participation in instrumental music affected quality of experience; (c) the extent to which intervention of other people in instrumental music participation affected informants' quality of experience; and (d) informants' perceptions of social connection in instrumental music ensembles and quality of experience.

Eleven informants, who were identified through contact with a variety of national and local organizations serving blind and visually impaired students, participated in semi-structured telephone interviews with the researcher. Informants reported the following: (a) multiple motivations for participation in instrumental music ensembles; (b) positive and negative effects associated with self-developed learning strategies; (c) positive and negative effects associated with the intervention of other people in their music learning; and (d) social connection experiences that related to motivations for participation in instrumental music class.

When analyzing the data through the sociocultural perspective of James Wertsch, memorizing emerged as the most commonly employed strategy for participation in band

and orchestra of study informants. Participants also accessed “tools” or “mediational means” such as Braille music notation, enlarged print notation, fellow ensemble members, parents, and ensemble directors to facilitate participation. Affordances and constraints accompanied the use of memory as well as the use of the various mediational means.

The researcher proposes suggestions for teaching students who are blind or visually impaired participating in school bands or orchestras. He further discusses implications for additional music education research that considers the experiences of these students.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In 1975, the United States Congress passed legislation dramatically changing the way that students with disabilities were educated. Public Law 94-142 provided for the education of students with disabilities in the “least restrictive environment.” Upon the passage of this legislation (now referenced as the “Individuals with Disabilities Act” or IDEA), parents and advocates focused on mainstreaming children with disabilities into schools in or near the students' neighborhoods. As IDEA has undergone reauthorizations, Congress has demanded that local school districts provide more services for students with disabilities. Writers of the 1997 version of IDEA called more specifically than ever for the highest possible level of inclusion of students with disabilities in public schools. In the 1997 reauthorization, three demands emerged: (a) access to the general curriculum rather than a specified curriculum for students with disabilities; (b) access to activities that include students with and without disabilities; and (c) the preparation of students for work and independent living (Gersten, 2001).

In addition to demanding access, advocates for disabled students strongly urged state and local school boards to become more concerned about the academic success of students in special education. For the first time in educational history, for example, the authors of IDEA requested that state school boards provide accommodations for the disabled in the administration of state sponsored achievement tests and that local school

districts involve students with disabilities in age-appropriate curricula without regard to the student's disability. In short, advocates expanded their concerns from the social integration of students with disabilities in schools to include the students' achievement in class (Gersten, 2001).

In IDEA's 2004 reauthorization, the demand for access to the general curriculum was maintained. In addition, parents' and advocates' requests for greater accountability related to the academic progress of students with disabilities were recognized. Four specific outcomes demonstrated this change: First, IDEA's "substantive requirements" were underscored. In other words, congress encouraged officers presiding during due process hearings to consider the effect of the special education program on student achievement. Second, IDEA and the federal No Child Left Behind act (NCLB) were aligned to stress three concerns in the education of disabled students: (a) a demand for highly qualified special education teachers; (b) the inclusion of special education students in high stakes statewide standardized evaluation; and (c) the use of interventions that have emerged from peer-reviewed research. Third, the requirements for eligibility for special education services were changed to discourage the practice of labeling students prematurely. As of 2004, school system officials were required to take more extensive steps to demonstrate a student's need for services. Finally, congress recommended changes to the IEP, disciplinary, and due process systems (Yell, 2006).

Arguably, the demands set forth in IDEA's 1997 and 2004 reauthorizations called upon music educators to ask new and different questions about the participation of disabled students in their classes. Prior to 2004, music education research studies focused on two main issues: teacher's perceptions about the process of teaching disabled students

in mainstream or full-inclusion settings (Atterbury, 1986; Darrow, 1999; Frisque, Niebur, & Humphreys, 1994; Gfeller, Darrow, & Hedden, 1990; Gilbert & Asmus, 1981); and social acceptance of disabled students by their non-disabled peers (Colwell, 1998; Johnson & Darrow, 1994; Johnson & Darrow, 1997). As a result of IDEA's recent reauthorizations, the value of investigations considering the experiences and musical achievements of disabled students in music classes has become more recognized.

Gfeller (1990), in a literature review of research on music education of disabled students, offered insight into obstacles facing this line of inquiry. The author first cited the financial and logistical constraints of research considering students' perspectives and achievements. Additionally, she pointed out the ways in which mainstreaming and full-inclusion have made it difficult to identify and locate children and adolescents with disabilities. In the same review, however, Gfeller emphasized the importance of conducting studies of disabled students as so little is known about them. She called specifically for information about the experiences of blind and visually impaired students.

In addition to the challenges set forth by Gfeller, my own experience as a music student, educator, and performer with a visual disability guided the questions in this research. I was drawn to music listening and performing early in my life. Eventually, as an elementary school student, I eagerly enrolled and experienced thrilling success in band class. Upon reaching high school, however, I experienced resistance from a director to my unrelenting motivation to participate in ensembles such as marching band or all-state band. I eventually participated in these and other similar ensembles with the support of a different band director and a host of other individuals. I went on to obtain a degree in music education and work in a variety of settings. Upon considering my own experience

and the dearth of music education research dedicated to the perspectives of disabled students about inclusion in music class, I was provoked to wonder about these individuals' stated motivations and strategies for participating in music ensembles. Moreover, the practice of satisfying social goals in students' IEP documents with music classes, which was revealed in music education research literature, propelled me to wonder how students with disabilities would characterize their social experiences in school instrumental music ensembles.

Statement of the Problem

My central question in this investigation was the following: What are the reported experiences of secondary school blind or visually impaired students enrolled in instrumental music classes? The goal of this investigation was to report on the experiences of these students. This goal was accomplished by addressing my specific research questions: (a) How do the motivations for participation in instrumental music of blind and visually impaired students compare to what is known from research about sighted students' motivations for participation in these classes? (b) To what extent, if any, does the ability to develop their own strategies for learning affect the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music classes? (c) To what extent is the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music related to the intervention or assistance of other people? (d) To what extent do blind or visually impaired secondary school students' perceptions of social connectedness determine the quality of their experiences in instrumental music classes?

Need for the Study

My review of relevant research literature yielded few studies addressing the music learning of blind and visually impaired students. In a summary of germane studies, Atterbury (1990) cited three investigations that considered topics such as music aptitude, ability, and mental imagery. In addition to the studies referenced by Atterbury, Madsen and Darrow (1989) investigated music aptitude in 32 students who attended a state school for the blind and visually impaired. Bruscia and Levinson (1982) attempted to determine factors predicting a blind individual's ability to read music notation with a machine called the Optacon™ (Optical Tactile Converter).

Since the dates of these studies, new trends and technologies have emerged. One particularly important trend has been the extent to which school age individuals with visual disabilities have been mainstreamed or fully included in schools near their homes. Since 1879, the United States Government has charged the American Printing House (APH) with maintaining data on the numbers of pre-college and pre-vocational blind or visually impaired students receiving educational or rehabilitation services. The American Printing House (2008) reported that, of the 7,019 ninth, tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students served by either schools affiliated with state departments of education or by schools for the blind, 6,917 (slightly more than 89%) attended schools affiliated with state departments of education. Only 820 (slightly more than 10.5%) attended schools for the blind. Of the approximately 7000 blind or visually impaired students attending schools affiliated with state departments of education, I posited that 700 (ten percent) were participating in high school bands or orchestras at the time of the present study.

To calculate this number, I considered that twenty-five percent of United States high schools seniors participated in performing arts opportunities in the year 2001 (U.S. Department of State, 2008). Recognizing that only a portion of these students were involved in band or orchestra, I further surmised conservatively that ten percent of United States high school seniors participated in instrumental music. I then assumed that this estimate generally held among all high school grade levels and that it did not fluctuate widely according to level of visual acuity. If the aforementioned statistic of 700 high school blind or visually impaired instrumental music students is accurate, we have only begun to understand the experiences of these students in the present study.

Regarding technology, computers equipped with screen reading software have replaced older technologies such as the Optacon™ (Hauger, 1995). Yet, little, if any, research literature that addresses the following topics has been published: (a) motivations of these students for participation in music; (b) blind and visually impaired students' perceptions of their experiences in mainstream and full-inclusion music education settings; or (c) the applications of modern technology to the music learning of blind or visually impaired students. Hence, the music learning experience for these students has remained an enigma.

The writers of Article 12 of the report from the United Nations 1989 Convention on the Rights of Children called all educators and social service workers to involve young people in the process of addressing issues that impact them (Arksey & Knight, 1999). As a result of the present study, music education researchers have begun participating in this movement by eliciting the voices of students with disabilities regarding their learning experiences where mainstreaming and full-inclusion are practiced. In addition, gaining

understanding of blind and visually impaired students' participation in band or orchestra has begun to provide music educators with insight into a wider array of strategies for mainstreaming.

Rationale for the Study

My overarching aim in this study was to report on the experiences in band or orchestra of mainstreamed or fully included blind and visually impaired high school instrumentalists. To this end, I employed the semi-structured interview in order to obtain rich description of students' experiences and accentuate their voices. This type of interview offered an investigative flexibility important in capturing the wide ranging nature of individual stories, while at the same time addressing my assumptions in the study: (a) that the ability to develop learning strategies would contribute to quality of experience; (b) that assistance from other people would affect quality of experience; and (c) that motivations for participation would affect the value informants' placed on social connection.

I found that sociocultural theory as expressed by James Wertsch (1998) offered an especially useful approach to interpreting the interview data. Sociocultural theorists, in general, consider the role of social context in learning. Wertsch's specific analysis of the properties inherent in mediated action provided a framework that attended to each of the issues raised in the present study including that of motivation for participation. Moreover, this interpretive lens allowed the study to contribute to a rising discourse about disabled students' experiences with mainstreaming and full-inclusion reflected particularly in one study by Burgener (2006). As a result of the present study, the voices of blind and

visually impaired students are now added to the discussion. Given the paucity of research considering school age students with visual disabilities, this contribution is important.

Defining Wertsch's Approach to Sociocultural Theory

Sociocultural theory emerged from the thinking of Lev Vygotsky, the early twentieth century Russian psychologist. Vygotsky was among the first psychological theorists to place emphasis upon social context in learning. Furthermore, he devoted copious thought to the learning of children with disabilities (Gindis, 1999; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Torres-Velasquez, 2000; Vygotsky, 1987). These facets of Vygotsky's work supported an ideal link between sociocultural theory and the present study.

In his writings, Vygotsky contemplated three broad ideas: (a) human beings' interactions with their physical and social environments or contexts; (b) new forms of tools or activities and their psychological implications for human beings mediating the environment through the necessary process of labor; and (c) the character of the relationship between tools humans employ to interact with their environments and the evolution of speech. For Vygotsky, tools were defined as external tangible items that individuals would employ to accomplish a task. Speech and symbols, though also important in navigating the social world, were not considered tools. Though, by whispering directions to themselves for instance, children might navigate their way through the necessary steps involved in the acquisition of a stick to retrieve a toy just out of reach, Vygotsky only recognized the stick as the tool for accomplishing the task. Speech fulfilled the complementary role of facilitating the child's use of the tool (Vygotsky, 1978).

Responding to the behaviorists and to Piaget, Vygotsky advocated approaches to teaching and learning that placed emphasis on the child's intrinsic desires and affinities. He wrote, for example, about situations in which young children began reaching for objects that interested them. Eventually, through interaction with adult members of their environment who were pointing at the object and confirming the children's desires, the young human agents developed an understanding of pointing. Therefore, through learning in social context where adults served as mediating tools, these children learned to point with intention and communicated their needs and wishes (Vygotsky, 1994).

Vygotsky asserted that understanding processes such as the aforementioned example of pointing was best achieved in settings in which development was atypical. For him, this conviction meant investigating the development of individuals with disabilities, a process known as "defectology" at the time. The term, which likely suggests an obviously unfortunate line of thinking to special educators and disability advocates in the West, was a specific reference to the study of particular types of disabilities and was not understood in Vygotsky's time or cultural environment as degrading. In fact, Vygotsky defined disability as a sociocultural matter in which individuals with sensory, language, and mental impairments could only be viewed as abnormal in light of their social context (Vygotsky, 1987).

This claim was not a suggestion that disability was a socially constructed phenomenon (i.e.), that social influences and institutions contribute more than any other force to defining, hindering, or facilitating groups of people (Adkins, 2003; Paul & Ballantine 2002) Rather, Vygotsky described disability as a genetically based circumstance in which typical development had been disrupted. Though he did not

consider this disruption negative, he perceived the social ramifications of disability as learning obstacles for children with special needs. These aspects of disability were, for Vygotsky, the most important issues for educators to consider (Vygotsky, 1987).

Vygotsky's theoretical claims prompted him to organize an institute in which he studied individuals with disabilities. From this work, he developed his insistence that society must confront the social disruption that surrounds disability. In encouraging teachers to address disabled students' social detachment, Vygotsky developed an important concept, which has been adopted widely in special education — namely, the zone of proximal development (ZPD). His belief was that understanding an individual's potential was achieved not necessarily through identifying what could be accomplished independently, but by discovering what could be achieved with assistance. Vygotsky labeled the gap between one's independent capability and one's assisted potential the zone of proximal development provided and defined it in the following way:

“The distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

In light of the present study, the idea of ZPD was important because it accounted for at least one tool informants accessed to participate in instrumental music class — human assistance. During interviews, I learned that nondisabled peers or teachers offered tangible assistance (i.e., recording ensemble parts onto tape or providing sighted assistance in unfamiliar areas) in several of the stories documented in this dissertation study. Additionally, I found that more experienced individuals problem solved with

informants to discover alternative methods for accomplishing objectives expected of nondisabled members of an instrumental music ensemble.

Though Vygotsky clearly spoke to many pertinent issues such as social implications of disability and human assistance in learning, I found his comparatively narrow understanding of tools as tangible material objects constricting in developing this research. In addition, his focus on the human agent (Vygotsky, 1978; Vygotsky, 1987; Vygotsky, 1994) did not allow for enough consideration of the degree to which mediational tools shape quality of experience.

Many scholars have continued developing theory about social context and learning with Vygotsky's assertions as underpinnings for their thinking. Lave and Wenger (1991), for example, developed assertions around how apprentices entered communities and acquired the necessary skills and understandings to become full members in a variety of cultures. Rogoff (1995) posited how individuals involved in a given task or effort operated on three different interacting planes with the necessary means to work together and apart, sometimes in view of one another and sometimes separated by large distances. The research questions in this study, however, did not consider individuals' experiences necessarily upon entering the culture of a band or orchestra, nor were they designed to account for the influences that informants were either exerting on others or that were being applied to them by others.

A theoretical framework that supported the aims of this study especially well was that of James Wertsch as espoused in his 1998 text, *Mind as Action*. Wertsch's thinking about human agents and their relationships to the mediational tools they use in communities such as work, school, and competitive sports was useful in interpreting the

interview data. Wertsch asserted the following about sociocultural research: “The task of a sociocultural approach is to explicate the relationships between human action, on the one hand, and the cultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which this action occurs, on the other” (p. 24).

Wertsch, like Vygotsky, adopted a view of learning as occurring in social context. In addition to Vygotsky, however, Wertsch incorporated the thinking of American philosopher Kenneth Burke and Russian philosopher Mikhail Mikhailovich Bakhtin.

Burke, who wrote during the twentieth-century, was interested in aesthetics and how the processes employed in studying great literature or drama could be applied to the study of human behavior. He believed that, if social scientists analyzed human action in the same ways that audience members or readers observe the occurrences of a scene in a play or novel, much valuable information could be gleaned. Burke suggested the use of what he called the dramatistic pentad: act, scene, agent, agency, and purpose. These five aspects of a play or literary work were the focus of Burke’s perspective (Burke, 1969; Burke, 1972). Burke wrote that the agent was the human being attempting some particular act: the “who” and “what” of the story. The agency was the “how” the agent went about accomplishing the act. The “Where” in this scenario was the scene, while the purpose for the act was the “why” (Burke, 1969; Burke, 1972). In addition to considering the elements of the pentad, Burke argued that one must consider what he called the “circumferences” surrounding the scene. Circumferences included such forces as historical periods, political climates, or social pressures upon characters in plays as they carried out actions in particular scenes and throughout entire dramas. For actual human

agents operating in day-to-day life, Burke saw these types of forces equally in play (Burke, 1969); Burke, 1972).

Wertsch applied Burke's ideas to sociocultural theory by adopting the aesthetician's terminology and applying it to the study of mediated action: an individual's use of a tool to accomplish a task. He embraced the view of the agent as the individual making use of the agency (mediational tool or mediational means) in a particular scene (community of practice) where a group participates in action toward a common goal or objective.

Applied to the present study, Burke's notion of the agent was represented by secondary school instrumental music students with visual disabilities. Each of these students employed various agencies (tools) to mediate the act of participating in a community of practice known as an instrumental music ensemble (band or orchestra). The scene with which I was especially concerned was any situation in which the ensemble was operating as a group including rehearsals, performances, and social conditions such as parties or trips. In addition, I was interested in understanding agents' purposes for participating in these specific types of communities of practice.

Regarding purpose, Wertsch focused less on this aspect of Burke's pentad and more on the relationship between the agent and the mediational means. In the third of his ten claims about mediated action, however, he argued for observing agents' multiple purposes for taking up mediational tools and participating in communities of practice. This case for understanding purpose was important to the present study because informants' motivation for participating in instrumental music ensembles was one of my specific research questions.

Wertsch also recognized the magnitude connected to the numerous forces such as politics, history, or economic circumstances (circumferences) contributing to agents' purposes for a wide range of actions (Wertsch, 1998). In the case of the present study, I did not directly consider the circumferences encircling informants' experiences as part of the research questions. It was possible, in some cases, to shed light on topics such as the impact of state music education policy on student's quality of experience.

Like Burke, Bakhtin was interested in aesthetics and was especially fascinated by the novel, which he considered unique among creative forms. Born in Russia, Bakhtin was a literary critic and philosopher who produced most of his writing during two difficult historical periods in his country: the post 1917 revolution era during which Russia struggled with multiple economic as well as political issues and the Stalinist thirties throughout which he was exiled in Kazakhstan. Freudian psychology, Marxist politics, and the philosophy of language were among the subjects he addressed in more than nine monographs, most of which were published under pseudonyms.

A central idea in Bakhtin's conception of language was expressed in a phenomenon he labeled "heteroglossia." For Bakhtin, this term referenced the specificity of meaning connected to all aspects of conversation including the text, time, place, and the number of participants. A discussion between the same two people, for example, had a different meaning if somehow replicated even a moment later.

Heteroglossia was closely related to competing uniting and dividing forces Bakhtin believed were at work in nature, culture, and perhaps especially in language. Though, for example, groups of individuals might use language to develop professional, religious, or other types of cultural communities, Bakhtin believed that they were, at the

same time, isolating themselves from other individuals not affiliated with the movement or effort in question.

At any given moment ... a language is stratified not only into dialects in the strict sense of the word (i.e., dialects that are set off according to formal linguistic [especially phonetic] markers), but is...stratified as well into languages that are socio-ideological: languages belonging to professions, to genres, languages peculiar to particular generations, etc. This stratification and diversity of speech [razvorchivost] will spread wider and penetrate to ever deeper levels so long as a language is alive and still in the process of becoming. (p. xix)

For Bakhtin, the unique nature of the novel had to do with the way he saw it document and transcribe the language patterns associated with groups of people or individuals. He saw novels, much like historical accounts, as explaining conditions related to such forces as economic, religious, or political climates. Where, however, historians articulate a sequence of events in a straightforward manner that satisfies their professional standards, Bakhtin noted that novelists employ the tool of dramatic language to bridge ever emerging gulfs between text and presentation. He believed, for example, that characters' dialects or inflection patterns, often as important in novels as the historical facts they surround, communicated aspects of human experience that histories were unable to reflect.

Bakhtin further posited that, in order for authors to convince readers that the characters in novels were realistic portrayals of actual human beings, it was necessary to develop a profound level of familiarity with the linguistic traits individuals connected with the time and place of the story would have demonstrated. In fact, the level of

connection required an intensity that enabled truly successful novelists to cultivate feelings of personal ownership around the natures of their characters' languages. Novelists were, therefore, appropriating the tool he labeled discourse to achieve their vocational aims (Bakhtin, 1979/1981).

This notion of appropriating discourse appealed to Wertsch, who also recognized language as a tool. Wertsch expanded the concept to formulate ideas about the appropriation of any kind of tool. He developed, in his eighth property of mediated action, the notion that tools contribute to shaping identity (Wertsch, 1998).

To understand Wertsch's suppositions regarding the appropriation of tools, one must first grasp his ideas about the mastery of mediational means. Wertsch advanced a definition of mastery that was synonymous with "knowing how" (P. 50). He wrote, for example, about how individuals demonstrate mastery of processes such as riding a bicycle or speaking a language by exhibiting their abilities outwardly. This refinement of the term was intended to clarify the idea that mastery was indistinguishable from internalization, which Wertsch understood as solidifying interior human mental processes. In his view, internalization did not indicate the extent to which a variety of actions such as bicycle riding and verbal communication are more obviously practiced on what he labels "the external plane" (P. 50).

Wertsch characterized appropriation somewhat differently, applying the following terms: "... the process is one of taking something that belongs to others and making it one's own" (P. 53). Wertsch recognized that mastery and appropriation usually, but not always, are interconnected. In some cases, he wrote, individuals master the use of a cultural tool such as a language but never feel that they have made it "their own." In

instances in which human agents struggle through the process of appropriating new linguistic systems, Wertsch noted that they infuse aspects of their own being (e.g., their accents, their intentions surrounding specific words or feelings) into their presentation of the language. With more tangible examples of cultural tools, he contended that new members of communities of practice travel through a similar process before they truly claim ownership of a piece of apparatus or equipment and embrace it as part of their identity (P. 54-57).

Ten Properties of Mediated Action

Wertsch organized ten claims about mediated action as he combined the ideas of Vygotsky, Burke, and Bakhtin to develop his perspective. These ten assertions were published in *Mind as Action*, his 1998 text, which I have cited extensively in the following summary of these theoretical points. In addition to reviewing these claims, I have commented on their application to the present study.

Sawyer (2002) criticized Wertsch's framework, maintaining that its emphasis was actually on the human agent rather than the relationship between the person and the mediational means. Perhaps, to some extent, stressing the human agent is understandable since theorists such as Wertsch concern themselves with people and the actions they pursue. Though he clearly remained mindful of human agents, the following paragraphs will demonstrate that Wertsch explored in depth issues such as how mediational tools changed over time and how these alterations affected mediated action.

The Irreducible Tension Between Agent and Mediational Means

Wertsch identified an agent/agency relationship without which a given activity or process is either exceptionally difficult or does not occur. In the sport of pole-vaulting, for example, he observed that human agents, the pole-vaulters, are unable to participate in this particular sport and truly identify themselves as pole-vaulters without employing the tool associated with the task — namely, the pole (1998, P. 27-28).

In other forms of action, Wertsch proposed that the irreducible nature of the relationship between human agent and mediational means appears less obvious. In multiplying two numerals with three digits each, for example, he posited that most humans struggle to conduct such operations without using tools such as standard methods for organizing the mathematical problem on paper. In both cases, Wertsch recognized that, in order for the action to take place, both the human agent and the mediational tool were necessary (P. 28-30). Wertsch expressed this idea in the following way: “ ... in and of themselves, cultural tools such as poles in pole vaulting and the forms of syntax used in solving multiplication problems are powerless to do anything. They can have their impact only when an agent uses them” (P. 30).

Clearly, the relationship between musicians and musical instruments could be described as irreducible. For sighted students in instrumental music class, copies of printed music notation and tools such as music stands may not approach the same level of irreducibility as musical instruments, but they are assumed to make ensemble participation easier.

For students with disabilities in the present study, my question became the following: What tools, in addition to musical instruments, are employed to participate in

secondary school band or orchestra? Moreover, can the nature of the relationship between informants and tools be characterized as irreducible? In other words, are the tools informants employ fundamental to their participation in such a way that playing in band or orchestra would be difficult or impossible without the presence of the mediational means? For individuals with low vision, for example, I considered the mediational tool of enlarged printed music notation. In some instances, the absence of this mediational means could in fact prohibit students from learning their ensemble parts and ultimately participating in the group. In such an instance, therefore, it is appropriate to consider the relationship between the human agents and the mediational means irreducible.

The Materiality of Mediational Means

Next, Wertsch noted the material or substantive nature of mediational means. Wertsch, however, developed a broad definition of “material” that included less obviously tangible tools such as learning strategies. He adopted a view of these more abstract notions as tools no less significant than tools easily perceived by the five physical senses such as the pole-vaulter’s pole or the musician’s instrument (P. 30-32).

For students with visual disabilities in instrumental music, I similarly chose to view tools or mediational means as ranging from Braille music translation computer software to processes of memorizing to human assistants. I focused specifically on learning strategies students developed independently and other people they accessed for help. I also considered how these tools impacted the quality of their experience in instrumental music education programs.

The Numerous and Concurrent Goals Associated with Mediated Action

Wertsch determined that members of communities of practice exhibit a variety of concurrent motivations or purposes for engaging cultural tools and participating in mediated action. Again reflecting on pole-vaulters, the author noted that these athletes participate in their chosen sport for simultaneously emerging purposes such as national identity, personal accomplishment, and team membership (P. 32-34). High school music ensemble participants expressed motivations connected with similar ideas in studies by Adderley, Kennedy and Berz (2003), Ebie (2005), Fredricks et al (2002), and Hurley (1992).

In developing the present study, I aimed to understand the extent to which blind and visually impaired participants in instrumental music reflected similar or different motivations in comparison to their colleagues without disabilities. I also was interested in determining the nature of the relationship between motivations and quality of experience in instrumental music education.

Mediational Means' Existence on One or Many Developmental Avenues

Wertsch noted that mediational means change over time on multiple planes. Historically, these planes have represented advances in such phenomena as technology or policy. In the field of airplane design, for example, engineers used to employ various types of drafting equipment and slide rules over a period of months to produce a blueprint. The introduction of specialized computer software altered significantly the time required to accomplish this task. Human beings, however, did not evolve especially dramatically between the time of the older technologies and the inception of these software packages.

Additionally, various government and corporate measures influenced the speed with which new airplane designs were achieved (P. 34-38).

Similarly, for students with disabilities, the mediational means adopted to participate in public school band and orchestra programs developed only in part due to the nature of visual disabilities. Certain mediational means resulted from trends in technology. I sought, in the present study, to learn about the extent to which informants were using these types of mediational means; how they developed strategies for using these technologies in music class; and how these mediational tools impacted students' quality of experience in band or orchestra.

Constraints and Affordances of Mediational Means

Like Vygotsky, Wertsch recognized the advantages associated with mediational means. Like other social cultural theorists, however, Wertsch observed that mediational means also impede agents in their efforts to participate in communities of practice. Both the constraints and affordances attached to mediational means, especially those considered newer and more advanced, emerged as important considerations for Wertsch. In his view, revealing constraints and affordances was important in assessing completely the quality of the mediational means and the extent to which they affect the lives of the individuals who use them. To explain fully his thoughts regarding constraints and affordances, Wertsch revisited his example of the pole-vaulter. When this sport was initially developed, athletes accomplished their jumps with the aid of sturdy wooden poles. Over time, they came to use more flexible fiberglass poles, which afforded much higher jumps. When the more pliable poles were introduced, however, veterans of the

sport asked the following question: Are the increased heights of the jumps attributed to the pole or the vaulter? To some extent, the constraining questions negated the accomplishments of people using fiberglass poles because their athleticism was called into question (p. 38-42).

When trying to develop new cultural tools, the focus naturally tends to be on how they will overcome some perceived problem or restriction inherent in existing forms of mediated action. However, one of the points that follows inescapably from the view of mediated action I am proposing is that even if a new cultural tool frees us from some earlier limitation of perspective, it introduces new ones of its own. (P. 39)

Regarding music students with disabilities, I attended to affordances and constraints of mediational means in analyzing the interview data. These concepts were useful in explaining how mediational tools shaped quality of experience for blind and visually impaired students participating in instrumental music class.

The Transformations Associated with New Mediational Means

Another aspect of mediational means Wertsch identified was the degree to which certain tools change the actual nature of a given practice. With the introduction of the calculator, for example, math educators struggled with the degree to which they were teaching students to compute mathematical operations or manipulate machinery. The use of this instrument aroused tension between teachers who valued unassisted cognitive engagement in each step of a process and those who embraced technological support in the act of computing mathematical operations (P. 42-46).

In the present study, I considered the ways various mediational means adopted prior to my involvement with these students transformed their participation in band or orchestra and thus influenced the quality of their experiences.

Mastery and Mediational Means

Wertsch ascertained that human agents' relationships to their mediational means entailed mastery — the proficiency demonstrated by individuals using a tool to accomplish a task (p. 46). An example, which Wertsch expanded under the rubric of appropriation, was the act of singing a Christmas holiday song. He wrote about an elementary school age student who demonstrated know-how or mastery of the various songs associated with the season by singing them alone or as a part of an ensemble. His ability to sing these songs skillfully allowed him to participate in various aspects of the school culture easily, though, as a Jewish person, his own family traditions were different (p. 57).

Regarding the present study, I considered whether the mastery of the various tools employed to participate in instrumental music and the reported quality of their experience were related for blind and visually impaired high school ensemble participants. Moreover, if informants were motivated primarily by music related interests, would their mastery of tools associated with learning music be more pronounced? If motivations less obviously specific to music were more apparent, would students' abilities to master tools associated with these types of motivations be more evident?

Appropriation and Mediation Means

In Wertsch's perspective, appropriation was a step beyond mastery. In mastery, agents demonstrated know-how in accomplishing a task or carrying out a process, in appropriation, they experienced ownership of the task or process. As a Jewish person, the aforementioned elementary school student was competent at singing popular Christian holiday songs when he was in elementary school. Owning or appropriating them seemed impossible, however, because of his own religious identity (P. 53-58).

In the present study, I was interested in the extent to which individuals with visual disabilities in instrumental music class appropriated mediational means associated with their primary motivations for participation. Moreover, I questioned whether the nature of their own expressed interests shaped the degree to which they appropriated the necessary tools involved in obtaining the quality of experience they sought.

Multiple Purposes for Mediation Means

Wertsch discerned that mediational means are often used for purposes other than their original intent. Fiberglass, for example, was not developed to facilitate the sport of pole-vaulting. Rather, it was crafted for use in the military.

... most of the cultural tools we employ were not designed for the purposes to which they are being put. Instead, they often emerge in response to forces that have nothing to do with the ideal design of a mediational means. In a sense, one could say that we are in a position of always "misusing" poles, words, patterns of speaking and thinking, and so forth in carrying out our actions. Indeed, in many

cases we may be trying to speak, think, or otherwise act by employing a cultural tool that, unbeknownst to us, actually impedes our performance. (P. 59)

Earlier in this chapter I mentioned a study by Bruscia and Levinson (1982) in which the researchers attempted to verify the extent to which the Optacon™, a reading machine for people who are blind, was suitable for reading print music. It was found that the Optacon™ did not emerge as a viable means for reading print music notation. Though it raised the print image on the page, the machine's design for use in a linear fashion constrained movement up and down on the page in the way that one reads print music notation. Had the Optacon™ proved viable for reading print music notation, however, it would illustrate effectively this notion of multiple uses for mediational means.

In the present study, I noted the degree to which mediational tools were used in the manner in which they were intended. Of greater interest was the connection or disconnection between the original intent for the mediational tools and the informants' quality of experience in instrumental music education.

Power, Authority, and Mediational Means

Finally, Wertsch observed that mediational means necessarily entail issues related to power and authority. The rise of print media, for example, created an informational divide between more and less privileged members of society. The actual printed material independent of readers held no power while these tools joined together with concerned human agents, however, produced situations in which the agendas of individuals with the tools outweighed the issues of citizens without them. "It is not as if cultural tools, in and of themselves, operate as independent, causal factors, but they can have a potent effect on

the dynamics of human action, including the power and authority relationships involved in it” (P. 65).

Allan (1999) reported on the subjugation experienced by students with disabilities in school settings. Allen discovered that, though intention to exclude was not necessarily always present, peers without disabilities, teachers, and administrators regularly exercised power and authority over disabled students. She also described the ways some of the students in her study resisted others’ influences and attempted to empower themselves.

In interpreting the data in the present study, I sought to understand informants’ experiences of power and authority especially as these two concepts related to mediational means. I did not interview anyone other than students with disabilities for this study because I was interested in these students’ perspectives on their experiences. I, therefore, was only able to comment on students’ perceptions of power exerted upon them; their perceptions of their own empowerment in various situations; and their perceptions of how their own and other individuals’ power shaped the quality of their experiences in instrumental music class.

Definitions of Terms

Blind: A term which is designated for those individuals having no useful vision (Wood, 1993, p. 98).

Inclusion: “Inclusion refers to the opportunity for persons with a disability to participate fully in all the educational, employment, consumer, recreational, community, and domestic activities that typify everyday society” (Tilstone, Floriani, & Rose, 1998, p. 16).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): Also referenced as the Individualized Education Program, the IEP is a legal document that commits a school district to providing special education and related resources to students with disabilities (Dornbush & Pruitt, 1995, p. 155). The IEP also contains educational goals and objectives for disabled students. Generally, goals and objectives focus on students' development in the areas of social interaction, personal care, communication, literacy, numeracy, and study skills (Tilstone et al., 1998, p. 141-142).

Instrumental music education: Instrumental music education usually references the teaching of Western concert band or orchestra instruments like flute, violin, and various percussion instruments. Though not stated specifically, music education scholars like Richard Weerts (1992) demonstrate this or a similar definition in professional publications about instrumental music by concentrating on wind band and strings in their discussion.

Learning Strategy: “A strategy is a plan of a sequence of actions to attain a pre-established goal; a learning strategy is a plan of a sequence of actions to attain a learning objective” (Klauer, 1988, p. 355).

Least restrictive environment (LRE): The least restrictive environment is the educational setting in which students with disabilities are able to function academically and socially with typical peers. When disabled students' needs can be met in a typical class, school system administrations should not place them in classes designated for disabled students. When their needs can be addressed in a resource class, school system administrations should avoid placing them in institutions or specialized academies (Wood, 1993).

Legally blind: A term which references a person whose visual acuity is 20/200 in the better eye after correction with visual aids like glasses (Wood, 1993, p. 98).

Mainstreaming: Mainstreaming is a process in which school systems offer instructional options to students with disabilities in typical school environments, providing special education only if required by the individual's IEP (Wood, 1993, p. 7).

Motivation: “The overall effect of processes which cause initiation, direction, vigor, and persistence of activity” (Werpy, 1995, p. 19).

Partially sighted: A term which references individuals whose visual acuity is between 20/70 and 20/200 in the better eye after correction with visual aids like glasses. Individuals who are partially sighted are able to use vision as a significant mode of learning (Wood, 1993, p. 98).

Social Connectedness: Social connectedness is the feeling of inclusion individuals experience in groups when they are able to participate without fear of exclusion or harassment for their openness about personal differences from most members of their community. This definition arises from a discussion by Sullivan and Wodarski (2002, p. 1-2) of social disconnection in which they describe socially disconnected individuals as inappropriately fearing “discovery,” thus limiting their openness with peers because of their sense of their profound or fundamental differentness or “otherness.”

Visual acuity: measure of the level of sharpness of vision. Normal visual acuity is 20/20 (Wood, 1993 p. 98).

Visually impaired: A term, which, among advocates, references individuals who have low visual acuity but have some usable vision (Wood, 1993, p. 98).

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The research literature explored in this chapter divided across four categories: (a) music education monographs about mainstreaming and full-inclusion; (b) music education research on teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming and full-inclusion; (c) music education research on non-disabled students' perceptions about the participation of students with disabilities in music class; and (d) research from outside music education on disabled students' perceptions of their experiences in school. For the first section, I summarized texts that have been published since 1975 to guide music teachers in preparing for increasing numbers of disabled students in their classrooms. For the second two sections, I reviewed music education research studies in which the authors examined the process of mainstreaming students with several disabilities, including blindness or visual impairment. These studies offered responses from teachers and students in two particular settings: band and orchestra. In some cases, however, they also provided responses from general music and choral music teachers or students. For the fourth section, I identified research in special education in which authors interviewed or surveyed students with disabilities about their experiences in either special education or in mainstream and full-inclusion settings.

My search for relevant literature began with key word searches in the following electronic databases: PsycINFO, ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center),

Worldcat, MCAT (the University of Michigan Library Catalog), and Dissertation Abstracts. The following key word searches were performed: K = music and disability, music and handicapped, music and special education, music education and disability, music education and handicapped, music education and special education, music education and mainstreaming, music education and full inclusion, music education and blind, music education and visually impaired, special education and mainstreaming, special education and full inclusion, special education and interviewing, special education and blind, and special education and visual impairment. In addition to conducting key word searches, author searches on all authors of useful articles were undertaken.

Non-electronic methods for identifying relevant literature included the following: (a) reviewing the bibliographies of all useful articles located; (b) checking for relevant literature located near books and articles identified in electronic searches; and (c) searching manually through issues of the Journal of Visual Impairment between the years 1993 and 2003. I undertook this step because little research considering blind and visually impaired individuals was located in initial searches.

Overall, studies demonstrated that music education researchers have limited their investigation to a narrow perspective, i.e., the experiences and perceptions of teachers and non-disabled students. The perspective of the disabled student in this process was yet to be investigated thoroughly until the present study.

Music Education Monographs on Mainstreaming and Full-inclusion

My probe for texts dedicated to the music instruction of school age individuals with disabilities revealed five monographs, which I have summarized in the following

paragraphs. Each of these books, presented in chronological order according to date of publication, provided information about topics such as Public Law 94-142, IEP documents, special education terminology, and relevant historical information. I, therefore, have emphasized differences that exist among the books particularly as they relate to blind or partially sighted individuals. In each of the books, the reading audience most clearly addressed appeared to be elementary general music teachers. Each of the authors, all drawing on their own experiences in the areas of music education and disability, at least mentioned instrumental music education. Moreover, I judged many of the suggestions directed toward general music teachers to be applicable to band and orchestra class.

Graham (1975), in the same year that Public Law 94-142 was passed, published a compilation of papers authored by music educators who taught children with disabilities. This monograph was an outgrowth of a special conference on music and exceptionality held in Atlanta, Georgia as part of the 1972 conference of MENC. The goals of the conference, reflected in the text, were the following: (a) to foster knowledge about exceptional children's needs and abilities in music; (b) to familiarize music teachers with approaches to addressing these needs; and (c) to acquaint music educators with music and exceptionality as a profession.

In their papers, some contributors focused on published research, while others stressed pragmatic teaching strategies. Throughout the text, I observed interest in promoting what, at the time, would have been considered appropriate language regarding children with exceptionalities.

In organizing this text, Graham opened with an overview of music in special education. In subsequent chapters, he and other authors addressed music learning with children representing a variety of disability groups. In addition, Graham included information about teaching gifted children because these individuals have also been served by special education services since the passage of IDEA.

Regarding blind and visually impaired students, Graham attended first to relevant terminology. He defined the distinctions, for example, between partial sight and blindness. He next provided general pedagogical guidance to music teachers. Because there are visual components to language development, for instance, he warned that these children sometimes present delays in speaking or singing. He further warned that they may also exhibit decreased vocal flexibility as compared to non-disabled peers. Graham asserted, however, that these differences can be addressed with non-visual approaches such as standing behind students and guiding their hands through conducting patterns to aid them in understanding meter or associating high pitches with the head and low tones with the feet (p. 75-77).

For teachers serving more advanced students, Graham provided a few details about Braille music notation (p. 74). He also observed that, when blind students receive high level ear training, their music education reflects the curricula employed in European music conservatories (p. 80). This remark was not intended to suggest that music should be the assumed vocational goal for blind and visually impaired young people. Rather, because music is a fundamental aspect of human experience, Graham argued that few differences should exist between the goals of students with visual disabilities and the goals of the general student population (p. 77).

Though Graham did not explicitly state an interest in guiding teachers away from stereotypes of blind people as musicians, perhaps his message was especially important for teachers to note in a time when at least two very high profile popular musicians — Ray Charles and Stevie Wonder — enjoyed great success. Graham’s message, though articulated in 1975, is still relevant today.

Following Graham, Nocera (1979) published an exceptionally detailed text addressing music education with special needs learners. The author, perhaps more obviously than other scholars in this area, clearly stated her position that mainstreaming and music learning were human rights. Therefore, in addition to providing information about serving students with special needs, Nocera stated that she sought to develop more positive attitudes among teachers regarding people with disabilities.

In her text, Nocera opened by spelling out her philosophy: that music education exists primarily for the purposes of satisfying every child’s right to build aesthetic sensitivity through the exploration of musical concepts and behaviors that correlate with physical and intellectual abilities. She also articulated her belief in the capacity of music to contribute to disabled students’ general human development. In addition, the author introduced information about Public Law 94-142 as well as initial thoughts about including individuals with disabilities in school music class.

In the second, third, and fourth sections of this text, Nocera supplied readers with in-depth suggestions for structuring lesson plans. In section two, though discouraging the practice of placing emphasis on special education labels, Nocera provided information about the various evaluative measures used to diagnose disabilities. She then provided detailed lesson plans that concurrently address music learning and disability specific

developmental goals. In addition to prose, the author included instructional charts that place the concepts she explored in graphic presentations.

In the next two sections of her text, Nocera provided a wealth of planning guides and activities useful in the organization of lesson plans. In addition to the expansion of musical abilities, attention was given to improving motor, language, social and visual perception skills.

In section five, the author considered specific areas of exceptionality. Nocera wrote about characteristics and learning needs of individuals with mental, learning, and behavioral disabilities as well as students with hearing, visual, and physical impairments. Like Graham, because of their coverage under IDEA, gifted and talented students were also included.

The author approached visual disabilities by providing general information about children with this exceptionality. She cited the standard medical definitions of 20/200 and 20/70 in the better eye after correction for legally blind and partially sighted respectively. She encouraged educators, however, to remember that individuals who are blind typically employ Braille for reading, while individuals with low vision rely on large print (p. 246).

In addition to information about visual measurement, Nocera provided behavior related guidelines for teachers to consider. She pointed out that children who are blind and are of above average intelligence are often highly verbal. She mentioned also that they frequently demonstrate strong fine motor skills. Because of limited opportunities to interact with sighted peers, the author noted that they are more likely to exhibit egocentric and self-stimulating behaviors such as rocking or head rolling. She suggested

that maintaining activity is key in directing these students toward adopting more socially appropriate behaviors (p. 247).

When teaching music to children who are blind or visually impaired, Nocera warned against subscribing to the misconception that these students are endowed with additional hearing at birth. Rather, like Graham, she promoted developing the same goals for these students as non-disabled individuals. Recognizing the need for alternative methods of instruction, however, Nocera offered a variety of suggestions that addressed tactile, kinesthetic, and auditory approaches to learning (p. 247).

Nocera included tactile instructional ideas such as creating surface differentiations among sections of music concept maps, while she proposed kinesthetic teaching methods such as guiding the hands to create shapes of notes and rests. Regarding auditory perception, Nocera discussed three important ideas: (a) sound localization, (b) auditory figure ground, and (c) auditory memory. She described sound localization as identifying the geographic origin and direction of a given sound, while she defined auditory figure ground as the combination of sounds resembling the concept of a landscape. Auditory memory, she explained, was retaining mental understanding about aspects of sounds and relationships among sounds. Certainly, Nocera urged teachers to assist students with developing abilities to isolate sounds in the auditory figure ground. The author identified auditory memory, however, as especially important in music learning because of its utility as a replacement for reading printed notation (p. 248).

When considering instrumental music education, Nocera advocated directing students toward musical instruments that appeared personally motivating rather than disability friendly. She advised that difficulties connected with instrumental music

learning were connected with the emphasis placed on method books and reading notation. In her view, this observation meant that blind and partially sighted band or orchestra members must negotiate acceptable alternatives to reading print with their teachers (p. 249).

Though providing a high level of clinically based material, Nocera clearly rejected stereotypes of individuals with disabilities. Perhaps her emphasis on mainstreaming and music education as civil rights was somewhat unusual for 1979. Interestingly, however, Nocera's philosophy, her abundance of instructional information, and her cautionary notes were reflected in the data in the present study.

Focusing more on the structure of special education programs, Graham & Beer (1980) published a text in which developing lesson plans for disabled students in music class was emphasized. Six points listed in their preface oriented the following discussions throughout the book: (a) the assertion that all disabled students can derive pleasure from music in some way; (b) the importance of planning lessons that consider both the goals of music education and special education; (c) methods for engaging all students with disabilities in aesthetic education; (d) explanations of purposes for lessons and methods for assessing student progress; (e) procedures for promoting disabled students' learning in the least restrictive environment; and (f) the importance of communication among the various professionals involved in the education of students with disabilities.

The authors provided historical information about mainstreaming in music education in the first chapter of the book. In Chapter two, they offered guidance to music educators about the structure of special education programs including an explanation of

the IEP. In Chapter three, they defined mainstreaming and offered suggestions for successful implementation of the process in regular general music class. They also explained the various types of disabilities and gave examples of appropriate objectives for disabled students in a mainstreamed environment.

In Chapters four, five, and six, the authors gave examples of singing, instrument playing, and movement lesson plans that incorporate students with various disabilities in mainstream music education settings. Interestingly, lesson plans for listening and creating, two of the five customarily recognized musical behaviors, were omitted from the discussion.

In the section entitled “Mainstreaming Students with Particular Handicaps,” Graham and Beer asserted that blind and visually impaired students posed little difficulty to music educators, especially if the assistance of a certified vision teacher was available. Perhaps to alleviate teachers’ concerns, they provided detailed visual representations of Braille music notation and informative discussions about large print, two methods still in use. They also listed Braille and large print production equipment, mostly replaced by computer technology today, that teachers once could access in vision resource rooms (p. 71).

Graham and Beer provided additional suggestions for teaching blind and visually impaired students. The authors included general instructional ideas such as consistently issuing verbal directions or allowing students with low vision to sit near the front of the classroom. Music education specific ideas included labeling resonator bells for individuals with even very low vision in such a way that they can identify intended pitches amid a cluster of similarly appearing items (p. 73-74).

In general, Graham and Beer advocated the same goals and objectives for blind or visually impaired children as they did for sighted non-disabled children. In some instances, they suggested that the process of instruction differed somewhat. The authors provided several examples of alternative processes for typical music objectives in this section of their book.

Somewhat different from Graham (1975) and similar to Nocera (1979), these authors wrote more details about topics such as Braille music notation. In comparison to the aforementioned texts, however, this volume appeared much more therapeutic in orientation. One can note, for example, goals and objectives designed to increase disabled students' self-esteem. Though the appropriateness of such aims may be indisputable for selected individual students with disabilities, one should not assume that all individuals with disabilities struggle abnormally with this issue or other related difficulties.

Atterbury (1990) published a more comprehensive text that combined her years of experience teaching in mainstream settings with the body of research in the field at the time. The purpose of her text was to provide music educators with an explanation of the following: (a) disability groups they could expect to teach in public schools; (b) legislation and policy guiding the education of students with disabilities; and (c) suggested strategies for serving these students. Though she acknowledged the lack of room in the undergraduate and graduate music education curriculum, Atterbury charged that course work in music in special education was crucial for intending music teachers.

Atterbury organized the text by related topics. In the first chapter, the author introduced the concept of mainstreaming and defined relevant terms such as least

restrictive environment. She also discussed the history, challenges, and rewards associated with teaching students with disabilities.

Beyond this chapter, Atterbury addressed the subject of the text by special needs groups. In the second, third, and fourth chapters, she considered students with cognitive exceptionalities. Then, the author detailed methods and issues surrounding teaching these students in music class. In chapters six, seven, and eight, Atterbury reported on teaching students with sensory and physical disabilities. She discussed individuals with emotional impairments in chapter nine. Subsequently, as in chapter five, she presented scenarios in which teachers instructed these students in class.

Atterbury opened each chapter by describing a vignette grounded in actual teaching experience. In these scenes, a music educator was teaching a class in which a particular type of special needs student was present. These short stories allowed the author to present instructional dilemmas, characteristics of special learners, and adaptive equipment in an inviting manner. From this point, she discussed selected details about the exceptionality considered in the vignette and strategies used in teaching the students. She also reviewed related published research.

