

THESIS

AN INVESTIGATION OF EMERGING MUSIC COURSES IN COLORADO SECONDARY  
SCHOOLS

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## ABSTRACT

### AN INVESTIGATION OF EMERGING MUSIC COURSES IN COLORADO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Emerging Music Courses (EMCs) are music classes for secondary students outside of traditional ensemble offerings and include courses in composition, music theory, music technology, guitar, piano, and general music. These classes are a growing trend and serve as an access point to music learning for students who play an instrument not offered in ensembles, are not enrolled in traditional ensemble courses, or have musical interests outside of ensemble performance (Abril & Gault, 2008; Kubik, 2018; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Though these courses are popular choices for students (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020) and viable options for teachers looking to increase their course offerings (Freedman, 2019; Sanderson, 2014), music educators historically lack training in the pedagogical practices of these courses (Kubik, 2018; Ruthmann, 2006; Sanderson, 2014). Additionally, there is a lack of research surrounding the EMCs currently being offered by Colorado secondary schools and the practices of experienced EMC educators. The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs, and assess the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these courses. Findings suggest that a variety of EMCs are offered in Colorado secondary schools, with general music, guitar, and piano as the top three most offered courses. Learning activities in EMCs appear to focus on performing, reading, and appreciating music, in addition to applying skills learned outside of the classroom. The COVID-

19 Pandemic affected the enrollment in and availability of EMCs and, to a lesser extent, the instructional delivery of EMCs. Results from follow-up interviews suggest that educators believe EMCs are valuable to their professional goals and students, but more training and preparation is needed in order for teachers to feel confident in their curricular design and delivery.

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## INTRODUCTION

Professional music education scholars, organizations, and teachers have long promoted the diversification of music education curricula to meet the needs of an ever-widening scope of students in a changing world. One method of achieving these needs is through the addition of Emerging Music Courses (EMCs) to secondary school music programs. EMCs are courses of music instruction that are growing in popularity and curricular definition, and feature various learning objectives, enduring understandings, and modes of instruction in order to appeal to an array of secondary students. EMCs include courses in composition, theory, music technology, guitar, piano, and general music (Kubik, 2018; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017).

The prevalence of EMCs in secondary schools appears to vary by region in the United States and depend on a variety of factors. Studies conducted on a national-level find that approximately half of secondary school music programs offer some form of EMC (Abril & Gault, 2008; Colquhoun, 2019), whereas studies conducted within individual states find a wider variety of prevalence, from 20% in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida (Veronee, 2017) to 71% in the state of Nebraska (Sanderson, 2014). Other studies have focused on individual types of EMCs, such as Fesmire's (2006) study which found that 22% of middle and high schools in Colorado offered a guitar course. There has been no study to date on the prevalence of EMCs as a whole in the state of Colorado.

Existing EMCs are known to attract students to music classes at the secondary level (Abril & Gault, 2008; Colquhoun, 2019; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020). EMCs are also known to address a wide range of understandings and musical strengths in students including composition, improvisation, music literacy, music listening, and the lifelong learning of music

(Dammers, 2012; Freedman, 2019; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Sanderson, 2014; Tobias, 2010; Veronee, 2017). Despite their importance to the goals of music education, these courses are commonly taught by secondary music teachers in public schools who have little to no training or experience in the content or instruments involved (Bauer et al., 2003; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fox & Beamish, 1989; Haning & Tracy, 2018; Kubik, 2018).

Furthermore, teaching and learning in U.S. public schools changed dramatically when schools were forced to shift to remote learning models in March of 2020 with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). Researchers found that during remote teaching educators shifted away from group performance and instead focused on new technological tools and more individualized methods of teaching music to students (Hash, 2021; Kurt, 2021; Shaw & Mayo, 2021). There is a lack of research on the pandemic's effect on the delivery, availability, and enrollment of EMCs. Given the drastic innovations that teachers made during the 2020–2021 school year and the profession's desire to expand musical offerings for students, music educators may benefit from knowledge about the prevalence, learning, and beliefs teachers hold about EMCs and the changes that the COVID-19 pandemic caused.

### **Problem Statement**

EMCs are one of many options for music educators looking to expand access and options for secondary students, but music educators frequently teach EMCs without appropriate pedagogical or curricular training (Bauer et al., 2003; Colquhoun, 2019; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Dorfman, 2008; Fesmire, 2006; Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Researchers have found that the prevalence of EMCs in the United States varies by region and across time, and little is known about the instructional goals and curricular decisions teachers use to make these courses successful (Abril & Gault, 2008; Dammers, 2012;

Fesmire, 2006; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). The state of Colorado has been included in some studies that have examined EMCs (see Abril & Gault, 2008 and Colquhoun, 2019), but there is a lack of research surrounding the EMCs currently being offered by Colorado secondary schools and the practices of experienced EMC educators in the state. An update to studies on the prevalence of EMCs, in addition to furthering our understanding of the learning that teachers select for students in EMCs in the state of Colorado, will enhance consideration of these courses within the discipline of music education and expand music learning for secondary students.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The following literature review explores the philosophical underpinnings of EMCS, each type of EMC (as categorized by the 2014 National Music Standards), and common themes between each of the course types. The importance of learning objectives and enduring understandings to the analysis of these courses is discussed, followed by an inquiry into the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on music education. The chapter ends with a summary of the major trends found in the literature surrounding EMCs.

### **Emerging Music Courses in Music Education's Mission**

One of the earliest indications of the music education profession's commitment to diverse music learning comes from the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium in which music educators and representatives of business, industry, and government met to plan the future direction of music education under the leadership of the Music Educators National Conference (MENC), now known as the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) (Mark, 2000). The result was the Tanglewood Declaration, which formally named music's place as a part of the core curriculum of public schools in the United States and outlined the priorities of music education. Most notably, the declaration stated that:

Music of all periods, styles, forms, and cultures belong in the curriculum. The musical repertory should be expanded to involve music of our time in its rich variety, including currently popular teen-age music and avant-garde music, American folk music, and the music of other cultures ("The Tanglewood Symposium: Music in American Society," 1967, p. 2).

In 2011, Scott Shuler, former president of NAFME, espoused a continuing mission to diversify and expand music education when he said:

Our mission as music educators is to help our students find paths of active involvement in music that they are willing to continue into their adult lives. The music curriculum design answer is clear: in addition to high-quality ensemble classes, music programs must offer alternatives that attract and engage other students (Shuler, 2011b, p. 9).

The objectives first laid out by the Tanglewood Symposium and later promoted by NAFME's leadership encourage a music education that incorporates music of multiple cultures and the multitude of musical understandings within them. However, most music courses offered to secondary school students are band, orchestra, and choir ensembles that typically focus on a Western classical tradition of performing. These ensembles are historically enrolled by approximately 20% of high school students, and adults report rarely using their performance and notation reading skills after they have left the secondary music classroom (Abril & Gault, 2008; Elpus & Abril, 2019; VanWeelden & Walters, 2004). While many students have experienced a great degree of success and learning in these ensembles, music education scholars are continuing to call for an augmentation of music course offerings to include more options for students who do not want to perform in a traditional ensemble, are looking for a career in popular or alternative genres of music, or feel their musical strengths lie outside of performance (Draisley-Collishaw, 2007; Freer, 2011; Haning & Tracy, 2018; Morrison, 2009; Regelski, 2014; Reimer, 1989; Swanwick, 1999).

EMCs have been found to be an effective option for reaching students not already enrolled in traditional ensemble courses. Several studies suggest that EMCs can increase overall music program enrollment without negatively affecting ensemble course enrollment (Bula, 2011;

Collins, 2016; Dammers, 2012; Freedman, 2019; Kubik, 2018). Elpus & Abril (2019), however, found that EMCs may not actually increase music department enrollment because many EMCs require low enrollment caps (e.g., music technology courses are limited by the number of computer stations available in the classroom). Despite this, Elpus & Abril (2019) conclude that EMCs are much more likely to ensure that music courses are attracting a representative and proportionate sample of the general student population than ensemble courses alone.

EMCs remain a relatively small portion of the secondary music teacher workload (Abril & Gault, 2008) because of a lack of teacher training, lack of time, and a lack of resources to offer such courses (Bauer et al., 2003; Colquhoun, 2019; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Dorfman, 2008; Fesmire, 2006; Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). As a result, teachers make major curricular design and implementation decisions with very little training or support, and best practices for these courses may even contradict a teacher's training and expertise in the Western classical music tradition (Ruthmann, 2006). For EMCs to successfully reach more students and assist in achieving the vision of the music education profession, teachers need more information about the successful curricular design and implementation of EMCs.

### **Patterns Found in Emerging Music Courses**

For the purposes of this study, EMCs refer to music classes not traditionally offered by secondary schools in the U.S. These courses typically fall outside of traditional ensemble course offerings (such as band, orchestra, and choir) and include a wide variety of goals, musical understandings, and structures. Abril & Gault (2008) created a profile of music in secondary schools based on responses from school principals and found that EMCs were offered in less than 50% of schools. The EMCs surveyed in the study include general music (45%), theory (40%), guitar (19%), piano/keyboard (13%), music technology (10%), and composition (7%). In

2019, Colquhoun conducted a national study of non-traditional music courses/ensembles in secondary-level schools and found that 53.1% of participants reported offering such courses. The three most frequently offered courses in Colquhoun's study were guitar (15.52%), music theory (15.06%), and music appreciation (10%). Other reported courses included piano (9.2%) and music technology (7.71%). Colquhoun (2019) also found through a chi-square test of independence that the southwestern division of NAFME (which includes Arkansas, Colorado, Kansas, Missouri, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) offered fewer non-traditional courses/ensembles than statistically expected.

