Music Education Curriculum Standards and Music Educators:

A Teacher Survey of Needed Supports

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Abstract

Recent changes in public policy have enjoined music educators to meet societal needs by instituting modern teaching methods and accountability standards, similar to those used in other academic subjects. However, some teaching methods and accountability standards were not the traditional focus of music education. Requirements of standardization include predetermined academic goals, formal assessments, and academic growth. In contrast, live musical performance had been the most relevant form of music education assessment. In 2011, the Michigan Department of Education published a set of standards entitled *Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater* (Michigan Department of Education, 2011). This document described standards under five topics: Perform, Create, Analyze, Analyze in Context, Analyze and Make Connections. Broadening the music education curriculum to include academic achievement while connecting to other curricula is a big change. Despite the benefits of building curriculum around recent music education standards, innovations can be missed by in-service teachers. The challenges have created a need for supports. The purpose of this study was to discover from the perspective of the music teachers what supports are needed to assist them in meeting standards as described in the document *Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater* (Michigan Department of Education, 2011). The study gathered data through interviews conducted with a sample of educators employed by west Michigan schools. Five main supports have been identified:

1. Leadership on the part of administrators.
3. Provision for funding for necessary materials, instruments, and supplies.
4. A designated classroom space.

5. Alternative plans for disruptive students in a required class.
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Introduction

In conversations the researcher has had with music teachers in west Michigan, it was revealed that the *Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater* (2011) for music education were not the basis of many music teachers' curriculum. In the era of teacher accountability, this prompts the question: Why not use the *Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater* (referred to hereafter as MI Music Ed Standards) for music education as written?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to discover from the perspective of the music teachers themselves what supports are needed to assist them in meeting MI Music Ed Standards, as described in the document *Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater* (Michigan Department of Education, 2011).

Justification for the Study

Academic subjects that have been deemed core subjects are required to meet the state level educational standards for eligibility of federal funding, as mandated by the No Child Left Behind federal initiative. Michigan had received an exemption from No Child Left Behind stipulations. However, in 2015, No Child Left Behind was replaced by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). And, on July 16, 2015, the Senate added music and the arts to its list of core subjects (NAAfME, 2016). Meeting music education standards as written by the states will be tied to federal funding as ESSA is put into practice. Thus, the paradigm of teacher accountability and standard outcomes has become more deeply entrenched in the educational landscape. And yet, many music teachers are unarmed for
launching campaigns to gain ground on the field of professionalism.

Research Question and Hypothesis

The research question for this study was: “From the K – 12 music teachers’ perspective, what supports are needed to meet MI Music Ed Standards?” The initial hypothesis of the researcher was that teachers needed to be informed of changes in federal and state curriculum guidelines and receive feedback from their administrators, while receiving adequate funding for assessment tools, including computer software and portfolio materials. Another hypothesis was that teachers who have been in service for more than five years would be less likely to look to MI Music Ed Standards for curriculum building, as their training predated its publication. Furthermore, the researcher predicted that until MI Music Ed Standards are part of administrative feedback, veteran teachers would not add them to the curriculum.

Definition of terms

This study references several important terms, which include:

Bloom's Taxonomy

Constitutional Definition: A reference framework for educational goals developed by Benjamin Bloom and collaborators. These goals are a continuum of six levels of cognition, from basic to advanced. They include: Remember, Understand, Apply, Analyze, Evaluate, Create.

Operational Definition: A reference framework for educational goals on which most modern academic curricula is based.
Every Student Succeeds Act

Constitutional Definition: 2015 federal educational initiative replacing the No Child Left Behind Act.

Operational Definition: 2015 federal educational initiative which ties federal school funding to meeting academic standards for subjects including music education.

MI Music Ed Standards

Constitutional Definition: An abbreviation of Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations as they pertain to music education. According to the Michigan Department of Education, these are the requirements for students to "earn 18 credits, including 4 in mathematics and ELA, 3 credits in science and social studies, 2 credits in a world language, and 1 credit in the visual and performing arts and physical education/health...[and] are required to be proficient in required academic standards in order to receive a diploma." (Michigan Department of Educations, 2015).

Operational Definition: The music education portion of Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-Level Content Expectations: Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater. The Standards for the fine arts and performing arts to adhere to the Michigan Core Curriculum initiative set forth by the Michigan Department of Education. These Standards for music education include Perform, Create, Analyze, Analyze in Context, and Analyze and Make Connections.

Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association

Constitutional Definition: A professional organization for music educators teaching band and orchestra classes in the state of Michigan.

Operational Definition: A professional organization for music teachers whose standards are entirely centered around Performance.
Music

Constitutional Definition: *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines music as, “the science or art of combining tones into a composition having structure and continuity.”