Regarding blind and visually impaired individuals, Atterbury defined terms such as partially sighted and legal blindness similarly to the previous scholars. She cited three studies in which music perception among blind and visually impaired individuals was investigated (p. 134).

In preparation for blind or visually impaired students, the author encouraged teachers to become aware of trends associated with these students. She observed, for example, gaps between the experiences of blind students and non-disabled students. In

music class, Atterbury found that the disparity could be observed when teachers asked students to participate in exercises such as the movement of a given animal. Because blind or visually impaired students did not have an understanding of how the animal moved, they struggled to satisfy the teacher's request. In addition, they sometimes demonstrated restricted freedom of mobility and inadequate interaction with their environment (p. 126-128).

When including individuals who are partially sighted in the music classroom, Atterbury recommended providing printed graphics and text in clearly contrasting colors such as yellow and black rather than dramatically opposed shades such as black and white. She also suggested that educators position themselves away from windows where the outside light distracts students from the teacher's presentation (p. 130).

For students who are blind, the author encouraged the use of recorded and Braille materials. For instrumental music students particularly, she outlined an aural music learning approach, which does not appear in the other texts, summarized in this section of the literature review. The idea, developed by Levine, involves providing two examples of recorded music: one without accompaniment and one with accompaniment. The first allowed blind students to hear their parts in isolation, while the second enabled them to perceive it in harmonic context (p. 126).

It appeared that at least two important distinctions separate Atterbury's text from the publications referenced thus far. First, the author demonstrated that research was beginning to inform the discourse surrounding disability and music education. Moreover, she organized the studies into a compendium that music educators could access to ground some aspects of their work. Second, because her writing was clearly grounded in actual

teaching experience, she depicted especially well the various dilemmas that emerge for music teachers who are inexperienced with the processes of mainstreaming or full-inclusion. Juxtaposed with the aforementioned research, Atterbury's work continues to offer a very rich portrait of mainstreaming from the informed music teacher's perspective.

The most current monograph addressing the music learning of school age individuals with disabilities was published by the National Association for Music Education (MENC, 2004). The organization assembled relevant articles and titled the collection *Spotlight on Making Music with Special Learners: Selected Articles from State Music Education Journals*.

In articulating the purpose for the text, the authors asserted the following two points: that children acquire knowledge in a variety of ways and that approaches to assisting learners with disabilities benefit all students. Their specific goals for the book were to offer suggestions to music teachers in obtaining assistance, developing instructional modifications, and attaining support from administrators, as well as provide encouraging anecdotes about disabled students' participation in music classes.

An investigation of the book's contents revealed that some of the articles are summaries of formal research reports, while others are less formal accounts of teachers' experiences. Perhaps because the subjects covered are so wide ranging, the articles were organized by author's last name rather than by related subjects. Among the general topics covered were types of disabilities, disability-specific strategies for teaching music, special education policies, and adaptive technology. Heartwarming stories written by

music teachers about their experiences serving students with a wide variety of disabilities also were included.

Regarding blindness and visual impairment specifically, three entries appeared especially noteworthy. The first, by Debrot, outlined successful teaching strategies with various disability groups. Debrot noted that the need to develop especially careful listening skills can provide the blind and visually impaired an opportunity to excel in music. Because of the readily achievable nature of imitation, the author suggested that music educators employ high levels of rote song teaching with this population. She warned, however, that some lessons pose participation difficulties. Movement, for example, was an area in which she encouraged teachers to consider safety related issues (p. 14).

The second article of interest was by Siligo who, at the time of the MENC publication, directed the music department at the California School for the Blind. As did the authors of the introduction to the text, Siligo advocated strategies that have applicability to all students. The author, for example, encouraged teachers to become familiar with blind or visually impaired students' lives outside of music. More specific to music, he suggested helping students understand exactly how to practice and instructing them about documenting their efforts. Siligo suggested first teaching simple familiar songs by rote. In his experience, he reported, students were less threatened by operating an instrument when they already knew the melody to be performed. In addition, though advocating the use of the Braille music system whenever possible, he emphasized that music notation should be viewed as one of several avenues for approaching music learning. Siligo further observed that students who become especially reliant on Braille

music notation struggle with developing aural skills. Like Nocera (1979), the author asserted that highly developed aural skills are most important in pursuing music study as a blind person. Moreover, he contested the belief that Braille music notation is the only viable method for acquiring understanding of a print score (p. 63-66).

Siligo also discussed technological options that teachers can employ in the instruction of blind and visually impaired individuals. He recommended, for example, recording vocal or instrumental parts onto a cassette tape. When employing this method, however, he urged the use of a tape recorder equipped with a variable pitch option. Especially in the case of instrumentalists, he noted that this feature allows the learner to place the pitch of the recorder at a level that matches the instrument (p. 65).

Regarding instances where Braille music notation is preferred, Siligo advised that teachers may wish to access professional transcribers. He briefly described how the transcription process is faster through the use of computer software (p. 65).

The third entry of interest was a personal perspective offered by Strunk who, at the time of the article's first appearance, was an undergraduate music education student with a visual disability. Strunk, a participant in various types of ensembles, advocated many of the aforementioned strategies for obtaining understanding of printed parts. Perhaps most valuable in this commentary was the observation that his similarities to sighted peers outnumber his differences. Where his strategies for learning material were different from sighted musicians, he perceived that his interests and motivations were typical (p. 76).

When organizing this publication, emphasis was placed on the use of "people first" language. This trend, currently embraced by advocates in the field of disability,

discourages referencing “the challenged” or “the handicapped” and stresses phrases such as “people with disabilities.” Because this approach is the respected current protocol within the disability community, it was laudable that the authors and editors of this text promoted this language.

Additionally, it was encouraging that, similar to the present study, disabled individuals stories about music learning were represented in this book, as the voices of disabled individuals were not highlighted in previous books on this topic. Like this text, the data in the present study demonstrated that interviewing students with disabilities about their experiences offers important insights about their learning. Perhaps future texts will develop this idea further.

The authors of each of the volumes discussed in this section contributed substantially to informing music teachers about including students with disabilities in music class. By modern standards, with the exception of the 2004 MENC compilation, the authors used rather dated language when describing individuals with disabilities in general or as a specific group. It should be noted, however, that these texts demonstrate the accepted language of the time in which they were written. The MENC (2004) collection was perhaps the first music education monograph to introduce the practice of using “people first” language. In addition, this publication pointed to a rising interest on the part of music educators in obtaining the perspectives of students with disabilities about their experiences in school music programs.

*Studies on the Perceptions of Music Teachers Regarding Mainstreaming and Full-
Inclusion*

My review of the music education research on mainstreaming and full-inclusion revealed that, upon passage of P.L. 94-142, music education researchers first examined how teachers perceived the impact of this legislation on classroom practice. Researchers have investigated music teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming and full inclusion in at least six studies. In each of these studies, the investigators surveyed or interviewed music teachers. In the four studies in which researchers surveyed large samples of music teachers, they achieved return rates that are substantially less than 80 percent. Borg, Gall, and Borg (1996, p. 303) have identified this standard as necessary to insure a representative sample and external validity.

Gilbert and Asmus (1981) were among the first researchers to examine music teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming. Their study addressed the following: (a) the extent to which practicing teachers served students with disabilities; (b) their knowledge of federal legislation regarding mainstreaming; and (c) their perceptions of their needs and problems in teaching disabled students. They sent out questionnaires to an unreported number of music educators who composed a sample of elementary and secondary general, choral, and instrumental teachers from each region of the United States. They received 789 completed questionnaires (p. 33).

After conducting four pilot tests of the survey with a team of music educators and therapists as well as special educators, the researchers included questions about the following five issues: (a) knowledge of P.L. 94-142; (b) teaching music skills in mainstreamed classrooms; (c) music activities as a method of teaching nonmusical skills;

(d) music as a means of teaching other academic areas; and (e) operation and administration in mainstreamed music classrooms. In the first four sections, respondents used a four-point scale to indicate the extent to which information or ideas presented in an item would be helpful in teaching disabled students. Respondents also indicated whether they were using information or ideas from these sections of the questionnaire in their current practice. In the last section of the questionnaire, the researchers listed a variety of potential problems in mainstreamed music classrooms. They asked respondents to rate the severity of the problems in their day-to-day experience.

Using a series of cross tabulations, Gilbert and Asmus analyzed the data by grade level taught (elementary or secondary) and area of specialization (general, choral, or instrumental music). Of the 789 respondents, 62.1% reported some interaction with disabled students (p. 33). Two thirds of the respondents indicated some knowledge of P.L. 94-142 (p. 34).

Further analysis revealed large gaps between some teachers' reported opinions and others' indicated teaching practices. Especially large discrepancies existed with regard to the following subjects: (a) knowledge of P.L. 94-142; (b) participation in IEP development; (c) developing music programs for disabled students; and (d) the assessment of disabled students' learning. For example, 18.7% of respondents reported using knowledge in the aforementioned areas to teach students with disabilities. In contrast, more than 73% of respondents believed that such knowledge would be helpful in their teaching practice (p. 34) if it were available to them.

It was encouraging to note that nearly 19% of 789 music teachers identified participation in IEP development helpful in their efforts to instruct students with

disabilities. Further encouraging was the fact that even a few music teachers found valuable guidance from information about P.L. 94-142, appropriate music instruction for students with disabilities, and music assessment for disabled students. Considering the dearth of research literature that addresses teaching or learning strategies and individuals with disabilities, it would be further enlightening to know specifically how individuals used the information and experiences they obtained.

Atterbury (1986), adapting her questionnaire from the study by Gilbert and Asmus (1982), studied music teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming in the southern United States. Her purpose was to determine the extent to which music teachers and school administrators considered different learning abilities in providing for students with disabilities.

Atterbury surveyed a random sample of 440 general music teachers who represented ten percent of the general music specialists in the southern division of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC). One hundred and thirty-three respondents completed the questionnaire, a response rate of 30%. The questionnaire contained sixteen items designed to obtain information on the following topics: (a) the amount of administrative support provided for music teachers serving disabled students; (b) the degree to which teachers adapted instruction for these students; and (c) teachers' beliefs about disabled students' experiences in general music classes.

In the area of administrative support, Atterbury inquired about assistance in the classroom, extra instructional time with disabled students, access to information about disabled students, and participation in IEP meetings. In the area of instructional adaptations, she asked about adjustments in music instruction for disabled students,

adaptations in textbook content, and the use of supplemental materials. In the area of teachers' perceptions about disabled students' experiences, respondents rated the extent to which disabled students participated inappropriately, the level of social acceptance of disabled students by non-disabled students, and the amount of participation disabled students demonstrated in classroom activities. She also inquired about teachers' knowledge of P.L. 94-142 and whether or not teachers believed they were asked to serve too many disabled students. Respondents answered all questions using a 3-point scale where "1" indicated a low rating, "2" indicated a moderate rating, and "3" indicated a high rating.

Results indicated that teachers generally felt no administrative support with the process of mainstreaming students. Seventy-six percent of the respondents provided the lowest possible rating on questions about this subject (p. 205). With regard to providing instructional adaptations to students, 51% of the responses indicated that teachers provided moderate levels of adjustment for students, while 43% indicated that teachers provided a low level of adjustment (p. 206). Also of interest, 61% of the responses indicated that disabled students enjoyed moderately good experiences in music class, while 25% of the responses indicated highly satisfactory experiences (p. 206).

Like Gilbert and Asmus (1982), Atterbury provided important information about at least a few music teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming at the time of her study. It was notable that a majority of the respondents reported making moderate or low levels of adjustment to provide moderately and highly satisfactory experiences for disabled students. Again, noting how little is known about teaching and learning strategies in this area, it would be helpful to understand specifically what constituted a "moderate" or

"low" level of instructional adaptation and how respondents defined a "moderately" or a "highly" successful experience for the student.

In another study, Gfeller, Darrow, and Hedden (1990) investigated music teachers' perceptions about the effectiveness of mainstreaming practices in Iowa and Kansas. The research questions focused on the following six topics: (a) differences among teachers' perceptions according to specialty (general, choral, or instrumental); (b) differences among music teachers according to level of experience with disabled students; (c) amount of pre-service preparation in special education available to music teachers in Iowa and Kansas; (d) support available to music teachers serving disabled students; (e) the extent to which a positive correlation exists between amount of support for mainstreaming and teachers' perceived success in mainstream settings; and (f) teachers' perceptions about the most and least difficult disability groups to mainstream.

Using a stratified random sampling, the researchers administered a questionnaire to 350 (5%) of the music educators in Kansas and Iowa. They did not explain how they defined the different strata. They did explain that their choice to limit their study to the experiences of music teachers in Iowa and Kansas was based on two factors: the practice in these states of employing specialists to teach music in public schools and similarities in rural/urban demographics. The researchers also reported that they achieved return rates of 76 percent from Iowa and 70 percent from Kansas (p. 93). They then combined the data from Iowa and Kansas because the demographic data indicated no statistically significant differences between the respondents from the two states (p. 93). The researchers did not report a new rate of return based on the pooled data.

The questionnaire items for their study were obtained from the following sources: (a) research literature on mainstreaming in music education; (b) existing questionnaires from related studies; (c) the professional experiences of the authors as well as their colleagues; and (d) information provided in the MENC documents *The School Music Program Description* and *Standards for Music Education for an Exceptional Child*. The survey contained six sections: (a) demographic information (respondents' music education specialties, ages taught, and years experience with disabled students); (b) amount of educational preparation in special education; (c) extent of instructional support in mainstreaming students in regular music classes; (d) the extent to which musical and non-musical goals are primary concerns for mainstreamed students; (e) the degree of difficulty in mainstreaming students with various handicapping conditions; and (f) perceived success in mainstreaming (p. 93).

Results indicated inconsistencies in respondents' thinking. The researchers reported, for example, that “nearly one-half” of the respondents were teaching students with disabilities in classes with non-disabled students, but further data revealed that 62% of respondents reported that effective mainstreaming occurred in their music classes (p. 95). This discrepancy begged a question — namely, how 62% of participants could be mainstreaming effectively when only about 50% were mainstreaming at all. At another point, the researchers reported that 63% of respondents expected disabled students to achieve the same musical objectives as non-disabled peers (p. 97). Two results, however, challenged this finding: only 32% of the respondents graded disabled students using the same musical standards as applied to non-disabled students and 67% stated that their primary objectives with disabled students were non-musical in nature (p. 97). Similarly,

62% of respondents believed that effective mainstreaming occurred in their classes (p. 96). Challenging this finding, however, were the following statistics: 50% of respondents believed that disabled students would be better served in segregated classes and 61% regarded mainstreaming and full-inclusion as detrimental to the learning process of non-disabled music students (p. 96).

Regarding differences among teachers' perceptions according to their specialty (general, choral, or instrumental), only one notable difference emerged: instrumental music teachers reported that their school administrators gave attention to musical ability when placing students with disabilities in music classes, whereas general and choral music teachers did not. The difference was statistically significant ($p < 0.01$) (p. 94).

In the area of training for work with disabled students, the data revealed a mean score of 10.78 ($SD=3.95$) where a score of five demonstrated no preparation and a score of twenty-five indicated maximum preparation (p. 94). The researchers identified a moderate but positive correlation ($r=.40$) between respondents' perceived ability to mainstream students with disabilities and perceived administrative support (p. 95).

With regard to the question of the most difficult disability groups to mainstream, the data revealed the following: (a) 56% of respondents indicated that students with emotional and behavioral disorders were most difficult to serve in music classes, and (b) 9% said that students with health disorders, like cystic fibrosis or sickle-cell anemia, were most difficult to mainstream (p. 100). Of particular interest, 25% of respondents believed that blind or visually impaired students were most difficult to mainstream (p. 100).

Though this study has clear limitations, it provided some interesting points to consider in light of the present investigation. First, the teachers questioned indisputably

wanted to believe that they were doing a good job. It was interesting that the respondents in this study, though indicating little administrative support for mainstreaming, believed that they generally were mainstreaming disabled students effectively. These findings closely resembled those of Atterbury (1986). It was also interesting, given the level of effective mainstreaming claimed, that so many respondents believed that disabled students slowed or impeded the process of music learning for non-disabled students in their classes. These results have implications for research in how music teachers judge their effectiveness in mainstream settings and how music teachers identify the effects disabled students have on the music learning of non-disabled students. Future research should focus on the strategies music teachers use to facilitate inclusion. In this study, the researchers reported, for example, that 28% of the respondents received an aide or paraprofessional in the classroom when needed (p. 95), but they did not explain how or if these individuals assisted disabled students in the music class.

Another troubling issue raised by this study was the identification of the most difficult disability groups to mainstream. The validity of the data in this section of the report depended on the clarification of two points: the extent to which teachers knew that students had a disability (i.e., whether there was a documented disability on record or merely a subjective perception of a disability) and the breadth of experience teaching disabled students that teachers brought to the task of assessing the difficulty of mainstreaming these disability groups. These issues are particularly relevant in discussing students with behavior or emotional disorders — the two disability groups identified as the most difficult to serve.

Frisque, Niebur, and Humphreys (1994) studied mainstreaming practices in music classes in Arizona public schools. Their research questions focused on five areas: (a) the extent and nature of mainstreaming in these classes; (b) reasons cited by Arizona music educators for mainstreaming students with disabilities into their classes; (c) expected educational achievement of students with disabilities in music classes; (d) indicators used by teachers to assess their own and their disabled students' success in mainstream settings; and (e) variables which predict successful mainstreaming in music classes.

The researchers developed a questionnaire to address the following: (a) demographic information about grade level taught; (b) teaching area of specialization; (c) level of formal education; (d) the extent of training in special education; (e) type of training in special education; (f) number of years of teaching experience; (g) amount of experience teaching students with disabilities; (h) types of disabilities encountered at the time of the study; and (i) school policy relative to placing and serving disabled students in music class. They also asked questions about the objectives developed and procedures followed by music teachers and their colleagues in mainstreamed settings. Lastly, they sought information about teachers' perceptions of the most difficult disability groups to mainstream.

After pilot testing the survey with 16 music teachers from one school district in Arizona, the researchers mailed the survey to 227 members of the Arizona Music Educators Association (AMEA). The response rate was 53%, and the investigators analyzed 107 completed questionnaires (p. 97). With 47 % of the data missing, however, the researchers could not achieve external validity. Therefore, it was not possible to generalize the results to a larger population.

Data revealed that more than 94% of respondents had served students with disabilities in mainstream music classes at some time in their careers (p. 97). According to 42% of respondents, all students with disabilities attended typical music classes in their schools. However, 50% of respondents reported that only some students with disabilities attended typical music classes (p. 97). At the time they completed the survey, 84% of respondents were teaching students with disabilities in regular music classes (p. 97). Of these, 22% were teaching young people who were blind or visually impaired (p. 98).

Though many teachers were serving students with disabilities, few indicated that they had received training to work with disabled students. More than 40% of respondents said that they had received no training to work with disabled students (p. 98). Twenty percent of respondents reported attending in-service training or workshops (p. 98). Only ten percent participated in on-going training once annually (p. 98). Thirty-four percent received training if requested. Moreover, 44% of respondents received no training even if requested (p. 98).

Researchers were disturbed by the lack of teacher participation in placement decisions as well as the motivations behind the placement of disabled students in music class. Seventy-two percent of the respondents did not participate in decisions about placement of disabled students in their classes (p. 99). Of greater concern, 49% of respondents reported that students with disabilities were placed in their classes to develop social skills (p. 99). Only 3% of the respondents indicated that placement of disabled students in their classes was based on musical ability (p. 99). Thirty-four percent, however, reported placement based on the student's interest (p. 99).

Unlike the findings of Gfeller et al. (1990), in this study choral, general and instrumental music educators alike indicated that disabled students were placed in their classes for the primary purpose of socialization rather than musical achievement (p. 99). This finding highlighted a concern voiced in the present research: the extent to which disabled students are assumed to participate in music for socialization rather than musical achievement. Clearly, the answer to this question rests with the students.

Regardless of the original impetus to enroll students with disabilities in music classes, findings indicated that teachers believed they address both the social and musical development of students in their classes. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements like the following: “Non-musical goals are more important than musical goals for the special learner” and “The primary objective with a special learner is to develop musical goals” (p. 100). There was a negative correlation found ($r = -.45$) between the aforementioned paired statements. The researchers concluded this relationship to be statistically weak. This was also the case with other similarly paired questions. The investigators thus concluded that respondents did not see the items as mutually exclusive. In addition, there was no relationship found when using factor analysis to discern the extent to which respondents viewed questions about certain types of objectives as related (p. 99-100).

Similar to the observations made by Gfeller et al. (1990), the researchers in this study suggested that music teachers demonstrated conflicts in their thinking about mainstreaming. Approximately 62% of the respondents indicated that they felt successful at mainstreaming disabled students into their music classes (p. 100). Paradoxically,

approximately 33% felt that students with disabilities were mainstreamed effectively into music classes (p. 100).

Also like Gfeller et al. (1990), these investigators found that children with emotional or behavior disorders were rated as significantly ($p < .001$) more difficult to mainstream than other disability groups (i.e., multiple disabilities, mental disabilities, learning disabilities, sensory impairments, or speech disorders) (p. 101). Students with physical disabilities and speech disorders were judged to be significantly easier to mainstream ($p < .005$) than students with five other types of disabilities. Frisque et al. (1994) provided no specific information about teachers' perceptions about blindness or visual impairment and ease of mainstreaming.

Frisque, Niebur, and Humphreys raised two important issues connected to mainstreaming in music education to consider: the extent to which music teachers have received training to serve students with disabilities, and the degree to which music teachers are encouraged to use music to teach social skills to disabled students. In addition, their study demonstrated two trends seen in earlier studies: the discrepancy in music teachers' thinking (i.e., their ability to mainstream versus effective mainstreaming of disabled students in music class), and the difficulty of teaching students with behavior disorders and emotional disturbances. Once again, it would have been helpful to define effective mainstreaming and articulate what factors promote effectiveness in mainstreaming.

Wilson and McCrary (1996) considered the issue of training raised by studies cited earlier in this review. These two researchers investigated the extent to which completing a graduate music education methods class focusing on disabled public school

students influenced subjects' attitudes about individuals with special needs. In pretests as well as posttests, the researchers asked course participants about perceptions of their comfort, willingness, and capability regarding instructing individuals with the following types of disabilities: (a) emotional disabilities, (b) multiple disabilities, (c) physical disabilities, and (d) mental disabilities. The researchers also asked about participants' perceptions about teaching non-disabled students.

Eighteen practicing teachers enrolled in a seven week summer course composed a sample in which the following levels of disability related training were demonstrated: (a) no prior instruction (13 subjects); (b) one special education workshop or college course (3 subjects); and (c) two or more college special education classes (2 subjects). Sixteen participants reported previous experience interacting with special needs children.

All members of the sample completed a pretest questionnaire, which was adapted by the researchers from an instrument developed by Stuart and Gilbert. On the pre-test, subjects read four descriptive statements about each of the aforementioned groups of students. Using a 5-point scale where "1" indicated strong disagreement and "5" denoted strong agreement, they rated their responses to the following: (a) "I would feel comfortable interacting with this individual;" (b) "I would be willing to work with this individual;" and (c) "I would feel capable in working professionally with this individual." The questionnaire was administered again at the conclusion of the class as a post-test.

The methods class ran for seven weeks. Three two-hour sessions were conducted each week by two instructors: one with experience in music therapy and the other in music education. Topics addressed included an overview of disabilities in the following areas: (a) cognition, (b) learning, (c) hearing, (d) vision, (e) mobility, (f) health, and (g)

emotion. In addition, the instructors covered issues related to special education policy, relevant terminology, teaching resources, and effective inclusion strategies. Instructional methods included presentations of videotapes, involvement in simulation exercises, and appearances by guest clinicians. The researchers described guest presenters as music therapists or educators with extensive mainstreaming experience.

The results of the pre-test indicated that respondents felt at least somewhat comfortable and willing to serve as music teachers for individuals with disabilities. Means scores for comfort were 3.99 (SD= 0.55), while means scores for willingness were 4.19 (SD= 0.59). In the area of capability, study participants were less confident with a mean score of 3.38 (SD = 0.59) (p. 29-30).

On the post-test, interestingly, mean scores for comfort and willingness decreased, while the mean score for capability increased. Comfort and willingness received ratings of 3.78 (SD = 0.49) and 3.76 (SD = 0.62) respectively. Capability, on the other hand, rose slightly for a score of 3.49 (SD = 0.63). A t-test of independent means revealed no statistically significant difference between pre-test and post-test means for comfort and capability. For willingness, however, the difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$) (p. 29-30).

The researchers next conducted a one way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to determine the extent to which subjects' pre-test and post-test scores differed in relationship to the four larger categories of disability explored in the class. Capability was the only area in which they found statistical significance, which appeared at the .05 level. On both pre-tests and post-tests, subjects indicated that they felt least capable of teaching

individuals with multiple or emotional disabilities and more capable of serving students with physical or mental disabilities (p. 29).

In their discussion, Wilson and McCrary noted that they did not incorporate field experience in which subjects worked directly with individuals with disabilities. In an effort to discern the degree to which knowledge gained in the training was transferable to the professional setting, the researchers sent a follow-up questionnaire to study participants six months after the conclusion of the class. Unfortunately, further analysis was not possible because too few questionnaires were returned. In addition, the researchers did not pursue observations of these teachers instructing children with disabilities in their classrooms. This step could have provided more concrete data addressing the extent to which the study participants were able to implement knowledge obtained from the class.

A particularly interesting question raised by this study was the extent to which training seemed to promote a statistically significant decline in willingness to teach students with disabilities. Wilson and McCrary speculated that the decline could have resulted from factors such as the lack of direct experience with disabled individuals; the development of more sensible expectations of disabled students; or negative reactions to aspects of the training. It indeed would be interesting to know from study participants what contributed to their decline in willingness to teach individuals with disabilities. In particular, if their resistance developed in response to an aspect of the training they received, it would be interesting and helpful to know if the particular facet in question was related to information that could not be altered or presentation that perhaps could be changed.

Darrow (1999) investigated music teachers' perceptions of full-inclusion by conducting in-depth interviews. The pool of informants included twenty-five women and ten men (seventeen general music teachers, five choral teachers, and thirteen instrumental music teachers) from a Midwestern school district where full-inclusion had been encouraged for 3 years. In the interviews, Darrow asked the informants to discuss the following topics: (a) critical issues associated with the full-inclusion of students with severe disabilities in music classes; (b) the effect of full-inclusion on teaching methodology; (c) the effect of full-inclusion on students with and without disabilities; and (d) advice to new teachers teaching in full-inclusion settings.

After developing written transcripts of each interview, Darrow separated the transcripts according to the informants' areas of specialization (choral, general, or instrumental). She then coded and analyzed for recurring themes. The inter-rater reliability for coding was .89, though the identities or positions of additional raters were not explicitly stated in the study (p. 261).

The informants identified 13 issues that they saw as critical in serving students with disabilities. Four issues were identified as particularly critical: (a) collaboration with special education or school administration officials (77%); (b) obtaining information about specific students' disabilities (63%); (c) the time needed to serve students with disabilities (57%); and (d) teaching students with wide ranging abilities in the inclusive music classroom (40%) (p. 262). Fifty-four percent of instrumental teachers also considered adaptation of materials critical. In addition, 46% of instrumental teachers and 60% of choral teachers considered performance expectations a critical issue (p. 262).

Informants discussed two types of teaching adaptations with greatest frequency: use of paraprofessionals and use of peer partners (p. 263).

At the time this literature review was created, this study appeared to be the only investigation that offered rich description about music teachers' experiences with full-inclusion. Though it provides some in-depth examples of issues and problems identified in earlier quantitative studies, its potential as a prescriptive tool might have been greater if certain terms had been defined more clearly. Darrow stated, for example, that 77% of the informants identified “collaboration with special education and administration officials” as a critical issue. It is unclear, however, if these teachers saw such collaboration as “critical” because they benefited from the process in their service to disabled students or because they were unable to secure desired assistance from special educators and administrators.

The authors of the studies reviewed in this section provided a helpful level of insight into the perceptions of music teachers serving students with disabilities. The overarching theme that arose from their work was that music teachers experience little control over their service to students with disabilities. The data revealed that they often are excluded from the processes of determining appropriate placement and the delivery of instructional service for disabled students. After reviewing these studies, at least two important questions remained unclear: How teachers are teaching disabled students and how those music teachers who are receiving information or assistance from IEP meetings, special education faculty, or school administration are using these resources. Even so, in these studies, many teachers claimed that they were mainstreaming

effectively and that the disabled students in their classes were having positive experiences. However, the authors did not explain how such claims were triangulated.

The degree to which students' experiences are in fact positive was one key concern in the present study. Though teachers' perceptions of their students' experiences are very important, it is impossible to understand entirely the students' perceptions of their experiences without engaging them in a dialogue. By using in-depth interview studies, however, researchers can probe the specific ways in which students learn and teachers teach. In the present Study, I sought to address such questions.

Studies on the Perceptions of Non-disabled Students about Disabled Students

I identified three studies by music education researchers that considered the opinions of non-disabled students about the participation of disabled students in instrumental music. Underlying each of these studies was the assumption that students with disabilities must be socially accepted by non-disabled peers in order to participate successfully in instrumental music ensembles.

Darrow and Johnson (1994) studied the attitudes of instrumental, choral, and piano students who attended three summer music camps located at a Midwestern university campus. Unfortunately, the researchers did not report the number of students to whom they administered the questionnaire, making it impossible to discern a return rate and judge the external validity of the study. They did report, however, that 752 students completed the questionnaire and that 699 respondents (424 junior high school and 275 senior high school students from 19 states) completed the questionnaire correctly (p. 271). The study had two main purposes: to assess the students' attitudes towards disabled

people and to expand the existing literature by examining both junior and senior high school students' attitudes towards particular disability groups.

The subjects completed a 75-item questionnaire called the Disability Factor Scale (DFS) developed by Siller et al. (1967) to measure non-disabled students' attitudes towards disabled students. This questionnaire requires non-disabled subjects to rate their level of comfort with nine different disabilities: visible scars, heart conditions, deafness, amputation, physical deformity, cancer, epilepsy, paralysis, and blindness. Darrow and Johnson (1994) adapted the DFS slightly to include questions about Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS). According to Darrow and Johnson, the DFS provided adequate validity and reliability, although no supporting data were offered.

The researchers analyzed questionnaire responses for differences between gender groups, age, and grade level (junior or senior high school). They also analyzed the data for differences among ensembles (choir, band, or orchestra) and instrument family (voice, brass, etc.).

Though they found no significant differences by age, the researchers found that senior high students demonstrated more positive attitudes toward the disabilities than junior high students (p. 73). A t -test of independent means revealed statistically significant differences ($p < .05$) between the student groups in their attitudes about five disabilities, including blindness (p. 73).

When analyzing for differences between gender groups, researchers found that females consistently demonstrated a more positive attitude than males (p. 74). With respect to blindness, a t -test of independent means revealed a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) between gender groups (p. 74).

Students were asked to indicate their willingness to associate with members from the ten disability groups presented. A rank-ordering of students' preferences reflected the following: all students consistently ranked blind students as the group they were least willing to associate with (p. 74). A Friedman two-way analysis of variance produced a Kendall coefficient of concordance of .004 (p. 74). A Friedman two-way analysis of variance is a statistical tool used to analyze the variance among items' places in rank order (Kendall, 1982, p. 77). The Kendall coefficient of concordance is used to report the statistical significance of the ranking. A coefficient less than or equal to .05 is considered to be significant (Kendall, 1982, p. 104).

Though, initially, this study appeared to have no implications for music education specifically as opposed to education in general, it offered one insight important to the present research. It was interesting to note the degree to which music ensemble participants demonstrated reluctance to associate with peers who were blind or visually impaired. This finding challenged the notion that music education is necessarily fertile ground for growing the social skills of this group of students.

In a later study, Johnson and Darrow (1997) specifically investigated non-disabled students' attitudes toward the participation of disabled students in band, approaching the problem somewhat differently. In this study, the researchers investigated the effect of viewing five videotaped examples of disabled students successfully participating in band on the attitudes of non-disabled students. The videotape featured examples of students with sensory disabilities as well as students with other types of disabilities. The term "sensory disabilities" usually references students who are either blind, visually impaired, deaf, or hard of hearing.

The study sample included 152 elementary, 387 middle, and 218 high school band students from 15 different schools. Subjects provided information on the following: (a) demographics; (b) their level of experience in classes that included students with disabilities; and (c) their attitudes toward the participation of disabled students in band class. This third section was further divided into four subscales: Inclusion, Comfort, Efficiency, and Procedural. The Inclusion subscale contained statements such as “Students with disabilities should have a band class of their own” (p. 177). The Comfort subscale included statements such as “A student with a disability would be accepted as a member of our band” (p. 177). The Efficiency subscale included items such as “Students who have disabilities would probably slow the progress of the band” (p. 177). Finally, the Procedural subscale included statements such as “Students who have disabilities should have to audition to be in the band like other students” (p. 177).

Using a Solomon Four experimental design, Johnson and Darrow (1997) collected data under the following conditions: (a) 196 subjects completed a pre-test questionnaire, watched a 30-minute videotape of students with a variety of disabilities performing successfully in bands, and completed a post-test; (b) 223 subjects completed the pre-test and post-test questionnaire without viewing the videotape; (c) 173 students viewed the videotape and completed the post-test questionnaire; (d) 165 subjects completed the post-test questionnaire only.

Pilot test results yielded a high overall reliability rating of 0.87. The researchers reported high reliability ratings of 0.86 for the Inclusion subscale, 0.70 for the Comfort subscale, 0.78 for the Efficiency subscale, and a low reliability rating of 0.22 for the Procedural subscale (p. 177).

The researchers reported a statistically significant difference ($p < .001$) in attitudinal improvement toward disabled peers between students who viewed the videotape and those who did not view the videotape (p. 178). A follow-up survey was administered six weeks after the post-test. Data revealed less positive attitudes on three subscales: Inclusion, Comfort, and Efficiency. The results on the Efficiency subscale were statistically significant ($p < .001$) (p. 180-181). The Procedural subscale yielded a low reliability coefficient and hence no further analysis was performed.

Consistent with their 1994 findings, Johnson and Darrow observed that female students demonstrated more positive responses regarding disabled students than male students on the following subscales: Inclusion ($p < .000$), comfort ($p < .000$), and efficiency ($p < .000$) (p. 178). Surprising to the researchers, older students did not consistently demonstrate more positive responses than younger students. Elementary school students, for example, were more positive than middle school students or high school students on the Inclusion and Comfort subscales, though they were the least positive age group on the procedural subscale (p. 180). Senior high students were the most positive age group on the efficiency and procedural subscales (p. 179), while middle school students were the least positive group on the comfort, inclusion, and efficiency subscales (p. 180).

In this study, specific implications for music education were clear. It was commendable to investigate the efficacy of an intervention such as videotaped disability sensitivity training that takes place in music education settings. In reviewing the study, questions arose. What, for example, constituted "successful participation" on the part of

the disabled students? Additionally, were there data from other areas of research that suggested that videotaped sensitivity training is effective?

Colwell (1998) also focused on the attitudes of non-disabled instrumental music students toward the participation of disabled students in band. She identified the following two purposes for her investigation: (a) to assess elementary band students' attitudes toward people with disabilities and (b) to compare strategies for altering negative attitudes.

Like Darrow and Johnson (1994), Colwell (1998) used the adapted version of the Disability Factor Scale (DFS) in her study. Of the 104 questionnaires administered, 95 usable surveys were collected.

Data were collected under four different conditions. Students at School A (33 subjects) completed the DFS, participated in band rehearsals for one week, and then completed the DFS once again. Students at School B (25 subjects) completed the survey. Then, one day prior to answering the survey questions again, these students watched a 15-minute videotape of students with various disabilities (including visual impairment). The videotape illustrated disabled students participating in individual, small ensemble, and large ensemble music experiences. Students from School C (24 subjects) completed the DFS. Next, one day prior to completing the DFS again, these students viewed the videotape. In addition, they were offered a very brief explanation of the nature of the students' disabilities featured on the videotape. The survey administrator said, for example: "This excerpt is of a nine year old boy with a severe visual impairment" (p. 25). Finally, students at School D (13 subjects) completed the DFS. Then, one day prior to a second administration of the survey, these students viewed the videotape and listened to

descriptions of the disabled students along with a positive qualifier: “This excerpt is of a nine year old boy with a severe visual impairment successfully participating in music” (p. 25).

Similar to the students in the Darrow and Johnson studies, the students in Colwell’s (1998) investigation identified themselves as largely uncomfortable around someone who is blind or visually impaired, providing a group mean of 3.71 ($SD = .61$) (p. 26). This mean score was the third lowest mean among a collection of mean scores ranging from 3.19 for epilepsy to 4.50 for visible scars. Also like the Darrow and Johnson findings, Colwell’s subjects responded most favorably to students with visible scars and hidden disabilities. When analyzed by gender, results indicated that females demonstrated significantly greater acceptance of only two disability groups: individuals with paralysis ($p < .05$) and students with physical deformities ($p < .01$) (p. 26).

Two groups demonstrated increased mean scores in their second test. However, the increase in scores was not statistically significant. The groups included the following: School B (students who only viewed the videotape) and School D (students who viewed the video and were instructed about the successful participation of disabled students) (p. 26). School C (students who only received a brief explanation of the disability featured in the videotape) demonstrated decreased mean scores that were not statistically significant (p. 26).

Colwell's (1998) study was not intended to offer a definitive prescription for modifying the negative attitudes of students towards their disabled peers. Based on trends in the data, it appeared that merely raising the awareness about the participation of students with disabilities in music classes has a generalized positive affect on students'

perceptions. Secondly, students responded positively to the proactive prompting of the investigator, as in the case of School D. On the other hand, it appeared that providing a brief description of a student's disability, as in the case of School C, only served to buttress the prejudice of students toward their disabled peers. For the purposes of the present study, two clarifications would have been helpful: what constituted a "severe visual impairment" and what defined "successful participation" in band by disabled students. Perhaps this lack of clarity coupled with a low sample size accounted for the absence of statistical significance in the data.

In two of the three studies immediately under consideration, interestingly, subjects consistently indicated that they felt uncomfortable with people who are blind or visually impaired. Because the researchers did not ask questions about students' actual experience with disabled people, one cannot discern the extent to which the subjects were providing answers to hypothetical questions. According to many research methodology texts, answering hypothetical questions poses a threat to construct validity (Arksey & Knight, 1999).

It is noteworthy, however, that so many students indicated a generalized level of discomfort with blind and visually impaired students. If students are unwilling to associate with blind students, it may follow that disabled students are motivated to participate in music education by the pursuit of music-making experiences rather than by social factors. Overall, it also may follow that their quality of experience depends largely on: (a) their ability to develop their own strategies for learning the music; (b) the intervention of someone other than peers in their music learning; and (c) a low level of interest in social connection. If peers do assist blind students in band and orchestra

classes, they may assist despite their own discomfort. On the other hand, non-disabled students who assist blind students may be among the few who are comfortable in the company of someone who is blind or visually impaired. In the present study, I sought to explore these issues by conducting in-depth interviews with blind and visually impaired students.

Studies of Disabled Students' Experiences in School

A minimal number of music education studies about disabled students' perceptions of their experiences in music classes emerged in my investigation of research literature. Lapka (2005) was the only report that offered an empirical analysis considering this line of questioning.

In another study, Luxton (2001) sought to understand the perspective of one of his own students who had multiple disabilities included in music class. The teacher/researcher's stated purpose was to develop a deeper understanding of disabled students' academic, social, physiological, and psychological needs by investigating the experiences of one special needs student, Brook, a ten-year-old third grade girl with mental, physical, and speech/language disabilities. Though interested in Brook's perspective, in truth, Luxton documented his own perspective as well as the perspectives of other people in the classroom culture. He employed audiotape and videotape to record Brook's actions, comments, and participation in music making. He also interviewed selected peers, Brook's aide, her resource room instructor, her classroom teacher, her parents, and additional figures responsible for her public school education. Though each of these procedures may have offered interesting opportunities to view Brook's

participation in class, they did not provide the reader access to her perspective. Acquiring Brook's perspective would have entailed a direct discussion of some kind with Brook, not interpretations of her behavior.

Lapka (2005) conducted a case study of a high school band in which students with disabilities were included. The researcher's specific questions centered around the following topics: (a) initiation of the inclusion process; (b) implementation of the process; (c) details about sustaining the process; (d) the development of relationships between disabled and non-disabled ensemble members; and (e) the presence of inclusion issues raised in the music education research literature in the context under investigation. As part of her study, Lapka elicited the perceptions of ensemble members with disabilities about their experiences in band class. This aspect of her work is most relevant to the present study and will be the focus of this summary.

The high school in which Lapka conducted her investigation was located in a rural area of the Midwest. Of the 243 members of the student body, 29 participated in the band at the time of the study. Of the 29 band members, 14 were identified as individuals with disabilities. Eight students were enrolled in the school's "advantage" class, a program for individuals with mental disabilities. In addition, five students with learning disabilities participated in band.

The researcher conducted observations and focus group interviews with students, parents, and faculty members over a 3 month period. She organized student focus groups by instrument families, including the parents of students with disabilities as part of each session. Because all ensemble members from the "advantage" class were assigned to percussion instruments, performers on brass and percussion instruments participated in

the same focus group. This measure avoided the virtual segregation of disabled and non-disabled students in focus groups.

Following these interviews, Lapka involved each participant in a process of member checking in order to insure the validity of her findings. Next, the researcher coded the data and uncovered the following recurring themes: (a) initiate, (b) collaborate and communicate, (c) respect/value special education teacher, (d) respect/value band director, (e) adaptations and accommodations, (f) attitude and values, (g) discipline, (h) socialization, (i) student learning, and (j) teaching methods/instruction (p. 80).

The opportunity for disabled students to participate in the band developed initially through informal communication between the band director, who was confronted with a shortage of percussionists in his ensemble, and the special education teacher, who was constantly seeking inclusion opportunities for her students. As they considered possible approaches to involving disabled students in band, the two teachers discovered a mutual commitment to what was described by the special education teacher as a “Realistic” process of inclusion (p. 136).

The researcher observed that the inclusion process, in this particular context, was sustained by the presence of several factors. First, the two teachers reported having ample time to communicate (p. 136). Second, both teachers participated in developing adaptations that facilitated disabled students’ learning. The special education teacher, for example, edited her students’ ensemble parts with colored markers to support their understanding of printed music notation. The band director adopted alternatives to standard conducting gestures, for example, closing his hand into a complete fist to indicate a cut-off (p. 155-157).

An additional factor contributing to the continuation of the process involved the extent to which non-disabled students demonstrated positive feelings about the participation of colleagues with disabilities. In focus groups, non-disabled students spoke appreciatively about how inclusion had provided benefits to the ensemble. As evidence, they noted external rewards such as higher ratings at contests and festivals. In addition, they identified improvements in ensemble process. Because ensemble members with disabilities were performing on percussion instruments for instance, non-disabled students were no longer reassigned from their chosen instrument to the percussion section (p. 136).

Students with disabilities also expressed positive perceptions about inclusion in band class. When asked to identify what they had learned in band, individuals with disabilities discussed playing a musical instrument; understanding note values; and performing favorite songs (p. 164).

The “advantage” students reported positive feelings about the ways two individuals, the special education teacher and the percussion section leader, assisted them in band. The percussion section leader was described by this group of ensemble members as “funny,” “a good guy,” and “cheerful.” One “advantage” participant spoke specifically about how he and his colleagues were supported in musical entrances during rehearsals and performances by their section leader’s practice of cuing them (p. 160).

Students with disabilities also discussed the ways the special education teacher supported their participation in instrumental music. Personal assistance with instrumental music writing and reading assignments were among the recognized assistive measures (p. 155).

Regarding social interaction, the researcher determined that interchanges between non-disabled and disabled band members were restricted to the school setting. It did not appear, however, that “advantage” students were necessarily troubled by this pattern. When asked about friends in band, for example, one “advantage” student’s response was “Yes, I know everybody in there” (p. 132).

Lapka offered specific types of observations that were particularly relevant to the present study. Though the researcher did not employ sociocultural theory directly, she uncovered trends that align with this philosophical perspective. In her study, for example, the intervention of individuals without disabilities emerged as important in the experiences of students with disabilities. The non-disabled individuals, in a sociocultural framework could be viewed as “tools” which were accessed by the students with disabilities. Additionally, in Lapka’s study, alternative signs were employed as “tools” to engage learners with disabilities. The band director and the percussion section leader used alternatives to standard conducting gestures to cue students with disabilities during rehearsals and performances. Lapka was able to understand the degree to which students with disabilities in her study valued these accommodations when she interacted directly with these individuals in focus group interviews. In the present study, I focused entirely on the stories of students with disabilities in an effort to gain more of this information.

Researchers in a variety of other areas of education have engaged in discourse with disabled students about their perceptions of their experiences in schools where mainstreaming or full-inclusion was practiced. Despite few examples of disability-specific interview protocols to guide them, these researchers have uncovered important

findings. In at least one study, Burgener (2006), sociocultural theory was selected as a framework for interpreting the information obtained from the study participants.

Burgener investigated how students with learning disabilities, along with parents and key school officials, perceived communication surrounding the process of transitioning students from receiving special education services to education and work beyond high school. Though she began the study with several specific research questions, over time, the focus of Burgener's inquiry became the manner in which communication and initiation of transition services in one reputable program for students with learning disabilities was undertaken among "key stake holders." In addition, she investigated the extent to which the transition process was affected by forces beyond the classroom. The aspect of Burgener's work that was most relevant to the present study was the information she elicited from informants about their experiences in regular education classes.

The setting for Burgener's study was a secondary school language arts transition class. The high school in which the class was located was reputed for successfully facilitating the transitions of students with learning disabilities from public school into college, prevocational, and vocational settings. The researcher conducted classroom observations and individual interviews; reviewed student records and "communication journals;" and administered a questionnaire to each of the individuals invested in the transition processes of four students. Data collection occurred between September 2005 and January 2006.

Four themes, commonly present in discussions of sociocultural theory, emerged in Burgener's study. The concept of distributed learning was apparent in classroom

characteristics and processes that were designed to equalize power between the teacher and the students. Allowing students to work without assigned seats at long tables rather than desks and promoting discussion were two practices that demonstrated this idea (p. 95-98).

Using the process of solving problems as a way of knowing was a second method that emerged in the data. When the teacher proposed that the class consider how she and her students could assist survivors of Hurricane Katrina, for example, she modeled thinking aloud as a strategy students could use to arrive at an answer. (p. 110-116).

The third theme, transfer of control, was present in the extent to which the teacher emphasized natural consequences for behavior rather than teacher controlled outcomes such as grades. On one class project, for instance, each student had a role in developing a grant proposal to purchase heart defibrillators. The proposal included plans for training with this equipment in hopes that students might transfer this skill to work beyond high school. Students who did not fulfill their obligations jeopardized the project for everyone in the class. The group members, therefore, appeared to exercise diligence communicating issues and keeping each other on task (p. 116-117).

The fourth theme, the one most relevant to the present study, highlighted the degree to which students need opportunities to express thoughts and concerns. In the case of Burgener's study, among the issues they raised was the extent to which they preferred the special education transition class over regular mainstream settings (p. 122). When referencing this program, they spoke about feeling "valued." In addition, they testified to learning more academic material, receiving more effective assistance, and appreciating the freedom to work at a slower or self-regulated pace (p. 131-135). Burgener also

discerned that a positive relationship between the student and the teacher appeared key in promoting a successful transition (p. 194).

Burgener's study was valuable, in light of the present study, because of the researcher's use of sociocultural theory. A theme that arose in Burgener's work as well as the present study was the need to talk and express. In addition, relationships with teachers emerged as important "tools" in the school experiences of students with disabilities in both studies.

Burgener's study participants reflected many of the same views expressed by individuals with disabilities participating in previous studies. Lovitt, Plavin, and Cushing (1999) conducted a three-year investigation of mainstreaming and full-inclusion issues in curriculum and instruction. They interviewed 54 students and surveyed 231 students with a variety of disabilities from one private and five public high schools in the Puget Sound area. The 54 interview informants and 231 survey respondents were representative of the 501 students with disabilities from the six schools. These study participants included a mix of males and females as well as a variety of grade levels and diploma programs.