Other smaller studies conducted within individual states have found a variety of results. Veronee (2017) found that less than 20% of secondary music teachers from Alabama, Georgia, and Florida offered an EMC at their school. Veronee (2017) reported guitar (18%), piano/keyboard (14%), music theory (11%), and music appreciation (9%) as the most offered courses within the sampled population. Sanderson (2014) found that almost half of Nebraska secondary schools offered a music theory course, 27% offered a music appreciation course, 26% offered a guitar course, 16% offered a music technology course, 10% offered a music history course, 6% offered a piano course, and 3% offered a composition course. These results suggest that the availability of EMCs varies by region and likely depends on a variety of factors.

Students indicate an interest in taking EMCs like music theory, guitar, and piano (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Kelly & Veronee, 2019; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020). Pendergast & Robinson's (2020) study grouped students into categories based on their music participation domain: nonparticipants, out-of-school music participants, and in-school music participants. Student participants expressed interest in piano/guitar class, music composition with technology class, popular music groups, and music history/theory class. In-school music participants showed



a much stronger preference for traditional large ensemble courses whereas other students wanted less traditional options. These findings are supported by several other studies that find students who enrolled in EMCs are typically not already a member of a school's ensemble program (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Dammers, 2012; Fesmire, 2006; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017).

Teachers are not commonly trained to teach EMCs. Most university music education programs require pre-service secondary music teachers to be classically trained musicians in the Western tradition and focus on ensemble-based instruction in their course work (*NASM Handbook*, 2021). There are several conferences, workshops, and professional development opportunities for teachers to gain training in instructing EMCs, but they require financial and time commitments that may not be available to all teachers (Haning & Tracy, 2018; Kubik, 2018; Ruthmann, 2006).

## **Types of Emerging Music Courses**

### ***Composition and Theory Courses***

**Music Theory.** Music theory courses are the most offered EMC across several states and teachers consistently rank music theory as the top EMC they would like to offer in their programs (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Kelly & Veronee, 2019; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). The prevalence of music theory courses may be due to the availability of curricular materials and resources through the College Board's creation of the AP Music Theory course and exam in 1978 (Lockart, 2007). Sanderson (2014) found from interviews with Nebraska music teachers who offered a music theory course that teachers felt prepared to teach music theory—likely because of their collegiate music theory training—in contrast to other course options. Both band directors and choral directors have also ranked a music theory course in their top three

choices for an EMC to add to their schedules (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007). Although most EMCs reach students not already enrolled in a music course, teachers interviewed by Sanderson (2014) shared similar beliefs that music theory classes primarily served as a means to prepare students already involved in the school music program with skills to be successful in a collegiate music program. Music theory, then, is not a course that is accessible to students without prior experience in ensemble music learning.

The AP Music Theory course ledger for the 2007-2008 school year listed eighteen courses in the state of Colorado. For the 2020-2021 school year, there were 47 programs, resulting in an over 160% increase in AP Music Theory course offerings for the state of Colorado over a thirteen-year period (*AP Course Ledger*, n.d.). The music education profession's goals of broadening musical understandings through increased course offerings and music teachers' preference for teaching a music theory class over other options have likely caused the increase in music theory courses in Colorado (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014). The cause of the increase could also be band, orchestra, and choir students' preference for music theory courses as a course offering at their school (Kelly & Veronee, 2019). Music teachers commonly study Western art music theory as a part of their undergraduate programs, which may explain their preference for and experience in teaching these courses (Garrett, 2009).

**Composition.** Composition courses are rare in secondary public schools and music teachers have ranked them low in preference for potential course offerings (Garrett, 2009; Veronee, 2017). Despite composition's prevalence in both state and national standards, it is most used "in service of other learning needs" and rarely used as a creative outlet or for simply teaching students to compose (Strand, 2006, p. 164). Several studies show that teachers may avoid composition in preference for other music standards, either because they are not

comfortable teaching it or because they prioritize other standards (Byo, 1999; Garrett, 2009; Strand, 2006). Composition learning is, however, prevalent within other courses such as music theory or technology-based music courses (Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017).

### ***Technology-Based Music Courses***

Technology-based music courses (TBMCs) are a relatively new and growing category of EMCs. Abril & Gault (2008) found that 10% of secondary schools in the United States offered a music technology course and Dammers's (2012) updated survey found that 14% of high schools in the United States offer a TBMC; over half of these courses were created in the last five years. This rapid growth was further supported by 66% of participating secondary school principals indicating they support TBMCs and 56% of principals of schools without TBMCs believed it would be feasible to offer such a course (Abril & Gault, 2008).

Technology offers a unique opportunity for students without musical experience to engage in multiple musical roles and experiences, and the design of TBMCs allow students to take courses that are accessible and appealing to them (Dammers, 2012; Tobias, 2010; Williams, 2007). At a national level, 89% of teachers of TBMCs indicated that a primary purpose of the course was to attract students not enrolled in ensembles. It seems these efforts are successful since 69% of the students in TBMCs do not already participate in school music (Dammers, 2012).

A key component to the development and continued growth of TBMCs is the availability of more teacher training and more research surrounding curricula and pedagogies used. As far back as the year 2000, music educators have been asking for more training in music technology (Reese & Rimington, 2000) and research finds that teacher training in technology increases the level and frequency of use of technology in the classroom (Bauer et al., 2003). Training is

difficult to maintain given how quickly music technology changes and advances, but organizations like the Technology Institute for Music Educators (TI:ME) are a key resource in developing and advancing teacher training and curricular standards for music technology. TI:ME produces over six thousand hours of professional development sessions for music educators each year so that teachers can be adequately prepared to teach TBMCs with the best tools available (*Technology in Music Education - TI:ME*, 2020).

The pedagogical aims and curricular goals of TBMCs remain as varied as the individual educators who teach them (Dammers, 2012; Sanderson, 2014). Most TBMCs focus on music composition through technology and the exploration of musical elements across various genres of music (Sanderson, 2014), but the music literacy students develop in TBMCs can depend heavily on the hardware and software available in their learning environment and the methods of instruction utilized by the teacher (Bartram, 2002; Tobias, 2010). As a result, students may struggle to transfer learned skills to other classroom or professional contexts.

The curriculum and pedagogical practices of TBMCs also highly depend on the goals of the course. Tobias's (2010) study analyzed a TBMC with the purpose of preparing students for professional careers in the music industry. The course structure and teacher actions were strongly influenced by this goal, as evidenced by the emphasis on group assignments, varied student roles, and lack of direct instruction from the teacher. Bula (2011), on the other hand, gathered information and created a TBMC curriculum focused on basic music skills (such as theory, listening, and improvisation) and accessibility to students without prior musical knowledge. In contrast to the course from Tobias's study, Bula's curriculum features mostly independent projects and "structured instruction with defined outcomes balanced with guided exploration time" (Bula, 2011, p. 65). The studies found that both course models are effective ways of

engaging students and expanding their ways of creating, understanding, and thinking through music (Dammers, 2012; Ruthmann, 2006).

### ***Guitar/Keyboard/Harmonizing Instrument Courses***

After music theory, guitar is one of the most prevalent EMCs in several states (Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Piano classes, on the other hand are most common at the collegiate level and there is a lack of research surrounding their prevalence in secondary public schools. Students who participate in music both in-school and out-of-school have ranked guitar and piano courses highly on interest scales and studies find that these courses are usually taken by a majority of students who have not previously participated in school music programs (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Guitar and piano courses both have unique equipment, budget, and classroom space challenges and, like most EMCs courses, both are commonly taught by educators who lack sufficient training on the instruments and the best curricular and pedagogical practices (Berlin, 2017; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006; Harrison, 2010; McCalla, 1989; Sanderson, 2014; Seifried, 2006). Nevertheless, guitar and piano are found to be important for reaching and attracting new music students because of their prevalence in popular music genres and students' interest in learning to play the instruments (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006; McCalla, 1989; Paz, 2020; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017).

**Guitar.** Guitar course curricula often focus on playing technique, note reading, and a familiarity with a variety of music genres (Fesmire, 2006; Sanderson, 2014). Guitar classes can include a performance element, but also be thought of as more of a “general music” class in which students develop a multifaceted understanding of music through playing, listening, and discussing (Bartel, 1990). Guitar class may be a popular option for students because of the

guitar's prevalence in popular musical styles and because it is an instrument that many students might already play outside of the school setting (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Seifried, 2006). The popular genres available for study in guitar class are an opportunity to give students a sense of ownership in their music learning and emphasize musical skills (such as improvisation) that are rare in other genres (Bartel, 1990; Seifried, 2006).