Operational Definition: Music is all that is defined by *Webster's* plus the performance, creation, social, experience and cross-curricular aspects of this science/art.

Music Education Standards

Constitutional Definition: *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines educate as “to develop mentally and morally” and education as “the action or process of educating or being educated.”

Please also see “music” and “standards” in this section.

Operational Definition: Music education standards are those that are part of the MI Music Ed Standards. Those Five Standards are Perform, Create, Analyze, Analyze in Context, and Analyze and Make Connections. Each of these MI Music Ed Standards has grade-level benchmarks that must be taught by the music educator and mastered by the students.

Music Educator or Music Teacher

Constitutional Definition: *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines an educator as someone who “provides with information” and is synonymous with “teacher”.

Operational Definition: A State of Michigan certified music teacher who teaches music at a school, not solely at a private studio.
NAfME

Constitutional Definition: National Association for Music Education. NAfME, "is the only [professional] association that addresses all aspects of music education. NAfME advocates at the local, state, and national levels; provides resources for teachers, parents, and administrators; hosts professional development events; and offers a variety of opportunities for students and teachers."

Operational Definition: National Association for Music Education and the entity's former names, such as Music Educator's National Conference (MENC) and Music Supervisor's National Conference (MSNC). The NAfME standards for music education include Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting.

NCLB

Constitutional Definition: Abbreviation of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, as defined by the United Stated Department of Education, is an Act to, "close the achievement gap with accountability, flexibility, and choice, so that no child is left behind." (US Department of Education, 2008).

Operational Definition: Abbreviation of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. The federal initiative to tie school performance as determined by standardized test scores to federal funding.

standards –

Constitutional Definition: Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus defines a standard as, "something set up as a rule for measuring or as a model to be followed."

Operational Definition: Standards are any collection of assessments used for music education.
Standards

Constitutional Definition: *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines standard as, “used as or meeting a standard established by law or custom.”

Operational Definition: When used as a proper noun, the Standards are the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations for Music Education.

State

Constitutional Definition: *Webster's New Explorer Dictionary and Thesaurus* defines a state as, “one of the constituent units of a nation having a federal government.”

Operational Definition: The State is the State of Michigan or Michigan Department of Education.
Background and Review of Literature

Educational techniques, philosophies, and policies have evolved over time. One of the footings for modern educational technique and standards is Bloom's Taxonomy. Because Bloom's Taxonomy can be applied to music education, the argument of 21st century relevance for the subject is proven (Hanna, 2007). MI Music Ed Standards include these five topics: Perform, Create, Analyze, Analyze in Context, Analyze and Make Connections (Michigan Department of Education, 2011). Not only do MI Music Ed Standards align with Bloom's Taxonomy, these Standards comply with the music education philosophy of Praxialism. Praxialism emphasizes performing vocally and instrumentally. The opposing philosophy is the Aesthetic. The Aesthetic focuses on perceiving music through concentration and experience. In her 2013 study, Anita Prest found that the practical approach of Praxialism was effective in a rural community that needed all education to be useful in order to be acceptable (Prest, 2013). Given the current backdrop of results-oriented policies, Prest's conclusion rings true in many settings.

Recent policy changes have enjoined music education to meet current societal needs. From this point of view, traditional methods of music education are disconnected from modern teaching methods and up-to-date music consumption; music methods should be revised (Kos, 2010). For example, one innovative way to strengthen a music program is the collaboration of music educators and teachers of the Three Rs, using the Common Core requirements of the non-musical curricula to underscore the utility of music in other subjects (Smith, 2014).

In order for music education curriculum to be considered as important as mathematics and language arts, music educators must pursue an outcome-based curriculum and assess student progress. Federal funding requirements under No Child Left Behind demanded the states provide reports of student annual yearly progress. While it is difficult to test the arts in an annual yearly progress format, without testing, the arts become trivial when compared to math and reading (Beveridge, 2010). At this
writing, it is unclear how federal funding will be allocated under the Every Student Succeeds Act.

Despite the benefits of building curriculum around music education standards devised by state or national professional associations, changes in education standards and other innovations can be missed by in-service teachers, according to the researcher's conversations with music teachers before this study. Perhaps promulgating the information was the issue. For example, the National Association for Music Education published nine voluntary standards in 1994. In 2002, a study recorded the discussions at the Midwestern Conference on School Vocal and Instrumental Music from the years 1946 – 1996 (West, 2013). Sadly, the NAfME standards were not among the topics discussed. Conference attendees potentially could have read about the standards in professional journals. However, there is a disconnect between classroom practice and professional journal topics, mainly due to cost (McQuarrie & Sherwin, 2013).