The researchers asked the students about their perceptions of a wide range of topics including curricular and extracurricular offerings, special education service provisions, learning strategies, and evaluation procedures. To understand curricular offerings for students with disabilities, they triangulated the interview data with the class schedules of all of the students interviewed and with the schedules of 345 students who were not interviewed. The investigators also inquired about the students' understanding of parental and teacher involvement in their education. Additionally, participants were asked

about their Individualized Education Plan (IEP), their in-school as well as post-school goals, and their understanding of graduation policies.

From the wealth of statistical data and interview excerpts provided in this study, two themes emerged regarding the perception of disabled students in this setting: difficulty interacting with non-disabled peers and difficulty articulating and understanding the academic and social expectations placed upon them.

Nearly one half (25 out of 52) of the students interviewed offered unsolicited comments about their relationship with non-disabled peers (p. 76). Fifteen of these 25 students provided comments describing instances of harassment and degradation from non-disabled peers. Students actively distanced themselves from classes or activities with the label “special.” Some students viewed “special” as code for derogatory terms like “stupid” or “dumb” (p. 76).

In discussing expectations placed upon them, students generally demonstrated a lack of understanding as to what they were to accomplish in special education. Of the 162 students surveyed, only 23 were able to write an approximate or exact IEP goal when asked (p. 71). Similarly, of the 54 students interviewed, only 8 were able to write one of their IEP goals (p. 71).

This study painted a discouraging picture of the extent to which students with disabilities benefit from mainstreaming or full-inclusion programs. Nearly a quarter of the students interviewed expressed poor relations with peers, and few students were able to articulate their IEP goals. As mentioned in the first three sections of this literature review, disabled students’ IEP goals in music class often focus on the development of social skills rather than on musical achievement. Based on data from this study, however,

social skills development did not occur for many of the students with disabilities in the settings under investigation.

Habel, Bloom, Ray, and Bacon (1999) investigated: the school experiences of students who had or were at-risk for having behavior disorders and these students' suggestions for improving the school environment. The authors conducted individual and small group interviews. The informants were thirteen boys and four girls in grades five through twelve from two elementary, one middle school, and one high school in two rural districts. In their efforts to encourage the informants to talk freely, researchers explained that the school administration had appointed them to a school advisory committee in order to elicit feedback on their experience.

As a frame for analyzing data, researchers chose the four categories or "spirits" of "The Circle of Courage," which the researchers described as a Native American approach to building community often used in schools and mental health facilities (p. 94). The authors constructed their interview questions around the four spirits of the circle: Belonging, Mastery, Independence, and Generosity. When inquiring about Belonging, for example, the researchers asked, "Can you think of a time that you really belonged at school?" (p. 95). The investigators probed for rich descriptions by further asking, "What was that like?" (p. 95) or "How did you feel when that happened?" (p. 95). Then, two researchers read each transcript separately, compared findings, and reached agreement about the statements which best described the students' experiences.

The researchers found that the data fell into three categories: (a) students' self-perceptions relative to each of the spirits of the Circle of Courage; (b) students' perceptions of how the school community encouraged each of the spirits; and (c)

students' perceptions of how the school community discouraged each of the spirits (p. 99).

Based on data obtained, one of the most noteworthy themes was the degree to which students indicated that they felt isolated from peers, faculty, and staff (p. 101). The researchers argued that, in order for these students to develop a sense of belonging, the school would need to take active measures to assist them in developing relationships with peers. In addition, students consistently expressed an inability to develop any sense of academic mastery (p. 101). The students and the researchers attributed these feelings to curricula that were not sufficiently challenging coupled with the inability of regular classroom teachers to present material using strategies that engaged the students' learning styles (p. 102). The researchers posited that the combination of few social connections and low academic achievement aggravated the already difficult situations facing the disabled students. The single factor that appeared important in keeping these students in school was the level of connection they felt with their special education teacher (p. 103).

This study, like the one by Lovitt et al., underscored the problem of social isolation among students with disabilities in typical school settings. It also revealed the frustration students feel with their low academic achievement. Though the researchers do not suggest a causal relationship between social isolation and low academic achievement, one wonders about the extent to which unfulfilled needs for social connection impact the academic performance of students with disabilities. Lastly, the study documents the important role played by the special education teacher in encouraging students to attend school on a consistent basis.

Bursuck, Munk, and Olson (1999) surveyed and interviewed students in order to more specifically identify the academic concerns of disabled students. Their research purposes were threefold: (a) to assess the perceptions of high school students regarding widely used grading adaptations made for students with learning disabilities; (b) to uncover the factors (i.e., grade level or achievement level) that might influence these perceptions; and (c) to reveal the students' views as to which grading adaptation practices were most acceptable.

The 275 participants came from a Midwestern suburban high school with a total population of 2,034 students. Fifteen of the 275 participants had received a diagnosis of a learning disability. Eighteen percent of the student body comprised the various minority populations of the school and 1.3% came from low socio-economic backgrounds. The researchers obtained a cross-section of grade levels: freshmen (26%); sophomores (27%); juniors (24%); and seniors (24%). The participants' academic achievement also divided across four strata: (a) 19% had a grade point average (GPA) of 2.0 or lower; (b) 35% had a GPA from 2.0 to 2.99; (c) 26% had a GPA from 3.0 to 3.74; and (d) 21% had a GPA from 3.75 to 4.55 (p. 86). Of the 15 participants with learning disabilities, there were 7 freshmen, 5 sophomores, and 2 seniors. One student with a learning disability did not report a grade level. Their mean grade point average was 1.43, ranging from 0.05 to 2.44 (p. 86).

The researchers of this study developed a survey instrument entitled "Ideas About Report Card Changes." The survey was developed by adapting items from instruments previously used for studies on testing and homework adaptations for disabled students. Survey items probed opinions on grading policies (adaptations) such as the following: (a)

awarding grades based on improvement in addition to achievement and (b) awarding grades independently for effort and achievement. Other choices in this section included awarding more credit for more academically challenging classes versus awarding all classes the same number of credits. In the final section of the survey, students were asked to comment on which grading practices they conceived to be the “the most fair” and why.

Results from cross tabulations of data provided important insight into the use of grading adaptations and the determination of a student's grade point average. Chi-square analyses yielded statistically significant differences between the opinions of disabled and non-disabled students on the following three grading options: (a) elevating some students' grades based on improvement ($p < .05$); (b) weighing criteria for the report card grade differently for certain students ($p = .05$); and (c) using different grading scales for certain students ($p = .001$) (p. 92). Disabled students were more likely to favor each of the aforementioned options. In the area of GPA calculation, students with learning disabilities were significantly more likely to feel that awarding the same amount of credit for all classes was fair ($p < .01$) (p. 89-90).

An interesting finding from this study was the degree to which disabled and non-disabled students differed in their views about how grades should be calculated. The comparison of vastly differing cell sizes in cross tabulation provided for a weak statistical operation. However, it was striking that disabled students consistently desired greater recognition of effort as a factor in determining the GPA.

A review of the research literature about blindness and visual impairment revealed only one study in which investigators asked students with visual disabilities to comment on their educational experiences. Higgins (1999) had two purposes for her

study: (a) to investigate the perceptions of blind children and adults about their experiences with orientation and mobility (O-M) lessons in the New Zealand school system and (b) to investigate the effects of O-M training on the lives of blind and visually impaired people.

Higgins conducted multiple semi-structured interviews with 6 blind adults (three women and three men) and 4 blind children (two girls and two boys). The parents of the four children who were blind (four mothers and one father) were also interviewed. All of the ten blind participants used Braille. The student participants came from the following school settings: (a) a residential school for students with visual disabilities; (b) a standard school located near the residential school for visually impaired students; (c) a standard school with a resource program for blind and visually impaired students; and (d) a standard school with an itinerant O-M instructor. All participants were recruited casually through conversation with the researcher.

Higgins analyzed the data inductively, observing common trends among each informant's interview transcripts. She also formed a discussion group of two blind individuals and a parent of a blind child. This group assisted the researcher by either concurring with interpretation of the interview data or by offering alternative perspectives.

The five common trends identified by Higgins from her study were as follows: (a) O-M training was important but often not available; (b) some O-M instructors were effective, while others were ineffective; (c) blind students were stigmatized mostly by their use of a white cane and from their dependence on other people for mobility rather than from being released from class in order to attend O-M training; (d) restricting blind

students from physically moving exacerbated their disability; and (e) learning was best when O-M was taught by O-M certified instructors (p. 565).

Other interesting insights were offered. Results challenged the assumption that being removed from class for special instruction is a socially stigmatizing event. In addition, participants spoke aggressively to the need for relevance in mobility assignments. Another important issue was finding non-punitive measures for maintaining the physical safety of blind students.

An important shortcoming of this study was the small number of school-age participants. Though it may have been interesting to note the degree to which informants' perceptions differed across age groups, Higgins could have offered more insight into the perspectives of students at the time of her study by recruiting more informants who were enrolled in school. This action would have allowed her the opportunity to represent this particular disability group more deeply.

Allan (1999) addressed the punitive nature of special education and included two blind students in her study of eleven disabled children who were mainstreamed in Scottish schools. Her research questions focused on the following: the constraints placed upon disabled students in Scottish public schools and how disabled students resisted and contested the power exerted on them by school influences like teachers and peers. Through interviews with the disabled students, their peers, and teachers, Allan obtained data that she subsequently analyzed using Foucault's "box of tools." A brief discussion of Foucault's "box of tools," a phrase denoting the philosopher's collection of analytical strategies, is hereby offered in order to illustrate the applicability of Foucault's theory to

Allan's research. Note that this summary is taken from Allan's description of Foucault's theory rather than directly from the philosopher's writings.

According to Allan, Foucault wrote widely about the social construction and subsequent oppression of various marginalized segments of society. In his writings, he outlined the following three central phases or processes of his theory: archeology, genealogy, and ethics. Foucault defined archeology as a phase in which one organized a chronology of statements that physicians had provided in documents like medical charts and records. Through these statements, the philosopher believed that it was possible to observe the sequence that physicians followed as they began defining patients by their abnormalities (p. 20). In the genealogy phase, Foucault advocated examining the techniques used by institutions like prisons to maintain power over the individuals who were subject to their authority. He argued that, in developing these techniques, institution officials also developed realms of power and knowledge that they used to define individuals under their supervision as "other" (p. 20). In the ethics phase, Foucault advocated observing how politically marginalized populations defy social authority to gain specific rights. More importantly, however, the philosopher believed that resisting social authority provided individuals in these groups the opportunity to ascribe new identities for themselves (p. 24).

Within each phase, Foucault (1977) encouraged researchers to observe for specific notions. Two of his notions, *transgression* and *governmentality*, emerged as significant in Allan's (1999) study. Foucault described transgression as contesting limitations and boundaries constructed by those in authority (p. 47). He defined

governmentality as a tension between the desires of the subjugated and the prescriptions for rehabilitation or recovery developed by their authority figures (p. 47).

In her study, Allan (1999) discovered numerous examples of transgression and governmentality. The experiences of two students with visual disabilities provided examples most relevant to the present study. In both cases, the students demonstrated transgression by refusing to use a white cane in their personal mobility. In an effort to appear "normal," they preferred to walk without a cane even if doing so meant occasionally stumbling or even falling (p. 49). These students' teachers provided the opposing tension, which contributed to an example of governmentality. In the teachers' judgments, the students were not only refusing to use technologies like the white cane, they were refusing to accept their actual disabilities which could necessitate additional clinical interventions such as psychological counseling (p. 58).

Of enormous importance to the present study, Allan (1999) observed that the extent to which students with disabilities were included in the typical classroom culture depended largely on the willingness of non-disabled students to accept them. Describing non-disabled students as "gatekeepers" in the inclusion process, Allan observed that students without disabilities encouraged full inclusion by their willingness to assist with academic tasks, play, and other aspects of school life (p. 111-112). Paradoxically, non-disabled students also inhibited the process of inclusion with their tacit efforts to "socially construct" disabled students. Non-disabled students, for example, regularly weighed the options and reasons for including a disabled student in a given activity, demonstrating that issues of governmentality emerge between non-disabled and disabled students as well as between disabled students and their teachers (p. 112).

Allan's study was especially relevant to the present research because of her identification of the extent to which non-disabled students served as gatekeepers in the inclusion process of individuals with disabilities. In the present study, it was interesting to observe how, or if, "gate keeping" manifested itself differently in the context of instrumental music class.

In examining the studies reviewed in this section, social isolation emerged as a concern for disabled students in four studies. Allan's (1999) study was particularly revealing because she uncovered the powerful role of the non-disabled peer in simultaneously encouraging and discouraging the inclusion process. Interestingly, in the music education study cited, Lapka (2006), social isolation did not appear to be as problematic. In Lapka's study, the researcher could have asked more questions of participants with disabilities to understand their experiences of social connection with peers. However, this area of enquiry was not the primary focus of her study.

With respect to the area of academic achievement, there were no discernable trends across the studies. In two studies, however, disabled students expressed concerns about academic performance. The findings of Bursuck et al. (1999) suggested that disabled students believe more strongly than non-disabled students that effort should be considered when calculating grade point averages. Data revealed, however, that general school culture delineated the concept of effort from that of academic mastery. The results of Habel et al. (1999) demonstrated that, at least among their study participants, students felt incapable of attaining academic mastery. In the present study, I examined the extent to which disabled students perceived both the willing assistance of their non-disabled

peers and “extra effort” on their part as contributing factors in positive educational experiences.

Summary

Music educators began providing a wealth of pedagogical suggestions for teaching students with disabilities shortly after the passage of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1974. Some of these suggestions appeared in monographs either written or edited by scholars who possessed especially high levels of experience and training with these students. Other suggestions emanated from research studies in the discipline focusing on teachers’ perceptions of mainstreaming and full-inclusion. Later studies investigated non-disabled students’ ideas about the participation of peers with disabilities in instrumental music ensembles.

Though these publications have limitations, readers can observe some important trends. First, though the authors of the various monographs generally advocated for an emphasis on music learning for students with disabilities in music class, the research studies considering teacher perceptions indicated that socialization was often the principal reason for mainstreaming these young people into music. What was not clear, however, was the degree to which students with disabilities expressed social motivations for participating in music or even understood that socialization was an expectation associated with their enrollment in such classes.

Another clearly observable theme was the degree to which music teachers received little support for mainstreaming and full-inclusion from other school officials. Even so, many of the teachers participating in the aforementioned investigations served

students with disabilities. What was not possible to understand, however, was exactly how instruction and assessment were provided.

In the three studies of non-disabled students' perceptions of students with disabilities, one trend of particular relevance to the present study emerged. Non-disabled students consistently listed blind or visually impaired students as the individuals with whom they felt least comfortable. In light of the present study, this result was striking because it suggested that band or orchestra members who were blind or visually impaired consistently reported difficulties developing social connection with peers in these ensembles.

Negative student reports about mainstreaming and full-inclusion were evident in more recent studies from other areas of education. In these investigations, researchers obtained the perspectives of individuals with disabilities. The theme of social isolation was clearly the most pronounced trend in these studies. Allan (1999) addressed this phenomenon pointedly, revealing the non-disabled students' roles as "gatekeepers" of the inclusion process. In one music education study, however, Lapka (2005), students with disabilities did not indicate dissatisfactions with social connection. It is important to note, however, that Lapka did not consider the experiences of students who were blind or visually impaired.

Upon reviewing these studies, readers can observe that, though many of the experience based recommendations proposed by music educators for serving students with disabilities may be effective, few, if any, are based on research that explores the degree to which students find the strategies in question helpful. Moreover, though opportunities for socialization may develop for students with disabilities in music classes,

there is little to no research that provides an understanding of the nature of the social opportunities or the students' perspectives about such opportunities. Furthermore, there is scant to no data that enables music educators to understand the degree to which disabled students' motivations for participation in music class differs from the motivations expressed by individuals without disabilities. There is, however, reason to believe that students who are blind or visually impaired struggle with socialization more than many other groups of students with disabilities. In the fourth chapter of this report I will detail the literature that highlights non-disabled students' motivations for participation in instrumental music and compare the data from those investigations with the results from the present study. I will provide results related to the questions of useful learning strategies and social connection in the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of this dissertation.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

Overview of the study

For the present study, I followed the procedures outlined in this section in order to investigate the following research question: What are the reported experiences of secondary school blind or visually impaired students enrolled in instrumental music classes? Specifically: (a) How do the motivations for participation in instrumental music of blind and visually impaired students compare to what is known from research about sighted students' motivations for participation in these classes? (b) To what extent, if any, does the ability to develop their own strategies for learning affect the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music classes? (c) To what extent is the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music related to the intervention or assistance of other people? (d) To what extent do blind or visually impaired secondary school students' perceptions of social connectedness determine the quality of their experiences in instrumental music classes?

To understand the experiences of blind or visually impaired instrumental music students, I interviewed these individuals regarding the following: (a) their motivations for participation in band or orchestra; (b) their strategies for participation; (c) the extent to which other people assist them in their participation; and (d) the extent to which

feelings of social connectedness contribute to their instrumental music experience. I coded the data into categories that corresponded to the research questions.

Informants

The participants in this study were United States high school students who were blind or visually impaired and were participating in their school band or orchestra. Because of the anticipated difficulty locating informants, I undertook several steps to determine if enough potential informants could be located before completing the development of the research proposal. I sent electronic mail messages to state curriculum consultants in charge of music curriculum and printed letters to state consultants in charge of curriculum for visually impaired students. I also posted a message on the national electronic bulletin board for the Association for Rehabilitation and Education of the Blind (AER) and on the list serve of the association of Parents of Blind Children (Appendix A). This method of locating informants is known as chain, snowball, or network sampling (Merriam, 1998, p. 63). It is the most common method of sampling in case study research and is customarily used in interview research (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Weiss, 1994).

Initially, the aforementioned individuals and organizations assisted me in identifying 18 potential informants. These 18 individuals were located in the following ways: (a) letters to state coordinators of vision education (5 potential informants); (b) email messages to state consultants for music education (8 potential informants); (c) email announcements on the list serve of Parents of Blind Children (5 potential informants). Because state consultants for music education had no access to the numbers

of potential informants for this study in their states, many forwarded the announcement of this research to interested parties on their email lists. Seven of the eight potential informants provided by state music education consultants came from the National Resource Center for Blind Musicians in Connecticut. Though the resource center is located in Connecticut, the students resided in a variety of states. Three identified individuals had participated in the National Resource Center's summer institute for young blind musicians. Four potential informants had become affiliated with the resource center through contacts with a friend of the center such as a music teacher or Braille music transcriber.

Upon completing the research proposal, I began contacting the potential informants. Of the 18 potential informants, only 1 individual was still able to participate. I therefore undertook a second attempt to identify potential informants. During this second attempt, I began by contacting the agencies and organizations that had indicated affiliation with potential informants. In addition, I contacted the following organizations listed as resources with the National Resource Center for Blind Musicians: the American Council of the Blind, the Braille Music List (BrailleM) internet mailing list, Dancing Dots Braille Music Technology, Friends in Art, Hadley School for the Blind, LRS (Library Reproduction Service), Midi-mag Internet Mailing List, Music Education Network for the Visually Impaired, the United States Association of Blind Athletes, the American Foundation for the Blind, and the National Federation of the Blind. In addition, a letter was sent to the coordinator of STARS (Social, Therapeutic and Recreational Services) at the Center for the Visually Impaired in Atlanta Georgia. This program is an on-going year-round youth program for blind and visually impaired school age young

people. This series of requests for study participants provided 11 informants who learned of the study from the following organizations: (a) the Center for the Visually Impaired in Atlanta, Georgia (5 informants), (b) the National Resource Center for Blind Musicians (1 informant), and (c) the American Foundation for the Blind (5 informants). A short biography of each informant appears at the end of this chapter.

Data Collection

I contacted the parent/guardian of each potential primary informant via the telephone or electronic mail to provide details of the study, confirm each student's involvement in the study, and request selected demographic information. The details of the study discussed included a brief explanation of the study purpose, the expected time commitment of the informant in the first interview (approximately two hours), and the expected nature of any follow-up interviews. Demographics included family contact information, student's grade level, and student's chosen band/orchestra instrument (Appendix B). This information enabled me to insure the extent to which potential informants were qualified to participate in the study. Criteria for participation in the study included the following: (a) potential informants must be blind or visually impaired; (b) they must be residing in the United States of America; (c) they must have two years of experience or more playing in band or orchestra; (d) they must be enrolled in band or orchestra at the time of their interviews or they must be planning to enroll in the coming academic year if their interviews occur during the summer; and (e) they must be in middle school, junior high school, high school, or recently graduated from high school. No documents such as medical reports or IEP forms were requested to verify the nature

of potential informants' disabilities. Parents or guardians were assumed to provide accurate information about the demographics requested. Two considerations guided the decision to accept this assumption: it would be unusual for individuals to fabricate a disability or a story involving participation in instrumental music class for no discernable profit, and the aforementioned organizations from whom names of potential informants were secured often do require documentation in order for individuals to participate in their programs.

Upon obtaining demographic data, I secured verbal assent for study participation and made arrangements for written evidence for human subjects compliance. To secure verbal assent, I asked permission from parents/guardians to talk with the potential informants. I discussed the nature of the study with the potential informants and their parent/guardian at the same time. Upon securing a verbal agreement from the potential informants, I requested their preferred reading media (i.e., Braille, large print or recorded text) in order to then further obtain written permission. I sent a confirmation letter to the potential informants and their parent/guardian (Appendix C). This letter documented two items: each student's willingness to participate in the study and the parent/guardian's permission for the blind or visually impaired student's participation. With each letter, I included a study participant consent form (Appendix D). All individuals returned the consent form within four weeks of the date it was sent to them and all were included in the study. Upon receiving all consent forms, I contacted the students to identify a date and time for their initial interview.

To investigate the specific experiences of blind and visually impaired students in band and orchestra, in most cases, I conducted two semi-structured telephone interviews

with each of the informants. One informant, Patricia, was only able to participate in one interview as she was scheduled to be on tour with a performing ensemble for the entire summer. Most initial interviews lasted approximately one and one half hours, while most follow-up interviews lasted approximately one hour.

Four factors supported the use of telephone interviews: (a) telephone interviews provided the most cost-effective and efficient way to interview the entire pool of informants; (b) telephone interviews allowed me to obtain rich description from informants from a variety of geographic locations in the United States; (c) telephone interviews allowed the flexibility necessary to probe for the unique details of each informant's story; and (d) telephone interviews allowed informants to participate in the study in privacy and avoided maximum disruption in their school experience. In addition, Coates (2004) explained that blind and visually impaired people can experience high levels of stress when placed in situations in which they feel the need to interpret nonverbal body language, but are unable to do so. One can infer that, even in situations in which two people who are blind or visually impaired are communicating for the first time, an unusual level of stress could develop. Employing telephone interviews avoided this risk. Moreover, one can also infer from Coates that, at least initially, gathering data from blind or visually impaired informants using means other than telephone interviews would place these individuals in a situation in which they could feel as though they were being observed through a one-way mirror, something I chose to avoid.

I used semi-structured interviews because they provided the structure needed to address research questions while allowing for flexibility in the interview schedule (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 7). I asked questions in these interviews about a variety of

issues including but not limited to (a) how respondents came to play their instrument and participate in the school ensemble, (b) what procedures students use to learn music, and (c) if and how respondents engage in social functions outside of class with their sighted peers from the musical ensemble (Appendix E). Each telephone interview was tape-recorded. Recordings and transcripts of all interviews were copied and stored in separate locations. This measure insured that copies of the data could be obtained quickly if original recordings or transcripts were damaged.

I provided each informant a transcript of his/her interview in the reading format they requested. Informants were offered the opportunity to comment on the accuracy of the interview transcript. This is a common qualitative research process used to ensure validity and is known as “member checking” (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rudestam & Newton, 2001).

As these procedures for data collection developed, affordances and constraints emerged. The principal constraint involved the degree to which I was collecting information about the perceptions of one individual, the student who was blind or visually impaired, in the context of a particular high school band or orchestra. Had I obtained the perceptions of additional people such as parents, ensemble directors, or peers, I might have traveled beyond perceptions and gained a sense of what actually occurred. Tierney & Dilley (2002), however, advocate strongly the use of interview studies that focus on the experiences of individuals who have been marginalized in education. In their view, it is only through deeply understanding the words of these individuals that educators can gain a sense of these students’ realities. Focusing solely on

the experiences of blind and visually impaired students participating in instrumental music class ensured that their voices would be highlighted.

A second constraint involved the degree to which I employed interviews only and avoided other methods of data collection. Using additional techniques such as videotape or audiotape might have enabled me to understand more about how, for example, a study participant compensated for the inability to use standard size print music notation. Employing such methods initially, however, may have created the types of aforementioned stress that Coates outlined. Creating stress between the informants and the researcher may have likely resulted in fewer details about students' perceptions of their experiences, which was the principal aim of this initial investigation.

Interview Schedules and Analysis of Data

I developed the interview schedules for informants to address issues raised by the research literature on mainstreaming and full-inclusion. Recall that music teachers in the studies cited in Chapter Two demonstrated consistently that disabled students were included in music class for the purposes of fulfilling social goals such as making friends. Yet the results of these previous studies do not offer insights into disabled students' motivations or strategies for participating in music. The questions in the interview guide address the following areas: (a) selected demographics, (b) how respondents came to play their instrument and participate in the school ensemble, (c) motivations for playing in the school band/orchestra, (d) strategies students use to learn music and participate in the band/orchestra, (e) the intervention of other people in the students' music learning, (f) if

and how respondents engage in social functions outside of class with their sighted peers from the musical ensemble, and (g) informants' future plans in music (Appendix E).

To analyze the data, I employed a process advocated by Auerbach and Silverstein (2003) in which they suggest identifying all relevant text in interview transcripts. Identifying relevant text involved combing through each of the interview transcripts and determining which sections of text related directly to the interview questions. Upon locating these sections of text, I copied and pasted them into a Microsoft Word document separate from the transcripts. I then coded sections of text according to which research question it addressed — i.e., motivation, self-developed learning strategies, assistance from other people, or social connection. I then chose to create additional Microsoft Word documents in which I placed the relevant text that corresponded with these categories. These categories would become what Auerbach and Silverstein label theoretical constructs which can emerge from research literature relevant to the investigation (p. 39).

After dividing all relevant text according to the aforementioned categories, I searched the data for what Auerbach and Silverstein called repeating ideas. Repeating ideas are words or phrases that suggest the same or, at least, very similar notions (p. 37-38). In the present study, terms such as “performing” or phrases such as “playing music with my friends” emerged as examples of repeating ideas.

Regarding motivations, the use of repeating ideas appeared to be a largely successful method for understanding the data. Within one area, motivations related to music performance, it was helpful to further divide the data into the following more specific repeating ideas: (a) general enjoyment of playing, (b) competence, (c) performing in concerts, and (d) learning.

I next noted larger topics that comprised related repeating ideas. Auerbach and Silverstein labeled these larger topics “themes” (p. 38). In the present study, for example, the themes that emerged from the data related to motivation were the following: (a) music-related motivations, (b) motivation for group membership, (c) motivation for personal accomplishment, (d) motivation for social interaction, and (e) motivation and identity development. Table 1 provides a visual representation of the relationship between the repeating ideas and themes that assembled under the construct of motivation.

More details of these themes and repeating ideas will be provided in Chapter Four of this dissertation report.

Table 1. Themes and Repeating Ideas for Motivations

Themes	Repeating Ideas
Music-Related Motivations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playing/performing music ○ General enjoyment of playing ○ Competence ○ Performing in concerts ○ Learning ● General music enjoyment ● Music-related goals ● Interest in process
Motivation for Group Membership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Status of group ● Group accomplishment ● Being a part of a group
Motivation for Personal Accomplishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mastering a particular section of music ● Achieving a respectable position
Motivation for Social Interaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Connection with ensemble members ● Talking
Motivation and Identity Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Embracing musicianship ● Resisting disability

The second construct considered in the present study was self-developed learning strategies. Examples of repeating ideas that emerged from the relevant text associated with this subject included the following: (a) scanning for familiarity, (b) guessing and checking, (c) low vision related adjustments, (d) Braille music, (e) recording the ensemble, and (f) sequencing learning. These particular repeating ideas gathered around the larger theme of strategies for learning ensemble parts. Another theme that grew out of the relevant text in this area was strategies for Rehearsing and Performing. Table 2 demonstrates the relationships between each of the repeating ideas and themes that surfaced under the construct of self-developed learning strategies. These themes and repeating ideas will be discussed further in Chapter Five of this document.

Table 2. Themes and repeating ideas for self-developed learning strategies

Themes	Repeating ideas
Strategies for Learning Ensemble Parts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scanning for Familiarity • Guessing and Checking • Low Vision Related Adjustments • Braille Music • Recording the Ensemble • Sequencing Learning
Strategies for Rehearsing and Performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorizing • Attention to Beat • Refraining from Playing

The third construct considered in the present study had to do with the intervention of other people in the music learning of band and orchestra students who were blind or

visually impaired. Two repeating ideas, peer assistance with notation and instrument as well as peer assistance with rehearsals and performances, clustered around the larger theme of peers. Additional themes related to human assistance considered the help offered by ensemble directors as well as parents, private music instructors, and individuals who were involved in professions largely outside of music. Table 3 shows the patterns that emerged between each of the themes and repeating ideas that materialized around this construct. An in-depth discussion of the themes and repeating ideas can be found in Chapter Six of this report.

Table 3. Themes and Repeating Ideas for Human Intervention

Themes	Repeating Ideas
Parents, Private Teachers and Other Professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outside Assistance with Learning System Development • Outside Assistance with Notation • Outside Assistance with Instrument
Ensemble Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensemble Director as Facilitator • Ensemble Director as Advisor or Coach • Ensemble Director as Recognizing Ability
Peers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Assistance with Notation and Instrument • Peer Assistance with Rehearsals and Performances

Social connection, the final construct considered in the present study, presented an interesting situation. When considering the repeating ideas and themes that emerged in the relevant text, I found that the question of how feelings of social connection

contributed to quality of experience in band or orchestra remained unanswered. After stepping away from the data, I realized that the repeating ideas and themes were interlocked. Table 4 demonstrates the three categories that emerged from the text relevant to social connection. These categories will be explored in-depth in Chapter Seven of this report.

Table 4. Themes for Social Connection

Themes
• Young intending professionals in music
• "Band is like a family"
• I like playing music with friends

Ethical Considerations

I conducted this study with three ethical considerations. First, it was likely that I might share a level of experience with the informants. Like each of them, I too am visually impaired. In addition, I shared the experience of participating in bands and orchestras as a clarinetist. Because of these commonalities, I believed that informants might seek my advice as they grappled with problems in their music education experience. I predicted that I might feel the urge to provide such advice. Though exploring our shared experiences was appropriate in the context of the interviews, I encouraged the informants and myself to remain focused on the informants' stories. I explained to the informants that I could provide some suggestions at the close of our

interview. I explained further that I could provide more suggestions through the study when it was completed.

In addition, I believed that I might encounter a temptation to celebrate the achievement of the informants in a way that is overstated. Such celebration was not the goal of this research: to understand the processes that are at work when students with visual disabilities are active participants in high school instrumental music programs.

Finally, though I was not acting as a participant observer, I believed that I might cause a disruption in what may have been a very stable process of providing music education to a blind or visually impaired student. A risk of uncovering complicated or difficult issues existed. Conversely, uncovering issues provided a possibility of strengthening the process or providing an opportunity for informants to express unspoken concerns.

These considerations were important because they emerged from my own experience as a student, teacher, and advocate. They were each considerations of which I have been constantly aware in my own work. As a student, upon occasion, I have experienced the role of the researched and have come to understand how research can disrupt a stable process. I have experienced, as a result of participating in research, feeling distinguished from my peers rather than included among them.

As an advocate and teacher, advice or instruction has emerged naturally when individuals with disabilities have shared difficult stories with me. This work has commenced more for the purposes of understanding the informants' rich descriptions of their experiences than for me to offer advice or counsel.

About the Informants

The following paragraphs contain brief introductions of each of the informants in this study. These introductions are presented in past tense because much of the information provided was specific to the time of the interviews. The names presented in this section are pseudonyms used throughout the report to protect the identity of the informants. Each of these introductions contains general information about the informants such as their grade in school, the instrument they play, and their future plans. Table 5 provides a summary of this information. References are made to the media students' access to understand printed music notation in order to provide the reader with some understanding of the informant's visual acuity. Detailed explanations of how informants use these media are discussed in subsequent chapters.

Table 5. Informant Profiles

Informant	Grade	Instrument	Ensemble	Visual Acuity	Future Aspirations
Patricia	12th	Percussion	Band	Blind	Performing Musician
Don	12th	Percussion	Band	Blind	Sound Engineer
Justin	12th	Trumpet	Band	Blind	Composing/Arranging
Trevor	11th	Trombone	Band	Partial	Math Education
Paul	10th	Trumpet	Band	Partial	Architect
Tom	12th	Tuba	Band	Partial	Undecided
Mark	9th	Violin	Orchestra	Blind	College Music Major
Chris	9th	Trumpet	Band	Blind	Attorney
Karl	12th	Clarinet	Band	Blind	Political Scientist
Russ	12th	Trombone	Band	Blind	First Blind Astronaut
Laura	9th	Baritone	Band	Partial	Health Care

Patricia

Patricia was a percussionist in the band at a high school that she described as having few resources in a rural area of the southern U.S. She reported that her senior class had 120 students and that she was graduating 14th in her class.

Patricia used Braille transcriptions when they were available and recordings of peers to learn percussion parts for band. She described herself as completely dedicated to her instrument, so she participated in no other high school clubs or organizations. Outside of school, she performed with a drum and bugle corps as well as a pipe band in the major city within a few hours of her home.

Upon leaving high school, Patricia intended to become a music major in college. She hoped to eventually earn a doctorate in percussion, perform with orchestras, and provide band instruction to younger people who were blind or visually impaired who attended residential schools for the blind.

No information was available about Patricia in 2007.

Don

Don attended a high school that he believed to have over 5,000 students in a growing metropolitan area in the southern U.S. At the time of his interviews, he was looking forward to his senior year and continuing to play percussion instruments in the band.

Don was dedicated to a variety of artistic pursuits. He studied tympani privately and performed as a part of his schools marching and symphonic bands. He learned

ensemble parts by listening to peer and teacher demonstrations. He had considered using Braille music notation but had found it cumbersome.

In addition to playing in his school ensemble, Don had plans to start a rock band. He also enjoyed developing what he called “audio movies” which were recorded dramas he had constructed with computer generated sound effects.

Don’s future plans included attending a community college in his town where he aspired to earn training in sound engineering. With this training, he hoped to become the sound engineer for major rock personalities. He also hoped to continue playing drums in the context of a rock band, but he did not imagine himself continuing to play tympani.

In 2007, Don was attending community college. He was pleased to find that relationships seemed easier to establish in college as compared to high school. He was struggling with some academic material.

Justin

Justin was a senior at what he described as a large high school in the Midwestern United States. He was not sure of the number of students in the school, but he described a building, which contained three full floors and a fourth partial floor dedicated to one academic subject.

Justin played the trumpet. He studied privately and participated in ensembles outside of school like district honor band. Within school, he participated in marching, symphonic, and jazz bands. He was particularly fond of jazz band and was considering a future in music composition. Justin used recordings to learn his ensemble parts but was interested in using Braille music notation.

Outside of school, Justin participated in scouting and church choir. He expressed an interest in college. Prior to attending college, however, he planned to attend his state's school for the blind to develop stronger independent living skills.

Justin did go on to attend the school for the blind in his state in 2007. In the early spring of that year, he was making plans to attend community college. He was still interested in playing the trumpet, and was still considering music as a college major.

Trevor

Trevor was an eleventh grade student who played the trombone when we first spoke with each other. He attended a high school that he reported to have 2000 students in a suburban area of a major metropolitan city in the southern United States. In Trevor's school, in addition to marching band, there were three ensembles that performed wind literature. In order of least prestigious to most prestigious, they were: (1) concert band, (2) symphonic band, and (3) wind ensemble. Trevor performed with the marching band as well as the concert band. He expressed a personal goal to become a member of the symphonic band. In performance and rehearsal, Trevor sometimes needed to have his sheet music enlarged.

Outside of school, Trevor participated in his church youth group and in scouting. He also participated in a social and recreation program for youth with disabilities. His future plans included college, but he was not sure that music would become a career. He was interested in continuing to play the trombone in college or community ensembles, but he was considering history, political science, and psychology as academic majors.

Most of 2006-2007 was dedicated to beginning college for Trevor. He was attending a state university that he reported to have about 6000 students. He was undecided about his major, but was considering math education. Trevor was participating in wind ensemble and basketball pep band, which he intended to continue doing in his sophomore year.

Paul

Paul was a tenth grade student who played the trumpet and was from a university community in the southwestern United States. He was not sure how many students attended his school, but he described it as large with a separate building for freshmen students alone. A head band director and two assistants supervised the band program which comprised a wind ensemble, symphonic band 1, symphonic band 2, the marching band, and Jazz ensemble.

When we spoke, Paul was looking forward to participating in the wind ensemble, which was the most prestigious band at his school. During his freshman year, he had performed in symphonic band 1, which was the middle ranking ensemble. In addition to band, Paul participated in the French club and juggling club at his school. Outside of school, he played on a youth sports ice hockey team.

Paul definitely planned to attend college, but he was unsure as to whether or not music would be his major and career path. He was unsure too as to whether or not he would continue to play the trumpet as he was concerned that band and achieving excellence on the trumpet required more time than he could commit in college. His long-standing interest was in becoming an architect because he was interested in three-

dimensional geometry. He joked that he would not share that information with his friends in geometry, however.

In 2007, Paul was excelling in music. He had participated in elite competitive ensembles such as regional band. He had discontinued participation in hockey to make more room in his schedule for practicing and homework. He was beginning his search for an academically intensive liberal arts college with strong music offerings.

Tom

Tom, a senior, attended a school that was located in an outer suburb of a major metropolitan city in the southern United States. He believed his school served about 1200 students. The band program consisted of a marching band and at least three concert ensembles beginning with the most prestigious: symphonic band 1, symphonic band 2, and concert band. Tom participated in the marching band and symphonic band 1 at the time of our interviews.

Tom began his music training on trombone but found the instrument difficult. When his middle school band director asked if anyone in the ensemble would be interested in playing the tuba, he volunteered and found himself successful.

Outside of school, Tom participated in church choir and a social recreation club for youth with disabilities. His future plans included attending college where he believed he would like to enter a computer related field. He expressed interest, however, in continuing to play with a college or community ensemble.

I was not able to speak with Tom directly in 2007, but I was able to speak with his mother. Tom's mother shared that his first year following high school had been

complicated. One semester of college had proved difficult and disappointing, so Tom was working at a local grocery store to earn money and consider his options.

Mark

Mark was a ninth grade violinist who attended school in a suburban community near a major Midwestern metropolitan area. He estimated his school to have about 1000 students. At the time we talked, Mark had participated in orchestra for four years. He had also participated in the metropolitan boy choir in the major city near his home for five years.

Mark learned his music largely through recordings prepared by his orchestra teacher and his private violin teacher. He also found that he was able to gain a certain amount of instruction by simply listening in class.

In addition to music, Mark enjoyed camping. He also described a high level of interest in weather and computer games. He shared with me that one of his favorite things to do was hurry home after school to look up weather conditions in various places on the internet. When we talked, he had just investigated weather conditions in several cities in Europe where he was to be traveling soon with a youth exchange program of middle school students from across the country.

Mark was interested in attending college, and majoring in music was a course of study he was considering. He was not sure, however, about long-term career plans.

As of 2007, In addition to performing with his school orchestra, Mark was participating in a community youth orchestra. He also was self-employed teaching younger students privately. Beyond playing the violin, this young artist was actively

involved in creating a cappella vocal arrangements of classical works and American folk tunes.

Mark reported good relationships with peers in orchestra. He felt less positive about his level of connection with peers in the general school culture. In an effort to combat this problem, he was working with his vision teacher to organize a special program in October, which is “Meet the Blind” month.

Mark was pursuing music as a major in college vigorously by attending summer programs where he could develop Braille music and computer skills. He was also making plans to obtain an assistance dog. His plans were to attend a mid size state university after completing high school in 2008.

Chris

Chris, a ninth grade student who played the trumpet, was negotiating his first year at a new school when he was interviewed. He had attended a public elementary and middle school but was now attending a new private Christian academy located in an outer suburb of a major metropolitan area in the southeastern U. S. Approximately 600 students attended Chris’s school. Chris felt sure of this number because one of his parents worked in the admissions office of the school.

Chris learned his music by listening to recordings of his parts and by listening closely to his peers in class. He participated in the marching and concert bands. Chris also participated in wrestling and a disability specific sport called “goal ball”. In addition, he was a member of a recreation youth program run by a community based rehabilitation center in the city near his home.

Chris felt sure that he would like to continue playing the trumpet in some way after high school, but he wasn't sure if that would mean participating in a college band. He was also unsure, as a 9th grade student, what college he would like to attend and what major he would be interested in pursuing.

In 2007, Chris was continuing to play in the pep band, but had discontinued marching and concert bands. Academics and sports had emerged as more intense interests. Academically, he was enrolled in advanced placement classes and was interested in attending very high ranking universities. Athletically, among other goals, he hoped to secure a position on the 2008 or 2012 United States Paralympic goal ball team.

During the summer, Chris was serving as an Intern in the office of a district attorney near his home. He was "90 percent sure" he wanted to major in history in college, perhaps with business as a minor or additional major. Beyond college, he was considering law school.

Karl

Karl and his family lived in the lower northwestern United States where he had recently graduated from high school. From presentations at school assemblies, he believed his high school to have about 2000 students. He knew the school to have an outstanding academic reputation.

For school work, Karl used braille text, recordings, and screen reading computer software. At his school, he played the clarinet in the band and participated in the intellectual challenge team. He had also served as his freshman class president. Outside

of school, Karl snow skied on a team of blind athletes. He also played the piano and was an avid music listener.

Karl was scheduled to attend college soon after our first interview where he planned to pursue a major related to government and politics. He did not see himself continuing to play in band, but he thought he might continue to play some for his own self-satisfaction. He also planned to continue playing the piano and listening classical music.

In 2007, Karl was in his sophomore year of college. He was continuing to enjoy music, though he was not actively playing the clarinet. He was studying government, and was considering doctoral studies in government or political science.

Russ

Russ, a senior and trombone player, was from a southwestern U.S. state. During the academic year, he was a member of the student body at two schools. He was a resident at the state school for the deaf and blind where there were approximately sixty students. For band and two other subjects, he attended what he reported to be a 2000 student high school about six blocks from the “D and B school,” as he called it.

At the state school for the deaf and blind, Russ was in the running club and on the wrestling team. He regularly attended dorm outings to movies and bowling with fellow residents and sometimes peers from the public school. In the summer, Russ volunteered as a counselor at a camp for youth with developmental disabilities. He also attended a university sponsored band camp at one of the large universities in his state.

Russ did feel that he would like to continue playing his trombone with a community band or similar ensemble. He did not believe that music would become his career because he was more interested in engineering and science. One of his goals was to become the first blind astronaut.

Russ's 2007 was very active. He completed his first year of college where he began studying mechanical engineering. In addition, he hiked Mt. Kilimanjaro in Africa and sought training for an assistance dog. Musically, he was expanding his interests to include guitar playing which he was studying independently.

Laura

Laura was a 9th grade student who played the baritone at a school that she believed to have about 1500 students. Laura's home and the school she attended were located in an outer suburb of a major metropolitan area in the south eastern United States. Laura learned her music by enlarging printed ensemble parts.

In addition to participating in band at school, Laura contributed about five hours of her time per week in her community. She assisted in the media department of her church about two hours per week and she volunteered about three hours per week in the gift shop at her local hospital. She also participated in a social recreation program for youth with disabilities.

Laura felt certain that she did not want to become a music major in college, though she was interested in playing her instrument with a college or university band. Her professional goals involved pursuing a major in the sciences and becoming a medical researcher.

In 2007, Laura was enjoying her senior year in high school and making plans for college where she intended to pursue international affairs. She was expecting to finish in the top ten percent of her graduating class, so she was considering quite reputable universities. In addition to band, Laura was continuing to volunteer in the gift shop at her local hospital.

Musically, she was playing in the wind ensemble: the top ensemble in her high school's band program. She was interested in continuing participation in band in college because she imagined that it would provide an interesting diversion from her other academic course work.

CHAPTER FOUR

MOTIVATION

The research literature on mainstreaming and music education cited in chapter two revealed that it is common practice to include disabled students in school music classes for the purpose of social skills development. In light of the present study, an important consideration related to this practice was the extent to which student motivations for participation in music class reflect interest in social skills development. The results reported in this chapter provided answers to the following research question: How do the motivations for participation in instrumental music of blind and visually impaired students compare to what is known from research about sighted students' motivations for participation in these classes?

To address this question, I summarized pertinent research studies that provided an understanding of what is known about non-disabled students' motivations for pursuing instrumental music education. I located these research studies by accessing the following data bases: (a) Psych Info, (b) ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center), (c) World Cat, (d) MCAT, (e) Dissertation Abstracts, and (f) RILM (Répertoire International de Littérature Musicale). In each of these data bases, the following key word searches were employed: (a) K = motivation, music, and education; (b) K = motivation, music, and high school; (c) K = motivation and music education; and (d) K = student retention and music education. In addition to key word searches, I undertook author searches using

the names of the researchers whose work is presented in this chapter. I also surveyed the bibliographies of these reports.

Informants in the present study were asked to discuss the following: their reasons for enrolling in instrumental music and their purposes for continuing to perform with their school band or orchestra. After obtaining their stories, I compared the motivations of informants who were blind or visually impaired with reasons for participation published in literature about students without disabilities.

Participants in the present study produced comments that reflected motivations connected to the following five themes: (a) music, (b) group membership, (c) personal accomplishment, (d) social interaction, and (e) personal identity. Repeating ideas, which expressed different facets of each theme, also emerged in the data.

Instrumental Music Motivations of Non-disabled Students

Music education researchers concerned with motivation historically have conducted invaluable studies focused on achievement of students participating music learning contexts (Thomas, 1992; Maehr, Pintrich, and Linnenbrink, 2002). In 1992, Thomas reported that most music education research had focused the following three achievement related orientations: (a) the degree to which relationships exist between self-esteem and music related attitudes; (b) relationships between self-concept and ability; and (c) beliefs about attributions for success and failure in music. Music education researchers, in the following decade, began turning their attention to new questions of choice, intensity, persistence, and quality as they relate to engagement in music learning (Maehr, Pintrich, and Linnenbrink, 2002).

In this section of the chapter, I have chosen to present studies that address choice: specifically, the choices students without disabilities make surrounding beginning and continuing instrumental music participation. It should be noted that it is generally not possible to know the extent to which students with disabilities may have participated in these studies. It is a reasonable assumption, however, that disabled students would have been a distinct minority of the participants.

Frakes (1984) was the earliest investigation of students' motivations for participation in school music ensembles identified during my search for relevant literature. The purpose of her study was to measure the extent to which significant differences existed among recent high school graduates in the following three areas: (a) music achievement as measured by Colwell's Music Achievement Test (MAT); (b) academic achievement as calculated by the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS); and (c) attitudes about music ensemble participation as gauged by the researcher developed Factors Affecting Participation Questionnaire" (FAPQ). For the purposes of the present study, Frakes's results related to participants' attitudes about ensemble membership were most relevant. These findings, therefore, became the focus of this section of this review.

The respondents in the study originated from a community in south east Iowa in which they had attended grade six in 1975, 1976, or 1977. They were graduated from one of two high schools between the years 1981 and 1983. Their elementary school music experiences and their high school music participation opportunities were judged by the researcher to be similar.

Upon obtaining school records, which included MAT and ITBS scores, Frakes determined that 98 graduates were eligible for her study. Of these potential respondents,

records for nine former students were incomplete. Questionnaires were sent to the remaining 89 individuals, and 83 completed forms were returned. The 83 respondents included 35 ensemble participants, 17 non-participants, and 31 discontinuers (p. 46).

The FAPQ consisted of two forms. Form “A” of the questionnaire, administered to ensemble participants and ensemble discontinuers, contained 56 items that addressed attitudes about the following: (a) music teachers, (b) content of course, (c) perceptions of musical ability, (d) music-related intrinsic interest, (e) influence of peers, (f) influences by family, and (g) time dedicated to ensemble participation. Form “B,” administered to nonparticipants, addressed the same issues with the exception of those related to music teachers and course content. Participants rated agreement with a given item using a five point likert scale where “1” was the least positive response and “5” was the most positive response. Pilot tests of the questionnaire were conducted on three occasions with individuals not participating in the actual study. A reliability rating of .94 was achieved for form “A,” while a score of .96 was found for form “B” (p. 38).