A multitude of method books and teaching methods exist for the guitar in addition to summer workshops for music educators. The Teaching Guitar Workshop (TGW) sponsored by the Guitar & Accessories Marketing Association (GAMA), the National Association of Music Merchants (NAMM), and NAFME is a popular option for teachers who are looking to expand their guitar curriculum and pedagogical knowledge (Sanderson, 2014). Between 1995 and 2021, over 4,000 music educators participated in TGW and impacted an estimated two million guitar students (*About*, n.d.; Horowitz & Rajan, 2008).

Fesmire (2006) conducted a study on the curricular designs of middle and senior high school guitar programs in Colorado, and the findings aligned with most of the literature analyzing EMCs in a variety of states. The report discovered that 22.4% of secondary schools offer a guitar course (a similar statistic to Abril & Gault's findings that 19% of schools nationally offering guitar in 2008), most guitar teachers in Colorado reported being self-taught, and most guitar students were students not enrolled in other ensemble courses. Colorado guitar teachers were largely using a standards-based curriculum with a heavy focus on rock and pop genres, performance, reading music, and listening to music (Fesmire, 2006).

**Piano/Keyboard.** Most group piano courses exist at the collegiate level since keyboard proficiency is a requirement for all undergraduate music students at accredited colleges and universities through the National Association of Schools of Music (*NASM Handbook*, 2021).

There is very little research surrounding the prevalence, curricula, and pedagogy of piano classes for secondary students. However, the research that explores collegiate piano courses and private instruction can still assist in our understanding of what piano courses may look like at the secondary level.

More flexible teaching and learning situations are possible in collegiate and secondary settings with the use of electronic keyboard and piano labs (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021). Given the flexibility it provides, music education scholars advocate for a comprehensive and collaborative approach to group piano instruction rather than approaching it from an individual learning perspective (Chen, 2017; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Jutras, 2006; Lowder, 1973; McCalla, 1989; Meulink, 2011). Diehl's (1980) investigation concluded that beginner piano students who received group instruction achieved just as highly as those who received individual instruction in aural discrimination, knowledge of musical symbols, public performance, and transposition. Additionally, students in the group instruction category scored higher on a sight-reading posttest than students who only had individual instruction. Jackson (1980) also concluded that the number of students in a piano class did not affect individual achievement for beginners from preschool through college-aged students.

McCalla (1989) and, in a follow-up study, da Silva Pozenatto (2021) examined secondary piano courses in the state of Florida. The studies were conducted more than thirty years apart, and both researchers found similar results regarding teacher preparation, pedagogy, and curriculum materials. Most high school and middle/junior high school teachers in the McCalla (1989) study had never received special training in class piano. Similarly, most teachers in da Silva Pozenatto's (2021) study had not received special training in group piano instruction, but these teachers had participated in group piano courses in their own collegiate music study. As a

result, several of the teachers had adapted materials from their college courses to teach their secondary piano classes. Both studies reported the development of keyboard technique (especially music reading, memorization, ear training, and chordal accompanying) and musicianship as important curricular priorities for piano teachers. Da Silva Pozenatto (2021) particularly noted that teachers adapted group piano methods written for collegiate-level students for use at the secondary level. Teachers likely chose to use these books because of their own work with these materials in their collegiate piano experiences.

Da Silva Pozenatto (2021) questioned whether emphasizing reading notation is the best method for students who enjoy quickly learning songs that are familiar to them. The researcher suggests that teachers should consider whether a sound before sign approach may be more successful for students in class piano (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021). Jutras's (2006) study on the importance of enjoyment and confidence in adult piano learners support these recommendations. Such findings underpin a desire to understand the curricular decisions of teachers and which pedagogical practices are best for students in EMCs classes.

### ***General Music***

General music is “the study of music as a comprehensive subject, rather than specializing on one instrument or voice” and it “serves to expose students to a broad study of music ranging from classic to popular” (Spicer, 2014, p. 61). General music at the secondary level is sometimes taught as the broad study of music just described, but teachers sometimes elect to teach general music as more focused subjects such as a history of rock and pop music, music appreciation, or world music course (Gerrity, 2009). For the purposes of this study, all courses of general, historical, or cultural nature are included in this category.



The broad range of general music courses available make it difficult to track. Abril & Gault's (2008) study reported that 45% of schools offered a general music course, and, on a smaller scale, Sanderson (2014) found that about a quarter of secondary schools in Nebraska offered a general music course. However, neither study specified the specific nature of the general music classes included in the results.

Scholars in the latter half of the twentieth-century advocated that the goal of secondary general music education was to give students the opportunity to study great works of music literature (Glenn, 1972), but the most recent consensus surrounds educating students to become more thoughtful and informed listeners and consumers of music (Davis, 2011; Langfeld, 1988; Monsour, 2000; VanWeelden & Walters, 2004). Wayman's (2005) study on the meaning of the music education experience to middle school general music students found that though these students did not participate in traditional performing ensembles, they "nevertheless value[d] performing, music theory and history, and appreciate[d] the social and agency benefits of music education" (p. 97).

There will likely never be a standard model and curriculum for general music, due to the variety in grade level configurations, schedules, unique local requirements, and diversity in student achievement (Gerrity, 2009). However, several educators and research studies agree on a handful of best practices for curriculum and design in general music courses. Experts recommend that (a) students should be actively engaged in listening, instrument playing, singing, composing, creating, dancing, and moving in order to inform their understanding of musical concepts, (b) activities should have clear goals for demonstrating understanding, and (c) students should have opportunities to connect their understanding to the musical genres with which they

are familiar with (Davis, 2011; Gardner, 2015; Gerrity, 2009; Giebelhausen, 2015; Spicer, 2014; VanWeelden et al., 2019; Wayman, 2005; Willow-Peterson, 2016).

VanWeelden & Walters (2004) examined the music practices of adults in order to inform the curricular goals of secondary general music teachers. Adults surveyed rarely performed music or read notation, but reported listening to music as a part of their daily lives. The researchers suggest general music teachers take the music practices of adults into consideration when planning their general music curriculum if life-long learning and appreciation of music is a goal for their students. This may be achieved through a focus on informed listening and a study of more contemporary genres in general music classes.

As with the other categories studied, general music courses are typically taken by students not enrolled in ensemble-based courses in secondary schools (Sanderson, 2014; Spicer, 2014) and teachers are not commonly trained specifically to teach it in their degree programs (Gerrity, 2009; Giebelhausen, 2015; Langfeld, 1988; Spicer, 2014). There is a lack of information on specific types of general music courses, their appeal to students, and the availability of training for teachers.

## **Instruction**

The instructional decisions a teacher makes reveals their “underlying assumptions about schooling” and is a practical application of their personal beliefs (Hanley & Montgomery, 2002, p. 136). The close connection between teacher beliefs and instructional decisions is well documented in the literature across several educator populations (e.g. Kelly-McHale, 2013; Richardson et al., 1991; Ruthmann, 2006; Sorah, 2012). As an example, a teacher committed to the attainment of musical literacy based on the Western paradigm will likely choose instruction focused on the repertoire and practices of the traditional ensemble model (Kelly-McHale, 2013).

More specifically, the instructional strategies, learning objectives, and enduring understandings that teachers select provide a window into the daily activities in classrooms and the beliefs teachers hold about learning.

Teacher preference and experience has been found to be an important part of the creation of EMCs and of the instruction in EMC classrooms. In a collective case study of three EMC teachers, Haning & Tracy (2018) found that the structure, content, and curriculum of EMCs were based on administrative needs and on teachers' personal preferences rather than on the needs or preferences of students. Kubik's (2018) case study of two EMC educators also found that the teachers began their EMCs because of administrative and scheduling needs and selected the course type based on their own experience with the content or instruments. In studies examining band directors' (Juchniewicz, 2007) and choral directors' (Garrett, 2009) preferences for certain EMCs, participants indicated a preference for courses related to their personal interests and experiences.

Haning & Tracy (2018) found that students had impactful and meaningful experiences in EMCs, despite the disregard for student needs or preferences in the design or creation of the classes. However, the authors recommend designing EMCs in a way that is strongly connected to the musical backgrounds and goals of the students in order to maximize student engagement and the value of these courses for the students who enroll (Haning & Tracy, 2018). More information is needed on the role of teacher beliefs and preferences in the creation and execution of EMCs.

### ***Informal Music Learning***

Informal music learning is one of the most studied instructional strategies used in EMCs. The practices of popular musicians characterize informal music learning, and the research of

music education scholar Lucy Green informs much of what we know. Green (2002) defines five principles that guide the way popular musicians learn:

1. Popular musicians select the repertoire they would like to play.
2. Popular musicians learn mainly by copying recordings by ear.
3. Popular musicians learn through self-directed or peer-directed avenues.
4. Popular musicians begin with the “whole,” or final product, in mind.
5. Listening, performing, improvising, and composing are integrated throughout the process.

These principles contrast the pedagogical approaches that commonly dominate ensemble classrooms, which focus on the teacher as the musical expert who leads students through musical decisions in rehearsal to prepare for a concert (Rescsanszky, 2017). Most secondary music educators receive training that emphasizes traditional approaches, which can cause internal conflict when attempting to implement informal music learning into both ensemble and EMC classrooms (Kubik, 2018; Rescsanszky, 2017; Ruthmann, 2006). Given that informal music learning is a common practice in EMCs, this struggle to balance traditional training with innovative techniques may be common for educators who teach EMCs (Ruthmann, 2006).