Furthermore, some music scholars argued against the use of music education standards at all, asserting the benefits of music education cannot be proven through quantifiable test scores (Madden, 2014). Another Aesthetic philosophical assertion was that a quality music teacher must be “plastic” and “fluid” to be relevant to the modern day, despite how the pro-business consortia redefined the purpose of public schooling as a results-oriented, global competition (Allsup & Reimer, 2015).

On the other hand, Praxial music scholars asserted the standards of music education proved achievable and useful. Orman's 2002 study revealed elementary music educators were able to meet the NAfME standards. Another study determined teachers who knew music education practices could meet state standards (Byo, 2000). In order to connect music education practices to any standards, teachers must read the standards (Kim & Robinson, 2010). Specifically in Michigan, MI Music Ed Standards has led to an increase in enrollment in music classes and a stabilization of staffing (Pratt, 2010). With supports, such as mentor programs and appropriate funding, new teachers could be successful and retained (Conway & et al, 2002).
Conceptual Framework and Methodology

Brief Overview of the Study

After discovering the problem of music teachers not using MI Music Ed Standards as a tool in writing curriculum in the era of teacher accountability, the researcher found purpose and justification for a study. The purpose of this study was to determine if MI Music Ed Standards were or were not used widely, and if not, what supports would the educators themselves require. The justification was the coming change of federal funding hinging on meeting the state level educational standards for core subjects, like music. The researcher devised a research question, formulated her hypotheses, and defined terms to introduce the research. What follows is the background and review of literature, which shows what has been written and discussed about music education and its use of standards in academia and in the classroom. Next, the procedures section will explain the structure of the study, including the research design, sample, instruments, validities, statistical techniques, methods of analysis, data, and data evaluation.

Description of Research Design

The research design for the question “From the K – 12 music teachers’ perspective, what supports are needed to meet MI Music Ed Standards?” took the form of an in-person interview with a questionnaire. The researcher chose an in-person interview rather than an on-line survey, because a conversation can yield subjective data that exists outside the exacting format of multiple choice questions.

Description of Sample

The sample consisted of a control variable group of music educators currently teaching at schools in and around Grand Rapids, Michigan. The teachers interviewed were professional contacts
of the researcher.

Potential subjects were contacted in January and February of 2016 via e-mail invitation with attached consent form. Interviews were conducted in January and February of 2016.

**Description of the Instruments Used**

**The Interview**

The critical instrument of the interview survey method is the questionnaire. The twenty-one question interview survey was conducted on site at the participant's school. The interview questions themselves were divided between the teacher's pertinent background facts and the teacher's opinions concerning his or her use of MI Music Ed Standards. Some of the questions were used to identify the teachers who use MI Music Ed Standards versus those who do not; other questions identified how the teachers valued MI Music Ed Standards. But the most telling was the unstructured call for insights of the professionals.

The questions were a non-projective character test, in that interpersonal needs for teaching to MI Music Ed Standards were being identified. The responses included multiple choice, ranking, checklist response, and unstructured responses. The interview questions had been scrubbed free of researcher prejudices to ensure reliability of subjective answers.

**The Technology**

Commonplace technology was used over the course of this study. Electronic mail, word processing and spreadsheet software were used. During the interview, the researcher recorded the results of the interview with pen and paper. To organize the results, the researcher used a spreadsheet to process, score, and categorize the data collected from the participants. Much of the correlations were done by hand. The results were presented in a computer printed format.
Explanations of the Specific Procedures Followed

In early January 2016, using the researcher's contact list, an invitation with consent form was sent by electronic mail to prospective participants. The participants were given a week to respond with a time and date for the interview. After that week, a reminder was sent to those who did not reply. The interviews were conducted in January and February. Once the interviews were completed, the data was be sorted and correlated.

All work collecting, sorting, and analyzing the data was be done on evenings and weekends in the researcher's home office with a password secure network by the researcher herself. The laptop used was password protected and always in either the possession of the researcher or in her home office.

Discussion of Internal Validity

In Tuckman and Harper's textbook, Conducting Educational Research, it states, "A study has internal validity if its outcome is a function of the program or approach being tested rather than the result of other causes not systematically dealt with in the study. Internal validity affects observers' certainty that the research results can be accepted, based on the design of the study." (Tuckman and Harper, 2012). To be specific, the survey method of research is only as good as its questionnaire and the answers given by the participants.

One of the issues that may cause concern for internal validity was that of the honesty of the survey participants. Perhaps some teachers would claim that they use MI Music Ed Standards, but only follow them vaguely. They might have over-reported in order to set themselves in a more positive light. To minimize over-reporting, several of the questions in the survey allowed for the use of personal standards and other pedagogical philosophies, giving a more generalized usage of standards.