In addition to the questionnaire, Frakes asked ensemble participants and non-participants to complete a series of written open-ended questions. The researcher sought, using this approach, to uncover respondents’ primary reasons for continuing or discontinuing involvement with high school music ensembles.

With the exception of peer influence, ensemble participants rated all categories on the FAPQ higher than non-participants and discontinuers. Their composite mean was 3.7, while means for discontinuers and non-participants were 3.1 and 2.8 respectively. Statistical significance was reported at the .0005 level (p. 51-52).

Intrinsically driven interests in music received the most favorable ratings among ensemble participants. The only group mean that exceeded a score of “4” in any category was in this area (p. 54). This idea was further supported by participants’ responses to the open-ended questions (p. 74).

Though they rated intrinsic musical interests highest, participants’ positive attitudes appeared to be influenced by the interaction among each of the following factors: (a) teacher, (b) course content, (c) musical self-perception, (d) intrinsic interest, (e) family influence, and (g) time involvement. Except in relation to attitudes about teachers, peer influence was not a powerful factor in shaping the attitudes of participants about ensemble participation (p. 62).

Hurley (1992) conducted an interview study of six elementary school and fifteen middle school students enrolled in string instrument study. His research questions focused on the following areas: (a) informants’ reasons for becoming involved in string instruction; (b) how factors related to motivations are shaped and change over time; (c) what factors contributed to change when change occurred; (d) informants’ foremost reasons for continuing string instruction beyond elementary school; and (e) informants’ foremost reasons for ending participation in string instruction. Though Hurley was concerned largely with achievement, the research questions reflected interest in student choice as well.

The researcher conducted individual interviews lasting roughly one half hour. Informants attended school in the same district and studied with the same string instrument specialist. Four different groups of students were chosen as informants: (a) elementary school string students in their first year of study (three males and 3 females);

(b) first year middle school students who had chosen to continue string instruction (three males and three females); (c) middle school students who had chosen not to continue string instruction but were considered promising string players by their teacher (four females and one male); and (d) middle school students discontinuing string instruction and were not considered promising string players by their teacher (two males and two females).

All of the informants in the first group were fourth-grade students. Because the school district offered beginning string instruction to children in this grade level, the researcher interviewed these students to understand initial motivations. The researcher's interests in the remaining middle school cohorts emerged from a trend that he uncovered in published studies focusing on student retention from elementary school to middle school — namely, that preadolescent attitudes about music participation become less positive, while preadolescent concerns for ability become more pronounced.

Informant responses were analyzed for statements reflecting two major ideas: the degree to which the individual values the task and the nature of expectations the person holds for the task. Achievement motivation models developed by Weiner and Parsons were combined to form the model for Hurley's investigation. Data analysis involved three stages. In the first stage, informant responses were interrogated for evidence of attributional and cultural patterns that encouraged string instrument study. Next, the researcher observed these patterns to determine the nature of change or to document no change in student motivations to continue string study. The investigator then analyzed the data for issues that supported or discouraged initial motivations for participation. The third stage of analysis provided for revelation of the motivational factors related to

continuing or discontinuing string instrument instruction. Factors not addressed by the models employed were also documented and presented in the research report.

Stage one analysis revealed that no factors were common to all informants as they initiated string instruction. The factor that appeared most often among the informants' descriptions was their ability to identify significant individuals in their social environment engaged in playing a musical instrument (p. 178). Informants also described considering values when joining the string orchestra program, but they did not necessarily describe similar values driving reasons for beginning string instruction (p. 179).

Stage two analysis demonstrated that most individuals transitioning from elementary school to middle school provided reasons related to intrinsic motivations for continuing string instrument instruction. Informants also provided utilitarian reasons for continuing their study. Utilitarian reasons included the degree to which participation in strings could appeal to college admissions committees or how mastering a string instrument could be a social benefit (p.198).

Students who continued and students who discontinued string instruction both cited prior experiences and developing anticipations of satisfaction in the affective domain as impacting their decisions about maintaining involvement with the orchestra. For discontinuing students, perceived cost like time away from traditional academic studies or greater interest in sports participation changed their motivations for participation and achievement (p.195-196).

Stage three results indicated that informants who had continued string instruction possessed strong levels of self-confidence in their instrumental music abilities. These

students discussed feeling accomplished on their instrument. They indicated that they enjoyed both the challenges associated with string instrument playing and music in general. In addition, these informants reported feeling satisfied with their instrument choice. Each of these factors was identified by the informants as important in their decision making about continuing or discontinuing study. More over, they considered orchestra class highly valuable — a position they indicated maintaining over a prolonged period of time. The informants also revealed the following repeating ideas: (a) expanded dedication to string instrument performance; (b) an enjoyable classroom environment; and (c) interest in developing long-term goals focused on orchestra participation (p. 213-214).

Fredricks et al (2002) conducted an interview study in which they investigated adolescents' initial and sustained motivations to participate in extracurricular programs. They also investigated how particular processes and factors affected informants' commitment to these activities. In this summary, I have focused on the initial and sustained motivations rather than the affecting factors to commitment.

The informants were forty-one European American adolescents who lived in three communities near a major Midwestern urban area. Because some informants participated in multiple activities, the researchers provided information about a total of sixty different experiences. The researchers identified 3 categories of motivations: (a) individual psychological motivations for participation; (b) motivations associated with context; and (c) motivations associated with the degree of integration between the informants' chosen activities and their developing identity.

Two principal themes emerged under the category of psychological motivations: enjoyment of the activity and the affordance of being with friends. An additional category was labeled “Other reasons why I participate.” (p. 77-81).

The researchers discovered that informants enjoyed a given activity, when they perceived it as “fun.” Upon probing, they learned that the informants’ definitions of “fun” involved perceptions of themselves as competent at their chosen activity. Perceptions of competence were associated with positive feedback received from others and intrinsic motivation for participation. An additional definition of fun involved experiences of increased self-esteem as a result of participating in the activity (p. 77).

The second theme under psychological motivations, the desire to be with friends, was demonstrated in comments in which informants revealed positive feelings surrounding involvement with people who shared common interests. The researchers posited that these comments also indicated the extent to which these informants felt a part of their school community (p. 78-79).

The theme labeled “Other reasons why I participate” contained ideas that suggested specific and pragmatic roles that activities played in high school students’ lives. This theme comprised the following ideas: (a) pleasing other people; (b) outlet for emotional pressure; (c) important for future advancement; and (d) use of time (p. 81).

The second category, motivations associated with context, contained two themes. The first theme focused on motivations related to the broader context or community, while the second concentrated on motivations related to the specific context in which the activity occurred (p. 81-84).

Motivations associated with broader context and community involved informants' recognition that their communities offered opportunities in sports and the arts as reasons to pursue these programs. In addition, the informants recognized that there were expectations that they would avail themselves of the opportunities provided by the community (p. 82).

Motivations related to the more specific contexts in which activities occurred involved issues of instruction, social interaction, and personal benefit offered explicitly by the programs in which informants participated. This theme comprised two repeating ideas: the degree of challenge provided by the activity and the balance between benefits and costs of participation (p. 83-84).

Informants did not necessarily require a high degree of challenge. Rather, their participation in an activity was linked to the extent to which they valued a challenge. If the activity provided the acceptable level of challenge, informants maintained involvement. If the activity provided too great a level or too little challenge, informants discontinued participation (p. 84).

When describing the costs and benefits to participating in activities, the majority of informants discussed social benefits such as developing relationships with peers who shared common interests and developing confidence relating to peers. In addition, informants reported learning important life lessons such as team work and managing disappointment. They also appreciated greater feelings of confidence, time spent with family around the activity, improved personal health, and the development of time management skills (p. 84-85).

The primary cost informants described was the amount of stress they felt. Informants involved in more than one activity described difficulties managing their time when one or more of the activities demanded high levels of their attention (p. 85).

The third category of motivations, those associated with integration between informants' chosen activities and their developing identities, demonstrated informants' discernment about the extent to which they felt connection between their emerging identity and sports or arts participation. The degree to which students were able to identify themselves as artists or athletes was important in determining whether or not informants would continue participating in activities. The informants also, in their discernment, considered the role athletics or the arts would play in their future (p. 86-87).

Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz (2003) conducted an interview study of 20 choral, 20 band, and 20 orchestra high school students at a 2,000 student school in the suburban northeastern United States. The researchers considered four areas of interest: (a) motivation for beginning and continuing music ensemble participation, (b) beliefs about the school music ensembles held by members and the greater school culture, (c) ensemble members' views about the meaning and value placed on participation, and (d) the social environment of the ensemble.

The researchers uncovered the following four reasons for participation in ensembles as reported by their informants: (a) family influence, (b) music related motivations, (c) curricular balance, and (d) social connection (p. 93-96). Frequency counts of comments in each category were not provided.

Family influence motivations were reflected in informants' comments about pressure and or encouragement from parents and siblings to join ensembles. Informants

discussed the following: how their parents described regrets about not participating in ensembles and how their parents valued ensemble participation for their children. Other comments revealed informants' interests in pursuing music because either their parents were musicians or a sibling had encouraged ensemble participation (p. 193-195).

Comments about music related motivations encompassed four areas. First, informants provided comments in which they simply articulated that they liked music. In some cases, they stated an interest in classical music specifically. Second, study participants tied their current ensemble participation to prior musical involvement. Here, they provided explanations about how studying piano and other instruments as well as viewing television programs encouraged them to join the high school band, choir, or orchestra. A third music related motivation was enjoyment associated with their chosen instrument. In these comments, informants described enjoyment of playing a band or orchestra instrument and singing. They articulated a liking for the sound (timbre) of their instrument and explained that participating in their chosen ensemble was appealing. Additionally, informants discussed an interest in developing themselves musically. These comments demonstrated interests in the following: (a) careers in music; (b) developing musical ability; (c) taking advantage of the quality program at their school; and (d) music solo opportunities (p. 195).

Motivations related to curricular balance were expressed in comments about the extent to which music ensemble classes offered opportunities for a diversion from traditional academic work. They also reflected students' interests in becoming well-rounded individuals (p. 195).

Social motivations were the fourth category of influences identified by the researchers. Comments in this area reflected interest in group membership and developing friendships. Important to the present study, participating in music making with a group emerged as an important reason for ensemble participation (p. 195/196).

Ebie (2005) investigated the self-reported motivations of high school student participants in extracurricular athletic and music programs with the use of an open-ended and free response questionnaire. Of the 190 students from urban, suburban, and rural school districts in the southwestern United States to whom questionnaires were sent, 160 provided completed documents providing for a response rate of 84%. The investigator reported his findings in the on-line journal *Research and Issues in Music Education*.

Four categories of responses emerged from the questionnaire data: (a) social/integrative (123 statements/30.2% of relevant statements), (b) kinesthetic (87 statements/21.4% of relevant statements), (c) self-esteem (114 statements/28.1% of relevant statements), and (d) self-efficacy (46 statements/11.3% of relevant statements).

Statements about social/integrative motivations reflected informants' desires for participation in sports or music with other people.

In these statements, informants described their appreciation for team work, friendships, and shared experiences with student colleagues as well as spectators. Statements about kinesthetic motivations reflected the need by informants to be physically active. Perhaps, in the context of sport, the desire for physical activity is assumed. In music, however, informants also described desires to participate in movement associated with playing musical instruments, performing with marching bands, performing with show choirs, and manipulating the human voice. Self-esteem

related comments demonstrated the levels of internal fulfillment informants' enjoyed as a result of participating in sports and music, while self-efficacy comments indicated students' beliefs about their own abilities in these pursuits.

The researcher undertook a second level of analysis in which he calculated the numbers of statements expressed by athletes and by musicians in each category. After determining the mean number of comments for athletes and for musicians in each category, he conducted t-tests to identify the extent to which statistically significant differences existed between these two groups of students. No significant differences were found.

Instrumental Music Motivations of Blind and Visually Impaired Students

Informants in the present study provided multifaceted and overlapping explanations for participation in instrumental music. The comments divided across the following five themes: (a) motivations related to music; (b) motivations related to group membership; (c) motivations related to self-edification; (d) motivations related to social interaction; and (e) motivations related to personal identity.

Music-Related Motivations

Ten of the eleven informants provided comments that related specifically to music. The following four repeating ideas were present within the data: (a) playing or performing music; (b) general musical enjoyment; (c) music related goals; and (d) interest in process.

Playing or performing music

Most informants provided comments in which they described motivations related to playing or performing music. Their comments demonstrated four more specific repeating ideas: (a) general enjoyment of playing, (b) competence, (c) performing in concerts, and (d) learning.

General enjoyment of playing. Informants' comments about general enjoyment of playing emerged in response to a question such as the following: What would you say your favorite thing about playing your instrument would be? Comments tended to illustrate informants' affinities for some aspect of the sound of their chosen instrument such as the timbre, pitch, or dynamic range—a trend also uncovered by Hurley as well as Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz.

PATRICIA: Um, the opportunity to be able to tran ... to change to different kinds of percussion ... the availability of the different instruments ... And the different styles that can be produced.

RUSS: The reason I picked trombone is 'cause one day we were in his room and he was handin' me instruments, "try this, try this," and trombone was the first one I made a sound on ... And I liked it, so I ended up starting to play trombone when I got into the band in fifth grade.

RUSS: Also, I like, um, the ... trombones have a part where they play loud a lot of times ... Loud but pretty.

LAURA: Uh, my favorite thing now about playing the baritone ... uh ... it's in the low group, so you get a lot of the uh bass parts which is a lot of fun playing.

LAURA: I chose the trumpet at first because I liked the way that it sounded and it was really loud and so I guess I kind of wanted to play the loud instrument.

MARK: Um, fast bows! ... just anything that you do fun on the violin ... Fiddle! ... go up really high! ... And also they sound nice with all the harmony.

KARL: And so, once I started the clarinet, I really liked it ... I, I think that the keys are real easy to operate and uh, I like the, um, the low range, especially the low notes.

A few participants mentioned simply enjoying the act of playing. This trend also emerged in the investigation by Frakes as well as the study by Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz.

DON: And I like playing ... it's a lot of fun.

TREVOR: I just like playin' in general, yah know?

RUSS: Well, it does take a lot of practice time to actually practice the instrument. Then it also takes a lot of time to, uh, memorize a piece, and then I have to go to class everyday, but what really gives me the motivation is that I like to play this music ...

LAURA: I like playing the different pieces that we get to play.

Competence. The informants who provided competence related comments revealed motivations to play a particular style or engage in a particular musical behavior like improvising. Some informants described the degree to which technical difficulty in musical pieces contributed to feelings of competence. One informant, Russ, mentioned feelings of personal accomplishment specifically linked to the experience of music making within the context of the ensemble. Competence was also revealed as important to participation in arts education programs by Frakes, Hurley, Fredricks et al, and Ebie.

JUSTIN: But I-I think Jazz band is, you know is gotta be my favorite ... 'Cause ... you know cause I ... I've become good at improvisation.

TOM: Yeah, I like playing the tuba, and it's, it's more enjoyable to me when I like know what I'm playing and stuff ... Like if I pull out say like ... I don't know ... like I have a whole bunch of music ... say I pull out something like "Old Man River" or something ... I know how to basically play that song so ... I enjoy playing my instrument when I play that song, but if I pulled out something like "Flight of the Bumble Bee" that's very very very difficult ... Then I probably won't enjoy playing my instrument as much 'cause that's a very difficult song and it's like really-fast-fingerings!

KARL: Yeah, I, I-I think that there were definitely a couple of concerts where I was very happy with how I had done a certain part especially when the clarinets — I-I was usually a second clarinet —
But we would do some kind of very nice melody where not very many other instruments were playing ... And I, I really like those ... probably whichever instrument I would have been on, I really would have liked playing those types of parts.

RUSS: It just ... I like to have that feeling of that, of that accomplishment and, um, succeeding and getting a piece memorized and playing with a band ...

Performing in concerts. Interestingly, very few informants described particular motivations for the specific act of performing music. The two informants who described such motivations demonstrated value for the act of performing in front of people. This trend was also less pronounced in the aforementioned motivation literature. The investigation by Ebie was the only one in which adolescents mentioned specific motivations related to performing for other people.

JUSTIN: Oh, man, ... you know, we're-we're in a clinic with the Marine Band ... The United States Marine Corps Band and ... You know we're doin' a concert with them.

TREVOR: You know this might be my one chance to play in front of crowds ... Playing something or just in front of crowds in general performing you know ... And some people don't get that opportunity to do any you know ... thing like that.

Learning. Three informants described motivations for playing music that were related to either learning to be a better music performer or learning about music in some way. Justin, a high school senior, described what he learned from participating in a dinner dance with his school jazz ensemble and a group of professional musicians. Chris and Russ simply described how much they enjoyed learning various pieces in the context of ensemble participation. Though informants in the aforementioned motivation studies did not discuss learning or the rehearsal process in such specific terms, they did reference

interests in developing themselves musically and the value of ensemble participation in each of the investigations.

JUSTIN: You know there's ... you know, and and I'd use those pros on the dinner dance as models for my own playing ... You know ... you know so now I've started takin' certain parts up the octave ... Things like that you know... You know it, it's called modeling the pros.

FRED: What would you say your main reason for participating in band is?

CHRIS: Just having fun and learning a lot of ... learning to play the trumpet and learning about music probably.

RUSS: Mainly, I like to participate in band 'cause I like the music ... Mainly, I just like playing my trombone, and yeah, I'll play at church as solos, but it just feels good to be in a group with people my own age, playing with friends, and learning music and stuff.

General musical enjoyment

In their studies, Frakes and Hurley as well as Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz both referenced informants who revealed motivations related to general enjoyment of music. In the present study, informants also discussed general enjoyment of music. Comments tended not to focus on playing and performing. In some instances, study participants described enjoying the sound of the instrument that they now play, but their comments demonstrated an interest in listening and attending to various elements of music.

MARK: 'Cause I'd always heard a violin and I thought it sounded neat.

CHRIS: Just, I kind of told this lady in band that I, I liked the trumpet sound and all that ... And I already had a little ... my mom is a big piano player and so ... my grandfather is a really big piano player and I'd kind of been taking guitar lessons before so I kind of enjoyed music already.

RUSS: I like the enthusiasm of the instrument, the low bass part ... It's just ... I like the sound of it 'cause that's really what makes the music beautiful is the under harmony.

Three informants, Mark, Russ, and Karl, mentioned a specific interest in “Classical” music. Other informants discussed similar affinities for this genre, but not in relationship to general interests in music.

MARK: Usually I put classical music on the radio.
... I like, um, Bach.

RUSS: Really, it’s just, I like the sound of classical music ...

KARL: I have always liked classical music and uh, I, I had just heard some music from the flute ...

Some informants’ comments indicated music listening interests that were not limited to a specific element of music or a particular style. Rather, these informants demonstrated a curiosity that was broad, but still focused on music listening.

JUSTIN: You know I listen to a lot of music ... you know ... that ranges from any kind of style.

CHRIS: Um, probably just the, the, the broad range of, of music that it sounds good with. I mean, trumpet can sound good with any type of music whether it’s jazz or classical or sometimes even rock and stuff like that.

LAURA: Uh, what made me want to do it was that I just really liked music ... And so, when I got the opportunity, it was um just that I really liked it so I wanted to do it.

Music-related goals

Hurley as well as Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz provided comments by informants who described goals for becoming better players. Comments from two informants in the study at hand also described goals for becoming more proficient on their chosen instrument. Interestingly, however, these informants cited sources other than their instrumental music classes as informing their goals.

DON: Well, I love the beats ... And that's why I listen to a lot of complicated drum stuff ... it makes me more experienced, 'cause it makes me wanna learn more.

CHRIS: And then when I first started playing the trumpet, my dad gave me some Wynton Marsalis cd's ... And that was a... a interesting thing that kind of got me motivated ... I heard how good he was and I ... I I enjoyed listening to it and I thought it was pleasant and I wanted to play as well.

Three of the aforementioned studies described how continued involvement in instrumental music was contingent on the degree to which informants envisioned playing their instrument as a part of their future. Neither the study by Frakes nor the investigation by Ebie described this trend. One informant in the present study, who had a very difficult high school band experience, provided comments that demonstrated an interest in pursuing a career in music. When asked why she continued participating in band when the experience was so negative, she answered in the following way:

PATRICIA: I knew that I was going to be a music major eventually and nothing would stop me and I knew that I would have to have that to succeed.

Interest in process

Motivations for the process of rehearsing a work until reaching a point of musical satisfaction were evident in the comments of three informants who responded to a question such as the following: when you say you learned a lot about music in band or orchestra, what kinds of things did you learn? At least for some students, the artistic process of rehearsing is an important factor in their instrumental music participation. Hurley's study supports this idea. He revealed a trend in which preadolescents' choices to continue or discontinue string instruction were dependent upon their expectations for affective satisfaction.

TOM: Just basically like ... you know how like ... you get this piece ... and the director has you Crescendo and decrescendo ... Maybe have this group come out a little louder and these groups get a little quieter ... Basically that ... It's kind of like ... you may have the composer have a crescendo here ... But there may be a smaller crescendo, but the director may want it bigger or smaller or something ... or he may put a crescendo or decrescendo where there's not supposed to be one, but sound's really cool here, so he puts it there which is some things that my director does ... And it makes it sound different and more enjoyable ... 'specially if you like listen to a piece and then listen to a piece by somebody, like, some other, like, band ... It's different!

KARL: Um, probably, um, you know, how a piece is, you know, the idea of how a piece is put together, um, you know, how the instruments blend together and how we-we had to keep practicing in order to learn it ... and also, you know, a lot about different styles, and all different styles of music.

LAURA: Uh, just like pulling out a different piece I've never seen before and then trying to make it sound like kind of aesthetic could ... sounds really fun.

Motivation for Group Membership

Motivation comments that emerged with the second greatest frequency demonstrated a theme of identification with a group. Participants provided comments that demonstrated the following repeating ideas: (a) status of group; (b) group accomplishment; and (c) being a part of a group.

Status of group

Comments that were related to the status of the group referenced the ensemble's position in the school culture or opportunities afforded the ensemble because of its quality. Informants described particular interest in continuing participation when they became members of ensembles that offered this affordance. Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz uncovered a similar trend among students whose larger motivations were related to enjoyment of their chosen instrument. Associated with this enjoyment was an interest in

capitalizing upon the opportunity to participate in a ensemble that they perceived as high quality.

DON: This year — I'm real excited about goin' into this — the wind ensemble ... Yeah, 'cause they have the most complicated pieces, and they're the most coolest as far as like competitions, they go on extra trips and ... all that kind of stuff.

TREVOR: No, it wasn't a competition. It was just um, they invited the band there you know to perform. There's a whole bunch of music educators there so ... They, from what our band director said, it was just they invited you and they were just listening to different bands ... Uh you know, I don't know why, just to listen I guess ... to different top bands.

PAUL: "I would never quit" because now I realize that, uh, I've made it into the top group ... I'm in a very low chair ... me being a sophomore ... and uh, but I made in the top group and that's gonna be fun and hopefully I'll be able to make the show.

PAUL: I remember my very first football game ... and we were standing there ... and it was before the show ... And our show started out where with the kids on the sideline and we'd work into ... into the center of the field ... and standing there and looking at up at all these people ... and you're sitting here in your shiny uniform and your white gloves and you're thinking, "Am I really doing this?" ... You know like uh, "I saw this in a cartoon when I was four and now I'm doing it."

CHRIS: Um ... just ... I don't know it was a big thing in my school and most people in sixth grade started playing an instrument and not many, not many of us stuck with it, but it was just ... most people started with an instrument in sixth grade, and I just enjoyed it.

Group accomplishment

Comments related to group accomplishment referenced winning competitions or accomplishing a difficult task like playing a difficult piece. Interestingly, specific references to competition did not emerge as factors contributing to motivation of informants without disabilities. Fredricks et al provided examples of adolescents who considered positive feedback from others when evaluating their competence for a

particular activity. Ebie described adolescents who valued team work in their athletic or artistic pursuits. Both sets of informants could be referencing competitions, but they do not articulate this factor specifically.

DON: Well you know, just imagine if you were on the marching band field ... you've just won grand champion ... Just imagine that glorious feeling that you get when you win ... You're like, "YES!" ... "We won the competition." ... And one day — I never thought we'd do this — at Carrie? Band Day, we placed third out of forty bands.

PAUL: Um ... in concert band, when you guys have just won sweep stakes ... all top rank in, in this contest which we did this year ... uh, you feel like, "Gosh! I was a part of that, you know, I contributed ... and, you know, without, without me and all of my friends, they would have been nothing" and you just think that you have an impact on this and it's ... without ... it's like a puzzle ... And you're a piece of the puzzle and that's just a good feeling.

CHRIS: Oh ... um ... Hmmm ... probably just all the times that I went to festival and we were playing well and we got all straight superiors and stuff. I was proud ...

KARL: Um, yeah, I-I think probably uh ... one year we were doing a concert of a piece that we worked on for a really long time, and I wasn't sure if it would work out alright, but, it really did and we all said how much fun we had doing, you know, preparing for it, and, I ... there was a clarinet part which, which only a couple of other people were playing and like, it just sounded really good ...

Being part of a group

Comments related to being a part of the group demonstrated a simple desire to belong to a group in the school culture. This trend emerged in three of the five motivation studies of non-disabled students, further signifying the commonly held view that most adolescents value group membership. Neither the studies by Frakes or Hurley described this trend.

DON: Well, I like being able to, you know, go on the games and go on the competitions where all my friends are standing by me ... we're getting' ready to

play and they're congratulatory feeling after I play and then I don't feel so nervous.

PAUL: After that competition, um, they ... incorporated the reserves in one hundred percent of the show ... and it's a much simpler show ... And, uh, that occurs for the last months or so of school ... of the first semester ... and you play uh at the play-offs basically ... and that was the time when I was, you know, be a part of the band when I was actually ... there were there were no reserves at this point ... everybody was incorporated and everybody was able to share what, uh, what everybody else was feeling ... And so you really feel like a part of it because you're not standing on the sideline and ... you know, you're involved in this.

KARL: And I also ... and I also just realized that I felt good about being active in something in the school, because I, I couldn't uh, be on a lot, most of the sports teams.

Motivation for Personal Accomplishment

Motivations related to personal accomplishment described experiences in which informants worked individually to learn a difficult passage of music, obtain a higher position like a chair in the instrumental program, or learn to play a more difficult instrument. The comments of one informant, Paul, articulated the importance of recognition by others. It could be argued that informants developed higher levels of self-esteem when accomplishing these tasks. Motivations related to self-esteem also emerged in the aforementioned studies by Frakes, Fredricks et al, and Ebie. Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz described informants who demonstrated interests in gaining experience as a soloist: a trend, which could indicate developing self-esteem or self-efficacy in music. The study by Fredricks et al also demonstrated the contributions of positive feedback to the development of a perception of competence among informants, which arguably could be connected with self-esteem.

Mastering a particular section of music

One repeating idea that emerged in this section of the data had to do with, in one case, finally performing a particular note correctly after practicing the pitch repeatedly. In the other instances, informants reported feeling as though they had played their respective instruments especially well in a particular performance or rehearsal.

DON: Well, the best that I ever felt was on the field of Raymond James Stadium last year in the Outback Bowl ... I thought I nailed that first movement.

JUSTIN: There was this one time where I was on lead part and I was hittin' all the high notes like double "F" sharps ... things like that and that made me feel really good ... About doin' Jazz band And you know that good feelin' pretty much carried on through the ... you know I'm feelin' really good right now you know ...

LAURA: Um, a time when I felt really good about playing in band was, um, when we were getting ready to play this concert and uh ... there was this part in the song where I had to go really high and I couldn't get the note and then one day I finally got the note.

Achieving a respectable position

A second repeating idea that emerged in this section of the data had to do with achieving status in the school ensemble. In one case, one informant, Don, was promoted by his band director to performing on tympani rather than on auxiliary percussion instruments such as the tambourine or the maraca. In the other instances, informants discussed the feelings associated with achieving first chair in their ensemble's trumpet section.

DON: Well, I felt a lot more respectable, because I'm playin' a more key instrument in the percussion now ... And, uh, it was difficult at first, and then I got the hang of it. We won six competitions last year, and we pulled a grand champion in Florida.

PAUL: I just simply have more dedication ... I mean, it's not like the other kids don't have any, but you know ... I have that extra drive to practice the extra ten minutes and get that first part and become first chair.

CHRIS: And then one of the, probably one of the most ... probably (inaudible) that I did at least ... that I ... was maintained first chair in my band throughout two years that we did chair placement.

PAUL: Um, well, in seventh and eighth grade in middle school, I was the, the lead trumpet player ... I was the section leader in seventh and eighth grade ... In the head band, and so I received a lot of solos and exposed parts, and I would go home and practice and practice and practice and practice those until they were almost more than perfect ... and then at the concert, you know like the ... at-at (gives initials) which we also did in middle school, the judges would say, "Great! Super! Great great trumpet soloist" ... Um, "Great clarinet soloist ... great trumpet soloist," uh, "Keep that tone clear" or something like that ... And you just think like, "Wow! I got noticed."

Motivation for Social Interaction

Interest in being with friends or making friends and talking with peers were two ideas that emerged from discussions about informants' motivations for social interaction. Similar to the informants in the studies by Fredricks et al, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, and Ebie, the informants in the present study differentiated between group membership and developing actual relationships. The following responses were offered when I asked questions such as the following: what is your main reason for participating in band or orchestra? Or what do you like about being with your friends in band or orchestra?

Connection with ensemble members

Some informants discussed the degree to which their motivation for participation in instrumental music was related to a general feeling of connection with their peers. In these comments, study participants talked about having friends or making friends in the

ensemble culture. They usually did not mention a specific social act that facilitated the feelings of connection.

DON: Everyone ... mostly everyone is really really nice to me ... And uh, you know, I just get a lot of it ... I just get a lot that helpful feeling if I have a lot of friends and it helps, when we're not doin' anything you know, it kind of helps me do more stuff ... sometimes I need some transportation, some movies, and, or whatever and, you know, they'll say, "Do you wanna ride with us?" I'll say, "Yeah! Sure!"

PAUL: Um, ok, well, my first reason, which is probably everybody's first reason, is social interaction ... you meet so many people that otherwise you would never meet ... um, ninety-five percent of my friends ... out of like all of my friends, ninety-five percent of them are in band ... And because the high school is such a big place, the band is also very large, and, uh, everybody knows everybody in band and it's ... it's really a great ... gat ... the band hall's really a great gathering place ... And so social ... social interaction would probably be my first reason ... To play in band.

LAURA: Uh, I guess that the meeting the people would probably be that (main motivation) because you get to form a lot of good friendships that way ... And uh to make a lot of good friends that you keep.

Talking

In three other comments, Patricia, Russ, and Laura identified the specific act of talking as important and related to their reasons for participating in band. Later, readers will note that some participants identified feelings of social disconnection when their peers avoided talking to them. Perhaps one should not be surprised that, particularly in the cases of Patricia and Russ who were blind, talk emerged as significant. Special education researchers such as Coates (2004) have discussed the difficulties associated with compensating for the inability to read non-verbal body language.

PATRICIA: Ok, well the past one's easy ... I loved it ... I loved rehearsals ... I loved marching band, um, I loved football games ... I loved all of it ... Just, uh, the atmosphere ... everybody was so awesome ... just they would just always talk to me.

RUSS: Just people my own age ... People that are, like to talk about stuff, we teenagers talk ... You can't go to adults and talk that way ... But um, just being with my peers and talkin' about ... being on the same level with talking ... And the same things that we like, music and stuff like that.

LAURA: My peers are some different friends in there ... We talk like ... talk about things you know ... Yeah, like share common interests or something.

Motivation and Identity Development

Each of the motivation studies referenced in this chapter suggests that continuing instrumental music instruction is related to the degree to which adolescents identify themselves as musicians. Fredricks et al describes this trend specifically.

Embracing musicianship

The informants in the present study also described a relationship between identity and involvement in instrumental music. In some comments, study participants described long standing identifications with music which informed their current interests.

DON: Yeah, I-I've always dreamed of, when I was a little kid, I used to have dreams about me playing music.

KARL: I also had a keyboard at home, and I liked to experiment with it ... You know, starting when I was two or three I think, and then I thought that I was really good at it and I was like a good musician ...

Resisting disability

In other instances, informants describe how involvement in band or orchestra allows them to assert an identity as something other than a disabled person. These comments emerged as responses to questions such as the following: what are some other reasons you participate in band or orchestra?

RUSS: That blind people are, are ok ... That blind people can just do as many stuff as sighted people as, can do ... Is getting people to know that blind people can do this stuff, can play, play a musical instrument, can be in band.

PATRICIA: Um, just something that I had to say ... I'm not just a blind girl ... I'm a musician.

CHRIS: Well of course I felt like I was as good as everybody else and I just, um, felt that I had done well because I had done as well as everybody else while I was trying to combat another handicap.

Conclusions

I have sought, in this chapter, to accomplish two tasks: reveal the motivations for participation in instrumental music education of blind and visually impaired adolescents who were participants in this dissertation study and compare their motivations to what is known about the motivations of non-disabled participants in high school band and orchestra classes. The motivations of the informants in this study divided across the following five themes: (a) motivations related to music; (b) motivations related to group membership; (c) motivations related to personal accomplishment; (d) motivations related to social interaction; and (e) motivations related to personal identity. Within each of these themes, a variety of repeating ideas emerged. The motivations of the informants in the study at hand were largely reflected in studies of non-disabled preadolescents and adolescents by Frakes, Hurley, Fredricks et al, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, as well as Ebie. Some differences, however, were noticed. For example, a few blind or visually impaired informants in the present study mentioned how participating in instrumental music served to enable them to develop identity as something other than a disabled person. Though identity development surfaced in motivation studies of non-disabled individuals, informants' references did not demonstrate an interest in relinquishing one

identity or in somehow proving that one's identity was not limited. The overarching conclusion to be drawn from these data is that the students in this study, like their non-disabled peers, were drawn to the experience of ensemble participation principally for music related reasons. In subsequent chapters, we will learn about strategies they used and individuals they accessed to facilitate their participation.

CHAPTER FIVE

SELF-DEVELOPED LEARNING STRATEGIES

The music education research literature that focuses on the perceptions of teachers regarding mainstreaming and full inclusion was described in Chapter Two of this report. The studies reviewed offered a comprehensive discussion of important issues such as the following: teachers' concerns about time constraints associated with preparing for students with disabilities and teachers' opinions of their work with this group of students. This research literature, however, did not offer an in-depth discussion of strategies that facilitate the participation of students with disabilities in music class.

A second question investigated in the present study focused on strategies blind and visually impaired students developed to learn their ensemble parts and participate in rehearsals and performances. My specific research question was the following: To what extent, if any, does the ability to develop their own strategies for learning affect the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music classes?

Nine repeating ideas divided into two larger themes: strategies for learning the ensemble part and strategies for rehearsing and performing. To understand the methods students adopted for participating in band or orchestra, I asked them to describe what they would do if their teacher presented them with a new piece of music to learn. To

comprehend the impact of the use of the strategy on quality of experience, I asked informants to comment on the degree to which the strategy aided or impeded their music learning. Perhaps, to some extent, it was an assumption on my part that a relationship would exist between learning and quality of experience in instrumental music class. The data presented in chapter four revealed, however, that some informants' motivations for participation in band and orchestra were related to learning. Under the repeating idea of playing or performing music, for example, a smaller repeating idea which was labeled "learning" emerged. In addition, the idea of learning surfaced within discussions of music-related goals and interest in process. Table 6 provides paraphrases of informants' quotations under the learning related categories that emerged in discussions with informants about motivations for participation. These comments came in response to questions such as the following: What did you enjoy learning about music?

Table 6. Connection between Music Learning and Quality of Experience

Music Learning	Informant Responses
Playing/performing music (Learning)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Justin -- modeling pros (as in professionals) • Chris <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Learning about music ○ learning to play trumpet
Music Goals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Don – listening makes me want to learn more. (or, listening to learn more) • Chris – heard how good he (Wynton Marsalis) was and wanted to play as well (as he plays).
Interest in Music Making Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tom – Crescendo or Decrescendo where there's not supposed to be one makes it sound different. • Karl – how a piece is put together. • Laura – trying to make a piece sound aesthetic.

It is important to note that, in this chapter, I have described instances in which informants developed particular strategies for participation in instrumental music that do not involve the direct or overt intervention or assistance of other people. Discussion of more active assistance to study participants is presented in the next chapter. Some strategies revealed in this chapter involved people other than study informants, but the text of supporting comments revealed that the informant initiated any interaction. In addition, the interactions often occurred without the apparent knowledge of the sighted peer.

Strategies for Learning Ensemble Parts

An important aspect of participating in ensembles like bands and orchestras is reading music notation and learning the assigned instrument part. For individuals who are blind or visually impaired, accomplishing this task requires alternative strategies. Informants in the present study discussed strategies that they employed when initially learning and when solidifying their understanding of their ensemble parts. Two strategies were implemented by informants who had low vision and informants who were totally blind. The remaining strategies were adopted according to informants' visual acuity. These methods emerged as repeating ideas in the interview transcripts and were clustered together under the theme of strategies for learning ensemble parts. The strategies or repeating ideas that emerged were the following: (a) scanning for familiarity; (b) "guessing and checking;" (c) low vision adjustments; (d) Braille music; (e) recording the ensemble; and (f) sequencing learning.

The first two strategies, scanning for familiarity and “guessing and checking,” were used by informants with low vision as well as informants who were totally blind when initially learning ensemble parts. Informants who were partially sighted used a variety of strategies for initial and continued learning, which were labeled “low vision adjustments.” Informants who were totally blind used the remaining three strategies to solidify their understanding of their ensemble parts.

Scanning for Familiarity

Informants discussed a strategy in which they employ a scanning process when they are introduced to a new piece of music. Interestingly, both individuals with low vision and individuals who were blind described using such a process to evaluate the task at hand. What do you do when you receive a new piece of music to learn from your band or orchestra teacher?

MARK: I listen to them.

TREVOR: Most of the time I check the piece of music ... can I see everything on there that I need to see? ... and if there is any issue, uh, I will talk to the band director ... see if I can have it enlarged or any section I need ... you know if there's only one part of it you know ... have that part enlarged.

LAURA: Ok ... uh, what I would do to learn it would be to, um, first make a larger copy of the music ... and then, uh, once I did that, I would study the notes and get the rhythms right.

PAUL: Um, well, the first encounter I always have with a piece of music is obviously in class. He never gives us a piece of music, and then tells us to go home and practice it, and then we play it in a week in class ... No, we play it everyday, and so I'm constantly coming in contact with these new parts that we do in rehearsal, so I know what it's s'posed to sound like ... I know what's going on like ... if there's trumpets on some odd section that sounds very awkward when we're alone, but know in rehearsal, I find out the saxophones are gonna be like doubling that and filling in the gaps, then I can understand, “Oh! It sounded weird when I was practicing it, but now I know how it's put together.”

DON: I count my beats the first few times and then, it just comes natural.

KARL: Which notes they were doing, which kinds of dynamics they were doing ... the tempo of the band, and uh, when, especially when they would rest ... so, ... if I heard only trumpets playing, then I knew that I would never have to worry about that section.

RUSS: Like if we're playin' the same part, I'll listen, if I don't have my music yet, I'll listen to them, and try to get the idea what my part will sound like when I get my tape.

RUSS: I listen to what the attitude of the piece is like if the tempo is fast, the tempo is slow ... that's the first thing I try to do, and I first, second thing is try to find out what the meter is ... and um, mainly listen to the piece, see if there's any meter changes or key changes 'cause those are easy to identify ... um, also, I listen to my section to see when they come in and when they're quite, or like if I, if I am coming in, what can I, what other instruments can I listen to while I'm counting to make sure I'm coming in at the right time.

Upon receiving teacher developed recordings of his trombone parts, one informant, Russ, also scanned to gain a sense of the length of the piece. This procedure generally occurred sometime after the piece was introduced to Russ and to the rest of the ensemble. I have included it here, however, because it demonstrates another aspect of the idea of scanning for familiarity.

RUSS: The first time I get the tape I listen to it all the way through ... Just not really tryin' to memorize it, just listening it through the all the way through so I can get an idea how long the piece really is.

Guessing and Checking

A strategy used by individuals who were blind along with one individual with low vision was labeled by one informant as a process of "guessing and checking." Once again, some informants described their use of this process as a temporary measure that afforded them a way of initially learning their part and rehearsing with the ensemble.

Chris, the informant who labeled the strategy “guessing and checking,” indicated that he used this process exclusively to learn easier pieces. Generally, however, informants used language that revealed that this process was not optimal. Chris explained that, in his case, the process involved listening to a neighbor member of the trumpet section carefully as that individual participated in an ensemble rehearsal; attempting to understand what pitch the neighbor was playing as well as predicting what pitch would be played next; and making adjustments when predicting incorrectly.

CHRIS: And I can ... I mean I usually get along ok like that ... just using my ears and working it out ... just—just using my ears and just, you know, playing it and playing it and seeing what goes right and what doesn't sound right. Guessing and checking I guess.

JUSTIN: Mmm ... well, usually if they're sight reading, I'm usually listening? ... to it you know ... you know and then if--if we do go back and play some, I try to pick it up ... if I can.

KARL: Yeah, and uh, so until the brail music came, I would sit, a-always sit next to somebody who had the same part ... and, really, listen to them play and kind of, at, at least for the easier sections, just start playing the notes with them, just kind of following along, then I'd, I would have a good start in learning my part, uh, by the time the brail music came.

MARK: There've been a few cases where I just had to learn it by just listening to the group.

TOM: Trombone was the most comfortable, and then I went over to tuba and I actually was doing better on tuba: I actually like learned quicker on tuba: 'cause like trombone: I was like (pause) second to last chair and like I was so bad that I actually had to like look at the person next to me and figure out what slide position was what.

Low Vision Related Adjustments

Informants with low vision provided discussion about strategies that involved changing their posture, their equipment, their location in the room, or the size of their

printed ensemble part in order to see more clearly. The two informants who described adjusting their posture explained that, when the ensemble was sight-reading, they would hold their part in one hand and their instrument in the other. They further explained that the strategy was a temporary solution that was not optimal, but allowed them to participate until they either memorized the music or had their part enlarged. Another informant, Laura, described an additional temporary solution in which she moved her music stand closer when the ensemble was sight-reading. These comments emerged in response to questions such as the following: what do you do when the ensemble is sight reading a new piece of music?

TOM: I have to hold it (the printed music) in my hand with the hand that I'm not playing with.

PAUL: Alright, for my first day in band, I would play my trumpet with one hand ... it's possible to hold it with one hand and hold ... I would hold my music in front of my face ... with my left hand ... and, uh, I would be doing that in class for, you know, about a week until I had practiced it at home so many times that I would get it memorized.

LAURA: Uh, sight reading ... it's a little bit more difficult, um, usually what I do is try to bring the stand a little bit more closer for sight reading ... it, it works ok.

Other adjustments offer more long-term solutions to the problem of learning ensemble parts. Two informants, Laura and Trevor, explained that they initiated enlarging their printed parts.

LAURA: It was kind of uh my idea when we first uh like thought the music was gonna be a little bit too small ... and they were like. "What are ... what can we do to try and fix it?", and I was kind of like, "We could try and make it a little bigger."

TREVOR: With copies out of the book, I'll just kind of ... if one size ... if I think it's a little over ... like ... too big ... you know ... like gigantic ... you know, I might shrink it down a little bit or if I think it's still a little too small ... you know I might enlarge it a little bit more and so I'll just kind of test it out.

Braille Music

Two informants, Karl and Patricia, were the only informants who used Braille music notation. Patricia, upon the suggestion of her first high school band director, located instruction manuals using the internet.

PATRICIA: He didn't know how to read it he just knew it was available ... so, I just kind of had to learn on my own basically ... I had books that like "How to Read Brail Music." ...

Patricia experienced a multitude of frustrations related to Braille music resulting, in part, from her band director's lack of willingness or ability to provide her ensemble parts early. In addition, her school system did not assist with Braille music transcription, so she was in charge of coordinating this effort. Often, she reported, her transcriptions arrived after she had memorized her parts.

PATRICIA: Um, it used to be through the school. They paid for someone, but now I have to provide ... it's a person outside, 'cause see I'm the only blind person in my school ... they're in another state ... so basically it's kind of too late when I get it so I've already had it memorized.

Karl, on the other hand, benefitted from the assistance of a vision teacher who transcribed Braille music. He did describe the books he used to teach himself as working "Pretty good for me."

KARL: Mostly, I did learn it on my own. My vision teacher and band director were never really comfortable reading it ... so uh, I mostly did it on my own ... um, I-I used some, uh, instruction books that uh, like "How to Read Brail Music Notation" ... which uh, worked, worked pretty good for me.

Recording the Ensemble

Two informants, Patricia and Russ, initiated a strategy of bringing tape recorders to band class and recording the ensemble playing a piece. They would then use the recording to rehearse their parts at home.

When asked who developed this strategy, Patricia responded in the following way: “One day I was like, um, I always like to record stuff, so I was like, ‘This would really work.’” When describing the process specifically, she explained, “I would attend rehearsals that day and I would record the music in rehearsal ... the other members playing it.”

For Russ, the strategy of recording the ensemble playing together enabled him to create the experience of playing with the band at home.

RUSS: Um, one thing I'll do ... I'll do this sometimes like if a piece is really, really treacherous ... or hard ... I'll take my own tape recorder to the band class, and tape them playing ... I'll ask the teacher, “Can you play the piece one, one time through please?” and I'll record the piece. Then, so when I take it back to my dormitory, I can listen to it and play with my part with the tape to figure out where I'm sposed to come in and stuff.

Sequencing Learning

Two informants offered comments that described a process of learning their parts by starting with some aspect of the musical material and building upon that material. Karl began with a small segment of material and added a few measures until he memorized the entire piece.

KARL: And then, I would make sure that I knew what I was playing, if what I was playing was right from the brail music, and then, it's, every measure, every, uh, measure or two, I would just play the part again until eventually, I memorized the whole piece ... every few measures I would play the piece again up to that point until, I, I learned the whole piece.

KARL: Yeah, and actually, I wouldn't normally play the whole piece, but I would, you know, have points where I would, um, (inaudible) say, "Ok, I learned this part. Now, now I'll go on to the next part. I can start from that part."

Chris employed a strategy in which he began by learning the pitches and rhythms. He then built upon his understanding by learning where expressive markings like accents and indications of dynamic changes were notated.

CHRIS: Usually when I listen, I listen for the notes. Then I'll ... and then later I get into the whatever, you know ... um ... yeah ... I mean ... usually I ... usually I don't play the notes ... like if I, I ... if I play the notes, I can play um right, because by listening, I hear if I have a wrong note so I'll adjust it so if like a ... it's a "B" and not a "B flat," then I ... I hear that the--the ... the note is flatter than it is when everybody else plays it so I know I gotta go up so usually I can get the notes, you know, playing ... so the main thing in the tapes is getting all the accents and then usually I don't get very ... I usually I won't get past ... I won't get a majority ... the whole song by listening so usually I use the tape for that.

Strategies for Rehearsing and Performing

A common practice among public school instrumental music ensembles is to perform works of music that have been rehearsed over a period of time. Performances may occur in a variety of settings such as school concerts or competitions. In the same way that students who are blind or visually impaired must develop strategies to learn their individual ensemble part, they must also employ strategies for negotiating rehearsals and performances when a group of people is playing music together under the direction of a teacher. Three repeating ideas revealed strategies that informants used in ensemble rehearsals and performances. These repeating ideas were organized under the larger theme of strategies for rehearsing and performing. The repeating ideas were the following: (a) memorizing, (b) attending to the beat, and (c) refraining from playing.

Interestingly, again, informants with low vision and informants who were blind shared a few strategies in common. Individuals with low vision or who were blind, for example, employed the practice of memorizing ensemble parts for performances. Both sets of informants also discussed attending to the beat or the pulse in music. Though they described different methods within this repeating idea, for these students, attending to the musical beat served as a way to compensate for either the complete or partial inability to watch and follow the conductor. One repeating idea, refraining from playing, emerged among blind informants only.