Allsup (2003) used informal learning practices to examine how students work together to compose a piece of music in small groups. The students elected to be in one of two groups: Group 1 became a “jam band” focusing on the jazz idiom and Group 2 focused on composing a work of classical music. Throughout the study, Group 1 successfully incorporated elements of informal music learning and a theme of democracy in group decisions emerged. Group 2 opted to compose individually and then bring their notated ideas to the group, which created a less cohesive product and a less democratic group process. Allsup found that when students in the

study were given the space to explore freely and to work democratically, they created a community in which they successfully explored music that they were familiar with or curious about. The findings of this study also support informal music learning as most beneficial when used in contexts that align with the informal strategies, such as those contexts found in EMCs.

Rescsanszky (2017) incorporated both informal and formal music learning practices in a middle school guitar class. The researcher experimented with different combinations of formal and informal learning practices and found that a mostly informal approach with some specific formal elements was the most successful. In this model, students were highly motivated, had authentic musical discussions, and met the curricular goals set out by the teacher. Rescsanszky notes that while informal learning practices appear to allow the teacher to take a backseat in the learning process, the teacher must be prepared to study all the repertoire, devise multiple approaches to addressing problems, model technique, and redirect students' attention, when necessary, in order for the process to be successful.

### ***Learning Objectives***

Learning objectives are the tasks that teachers present and use to assess student progress toward curricular goals (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). Objectives represent what students will be able to understand, demonstrate, and express at the end of a lesson or unit of instruction. Wiggins & McTighe (2005) emphasize that since the amount of content is typically much larger than what teachers can reasonably address with their students, teachers must prioritize which concepts students should be familiar with, what is important to know and do, and what will form the core tasks of the instruction. The following diagram from Wiggins & McTighe illustrates the relationship between content teachers prioritize as a “big idea” or “core task” and content that supports student understanding of those core ideas and tasks.

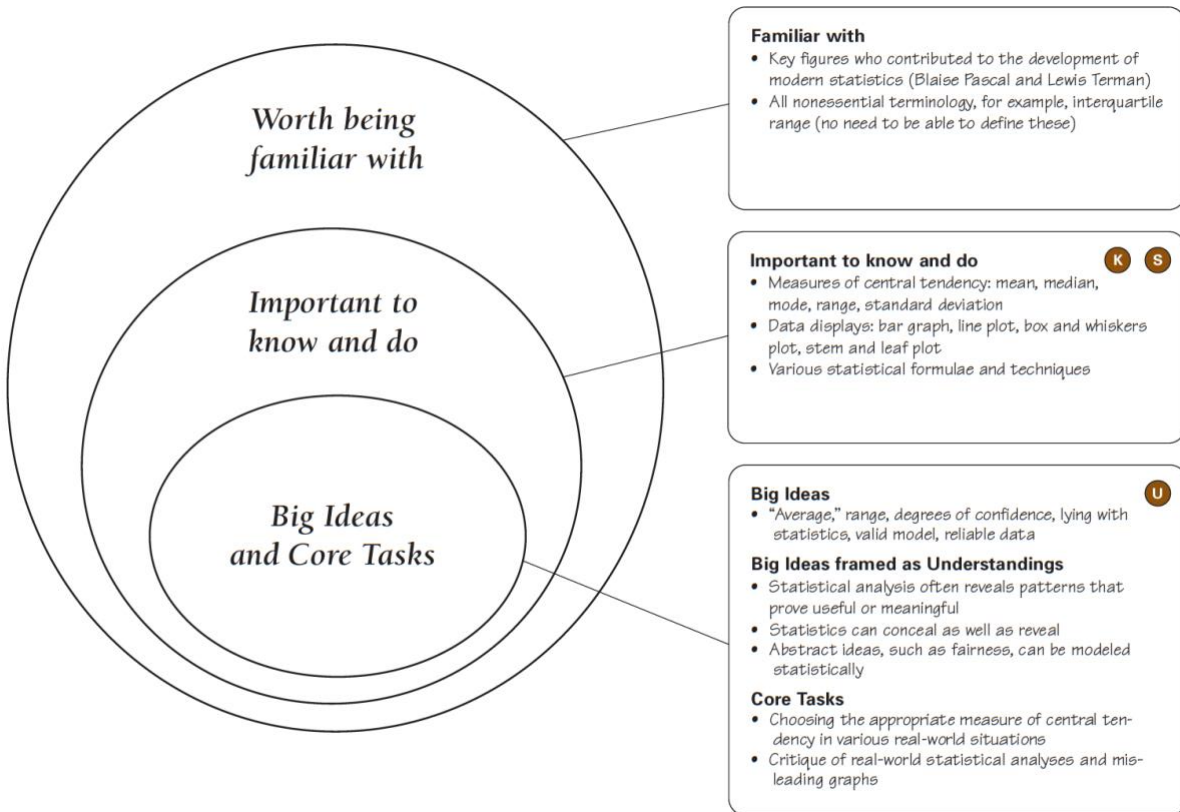


Figure 1. *Wiggins & McTighe's Model for Clarifying Content Priorities and examples from a math curriculum (2005, p. 71)*

Studies by music education researchers have examined curriculum as a way to promote enrollment in music courses (e.g. Kratus, 2007), in relation to the assessments that music teachers use (e.g. Russell & Austin, 2010), and as a way of further understanding the learning that happens in various EMCs. For example, results from Fesmire's (2006) study indicated that guitar teachers in Colorado focused on performance, reading music (both in standard notation and tablature), listening to music, music history, and evaluating performance in their guitar classes. Da Silva Pozenatto's (2021) study of piano teachers in Florida revealed that teachers prioritized ear training, chordal accompanying, and memorization in their piano class instruction. The learning objectives of the large variety of EMCs available to students can provide a window into both the classroom experiences of students and the instructional priorities of their teachers.

Other research has found that learning objectives are closely tied to a teacher's beliefs about music and learning. Ruthmann (2006) investigated the lived experiences of a group of sixth-grade students and their teacher as they negotiated learning and teaching in a technology-based exploratory music class. An overarching theme from the study was the teacher's need to balance her own beliefs and traditional training with the innovative curricular and pedagogical decision-making needed for the success of the course. The teacher expressed a deep desire to give her students more "formal" musical training (i.e., lessons on notation, music theory, and piano skills) believing that the students might need that information later in life. However, students were the least engaged in these formal music knowledge lessons and rarely retained the information in future music classes. The teacher also selected curricular projects that she deemed exciting and fun, further illustrating the strong influence her beliefs and experiences had on the curriculum of the course.

### ***Enduring Understandings***

Enduring understandings represent the broader goals of a course that the objectives help to achieve. Enduring understandings are specific inferences based on core knowledge (see Figure 1) that are central to a discipline and transferable to new situations (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005). According to Wiggins & McTighe, these understandings require sustained inquiry so that students can "grasp the idea, as a result of work" (p. 342). Enduring understandings that teachers select for their students reveal teachers' beliefs about what is most important for students to learn and understand.

Enduring understandings in music education commonly center on music as a life-long subject that students will continue to explore even after they graduate from the music classroom (Shuler, 2011a). Kubik's (2018) case study found that both a secondary guitar teacher and steel

pan teacher believed that musical knowledge and music's connection to life were the overarching enduring understandings for their courses. It is notable that these understandings are similar across different EMCs, but whether the instructional objectives the teachers set for their students directly related to the enduring understandings described by the teacher was not studied.

VanWeelden & Walters (2004) questioned whether the learning students experience in their secondary general music classrooms transferred to their music making and consuming as adults. The researchers asked adults about their experiences in music making, music reading, music listening, and music consumer practices in order to inform secondary general music classroom experiences. Results found that less than ten percent of adults continued music making outside of school and only about half of respondents reported being able to read music notation. VanWeelden & Walters (2004) question whether “we are teaching our students music-reading skills for future musical involvement and retention or limiting our instruction to rudimentary bits of information that only apply within the context of specific classroom activities” (p. 29). Teachers may be able to clearly state the enduring understandings of their classes and their beliefs therein, but there may be a disconnect between what teachers believe and what students grasp as the enduring understandings of the course.

### ***Standards-Based Music Education***

Standards-based education helps to “minimize the effect of teacher preference and ensure that music instruction remains a sequenced, comprehensive endeavor” (Gerrity, 2009, p. 44). While some scholars criticize the standards as being positivist (i.e., the belief that substantial knowledge only comes from experience and observation) and a result of hegemonic practices (i.e., a social, cultural, or ideological influence exerted by a dominant group), their role in the



planning and development of classroom teachers' curricula is essential to fully understanding the instructional practices of teachers.

**The National Music Standards.** The National Core Arts Standards had a strong influence on the creation of the Colorado Academic Standards for Music and may influence teachers' curricular choices in addition to more local standards and guidelines. In 2014, NAFME and the National Coalition for Core Arts Standards (NCCAS) created a set of standards called the National Core Music Standards, designed to account for the greater availability of technology and the growing emphasis on assessment and college and career readiness in American education (Shuler et al., 2014). The National Core Music Standards emphasize four artistic processes: Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting. The standards are also written for five different categories of music courses: PK-8 General Music, Composition/Theory, Music Technology, Guitar/Keyboard/Harmonizing Instruments, and Ensemble. These standards continue to broaden the means and access students have to music education and "have allowed for emerging ensembles...by broadening an expectation to teach other facets of creating and enabling teachers to promote creative expression" (Collins, 2016, p. 9).