Discussion of External Validity

External validity is the ability of results to transcend the particulars of a given study and be
generalized to a wider population. The particulars of this study were music teachers in the area of Grand Rapids, Michigan, and the wider population would be music teachers in the State of Michigan. Under the new guidelines of the Every Student Succeeds Act, which took effect August 1, 2016, music education is a core subject. While rigorous standardized testing is no longer the tool to procure federal funding, accountability will remain the key. MI Music Ed Standards provide for assessments and proper accountability. Supports for Michigan music educators to meet MI Music Ed Standards are worthy of study.

Furthermore, this study establishes construct validity because the researcher compared the data to the hypothesis that MI Music Ed Standards are not being used in music class curricula, due to a gap in adequate support from the State or district level.

Description of the Statistical Techniques and Methods of Analysis

After the responses to the interview were collected, the data was electronically sorted, using the LibreOffice platform. The measurement scales include nominal scales, in that the number of responses to given questions were tallied. Statistical techniques used included contingency tables to line up moderator variables (such as use / non-use / moderate use of Standards) with intervening variables (such as years of service and size of district).
Data and Data Evaluation

The sample size consisted of ten participants (n =10). Their years of teaching in the state of Michigan ranged from 1.5 to 36 years, with an average of 17.2 years. The majority of the participants (90%) taught more than one segmented grade level. The remainder instructed middle school students, grades five through eight, exclusively. Over half of the participants were public school instructors. This sample group had three main things in common, pertaining to meeting MI Music Ed Standards.

First, these music teachers use techniques and practices that they learned after completing their initial certification. Professional development is a requirement for Michigan teachers, newly acquired assessment skills or teaching practices in the classroom were used by 80% of those studied. Second, this sampling used both informal and formal methods of assessing student work. The informal assessments were behavioral (100%) and effort (100%) The most common form of formal assessments were written tests (90%), individual singing/playing tests (90%), and small group singing/playing tests (80%). The researcher determined that veteran teachers did incorporate new practices into the classroom, and professional development was effective.

Third, this study revealed music educators in west Michigan are somewhat willing to use formal standards. Currently, 50% of those interviewed used district standards, 40% used NAfME standards, and 40% used MI Music Ed Standards. The rate of music teachers receiving no feedback from administrators with regard to meeting MI Music Ed Standards was significant at 70%. When asked if meeting MI Music Ed Standards should become a part of performance reviews, half of the participants replied “no”.

Nevertheless, educational standardization is to be reckoned with for the foreseeable future. In point of fact, some of the participants have already used MI Music Ed Standards. In this study, this level of usage was 40%. Of those who currently use MI Music Ed Standards, the average years of teaching was 24.25, which is 40% greater than the sample average of 17.2 years. This subset of
participants taught in subject-defined medium sized districts, and 75% of them met with students once or twice a week. In addition, 75% of these participants also adhered to district standards. Furthermore, 75% of these participants read professional journals occasionally and have pursued continuing education in MI Music Ed Standards. Of those who had studied MI Music Ed Standards, two-thirds found the training to be adequate. Half of those who used the MI Music Ed Standards rated them helpful during the interviews.
Conclusion

Philosophies of educational practices grow and change over time. In the 1970s and 1980s, a push for getting back to basics and The Three Rs (Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic) forced music education off the curriculum. But, as educators, administrators, and the general public rediscovered the academic advantages of studying music, this specialized subject germinated anew. In the current era of increased accountability, the seedlings of renewed music studies have been brought into the hothouse of standardization. It is a fair assertion that in order to be held as equally scholarly as The Three Rs, music education must have a scholarly curriculum. While not as obviously practical as classes in mathematics and the language arts, music education reinforces and intensifies these basic subjects.

Given the current political landscape of education, standardization of all subjects is on the horizon. However, current music educators must be fitted with supports to meet these new standards. This study set out identify what supports are needed for teachers to meet MI Music Ed Standards. The data was gathered from interviews with music educators who teach in and near Grand Rapids, Michigan. Over the course of these interviews, five main supports have been identified as necessary for music educators to meet MI Music Ed Standards. These supports are as follows:

1. Leadership on the part of administrators.
3. Provision for funding for necessary materials, instruments, and supplies.
4. A designated classroom space.
5. Alternative plans for disruptive students in a required class.