Memorizing

Surprising to the researcher was the discovery that both informants who had low vision and informants who were blind found memorizing their parts to be a useful strategy for participating in performances. Upon learning the pitches and rhythms in ensemble parts, some informants found that memorizing their parts occurred naturally. To some extent, memorizing was a primary step in negotiating performances.

Two informants with low vision, Paul and Tom, explained that memorizing afforded them freedom from the printed page.

PAUL: Um, for me, it's really easy to memorize music, because I'm forced not to see it, and so my only other alternative is to memorize it ... and ... once, once I've memorized it, I really don't need the music at all.

TOM: I very rarely like look down at my music very much anymore 'cause I can memorize it so well.

The next four comments were provided by Tom, along with Don and Mark who were blind. Their comments focused upon the degree to which repetition within the context of ensemble rehearsals or personal practice contributed to their ability to

memorize. In the remaining three comments, two informants who were blind, Patricia and Russ, asserted the crucial role memory plays in their ability to participate in band.

TOM: We read pieces every day and sometimes we only read one piece ... sometimes we read two pieces so I mean ... and I, basically we read it so much that it just gets into my brain and I memorize it.

DON: That's basically, that's kind of memorization more, more, you know, I mean if I hear it the first few times and I don't cut off ... then, the conductor will tell me what measure, um, I'm supposed to cut off in, and then I count to that measure and cut it off a few times and then I won't even have to do that anymore, because I'll have memorized it.

DON: Well, I mean if you're used to hearing the piece and you know exactly where you're s'posed to come in, then, I, uh, that's not really a problem ... 'Cause your head has processed it from you counting it ... and has, uh, your mind had sent a signal to your brain to count it for you so that way you don't have to count anymore.

MARK: I don't know how I do it, but I just remember it ... it just gets in my mind.

Two informants who were blind, Patricia and Russ, asserted the crucial role memory plays in their ability to participate in band. Russ was especially clear about the degree to which he could not participate in band if he were unable to memorize.

PATRICIA: Um, usually I receive the piece. If I can't get it Brailled fast enough, then I learn it by recording ... remember ... memorize it in one day usually.

RUSS: But I can listen to like other cues on other instruments like a trumpet solo might start and I'd count four measures and then it's my turn to come in.

RUSS: Um, the main thing about my learning the music is memory ... totally, I don't use any, um, when I go out on the stage or anything, I don't use any references or anything ... I have the total piece memorized. ... That's a big part about learning it on tape is you gotta have the memory to learn the pieces ... I mean and that's just developed through practice.

Attention to Beat

An important part of ensemble participation, perhaps especially crucial in performance, is following the conductor. One aspect of following the conductor is attending to the beat or pulse that this individual establishes. Sighted ensemble participants are generally assumed to follow a conductor's pulse by observing visually. Informants in the present study proposed alternative strategies to achieve this task.

For blind informants, attending to the beat was most easily achieved when the ensemble director counted aloud at the beginning of a piece. One informant, Don, also described listening for cues like a director's foot taps.

DON: Well, if he counts it off, then that makes it all the easier for me. If he doesn't, then I'll have someone, you know, tell me when we're about to play, or I'll listen and see if he, you know, or is like tapping his foot on the floor. Most of the time, most conductors do that.

JUSTIN: Obviously when--when the director does count, y-you know I figure out what the tempo is eventually when I'm listening to it.

CHRIS: It's usually ... usually they have the same system, and sometimes they'll go, you know, sometimes they'll kind of whisper "1 2 3 4" something like that, so I usually just kind of ... kind of go along with that.

KARL: Oh, oh yeah, he-he usually did that I, I asked him if he could, because he would say, "Can I do anything to make this better?" and, and he, I said that, before he started, he should, you know, not just be silent, but count or something and he, he usually did. He forgot occasionally ...but uh, he-he was pretty good about that.

The two informants with low vision described different strategies for attending to the beat. One informant, Laura, described a strategy discussed earlier — namely, altering the environment in order to see the conductor as clearly as possible. Paul, a high school freshman, described a process of internalizing the pulse.

LAURA: I usually just try to make sure that I'm uh sitting in a spot where I can like clearly see what he's doing ... and uh make sure I get, um, all the beats just right.

PAUL: Um, what I typically do is ... I I can't ... it's not necessarily my vision, but it's the way that the conductor conducts ... it's not exactly a very precise gesture telling you exactly when the beat is ... instead, his arm kind of flows around, and it's hard for me to tell when the ictus is ... and uh ... and so for that, you know, I wait till beat one, because beat one is clear ... and if we're in ... no matter what time signature we're in, I'm able to follow, you know, "Ok, that was beat one ... ok there was beat one again" and I'm able to internalize the beat without knowing exactly where, where each, each beat is.

Refraining from Playing

Chris and Karl, two informants who were blind, described instances in which they chose not to play during performances. Refraining from playing was a strategy that these informants employed when either they were unable to memorize entire musical selections or when they were unsure when the ensemble was to begin playing.

CHRIS: Sometimes I might just skip the first note just so I don't mess something up or ... play out of tune or somethin'.

CHRIS: I mean on some songs, like, if we, if we were playing a concert and we had five songs that were, you know, two hundred measures or longer each sometimes, I would know that on measures forty-five of one song that I don't know the notes too well, so I just back off playing that ... and so ... I mean I got most ... I got the majority of songs down, but it was not a hundred percent ever.

KARL If, if I really didn't know what I was doing, if there was a sixteenth note section, then sometimes I wouldn't play but, I, I usually wouldn't put my instrument down.

Relationship between Personal Strategy Development and Quality of Experience

The strategies that informants described for learning ensemble parts did appear to serve them, for the most part, to their own satisfaction. Initial strategies (scanning for

familiarity, “guessing and checking,” and short-term low vision adjustments) enabled informants to evaluate the task of learning new pieces of music and to participate initially in playing a new piece with the ensemble. For individuals with low vision, this evaluation process informed decisions about whether or not to have a part enlarged. Short-term adjustments also provided them the possibility of participating in sight reading. For individuals who were blind, the evaluation process provided general information about their parts. Scanning for familiarity enabled these informants to understand, for example, the length of the piece and the location of entrances. Impediments associated with initial strategies were that they were temporary measures until long-term materials like enlarged, Braille, or Braille copies of ensemble parts could be obtained.

The primary positive result of long-term learning strategies (enlarging print copies; using Braille music notation; recording the ensemble, and sequencing learning) was that they provided more permanent solutions to learning ensemble parts. For some informants, these methods were necessary to memorize their part — a strategy that emerged as valuable for participation in rehearsals and performances.

The problems that accompanied these strategies were that they were not often readily achievable. Braille music notation, even for Karl who had access to Braille music transcription in his school, was never available either before or when a new piece was introduced to band classes in which Braille music readers were enrolled.

Perhaps the encouraging outcomes of strategies used in rehearsals and performances (memorizing, attending to the beat, and refraining from playing) were best articulated in the achievement related comments in the previous chapter. Clearly, these strategies contributed to the experiences of success informants described when they felt

they had performed well. Additionally, in this chapter, informants with low vision described how memorizing freed them from struggling with print notation. For individuals who were blind, memorizing was readily achievable and occurred almost naturally within the context of the instrumental class for some informants.

Limitations of these strategies were experienced only by individuals who were blind. When understanding of the ensemble part was lacking or when the beginning of a performance was unclear, these informants resorted to refraining from playing which represented incomplete participation in the music making process. An interesting help or hindrance, depending upon the story considered, was the degree to which other people approve or disapprove of an informant developed strategy. Patricia, who indicated that she had developed all of her own strategies for learning percussion parts, was not able to meet the expectations of one of her band directors. This disconnect contributed to an unsatisfactory experience in band.

PATRICIA: Well, it would just be the whole band playing and if I didn't play it right, my band director would yell at me ... he would say, "You're making noise ... all you do is make noise ... don't even play."

Paul and Karl, on the other hand, developed strategies, which they perceived as acceptable among others in their instrumental music program culture.

PAUL: Um, the ... I came up with the idea of holding the music in front of me ... and uh ... I tried it for about a while in the seventh or eighth grade and the director didn't seem to mind and so I ... I realized, "Oh, this director doesn't mind. He knows exactly what I'm doing ... he knows that I'm paying attention ... I just need to hold it in front of me."

KARL: I realized that I could hear a lot of the piece by listening to the band, and so I feel like I became a really good listener from that ... But uh, I, uh, I-I just, you know, did that on my own I think, and everybody realized that I was doing ok, so they kind of left, left it that way.

Conclusions

The results reported in this chapter have emerged from a query about the extent to which blind and visually impaired individuals who participate in school band or orchestra develop strategies for learning their instrument part and participate in the ensemble. In addition, I have reported on the extent to which their ability to develop these strategies contributes to their quality of experience in these groups. The strategies cited in this chapter have been those, which, for the most part, have not involved assistance from other people. This line of questioning grew from a concern that, though valuable, the music education research literature offered little information about specific strategies blind or visually impaired students employed to participate in music class.

From the interview data cited here, the following two themes emerged: strategies for learning the ensemble part and strategies for rehearsing and performing. Nine repeating ideas, which divided across these themes, reflected the types of strategies informants used to participate in band or orchestra.

Generally, informants discussed developing strategies that served them adequately as short-term solutions when their peers were sight-reading. Informants with low vision discussed enlarging print copies of ensemble parts as a sufficient long-term solution for understanding the notation. Two informants who were blind described the use of Braille music notation as a viable long-term strategy. Individuals with low vision and informants who were blind both revealed that memorizing was the strategy that emerged as most helpful in performance situations. .

A discussion of the affect of these strategies on quality of experience in band and orchestra classes revealed mixed results, especially for informants who were blind.

Informants with low vision were able to use initial short-term strategies to participate in sight reading and eventually secure large print ensemble parts as long-term solutions. These informants, however, sometimes chose to memorize their parts to obtain freedom from the print copy.

Informants who were blind used a variety of short-term strategies to gain information about their ensemble parts within the context of the instrumental music class. The limitation of long-term strategies like the use of Braille music notation or recorded parts was that they were rarely immediately available. When parts were memorized, one can infer a positive experience based on informants comments in chapter four. When they either were not able to understand how their ensemble director initiated the performance of a piece or when there was uncertainty about their part, informants who were blind refrained from playing — a strategy that demonstrated an incomplete music making experience.

Finally, informants experienced negative and positive consequences based on the reactions of other people in their instrumental music learning culture. Though the informants had developed particular strategies, the degree to which other individuals approved of the strategies or the degree to which they perceived the strategies as resulting in quality music making affected some informants' experiences in instrumental music class. It is interesting that, even in the context of personal strategy development, informants' experiences were affected by the approval or disapproval of other people. An in-depth discussion of the affordances and constraints provided by teachers, parents, and peers is offered in Chapter Six.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERVENTION OF OTHER PEOPLE

The themes and repeating ideas in Chapter Five revealed a variety of strategies blind and visually impaired students have developed independently to learn instrumental parts and participate in ensemble rehearsals or performances. As was noted, however, these strategies were not always sufficient methods for accomplishing a given task. What options were available to informants when strategies such as listening to a fellow instrumentalist nearby (guessing and checking) or using Braille music notation were either not viable or not possible?

An assumption of this study that emerged as correct according to the research literature in chapter two and to the interviews conducted with the informants in this study was that other people provided assistance to blind or visually impaired individuals participating in instrumental music classes. Moreover, a goal related to this research was to uncover specific ways individuals such as peers, parents, and teachers mediated and how their involvement affected the quality of blind and visually impaired students' experiences. The central question addressed during this aspect of my research was the following: To what extent is the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music related to the intervention or assistance of other people?

When considering the quality of experience for a student with a disability and the intervention of other people, one can investigate how assistance has been obtained and provided for purposes of learning as well as for social interaction. In this chapter, because informants' comments about assistance from other people focused on help learning their ensemble parts and participating in rehearsals and performances, I have chosen to limit the discussion accordingly. Human intervention as it applies to social interaction will be explored in Chapter Seven in which quality of experience and social connection are emphasized.

It is possible to view this chapter and Chapter Five as overlapping one another because informants use language that indicates they have developed learning strategies in which they access other people. In addition, defining terms like "intervention" or "assistance" is an issue that emerged when considering this question. In the previous chapter, for example, we saw that informants sometimes relied on other individuals when the ensemble was sight reading. The difference between the discussion in Chapter Five and the discussion in this chapter is that informants reveal that here, when they are not able to develop a strategy, they either have intentionally sought the assistance of others or others have intentionally offered the assistance.

Three themes in the data placed particular individuals in the foreground: (a) individuals outside of the ensemble context (parents, private teachers, and other professionals): (b) ensemble directors: and (c) peers. Within each of these themes, repeating ideas emerged that revealed roles played in the informants' experiences by these individuals. After describing these themes and repeating ideas, I will discuss how

interventions of other people affected informants' quality of experience in instrumental music education.

Parents, Private Teachers and Other Professionals

Individuals who were operating outside the context of the instrumental music class offered a noteworthy level of assistance to informants in the present study. This theme has been placed first in this discussion because, in the stories of a few informants, members of this group have offered the first words of advice or assistive acts in planning for the instrumental education of blind and visually impaired students.

Parents and professional private music instructors were clearly represented in the experiences of informants. Other perhaps less likely sources of assistance were also involved. In one instance, for example, an informant's family physician offered his services as a volunteer private trombone teacher. I have therefore labeled this theme "parents, private teachers, and other professionals."

Private professional music instructors presented an interesting dilemma because some of these teachers also served as assistant band directors in particular informants' schools. I was unclear, therefore, if they should be considered along with individuals who clearly were operating outside the context of the instrumental music class. When they were teaching privately, however, they were teaching outside the traditional domain of the band or orchestra classroom and were thus treated as outsiders in this dissertation study.

The story of one informant, Russ, presented a particularly challenging example of this dilemma. Russ was a residential student at a state school for the deaf and blind,

which will be referenced as SSFDB. In addition to attending classes at the SSFDB, he participated in three classes including band at a local public high school. At the SSFDB, the music teacher on staff assisted Russ with learning notation and understanding issues related to the trombone much in the manner that a private instructor might. Furthermore, the SSFDB music teacher contributed to the development of a system of participating in band along with Russ and the public school band director. Because she was not a regular part of the instrumental music ensemble context, however, I have treated her as an outside resource.

Three repeating ideas emerged in this theme: (a) outside assistance with learning system development; (b) outside assistance with notation; and (c) outside assistance with instrument.

Outside Assistance with Learning System Development

Individuals outside the ensemble context offered helpful suggestions to informants when initial questions about instrumental music participation arose. They also provided suggestions when changes in informants' learning strategies were necessary. The types of people assisting included a private music instructor, the aforementioned music teacher from a state school for the blind, and parents. In one instance, the informant did not actually remember who had offered a particular suggestion that became an important part of his learning process.

JUSTIN: Someone I don't remember who ... told us that the clarinet and the trumpet were in the same key ... you know and so ... I think that's what kind of brought about the idea.

RUSS: Now, when we're starting into the high school, my band teacher was wondering how we were gonna do this and, with my new band teacher, my music

teacher, and myself, we, um, we decided that he would ... my band teacher would give me the print music to give to my music teacher, and...

FRED: Your music teacher at SSFDB?

RUSS: Yeah ... and we'd work on that twice a week for an hour.

TREVOR: My first private lesson teacher that I had a while just, just told me "You know you can enlarge the music and I'm sure that'd be fine."

PAUL: Enlarging my music ... my parents suggested that to me ... I don't know why I had never thought of that before. (Paul speaking for parents) ... "Why don't you blow it up?" (Paul speaking for himself) ... "Oh right."

KARL: When we moved to Sunland, the first aid that the, uh, school hired for, in my class for me also happened to be a piano teacher and so she became my piano teacher, uh, she was only my aid for a couple of months, but actually, her main career was being a music teacher. She taught choir, um, and she eventually taught the band for a while when the first director who started it died, but uh, her main instrument was the clarinet, and so she was the one who suggested that I switch to the clarinet after I really wasn't making progress on the flute.

KARL: (*About obtaining Braille music notation*) I (inaudible) think my mom and the vision teacher decided that (inaudible) I was pretty comfortable ... I was pretty comfortable with it.

Outside Assistance with Notation

Understanding music notation was an area in which outside assistance was necessary in the experiences of nine of the eleven informants. For most informants, the assistance was provided at home. In one story, that of Patricia's, obtaining assistance transcribing print notation into Braille music notation required sending the ensemble part away to a hired transcriber. For Justin, in addition to the assistance he received from his mother, the ability to depart from the printed score was a skill he developed by listening to professional Jazz musicians who participated in an annual dinner dance with his school Jazz ensemble.

PATRICIA: (*About securing Braille music notation*) ... It used to be through the school. They paid for someone, but now I have to provide.

FRED: Is there someone through the school who knows Braille music?

PATRICIA: No, it's a person outside, 'cause, see, I'm the only blind person in my school.

DON: (*About private teacher's methods for teaching percussion parts*) Well he does it hand-over-hand, and I don't really mind that, it's just, you know, it's-it's, well hard because like to try and get it up to tempo.

FRED: Clarify that for me ... he does it hand-over-hand.

DON: Ok, like, he shows you what to do with your hands.

FRED: Ok, so, did he stand in front of you?

DON: Yes.

FRED: Or behind you?

DON: Uh, in front of me.

FRED: Ok.

DON: And he played it, and then, I tried to play it.

FRED: And, did you feel his hands do it or did he?

DON: Yeah.

FRED: Did he ever take your hands and...

DON: Yeah, he did it, he did that.

FRED: He did that too ... ok, so, so, there was a combination, he, him, first of all, him standing in front of you, and him doing the cross-over with you feeling his hands, and then switching.

DON: Yeah.

FRED: Um, alright, is there anything else about that that I ought to know that I don't know?

DON: Not really except for the fact that I only got three measures, that, that, that I only got twelve measures of the of the first movement of the marching show memorized (chuckle).

DON: Sometimes we do the whole play-back thing.

FRED: Play-back thing ... tell me more about that.

DON: You hear it, and then you play it.

FRED: Over a tape, or, or just him playing it for you and you playing it back?

DON: Him playing it for me.

FRED: Mmm, ok, do you have two sets of tympani when you're doin' this (pause) or are you switching off?

DON: I'm switching from drum to, um, drum really fast.

FRED: M-hmmm, but I, I mean when you're, when you're doin' the play-back method I mean, is he, is he using one set?

DON: Oh, no, no.

FRED: Ok, so the two of you are just switching back and forth?

DON: Yeah.

MARK: (*About private teacher recording parts*) Well I-I take private lessons and that's what we did.

JUSTIN: (*About visiting Jazz professionals*) You know, sometimes, they'll just, play certain things that aren't written on the page ... like, they'll, put a shake where one's not written or they'll put a gliss where there's not one specifically written ... so now, I, you know, I, I've kind of been able to figure that out ... you know, where I can just put those in, you know.

For most informants, assistance with notation was provided at or near home often by informants' mothers. For informants who were blind, such assistance often meant sitting and talking through what appeared on the printed page. For informants who had low vision, parents generally facilitated enlarging the printed ensemble part.

JUSTIN: I pick up some things in band and then my mom, she played the clarinet ... and ... she's the one who's been helping me learn it too ... you know I learn it by ear ... I know what notes are what pitch ... and things like that? ... and you know and so ... she was the one who helped me ini-initially startin' out you know? ... Mom was helping me out with her clarinet ... and-and you know my lesson teacher helps me with music if I need help with that?

JUSTIN: If there are instances in which I find I'm sittin' in band rehearsal and don't really know it, then you know we—we ... Mom and I go through it again.

PAUL: If I need help like formatting it correctly, if it won't all fit on one page, if I have to tape it together or something if it comes out on two pages, then I would usually ask for my mom or my dad's help.

TOM: Yeah, my mom enlarges it to eleven by seventeen for me ... and it ends up maybe like one ... like if you have a normal piece of music ... it's usually like nine or ten lines ... graph, uh, bar lines, you know?

FRED: Nine or ten staff lines?

TOM: Yeah ... and so she usually breaks it up into five staff lines on a page of eleven by seventeen paper.

CHRIS: I would just take it home and have my mom read me the notes and I'd memorize it.

RUSS: So I was able to sit down with my mom who knew music 'cause she played the piano for a while, and she was able to tell me the notes and how long they were and I was able to play it on the trombone that way by memorizing it ... so it required some extra time on her part to help me learn those music, but was such small pieces that that was an easy thing.

In two instances, students' vision teachers assisted with understanding notation. This assistance involved facilitating the complicated process of either creating Braille music notation ensemble parts or teaching students about the Braille music notation code.

KARL: So, I would give the print copy of the piece to my vision teacher who knew how to do Braille music. ... She didn't know before, but she learned how after, I-I came.

RUSS: (*About music teacher at state school for the blind introducing Braille music notation*) Half way through eighth grade, she was like, "Hey, how bout we start some Braille music?" And then, so, I've got books ... one that's like "Braille Music Made Easy" ... I think that's the name, but um, it basically taught you the basics for Braille music like the notes and stuff ... and that's mainly what I've learned, but there, I don't ... my music teacher didn't really have a book that would teach you all the complicated stuff in music now days ... so if you give me a really simple piece with no key changes or meter changes or anything, I could probably do that with Braille music, it'd be a little slow, but I could probably get it done ... but with all the complicated codas, key changes, and stuff in music now days, I haven't gotten that, or taken the time to learn how to read that in Braille music yet.

Outside Assistance with Instrument

Managing the musical instrument was another area in which informants found it necessary to seek outside assistance. Again, for most informants, these issues were addressed by parents or private teachers.

JUSTIN: It wasn't really difficult un until, uh like, it was like sophomore year I think when my high school band director was talkin' to me about correct embouchure ... and then you know once ... you know and then I I took that advice and talked to my lesson teacher about it ... and we you know we had worked on that in lessons then you know so that's how got more ... that's how I got better at that.

JUSTIN: My lesson teacher ... like in Jazz band, there might be shakes or something ... where I gotta talk to my lesson teacher about certain instances ... of that you know ... you know how to play a shake ... how to play a turn.

JUSTIN: There's this trumpet method book, the Arbis?? Book? ... which you know he ... there's some stuff about that in there that we've went through and ... things like that.

TREVOR: I have a private lesson teacher ... so we just kind of go things ... go over things with him most of the time ...

TREVOR: We do uh, other music ... just mainly like sight reading techniques ... kind of work on confidence ... you know ... stuff like that ...

TOM: But if it doesn't sound that good, I go to my director ... or I take private lessons from somebody who is usually a tuba player ... and I ask him ... and he can usually tell me, "Ok, this fingering sounds good for this note, but it doesn't sound very good for the note in the next octave up, so finger it THIS way."

RUSS: My mom wanted me to take private lessons ... just a little bit ... not very many of them just, cause, I was havin' some ... I talked to my music teacher, I was havin' some problems, um, uh, playing clearly and getting to get better.

FRED: Which music teacher was this?

RUSS: The one at the D and B.

FRED: Ok.

RUSS: So we, um, she called up one of her friends who's a tutor or a, um, someone to give me private lessons on the trombone ... and, we had only four lessons cause they were like, ooh how much? Like sixty dollars each, and um, I took these lessons like, um, every couple weeks, I had one, and we'd do one for like two hours, and mainly what we worked on in my lessons cause I was having a problem with breathing ... I couldn't breathe properly, and, um, he helped me out to learn how to breathe properly, and also some indignation problems and stuff like that ... in, in, I don't know if I can say the word, but tonguing ... intonation, yeah ... tonguing ... (inaudible) a better word (chuckle) ... intonation like tonguing?

FRED: And, intonation and tonguing ... sounds, uh, articulation maybe?

RUSS: Yeah! That's it.

In the cases of Karl and Russ, teachers who understood both instrumental music playing and visual impairment were available. There appears to be little data to support the degree to which this circumstance is believed to be rare. Of the eleven informants in the present study, however, Karl and Russ were the only two who reported access to both services from the same person.

KARL: (*About reed placement*) Yeah, but, because after that, I got it, but my vision teacher actually, because my band director at that time was going through a lot of trouble and didn't have time to help that much.

FRED: Ok.

KARL: This wasn't the main one I'm talking about.

FRED: Right.

KARL: (Inaudible) My vision teacher just practiced with me a lot and before that, I had had somebody else do it which was pretty embarrassing.

RUSS: (*About receiving help with trombone from music teacher at state school for the blind*) ... I could go to my music teacher and she's got a whole bunch of books that has the deal with trombone playing and we'd just look it up in there and she'd be able to tell me ... and she'd play the note on the piano and I'd try to match it with my trombone ... and we'd end up tryin' to do it that way.

Parents appeared less involved with instrument assistance than with notation assistance. For two informants, Chris and Russ, this assistance could be accessed either at home or close to home.

CHRIS: (*About questions about instrument*) Probably I would just ... I'd just probably look in the ... or in my, book, but I usually (inaudible) my, I learned the, the uh ... I learned my scales pretty well, so I usually don't, I usually know most of the notes, but if there was a time when I didn't, I would probably just get my mom to look it up in one of my band books.

RUSS: Um, my doctor here in (home town) is always willing to help me out ... he'll, um, teach me like if there's somethin' wrong with my legato or my, um, notes, or high notes, but he'll do it for free ... he's willing just to always help me when I need it.

Ensemble Directors

Ensemble directors emerged as principal figures in the experiences of the participants in this study. The following three repeating ideas addressed particular roles played by ensemble directors: (a) director as facilitator; (b) director as coach or advisor; and (c) director as recognizing ability.

Underlying each of these repeating ideas is a sense of the director as accessible or understanding or accepting. When this trait was present, informants described experiences in which directors were helpful in a variety of ways.

Ensemble Director as Facilitator

Informants who described ensemble teachers as facilitators in their learning provided specific information about how teachers assisted them with their participation in the ensemble or with their understanding of the music notation. In some instances, students spoke clearly about their perceptions of their teachers as helpful, nice, or accepting. Even in these instances, however, informants spoke also of specific ways the teachers facilitated their participation in the ensemble.

PATRICIA: In my older bands, they were very, very awesome ... they were very, um, accepting and just ... oh man, I-I have so many good things to say about ... My band director ... this was middle school and my freshman year of high school ... he would be so very willing to work with me, and, um, he would give me my music in advance ... he ... I was ... I received best, most outstanding percussionist award every year. He really thought it was outstanding that I couldn't see and I could still play.

KARL: He was really willing to work with us ... and uh pretty soon he realized that it would be ok and that's pretty much the way all of my teachers have always been.

LAURA: Uh ... well, there was uh a time when I had uh lost my piece of music and I couldn't find it (inaudible) like didn't get mad or anything ... he was completely fine and helped me find another copy and (inaudible) made a bigger copy of that for me.

TREVOR: And if there is any issue, uh, I will talk to the band director ... see if I can have it enlarged or any section I need ... you know if there's only one part of it you know ... have that part enlarged.

DON: Well, he counts off for me, which is like a God given thing ... even at concerts I'm like, "Yes!" ... and uh ... he's a just a darn nice guy.

DON: He leads me around places and stuff ... well, I mean like if I have to go down to the practice field for a, you know, practice session, sometimes, there's no one else in there, he'll help me.

KARL: And uh, so, the, the director and other kids would help the guide make sure that I was in the right place and, the guide would have his or her hand on my, uh, shoulder ... so that I could still play the clarinet with both hands.

A particularly interesting set of comments came from informants who described how their teachers approached them and offered to be accessible in facilitating their music learning. Similarly, other teachers responded to self-advocacy on the parts of other informants.

KARL: He would say, "Can I do anything to make this better?" and, and he, I said that, before he started, he should, you know, not just be silent But count or something and he, he usually did. He forgot occasionally ... but uh, he-he was pretty good about that.

LAURA: Uh, they came to me before hand and sort of ... before they passed out anything, to kind of see like you know if this is gonna be ok or if they needed to do something different ... that kind of helped out.

CHRIS: Um, well, my band teacher started recording stuff for me in like seventh grade, so I'd already been pretty used to that, so I just ... I was used to that, and so I just brought that over and told her that that was probably the best way.

RUSS: Um, one thing I'll do ... I'll do this sometimes like if a piece is really, really treacherous ... or hard ... I'll take my own tape recorder to the band class, and tape them playing ... I'll ask the teacher, "Can you play the piece one, one time through please?" and I'll record the piece. Then, so when I take it back to my dormitory, I can listen to it and play with my part with the tape to figure out where I'm s'posed to come in and stuff.

For three informants who were blind, teachers were accessible as teachers who played ensemble parts onto cassette tape for the students. In the case of Chris, his middle school teacher began recording his parts. Then, when he transferred to a private high school, he suggested placing parts onto tape, and the high school teacher obliged.

MARK: My teacher puts it on uh tape for me. She records all the music.

CHRIS: Um, my band teacher would either play it for me and record it on a tape and tell me the notes.

RUSS: But also my band teacher at UHS would take, um, time and put the music on a tape ... like say the notes and their values, and play it for me once through.

Several informants alluded to the fact that their teachers were prompt in addressing their access to materials or services. Two informants, Russ and Trevor, commented specifically about this quality in their teachers.

RUSS: Well, he'd hand out the music and said, "Russ, I'll make you a tape," and about the next day or the day after that, I'd be, I'd have a tape ...but it took extra time on the teacher's part to get that done.

TREVOR: You know, like I handed 'em the music back and said "I need an enlargement" or somethin' like that, they haven't, you know, I get it back, I can get it that day or, or you know, or they'll let me go do it myself.

Another valuable quality in teachers was their ability to recognize when students were having difficulty and act to either avoid or alleviate a problem for the student. Karl and Trevor both comment on this point.

KARL: Yeah, he-he-he was very helpful, uh during the marching, he would make sure--sure that I was doing the right thing and uh, occasionally, the guide would have some kind of, uh, issue where, for some reason, they didn't wanna come to the performance or something ... because, like if they had something else to do, and so the band ... one, one day, the band director and the guide who was also a saxophone player but to be honest, he wasn't really very good ... but they, they got into a huge argument because they're both just very emotional people ... and uh, so, anyways, I was on his side, because I wanted to do the performance which I rehearsed for--for weeks, and the, the guide wanted, decides he wants to do something else, and uh, so the band director always, you know, helped-helped me with those types of issues.

TREVOR: At another time ... last year I think ... we had to ... with football ... the stand music you know the ones they keep in little flip folders? ... Yeah ... I had one of those I thought, "Ok, you know, I can ... I can do this" and one um one of the band directors noticed that that, that I had a little trouble that I didn't think I was ... at the time ... um ... and he went and he had it enlarged so, it's kind of stuff like that.

Ensemble Director as Advisor or Coach

Another role fulfilled by ensemble teachers was that of advisor or coach. Students who described their teachers in this way shared stories about how their directors offered feedback or suggestions. Informants' stories in which feedback was described as helpful tended not to highlight acts that the teachers performed on the student's behalf. Rather, they demonstrated suggestions teachers offered students that the students were to act upon. Conversely, informants described accessing their ensemble directors for help or clarification.

One informant, Don, shared a comment that was not specific to him or his playing but expressed his appreciation of a conductor's sense of humor in motivating an ensemble. More often, study participants described helpful feedback that was volunteered by the teacher or that emanated from questions asked by informants.

DON: Well, Mr. D was older, he was a little bit more experienced, but yet, he knew how to motivate everyone to do things ... you know, he's funny ... he uses more of a nicer ... like he says, "That was real good, but you guys need to make sure that you play the correct note."

JUSTIN: Right like ... like you know there's-there's been times when Mr. D has recommended that ... you know or like ... "Ok we're gonna change tempos here ... " ... and y-you know "ok so when you hear um crescendo, you know cut-cut cut out and then you know figure out the new tempo..."

JUSTIN: Mr. D and Mr. A the band directors, they usually, you know, they usually talk to me about bringing a tape recorder? ... to help me out -- learnin' the pieces and stuff?

DON: He'll tell me where I screwed up (chuckle).

TOM: I mean like, I know that like I've IMPROVED since I've had a private teacher ... 'Cause the band director have said ... has said that ... like, since I've been taking lessons, he's said I have improved on my playing abilities so, the private teacher has definitely helped (pause) with my, um, music skills ... I mean my director has helped on my music skills 'cause I've gotten better but I mean: he

said since I've had this ... since I've had my teachers ... private teachers, I've improved my music skills.

KARL: Sometimes also, the director would explain something to me after class because I, I got along with him really well.

JUSTIN: Some-sometimes ... Mr. D y-you know say ... y-you know there might be times when I'll ask him a question about you know tempo or somethin'.

TREVOR: Most of the time ...if I have any issues ... I'll just kind of ask the band director or somethin' like that.

TREVOR: Any ... any of the directors ... you know ... they're all great ... you know ... if you need help with somethin', they're all pretty helpful you know.

PAUL: Um, I would either ask the section leader or the band director ... Because they're typically knowledgeable, knowledgeable about that stuff.

PAUL: Uh, yes, he was helpful. Uh, he was resourceful. When, when you came to him for one-on-one help, he would tell you exactly what you needed.

TOM: But if it doesn't sound that good, I go to my director...

KARL: Um, usually I-I would ask the band director, and he-he would, you know, lots of kids asked him about stuff like that, but sometimes, I'd just try to figure it out or not really worry about it because sometimes, you know, the band director had things that he had to be doing right at the end of class.

LAURA: Uh ... I guess just ... usually, the band director is ... you just ask him for anything, he's usually just up to doing anything for you.

LAURA: I might ask uh the band director ... something about that.

Ensemble Director as Recognizing Ability

A repeating idea that surfaced less frequently spoke to the role ensemble directors play in recognizing and addressing the abilities of informants. The few informants who discussed this idea clearly saw it as a very important factor to a positive experience in instrumental music.

PATRICIA: And my band director at that time, he loved for members to be involved in other organizations ... like drum corps and drum line and he actually introduced me to the drum and bugle corps activity.

DON: He noticed right from the start that I was more of a mature guy, and I didn't think that I could handle auxiliary anymore 'cause I just got tired of it ... I've matured since ninth grade too ... so he noticed right away, and he says, "You know, you, I think you're a much more mature person, and I think you could probably handle a tougher instrument" ... I said, "Oh yeah" (chuckle). So he says, "You know, why don't you go to the tympani?" I'm like, "OK!" (Chuckle).

KARL: And, sometimes we would just talk about other things too like uh, you know, just music in general and uh, uh, other things like that ... he-he also, he also said sometimes that I was the only person who got his jokes because he would talk about some kind of, uh, music composer that a lot of the kids didn't know about ... and uh, he, you know, sometimes I'd be the only one who would laugh at it because the, the other kids didn't know what he was talking about.

CHRIS: And then one of the things that ... that was of trouble for me was I was ... I wanted to try out for all state band and my teacher thought I would do well and ... they said I couldn't 'cause I couldn't do the sight reading piece ... kind of annoying so...

Peers

Comments about peer support mostly focused on how students who were not blind or visually impaired assisted study informants in learning their ensemble parts or participating in rehearsals and performances. Where ensemble directors were concerned, I labeled these types of comments facilitating learning. Where, when talking about ensemble directors eight informants offered at least one comment about teacher as facilitator, only a few study participants discussed peers similarly. Two repeating ideas emerged during these discussions: peer assistance with notation or instrument and peer assistance negotiating rehearsals and performances.

Peer Assistance with Notation and Instrument

Peer assistance, as compared to ensemble director or outsider assistance, was not solicited intensely by informants with tasks such as learning ensemble parts or understanding characteristics of musical instruments. Fellow students were, however, sources of answers to more limited questions such as those about unclear or unfamiliar markings in notation and unfamiliar finger placement on instruments. Two informants, Don and Chris, did indicate that peers assisted them with understanding larger amounts of printed notation. In other sections of their transcripts, however, both revealed that peers were not their principal sources of assistance for this task.

DON: They tell me, you know, they'd say, "A, this piece starts off with a tympani roll, and, and they you'd play this" or whatever ... they'd play it for me once or twice, and then I get it.

JUSTIN: Sometimes I'll just ask the people around me ... you know if I'm unsure of a note you know what's this note supposed to be.

PAUL: *(About section leader)* And once we were assigned our right parts, I would go about asking him for help enlarging the music if I wasn't able to do that on my own.

CHRIS: Um, sometimes I'll ask, you know, what's the first note ... of this song and ... because that's a good starting point.

KARL: *(About ensemble parts)* And sometimes, I would talk to friends about it also ... like the section leader, 'cause I was never the section leader, but uh, I was pretty good friends with the people who, who were.

RUSS: I've always had friends sit down with me and learn the music, same way, notes, tell me the notes, and play it once through and stuff like that.

RUSS: *(About issue with instrument)* Well if I was sitting in band class, I'd ask my fellow trombonists if they knew how to do it ... and I've made good friends with my high school trombonists that they ... usually help me out.

LAURA: *(About notation she did not understand)* For that, I might um ask uh someone around me ... another baritone who um has the same part.

Peer Assistance with Rehearsals and Performances

Peers also assisted informants in larger ensemble rehearsals and performances with interpreting nonverbal cues from the conductor and assisting with maneuvers in marching band. One facet of participating in performances that is not directly related to playing ensemble parts is performance etiquette. When to place instruments into position; when to stand; when to bow; these issues of protocol are all matters that ensemble directors typically address with their students. In performances, ensemble directors generally indicate, with nonverbal cues, how or when students are expected to demonstrate particular gestures.

Three informants who were blind described how peers assisted in managing performance etiquette. From the comments presented below, especially one statement provided by Karl, one can observe the value placed on conforming to expectations associated with this aspect of ensemble participation. Though brief, these interactions with peers were significant.

DON: They'll just, uh, tell me, you know, "A, we're about to play" I say, "OK." That's about it.

DON: Well, they tell me like, "1-2-3-4-off" or whatever ... or "roll" or somethin' like that.

KARL: (*About marching band*) ... I-I always used a guide, so we would get somebody to volunteer to be the guide and either, one of my friends, or somebody who was, uh, you know, used to be in the band that was in the orchestra, or occasionally somebody who was in the band but just wasn't a very good player, so, um, they, they just, uh, were my guide, and I had about six different guides during the years ...

CHRIS: Last year, you know, if the conductor put their hands up, which means, you know, bring your instruments up or whatever, somebody just tapped me on the knee ... We have it where, if, when they stepped on the podium, our

instruments went one place ... then, when they put their arms up, they went up to our mouths and then ... so on ... so I usually had somebody there (inaudible) just tap me on the leg or somethin' like that.

KARL: That was one of the hardest parts about concerts actually ... I was never really nervous about playing, uh, very much, but that standing up thing, just hoping that the kid would remember to tell me to stand up ... Sometimes, I would even feel his, you know, leg or something ... to, you know, see if he was standing up.

RUSS: Also, on stage and stuff, course I can't see when everybody stands up and bows and stuff ... and when everybody puts there horns up to play, so I'll have the guy next to me ... and usually, um, people are really good about this ... that I've played in bands with ... they're usually ... they'll tell me when horns up, stand up, bow, sit down ... And they're usually really good about that.

Effect of Human Intervention on Quality of Experience

The intervention and assistance in the instrumental music experiences of blind and visually impaired students participating in this dissertation study generally provided helpful assistance which can be observed in text provided in this chapter. There were, however, constrictions that should be mentioned. Some problems emerged as a result of the informants' needs to access special assistance. Other limiting factors were connected with the types of individuals offering or not offering assistance.

Parents, Private Teachers, and Other Professionals

Individuals from outside the instrumental ensemble context (parents, private teachers, and other professionals) clearly provided valued help understanding issues related to music notation and to operation of a musical instrument for most informants. Additionally, in the experiences of at least four informants, these human resources suggested solutions that informants had not considered as they struggled with various

issues. Two obstacles, time and financial resources, were associated with outside assistance to some extent. Limitations of time were not always identified as restrictive by informants. Rather, they were mentioned almost in passing. Some study participants, on the other hand, clearly stated predicaments posed by the amount of time involved in either accessing help or participating in the instructional process provided by other people.

DON: (*After lesson with private teacher*) ... I only got twelve measures of the first movement of the marching show memorized ...

JUSTIN: If there are instances in which I find I'm sittin' in band rehearsal and don't really know it, then you know we-we Mom and I go through it again.

FRED: (*About transcribing Braille music*) How much time does that usually take?
PATRICIA: Usually, two months, so basically it's kind of too late when I get it so I've already had it memorized.

TREVOR: Most of the time ... I'll ... you know ... I can uh ... I can just ask for the enlargement or I can go home and go ... go to a ... a copier somewhere and make the enlargement.

RUSS: So I was able to sit down with my mom who knew music 'cause she played the piano for a while, and she was able to tell me the notes and how long they were and I was able to play it on the trombone that way by memorizing it ... so it required some extra time on her part to help me learn those music, but was such small pieces that that was an easy thing.

RUSS: When I wasn't in a band, with my music teacher through ... half way through fifth to ninth grade ... the solo pieces that I'd do ... she'd sit down with me like twice a week, um, an hour each day, I mean an hour each time ... And, we'd go through the music note by note and the, um, time, um, quarter note half note stuff like that, and then we'd learn different sections and play the sections first on the piano so that I could make sure that I got it and then I'd play it on the trombone and eventually we got the whole piece memorized.

RUSS: I've never really had any problems learning music except with my band ... and this is what I ... when I said back earlier you have to take the extra time to get the stuff. Like with this band camp, um, I've had some problems getting music to me before I go to the band camp so we can get it on tapes ... that means ... so that ... if a blind person or a blind individual wants to do this, they have to get the music before hand or at the same time so they can get it on a

tape and get memorizing it ... 'Cause it has to take some extra time on the band instructor or whoever's in charge of the music and stuff.

RUSS: But I gotta take the time and effort to memorize it, and I usually get that done (laugh) ... And I usually can participate fully with the band.

RUSS: Well, it does take a lot of practice time to actually practice the instrument. Then it also takes a lot of time to, uh, memorize a piece, and then I have to go to class everyday.

Financial restrictions related to outside assistance surfaced much less frequently in the stories of study informants. Patricia, Russ, and Tom, however, revealed cost related concerns. Patricia's statement about outside help with Braille music notation, presented earlier in this chapter, revealed a sense of disappointment about the expenses of obtaining percussion parts for band.

One might assume that several informants would describe concerns regarding paying for private lessons. Russ, however, was the only informant who expressed this particular sentiment. In addition, connected with financial concerns, Russ mentioned two other problematic issues: shortcomings of substitutes for expert instrumentalists as private instructors and misguided positive feedback that discouraged accessing private instruction. Tom described expenses associated with providing his own enlarged copies of tuba parts for band. In reading Tom's and Patricia's statement, one wonders why these two informants and their families were required to provide their own ensemble parts in alternative formats. In other sections of their transcripts, it was revealed that their respective school systems resisted and ultimately refused to provide transcribing or enlarging services.

RUSS: I really never ever had personal lessons ... 'Cause we couldn't really pay for them 'cause they're so expensive ... So with my doctor here (in home town) and my teacher down at the D and B school who really didn't know anything about trombone, taught me the positions and the notes, I basically taught myself

to learn how to play and then I started attending band camp in ninth grade and I got some lessons there and this year, I also, we were able to pay for some lessons that I took and I was able to develop my technique and, yeah, for first four years of playing trombone ... fifth sixth seventh and eighth ... everybody's telling me I'm really good, really, I was really crummy ... 'Cause everybody wanted me to get a positive attitude, but someone at band camp said, "Russ, you really need to start working on your technique," and then I really started focusing on, "Yeah, I was a bad player, and I need to get better."

RUSS: ... I talked to my music teacher, I was havin' some problems, um, uh, playing clearly and getting to get better.

FRED: Which music teacher was this?

RUSS: The one at the D and B ... so we, um, she called up one of her friends who's a tutor or a, um, someone to give me private lessons on the trombone ... And, we had only four lessons cause they were like, ooh how much? Like sixty dollars each ...

TOM: (*About visiting a copy center*) ... Basically what happens is we go there ... pop it in the copy machine and make about, the copies we need and that's all we do. I mean copies are so expensive now that we can't afford to like mess up too many times.

Ensemble Directors

The degree to which ensemble directors intervened in informants' music learning in instrumental classes was surprising to the investigator in the present study. Clearly, upon reading comments from study participants, one can observe that helpful teachers' roles as facilitators and coaches as well as their ability to recognize untapped ability was appreciated by informants. Perhaps the most important helpful influence was the perception on the part of the informant of the teacher as willing or able to assist even if the support offered was relatively routine.

When this perception was not present, students' stories were less positive. Informants did not always indicate that their teachers were uncaring or uninterested, though this perception did emerge. Patricia, Paul, and Don described particularly difficult

experiences with ensemble teachers whom they believed lacked understanding of or concern about their disabilities. Patricia discussed several difficulties experienced with her second high school director, while Paul referenced struggles with his middle school director and the head band director at his high school. Don recalled frustrations with his first high school director. Patricia and Paul spoke specifically about lack of acceptance or understanding on the part of their band directors.

PATRICIA: He doesn't treat, um, members with special needs very well.

PATRICIA: Um, I wish that my band director would have been more acceptant ... of my disability.

PAUL: Well, because Mr. M told me that, you know, it would be a challenge for me ... and I'm not sure if that's because ... well, no, I'm positive ... it's because of my vision ... he thought, he thought that ... I think it's because he wasn't really sure about my, my condition, and he didn't understand in, in full detail what particularly in my condition was holding me back.

PAUL: Um, at the beginning of the year, there was, you know um, an introduction to the program and, in which we can ask questions ... let them in on things that we would need to know ... obviously, mine being my albinism ... and I would tell him that, and he didn't seem, you know, very interested ...

Not only did these informants view the individuals in question as lacking understanding, they also found them unwilling to facilitate their learning. Along with Don, in some instances, they even perceived their teachers as combative.

Two other informants indicated that they would have appreciated receiving ensemble parts early. Neither informant suggested, however, that failure to provide parts early was related to a lack of understanding or acceptance on the part of their teachers.

Tom attributed his choice not to pursue obtaining parts early to lack of organization on his teacher's part. Chris reported that his progress was impeded when his director simply forgot to provide recorded instruction.

PATRICIA: Well, when I ... when I first joined his bands, um, he really seemed to want to work together, and as the weeks went by, I started getting old ... I guess I wasn't new anymore. ... He ... he thought ... I guess he figured, "Well, this is taking so much time" or, you know, I really don't know.

PATRICIA: He could have been more willing to work with me ... he could have given me my music when I asked for it ... earlier ... he could have been much nicer about everything ... and he could ... he could have just you know not been so mad about everything.

PATRICIA: Well, it would just be the whole band playing and if I didn't play it right, my band director would yell at me ... he would say, "You're making noise ... all you do is make noise ... don't even play."

PATRICIA: Um, I would wait about three weeks into all the rehearsals and begin playing when I felt that I could play it. If my band director were to say ... you know to ask me to play in front of the whole band which he would do often ... yes ... very, um ... horrifying ...

PATRICIA: And the director would ... this was in, you know, my current high school ... he would get very, very angry because I couldn't memorize, um, fast enough and he would say, "You can't memorize ... you're not memorizing this fast enough" ... and he would ... he actually gave parts ... two pieces away to another kid because I couldn't memorize them fast enough he said.

PAUL: (sigh) Well, one of the directors in particular is not very understanding of my condition and there are a few other people with visual impairments in our band and he is not very understanding of them ... and, most people don't resort to this person for help.

PAUL: And I've explained to him several times that I often have trouble telling the difference between a sharp and a natural and, often times I play it a half step off and it sounds very bad ... and he doesn't seem to understand that I'm not doing it on purpose ... I'm not ... it's not a learning disability ... it's me not being able to see and constantly like switching them up.

PAUL: He doesn't, you know like scream at you in front of everybody ... he tells you like, "Hey, you keep missing this note. What can you do to fix this? Can you ... are you gonna not play here?" and several students encounter that scenario.

DON: Uh, he wasn't that good of a band director, because he would not realize that, in order to be successful, you have to be mo, somewhat motivating ... you know? ... he did not realize that, because most of the time he would, uh, he would just yell at us if we got something wrong but he would never motivate us to, to go right.