**Colorado State Standards.** All school districts in the state of Colorado require standards that meet or exceed the Colorado Academic Standards for Music (*Standards*, 2019). The Colorado standards are similar to the National Core Arts Standards and reference the main artistic processes of the National standards (Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting) in its "Purpose of Music" statement: "the acts of performing, creating, and responding to music provide a means for development and growth in the ability to express the otherwise inexpressible and to facilitate growth in many areas of academic development" (Cochran et al., 2020). Like the National Core Music Standards, the Colorado standards divide into four categories: (1)

Expression of Music, (2) Creation of Music, (3) Theory of Music, and (4) Aesthetic Valuation of Music. The document also includes eight benchmarks for prepared graduates to achieve:

1. Apply knowledge and skills through a variety of means to demonstrate musical concepts.
2. Perform with appropriate technique and expressive elements to communicate ideas and emotions.
3. Demonstrate practice and refinement processes to develop independent musicianship.
4. Compose, improvise, and arrange sounds and musical ideas to communicate purposeful intent.
5. Read, write, and analyze the elements of music through a variety of means to demonstrate musical literacy.
6. Aurally identify and differentiate musical elements to interpret and respond to music.
7. Evaluate and respond to music using criteria to make informed musical decisions.
8. Connect musical ideas and works with societal, cultural, and historical context to understand relationships and influences.

The Colorado Music Standards do not divide into the same course categories as the National Standards, but instead feature two categories that focus on students' level of achievement in music. Sixth through eighth grade standards are categorized as Sixth Grade/Novice, Seventh Grade/Intermediate, and Eighth Grade/Advanced, and ninth through twelfth grade standards can either be achieved in the Accomplished or Advanced categories.

### **The COVID-19 Pandemic's Impact on Music Education**

In March of 2020, schools across the United States made drastic changes to their instructional formats and goals when a novel Coronavirus designated as COVID-19 led to a global pandemic. On June 1, 2020, the World Health Organization reported over 1,700,000

positive cases and approximately 100,000 deaths in the U.S. (World Health Organization, 2020). To prevent further spread of the virus, schools in all 50 U.S. states and all U.S. territories moved to remote learning models for the remainder of the 2020 semester, and some continued this modality into the 2020–2021 school year (Hash, 2021).

Remote learning models might involve a packet of instructions and materials for students to complete independently or some form of online distance learning that can be synchronous (happening over a videoconferencing platform in real time) or asynchronous (guided independent study around specific assignments and due dates) (Sleator, 2010). The content and delivery of music classes makes remote learning difficult because of the focus on skill-based learning, performance-focused content, and group music making in most music classes (Shaw & Mayo, 2021). Group music making common to music classrooms (such as singing, playing instruments, and keeping a steady pulse) remains impossible in remote learning modalities mainly because of latency in videoconferencing audio.

Schools and their teachers developed several different models and requirements for delivering remote learning during the 2020–2021 school year (Hash, 2021; Kurt, 2021; Shaw & Mayo, 2021). Most music teachers surveyed by Shaw & Mayo (2021) reported that their instructional time decreased to one lesson per week and more than half (53.3%) of surveyed teachers indicated the lessons were online and asynchronous. Elementary and secondary band teachers in the state of Illinois reported using more individualized instruction centered on performing, listening, and music theory during remote learning (Hash, 2021). Kurt's (2021) study on the remote learning of middle school, high school, and collegiate choral directors also found that teachers emphasized more individualized instruction and music literacy in their curriculum. PreK–12 music teachers surveyed by Parkes et al. (2021) indicated a desire to

include some component of online coursework and continue to focus on individual student improvements and independence once pandemic conditions cease. Teachers also expressed an interest in broadening their curricular offerings for students, but specific offerings were not reported in the study (Parkes et al., 2021).

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent remote learning requirements forced music teachers to not only innovate their music instruction for students, but also to ask important questions, like “what are the absolute essential learnings for my music students regardless of the format in which their learning opportunities are delivered?” (Kaschub, 2020, p. 19). As of September 2021, most schools (88.3%) in the U.S. have returned to full in-person learning (MCH Strategic Data, 2021). How the forced changes from remote learning have affected music course availability, enrollment, and delivery for music teachers and students in the 2021–2022 school year and beyond has yet to be studied.

## **Summary**

As the literature reveals, EMCs successfully support the goals of the music education in making music learning more accessible and relevant to students in secondary schools. Data reveals that the prevalence of EMCs in secondary schools varies by region and may depend on a variety of factors including teacher experience, school resources, and administrative needs. There is an increased need for resources to aid teachers who are considering adding these courses to their schedules. EMCs effectively attract potential new music students to school music programs and give teachers and students space to explore multiple ways of knowing, understanding, and expressing music.

Music theory courses are comfortable for secondary teachers and are therefore a common offering in secondary schools. However, they usually remain inaccessible to students without

prior musical experiences and mostly attract students already enrolled in ensemble courses (Sanderson, 2014). Composition courses are rare and teachers are apprehensive about teaching them, but compositional skills are often explored through other classes like music theory or music technology (Byo, 1999; Garrett, 2009; Sanderson, 2014; Strand, 2006; Veronee, 2017).

Technology-based music courses (TBMCs) are rapidly becoming a popular offering in secondary schools and focus on a wide variety of music learning based on career preparation for the modern music industry or exploring elements of music through the use of technology (Bartram, 2002; Bula, 2011; Tobias, 2010). TBMCs are frequently created with the express purpose of attracting students not already enrolled in school music and feature a wide variety of learning objectives and enduring understandings based on the tools available and goals selected by the teacher (Bula, 2011; Dammers, 2012; Tobias, 2010).

Guitar and piano courses are popular options for students and they offer a wide variety of learning opportunities through various genres of music, including performing, notation reading, and improvisation (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006; McCalla, 1989). Student participants in previous studies have expressed a strong interest in guitar and piano course offerings (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020).

General music encompasses a multitude of course offerings and therefore, many curricular choices from teachers. Experts recommend that general music courses be active learning environments for students and that the curricula take into consideration the musical skills students may need to be well-informed music consumers in the future (Davis, 2011; Gerrity, 2009; Giebelhausen, 2015; Spicer, 2014; VanWeelden et al., 2019; VanWeelden & Walters, 2004; Wayman, 2005).

The instructional practices, learning goals, and enduring understandings selected by teachers can help to better understand the experiences of teachers and students in EMCs. The standards at both the state and national level provide support for teachers looking to ensure their music curriculum is both comprehensive and diverse and is a required part of Colorado music educators' instruction (Gerrity, 2009; *Standards*, 2019). However, teachers still may struggle with balancing a traditional music training with the use of informal music learning practices in their EMC classrooms and a lack of training in the instrument or content of the EMC (Bauer et al., 2003; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006; Fox & Beamish, 1989; Garrett, 2009; Haning & Tracy, 2018; Juchniewicz, 2007; Kubik, 2018; Reese & Rimington, 2000; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Knowledge about the learning objectives and enduring understandings of teachers who already teach EMCs will help other educators create their own successful programs and help state and national leaders in the music education profession continue to refine and develop resources and training.

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted education in the U.S. and forced music educators to shift away from traditional practices and towards more innovative ideas. Teachers made various adaptations for remote learning formats that have likely impacted the teaching practices and curricular offerings of music programs in secondary schools. Whether the pandemic caused a change in EMC offerings or practices has yet to be explored.

### **Need for Study**

The music education profession aims to provide a comprehensive and diverse music education to all students in the public schools, but a relatively small percentage (20%) of students choose to take ensemble classes, the most widely offered music courses (Abril & Gault, 2008; Elpus & Abril, 2019). EMCs are currently offered in less than half of secondary schools,

but that number is changing as educators seek to increase access to music education and appeal to a larger population of students (Collins, 2016; Dammers, 2012; Kubik, 2018; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017; Williams, 2007). As the demand and availability of these courses grow, teachers need models that they can follow when determining their own curricular and pedagogical strategies and priorities. One avenue to further understanding curriculum development is through examining the instructional practices, learning objectives, and enduring understandings educators currently use in their EMCs. Studies that examine the prevalence and instructional practices of EMCs exist for other states and for specific EMCs. Research is needed on the prevalence and practices of EMCs in Colorado, in addition to what effect the COVID-19 pandemic has had on these courses.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study is to investigate the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs. This study also examines the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these courses. A deeper understanding of EMCs will help secondary music teachers design and implement their own EMCs and assist in creating rich and meaningful music learning for secondary students. Findings from this study can also help administrators and stakeholders make informed decisions about the benefits and resources needed for successful instruction in EMCs.

### **Research Questions**

The research questions addressed are:

- What EMCs are currently being taught in Colorado secondary schools?

- What kinds of learning activities do secondary music teachers in Colorado emphasize in their EMCs?
- How have EMCs been affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- What beliefs do secondary music teachers in Colorado have about music learning in the context of EMCs?