Nearly all the participants in this study agreed that formal standards have a place in modern music education. The requirements of standardization included predetermined academic goals, formal assessments, and academic growth. However, the standardized requirements which had been adapted
MUSIC EDUCATION CURRICULUM STANDARDS AND MUSIC EDUCATORS

from the The Three Rs and Bloom's Hierarchy of Learning were not the traditional focus of music education. Performance had traditionally been the most relevant form of music education assessment. Mastery of the material was displayed as students performed concerts for their schoolmates and parents. Additionally, many middle and secondary student bands, orchestras, and choral groups perform for judges at festivals and competitions. These festivals and competitions bring together students from the local, state, regional, and national levels. Judges rate and rank students performing as soloists, ensembles, and large groups. Broadening the curriculum to encompass beyond performance and including academic achievement within music classes while connecting to other curricula is a big change. Moreover, adequate student preparation for performances and academic assessments requires additional instructional time. For high school students, daily music class periods are common. However, for many elementary and middle school students in west Michigan, music classes meet for one hour per week. Specifically, the subject of general music is broad, even in its grade level differentiated form. The challenges facing modern music educators have created a need for supports. Five supports have been identified by the participants of this study.

The initial support for music teachers successfully meeting MI Music Ed Standards is leadership on the part of the administrators. If meeting MI Music Ed Standards is a goal of the district, the administrators must communicate to the teachers through the structure of the district curriculum. While an obvious assertion, the State of Michigan is not the only published writer of standards. Numerous sets of standards are in current, common use.

Many of the teachers interviewed looked to the standards set forth by professional organizations, such as the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association, the American Choral Director's Association of Michigan, and the Michigan Music Education Association. Each organization has drafted distinct standards, which differ from the State of Michigan's. In addition, other education
entities have published specified standards and goals. For example, Common Core added music as a core curriculum and outlined 11 Anchor Standards under 4 categories. Michigan is a Common Core state currently under a deferral. Moreover, while Common Core is a state initiative, the federal government has passed initiatives for the national level. The Every Student Succeeds Act, which in 2016 replaced No Child Left Behind, included music as a core subject. At the time of this study, specific curriculum guidelines had not been completed. Beyond the United States Department of Education, the International Baccalaureate determined a set of music education standards. Private philanthropic organizations such as the Kennedy Center promote their sets of standards. In addition, certain music education methods, such as Suzuki, Kodaly, and Orff, have different skill emphases. Without the leadership of administrators designating MI Music Ed Standards as the basis of district curriculum, music teachers could fall subject to the Otis Redding Quandry of: “I can't do what ten people tell me to do; So I guess I remain the same.” (Cropper & Redding, 1968).

Once the support of administrator leadership has been put in place, the support of professional development, can be initiated. All educators are required to study teaching throughout their careers to keep current with new best practices and ongoing re-certification. These studies take the form of university coursework for professional designation or an approved seminar. Schools districts and professional organizations often sponsor professional development seminars. All participants in this study reported using techniques in best practices learned during professional development seminars. In addition, participants in the study agreed that learning about the MI Music Ed Standards was an important support to meet the MI Music Ed Standards. At the time of this study, 20% of the participants had a working knowledge of the MI Music Ed Standards.

Professional development as a support for meeting the MI Music Ed Standards should also present classroom lesson planning examples, especially for the ones that are not performance oriented.
To fully understand how educators can make full use of the MI Music Ed Standards, professional development must inform teachers of the studies that have shown the use of modern music education standards promoted and expanded music programs.

One subject mentioned the need for professional development specifically for the improvement of the educator's musical skills. For example, further study of vocal and instrumental techniques would improve teacher effectiveness, but these courses are not considered a part of maintaining teacher certification in the State of Michigan. Another example of further study not part of maintaining teacher certification is the study of non-Western musical traditions. In a study of time spent by preservice teachers in music school on Western versus non-Western music, the researchers found that 99.77% of the subjects' time was spent on the study of music in the Western tradition (Chang & Humphries, 2009). Despite the changing demographics in the United States, music teachers in the United States have spent less than 1% of their formal training learning the music of South American, Asian, Indian, African, or Middle Eastern cultures. Further study of world music may be needed to include students from these communities within the music classroom.

The third support derived from the survey is the provision of funding for necessary materials, instruments, and academic supplies. MI Music Ed Standards call for student compositions of vocal and instrumental music at the elementary school level. Compositions can either be written down by hand with pencil and manuscript paper or keyed into a computer or electronic device using licensed software. Furthermore, recording performances electronically is required in MI Music Ed Standards. Funding must be provided for the purchase, maintenance, license renewal, and perpetual replacement of electronic devices and speakers, which have become necessary materials.

Instruments required by the MI Music Ed Standards for general music classroom use include rhythm instruments (such as tambourines, shakers, small drums and triangles) and tonal instruments
(such as recorders, portable electric pianos, ukuleles, and small xylophones). Each student in a class must have his or her own instrument during the class period. Other academic subjects provide students with individual textbooks and supplies. However, these other subjects have been adding textbooks and supplies to the budget for generations. In recent years, elementary general music classes not only sing but play and compose for musical instruments. More time must be spent with instruments in order to be able to compose for the instruments. Sharing interrupts this time.