TOM: Uh, I don't think so ... it's just ... I think he just picks out a piece like at the spur of the moment ... I don't know if he really like picks a piece out a day or two early ... I think he just walks into the ... like, he may pick it out like the day before, but he doesn't ... I don't think he decides on the beginning of the week, "Hey, I think I'll pass out THIS song at the end of the week." ... I think he decides like that last afternoon or that morning ... he doesn't seem that kind of guy that would do something like that ... I mean I wouldn't mind doin' somethin' like that ... it's just I don't know if he actually does take it out like 2 or 3 days before or if he actually picks out that morning, "Hey, I think I'll: I think we should play this piece." ... 'Cause he's not really somewhat organized ... he's a little organized ... not much.

FRED: Is there anyone who stands in your way or makes it difficult?

CHRIS: Occasionally the band director (laugh) ... Just, kind of, not really sayin' like, sometimes she might forget to make the make the tape or somethin' like that ...

Perhaps the comments demonstrating the most intense disappointment reflected incongruence between informants' and teachers' perceptions of ability. For Patricia, in addition to receiving unfulfilling assignments in band, she felt discouraged by her director from participating in community music ensembles.

PATRICIA: Usually, he would give me a very, huh, simple parts I hate to say ... like a snare part because he didn't like me — I hate to say — but, but he would give me a part where there were four other people playing it and ... you know, basically, I felt like I didn't even need to be there because there were so many people playing it that I just ... you know, I'd have to play it, so I'd learn it from them.

PATRICIA: Oh, I've asked him for challenging parts and he's like, "No ... whatever" you know, he doesn't really pay attention.

PATRICIA: And my band director ... um ... well, when I you know at my current school, he hates any of that ... he thinks his band is very ... is the most important ... you shouldn't do anything but his band.

PATRICIA: Well, he'd be like, "You don't think this band is important" you know "you're, you're just wasting my time" you know.

PAUL: He (the middle school director) said to me, for example, marching was gonna be very, very difficult, uh, so difficult that he didn't recommend I do it ... he recommended that I talk to the director Mr. S about not participating in, in the marching.

DON: Well he was a nice guy, but it's just, I wish that he would ... I wish that he would have not put me on the auxiliary stuff then, because they needed more, more of a — I don't know — bassist and a more experienced percussionist ... because I'm more experienced than a lot of the people he made play some of the more complicated instruments ... well, I don't know. I guess he was a little afraid of ... 'cause I didn't really get to show him what I could do before I came.

Peers

In comparison to people from outside the instrumental music context and ensemble directors, peers presented relatively few influences related to the music learning of blind and visually impaired students participating in band or orchestra. Peers played a greater role in social connection: a topic to be addressed in Chapter Seven of this dissertation study.

Peers did provide some limited learning assistance to study informants. They answered specific questions about notation particularly. Four informants who were blind also described how they employed peer assistance to understand conductors' gestures signifying musical entrances and releases as well as performance etiquette expectations. One informant, Karl, recounted how peers facilitated his participation in marching band. Unhelpful actions linked to fellow students and learning music or participating in the ensemble were complicated to label. It was unclear, in some instances, if problematic behavior on the part of peers was more emblematic of social harassment or intentional interference with learning. Though the motivations of difficult peers may have been social in nature, because the behavior affected informants' abilities to participate in music making in some cases, I have cited them in this chapter.

An additional frustration in the experience of one informant, Karl, was a result of lack of availability on the part of a peer. From Karl's comment, however, one can observe the disappointment.

DON: (Chuckle) Ok, back in middle school, there was this one kid that just ticked me off ... like he would just like take, like if I dropped my stick, he would take it, and like, just kind of mess with it, and I'd be like, "T, give it back man."

TREVOR: Sometimes the paper's just kind of a little too big to fit on the stand ... uh ... Where I went a little bit too big on the sides ... so I'm not like other people you know ... I don't like to make it ... have a big scene you know where I have this gigantic music sittin in front of me ... some of the other people that ... you know ... that aren't gonna be kind ... you know ... they like to poke ... poke fun at anything just for the heck of it.

KARL: One time, we couldn't find a guide to uh march with me during something ... So uh, even though I'm not really crazy about marching, I did feel kind of bad about that ... Even though I didn't tell anybody that I felt bad about it.

Conclusions

The data presented in this chapter emerged from asking about the extent to which individuals such as teachers, parents, and peers assist students who are blind and visually impaired with participation in instrumental music classes. Two component issues were investigated: How other people assisted blind and visually impaired students and how their intervention affected informants' quality of experience in the ensemble. The research studies cited in chapter two of this dissertation revealed that students with disabilities received assistance from other people in music class; however, in these reports, even if the nature of the assisting person's role in the school culture was defined, the exact type of support they provided was not.

The following three themes, foregrounding particular types of individuals, emerged in the data: (a) individuals operating outside the instrumental music context

(parents, private teachers, and other professionals), (b) ensemble directors, and (c) peers. Repeating ideas highlighting roles and learning strategies involving these agents surfaced within each theme.

For most informants, intervention from other people was welcomed and viewed as encouraging the quality of their instrumental music experience. There were, however, occasions in which other people discouraged study informants in their learning and participation.

Individuals operating outside the context of the band or orchestra (parents, private teachers, and other professionals) assisted with developing systems for learning ensemble parts, understanding of printed music notation, and understanding issues related to use of the informant's chosen musical instrument. Generally, these outside resources provided valuable assistance that was described by study informants. Limitations of time and financial resources did emerge in the experiences of some study participants.

Ensemble teachers emerged as prominent in the experiences of informants, fulfilling the following roles: (a) chief instructional facilitator, (b) advisor and coach, and (c) observer of unrealized informant ability. Difficulties emerged when informants perceived ensemble directors as lacking understanding and acceptance of disabled people. Perhaps this perception limited informants most profoundly as it seemed that, where there was lack of understanding or acceptance, there also was failure to facilitate, to coach or encourage, and to recognize ability. Interestingly, when conductors were perceived as unorganized in their planning, they were not described as strong facilitators of informants' learning. They were not labeled, however, as lacking acceptance or

understanding. Neither were they considered unwilling to coach disabled students or to recognize their abilities.

Peers were less involved than outside individuals or instrumental music teachers in assisting blind and visually impaired ensemble members. Sighted students provided modest help with understanding print notation. They also provided important assistance to individuals who were blind with particular conducting gestures, especially those related to performance etiquette.

Peers did demonstrate some behaviors that presented a dilemma — namely, whether or not their behavior was socially or instructionally constraining. In two instances, peer actions such as teasing or lack of availability inhibited informant participation in music making, so the examples were presented in this chapter. Peers, perhaps not surprisingly, exerted a greater role facilitating or hindering social connection which will be explored in depth in Chapter Seven.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SOCIAL CONNECTION

Music education as aesthetic education became the dominant philosophical approach among music scholars and practitioners during the mid-twentieth century. Eventually encapsulating their orientation with the phrase “music for music’s sake,” aesthetic educators encouraged the study of music for its inherent qualities. Their assertion was that music deserved a place in the school curriculum equal to that of the sciences or the language arts. This position arose somewhat in opposition to the pragmatists who promoted music as a tool to develop moral character, physical health, and mental stability (Finney, 2002).

Recently, perhaps revisiting pragmatist thinking, music educators have begun considering the psychosocial benefits derived from the social context of music making (Thomas, 1992; Maehr, Pintrich, & Linnenbrink, 2002). The literature reviewed in chapter two of this report suggested that, with the rise of mainstreaming, school officials began placing children with disabilities in music class to fulfill social goals on the IEP. Perhaps administrators and special educators believed that these students would experience psychosocial gains from attending music classes with non-disabled peers. However, the social experiences of students with disabilities in music class are still in question.

What is known is that feelings of isolation are prominent among students with disabilities who are mainstreamed and fully included in public schools. Evidence of this fact was presented in Chapter Two of this dissertation. Unfortunately, the studies in which disabled students expressed feelings of isolation did not reveal data about disabled students in music class specifically.

My study was built, in part, on the assumption that the social context for music making is important. I wondered if there was reason to believe that the social experiences of disabled students in band or orchestra were different from those who were not involved in music. This line of inquiry led me to the following research question: To what extent do blind or visually impaired secondary school students' perceptions of social connectedness determine the quality of their experiences in instrumental music classes?

The construct of social connectedness as a factor in the quality of experience arose from an article by Sullivan and Wodarski (2002). In their discussion, these authors revealed the extent to which gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, and questioning (LGBTQ) students experience social disconnection from the general public school culture as it related to their gender status, or what I refer to as their “otherness.” Applying this construct to the present study was not, however, intended to equate issues of gender with issues of disability. What was relevant to my research study was the notion of “otherness” — i.e., a quality or characteristic that causes an individual to stand out or be perceived as different. More specifically, I wanted to understand if a sense of otherness influenced a person’s ability to connect with their peers and feel part of the ensemble culture. It is important to note that my underlying presupposition was that a student’s otherness, by virtue of their disability, could be a barrier to the creation of social bonds as

well as being part of the dominant ensemble culture. I was open, however, to be proven incorrect in my assertion.

I also chose the concept of social connectedness because it allowed me to investigate the student's own perception of inclusion and integration. The alternative would have been to ask students if they felt accepted by their peers. This would have proven counterproductive to the primary goal of this research study—to obtain information about their experience from their own personal perspective and in their own words. Inquiry into social connectedness placed students' own perspectives front and center, whereas asking about social acceptance meant asking them to make inferences about their peers' perceptions of them.

Informants in this study were encouraged to share their experiences of social connectedness. In particular, students were asked the following question: Can you tell me about a time when you really felt a part of the band or orchestra? However, students were not asked to rate the quality of their experience. I assessed the quality of their experience globally, based on the overall tone of the narratives they provided. That is not to say that students did not offer specific language that described how they felt about their participation in band or orchestra.

With regard to the influence of social connectedness on the quality of experience, the responses from informants were highly individualized, though a few unifying themes became apparent. The degree to which social connectedness influenced the quality of experience depended upon the student's motivation for enrolling in the class in the first place. Social connectedness had a minimal influence of the quality of experience of students who enrolled in band primarily because of a strong musical interest. On the other

hand, students who sought enrolling in band or orchestra as an opportunity for socialization were impacted to a greater extent. Considering this trend, I identified the following three categories for cataloging informants' experiences: (a) the experiences of young intending professionals in music; (b) the experiences of students for whom band was like a family; and (c) the experiences of students who enjoyed making music with their school peers. In this chapter, I have presented a description of each category. Within the discussion of the categories, I have summarized the instrumental music experiences of the students whose stories were expressed by that category. Then, I have elucidated the role of social connection in the informants' experiences.

Young Intending Professionals in Music

Four informants, Justin, Mark, Don, and Patricia, expressed interest in pursuing music related careers. To some extent, this motivation appeared to be the important factor in their general experience of instrumental music. It was, in essence, their interest in musical accomplishment that drove their participation. Social purposes for playing in band or orchestra appeared less important, though in two cases, negative interactions disturbed informants' general enjoyment of ensemble participation.

Justin reported a very positive instrumental music experience, which he attributed primarily to participating in the school's Jazz ensemble. Accordingly, it was the experience of "just making up the solo on the spot" that kept him motivated to participate. He also enjoyed opportunities his teacher had created to arrange and compose for the jazz ensemble. Reflecting on his completed pieces, Justin said, "So, I'm gonna have to do more of these, y-you know, maybe I'll major I'll major in music composition."

As evidenced by the following interview excerpt, for Justin, clearly, the benefits of ensemble participation were musical:

JUSTIN: Oh ... I ... well I I, I think I'm mainly into the jazz side of things ... you know I mean ... I mean symphonic band and marching and you know they're not bad I ... I like doin' 'em?

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: But I I think jazz band is, you know is gotta be my favorite.

FRED: Really?

JUSTIN: 'Cause ... you know cause I ... you know I've ... I've become good at improvisation...

FRED: Mmm...

JUSTIN: Of jazz solos...

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: You know just just makin' up the solo on the spot.

FRED: Right.

JUSTIN: Pretty cool, you know.

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: That, that's one thing that keeps my interest in jazz.

FRED: Is improvisation?

JUSTIN: Yeah.

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: You know especially with combo, I I get to do more of it...

FRED: Right.

JUSTIN: You know 'cause jazz band, there's a lot of full ensemble playing...

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: And y-you know there are some solos.

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: But you know when when you get to combo, the only thing you really do as an ensemble is the, is the theme of the song...

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: Like a little twelve sixteen bar melody and then the soloist improvise over a chord change, over those chord changes ... on that melody.

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: And y-you know ... and then and then we go back to full ensemble playin that melody again and then the ending...

FRED: M-hmmm...

JUSTIN: You know.

Justin's connectedness to the band was through music much more than social relations. In contrast to other students who stated enjoying the process of making music

with peers, Justin valued the opportunity to play alongside professionals. He explained that “modeling the pros” was a welcomed benefit of membership in the band program.

Throughout the interview, Justin’s portrayal of his social experiences was secondary to the thrill of making music. He mentioned, almost in passing, social interactions at gatherings that occurred after athletic events such as football games. “... everyone else was doin’ it, you know. Why shouldn’t I?” portrayed Justin’s attitude and rationale for participating in social events sponsored by the music ensemble.

JUSTIN: Well ... you know I mean there there’s some times been social events that have been organized by certain people like say after a football game that the marching band’s just done...

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: You know we’ll go to have ... have a party or somethin’... you know...

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: You know a social event and um you know I’ve participated in those and joined in with ‘em...

FRED: Uh-huh uh-huh.

JUSTIN: You know so ... you know I mean you know everyone else was doin’ it you know. Why shouldn’t I?

Justin did, however, discuss in more detail the development of more enduring relationships that, to some extent, arose out of the social context for his music-making experience. This dialogue supported the assertion that he had a positive experience in band. He forged a close relationship with a female member of the marching program:

JUSTIN: Like the past couple of years you know I I had had this girl from color guard...

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: Who-who’s become my friend you know.

FRED: Ok.

JUSTIN: You know we did ... y-you know we met at a dance...

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: You know we just happened to meet up and we danced the whole night together.

FRED: Uh-huh.

JUSTIN: And then that was the year that the band went to Florida for spring break.

FRED: Uh-huh.
JUSTIN: You know Disney World and things like that and and we were hangin' out together in all the parks.
FRED: I see, ok.
JUSTIN: You know we were goin' around together and you know ... you know and that that continued into we started sittin' at lunch together.
FRED: Uh-huh.
JUSTIN: You know and we ... and we even did prom together last year.
FRED: Oh, how nice.
JUSTIN: So...
FRED: That's great.
JUSTIN: You know and ... and we're still talkin' to each other you know she'll ... you know there'll be times when she'll just call me at random and...
FRED: Uh-huh.
JUSTIN: We'll talk...
FRED: Uh-huh.
JUSTIN: You know even though she's in college.
FRED: She's in college now?
JUSTIN: Yeah.
FRED: Uh-huh.
JUSTIN: We're still talkin'.
FRED: Great.
JUSTIN: You know she's still livin' at home too so we can still hang out.
FRED: Right.
JUSTIN: You know so that's cool.

Similar to Justin, Mark described music-related reasons for participating in instrumental music. When asked, for example, if he would consider joining clubs or organizations in his high school, he responded by saying, "If it's anything that's music, I'd probably consider it." Also like Justin, Mark expressed interest in being a music major in college. Unlike Justin, however, Mark was unable to identify friends in the ensemble.

Mark's rather standard response to questions about his reasons for playing the violin or participating in orchestra was, "Cause it's fun."

Perhaps, because he was a normal adolescent in many ways, it was sometimes difficult to encourage him to elaborate on his generally short answers. It was clear, however, that his experience in orchestra was good.

Mark's passion for music may have contributed the most to his positive experience in instrumental music. He explained that he routinely listened to classical music on the radio and that his favorite composer was Bach. He also enjoyed learning pieces in orchestra class that involved fiddling.

FRED: Can you tell me about one time when you felt particularly good? Was there sort of a concert or, or, practice that just really felt great for one reason or another?

MARK: We play, well, well, when we started a really cool fiddling song, I thought it was real fun to play.

After I asked several different ways what constituted "fun", Mark revealed that he liked pieces that employed fast bowing, wide ranges, and harmony.

FRED: Ok, so you really enjoy pieces that have a lot of range and go high and that involve fiddling.

MARK: M-hmmm.

FRED: Have you ever — this doesn't necessarily have to be with this teacher — have you ever had pieces that you thought were bad?

MARK: Uh, no.

FRED: No ... wow ... that's great. So this teacher has managed to pick all pieces that are fun?

MARK: Yeah.

FRED: And do exactly what you like for them to do. Alright, excellent, that's helpful.

MARK: And also they sound nice with all the harmony.

FRED: Ah ... ok, sound nice with the harmony ... with the other instruments?

MARK: Yeah.

FRED: Cellos and violas? Second violins?

MARK: Yeah.

FRED: Are you playing pieces that are in four parts?

MARK: Yeah.

FRED: Fabulous.

MARK: Sometimes we do more.

FRED: What's that?

MARK: Sometimes we do more parts.

FRED: More parts than four?

MARK: Yeah

FRED: Great ... alright ... and do you like those even better?

MARK: Yeah.

Imbedded in the discussion about fun music was Mark's suggestion that his teacher contributed to his quality of experience. "... for one thing, she picks out some good music," was the initial response to a question about how he knew she was a good teacher. Additionally, Mark appreciated strategies she used for keeping the group together.

MARK: Um, she teaches well.

FRED: She teaches well. In what way? We'll probably talk more about this later on.

MARK: Like, um, (pause) ah, sometimes when when when we're not together, she'll use a metronome to keep us together.

Mark also attributed much of his successful experience in orchestra to taking private lessons. "That's why I'm real good," he explained, after revealing that he had studied privately for five years. In his lessons, at the time of our interview, he and his teacher were working together on the Bach concerto in E minor. "Probably half the kids in our class couldn't play that, I bet," he posited as he discussed how helpful private lessons had been in his music education.

Little, if any, of Mark's good experience in orchestra appeared related to social connection. When asked if he had any particularly good friends in the orchestra, he responded, "No not really." When asked about the extent to which he felt a part of the group, he commented that, "I think I feel generally everyone's pretty good, and I feel like we all work together well." He did confirm having friends in the general school culture and in his community boy choir. He reported sometimes spending time with these friends outside of school. Mark did not appear to believe that any lack of social connection was

related specifically to his disability. He attributed this situation to the fact that he and his family lived in a township somewhat removed from the school's immediate vicinity.

FRED: Uh, we talked a little bit about your friends in the boy choir and your friends in orchestra.

MARK: Uh-huh.

FRED: And we talked a little bit about the fact that ... that you live a little bit of a ways from them, um, you live in the township ... right?

MARK: M-hmmm.

FRED: And, and a lot of them live in the town. I'm just curious ... do you get a sense that they see each other out of school a lot?

MARK: Oh yeah.

FRED: They do ... ok ... alright ... and so what kinds of things do you get the sense that they do outside of school?

MARK: Well plus ... we live in a neighborhood, um, it's basically quiet streets and, no one really lives nearby us.

FRED: I see.

MARK: So I really don't see anyone.

Similar to Justin and Mark, Don described a high level of musical interest that drove his participation in instrumental music. His future plans involved recording engineering.

DON: See, I'd really like to also be a sound engineer, cause I wanna go on tour with a whole bunch of bands and meet 'em and be this huge celebrity that does sound engineering and, you know...

FRED: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

DON: Gets calls all the time that say, "Hey A could you do this sound engineering gig for us at, uh, four in Florida?" I'm like, "Yeah, sure" (chuckle).

"I love it" was Don's response to how he felt about band. The essence of Don's positive experience was, in his words, "... the glorious feeling that you get when you win." Unlike Justin, but similar to Mark, he did not have strong social bonds with his peers either during school or outside of school. One can gather, consequently, that this lack of social connectedness did not have a major negative impact on the quality of his overall experience.

FRED: What do you love about being in band?

DON: Well you know, just imagine if you were on the marching band field ... you've just won the grand champion.

FRED: M-hmmm...

DON: Just imagine that glorious feeling that you get when you win.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm...

DON: You're like, "YES!"

FRED: M-hmmm...

DON: "We won the competition."

FRED: M-hmmm...

DON: And one day — I never thought we'd do this — at Carrie? Band Day, we placed third out of forty bands.

FRED: Wow ... that's excellent ... um, would you say that that's your main reason for participating?

DON: Yeah.

FRED: That, that feeling of winning competitions and that glorious feeling.

DON: Yeah.

The times when Don felt social connectedness revolved around performances and competitions. He explained, for example, that he felt a part of the group when his band won competitions and fellow ensemble members congratulated him for his contributions to the group's performance. He also described feeling a part of the ensemble when the drum major encouraged him and his fellow percussionists by saying things such as "You guys can handle this I think." Moreover, having the opportunity to talk with the drum major and get to know this individual personally also contributed to Don's feelings of connectedness.

DON: Yeah, when the drum major's telling us, you know, "You guys can handle this I think."

FRED: Uh-huh.

DON: The drum major, and I get to know the drum major, then I really feel a part of the group, because drum major's like one of the key elements to a marching band.

Bonding with his peers over victory offered him one of the few opportunities to be fully embraced by the group. It can be speculated that Don expected these moments of connection to extend to his day-to-day life. This was invaluable to him. As he explained,

it helps to have a lot of friends. Given his disability, having friends meant having people willing and able to help him accomplish necessary tasks. More importantly, he eagerly wished to be regarded as a typical adolescent. He stated, "... hopefully everyone . . . will realize that I'm just a senior like everyone else. The only thing is that I can't drive."

FRED: What are some other reasons that you participate?

DON: The friends.

FRED: Friends?

DON: Yes.

FRED: Ok, tell me about the friends.

DON: Everyone ... mostly everyone is really really nice to me.

FRED: M-hmmm...

DON: And uh, you know, I just get a lot of it ... I just get a lot that helpful feeling if I have a lot of friends and it helps, when we're not doin' anything you know, it kind of helps me do more stuff.

FRED: Helps you do more stuff ... tell me about that. What do you mean?

DON: Well sometimes I need some transportation, some movies, and, or whatever and, you know, they'll say, "Do you wanna ride with us?" I'll say, "Yeah! Sure!"

When probing further about spontaneous social gatherings such as attending movies, I actually learned that Don often felt left out of these events. Don voiced disappointment and explained that his peers' behavior tempered his general experience in band. As he explained, "I hate to have to invite myself."

DON: It only happened, actually, come to think of it, I can only remember going out with Greg and a few of his friends last year and that was about the only thing that happened to me all year (chuckle).

FRED: Oh really?

DON: Really.

FRED: You mean like one time or?

DON: Yeah.

FRED: Oh, ok.

DON: That's just about the only thing that happened all year.

It can be argued that adolescents who participate in large groups such as bands and orchestras naturally develop smaller circles of friends. Perhaps, naturally, they include and exclude some members based on criteria that have little to do with disability.

Don, however, wondered about the extent to which his disability entered into his peers' decision not to tell him about these gatherings.

FRED: Well, one of the things that you mentioned was that it didn't happen more often because you suspected that maybe people were uncomfortable leading you around or got tired of leading you around or something like that.

DON: Well, yeah, I, I said that maybe they didn't feel like driving me places.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm, and what I wondered is if they've ever said anything along those lines that made you think that.

DON: Well, they haven't said anything, but, but I think they just do that to be nice, but I guess...

FRED: They do what to be nice?

DON: They don't say anything.

FRED: Ah, ok, uh-huh ... is your sense that they go out a lot?

DON: I, yeah, I ask them a lot and they're like, "Yeah! We just went out last night" I'm like, "Come on guys!"

FRED: Oh.

DON: "I wanna go." (chuckle).

FRED: Uh-huh, uh-huh, uh-huh.

DON: You know?

FRED: Right ... sure you do.

DON: And I said, "I hate that I have to invite myself, but it's the only way that I can get you guys to help me out here. (chuckle).

FRED: M-hmmm...

DON: "I'm a teenager; I don't need to be stuck inside of a solitary shell here, you know what I mean?"

Unfortunately, there were other instances that tempered Don's feelings of connection. In the context of rehearsals, he experienced difficult interactions with peers. In one example he provided, Don reported that a peer had informed him at the end of his junior year that he was to be a co-section leader during his senior year. Without confirmation from his band director, Don proceeded to take on the role of co-leader of the percussion section in his band. He approached his job with due diligence and exerted strict discipline on the new and younger members of the band. Much to Don's disappointment and embarrassment, he learned from his band director that this he was not

a section leader. In his view, he had been set up by a classmate to commit socially awkward offenses.

DON: Well, actually, it appears that I wasn't even co-section leader I found out, so uh, they were being very mean to me I found out during the first week of practice.

FRED: Uh-oh, tell me about this.

DON: And uh, I was tryin' to help out my section a little bit because, you know, they, there's a lot of freshmen in my section this year and I thought I'd kind of help them get off to a good start and then be their friend and after words, I thought I'd be a little bit strict at first so that way they would not disrespect anyone later.

FRED: M-hmmm.

DON: But, my friend, uh well, my teacher told me that uh, "You've been bossy and a little mean today." I said, "Listen, I was told that I was co-section leader, the pit..."

FRED: Mmm...

DON: By, well, I didn't mention any names." So, we went a little deeper into it, and my parents had even heard him say this much at the banquet last year, but, at the marching band banquet.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm.

DON: Matter of fact, it was the same person that I mentioned that got in the way this year, but I'm thinking now that he may have done this just to play an evil joke on me.

FRED: Oh (Spoken long)...

DON: 'Cause no one knew about it.

FRED: Oh, how confusing ... ok, so you, you never really heard from your band director that you were co-section leader. You had heard this from some, from this, from this guy.

DON: Yeah.

FRED: Oh, I see, alright, so one way, one way or another, you were under the impression that you were co-section leader, but your band director tells you now that you're actually not.

DON: Exactly.

FRED: Is that what I'm hearing?

DON: M-hmmm.

FRED: Ok, ok, that kind of changes this question completely doesn't it?

DON: Yes it does.

FRED: (Chuckle) Um...

DON: Unfortunately, I hate to have you have to rewrite that.

FRED: Well no, that's alright, that's not a problem for me. It sounds disappointing for you.

DON: It was! Let me tell you.

FRED: Yeah.

DON: Nobody wanted me in the pit just because I was strict for the first week? I mean come on.

This scenario begged the question whether Don's social experience would have been different if he were not visually impaired. On the other hand, I wondered about Don's level of social savvy in general, irrespective of his disability, for not confirming with his band director about his status in the band. Perhaps in his eagerness to be accepted, to hold a leadership position, to feel social connectedness, Don failed to make a realistic assessment of the social situation he was in. On the other hand, not being sighted was a detriment to him because he could not use visual cues like facial expression or other such paraverbals to gain feedback from his peers about the role he was playing.

Like Don, Patricia expressed a very clear interest in music as a career.

FRED: Do you think you'll continue to play your instrument?

PATRICIA: Oh gosh ... I have like eight more years of college.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PATRICIA: 'Cause I want to be a doctorate of music, so if I didn't, there'd be a major problem (Chuckle).

Patricia had two separate experiences to draw on. For one high school band experience she offered many positive statements; for the other, she had few heartening things to report. The first experience took place in a school an hour away from her home. She attended this school because it serviced students who were blind or visually impaired through a mainstreaming program. When asked to describe her experience at this school, she explained:

PATRICIA: I loved it ... I loved rehearsals ... I loved marching band, um, I loved football games ... I loved all of it.

FRED: M-hmmm ... tell me what was so good about it.

PATRICIA: Just, uh, the atmosphere ... everybody was so awesome ... just they would just always talk to me.

FRED: Uh ... the other people in your group you mean ... would talk to you?

PATRICIA: Yeah.

Eventually, Patricia's family pushed for vision services to be provided at her home high school. Patricia understood that she was to be the first blind student to attend this institution. Unfortunately, like Don, her reports about her experiences in band at her neighborhood school were less than favorable. From Patricia's perspective, her disability made it difficult for her to integrate into the group. Regarding her peer group, she explained:

PATRICIA: They didn't know how a blind person was...

FRED: Huh?

PATRICIA: They were a little ... they hadn't seen one before.

FRED: Really ... are you the first blind person to have attended this school?

PATRICIA: Yes.

FRED: Very interesting ... ok, so that does put you in a position of having to be, uh, uh, kind of a trail blazer doesn't it?

PATRICIA: Yes.

When asked if there was anyone in her peer group who she considered a friend, she explained that she mostly felt belittled and used by her peers.

FRED: Was there anyone at all ... any of, uh, any of your peers, um, that you could consider a friend ... or?

PATRICIA: Not really.

FRED: Not really ... ok, ok.

PATRICIA: And if they were, they would just treat me like a baby or use me to ... as an excuse to be late for a class.

FRED: Use you as an excuse to be late for a class?

PATRICIA: Yeah.

FRED: Really?

PATRICIA: Yeah.

FRED: Like ... like how would that happen?

PATRICIA: Like they would say ... like they would lead me to a class.

FRED: Um-hum.

PATRICIA: They would say, "Oh, I was leading Patricia."

FRED: Huh, huh, ok, did they lead you from ... I mean, um, um, is that something that they did regularly was lead you from class to class?

PATRICIA: Yeah.

She further explained that her interactions with band members were very superficial, at best. Once again she attributed the social disconnect, in part, to her disability.

PATRICIA: No, actually, my friends ... they weren't ... when you ... I guess it's when you can't see ... um ... they ... I tend to find that they only say "hi" to me or they won't really engage in long conversations.

Talking appeared to be an important factor in determining Patricia's sense of connectedness. Patricia would have felt more socially connected if her peers had talked to her more.

In another section of our interview, I asked her to describe times in which she felt a part of the group. In the second ensemble, she reported feeling somewhat connected during football games, but her connections were with adult chaperones.

FRED: I'm wondering if you can tell me about a time, um, in either group or in both groups when you really felt a part of the band.

PATRICIA: Um, well in the first group, everyday everywhere.

FRED: Wow.

PATRICIA: (Chuckle) It's just ... in the second group, probably ... oh ... probably at football games.

FRED: Ok.

PATRICIA: Probably ... that's probably the most time.

FRED: The most times ... what would happen at football games that would make you feel a part of the group?

PATRICIA: Um, just everybody having fun and, you know, being on the road together and ... huh ... all of it pretty much.

FRED: M-hmmm, ok, alright, um, but you've mentioned in other parts of the interview that in this, in this most recent ensemble that folks weren't particularly friendly.

PATRICIA: They weren't. Mostly, it was the adults, actually. They ... I seem to get along better with adults.

FRED: Uh ... the, uh, chaperones and the like from the ensemble?

PATRICIA: Yeah.

Unlike Justin, Mark, and Don, a series of negative experiences with her band director greatly colored Patricia's perception of her experience in band. In fact, these

difficult interactions did contribute to Patricia essentially discontinuing her participation in band.

PATRICIA: Well, it would just be the whole band playing and if I didn't play it right, my band director would yell at me ... he would say, "You're making noise ... all you do is make noise ... don't even play."

FRED: Huh, huh.

PATRICIA: So, I've had to ... I didn't attend ... I didn't attend the spring concert, because I felt like I wasn't needed and I hated it ... I started to hate the band director.

FRED: Ah.

PATRICIA: I started to hate going to rehearsals because of his lack of patience...

FRED: Mmm...

PATRICIA: Working with me.

Patricia went on to relate the fact that her relationship to her band director had deteriorated over time.

PATRICIA: Well, when I ... when I first joined his bands, um, he really seemed to want to work together, and as the weeks went by, I started getting old ... I guess I wasn't new anymore.

This pattern of relating adversely to the director affected her ability to be involved in the band. According to Patricia, she was relegated to a single instrument because her disability required more help than was available to her.

PATRICIA: Um, well, as it started getting further into the year, he started to just keep me on one instrument, because he didn't feel like to have people lead me to each instrument.

Another frustrating aspect of band was not being able to perform to her highest ability. According to Patricia, because the band director lacked confidence in her abilities, he would assign her very simple parts. In contrast to this, she explained that in other ensembles she was highly esteemed.

PATRICIA: Oh, I've asked him for challenging parts and he's like, "No ... whatever" you know, he doesn't really pay attention.

FRED: You just really haven't gotten the challenging parts ... ok, ok, huh, when, um, when you're in your other ensembles, um, if you ... in the in the other ensembles, do you usually play snare or mallets ... or?

PATRICIA: I'm a soloist on tympani.

FRED: A soloist on tympani?

PATRICIA: Yeah, I actually get selected by audition

For Patricia, her primary motivation for participating in band was musical. This help explained why she continued membership in band in spite of adverse social conditions. However, when her musical participation was jeopardized by her relationship with her band director, she turned to venues outside of school for musical expression.

PATRICIA: And I actually use ... I used to use those ensembles as an alternative to my school music program.

FRED: Uh-huh...

PATRICIA: Since I wasn't receiving very good education.

When asked what kinds of things she wished had been different at her second high school, Patricia expressed a desire for more verbal communication with peers and more acceptance of her disability from her director.

FRED: What do you wish that they had done ... your band director and your peers?

PATRICIA: Oh, I wish that my, my, um, fellow members would have, you know, talked to me more.

FRED: Uh-hum...

PATRICIA: Um, I wish that my band director would have been more acceptant...

FRED: M-hmmm...

PATRICIA: Of my disability

FRED: M-hmmm...

PATRICIA: And I think I would have been better for it but you know ... can't change it now I guess.

Perhaps because the informants featured in this section intended to pursue music as a career, performing opportunities emerged as key in the quality of their experiences. Additionally, perhaps because these informants viewed their teachers as models for their own professional development, ensemble directors surfaced as important gatekeepers in

at least some experiences. Justin did not comment on his teacher's contributions in a general way, but he did mention assignments and opportunities that his teacher developed that were meaningful. In chapter five, readers can also note that Justin's ensemble director offered some instructional suggestions that he appreciated and employed regularly. Mark, Chris, and Patricia spoke more generally about their teachers' contributions to their experiences. About his teacher, as he was describing what "fun" about orchestra was, Mark said, "she teaches well." Don described his teacher as a "friend." In her first high school band experience, Patricia described a teacher who was very encouraging. In her second high school program the relationship was apparently difficult enough that she virtually discontinued participation near the end of her senior year.

Social connection was clearly a secondary concern for these informants. Though Justin spoke positively about relationships with peers, he did not count them as among the reasons he participated in band. Mark was unable to identify friends in band, but the situation was not bothersome or frustrating for him. Don, and to some extent Patricia, were the only members of this smaller group of students who mentioned friends as a motivating factor in chapter four. Unfortunately, both informants expressed difficulties developing relationships with peers yet neither individual discontinued participating in band for this reason.

In the cases of Don and Patricia, both informants identified their disabilities as contributing to their social disconnection. Patricia believed that her peers were reluctant to have in-depth conversations, a type of interaction she valued, with people who were blind or visually impaired. Similarly, Don posited that his peers were uncomfortable

including him in impromptu gatherings because they were uncomfortable rendering assistance.

When comparing the stories of the four informants considered in this section of the chapter, I observed the following interesting point: Don and Patricia were the only informants who discussed what I judged to be especially difficult social interactions . They were also the only two informants who mentioned regularly needing mobility assistance (sighted leadership) around their respective schools. This observation prompted me to question the extent to which non-disabled peers rejected Don and Patricia because of their disabilities or because of a perceived lack of independence. Additionally, in recalling my own experience of high school, I imagined that Justin, Mark, Don, and Patricia's highly directed focus on musical accomplishment could be serving to separate them from their peers as much as their disabilities. Interestingly, only Justin revealed involvement in a non-musical club or organization. He was a member of a scouting troop. Mark, Don, and Patricia engaged only in music related organizations, though it should be noted that Mark discussed non-music specific hobbies and interests. To address the extent to which non-disabled students responded to these characteristics, certainly, I would have needed to interview these four informants' peers. As one of my interests in the present study was highlighting the voices of students who were blind or visually impaired, I did not seek the perspectives of their peers. For the purposes of this study, it was sufficient to note that perception of their disability as contributing to problems with social connection was evident. It was further important to understand that problems with social connection perhaps tempered, but did not impact instrumental music experiences so harshly that informants discontinued participation in band or orchestra.

“Band is like a family”

Four informants, Paul, Tom, Trevor, and Karl all reported generally positive experiences in band. Like the informants in the first section of this chapter, they described interest in music when interviewed about motivations for participation. Unlike the informants in the first section, they did not intend to pursue careers in music but they were interested in continuing to participate in music in some way. For Karl and Tom, musical interests were related to understanding details about the elements of music. For Paul and Trevor, the draw to participating in music ensembles was related to performing.

In addition to interest in music, each of these informants described good relationships with peers in their respective ensembles. In fact, connection with friends contributed significantly to their participation. If not describing their ensembles as close or “like a family,” they provided details that indicated experiencing a high level of social connection in the group. In addition, these informants described how participation in their ensembles provided them with opportunities to fit into the greater school culture, enhance personal characteristics such as self-confidence, and support their applications to colleges and universities. I placed the title of this section in quotes because one informant, Paul, described his band as “like a giant family.”

Paul highly recommended that students join band. In fact, at the close of our first interview, he asked me to tell those contemplating joining band that “... Paul says that band is a great idea.” There were many reasons Paul found participating in concert and marching band a positive experience. Topping the list was that band was “a great social event.”

PAUL: Well, something that I think you should, uh ... some information that I think you should convey to others who are possibly considering doing band in middle school and sticking with it is ... I think you should tell them that's it's a great ... or at least from what I know, it's a great social event.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And that it's, it's something you can use, and it's a skill you can carry on wherever you go for the rest of your life.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And so, you should publish that or display that on whatever web sight or news paper you're gonna be writing.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And let people know that Paul says band is a great idea.

For Paul, band fostered a sense of solidarity for ensemble members. He reflected this idea in a description of his school, which outlined what the band rehearsal hall meant to him.

PAUL: Ok my school is a fairly large school, um, it, it, it's calm ... and it, it's ... it's a quiet and calm place, but there's a lot of kids running around. It's pretty civilized, uh, our band hall is mmm, a social resting place for the band kids...

FRED: Mmm...

PAUL: and some orchestra kids.

The cohesive nature of the band as a unit was evident in the following quote:

PAUL: Everybody likes ... not only does everybody like, know everybody, everybody likes everybody, so...

FRED: Hah ... good deal.

PAUL: You know, it's like a giant family I guess, as, as cheesy as it sounds.

Paul related that the socialization process was further promoted by band parties outside of school. These parties were organized by band officers and were open to all band members.

PAUL: The officers of the band organize band parties at, just, at their houses.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And we have one of those every one or two months.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And everybody in the band is invited ... and everybody in the band goes.

FRED: Uh-huh (Chuckle).

PAUL: And so, you know, that's, that's a great way to get people to socialize.

FRED: Uh-huh ... and you...

PAUL: Outside of band.
FRED: Usually go to those do you?
PAUL: Yes.
FRED: Yeah?
PAUL: I don't think I've missed one actually.

Meeting people he would otherwise never meet was Paul's impetus for joining band. Paul explained that the majority of his friends were in band, and that this was one of the main reasons for his — and he assumed everyone else's — participation.

PAUL: Um, ok, well, my first reason, which is probably everybody's first reason, is social interaction ... you meet so many people that otherwise you would never meet ... um, ninety-five percent of my friends ... out of like all of my friends, ninety-five percent of them are in band.
FRED: M-hmmm.
PAUL: And because the high school is such a big place, the band is also very large, and, uh, everybody knows everybody in band and it's ... it's really a great ... gat ... the band hall's really a great gathering place.
FRED: M-hmmm.
PAUL: And so social ... social interaction would probably be my first reason...
FRED: Ok.
FRED: To play in band.

Paul's deep sense of connectedness with his fellow band members went beyond the superficial level of socialization one would expect as part of "hanging out" with the band as a group. Paul sought solace from his band members, for example, when faced with a difficult situation with his band director. Paul relates being told that he would not likely be allowed to participate in the marching band because of his visual disability:

PAUL: And I told my friends about that ... I said, "hey, do you guys think, you know, I'd really be able to march next year" and they didn't know much about marching, and they said, "Yeah, I mean, I guess. Why would you not be able to do that?" ... and I said, "Well, because Mr. M told me that, you know, it would be a challenge for me."

Paul indicated that the support of fellow band members encouraged him to persevere.

What accounted for the deep connections made? Paul explained that, unlike many other clubs and organizations, band membership meant surrounding oneself with a consistent group of peers. An interesting point Paul made was that, while the set-up of band fosters positive relations, there was another phenomenon in place: older students serving as role models for younger students. The older students set the tone for a positive experience for making music. A desire and willingness to carry on the tradition was instilled in the younger students by virtue of their appreciation for the social atmosphere they enjoyed.

FRED: Is the social experience, experience in band better than in those other activities that you're involved in?

PAUL: Definitely, because it's a much larger group, so there's always somebody, uh, there's always somebody basically you can hang out with, because everybody is friends with everybody, because you're basically forced to be friends with each other in, in marching, 'cause you're gonna be next to each other at one point, and everybody ... there, there's a lot of older kids in it too, and so they, they act as models for everybody else, and the younger people are just, are able to appreciate the, the social atmosphere and carry it on, so that when they're older people, they, they can introduce the freshmen to the social atmosphere as opposed to in French club, well, it's kind of like, well, we have a meeting here and we don't see each other for a month ... we have a meeting here, and we don't see each other for a month. Hockey, the season, the season ends obviously at some point and then eventually begins and you're with a whole new group of kids.

FRED: Ah ... I see.

PAUL: And, so the band program is just consistent kids all the time the same kids ... different places ... there's always somebody there you can just talk to.

With regard to music making, band provided Paul an opportunity for personal accomplishment. Throughout the interview there was a lot of evidence that Paul thrived in the spot light. Below is one such example:

PAUL: Um, well, in seventh and eighth grade in middle school, I was the, the lead trumpet player ... I was the section leader in seventh and eighth grade...

FRED: Mmm...

PAUL: In the head band, and so I received a lot of solos and exposed parts, and I would go home and practice and practice and practice and practice those until they were almost more than perfect.

FRED: M-hmmm.

PAUL: And then at the concert, you know like the ... at at (gives initials) which we also did in middle school, the judges would say, "Great! Super! Great great trumpet soloist."

FRED: Nice.

PAUL: Um, "Great clarinet soloist ... great trumpet soloist," uh, "Keep that tone clear" or something like that.

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: And you just think like, "Wow! I got noticed."

Though personal accomplishment was valuable to Paul, group accomplishment meant more. He related the exhilaration of shining as a unit with his band:

PAUL: Um in concert band, when you guys have just won sweep stakes ... all top rank in, in this contest which we did this year ... uh, you feel like, "Gosh! I was a part of that, you know, I contributed ... and, you know, without, without me and all of my friends, they would have been nothing" and you just think that you have an impact on this and it's ... without ... it's like a puzzle...

FRED: M-hmmm.

PAUL: And you're a piece of the puzzle and that's just a good feeling...

FRED: That's great.

PAUL: that you're helpin' out.

In fact, the only time Paul felt discouraged in band was when he did not get to fully experience a sense of solidarity through music making with the band. Paul was put in the reserve group of the marching, which meant that he was unable to participate with the band performances. He explained that this was perhaps the only time he considered quitting band.

FRED: When you, when you were thinking about quitting, what was ... what was...

PAUL: My reason?

FRED: Yeah, what was causing you to ask those questions?

PAUL: Um, well, most of the time I thought about quitting was in the marching season. Um, I will admit that in my first year, this past year in the marching season, I was in the reserves...

FRED: Uh-huh.

PAUL: Which means that my marching ... my marching ability ... not necessarily my trumpet abilities but my marching abilities were not up to the skills of the other people.

FRED: I see.

PAUL: And therefore, along with twenty other children, most of the show, not all of the show, but most of the show, we were close to the edge of the field, often standing on the sidelines.

FRED: I see.

PAUL: And, we weren't completely rejected, but, you know, we weren't always involved ... we, we couldn't share like, "Yeah! We really did this," you know, "We were really part of this" we don't feel like, you know, we're part of the band and we contributed to this win or we contributed to this los, you know, we win as a team, we lose as a team.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm.

PAUL: And, you know, it kind of feels ... it kind of makes you feel excluded sometimes ... and, because of that, I wasn't sure if marching was gonna be fun ... and, I thought of quitting marching band ...

Another detractor to Paul's positive experience in band had little to do with social connection, but was related to factors associated with his visual disability — albinism.

Paul explained:

PAUL: In the ... we practice in the mornings, and the stadium ... the school's pretty flat and so the sun comes up over the horizon half way through your practice and it's really bright.

FRED: M-hmmm.

PAUL: And you're looking at the, the drum major who is, you know, like five feet off the ground right where the sun is ... and that's really hard on everybody, especially on me.

FRED: I was gonna ask.

PAUL: And so the, the temperature and the sun just makes you feel drugged almost...

FRED: Right (Chuckle).

PAUL: 'Cause it's so miserable.

FRED: Right, right.

PAUL: And, uh, concert band is just relieving 'cause it's like, "Oo! Air-conditioning" and you take it for granted and you go outside and you realize, "this is miserable."

FRED: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

PAUL: But I've come to the conclusion that, you know, whatever heck you have to go through in marching band, it's probably worth it.

Similar to Paul and his identification of the band as "like a giant family," Tom explained that his high school band was a very connected group of people. He described band members as "close." Tom reported that, perhaps because members of the band spent

so much time together, he tended to have more friends in the ensemble than in other classes or activities.

TOM: I mean I have friends outside the band, but most of ‘em are in the band ‘cause that’s who I hang around with the most.

FRED: M-hmmm m-hmmm.

TOM: Like in the mornings, we have a special band area in the hall where everybody where a lot of people in the band program meet.

FRED: M-hmmm.

TOM: And most of the time at lunch, a bunch of us in the band sit and eat together...

FRED: M-hmmm.

TOM: And in the afternoons, like we practice two times a week ... so I see everybody two times a week ... we have football games every Friday ... and then some Saturdays we have comp ... like, I think we have two or three competitions this year so...

FRED: M-hmmm.

TOM: I see a lot of those people so ... I’m more friends with the people in the band than I am like with people outside the band.

Tom attributed his success, particularly in marching band, to the fact that he became acquainted with future peers ahead of time. Tom’s older sister “sparked [him] into actually doing the marching band” and paved the way for his success. He explained that she participated in the high school band ensemble while he was in middle school. As a middle school student, Tom assisted the high school group with props during football games. This allowed him to become friends with members of the ensemble, many of whom were still in band when he entered high school. He offered the following comment when talking about his sister’s contribution to his experience:

TOM: She probably sparked me into actually doing the marching band.

FRED: Really?

TOM: Like I kind of decided I wanted to do band, but I didn’t think I’d do marching band, but once she started it, I guess I started getting a lot of friends and stuff like that...

FRED: Hmmm...

TOM: ‘Cause I mean most people, they don’t do marching band as a freshman.

FRED: They don’t?

TOM: Yeah, especially at my school ... like, not very many people start their freshman year in, doing marching band. They usually wait 'til their sophomore year to see what it's like, but I wasn't like that ... I started out as a freshman.

FRED: Huh! Great!

TOM: But the thing was, I knew a lot of people in the marching band.

FRED: Um-hum.

TOM: 'Cause I I've been ... 'cause I helped out a lot at games and stuff moving props and stuff and I knew a lot of people in the marching band.

FRED: Ahhh, I see, when your, when your sister was in it?

TOM: Right

Any disconnection Tom felt from other ensemble members had little to do with his visual disability. Rather, as a high school senior, he felt that he simply knew his fellow upper class people better.

TOM: I feel like a part of the band like with certain people but not with others.

FRED: Ah that's interesting.

TOM: like I have like really close friends and I got people that I just don't hang around with...

FRED: M-hmmm.

TOM: That participate in the band program...

FRED: Ok.

TOM: that, you know, (pause) I just don't really hang around 'em much with and I don't — it's hard to describe —

FRED: You're doin' great ... keep, uh, keep talkin' ... it's ok if you kind of think out loud here so.

TOM: You know, I just feel more comfortable around certain people than others 'cause like ... like my senior friends and stuff ... I feel more comfortable around them than like the freshman people 'cause I don't know much of the freshmen that much.

Trevor, unlike Paul or Tom, did not describe his high school band as “like a giant family” or “close.” He did indicate that the majority of his friends were in band, however.

TREVOR: I have 2 or 3 friends, good friends of mine that aren't in band but I have a majority of friends in band you know.