## **Definitions**

*Colorado Music Educators Association (CMEA)*—a state-level professional organization for Colorado music educators; in the follow-up interviews, the acronym CMEA is often used to refer to the organization’s yearly clinic and conference rather than the organization itself.

*Emerging Music Courses (EMCs)*—courses of instruction that are less common than traditional music courses in U.S. public school music education programs but are growing in popularity and curricular definition (Pendergast, 2018). For this study, these courses are categorized based on the 2014 National Core Arts Standards “strands” and include: Composition/Theory (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014), Music Technology (Dammers, 2012; Tobias, 2010), Guitar/Keyboard/Harmonizing Instruments (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006), and General Music (Gerrity, 2009; Giebelhausen, 2015; Spicer, 2014).

*Full Time Equivalent (FTE)*—a unit that indicates the workload of an employed person in a way that makes class loads in teaching comparable across various contexts.

*National Association for Music Education (NAfME)*—national-level professional organization for music educators in the United States.

*Secondary schools*—are public schools classified as either “middle level” or “senior level” by the Colorado Department of Education (*SchoolView: School and District Data*, 2021).

## **Delimitations**



Data collection is limited to secondary music teachers employed in the state of Colorado. Only secondary music teachers who self-report teaching an EMC during the 2021–2022 school year provided data used to describe EMCs in this study. Data from teachers who did not self-report teaching an EMC were used in estimating how many educators are currently teaching an EMC in the state of Colorado.

## METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, investigate the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on EMCs in Colorado, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs. Data was collected in two phases and organized into two strands. The first strand consists of quantitative data gathered via a questionnaire to measure demographic characteristics of educators, schools, and music departments that offer EMCs to their secondary students. The questionnaire followed a cross-sectional survey design in which data surrounding "current attitudes, beliefs, opinions, or practices" at a single point in time were examined (Creswell, 2012, p. 377). The second strand features qualitative data gathered from four post-survey interviews. Interview participants were selected via a purposeful variation sampling method in order to capture major variations and to understand the central phenomenon (Creswell, 2012). The central phenomenon in this study was the experience and beliefs of secondary music teachers in Colorado as it relates to their instruction of EMCs. Examining the characteristics of EMC educators was intended to describe a holistic picture of EMC educators in Colorado secondary schools.

### **Strand I: Survey Methodology**

#### **Participant Selection**

Potential participants for the study included music educators employed during the 2021–2022 school year in Colorado public secondary schools as designated by the Colorado Department of Education (*SchoolView: School and District Data*, 2021). Eligible participants were secondary music teachers in public schools in the state of Colorado who teach both EMCs

and ensemble music courses. Participants were invited to participate in the study via email (Appendix C) with a link to the Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Questionnaire (Appendix D). Emails were collected through school district websites and the Colorado Bandmasters Association's membership contact list. The researcher contacted other state-level music teaching associations such as the Colorado Music Educators Association, the Colorado chapter of the American String Teachers Association, and the Colorado chapter of the American Choral Directors Association but was unable to obtain information from these associations. Out of 785 contacted teachers, 109 teachers responded to the questionnaire, yielding a response rate of 13.9%.

### **Questionnaire Measures**

Studies that analyze the prevalence and instructional practices of EMCs typically collect data from single types of EMCs (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006) and/or limit the study to a few number of U.S. States (Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). The questionnaire for this study adapted questions from studies done by da Silva Pozenatto (2021), Fesmire (2006), Kubik (2018), Sanderson (2014), and Veronee (2017). The researcher-designed Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Questionnaire (Appendix D) gathered teacher demographics, school and music department data, and information about the teaching and learning practices in EMCs respondents taught during the 2021–2022 school year.

### ***Pilot Test***

To ensure validity and reliability in this study, the questionnaire was pilot tested with a small group of secondary music educators in the state of Colorado ( $n=10$ ). The primary study was conducted after editing the questionnaire for clarity based on the pilot study respondent's feedback. In order to receive the highest return rate possible during the primary study,

nonrespondents received a follow-up email two weeks after the initial invitation to participate. After an additional two weeks, nonrespondents received a final reminder to complete the questionnaire. Eligible participants had a total of five weeks to complete the questionnaire.

### ***Validity and Reliability***

In order to ensure validity, the Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Questionnaire (Appendix D) adapted questions from previously completed studies about EMCs in various other conditions. Using the previous measures, minor alterations in wording and question modality were made in order to better fit the research questions explored in this study. For example, Fesmire (2006) asks in their questionnaire, “Please indicate which of the following curricular areas are included in your guitar course.” For this study, the researcher changed the question to ask about any EMC the participant may teach and changed the modality of the question to be an open-ended response. The adapted question reads, “What are some common learning objectives and/or goals that you have for your students in this course?” Some measures remained largely unchanged such as the question from Veronee (2017): “How did the EMC you are currently teaching come into existence?” with multiple choice options of (a) College/Music Education Course, (b) Conference/clinic/in-service, (c) Self-Research, (d) Self-Experience, (e) Community Members, or (d) Other, please specify (see Appendix D, question #26).

Reliability was addressed through a test-retest approach via the pilot test. A pilot test, according to Creswell (2012), is “a procedure in which a researcher makes changes in an instrument based on feedback from a small number of individuals who complete and evaluate the instrument” (p. 390). Pilot test participants ( $n=10$ ) suggested minor re-wording of measures and additional multiple-choice options. Results of the pilot test showed the questionnaire to be a reliable and valid measure of each of the questionnaire categories.

## **Data Analysis and Reporting**

Quantitative data were collected via a Qualtrics survey (version XM of Qualtrics, 2020) and analyzed using descriptive statistics with Microsoft Excel software. Measures of central tendency were determined using mean, median, mode, interquartile range, and standard deviation for each measure. A chi-square test of independence was conducted to determine the statistical significance of the relationship between demographic characteristics and prevalence of EMCs.

## **Strand II: Follow-Up Interviews**

### **Participant Selection**

At the end of the Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Questionnaire (Appendix D), respondents were prompted to answer whether they would like to be contacted to participate in a follow-up interview. Participants for the follow-up interview portion of the survey were selected using a purposeful variation sampling strategy in order to represent an array of experiences and course types and contacted via email (Appendix E). Interviewees were selected based on their years of experience (early career teachers with between one and ten years of experience or veteran teachers with eleven or more years of experience) and type of EMCs reported in the questionnaire. Four interviews were conducted with two early career and two veteran teachers. Interviewees taught courses in each of the categories discussed in the literature review (Music Theory, Technology-Based Music Courses, Guitar, Piano, and General Music). The interview questions explored participant's perceptions of the instructional practices, learning objectives, and enduring understandings used in their EMCs, their career paths, and individual narratives. Interview questions were adapted from studies conducted by Sanderson (2014) and Veronee (2017) (Appendix F).

### **Data Collection**

Once identified, potential participants were contacted via email to be informed of the study and invited to participate (Appendix E). After four EMC educators agreed to participate in the study, data were collected via semi-structured interviews conducted using either the Zoom Videoconferencing platform or phone. Each participant was asked the same set of open-ended interview questions (Appendix F), but follow-up or probing questions and further discussion depended on responses to the original questions in order to highlight the uniqueness of each individual case (Creswell, 2012). Interviews took between 20 minutes to an hour to complete and were audio-recorded for later analysis.

### **Data Analysis and Reporting**

Interviews were transcribed by the researcher and reviewed by participants to check for accuracy (Creswell, 2012). Following data collection, identifying information (including participant names, people, places, and organizations) was replaced with pseudonyms to protect the identity of participants. Data from interviews were then coded on three levels (inductive, pattern, and deductive) to create a code book for analyses (Appendix K). Coding began with the use of low-level inference, inductive codes and moved to the use of high-level inference, deductive codes. Inductive coding was interpreted and organized according to emergent themes. Deductive coding connected items and patterns to theoretical concepts reflected in the research literature (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Finally, pattern-level coding was used to synthesize both inductive and deductive coding into themes and categories reflective of this study.

### ***Trustworthiness and Validity***

Several strategies outlined by Miles and Huberman (1994) and Creswell (2012) were used to ensure the trustworthiness and validity of the study. During data analysis, color coding was used to designate potential emergent patterns and themes, resulting in two major deductive

themes. Representative examples of each specific code were indexed by the researcher and organized into a code book (Appendix K). Member-checks occurred through participants being invited to review transcriptions of their interviews and participant profile descriptions developed by the researcher to ensure accurate portrayal (Creswell, 2012).

### **Ethical Considerations**

Since qualitative research is interpreted by the researcher (Creswell, 2012), the researcher should report any bias related to the study that may impact their interpretation. Researcher biases regarding this study include prior experiences teaching EMCs for four years at a secondary school in Colorado. The challenges encountered by the researcher in navigating student interest and engagement in addition to a lack of resources and preparation prompted an interest in this subject of research.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was granted (Protocol ID #2747; see Appendix B) prior to contacting potential participants about the study. Follow-up interview participants digitally agreed to the IRB-approved Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) that detailed the purpose of research, study procedures, and confidentiality measures before data collection began. Participants agreed to an electronic version of the Informed Consent Form before responding to the questionnaire, per IRB regulations.

## RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs. This study also examined the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on these courses. Data were collected via an electronic questionnaire ( $N=100$ ) and follow-up interviews were conducted with four participants who were selected using a purposeful variation sampling approach.

### Questionnaire Results

#### Participant Data

A total of 100 participants from music educators employed by Colorado school districts during the 2021–2022 school year were eligible participants in this study. Demographic data for the sample are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1.  
*Sample Demographics*

<b>Gender</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
Male	48	48%
Female	51	51%
Prefer not to say	1	1%
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
White or European American	88	88%
Hispanic American	6	6%
Black or African American	1	1%
Prefer not to say	4	4%
Other	1	1%
<b>Highest Degree Earned</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
Bachelor's Degree	32	32%
Master's Degree	64	64%
Doctoral Degree	4	4%
<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
1 – 5 years	25	25%
6 – 10 years	28	28%
11 – 15 years	14	14%



Table 1.  
*Sample Demographics*

16 – 20 years	8	8%
21 – 25 years	15	15%
26+ years	10	10%
<b>Primary Area</b> (Participants were able to select multiple)	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
Band	70	70%
Choir	36	36%
Orchestra	25	25%
Elementary General	11	11%
Guitar	17	17%
Piano	19	19%
Secondary General	14	14%
Other	12	12%

Participants were able to select multiple primary areas of expertise and ranged from a single selection up to six selections. All participants selected either band, choir, or orchestra as their primary area of expertise.

### ***Teaching Experience***

One hundred respondents reported teaching experience that ranged from 1 year to 38 years with an overall mean of 12.5 years. Twenty-five percent of participants had 1–5 years of experience, 28% had 6–10 years of experience, 14% had 11–15 years of experience, 8% had 16–20 years of experience, 15% had 21–25 years of experience, and 10% had over 26 years of teaching experience. The most-often reported years of experience was 3 years, with seven participants indicating that they had 3 years of experience teaching school music.

Respondents reported years at their current school that ranged from 1 year to 28 years with an overall mean of 7 years. Again, the most often reported number was 3 years, with 13 participants indicating they had been at their current school for 3 years total.

### ***Teaching Load***

When asked which grade levels they currently teach, most respondents ( $n=42$ ) indicated that they teach only high school (grades 9–12). Thirty-two respondents reported teaching only middle school (grades 6–8), 11 reported grades in both middle and high school levels (grades 6–12), eight reported elementary and secondary grades (Kindergarten–12<sup>th</sup> grade), four reported fifth grade and middle school levels (grades 5–8), and three reported fifth through twelfth grade. Table 2 illustrates the grade levels and frequencies indicated by respondents.

Table 2.  
*Grade Levels in Teaching Load*

<b>Grade Levels</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
High School only (grades 9–12)	37	37%
Middle School only (grades 6–8)	33	33%
Middle and High School (grades 6–12)	15	15%
Elementary and Secondary (grades K–12)	8	8%
Fifth Grade and Middle School (grades 5–8)	4	4%
Fifth Grade, Middle, and High School (grades 5–12)	3	3%

Responses for classes taught included the following: ensembles ( $n=86$ ), guitar ( $n=22$ ), general music ( $n=21$ ), piano/keyboard ( $n=16$ ), music theory ( $n=11$ ), technology-based music ( $n=7$ ), and composition ( $n=1$ ). Twenty-two respondents classified one of their courses as “other” and included drama, IB Music, recording & songwriting, modern band, musical theatre, bucket drumming, arts event management & marketing, adapted music for students with special needs, Mariachi, music exploration, and study hall.

Table 3.  
*Courses Reported*

<b>Subject</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>
Ensembles	86
Guitar	22
General Music	21
Piano/Keyboard	16
Music Theory	11
Technology-Based Music	7
Composition	1
Other	22

A breakdown of the percentage of teachers at each level within each course type is presented in Table 4 (i.e., 35% of the total ensemble courses reported were taught by high school teachers). Teachers at the secondary level (high school only, middle school only, and high school and middle school) taught the majority of each EMC category. High school teachers taught the highest percentage of each EMC type.

Table 4.

*Percentage of EMC Types Taught by Each Grade Level Category*

	<b>HS Only</b>	<b>MS Only</b>	<b>MS &amp; HS</b>	<b>Elem &amp; Second</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup> &amp; MS</b>	<b>5<sup>th</sup>, MS, &amp; HS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Ensembles	30 (35%)	28 (33%)	14 (16%)	7 (8%)	4 (5%)	3 (3%)	86
Music Theory	9 (82%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	7 (8%)	0 (0%)	1 (9%)	11
Composition	1 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1
Tech-Based	3 (43%)	2 (29%)	1 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1 (14%)	7
Guitar	10 (45%)	4 (18%)	5 (23%)	3 (14%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	22
Piano	10 (63%)	2 (13%)	2 (13%)	2 (13%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	16
General Music	9 (43%)	5 (24%)	2 (10%)	4 (19%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	21
Other	8 (36%)	7 (32%)	6 (27%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	22

## School Data

### *School Level*

Thirty-nine participants reported their school as a high school and 33 reported a middle school. Four participants indicated their school as a K–8 school and 24 selected “other.” Those who selected “other” reported their schools as a combination of middle and high school ( $n=10$ ), as a K–12 school ( $n=8$ ), or that they teach at multiple schools ( $n=6$ ).

Table 5.

*Reported School Level*

<b>School Level</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
High School	39	39%
Middle School	33	33%
K–8	4	4%
Other	24	24%

### *School Size*

School size ranges were based on the Colorado High School Activities Association's enrollment classifications for music (2020-22 *Classifications*, n.d.). The majority of respondents ( $n=59$ ) indicated their school size was 272–618 students, followed by 21 respondents selecting 88–271 students, and 14 respondents selecting 619–1,391 students. Six respondents indicated their school had more than 1,392 students and no respondents selected 1–87 students.

Table 6.  
*Reported School Size*

<b>Student Enrollment</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
1,392 and up	6	6%
619–1,391	14	14%
272–618	59	59%
88–271	21	21%
1–87	0	0%

### ***Performing Arts Credit Requirements***

The majority of respondents indicated that their students were not required to complete a performing arts credit at their school ( $n=54$ , 54%) and 36 (36%) respondents indicated that their school has a performing arts requirement. Ten respondents (10%) selected “other,” and responses included specifying that the requirement was for fine arts and that sixth-grade students were required to enroll in an ensemble course (band, choir, or orchestra).

### **Questionnaire Responses**

Mean scores, standard deviations, and interquartile ranges were calculated for individual portions of the questionnaire. Descriptive data for each questionnaire measure are included below.

### ***Prevalence of Emerging Music Courses***

More than half of respondents ( $n=61$ , 61%) indicated at least one EMC was a part of their teaching load for the 2021–2022 school year and were asked to provide details about each

course. Data were collected on a total of 82 courses in seven categories: music theory, composition, technology-based music, guitar, piano, general music, and courses classified by respondents as “other.” Courses classified as “other” included IB Music, Recording & Songwriting, Music Exploration, Modern Band, Mariachi, and Percussion Ensemble.

Table 7.

*Emerging Music Courses*

<b>EMC(s) on Teaching Load</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
Yes	61	61%
No	39	39%
<b>Course Category</b>		
General Music	22	22%
Guitar	21	21%
Piano	13	13%
Other	10	10%
Music Theory	9	9%
Technology-Based Music	7	7%
Composition	0	0%
<b>Number of EMCs per Participant</b>		
One EMC	43	70%
Two EMCs	15	25%
Three EMCs	3	5%

Out of 61 respondents who reported teaching an EMC, 43 respondents (70%) listed data for just one EMC, 15 (25%) listed data for two EMCs, and three (5%) listed data for three EMCs. Three EMCs was the highest number of EMCs reported as a part of a Colorado educator’s teaching load for the 2021–2022 school year.

***Student Population in Emerging Music Courses***

Participants were asked to estimate the percentage of students in each of their EMCs that were also enrolled in an ensemble music course. Table 8 summarizes the findings for each EMC category.

Table 8.

*Co-Enrollment with Ensemble Courses*

<b>EMC</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>IQR</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Music Theory	20–100	73.33	32.5	45	90

Table 8.

*Co-Enrollment with Ensemble Courses*

Tech-Based Music	10–40	23	11.68	15.5	20
Guitar	0–100	20.14	28.19	20	5
Piano	5–60	23.08	15.52	11	20
General Music	0–80	14.5	20.53	17.25	0
Other	0–100	46.4	47.91	98.75	100
All EMCs	0–100	28.38	32.44	29.5	0

Music theory courses had the highest mean percentage ( $M=73.33$ ) of students also enrolled in an ensemble course, whereas general music courses had the lowest mean percentage ( $M=14.5$ ) of students co-enrolled.

*Learning in Emerging Music Courses*

For each EMC reported, participants were asked to give examples of common instructional objectives/goals and enduring understandings they have for students in their EMCs. A total of 76 instructional objective responses and 76 enduring understanding responses were coded into categories (see Table 9). Some responses were multifaceted and coded into multiple categories (ex. the response “*Learn the basics of playing the guitar, and basic fluency in both tablature and traditional music notation*” was coded into both the Performing Music and Music Literacy categories).

Table 9.