Furthermore, on the leading edge of best practices in teaching is the use of student journals and portfolios in educational settings to show metacognition and academic growth. Whether these journals and portfolios are pencil-and-paper or electronic in format, the supplies are needed to create and store for future review. The traditional performance centered music education curriculum did not require many ordinary office supplies. These expenses are new with the adoption of MI Music Ed Standards.

Fourth, once the materials, instruments, and supplies are procured, they must be stowed and secured within a **designated classroom**. Twenty percent of the participants cited the importance of having the support of a designated classroom. One participant had a successful middle school band program at a school which provided a designated classroom and a struggling middle school band program at a school which rehearsed in the gymnasium. The schools were in the same neighborhood and were comparably sized in student population and funding. The teacher noted that the successful band had greater numbers and better skills than the other school. Another participant stated that meeting the expectations of her district standards is only possible with ready accessibility to and safe storage of instruments.

The support in the form of a designated classroom was not mentioned by the remaining 80%. But this fact was not surprising. At the time of this study, 80% of the participants were teaching in designated classrooms.
Many of the teachers remarked about the unique behavioral expectations of a general music classroom. At the high school level, music education is an elective course. Students who do not care for music tend to enroll in other courses to meet a fine arts credit. However, elementary schools and middle schools commonly have a mandatory music class. While the routine of being in a non-musical class is established and reinforced daily, music class differs from other academic classes in that projected sound must happen in a disciplined way. As a student learns self control in a setting outside the regular classroom routine, there are moments when these efforts at self control fail. Music educators use redirection, but there are times when that does not work. A support needed for meeting the standards would be alternative plans for disruptive students who consistently fall short of controlling themselves, even with teacher guidance. Unfortunately, the specialized nature of music education can leave non-musical administrators ill equipped to anticipate this need.

In conclusion, this study of supports necessary for music educators to meet MI Music Ed Standards found that the teachers needed leadership, professional development, provision of necessary funding, a designated classroom, and an alternative plan for disruptive students. According to the survey, teachers tended to follow the directions of administrators and often used the skills and techniques learned in professional development. When administrators value MI Music Ed Standards, inform the educators as to the expectations and examples of lesson plans, and use meeting these requirements as part of feedback to the educators, that is the beginning of teachers planting the seeds of student success. These supports are the most attainable. However, other supports call for more attention and pragmatism.

The provisions of necessary funding, a designated classroom, and an alternate plan for disruptive students require more statesmanship, not only on the part of administrators, but politicians
and school boards as well. All educators compete amongst themselves for funding, space, and planning of finite resources. The recognition of music education as a scholarly pursuit through the practice of academic standardization will truss up music teachers' access to these resources.

Given the relatively small sample size of this study, a study with a much larger sample size would be useful in determining the ranking of these supports. Further study will be necessary to answer the questions of which alternate plans would be appropriate for disruptive students in music class. Another focus of research would be in the cost-benefit analysis of the points of the standards. A larger, long-term study of what the implementation of any given benchmark standard costs and to what extent each dollar spent improves the learning process of the students.
References


%3Dhttp://www.musicnotes.com/sheetmusic/mtd.asp?

ppn=MN0138277&cmp&gclid=CLH9kYTT880CFdgVqo8dKK0C4w&ca=0&cmpid=pad_roig


Appendix: Research Resources

Informed Consent Form

I am currently working on the final project for my Master in Education degree at Aquinas College, under the supervision of Dr. Carol Winkle, Associate Professor of Education. Please give your consent to participate in my research project entitled, “Music Education Curriculum Standards and Music Educators: A Teacher Study of Needed Supports.” This study, an important component in my graduate work, aims to understand and enumerate what music educators need in order to meet the students where they are and instill a deeper love and proficiency of music, as determined by the Michigan Department of Education in their achievement goals formally outlined in the Michigan Merit Curriculum: Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade Level Content Expectations Visual Arts, Music, Dance, and Theater.

I am hoping that you will be willing to be interviewed for 15 – 20 minutes, either at your school or in a meeting room at a local branch library. I would be recording your response both on paper and with an electronic voice recorder. Your participation is completely voluntary, and there will be no penalty if you choose not to participate or if you decide to stop participating during the interview. There is no risk in being interviewed.

All data collected from this study will be kept completely confidential. Once collected, the electronic recordings of the interview will be uploaded to a password protected laptop kept in my home office, and the paper recordings will be locked in the desk of my home office. No names will appear in the research documents, and no individual's answers will be revealed in the study. Only group findings will be reported. After the interview answers have been tabulated, the electronic recording will be deleted and the handwritten notes will be shredded, within two business days. The consent forms shall be printed, retained for five years, then shredded.