FRED: Majority of friends in band?

TREVOR: Yeah.

Rather than pointing to a particular time or event in which he began connecting with band members, Trevor built a sense of relationship with his peers over a period of

time. When asked specifically about social connection, Trevor explained that he had felt somewhat detached from the band when he first entered his community's middle school because he was a new student in the school district. Eventually, however, he came to feel connected as he grew to know more people. There was no mention of how his disability may have played into this time of disconnection.

TREVOR: In middle school is was kind of you know, I felt a little detached from the band because, by then you know, everybody had come up from you know the same 2 or 3 elementary schools so they pretty much knew each other you know.

FRED: Uh-huh.

TREVOR: When I was listenin' to them you know I didn't know anybody, they'd like you know point to somebody, "Hey! I saw you in, you know, you were in my fifth grade band," you know and I'm kind of like lookin' around here.

FRED: Uh-huh.

TREVOR: You know...

FRED: Right, right.

TREVOR: I didn't know anybody.

FRED: Right, that was hard.

TREVOR: Yeah but, high school now it's kind of like, I know people from middle school and there's always new people movin' in so you know I mean, I'm not the only one who hasn't been there. (chuckle).

FRED: M-hmmm m-hmmm m-hmmm, Have you made friends with a lot of those people who haven't been there so long, or?

TREVOR: Um yeah I can, I can pretty much make friends with most people you know.

In spite of Trevor's high level of social connectedness, he did relate instances in which he experienced social discomfort caused by fellow students who teased others. Trevor was quick to point out that these individuals did not single him out exclusively. The teasing that they directed to him, however, was related to his disability. He mentioned, for example, instances in which peers would make fun of the way his copies of enlarged music notation would exceed the sides of his music stand and the ways, in an effort not to draw attention to himself, he would attempt to make copies that were large enough to read but small enough to fit on the stand.

TREVOR: I don't wanna have — I mean I'm thinkin this is what you're thinkin about — is not havin this huge, hunkin, thing of music...

FRED: Right.

TREVOR: Sitting right there in front of me you know that kind of, you know I mean sometimes that doesn't bother me I mean sometimes I'm gonna say "Hey, I have to have it," but other times I'm like, "ee, yah know, I really don't want it to attract attention," you know.

FRED: M-hmmm m-hmmm, and what is your suspicion about what would happen if, if attention were attracted to your, to your enlarged music? What would people do?

TREVOR: Um, I mean some people just kind of like, "Hey, cool, big music," you know and they'll leave me alone, but some people, they just, think it's funny and amusing to, I mean they'll do this to anybody, I mean not just me.

FRED: Right.

TREVOR: They'll just try to rag on any little thing about you just to get others to laugh at their jokes!

FRED: Right.

TREVOR: 'Cause they think they're funny or they're cool you know.

FRED: M-hmmm, and are these usually really popular people in the band or not so popular?

TREVOR: Um, most of the time it's by the popular people that ... they think that's what makes them popular is you know...

FRED: Gotcha.

TREVOR: Kind of tryin' to rag on others you know.

Being a band member meant having access to activities such as trips and competitions with his friends. To some extent, these trips generally have a social aspect which is perhaps why this type of engagement was at the root of his motivation for participating in band. Additionally, there were at least two instances where he correlated moving up in the band hierarchy and having access to premium social activities.

TREVOR: It was, that was the kind of time around the time I was up in a higher band 'cause in our middle school, when you went up into seventh, you could either go into concert band or up into a higher band, symphonic, and for most of the seventh grade, or a good portion of it, I was in, I was in concert and then I moved up into symphonic.

FRED: M-hmmm.

TREVOR: And so during, you know kind of the eighth grade year in general, it, it was kind of a good time you know, we were on a few trips and all that ...

He begrudged being in a lower band because this ensemble did not go on tours. By mentioning that he was “stuck” in this ensemble, Trevor expressed perhaps a slight level of dissatisfaction with his band experience. His position in a lower ensemble was not cause for him to discontinue playing in band however. Rather, it served as motivation to improve.

TREVOR: Om, I haven't been anywhere big 'cause I've been stuck in one of the lower bands.

FRED: I see

TREVOR: For 3 years so we don't, we do festival, we've done, I do the marching, but I haven't been anywhere particularly huge yet.

FRED: Uh-huh, uh-huh, so you're working towards being in the symphonic band, do they call it the symphonic band there?

TREVOR: Om, for next year, om, we have a symphonic and then the highest band's wind ensemble.

FRED: Oh, ok.

TREVOR: After a few years, I wanna be in symphonic.

FRED: I see.

TREVOR: (inaudible) First chair.

Of note, Trevor was one of the few interview participants who acknowledged that participating in band offers psychosocial benefits such as confidence-building and improved sense of well-being. He related how skills learned in band transferred over to other classes.

TREVOR: If you think you're playing well, it, it could kind of build confidence to do stuff and, you know, if you're out there on the field marching for these people, you know, then you can stand up in class and give a, you know, let's say you have to do a project, and present a project you know, without becoming nerv-, overly nervous, um, it kind of builds a little, you know, it kind of builds your confidence. Um.

FRED: Great.

TREVOR: Other times it may just, like if you're having a crummy day you know, and you gotta go play you know the crowd's cheerin' it might actually help you know.

FRED: M-hmmm.

TREVOR: Pick you up you know.

Like Trevor, Karl did not use the specific labels of “close” or “family” to describe his experience in band. He did use language that indicated that his high school ensemble functioned as a very connected unit.

In describing his experience, Karl said, “It was great to be in band.” There was no one thing that fundamentally fostered a positive experience for Karl. As he explained, “... it’s the whole situation in the band ... including being part of a group, having a good relationship with the band director, the congeniality of his peers, going on trips, and learning about music.

Participation in band also provided for Karl an opportunity to represent his school. It allowed him the ability to participate in the school culture in a significant way.

KARL: Well, the combination of, you know, there-there was a good director and most-most of the students were really good.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: Um, we were playing a lot of pieces that I, I like most of the pieces, I was learning a lot about music and uh, having a lot of good friends that-that were, you know, a lot of interesting things that we did like the uh cruise trip and a lot of the concerts, and did, I, I think I got to do a lot of things that I never would have thought about doing before.

FRED: Mmm.

KARL: And I also and I also just realized that I felt good about being active in something in the school, because I, I couldn’t uh, be on a lot, most of the sports teams.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: And uh, there are other things which I probably could have done but I wasn’t really interested in.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm.

KARL: And, uh, that Intellectual Challenge activity that I mentioned was also, I also felt similarly about, but-but those two activities were things I could really represent the school in...

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: And uh, be a major part of it but, you know, the whole, um, football game activity and uh, other things, that-that also felt really good.

Social connectedness, for Karl, was also forged through group effort. Indeed, band was one of the social groups where he had a lot of friends but it was the ability to

work with them towards a common goal that made the interaction significant. He related, for example, times when he felt proud of himself and his fellow band members after working hard to conquer difficult musical pieces.

KARL: One year we were doing a concert of a piece that we worked on for a really long time, and I wasn't sure if it would work out alright, but, it really did and we all said how much fun we had doing, you know, preparing for it, and, I ... there was a clarinet part which, which only a couple of other people were playing and like, it just sounded really good.

Group effort, in turn, promoted a sense of solidarity with the other band members as well as identity with the band itself. He explained:

KARL: And, when people ... when people talk about, uh, the band, you know, their name is always a part of it. Probably, probably one time when I especially felt part of the band was, um, during the last concert, last spring concert a couple of months ago, the band director did speeches about all of the seniors ... he did that every year.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: But then, it was, you know, that-that was my class, and I was one of them.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: And that, that was, you know, a pretty proud moment.

Additionally, when asked to talk about specific things peers did to contribute to his feelings of connectedness, Karl explained:

KARL: Making sure that I was alright at concerts and helping me with my parts and some more things. It's also, you know, when I would talk to them uh, before the rehearsals and, and before the concerts and, you know when we were really bored standing, you know, waiting for the parades.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: And uh, you know, a lot of the inside jokes we had.

FRED: M-hmmm, m-hmmm.

KARL: You know, that I, you know, understood, they really made me feel connected, and, and I did have a couple of special friends that I was in band along with other classes and uh, so, you know, that-that was really good too.

Perhaps it was these "inside jokes" that made Karl's ensemble most like a "family." He, however, also acknowledged the central part the band director played in setting the tone for his positive experience in band.

KARL: I, it's not just the band director, it's also the other students, but I think the band director is a major part of it, because he is the center of it.

Karl did label some challenges to social connection. He shared that difficulties arose when his peers became excited or adventurous on band trips and attempted things he found unnerving such as sneaking out of hotel rooms to meet people from other schools. Recognizing that part of his reluctance to participate in such activity was related to his own personal style, he said, "I'm just not, you know, a really wild person I guess." Feeling that to some extent, however, his feelings were related to his disability, he articulated the following: "well, I have to keep track of everybody, and, you know, if people leave all of a sudden, then, I don't know where they're going really."

On the other hand, Karl felt that, because of his disability, he was able to serve as an inspiration to his fellow band members. In turn, this added significantly to his sense of connectedness with the band.

KARL: And I, I, I had heard a lot of the times that I was really inspiring to a lot of the other kids in the band ... the, the, a few of the kids had said that, and the band director, he, he said that it will be really sad that I have to leave...

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: Grad-graduate high school because I was such a, you know, good part of the band to inspire everybody so that, if somebody was complaining about something, then they would know that I had even more obstacles and I still played in the band, and so, at the end of the ... we-we had a senior picnic every year ... it was called a senior picnic, but it was like a get-together of the band.

FRED: M-hmmm.

KARL: And we would do, uh, you know, awards and stuff like that.

FRED: Right.

KARL: And so, every year, I'd usually make a speech there thanking my guide, and the last year, I made a speech thanking everyone saying, "It was great to be in the band."

Like the informants who were interested in music as a career, each of these informants mentioned music related motivations for participating in instrumental music in chapter four. None, however, was interested in musical as a professional pursuit.

Interestingly, unlike the intending career musicians, Paul, Tom, Trevor, and Karl all clearly stated social motivations for playing in band. Moreover, they appeared to value the fact that their ensembles functioned “like a giant family” or as a “close” group. Though two informants, Trevor and Karl, expressed detractors to their experiences that involved interactions with sighted peers and were related to their visual disabilities, neither of them appeared to consider discontinuing band membership for these reasons.

When comparing this group’s experiences with those of the intending musicians, I wondered what factors might be contributing to these relatively positive social experiences versus the clear social struggles especially revealed by Don and Patricia. Upon reviewing the transcripts, I was reminded of a few interesting differences. First, three of the four informants in this group reported themselves to be individuals with low vision as opposed to blind. Each of the intending musicians was blind. Second, all of the informants in this group were active in activities outside of music, which could indicate a higher level of general social skill development. Among the intending musicians, as mentioned earlier, only Justin participated in anything other than music. He was involved in scouting and, interestingly, was the only intending musician to report an entirely positive social experience. In this group, however, Paul played hockey, while Tom and Trevor participated in church youth groups. Karl, the only member of this group who was blind, was involved in disability specific sports, student government, and an intellectual challenge program.

I like playing music with friends

Three informants, Russ, Laura, and Chris, clearly enjoyed performing on their respective instruments. They also shared positive sentiments about their peers in band. What was especially interesting about these three individuals is that they appeared to appreciate the specific process of playing music with peers. These informants viewed performing music in an ensemble as a social act in and of itself.

Perhaps Russ expressed most clearly his appreciation for connectedness with the group when he was making music. He stated: “I get to really feel like I’m a member of the band . . . when I got my music memorized and I start playing with them.”

With regard to the social context for his music-making experience, Russ described a need to make himself available and approachable to his peers. He was keenly aware that his visual disability could interfere with the socialization process. Cognizant that he must make the effort to make others feel at ease with his disability, Russ was committed to being outgoing, to demonstrating that people with visual disabilities are capable of becoming enjoyable friends. He attributes his social competency to this awareness.

RUSS: Well, um, when I first come into the band, every year, we get new people and people leave, so the band is different, and for the first week or so, I’m a little hesitant tryin’ to get to know people so I get to really feel like I’m a member of the band is when I got my music memorized and I start playing with them.

RUSS: There was a little tension at the beginning like, “Blind guy ... how do I treat him?”

FRED: Uh-huh.

RUSS: But with my personality, always outgoing and joking around, no hesitation...

FRED: Uh-huh.

RUSS: I’d get to know my friends, and they’d get to know me as an excellent friend like, “Come check out this blind guy. He’s awesome,”

FRED: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

RUSS: So, I think, um, if blind people really wanna get to know people in their bands to help them out, they can’t have, show any hesitation.

FRED: M-hmmm.

RUSS: They half to, um, um put out an extra effort to get to know people and get people comfortable about being around them since they've never known a blind person before.

As it pertained to social connectedness, Russ distinctly delineated his school life from his personal life. Russ' robust social interactions with his peers in band were limited to school. This was a self-imposed arrangement. Russ explained that the behavior and choices made by some of his friends in band were not acceptable for him in his personal life. This fact buttressed the assertion that, for Russ, a sense of social relatedness was secondary in making his band experience positive. His connectedness to the band came from his music-making experience. Were it not for the opportunity to make music with them, his band peers would probably not have been part of his social milieu.

RUSS: These are more like friends that it's cool to hang out with class with...

FRED: Uh-huh.

RUSS: But we also have our own personal lives too.

FRED: Uh-huh.

RUSS: 'Cause some things they do, I don't agree with.

FRED: Some things they do you don't agree with?

RUSS: Yeah.

FRED: Ok.

RUSS: Just the people they hang out with, I, just don't really like, but friends in class, they're, they're great friends.

Like Russ, Laura was almost exclusively positive in her statements about performing in band. "... the people in there are really nice and uh I like playing the different pieces that we get to play" was one statement that summarized Laura's experience.

Laura reported good relationships with teachers, a deep interest in music, and very healthy relationships with peers. When asked if her main motivation for participating in band was music or friends, she said, "I guess that the meeting the people would probably

be that because you get to form a lot of friendships that way.” Laura went on to discuss how the friendships she was developing in band would last over time.

Laura saw her friends outside of school as well as during school. She saw them as a group with whom she held common interests.

LAURA: Uh, just uh like my peers are some different friends in there.

FRED: Uh-hum.

LAURA: We talk like ... talk about things you know.

FRED: Did you say you talk about things?

LAURA: Yeah, like share common interests or something.

FRED: Uh-huh ... great. With, uh, like a few people or most of the people?

LAURA: Uh, most of the people in there.

FRED: Most of the people ... what kinds of common interests do you share with them?

LAURA: Uh, stuff like uh like uh different things like going to movies or like going out to um the pizza place or different stuff like that.

FRED: Uh-huh ... great. And, um, do you go to movies and pizza places with them?

LAURA: Yeah.

FRED: Fairly frequently? ... or...

LAURA: Yeah.

FRED: Yeah? Just out of curiosity, bout, bout how often ... would you say?

LAURA: Uh, probably go to movies like once a month probably.

FRED: Uh-huh

LAURA: And then probably go out to eat somewhere like once every couple of weeks.

FRED: Once every couple of weeks ... great. And is this usually after a concert, or is it usually just like on the weekend?

LAURA: A lot of times it's after a concert, but uh sometimes it's uh usually on the weekends.

In addition to good relationships with peers, Laura described her band directors in a positive light. Many of the comments she provided were presented in chapter six. When I asked what she believed contributed to their open and progressive attitude, Laura explained that there were several students with visual disabilities in her district. She believed that her ensemble directors, along with other teachers, were more prepared than most educators to assist students who were blind or visually impaired.

LAURA: This county is, um, I guess ... probably deals with um more visually impaired students than a lot of other counties.

FRED: Uh ... this county is ... did you say this county is dealing with more...

LAURA: Yeah.

FRED: Visually impaired students than other counties?

LAURA: Yeah.

FRED: Ok.

LAURA: So I guess that, um, they kind of know what to expect or how to deal with it.

Additionally, Laura enjoyed initiating and continuing work on a piece with the ensemble until it became something “aesthetic.” When I asked her to describe a specific example of this process, she recounted her ensemble’s efforts on a piece called “Florentina March.”

LAURA: Uh, when we first played it, it didn’t sound very good. It wasn’t very musical.

FRED: Uh-huh.

LAURA: But, uh...

FRED: Tell me what you mean by that ... it wasn’t very musical.

LAURA: It didn’t have like dynamic contrasts or

Fred: Ah.

LAURA: Um, it wasn’t ... people didn’t like uh play in the right beat or get the right rhythms all the time.

FRED: I see.

LAURA: So, when we started working on it and practicing it and everything, the rest ... it really makes those areas a lot better.

FRED: M-hmmm.

LAURA: And we did it very good.

Laura shared that, most of the time, she felt a part of the band. Interestingly, these feelings were tempered not in instances when peers were perhaps unkind, but when her ability to perform with the group was disrupted.

LAURA: Times when I don’t feel a part of the band are when like uh ... some, like, something’s written on the board or something.

FRED: Ah.

LAURA: It’s uh really far away and so therefore I couldn’t see it.

Since Chris was only in his first semester of high school when he was interviewed for this study, I thought it relevant to gain a sense of his middle school band experience. Chris reported having a very positive experience in middle school band. He acknowledged and appreciated the fact that the assistance of his band director and other individuals promoted what he called “a level field.” Chris particularly enjoyed competing and winning:

CHRIS: All the times that I went to festival and we were playing well and we got all straight superiors and stuff. I was proud.

FRED: M-hmmm m-hmmm. I always thought that that was really exciting too. Yeah.

CHRIS: And then one of the, probably one of the most ... probably (inaudible) that I did at least ... that I ... was maintained first chair in my band throughout two years that we did chair placement.

Upon probing it became apparent that obtaining first chair was particularly meaningful to Chris. He explained that this accomplishment served to convince him that his visual disability was not precluding him from achieving as much as a sighted person.

CHRIS: Um, uh, I just felt like I was as good as a lot ... well of course I felt like I was as good as everybody else and I just, um, felt that I had done well because I had done as well s everybody else while I was trying to combat another handicap.

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: In my music ability.

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: Not my ability, but in my ... in my ... something ... I don't know ... something that did not allow me to have the same opportunity I guess.

FRED: Say a little more about that. I think I know exactly what you're talking about.

CHRIS: I had to, I had to do more to get to the same place as other people.

FRED: Ah.

CHRIS: So where somebody can work an hour a day and be good, I had to work two hours a day to be the same amount of good.

Accomplishing high ratings at festivals also served as acknowledgement for a job well done. In Chris' words, it showed him that “hard work had paid off.” The ratings also “... made me grateful that I had such an experienced band director.”

Socially, Chris' experiences connected to middle school band were equally as positive. He explained that he always felt a part of the band:

CHRIS: I guess I always, you know, feel a part of the band, but like my ... one of my best friends is the second chair trumpet. Then, some of my best friends play, you know, percussion, so I always have friends close by when I was in the band, so that always helps.

Additionally, in middle school, he and his friends engaged in social activity outside of school.

CHRIS: Um ... last year, me and my friends would go, you know, somebody's house a lot or go to the movies a lot.

FRED: Uh-huh uh-huh.

CHRIS: So, this year I haven't been going as much places 'cause it's a new school ... I'm makin' new friends, so it's different, but, um ... last year I would see people usually once or even twice a weekend.

FRED: I see.

CHRIS: So...

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: And most of those people were in the band.

Chris' experience in high school was not comparable to his middle school band experience. Musically speaking, he attributed the difference to the fact that the band program was a new component of a private Christian Academy that had only been in operation for a few years. Socially his experience was not necessarily bad, but different. Because the school was so much smaller than his middle school, Chris felt that there was a decreased need for the ensemble to function as a social unit distinguished from the rest of the school culture.

CHRIS: I mean ... 'cause there's only 200 people in the school, you're pretty much gonna know everybody and you're probably gonna be friends with a lot, most of the people.

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: So I mean I don't think it's just that you're not as close as the people in the band. I just think it's people have a lot of friends that are in the band with you and a lot more that aren't in the band with you.

FRED: I see ... ok ... that makes sense ... uh-hum ... where would you say most of your friends in school, um ... how do you know them? Your friends, your friends in your school, if you don't know them as much from band, um, how, what do you know them from?

CHRIS: Um, classes I guess. I mean, I have some way, some class with everybody in the grade, 'cause there's only sixty people in my grade.

From a musical standpoint, Chris felt that the high school band demonstrated “room for improvement.” For someone who highly values high musical accomplishment, this created a problem. However, rather than quitting band, he hung his hope on the fact that it “was a learning experience” for him. Chris recognized that some of his experience was tempered by his own process of adjusting to a new school environment.

CHRIS: Um, well our level of music wasn't very high.

FRED: I see.

CHRIS: And our ... I mean we didn't ... our drills were just, not very ... I mean we just ... it wasn't very ... I mean I don't know, I've never been in a marching band, but it seems to me that it wasn't as ... I just wasn't a very high ... high level marching band ...

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: Which is to be expected for a first year ...

FRED: Right.

CHRIS: Marching band so ... I mean I didn't have any false hopes or expectations or anything.

FRED: M-hmmm.

CHRIS: But it, was ... it was a learning experience and hopefully it will continue to improve.

Chris had no overt complaints about his experience in high school band. When pressed for comments, he reluctantly admitted that his band director sometimes stood in the way of his participation when she forgot to record his trumpet parts onto a cassette tape. Like Laura, his participation was disrupted when he could not perform with the group. This underscored for him the importance of obtaining his ensemble parts early in order to participate fully.

FRED: Is there anyone who you consider unhelpful?

CHRIS: (Chuckle)

FRED: Is there anyone who stands in your way or makes it difficult?

CHRIS: Occasionally the band director (laugh).

FRED: Occasionally the band director, really?

CHRIS: Yeah.

FRED: Can you tell me a little more about that?

CHRIS: Just, kind of, not really sayin' like, sometimes she might forget to make the make the tape or somethin' like that, but, other than that, no.

Each of the informants in this section appeared to value the process of playing in a music ensemble with peers in a way that was not expressed in the other two groups. Interestingly, each of them expressed feeling less connected with their ensembles when they were unable to perform on their respective instruments. For Russ and Chris, this disruption occurred when they had not memorized their ensemble parts. For Laura, disconnection from the group emerged when she was unable to see material that was not visually accessible to her. This condition was created, for example, when music exercises were placed on the blackboard rather than on paper in a large print format.

When considering these students' experiences alongside those of the intending musicians and the informants who viewed their ensembles as families, again, important points surfaced. First, two of the three students in this group were blind rather than study participants with low vision. As each of the informants in this section of the chapter reported positive social experiences, I was less inclined to believe that individuals who were blind necessarily struggled more with social connection than individuals with low vision. Second, each of the informants in this group participated in activities outside of music. Russ and Chris both competed in blind specific sports, while Laura volunteered in her community. Like Paul, Tom, Trevor, and Karl, perhaps these informants developed stronger social skills as a result of their involvement in other activities. Third, none of these students expressed interest in music as a career, suggesting that they demonstrated a

range of interests that coincided with those of their peers. Finally, and perhaps most interesting, two of the three informants in this group (Chris and Russ) had discontinued participation in instrumental music when final follow-up discussions were conducted. Russ had entered college and felt that his time was too constrained for ensemble participation. Similarly, though still in high school, Chris's interests had gravitated to sports and advanced placement academic subjects. Laura, who was preparing to graduate from high school, was unsure about playing in a college band. These situations supported the notion that playing in band with their peers was something they appreciated during a particular time when both quality of musical performance and quality of social connection met their personal standards.

Conclusion

For the majority of informants, perceptions of social connection appeared to be what most people from outside the context would label good, though barriers existed. In reflecting on informants' experiences, what emerged as most striking was that blind and visually impaired students expressed generally positive feelings about social connection when their desire for inclusion and their experiences with inclusion matched. When desires were unmet and disillusionment with peers was present, informants' social experiences in their school ensembles were not as fulfilling as the blind or visually impaired ensemble member had hoped.

This finding is striking, because it foregrounds the possible conflict between informants' motivations for participation in instrumental music and directing students with disabilities into music classes for the purposes of social development. This policy

revealed in the research literature cited in Chapter Two of this dissertation study presents complex problems. The literature, for example, does not discuss the degree to which disabled students' motivations are connected to social development. It also does not provide teachers with suggestions or methods for facilitating healthy social relationships between students with visual disabilities and sighted individuals. Though music learning environments have been perceived as offering unique social components compared to other school subjects, one can not expect disabled students to capitalize on the opportunity if their motivation for social interaction is not present. Similarly, assuming blind and visually impaired students possess social motivations for participation in instrumental music, educators can not assume peers without disabilities will respond favorably to disabled students. Non-disabled students may need a variety of experiences with disabled students to develop a level of comfort with students they perceive as so different from themselves.

Not only should assumptions of students' abilities to embrace inclusion be avoided, one should resist the supposition that ensemble teachers will feel equipped to facilitate social connection among students with and without disabilities. Perhaps, because music education researchers are gaining understanding of the social aspects of band, choir, and orchestra participation, more attention to subjects like human dynamics among typical adolescents should be explored in education methods classes. More specifically, discussions focusing on the social challenges surrounding mainstreaming and full-inclusion should occur. From data presented in this chapter, at least two important points could be shared with future music educators. First, in most instances, blind and visually impaired students who expressed social motivations for playing in

ensembles reported largely favorable social experiences. Second, and antithetical to the previous finding, it appears that the risk of denied social access particularly for blind individuals who long for peer interaction may be greater when non-disabled band or orchestra members exclude them from impromptu and unofficial gatherings. Clearly, such impromptu social gatherings of small groups within an ensemble are natural and normal occurrences. Moreover, inclusion in and exclusion from these groups transpires for a host of reasons. Though it is often easy to assume that exclusion, based on disability persists, the data in this chapter suggest that perhaps other factors such as non-disabled students' perceptions of blind or visually impaired students' social dependency or narrow range of interests are at least equally problematic.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SOCIOCULTURAL INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA

Sociocultural theory is well suited for evaluating the quality of experience of blind and visually impaired students who are mainstreamed or fully-included in instrumental music class. Recognizing the complex and multifaceted reality that students are experiencing requires turning one's attention to the intimate relationship that exists between human action and the sociocultural setting in which the phenomenon is taking place. Using sociocultural theory as the analytical lens allows researchers to understand how human action affects and is affected by the culture, the institutional influences of the school, and the historical context in which it is occurring.

In this study, I sought to gain insight into what students report about their experiences with mainstreaming and full inclusion — i.e., what is happening to them; how they are participating in band or orchestra; who is involved in their participation; when their experiences are either positive or negative; and where these actions are taking place. These questions are important in and of themselves; however, insight into *why* and deeper understanding as to *how* this phenomenon is playing out requires looking at human action (participation in instrumental music class) in a multidimensional context involving cultural, institutional, and historical forces (the sociocultural setting).

I chose the sociocultural analytic framework proposed by James Wertsch in his 1998 text *Mind as Action* because it addresses each of the research questions in the

present study — i.e., motivation for participation; self-developed strategies for learning; the intervention of other people in learning; and social connection. As Wertsch explains, “The task of a sociocultural approach is to explicate the relationships between human action, on the one hand, and the cultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which this action occurs, on the other” (Wertsch, 1998, p. 24).

According to Wertsch, a unit of analysis must be examined as an integral whole, observing the irreducibility between the causal agent and the cultural tools employed in the mediated action. In other words, only by examining how students are acting, reacting, and being acted upon by the sociocultural setting in which the action is taking place can we answer how the students are faring and why this is so. To do otherwise would run the risk of analyzing “pre-sliced disciplinary pieces” (p. 10); this, in Wertsch’s opinion, is the pitfall of research in the humanities and social sciences. Limiting the investigative focus to one or another aspect of the interaction fails to yield a holistic picture. Without such a picture in mind, finding authentic ways to enhance the quality of students’ experiences is not likely to occur. Given the institutional will to make improvements, sociocultural theory offers a way to engage in a meaningful analysis.

In accordance with sociocultural theory, I focused on the participation of blind or visually impaired students in instrumental music ensembles as the mediated action. I used Wertsch’s ten claims of mediated action in order to describe, interpret, and explain this phenomenon. Analysis of mediated action invokes the simultaneous use of multiple disciplinary perspectives rather than focusing on an evaluation using a singular view, such as sociological, psychological, historical, or educational, for example.

The Irreducible Tension Between Agent and Mediational Means

Wertsch's analytic approach focuses on examining the agent and the mediational means (cultural tool) as they interact, as they engage in mediated action. He claims that "any attempt to reduce the account of mediated action to one or the other of these elements runs the risk of destroying the phenomenon under observation" (p. 25). We are urged to keep in mind that the two elements—agent and mediational means—are aspects that do not really exist independently of action. Building on one of Vygotsky's analogies, Wertsch explains that the relationship between the human agent and the mediational means is similar to the connection between hydrogen and oxygen in forming water—the boundaries separating the two elements are indiscernible (p. 26). This point largely drives his attention to the connection between human agents and mediational means rather than one or the other. Wertsch's focus is mediated action because he recognizes that tools accomplish nothing independently. Tools must be employed by human agents in order for tasks to be accomplished. For Wertsch, therefore, who uses a tool and how a tool is used are two an important consideration (p. 29).

Wertsch offers the sport of pole-vaulting to illustrate his point. In this sport, athletes initiate a jump by running a distance of one hundred and twenty-five feet, while clutching a fiberglass pole. Upon setting one end of the pole in a vaulting box at the end of the runway, competitors engage the pole and personal force to thrust themselves over a high bar which is secured by two vertical posts. One of the athlete's immediate goals is to clear the bar by as wide a margin as possible. In Wertsch's view, the human agent pole-vaulters could not participate in the sport, completely identifying themselves as pole-

vaulters, without the pole—the necessary mediational means, or tool. He, therefore, defines the relationship between the athlete and the pole as irreducible (p. 25-28).

Focusing on the irreducible tension between agent and mediational means causes the boundary between the two elements to fade. In other words, without the mediational means (the pole), an agent cannot perform the very task that defines who or what the agent is (pole vaulter). This irreducible tension, Wertsch explains, inevitably calls into question the definition of agent. The agent is not the individual who is responsible for doing the action. Carrying out the action is the responsibility of the individual-operation-with-mediational-means.

In understanding how visually impaired students function in band or orchestra, it is important to focus on the irreducible relationships present in this mediated action. In the context of music performance, all students are indeed individuals-operating-with-mediational-means. It is clear to see that there is an irreducible relationship between an instrumentalist and the instrument being played. In this mediated action, the musician must engage the voice or some other musical instrument to participate in this particular type of action. To attempt an understanding of the mediated action of performing music by either focusing on the agent or on the instrument would yield an incomplete picture of the phenomenon taking place.

What my research revealed, however, was that the mediational means used by visually impaired students were different. What became evident from the data was that, while the task of learning an instrument does not necessarily require having vision, the task of performing music in some social contexts arguably does. The social context

changes the demands placed upon the students as well as the mediational means needed to accomplish the task.

In the present study, informants discussed using a variety of mediational means to accomplish the task of apprehending ensemble parts. Enlarged printed notation was one such example. In order to learn their parts, ensemble members with low vision needed access to enlarged printed music notation. For informants who were blind, tape recordings of the music served as surrogates for seeing the printed notation on paper.

For the purpose of performing in a social context, however, informants who were blind as well as those who were visually impaired expressed an irreducible relationship with auditory memories. Of the eleven informants, nine reported that it was either necessary or much easier to employ memory to perform ensemble parts than relying on other cultural tools. For blind or visually impaired students, the irreducible relationship they have with their instruments was secondary to their ability to commit acoustic information to memory and subsequently reproduce it. Where memorizing music literature is an optional skill for sighted students because they could rely on reading printed notation in order to perform, for visually impaired students, it was a necessary tool.

Even though students reported using memory as a tool, the query became the extent to which an individual's memory qualifies as a mediational means under Wertsch's framework. Specifically, I wondered about the extent to which one's memory possesses materiality—the subject of the second of Wertsch's ten claims about mediated action.

The Materiality of Mediational Means

Wertsch defines mediational means as having materiality or substance. In order to have materiality and qualify as a tool, mediational means must have a way of existing outside of the human agent. In cases such as the pole-vaulter's pole or the musician's instrument, the materiality of the mediational means is easy to recognize; but materiality, in Wertsch's framework, exists in a broad array of structures. Language, for example, is understood as a cultural tool with observable materiality. Learning strategies and organizational processes such as multiplying numbers on paper also demonstrate materiality. In both of these examples, Wertsch acknowledges that the observable existence outside of human agents is often fleeting. A word, for instance, is spoken; then, its sound disperses into the space surrounding the human who produced the utterance. A mathematics problem is organized on paper; once the answer is achieved, the method is likely temporarily retired; the paper is discarded. For Wertsch, the ephemeral quality of the mediational means does not disqualify its appointment as a tool (p. 31).

The issue to consider is how internal processes such as skills differ from a tool. Wertsch writes that the interaction between skills and tools promotes the development of specific mental processes that are necessary in particular communities of practice.

Wertsch does, however, view skills as different from tools. As he explains:

... the external, material properties of cultural tools have important implications for understanding how internal processes come into existence and operate. Such internal processes can be thought of as skills in using particular mediational means. The development of such skills requires acting with, and reacting to, the material properties of cultural tools. Without such materiality, there would be

nothing to act with or react to, and the emergence of socioculturally situated skills could not occur. (p. 31)

In the present study, enlarged printed music notation demonstrated clear materiality. Individuals with low vision reported an ability to reproduce existing ensemble parts that were visible and tangible. These enlarged copies obviously existed outside of the human agents. Additionally, because they were necessary for the human agent's participation in band or orchestra, the relationship between the tool and the agent met the criteria for irreducibility.

Participants who were blind discussed using material tools such as Braille music notation and recordings of their ensemble rehearsals for the purpose of learning such parts. The materiality of some tools employed by these informants in order to *participate* in the ensemble, however, was much less apparent. Two such tools included conducting an auditory scan of recorded ensemble parts and attending to the beat. Both of these mediational means appeared to fall under the category of internal processes rather than primary artifacts with apparent materiality.

As mentioned earlier in the discussion of irreducibility, however, an interesting dilemma emerged surrounding the tools employed by informants who were blind as well as some informants with low vision. When asked to describe strategies for learning ensemble parts, informants who were blind reported accessing recordings, other human beings, and sometimes Braille music notation. As they continued to talk, however, they revealed that these tools were a means to an end. Ultimately, these tools facilitated their efforts to commit music to memory. Granted, they helped them to memorize ensemble

parts; but, during ensemble rehearsals and performances, these mediational means were absent. To participate in a music ensemble, their reliance ultimately rested on memory.

The difficulty in distinguishing whether musical memory is a tool rather than a skill acknowledged the irreducible relationship between human agents and this internal process. Especially in the cases of informants who were blind, because they did not have access to the tools sighted individuals were using, primarily printed notation, they relied on memory. Their identity as performing musicians rested on their ability to materialize music from memory.

In some ways, the materiality of memory can indeed be observed outside of human agents thus qualifying it as a mediational means in Werstch's theory. This is the case when an individual recites poetry or performs music without the benefit of external cues. Not only can memory be projected outwardly, it can also be something that is acted on or reacted to. Consider what happens when a student performs a piece from memory at a piano recital. They are acting on memory to perform the piece and they are responding to it by guiding their performance accordingly. Additionally, audience members watch and perhaps comment on how well the student performed the piece from memory. On some level, the audience members have witnessed the externalization of memory; they have observed human-acting-with-memory in action.

The danger in labeling memory as a tool is that it places emphasis on the human agent since memory could be understood as a part of their innate composition; and an emphasis on any one aspect of the mediated action is exactly what Wertsch urges us to avoid. On the other hand, if one considers memory to be an innate quality rather than a mediational means for participating in music performance, this would mean ostensibly

that students who are blind have no means of accessing musical notation during rehearsals and performances. The fact is that blind students *do* not have anything truly external that they can access to understand music notation during a performance; they do this by employing memory. For blind and visually impaired students, memory appears to serve as a tool. In Wertsch's framework, however, memory is an internal mental process (Wertsch, 1997). It, therefore, can not be considered a tool.

The Numerous and Concurrent Goals Associated with Mediated Action

According to Werstch, members of communities of practice demonstrate concurrent motivations for acquiring cultural tools as well as participating in mediated action. Using the sport of pole-vaulting as an illustration, Wertsch explains that athletes participate in this sport for a variety of reasons including, but not limited to, personal accomplishment, team membership, and national pride (p. 32-33).

Data from the present study validated Werstch's notion that mediated action is often organized around multiple purposes. Informants indicated multiple purposes for acquiring the necessary tools and participating in instrumental music. My findings also demonstrated trends in research on motivations for music participation in high school band or orchestra (Adderley, Kennedy and Berz, 2003; Ebie, 2005; Frakes, 1984; Fredricks et al, 2002; and Hurley, 1992). In these studies and the present study, students reported that motivations for learning to play musical instruments and performing with bands and orchestras ranged from pursuing music as a career to developing and maintaining social relationships to taking part in their respective school cultures.

Werstch argues that examining the multiple goals and the complex relationships that exist among them are essential issues to consider when interpreting mediated action (p. 34). To assume a single goal or deny the intricate relationship between goals is detrimental to the analysis at hand. Consider the following as an illustration: Historically, special education teachers have made a basic assumption in suggesting that participation in music education classes offers students with disabilities a venue for socialization. Informants in this study confirmed this assumption *only* when socializing was one of their stated purposes for participating. Otherwise, the desire to make music was a more basic drive in deciding whether or not to participate in band or orchestra.

Some goals extended well beyond the music-related goals for participating in instrumental music ensembles or orchestra. A few informants discussed, for example, the extent to which participating in band or orchestra allowed them to engage in educating sighted individuals about the abilities, as opposed to the disabilities, of individuals who are blind or visually impaired. Others wanted to lay claim to an identity as musician rather than, or in addition to, person-with-disability.

I was intrigued to find that study participants did not reference the development of memory as a goal or purpose for participating in band; yet, to some extent, virtually all informants were aware of the need to master this mediational means. Arguably, the mastery and appropriation of music notation, using memory as a tool, was an unarticulated aim of these informants. They did not enroll in instrumental music ensembles to acquire memory; yet, engaging memory more skillfully became a goal they attempted to accomplish nonetheless.

Mediational Means' Existence on One or Many Developmental Avenues

Wertsch's fourth claim is that mediational means evolve along on one or more developmental paths. This claim builds on the notion that mediated action is historically situated. The usage of the term "developmental path" implies that an evolutionary process is taking place; but, contrary to what would be assumed about such a process, Wertsch argues that there is no preset directionality. In other words, the evolution of mediated action involves a great deal of contingency and accident. Not surprising, Wertsch references the American biologist and historian James Gould in paralleling his notion of the development of mediated action to the natural evolution of biological species: "Instead of viewing evolution as development toward some sort of preordained end point, I would argue, following Gould, that it is subject to all sorts of contingent events, many of which have major implications for how development occurs" (p. 36).

When discussing the development of mediational means, the danger lies in positing an ideal end point. In the present study, the ideal point would be the full integration of students into the sociocultural context of band and orchestra. The temptation was to rank the success of students involved in mainstreaming and full inclusion by how well they were demonstrating the mastery and appropriation of the set of cultural tools provided to them by a given sociocultural setting. Essentially, success would be determined by whether a student who is blind could function like a sighted student in a sighted student's world while fully appreciating that the compensatory mechanisms in place offered as many affordances as constraints. Herein lies the danger of positing an ideal end point.

My analysis of data strongly benefitted from the application of Werstch's theory. Instead of assessing and ranking how well students faired based on external and "artificial" measures, I began to understand their experiences as an evolutionary process whereby their acculturation to band or orchestra was gauged against a set of background assumptions about what forms of mediational means were available to them. Interestingly, however, my analysis revealed that it was *not* the forms of cultural tools available to them that distinguished their evolutionary trajectory, but rather the lack thereof. This finding buttressed Werstch's point regarding the amount of contingency and accident that is involved in the development of mediated action.

As mentioned earlier, one distinct trend that appeared to mark the experiences of most informants in the present study was the use of memory as a mediational means for engaging in music performance. Memory, however, did not meet the necessary criterion for consideration as a tool in Wertsch's framework. Rather, memory emerged as a skill — an aspect of general intelligence with abstract attributions. Likely, students did not enroll in band or orchestra with intentions of developing memory. Such development evolved as a response to the sociocultural pressure to access the inaccessible mediational means known as printed musical notation and and to compensate for the inability to employ this tool. Perhaps an outgrowth of using the tool of memory to participate in music performance maybe a type a musical intelligence that is yet to be fully understood.

The issue of whether memory was a tool or a skill needs to be revisited. As previously discussed, one distinct trend that appeared to mark the experiences of most informants in the present study was the use of memory as a mediational means for engaging in music performance. Memory would be considered a skill — an aspect of

general intelligence with abstract attributions—if it were assessed independently of the context provided by the specific mediated action (music performance) and the fact that the agent in question is blind or visually impaired. However, in the context of mediated action as the unit of analysis, memory surfaces as a tool. Certainly students did not intend to employ memory as such—it evolved as a response to the sociocultural pressure to access a mediational means to compensate for the inability to see printed musical notation. Perhaps an outgrowth of using the tool of memory to participate in music performance may be a type a musical skill that is yet to be fully understood.

Constraints and Affordances of Mediational Means

Revisiting the example of pole-vaulting, Wertsch explains that advancements in the construction of poles used in this sport encouraged higher jumps, but also unleashed challenges. Questions emerged about the extent to which high jumps were due to the nature of the poles rather than the abilities of the athletes. Such questions and challenges constrained pole-vaulters because they created a veil of suspicion around the competitors' physical strength and abilities (p. 39-42).

The extent to which cultural tools affect the quality of the mediated action is revealed by examining the affordances and constraints associated with mediational means. Generally speaking, the qualifier “agent-operating-with-mediational means” is the most apt qualifier used to describe a person with a disability. This is because, in order to compensate for a disability, an individual is *forced* to adopt a tool to produce a desired action. At the moment of musical performance, the musician who is blind surfaces as individual-operating-with- memory. During the learning process, however, the musician

could be described as individual-operating-with-acoustic-representation-of-musical-notation. On the other hand, if the student is using Braille music notation, the individual surfaces using a tactile representation for visual music notation. Regardless of the qualifier, the use of mediational means as a surrogate for physical vision provides ample opportunity to prove Werstch's point that cultural tools inherently and simultaneously create constraints and yield affordances.

In the present study, an obvious example of how cultural tools grant affordances and constraints was the use of enlarged print notation by individuals with low vision. One affordance associated with enlarged print notation was the degree to which it mirrored the standard-size copies of ensemble parts used by sighted students. In addition, large print copies of notation were quite readily achievable. One constraint related to enlarged print copies was, ironically, their size. Because the print size was larger, less information could be presented on the page. This result forced informants to turn pages more frequently than sighted peers and run the risk losing their places in the notation during performances or rehearsals. Additionally, enlarged copies triggered social stigma. It invited the possibility of teasing from peers, which was problematic for at least one informant. For these reasons, some informants with low vision chose to engage memory because it freed them from the printed page.

For informants who were blind, committing music notation to memory made ensemble participation possible. This fact was the principal affordance associated with this tool. A constraining factor related to memory was its unreliability. Informants mentioned feeling the need to refrain from playing during rehearsals and performances when memory failed and they were not able to play their ensemble parts.

Braille music as a mediational means introduced yet another discussion surrounding affordances and constraints. The constraints associated with using Braille music notation were numerous. First, students voiced frustration with the fact that this mediational tool was not readily available. Second, even when it was available, informants reported that reading Braille music notation was a very cumbersome experience. This could be due to the fact that Braille was never intended to be used for music notation.

On the other hand, Braille music notation allowed students who were blind direct, first-hand access to music notation. There is no other mediational means that affords students who are blind the opportunity for the direct processing of music literature. Other cultural tools such as tape recordings of ensemble pieces rely on others for musical interpretation. The extent to which this is problematic in the development of one's musicianship is among the issues I wanted to explore.

In my own experience, using recorded examples to memorize music from the Baroque and Classical periods has created few obstacles. Even though I have accessed secondary sources for this literature, I was able to master and even appropriate this literature. Using secondary sources for Romantic and Twentieth-century literature, however, presented struggles. It is difficult to apprehend the complex nature of the rhythm and the increased presence of subtle dynamic markings using recordings. For this music literature, Braille music notation has been a necessity. Still, the major constraint revolving the use of Braille music notation is that it does not immediately facilitate performing on stage. In the case of most instruments, it is not possible to perform with one hand and read Braille with the other.

The Transformations Associated with New Mediational Means

Wertsch discusses how the transformation of a tool triggers a fundamental change in the nature of particular practices. He illustrates this point with the example of how technological advances such as calculators challenged math instructors to clarify, for themselves, whether they were providing education in their discipline of mathematics or in the mechanical manipulation of this cultural tool (p. 43-44).

The transformations associated with new mediational means occur in myriad ways, not only through the introduction of a novel tool. Wertsch explains that changes can be traced to different levels of skill or other facts about the agent. The importance of recognizing how a new cultural tool transforms mediated action is that it “alters the entire flow and structure” of mediated action (p. 43). A new mediational means creates an imbalance in the systematic organization of mediated action — an imbalance that sets off changes in other elements such as the agent and changes in mediated action in general (p. 45). Quite powerfully, a new cultural tool can cause an entirely new form of mediated action to appear.

In the present study, there were no instances of a novel cultural tool transforming the action of acquiring or performing music; in other words there were no instances in which high-tech tools were introduced into the social setting, thereby revolutionizing the way students performed or acquired an understanding of music notation. Nonetheless, in accordance with Wertsch’s theory, there were examples of more subtle, yet equally powerful ways in which external factors transformed the mediated action. The changes and transformations in mediated action that occurred were traceable to facts about the

agents—specifically, knowledge obtained by agents. Patricia, for example, did not realize that a Braille music notation system existed until her first high school band director discussed the process with her. Trevor did not realize that using an enlarged copy of an ensemble part was an acceptable accommodation until a private trombone instructor offered this suggestion. Justin’s band director proposed recording rehearsals so that he could listen to ensemble rehearsals and commit events such as musical entrances and tempo changes to memory. The introduction of these cultural tools—Braille music, enlarged copy of music notation, and recordings of music—transformed the way these students engaged with the music they were learning. The mediated action evolved to encompass a new irreducible relationship between agent and the mediational means. As a result, each of these informants reported that the introduction of these tools enabled them to have more autonomy over their learning. It also allowed them to gain a higher level of mastery over their participation in instrumental music.

The value of analyzing mediated action from the perspective of the mediational means is that it highlights the fact that, to a large extent, cultural tools provide the context and the standard for assessing the skills of an agent (p. 45). The implication is that the skill of a musician must be assessed with regard to a particular cultural tool. It is not something that should be either defined or assessed in the abstract.

The quality of experience in performing music reflects the cultural tools of a contingent sociocultural setting. The extent to which the skills of a visually impaired musician can be assessed largely depends on the cultural tools used in the assessment. Perhaps this explains why individuals with visual disabilities fair poorly in the cultural setting of elite music performing ensembles. In this cultural setting, a high premium is

placed on the ability to sight read music literature. Given that this cultural tool is not accessible to blind or visually impaired students, it is not surprising that few such musicians have obtained high status positions in this arena. For a change to occur that will alter the evolutionary path of this phenomenon, a novel cultural tool would indeed need to be introduced to transform the relationship between music literature and the blind or visually impaired musician.

Mastery and Mediational Means

Wertsch's next claim about mediated action is that mastery, the demonstrated proficiency in the use of a tool, is present in the connection between agents and mediational means. In light of my focus on music education, Wertsch's illustration of this point is fitting. He cites a narrative in which an elementary school student masters the act of singing Christmas songs in order to participate in public school culture even though his family does not celebrate this particular holiday (p. 57-58).

I considered the extent mastery of tools played in the quality of experience for blind and visually impaired high school ensemble participants. For blind informants particularly, gaining mastery of the music literature was crucial. For this task, they employed memory. This was especially apparent when informants wanted to advance themselves to opportunities such as district band or all state. Justin, for example, demonstrated enough mastery of memory to achieve first chair in the elite ensembles in his school. He even auditioned and earned placement in district honor band. Similarly, Patricia auditioned and earned placement in district honor band—an accomplishment of

which she was immensely proud. Sadly, however, because she was unable to memorize her parts quickly enough, she was forced to relinquish her chair.