Please, if you have any questions, contact me via e-mail, amb007@aquinas.edu. Alternatively,
you may contact Dr. Winkle at winklcar@aquinas.edu. Your questions or concerns will be addressed fully. In addition, if you are interested in receiving a copy of the research results, I would be delighted to forward that document to you.

Thank you for your willingness to help in my research.

To give your permission to use the data for the above mentioned interview, please reply to this e-mail stating, “I agree.” and including a time you would be available for an interview.
Appendix: Research Resources

Music Education Curriculum Standards and Music Educators:
A Teacher Survey of Needed Supports
The Questionnaire

ABOUT YOU AND YOUR JOB

1. How many years have you been teaching music in a Michigan school?

2. Which do you teach?
   - General Music
   - Choral Music
   - Instrumental Music

3. What grade level(s) do you teach?
   - preK-K
   - 1 – 4
   - 5 – 8
   - 9 – 12

ABOUT YOUR DISTRICT AND STUDENTS

4. In your current teaching position, how many times per week do you meet with your students?
   - 5
   - 3 or 4
   - 1 or 2
   - Other

5. You teach at this kind of school:
   - Public
   - Private or Parochial
   - Charter school
   - Other

6. The size of your district is:
   - Small
   - Medium
   - Large
   - Don't Know

7. Are the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations part of
your performance review or feedback from your administrator?

- Yes, Very Much So
- Yes, Somewhat
- No
- Don't Know

ABOUT STANDARDS AND YOU

8. Which of the following standards do you use to guide your teaching, including both lesson planning and unit planning? (check all that you use)
   - I use my own set of standards to evaluate student progress and outcomes.
   - I use the formal standards designated by my district.
   - I use Common Core standards.
   - Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations
   - NAfME 1994
   - NAfME 2014
   - Kennedy Center ArtsEdge Standards
   - Pedagogy method such as Orff, Suzuki, Kodaly, etc.

9. How often do you use formal standards, such as Common Core, Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations, NAfME, or Kennedy Center ArtsEdge?
   - Always
   - Frequently
   - Sometimes
   - Rarely
   - Never

10. What assessment tools do you use in the classroom?
    - Effort and Attitude
    - Participation and Behavior
    - Small Group Singing or Playing Tests
    - Individual Singing or Playing Tests
    - Portfolio
    - Journals
    - Written Tests or Quizzes
    - Project Work
    - Standardized Tests

11. Were you given a mentor when you were a new teacher?
    - Yes
    - No
    - Other

12. In your continuing education, do you read professional journals on your own time?
    - Yes, frequently.
• Yes, occasionally.
• Not lately.
• No, never.

13. In your continuing education, within the last 5 years, have you taken a course or seminar on standards implementation?
• Yes
• No
• Other

14. Have you included new assessment practices or teaching methods in your classroom after learning about them in your continuing education?
• Yes
  • Which ones did you use?
• No
• Other

ABOUT YOUR OPINIONS

15. Rank the importance of the following standards, 0 not important at all 1 least important and 5 most important.
• Perform
• Create
• Analyze
• Analyze in Context
• Analyze Across Curricula

16. Have you received adequate training in the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations as they apply to your current position?
• Yes
• Almost
• No
• Other

17. Do you strive to meet the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations?
• Yes, to the letter.
• Yes, as is possible.
• Yes, in addition to my pedagogical method
• Somewhat.
• No, I have my own criteria
• Other

18. In general, you view the Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations for music instruction as:
• Helpful
• Neither helpful nor unhelpful
• Unnecessary
• Insulting

19. Do you believe that demonstrating that Michigan Merit Curriculum Standards, Benchmarks, and Grade-level Expectations should be a part of music teacher performance review?

20. In order for you and your music colleagues to be able to guide your students to reach the grade level goals as set by by Michigan Department of Education, which of the following supports would be advisable?
• On-going professional development in the standards and methods for reaching those goals
• Mentors for new teachers
• More budget to purchase classroom materials and technology
• More budget to purchase instruments
• More budget to purchase prepackaged curriculum
• Feedback from the administration about meeting the grade level goals
• Cross-curricular planning with teachers of other subjects
• More classroom time with the students
• Regular teacher input to improve the standards
• Forget the standards. Get government out of the classroom and let the teachers teach.
• Rewrite the standards so that they make sense given our current school environment.
• Don't Know
• Other

21. Given the scope of this study and the questions you have been asked, are there any insights you would like to add?
## Appendix: Research Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response Tally</th>
<th>1. Years teaching in MI</th>
<th>Mean = 16 years</th>
<th>Average = 17.2 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. General</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Pre-K – K</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Grades 1 – 4</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Grades 5 – 8</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Times per week 5</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Times per week 1 or 2</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Times per week 3 or 4</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Large</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Small</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Other</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Medium</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100% of MI standards followers were medium district</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Don’t Know</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Feedback: Yes, Very Satisfied | 10% | 78% of MI standards followers were feedback: Yes, Very Satisfied |
| Feedback: No               | 20% | 22% of MI standards followers were feedback: No |
| Feedback: Don’t Know | 20% | 0% of MI standards followers were feedback: Don’t Know |

| District Standards | 50% | 100% of MI standards followers were district standards |
| 8. NeMe 1994        | 40% | Participants used either NaMe standards OR NeMe 1994 |
| 9. NeMe 2014        | 30% | Participants used NeMe 2014 and NeMe 1994 |
| 10. Kennedy Center  | 0%  | 0% of MI standards followers were Kennedy Center |

| Michigan Merit Benchmarks | 40% | 75% of MI standards followers were Michigan Merit Benchmarks |
| 11. Pedagogy Method | 50% | 50% of MI standards followers were Pedagogy Method |
| 12. Michigan Merit Standards | 100% | 100% of MI standards followers were Michigan Merit Standards |

| Formal Standards Used | 20% | 10% of MI standards followers were Formal Standards Used |
| 9. Formal Standards Used Never | 80% | 90% of MI standards followers were Formal Standards Used Never |
| 10. Assessment portfolio | 100% | 100% of MI standards followers were Assessment Portfolio |
| 11. Assessment Journal | 100% | 100% of MI standards followers were Assessment Journal |
| 12. Assessment Project Work | 70% | 70% of MI standards followers were Assessment Project Work |
| 13. Continuing Education in Standards? Yes | 30% | 30% of MI standards followers were Continuing Education in Standards? Yes |
| 14. Continuing Education in Standards? No | 70% | 70% of MI standards followers were Continuing Education in Standards? No |

| Mentor: Yes | 70% | 10% of MI standards followers were Mentor: Yes |
| Mentor: No | 30% | 10% of MI standards followers were Mentor: No |
| Mentor: Other | 10% | 10% of MI standards followers were Mentor: Other |

| 16. Full Standards: Perform | 4 | Rank 2 |
| 17. Rank Standards: Complete | 4.3 | Rank 1 |
| 18. Rank Standards: Analysis | 3.8 | Rank 3 |
| 19. Rank Standards: Analyses | 2.8 | Rank 4 |
| 20. Rank Standards: Analysis Across Core | 3 | Rank 5 |

| Received adequate training in Michigan standards for current position? | 20% | 20% of MI standards followers were received adequate training in Michigan standards for current position? |
| Received adequate training in Michigan standards for current position? | 80% | 80% of MI standards followers were received adequate training in Michigan standards for current position? |

| 15. Strive to meet Michigan Standards? Yes, to the letter | 0% | 100% of MI standards followers were strive to meet Michigan Standards? Yes, to the letter |
| 16. Strive to meet Michigan Standards? Somewhat | 20% | 20% of MI standards followers were strive to meet Michigan Standards? Somewhat |
| 17. Strive to meet Michigan Standards? No | 20% | 20% of MI standards followers were strive to meet Michigan Standards? No |

| 18. View of MI Standards: Helpful | 40% | 40% of MI standards followers were view of MI Standards: Helpful |
| 19. View of MI Standards: Necessary | 40% | 40% of MI standards followers were view of MI Standards: Necessary |
| 20. Should MI Standards be part of performance review? Positive | 10% | 10% of MI standards followers were should MI Standards be part of performance review? Positive |

| 21. More support for MI Standards Professional Development | 80% | 80% of MI standards followers were more support for MI Standards Professional Development |
| 22. Feedback from administrators | 60% | 60% of MI standards followers were feedback from administrators |
| 23. More support for MI Standards Professional Development | 40% | 40% of MI standards followers were more support for MI Standards Professional Development |

| More support for materials and tech | 0% | 0% of MI standards followers were more support for materials and tech |
| More support for materials and tech | 0% | 0% of MI standards followers were more support for materials and tech |

21. Any other insights?
Increased State control Earspe Local Control
Music is different from other subjects. No other activity that we have in school uses all the brain at once.
Classroom is crucial. Space is needed for materials.
Similar instruments must be available for every kid to avoid behavior issues, build teamwork, and prepare for ensembles.
PD days are school-wide, with no separation for music teachers. Music is in a bubble. Standards are tricky when they are not performance-based. We teach to the concert.
Standards should be revisited and changed as the climate evolves.
Make sure trained experienced music teachers rework and give input to the Standards.
Standards give music teachers recognized goals.
More behavioral resources are needed. Smaller class sizes with in-school alternatives.
District support for music education professional development.

The standards are lofty. It is important that the students enjoy their time in music, learning new songs and singing.
Basic music literacy is the best foundation. Also, exposure to different artists and styles, along with creating other things should be in place.