Appropriation and Mediational Means

In addition to mastery, Wertsch considers the appropriation of mediational means. He defines appropriation as a sense of ownership over the tools, tasks, or processes associated with mediated action. Revisiting the aforementioned example of Christmas holiday songs, Wertsch explains how the student mastered the tunes, but did not appropriate them. Because of his family's religious practice, he never gained a sense of ownership over the songs (p. 57-58).

I considered the degree to which appropriation of tools surfaced in the experiences of informants in the present study. Again, memory appeared to play an important role in the facilitation of appropriation, especially for informants who were blind. In closing follow-up interviews, I learned about informants accomplishments since the time of our initial discussions. Mark, a junior in high school by this time, was teaching private violin lessons. He was continuing to perform with the elite ensembles in his school and community orchestras in his geographic area. He was also mastering and appropriating computer music software to participate in arranging and composing music. Clearly, Mark was comfortable committing ensemble parts to memory; but, he was also appropriating the tools he had engaged for the purposes of facilitating memory to pursue other musical interests. Somewhat similarly, Trevor, in college by this time, was playing in his university wind ensemble. He reported knowing exactly how much he needed to enlarge parts and creating the copies independently.

Unfortunately, by the time of closing follow-up interviews, several informants were no longer participating in band or orchestra because their interests had changed. I was particularly curious about Patricia who had informed me of her intentions to pursue music as a career, but whose contact information was no longer valid. I attempted to reach her through the agency that had identified her for the present study initially. This organization was able to confirm that she had begun university studies, but had discontinued after the first semester. Remembering Patricia's experience with district honor band and the difficulty she expressed learning ensemble parts for school, I wondered if memory had not served her well enough for accomplishing college level music study. From her interview, it appeared clear that Patricia had appropriated the tympani as she appeared to see it as an extension of herself; but, her efforts to memorize ensemble parts had not produced the desired results.

Multiple Purposes for Mediational Means

Wertsch's ninth claim calls for putting cultural tools in a historical context. He asserts that most cultural tools are not applied to the tasks for which they were intended. Often, their eventual uses emerge in response to forces that have nothing to do with the ideal design of the mediational means. In a sense, Wertsch explains that ". . . one could say that we are in a position of always misusing these tools in carrying out our actions. Indeed, in many cases we may be trying to speak, think, or otherwise act by employing a cultural tool that, unbeknownst to us, actually impedes our performance" (p. 59). In the present study, Braille music notation presents an ideal example to buttress Wertsch's point.

The Braille system is a mediational means that did not evolve for the purposes it currently serves. Its originating sociocultural context was wartime in the Napoleonic era. In response to Napoleon's demand for secret communication among soldiers, Charles Barbier developed a code that soldiers could use at night to communicate silently and without light. Barbier's system was rejected by the military for its intended use because it was too complex for soldiers to learn. In 1921, however, Louis Braille learned about this system from Barbier. Braille recognized that Barbier's system contained an important constraint—namely, that the symbols were too complex for tactile comprehension. Because the human finger could not encompass the whole symbol with a singular contact, it was not possible to move rapidly from one symbol to another. Having identified the major failing of Barbier's military code, Braille made the necessary modifications to transform it into a method of reading and writing for people who were blind (Berwin, 2006).

Making music notation accessible to people who were blind was yet another challenge. There is evidence that, as early as 1834, Braille experimented with a system for notating music. However, this system did not become widely accepted until 1954, when an international committee adapted Braille's system and approved a code for representing print music notation (Krolick, 1979).

Applying this cultural tool to yet another sociocultural setting inevitably created associated affordances and constraints. Regarding affordances, the system offered musicians who were blind the ability to read music notation. Because the method was not developed for this explicit use, however, it emerged fraught with constraints imposed upon the musician.

The most pressing constraint traces back to the inherent difference between the English alphabet and musical notation. The six-dot cell of the Braille system was developed so that the reader could comprehend one complete letter with a single placement of the finger. This is not the case for musical notation. Musical notation often requires more than one six-dot cell to relay the content of a musical note. Consequently, when reading Braille music notation, the musician must undertake two or more finger placements to comprehend the information surrounding one musical note. To some extent, this constraint parallels the issue of overwhelming tactile complexity that hampered the success of Barbier's original system in its use for military purposes.

In light of Wertsch's claim regarding mediational means, the Braille system is being "misused" as a tool for the mediated action of reading music notation. The consequence of misusing this mediational means is the creation of a cumbersome system that impedes the speed of learning music literature by musicians who are blind. Indeed the informants in the present study voiced this concern. One informant, Russ, described the process of reading Braille music notation as "treacherous."

Power, Authority, and Mediational Means

In his tenth claim, Wertsch asserts that mediational means are not neutral cognitive and communicative instruments. An analysis of power and authority is inevitable when the theoretical framework calls for an exploration of mediated action in a sociocultural setting: As Wertsch explains: ". . . the larger goal of my analysis is to explore how human action is socioculturally situated, and given that sociocultural settings inherently involve power and authority . . ." (p. 67). Hence, a discussion of the

interrelationship among power, authority, and the implementation of mediational means is essential. In short, the acceptance of a mediational means by an agent who is engaged in mediated action is not a “dispassionate choice” (p. 66). Instead, as Werstch explains, “it is often shaped by the power and authority associated with items in the ‘cultural tool kit’ provided by a sociocultural setting” (p.68).

How and why students choose a given mediational means speaks to the notion that power and authority are inherently involved in mediated action. In the sociocultural setting of band or orchestra, student musicians have choices to make regarding the items they can select from the available cultural tool kit. For example, most students choose their instrument. The basis for their selection has sociocultural ramification such as the perceived social ranking imparted by the instrument, culturally influenced preferences related to gender, family support for playing the instrument, and financial considerations associated with the maintenance and study of the instrument. Alternatively, instrument preference can be related to the innate aesthetic qualities such as timbre and appearance—two factors that are arguably culturally influenced. Another example is a student’s choice regarding mastery and appropriation of the music literature. Students can choose to use printed notation to guide their playing or they can choose to memory the content of the music literature. Choosing to master and appropriate a given mediational means can imbue the agent with power and authority. For example, a student can choose to excel in the sight reading, and in so doing, gain status in the sociocultural setting of band or orchestra. Sight reading, in this case, confers power and authority upon the agent.

As it applies to the present study, Werstch’s theory and implication holds true given the assumption that students are free to make choices. Arguably, in the case of

blind and visually impaired students, the choice of items available in the cultural tool kit provided by the sociocultural setting is limited. On the other hand, because they cannot partake of some of the tools available, students were allowed to create their own tool kit.

Regarding the creation of learning strategies, for example, it appeared that informants were generally free to implement tools and organize their own approaches to learning ensemble parts. There were, however, a few noteworthy instances that suggested a need for approval from sighted ensemble directors or peers. Karl, for example, recounted how he believed he was able to learn a significant amount of a new piece by listening to the other members of his ensemble. When describing how this process occurred, he stated the following: “I just, you know, did that on my own . . . and everybody realized that I was doing ok, so they kind . . . left it that way.” Similarly, when a piece was first distributed to his middle school band, Paul held his trumpet with one hand and held his part close to his eyes with the other in order to read the regular sized print until an enlarged part could be created. When detailing how he developed this idea, Paul said that he “. . . tried it for about a while in the seventh or eighth grade and the director didn’t seem to mind.” Both of these comments suggest that certainly these students, and perhaps other informants in the study, were concerned with the introduction of mediational means that were not part of the accepted cultural tool kit of the sociocultural setting. The employment of alternative mediational means could have been met with disapproval from teachers or peers, and this could trigger myriad negative repercussions for the student.

By employing certain mediational means, students succeeded in being recognized, or gaining the floor, in the way that was acceptable and valued in the sociocultural setting

of band or orchestra. Don, for example, believed he had achieved a more “respectable” role in his band when his director suggested that he move from playing auxiliary percussion instruments to tympani. Russ, in a related example, described feeling most a part of the ensemble when he had received a tape, had memorized his part, and could rehearse or perform with his peers. On the other hand, Laura, for example, discussed feeling less a part of the band when print notation exercises were presented on the board and not in large print. Through these examples, we can observe how the right manipulation of cultural tools can open the door for the full inclusion of visually impaired students into a sighted sociocultural setting.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have interpreted data using sociocultural theory as articulated by James Wertsch in his 1998 text *Mind as Action*. In this monograph, Wertsch asserted ten claims for studying mediated action—the action that results when human agents acquire cultural tools to accomplish a task. Wertsch recommended this approach over the traditional practice of investigating human agents and cultural tools in isolation because focusing on mediated action allowed for a clearer understanding of how agents and tools relate to one another.

The fundamental claim of Wertsch’s theory is that the relationship between agents and tools is irreducible. In other words, the bond between the two is such that given tasks are not accomplished if agents and mediational means are not working in tandem. Beyond irreducibility, Wertsch’s claim that mediational means confirm affordances and constraints that impact the quality of the mediated action is most relevant to the present

study because it addresses the extent to which mediational means impact the quality of a human beings experience.

Data revealed that students experience an irreducible relationship with memory. For individuals with low vision, the affordance of this tool appears to be the manner in which it frees them from struggling with the printed page. For individuals who are blind, memory allows participation in band or orchestra alongside sighted peers. No other alternative is available. In Wertsch's framework, however, memory is an internal mental process, not a cultural tool. As a mental process, its principal constraint is its reliability, or lack thereof. When informants were unable to call upon memory to participate in rehearsals and performances, they refrained from playing, which negatively impacted the quality of their experiences.

In light of this information, one possible approach for enhancing the music education of instrumental music students who are blind or visually impaired is to facilitate access to ensemble parts early. The sooner these students can begin to memorize parts use of recordings, Braille music, and the help of other individuals, the more time they have to adjust to performing with the ensemble.

Another approach is to engage students in musical behaviors such as listening, composing, and improvising within the context of the ensemble. Organizing a discussion, for example, around two performances of a piece which the band or orchestra is rehearsing may provide students who are blind an opportunity to share ideas and acquire knowledge about performance practices. Performing ensemble arrangements of jazz works that invite improvisation may enable all students—blind and sighted—the opportunity to demonstrate unrealized musical abilities. For sighted, blind, or visually

impaired such an approach would offer the opportunity to develop what leaders in music education have advocated for decades—comprehensive musicianship.

CHAPTER NINE

DISCUSSION

The United States Congress transformed education services for children with disabilities upon authorizing the Education for All Handicapped Children Act in 1975. Often referenced as Public Law 94-142 (PL 94-142), the legislation required that children with disabilities receive a free and appropriate education in a public school system that was suitable to their needs, but as close as possible to the student's home. In response to the law, school systems generally mainstreamed children with disabilities into so-called "specials" in the school day such as music class, art class, physical education, recess, or lunch. Eventually, PL 94-142 was renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). With each reauthorization of IDEA, members of the disability community and their advocates urged that students with disabilities obtain greater access to the facilities and services in their home schools. This notion has become known as full inclusion (Gersten, 2001; Yell, 2006).

With the authorization of IDEA, experienced scholars in music education published texts designed to assist teachers in preparing for students with special needs (Atterbury, 1990; Graham, 1975; Graham & Beer, 1980; Nocera, 1979). Similarly, in initial and later investigations, researchers solicited information about teachers' perceptions of mainstreaming (Atterbury, 1986; Darrow, 1999; Frisque, Niebur, & Humphreys, 1994; Gfeller, Darrow, & Hedden, 1990; Gilbert & Asmus, 1981, and

Wilson & McCrary, 1996). The data in these studies revealed that, generally, school system officials do not engage music teachers in decisions about the inclusion of students with disabilities in music class. Music educators reported, for example, feeling excluded from conferences such as IEP meetings where instructional delivery to students enrolled in special education is established. Additionally, teachers indicated that it was common practice for disabled students' social goals on the IEP to be fulfilled with school music classes.

Perhaps it was discovering the policy of employing music class to meet social goals that encouraged music education researchers to launch a new line of inquiry: social acceptance of students with disabilities by non-disabled peers (Colwell, 1998; Darrow & Johnson, 1994; Johnson & Darrow, 1997). A finding that was present in two of these studies and was of particular relevance to the present study was the level of expressed discomfort with blind and visually impaired students reported by non-disabled youth. In one study, Darrow and Johnson, (1994), students without disabilities ranked their comfort level with ten different disability groups. Blind and visually impaired people were consistently among the groups with which all non-disabled individuals felt least comfortable (p. 74).

In more recent studies, education researchers began addressing the perceptions of students with disabilities about mainstreaming and full-inclusion (Allan, 1999; Burgener, 2006; Bursuck, Munk, & Olson, 1999; Habel, Bloom, Ray, & Bacon, 1999; Higgins, 1999; Lovitt, Plavin & Cushing, 1999). In four of these studies, one recurring theme was the following: public school students with disabilities reported high levels of social isolation. Allan (1999), in an especially thought-provoking report, highlighted non-

disabled peers' roles as gatekeepers in the inclusion process. In one related music education study, however, social isolation did not emerge as a troubling concern (Lapka, 2005). It should be noted that, in this study, the researcher could have obtained richer descriptions of disabled students' perceptions if she had chosen to do so. Likely, because her study was not focused solely on student perceptions, this area of inquiry was less prominent in the investigation.

In reviewing the music education research literature on mainstreaming and full-inclusion, I was compelled to know more about disabled students' experiences in music class. I was particularly interested in their motivations for participation and their social experiences with non-disabled ensemble members. If students with special needs were in fact expected to demonstrate social development in music class, I first questioned the degree to which their motivations for participation in band or orchestra intersected with this type of IEP goal. Moreover, I questioned how these students would evaluate their social experiences in school music ensembles.

My interest in the experiences of blind and visually impaired students emanated from the fact that these students are among the least represented in music education research (Gfeller, 1990). In addition, my own life experience as a music student, teacher, and performer encouraged me to question the appropriateness of assuming that a music education environment was necessarily the correct setting for social skills development. I remembered, for example, that my own motivations for participation in band were driven by a thirst for opportunities to learn about music and to perform music.

The aforementioned research collided with my own life experience, and this dissertation study emerged. My goal in this investigation was to understand the

experiences of blind or visually impaired secondary school instrumental music students through the use of in-depth semi-structured interviews. My focus was expressed in the following overarching research question: what are the reported experiences of secondary school blind or visually impaired students enrolled in instrumental music classes? The following four questions guided the specific nature of the inquiry: (a) How do the motivations for participation in instrumental music of blind and visually impaired students compare to what is known from research about sighted students' motivations for participation in these classes? (b) To what extent, if any, does the ability to develop their own strategies for learning affect the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music classes? (c) To what extent is the quality of secondary school blind or visually impaired students' experiences in instrumental music related to the intervention or assistance of other people? (d) To what extent do blind or visually impaired secondary school students' perceptions of social connectedness determine the quality of their experiences in instrumental music classes?

I addressed these questions by engaging eleven secondary instrumental music students who were blind or visually impaired in semi-structured interviews. I located informants by contacting a wide variety of state education department offices as well as national, state, and local agencies serving blind and visually impaired consumers. These organizations and agencies forwarded my announcements to potential informants and their families. Interested candidates or members of their families then contacted me by email or telephone.

During my search for informants, a very interesting development occurred. Some of the organizations serving blind and visually impaired individuals appeared to have an

interest in only facilitating my contact with high school students they perceived as successful. I frequently found myself in the position of explaining that I was interested in talking to any young people they knew who were participating in band or orchestra regardless of the degree to which the student's experience was positive or negative. Representatives from the organizations in question, however, were most interested in providing me with the names of individuals who were proficient at using Braille music notation. I learned, for example, that one representative was refusing to allow me access to Patricia. Had I not accessed a wide variety of organizations and agencies, I would have never obtained Patricia's story.

Patricia's story was important in the present investigation, however, for the exact reason her identity was concealed from me: she was not compliant. She was a willing participant in this study, but, as one can note from her interview, she resisted the power others exerted upon her. It was she, for instance, who articulated strongly an interest in an identity as a musician, rather than a "blind girl." It is conceivable that, in her quest to assert a different identity, Patricia offended the person who refused to facilitate my interest in contacting her and who described her as "not good" for my study.

Upon locating potential informants, I introduced these individuals and their families to the project and secured their verbal agreement to participate. I next sent participant consent, assent, and project descriptions to each family. When signed forms were returned, I phoned each informant to identify a time for the first interview. Ten of the informants participated in two telephone interviews lasting between one and two hours. One informant, Patricia, was only able to participate in one interview.

I asked informants to discuss topics such as the following: (a) how they became interested in playing a musical instrument and participating in the school ensemble; (b) what procedures they employed to learn ensemble parts; and (c) if and how they participated in social functions outside of class with their sighted peers from the music ensemble (Appendix E). I tape-recorded all Interviews, and I developed print transcripts. Then, I sent informants transcripts of their interviews in their preferred reading format (Braille, large print, tape-recording, or electronic copy). I asked all informants to check their transcripts for accuracy. This common qualitative research process known as “member checking” is used to ensure validity (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Rudestam & Newton, 2001).

Summary of Findings and Implication for Teaching

Motivations

The data addressing motivations for participation were presented in Chapter Four of this dissertation study. In this section of the report, I sought to uncover blind and visually impaired students’ motivations for participation in band or orchestra as well as to compare their motivations with those of individuals without disabilities. Research studies cited in Chapter Two of this report demonstrated that students with disabilities are often placed in music classes to fulfill socialization IEP goals. For this reason, it was important to consider the motivations of students with disabilities for participating in these classes. Until now, disabled students’ voices surrounding reasons for becoming involved in music classes appeared to be absent from the discussion.

In studies by Adderley, Kennedy and Berz (2003), Ebie (2005), Frakes (1984), Fredricks et al (2002), and Hurley (1992), high school student musicians reported the following broad spectrum of reasons for enrolling in band or orchestra: (a) intrinsic musical interests; (b) contextual motivations (liking the teacher or having friends in the ensemble); (c) utilitarian purposes (impresses colleges or provides social status); (d) personal accomplishment; (e) family influences; (f) interest in a music related career: and (g) identity development.

In the present study, I found that blind and visually impaired participants in instrumental music reflected similar motivations in comparison to their sighted colleagues. The following five themes represented present study informants' motivations: (a) motivations related to music; (b) motivations related to group membership; (c) motivations related to personal accomplishment; (d) motivations related to social interaction; and (e) motivations related to personal identity.

Identity development was the only area related to motivation in which informants in the present study differed from non-disabled middle and high school instrumental music students whose motivations for participation have been elucidated in published research studies. In investigations by Hurley, Fredricks et al, Adderley, Kennedy, and Berz, as well as Ebie, identity development did emerge as an important motivating factor. Participants in those studies, however, did not appear to share interest in abandoning an identity. Moreover, non-disabled preadolescents and adolescents did not demonstrate the need to prove themselves capable as opposed to constricted by some personal characteristic such as a disability. .

In the present study, some informants did express the desire to prove that they were capable of something other than being disabled. As Patricia said, “I’m not just a blind girl; I’m a musician.”

I found the notion of asserting an identity other than that of a disabled person especially striking in the context of this study. In my own experience as a person who is visually impaired and as a music specialist for students with disabilities, I have noticed the many ways in which my students and I have resisted labels. Though I do not believe anyone necessarily intends the various labels or even the word “special” to imply negative connotations, they do for me and some of the informants in the present study. What is interesting is that music class is evidently one of the places in which the individuals participating in this study could put forth a different identity. Again, in my own experience, I remember that the people I admired most in my community were musicians and music educators. I wanted to be like them! The music programs in my high school were the places where I was able to pursue that goal.

Additionally, like most of the individuals in the present study, I pursued band and orchestra opportunities because I was driven to know more about music and to know more about being a musician. I also remember desiring membership in those particular school groups. I did have good friends in band, but it would be inaccurate to say that I consciously joined band for the purpose of making friends. Even in the stories of informants in the present study who indicated social motivations as principal motivations for participating in instrumental music classes, a deep interest in some aspect of music or music making was present. As I reflect on this trend in the data, I am forced to question more the efficacy of assuming that music class is necessarily the appropriate venue for

social skills development. I encourage fellow music educators, special educators, and school administrators to consider this issue as well.

Another especially interesting trend in the motivation literature was the following: among adolescent students, there was a general interest in music and the opportunity to play music with peers outside of staged performances. In the present study, only two informants valued the specific act of performing in front of other people. Several more spoke positively about participating in performances and competitions, but it was interest in group accomplishment that sparked their comments, not only music performance.

This finding also paralleled my own experience. In this case, the correspondence had less to do with a visual disability and more to do with being inquisitive. Like the informants in the present study, I was interested in what happened when my band director chose to direct a particular passage slower or with a more gradual crescendo. This result encourages music educators to balance the traditional emphasis on music performance with opportunities to learn more about the music making process.

Self-developed Learning Strategies

In Chapter Five, I dealt with the question of learning strategies informants developed independently. In addition, I considered the extent to which informants' abilities to develop learning strategies contributed to quality of experience in the ensemble.

Two principal themes emerged from the interview transcripts: strategies for learning the ensemble part and strategies for rehearsing and performing. Nine repeating ideas revealed the specific strategies employed by informants to accomplish these tasks.

Participants spoke positively, for the most part, about strategies they had developed. Memorizing ensemble parts was the most helpful strategy for all informants, especially during performances.

An interesting trend emerging from this portion of the data was the extent to which study participants struggled and even resisted learning to use Braille music notation. Russ described this system as “treacherous.” Because the Braille music notation system seemed too difficult to learn, and because it was often difficult to access in a timely manner, informants adopted other methods such as listening to a neighbor or using a recording to learn ensemble parts.

Though I am able to use Braille music notation, and though I recognize its value, the informants’ sentiments resonate deeply with me. Learning Braille music notation can be overwhelming, especially when it is presented to students who are also attempting to master Braille code for curricular requirements such as mathematics and science. Clearly, from the motivation data, one can understand that these informants do not pursue music to become overwhelmed; rather, they pursue music for purposes such as learning, growing, and having fun.

Even in instances in which informants employed Braille music notation, memory was the means upon which they eventually relied most. This finding begs the following questions: To what extent are educators involved in training blind and visually impaired students to use memory? To what extent are we teaching these students music?

One informant, Justin, described how his band director required students to produce musical arrangements of existing pieces in jazz ensemble. Justin also discussed how his jazz improvisations improved when he listened and modeled a group of

professional musicians who joined his school big band for a performance each year. In reflection, Justin explained that he was considering jazz arranging, composing, and performing as a career because the requirements for memory were not so taxing.

Certainly, using memory and performing with school instrumental ensembles has merit. It appears, however, that opportunities to rest the memory and engage in other forms of music making such as listening, improvising and composing could provide equally rich music learning opportunities.

Intervention of Other People

In addition to identifying and executing methods for participating in instrumental music on their own, informants experienced assistance from other people. Data highlighting the types of individuals who offered assistance and the roles they played were presented in Chapter Six.

Regarding the types of individuals who assisted, three themes were observed in the interview transcripts: (a) individuals operating outside the instrumental music context (parents, private teachers, and other professionals), (b) ensemble directors, and (c) peers.

Informants generally found ensemble teachers supportive. Three repeating ideas demonstrated roles played by school band and orchestra directors who were perceived as supportive or accepting: (a) director as facilitator; (b) director as coach or advisor; and (c) director as recognizing ability.

I was heartened when listening to the positive accounts most informants offered about their ensemble directors. Knowing the demands that are placed on public school band and orchestra teachers, I was, frankly, astonished by the numbers of informants who

reported that their teachers produced recordings or enlargements of ensemble parts for them. In my own experiences, peers and private instructors provided such assistance.

In most cases, though their ensemble directors did not necessarily provide the aforementioned type of assistance, informants expressed a sense of their school music teachers as accessible. They described their teachers as “a good guy” or even “a friend.” In some instances, informants reported that their ensemble directors actively involved them in problem solving around a particular issue of disability access. Laura, for example, described a situation in which her band teachers involved her in a discussion about developing enlargements. In another account, Don described how his director assisted him in uncovering a difficult social dynamic in the percussion section of the band.

From my perspective as a student and teacher with a disability, the ensemble directors represented in the present study actually encouraged informants to begin advocating for themselves by involving them in these discussions. The teachers avoided the temptation to make decisions for their students and instead allowed their ensemble members with disabilities to understand that their voice was important.

Social Connection

The role of social connection in the instrumental music experiences of secondary blind and visually impaired instrumental music students was considered in Chapter Seven of this report. In addressing this question, I asked study participants to begin by identifying a time when they felt “a part of the band.” In discussions in which informants were able to label themselves as feeling a part of the band, I then engaged them in

dialogue about the nature of their relationships with non-disabled peers and the ways these relationships were cultivated. In instances in which informants expressed difficulties with peers, I encouraged them to offer details about their perceptions of the disconnection.

Informants' descriptions of social connection in band and orchestra separated into three categories: (a) experiences of study participants who intended to have careers in music; (b) experiences of study participants who viewed the ensemble as "like a family"; and (c) the experiences of study participants who valued performing music with peers in school. Students whose descriptions represented the first category indicated interest in pursuing careers in music performance, arranging and composing, and sound engineering. Informants who saw the ensemble as a family, though generally very interested in music, also valued the close social bond that they believed was evident in their band or orchestra. They also clearly recognized and appreciated the opportunities instrumental music education offered for social incentives such as personal recognition and status. Participants in the third group expressed a particular affinity for the specific act of engaging in music making with peers.

Informants were generally positive when describing their experiences of social connection in instrumental music. Interestingly, the group that described the most difficulty was the cluster of informants who desired careers in music. This finding suggested that perhaps something other than disability might be contributing to social alienation. What peers perceived as hyper focus on music, for example, could be as socially problematic as blindness or visual impairment. A second result from this data further challenged the assumption that music class was necessarily an appropriate setting

for social skills development. When informants' motivations for social connection and their experiences with inclusion matched, informants were positive. When, however, informants' interests in connecting with peers were unmet and disillusionment with peers was present, they found their experiences in school ensembles disappointing. Though their disappointment in levels of social connection was clearly evident, informants did not identify this issue as cause for discontinuing instrumental music study. Where one could assume easily that individuals are socially isolated as a result of their disability, teachers should recognize that other factors may be contributing to social exclusion. The story of one informant, Don, revealed how an apparently caring band instructor provided valuable feedback when the informant was committing a social faux-pas — namely, bossing his peers around. Upon receiving the feedback, Don and his director uncovered a very problematic aforementioned social situation in which the informant understood himself to be a co-section leader. To some extent, the misunderstanding may have been connected to Don's visual disability; but, the majority of the discrepancy resulted from Don's misunderstanding his role in the ensemble culture. Likely, such a misunderstanding could develop in the experiences of sighted students as easily as it did in Don's case.

As a student in my high school band, I enjoyed a very satisfactory level of social connection. Not only did I participate in healthy social interactions with other band members in school, we frequently gathered outside of school to attend movies or consume pizza. In a different church music ensemble, however, I experienced feelings of alienation very similar to Don's. Reflecting on those events, I remembered and realized again that my seriousness about music probably had more to do with my disaffection

from the group than my visual disability. I know my seriousness led me to correct my peers' behavior, and I imagine that it probably propelled me to comment on their musicianship. In light of these data, I wonder how or if the experience would have been different if my ensemble director had steered me in a different direction.

Recognizing that socially awkward behavior may have little or no connection to blindness or visual impairment, my suggestion is that music educators offer students such as those in the present study the same careful, but direct verbal feedback in this area they would provide for any other student. Because it is likely that students who are blind or visually impaired are unable to access nonverbal communication from their peers, music teachers can serve an important function by discussing their observations of relevant classroom events with these students.

Interpreting the Data through the lens of James Wertsch and Sociocultural Theory

I chose to interpret the data through the lens of sociocultural theory as described by James Wertsch in *Mind as Action* (1998). Wertsch asserted ten claims about what he labeled mediated action — the action that occurs when human agents take up various types of contextually specific tools to accomplish a task. In the present study, the human agents were blind or visually impaired students involved in the mediated action known as participating in school band or orchestra.

Wertsch's claims were the following: (a) there is irreducible tension between human agents and mediational means; (b) mediational means possess materiality; (c) there are multiple goals associated with mediated action; (d) mediational means exist on one or many developmental avenues; (e) all mediational means possess constraints and

affordances; (f) there are transformations Associated with new mediational means; (g) mediational means involve mastery; (h) mediational means involve appropriation; (i) there are multiple purposes for mediational means; and (j) mediational means involve issues related to power and authority.

The overarching observation that emanated from viewing the data through this lens was that all informants who were blind and some informants who had low vision relied on an irreducible relationship with memory to participate in instrumental music class. From Wertsch's perspective, however, memory does not hold the same status as a tool. Though informants accessed a variety of types of mediational means that would be considered tools to learn ensemble parts, ultimately, they depended on memory to participate in rehearsals and performances.

For informants with low vision, memory served as an affordance because it enabled them to avoid turning numerous of enlarged printed pages during rehearsals and performances. For students who were blind, memory was the mediational means that allowed participation. The constraint associated with memory was that it sometimes failed and informants refrained from playing.

In at least one instance, reliance on memory was connected with issues of power and authority. Chris, an informant who was blind, reported that he and his instrumental music teacher had developed a system in which she played a series of notes in succession and he employed memory to replicate the sequence. This procedure was intended to serve as a substitute for sight-reading during all state band auditions. Unfortunately, however, the decision-makers in Chris's state refused this option and Chris was denied the opportunity to audition.

An important problem that emerges from this analysis is that, beyond the director and other ensemble members, blind and visually impaired band and orchestra participants have virtually no tools upon which they can rely particularly in performance. Their (our) reliance is on what Wertsch calls “internal mental processes” such as memory. Perhaps such a deep connection between music and memory gives rise to a discussion about a type of musical skill that is presently undefined.

Instructional Guidelines for Optimizing the Music-Making Experiences of Blind and Visually Impaired Students

The following paragraphs offer instructional suggestions for music teachers serving students who are blind or visually impaired in band and orchestra classes. This particular collection of ideas emerges from the data analyzed in this dissertation study.

Regarding motivation, assume that students with visual disabilities have enrolled in music class because they have a fundamental interest in music, even if an IEP indicates that a student is enrolled in band or orchestra for psychosocial development. Though other types of motivations may be present, avoid the temptation to assume that they necessarily rise above a student’s interest in music.

In the present study, some of the most obviously positive accounts were provided by students who had been included in discussions about their music education. When learning that a student who is blind or visually impaired is interested in music class, open a dialogue with the student and vision teacher regarding accommodations needed for instruction and participation during performances. Perhaps establishing regular feedback sessions with the student for the purpose of fostering a positive rapport between teacher

and student will also allow for the following: (a) encouraging students to create their own instructional aids or develop their own methods for learning the music literature; (b) an opportunity for the teacher to inform students of instructional aids that are available to them such as enlarged printed notation, recordings of the ensemble, and Braille music notation; and (c) an opportunity for the teacher to inform students about the degree to which various methods or tools would be endorsed in band or orchestra class.

One of the difficulties expressed by informants in the present study had to do with obtaining ensemble parts late. When possible, make musical literature available to students prior to the first rehearsal of a given piece. This will likely decrease the amount of “guessing and checking” that a student will do. It also will allow students with low vision to make enlargements early, freeing them to use both hands to play their instrument.

For students with low vision, suggest that they visually scan new parts to determine if the notation should be enlarged. For individuals who are blind, even if using Braille music notation, suggest that they record the ensemble in rehearsal with at least two purposes in mind: to gain an understanding of the overall structure of the music and to practice along with the recording in order to recreate the memory of the ensemble rehearsal.

When recording ensemble parts for students, consider the following: (a) begin by providing information such as the key and the meter in which the piece is played; (b) play through the piece to provide the pitches and rhythms; (c) talk through the part in order to explain where markings such as accents or dynamics are indicated; and (d) instruct

students to listen to the recording completely to gain familiarity with the part. Then, encourage them to begin with the section that sounds most easily achievable.

When planning for performances, consider encouraging students who are blind to attend to auditory cues to remain aware of the musical pulse. Involve the student in developing strategies for attending to the pulse during rehearsals and performances. For example, students in the present study listened for conductors' foot taps and audible, but soft, counting aloud.

Some students in the present study discussed the degree to which participating in band or orchestra was stressful because of the need for unusually well developed memory. To shift the focus from memory and performing only, consider providing opportunities to engage in musical behaviors that are less reliant on memory such as listening, composing, and improvising.

Regarding social connection, whenever possible assist students in deciphering the non-verbal communication occurring in the classroom. Recognize, however, that sighted students may not necessarily struggle socially with blind or visually impaired students because of their disability. Social disconnection may develop over such issues as differences in levels of seriousness about music. Helping blind or visually impaired students understand this disconnect through verbal communication may enable them to have more positive social experiences.

Implications for Further Study

The findings in this study suggest a number of lines of inquiry that should be considered for future investigation. In this study, for example, the voices of blind and

visually impaired students who discontinued participation in high school bands and orchestras do not appear. In light of sociocultural theory, it would be interesting to know particularly what constraints related to their experiences promoted the decision to leave the ensemble. To what extent, for instance, did reliance on memory inform the decision to end participation in band or orchestra?

Additionally, in the present study informants spoke positively about relationships with teachers. Considering the fact that only one informant, Patricia, cited the relationship with her band director as a reason to end her participation in the ensemble, to what extent do negative perceptions of teachers' attitudes or levels of cooperation contribute to such a decision?

Next, related to Patricia's narrative, the experiences of informants considering music-related careers raise interesting questions. Where most informants reported positive experiences in band or orchestra, three of the four informants in this cohort reported difficulties, particularly with social connection. Considering that high school bands and orchestras are examples of music making in social context, what individual personality traits of blind and visually impaired students appear to shape their experiences in instrumental music class? For example, blind informants who reported positive social experiences also revealed involvement in other activities such as blind-specific sports and church youth groups. It would be interesting to know if, from their perspectives, these pursuits informed their social connection in band or orchestra, or informed or cultivated dispositions for social connections that were utilized in band or orchestra.

The issue of how “inclusion” is defined in the sociocultural context of the school system appears to have important implications for the informants in the present study. Two of the most pressing questions are as follows: Especially in the cases of informants who reported difficult social experiences, when do teachers, parents, and administration officials believe that they have successfully included a student who is blind or visually impaired in music class? Moreover, to what extent do parents’ and school officials’ beliefs coincide interlock with visually impaired students’ perceptions of their levels of inclusion?

Researchers should undertake studies in which multiple perspectives are obtained and compared. Additional research should consider students with other types of disabilities and the mediational means they employ to participate in instrumental music class. Finally, the issue of how advanced technology has served other disability groups in comparison to blind and visually impaired students should be examined.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: REQUEST FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Dear ____:

I am writing to request your assistance with my dissertation research project. The body of research which provides music educators with information about serving students with disabilities is small. Specifically, the research addressing music teaching and learning strategies with students who are blind or visually impaired is virtually nonexistent. In my research project, I am interested in gathering information from blind and visually impaired students who have participated in instrumental music classes like band and orchestra for two years or more. I plan to collect most of the data by conducting semistructured interviews with the students. I believe that, through these interviews, we can learn what kinds of strategies both the teachers and the students are using to provide the student with a successful music education experience.

You can help by forwarding this information to the music teachers in your state so that they can provide the information to qualified students and their families. Parents or guardians of qualified students should be in touch with me by using the contact information provided below. If you are not able to forward this information directly to music teachers, perhaps there is a way that your state provides information about research projects to superintendents of school systems in the state. Any way that you are able to help me identify blind or visually impaired students for this project is greatly appreciated.

Thank you very much for your attention to this letter. I look forward to sharing my research findings with you at a later date.

Sincerely,

Fred Moss

Doctoral Student in Music Education

Moore Building,

1100 Baits Drive

University of Michigan

Ann Arbor, MI 48109-2085

Phone (734) 764-1580

email fwmossj@umich.edu

APPENDIX B: PRELIMINARY CONTACT WITH PARENT/GUARDIAN AND
INFORMANT

Hello:

My name is Fred Moss. I am contacting you because you were in touch with me to let me know that your son/daughter is blind or visually impaired and participates in band/orchestra at her/his school. You indicated that you would be willing for your daughter/son to share her/his experience with me as part of my dissertation study in music education. Are you still willing for her/him to participate in this study? If yes, could I explain the study to your daughter/son and ask you both for some preliminary information?

Explanation for potential informant:

Hello _____:

My name is Fred Moss, and I am interested in talking to you about your participation in band/orchestra. I hear you play the (name of instrument) in your school band/orchestra. Is that correct? (Student's name), there are band and orchestra directors

across the country who are not sure how to teach people like you and me who are blind or visually impaired in their classes. By talking to you, I can learn about how you learn your music and participate in ensemble rehearsals because you are the expert on that subject. Then, I can share your way of participating in band with these other teachers in my dissertation for my doctorate in music education. Would you be willing to talk with me sometime in the near future about your experience in band/orchestra? If you think you would be willing to talk with me, you should know the following things:

(1). I will include your responses to all questions you do answer, often as direct quotations, in my dissertation. I also may include your responses in music education journal articles and professional public presentations. Though the information you share with me will be shared with music teachers and students across the country, your name and contact information will be kept confidential.

(2). To make sure that I report your answers accurately, I am planning to tape-record each interview.

Other than me, the only people who may have access to these recordings are those individuals who assist with transcribing your answers into printed text.

(3). We will probably need to talk for about two hours in the first interview and for about thirty minutes in the second interview.

(4). You will have a chance to read the transcripts of all interviews to make sure they are correct.

(5). If you are ever uncomfortable with any questions, you do not have to answer them.

(6). If you ever become uncomfortable participating in the study, you do not have to continue participating.

Do you think you would like to participate in this study? (Potential informant answers) If yes, I need to send you some papers to read and sign. Before I send those documents, I need to ask you for some information to make sure that you qualify for the study.

1. Informant's age

2. Informant's grade in school

3. Informant's chosen band/orchestra instrument

4. Parent/gardian's and informant's phone number

5. Parent/gardian and informant's email address

6. Parent/gardian's and informant's mailing address

7. Informant's preferred reading media (brraille, recorded text, electronic text, other)

8. Informant's gender

9. Informant's race

APPENDIX C: INFORMATION FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Dear _____:

Thank you so much for agreeing over the phone to serve as an informant in my dissertation study of blind and visually impaired students' experiences in high school band and orchestra. Please read the information about the study provided in the next paragraph, and indicate your understanding of the statements that follow. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact me using the information provided below.

As we discussed on the phone, many band and orchestra teachers want to teach disabled students, but many are unsure how to teach people who are blind or visually impaired. Your experience with this subject could result in better instruction for blind and visually impaired students in regular instrumental music classes throughout the United States. To understand your experience, I will contact you to set up a convenient time for me to conduct a telephone interview with you. Before you agree in writing to participate in this study, you should read the following items:

(1). I will include your responses to all questions you do answer, often as direct quotations, in my dissertation. I also may include your responses in music education journal articles and professional public presentations. Though the information you share

with me will be shared with music teachers and students across the country, your name and contact information will be kept confidential.

(2). To make sure that I report your answers accurately, I am planning to tape-record each interview.

Other than me, the only people who may have access to these recordings are those individuals who assist with transcribing your answers into printed text.

(3). We will probably need to talk for about two hours in the first interview and for about thirty minutes in the second interview.

(4). You will have a chance to read the transcripts of all interviews to make sure they are correct.

(5). If you are ever uncomfortable with any questions, you do not have to answer them.

(6). If you ever become uncomfortable participating in the study, you do not have to continue participating.

In closing, let me thank you once more for agreeing over the phone to participate in this study. Remember that you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without explanation. If you do think that you can participate, please indicate that you understand the following statements. Then, sign the participant consent form, and return it to me in the self-addressed stamped envelope provided by (date).

Sincerely,

Fred Moss

Doctoral Candidate in Music Education, University of Michigan

P. O. Box 130912

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105

Phone (734) 998-3466

email fwmossj@umich.edu

APPENDIX D: DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

Parent/Guardian

Fred Moss, Doctoral Candidate in Music Education, University of Michigan

P. O. Box 130912

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105

Phone (734) 998-3466

email fwmossj@umich.edu

Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please contact the Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, Kate Keever, 1040 Fleming Building, 503 Thompson Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, 734-936-0933 email: irbhsbs@umich.edu

Please read each of the statements provided. Then circle "yes" or "no," depending upon which response is appropriate. If you are reading these instructions in braille, use a writing pin of some kind to circle either "yes" or "no." If you are listening on tape, please say your response in the space on the tape provided between questions. If you are using a form on disk or e-mail, please write "yes" or "no" after the left parenthesis that follows the word "no."

1. Have you read the description of the study provided with this form? Yes No
2. Have you had the opportunity to discuss any further questions with the researcher? Yes No
3. Have you received sufficient information about the study to decide if you want your son/daughter to participate? Yes No
4. Do you understand that you and or your son/daughter may refuse to answer any questions? Yes No
5. Do you understand that your son/daughter may discontinue his/her participation in the study at any time without fear of penalty of any kind? Yes No
6. Do you understand that the researcher may share information that you or your son/daughter provide, including direct quotes, in professional literature and presentations, but will keep your name, your son/daughter's name, and all contact information confidential at all times. Yes No
7. Do you agree to participate in the study? Yes No

Signature:

Date:

Printed name:

8. Do you agree to have your son/daughter audio taped during the telephone interview? Yes No

Signature:

Date:

Printed name:

APPENDIX E: DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED ASSENT

Minor (under age 18 years) Informant

Fred Moss, Doctoral Candidate in Music Education, University of Michigan

P. O. Box 130912

Ann Arbor, Michigan 48105

Phone (734) 998-3466

email fwmossj@umich.edu

Should you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in research, please contact the Behavioral Sciences Institutional Review Board, Kate Keever, 1040 Fleming Building, 503 Thompson Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, 734-936-0933 email: irbhsbs@umich.edu

Please read each of the statements provided. Then circle "yes" or "no," depending upon which response is appropriate. If you are reading these instructions in Braille, use a writing pin of some kind to circle either "yes" or "no." If you are listening on tape, please say your response in the space on the tape provided between questions. If you are using a form on disk or e-mail, please write "yes" or "no" after the left parenthesis that follows the word "no."

1. Have you read the description of the study provided with this form? Yes No
2. Have you had the opportunity to discuss any further questions with the researcher? Yes No
3. Have you received sufficient information about the study to decide if you want to participate? Yes No
4. Do you understand that you may refuse to answer any questions? Yes No
5. Do you understand that you may discontinue your participation in the study at any time without fear of penalty of any kind? Yes No
6. Do you understand that the researcher may share information you provide, including direct quotes, in professional literature and presentations, but will keep your name and contact information confidential at all times. Yes No
7. Do you agree to participate in the study? Yes No

Signature:

Date:

Printed name:

8. Do you agree to be audio taped during the telephone interview? Yes No

Signature:

Date:

Printed name:

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR BLIND/VISUALLY IMPAIRED
INFORMANTS

Hello _____:

Thank you so much for agreeing to talk with me about your experience playing in band or orchestra. As we discussed earlier, many music teachers across the country want to teach students with disabilities, but they are not sure how best to teach people like you and me who are blind or visually impaired. Your experience with this subject could result in better instruction for blind and visually impaired students in regular instrumental music classes throughout the United States. As we talk, remember that you are the expert about your experience. Everything you say will be useful to me. Also, remember these things: (1) I will keep your name and contact information strictly confidential, (2) that you are free not to answer any questions that you don't want to answer, and (3) that you are free to discontinue your participation in this study if you become uncomfortable during this interview or during any part of the study. I hope, however, that you will enjoy telling me about your experience in band and or orchestra. Do you still want to participate in this interview? I am planning to tape record our conversation. Is that alright with you? If yes, I will turn the tape recorder on now. It is on. I will begin with some questions about your school and the instrument you play.

Introductory information about School and instrumental music experience:

1. Could you describe your school for me?
2. Is it large or small?
3. Do you know how many students attend your school?
4. Is your school known as a good school to go to for band/orchestra?

5. What makes you think that your school is (good/not-so-good) in band/orchestra?
6. Do you play in band at your school?
7. Do you play in orchestra at your school?
8. What instrument do you play in the band/orchestra at your school?
9. How long have you been playing in the band/orchestra at your school?
10. Did you play in the band/orchestra at (previous school)?
11. Did you play the same instrument?
12. Why or why not?
13. Are you in other music groups at your school? Which ones?
14. Are you involved in music groups or ensembles outside your school? Which ones?
15. Whose idea was it to play an instrument?
16. Why did you choose the instrument you did?
17. What is your favorite thing about playing the (name of instrument)?
18. What is your least favorite thing about playing the (name of instrument)?
- *question about other activity*

Current instrumental music experience:

I would like to ask you some questions now about your experience playing in band/orchestra at your current school.

19. Learning:

Suppose you were given a new piece of music to learn for band/orchestra, what would you do to learn it?

Probing questions:

A. What would you do to learn anything you might not know about (instrument played) to play the piece?

B. What would you do to learn the music notation?

C. What would you do to be able to play the piece with the ensemble as opposed to playing it by yourself?

D. Would anyone help you with learning new things about your instrument, learning the music notation, or learning to play pieces with the ensemble? If yes, who for the instrument, who for the notation, and who for playing with the ensemble?

E. What would they do that is helpful?

F. Does this person/people help you regularly now?

G. How does (named person's) help make you feel about your participation in band/orchestra?

H. Do you think anyone would be unhelpful with learning new things about the instrument, learning the music notation, or learning to play the piece with the ensemble? If yes, who for the instrument, for the notation, and for playing with the ensemble?

I. What would they do that is not helpful?

J. Is this person/people regularly unhelpful now?

K. How does what (named person) does make you feel about your participation in band/orchestra?

20. Autonomy/Self-Efficacy and Intervention

Was the way you learn your music and participate with the ensemble your idea or someone else's idea?

Probing questions:

A. When did named person/people come up with the idea?

B. If you were involved, what were your suggestions/ideas for how to learn music and participate with the ensemble?

C. If other people were involved, how did they help figure out how you could learn music and play with the ensemble? Who?

21. Values/Motivation:

Tell me about a time when you really felt proud to be in the band/orchestra.

Probing questions:

A. Where did the experience occur? (rehearsal, performance, at home, on a band/orchestra trip)

B. What was the best thing about the experience?

C. Would you say that (previous answer) is your main reason for participating in band/orchestra?

D. What are other reasons you participate in band/orchestra?

22. Competence

Tell me about a time when you felt really good about your own playing in band/orchestra?

Probing questions:

A. Where were you? (at school, at home, in rehearsal, in performance, on band/orchestra trip)

B. What were some of the things that made you feel particularly good about your work?

C. How good do you think you are at your instrument and playing in band/orchestra?

D. How good do you think you are at your instrument compared to other students?

E. What makes you feel that way?

23. Social support/belonging

Tell me about a time when you really felt "a part of the band?"

Probing questions:

A. Where were you? (in rehearsal, in performance, at a party, on band/orchestra trip)

B. What are some of the reasons you felt so "a part of the band" in the story you just told me?

C. Did someone do something special that made you feel "a part of the band"?

D. Who?

E. What did they do?

24. Future aspirations

Do you think you will continue to play your instrument with a band/orchestra after high school? If yes, what do you imagine yourself doing to continue playing? If no, why will you probably discontinue playing your instrument with a band or orchestra?

Probing questions:

A. Do you think you might study music in college?

B. Do you think you might play with a band or orchestra in college but not major in music?

C. Do you think you might make music a career?

D. Do you think you might continue to play your instrument but not as part of your career?

Closing:

(Name of informant), thank you so much for talking with me today. You have provided me with some very helpful information. I am going to write up our interview. Then, I will send you a copy to make sure that everything is correct in the transcript of what you have said. Would it be best if I sent that transcript in braille, large print, recorded text, or electronic text like email? (Informant answers). Ok, I will send you the transcript of the interview in (name of format). Now, after you read the transcript, we

should talk again to make sure it is right. How would you like to do that? (Informant answers). In closing, let me say thanks one more time. After I write the transcript and check it with you, I will need for us to talk one more time for about thirty minutes. Is that ok with you? (Informant answers) Until we talk next, take care and goodbye.

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