*Instructional Objectives and Enduring Understandings*

<b>Instructional Objective Response</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>
Culture, History, or Popular Music	20
Lifelong Learning and Life Skills	3
Music Literacy	23
Creating Music	17
Performing Music	38
Appreciation of Music	8
Theory of Music	18
Critical Listening	8
<b>Enduring Understanding Response</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>
Culture, History, or Popular Music	13
Lifelong Learning and Life Skills	30
Music Literacy	10

Table 9.

*Instructional Objectives and Enduring Understandings*

Creating Music	14
Performing Music	24
Appreciation of Music	24
Theory of Music	5
Critical Listening	4

Participants were asked whether they use the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards for Music in each of their EMCs. Seven (9%) of reporting teachers said they never use the standards, 27 (33%) sometimes, 21 (26%) about half the time, 15 (18%) most of the time, and 12 (15%) always. Respondents were also asked to estimate the amount of time spent in each of their EMCs on each of the four 2020 Colorado Academic Standards for Music. Given the variety of course categories, the descriptive statistics for each will be reported separately in Table 10.

Table 10.

*Percentage of Time Spent on Each Standard by Course Category*

<b>Music Theory</b>	<b>Range</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>IQR</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Expression of Music	0–15	6.11	5.46	10	0
Creation of Music	0–30	17.78	9.39	15	20
Theory of Music	0–90	<b>56.11</b>	25.71	20	50
Aesthetic Valuation of Music	0–20	8.89	8.21	15	0
<b>Technology-Based Music</b>					
Expression of Music	0–20	14.29	7.87	10	20
Creation of Music	20–60	<b>42.86</b>	12.54	10	40
Theory of Music	10–30	18.57	6.90	5	20
Aesthetic Valuation of Music	10–40	21.43	10.69	10	20
<b>Guitar</b>					
Expression of Music	0–70	<b>35</b>	23.18	35	50
Creation of Music	0–75	25.24	21.59	20	10
Theory of Music	0–40	17.86	11.57	10	10
Aesthetic Valuation of Music	0–40	15	9.35	10	10
<b>Piano</b>					
Expression of Music	0–90	<b>48.85</b>	29.94	55	80
Creation of Music	0–40	9.62	10.89	15	0
Theory of Music	0–50	22.69	16.15	10	25
Aesthetic Valuation of Music	0–30	11.15	7.68	10	10
<b>General Music</b>					
Expression of Music	0–40	11.91	13.42	23.75	0
Creation of Music	0–50	13.09	14.50	20	0
Theory of Music	0–40	11.36	11.87	13.75	0

Table 10.

*Percentage of Time Spent on Each Standard by Course Category*

Aesthetic Valuation of Music	0–100	<b>55</b>	6.79	57.5	50
<b>Other Courses</b>					
Expression of Music	0–80	22.5	25.30	18.75	10
Creation of Music	0–70	27.5	22.88	28.75	0
Theory of Music	0–35	16.5	12.70	13.75	10
Aesthetic Valuation of Music	0–25	12.5	8.58	10	10

Music theory teachers reported spending the largest percentage of time on the Theory of Music standard, whereas technology-based music course teachers spent the largest percentage on the Creation of Music standard. Both Guitar and Piano teachers gave the greatest percentage to the Expression of Music standard and the general music teachers reported spending the most time on the Aesthetic Valuation of Music standard. Teachers in the “other” course category did not have a clear standard used for the greatest percentage of class time.

**Instructional Drivers.** For each EMC reported, participants were asked to indicate whether the instruction in the course was primarily teacher- or student-driven. Table 11 summarizes the responses by course type.

Table 11.

*Instructional Drivers by Course Type*

<b>Music Theory</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b><i>%</i></b>
Teacher-driven	7	78%
Student-driven	2	22%
<b>Technology-Based Music</b>		
Teacher-driven	3	43%
Student-driven	4	57%
<b>Guitar</b>		
Teacher-driven	17	81%
Student-driven	4	19%
<b>Piano</b>		
Teacher-driven	5	38%
Student-driven	8	62%
<b>General Music</b>		
Teacher-driven	17	77%
Student-driven	5	23%
<b>Other Courses</b>		
Teacher-driven	5	50%



Table 11.

*Instructional Drivers by Course Type*

Student-driven	5	50%
<b>All EMCs</b>		
Teacher-driven	54	66%
Student-driven	28	34%

Technology-based music and piano courses were the only course categories with a majority focus on student-driven instruction. Just over half (57%) of respondents indicated their Technology-Based Music Course instruction was student-driven and 62% of respondents indicated their piano instruction was student-driven. Courses classified as other were split evenly between teacher-driven (50%) and student-driven (50%) instruction. All other courses were reported by the majority to be teacher-driven.

*The COVID-19 Pandemic and Emerging Music Courses*

Respondents were asked to select each of the ways their EMC(s) were affected during the 2021–2022 school year by the COVID-19 Pandemic. The options were (a) This course was started to mitigate the instructional challenges of the pandemic, (b) Enrollment has increased, (c) Enrollment has decreased, (d) The enduring understandings for this course have changed, (e) The instructional objectives have changed, and (f) Other, please describe. Responses are summarized in Table 12.

Table 12.

*The COVID-19 Pandemic's Effect on EMCs*

<b>Response Item</b>	<b><i>n</i></b>	<b>%</b>
This course was started to mitigate instructional challenges	13	17%
Enrollment has increased	26	35%
Enrollment has decreased	7	9%
The enduring understandings have changed	7	9%
The instructional objectives have changed	11	15%
Other	24	32%

Write-in responses from those who selected “other” included no change to the course ( $n=15$ ), positive experiences with the course ( $n=3$ ), the course being created to accommodate scheduling and enrollment needs ( $n=5$ ), and the use of more online learning tools ( $n=1$ ).

### ***Stakeholder Perception of Emerging Music Courses as Reported by Participants***

Respondents were asked to use a five-point Likert-scale (strongly disagree, somewhat disagree, neither agree nor disagree, somewhat agree, strongly agree) to indicate whether administrators, music colleagues, non-music colleagues, students, and parents responded positively to their EMCs. Responses are summarized by each course type in Table 13.

Table 13.  
*Response to EMCs from Various Stakeholders*

<b>Music Theory</b>	<b>Mean (Range 1–5)</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>IQR</b>	<b>Mode</b>
Administrators	4	1.12	2	5
Music Colleagues	4.11	0.60	0	4
Non-Music Colleagues	3.44	0.73	1	3
Students	4.44	0.53	1	4
Parents	4.22	0.67	1	4
<b>Technology-Based Music</b>				
Administrators	4.14	0.69	0.5	4
Music Colleagues	4	0.82	1	4
Non-Music Colleagues	3.86	0.90	1.5	3
Students	4	0	0	4
Parents	3.43	0.53	1	3
<b>Guitar</b>				
Administrators	4.14	0.85	2	5
Music Colleagues	3.86	1.01	2	5
Non-Music Colleagues	4.09	0.83	2	5
Students	4.29	0.96	1	5
Parents	3.76	0.99	2	3
<b>Piano</b>				
Administrators	4.23	0.73	1	4
Music Colleagues	4.31	0.85	1	5
Non-Music Colleagues	3.92	0.86	2	3
Students	4.62	0.51	1	5
Parents	3.85	0.99	2	4
<b>General Music</b>				
Administrators	4.27	0.70	1	4
Music Colleagues	4.05	0.95	2	5

Table 13.

*Response to EMCs from Various Stakeholders*

Non-Music Colleagues	3.86	0.94	2	3
Students	4.18	0.91	1	4
Parents	3.77	0.81	1	3
<b>Other</b>				
Administrators	4	1.33	1.75	5
Music Colleagues	4.1	0.99	2	5
Non-Music Colleagues	4.1	0.99	2	5
Students	4.4	0.96	1	5
Parents	3.6	0.84	1	3
<b>All Courses</b>				
Administrators	4.16	0.87	1	5
Music Colleagues	4.05	0.90	2	5
Non-Music Colleagues	3.91	0.88	2	3
Students	4.32	0.80	1	5
Parents	3.78	0.86	1.75	3

**EMC Prevalence by Demographic Characteristic**

In order to examine the influence of certain teacher and school characteristics on the prevalence of EMCs, the sample was divided according to participants' years of experience, primary area of specialization, school classification, school size, and performing arts credit requirement. A chi-square test of independence was calculated comparing the frequency of EMC teachers in each demographic category. A significant relationship was found,  $\chi^2 (3,100) = 13.75$ ,  $p < .05$  between the prevalence of EMCs and school classification. It appears for this data set that school classification is the strongest predictor of EMC presence and that high school teachers are more statistically likely to teach an EMC.

Table 14.

*EMC Prevalence by School Classification*

	Middle School	K-8 School	High School	Other	Total
Yes – I teach an EMC	12 (20.13)	2 (2.44)	30 (23.79)	17 (14.64)	61
No – I do not teach an EMC	21 (12.87)	2 (1.56)	9 (15.21)	7 (9.36)	39
Total	33	4	39	24	100

$\chi^2 (3,100) = 13.75$ ,  $p < .05$  ( $P=.003$ ), significant

*Note.* The “other” category includes combination middle and high schools, K–12 schools, and educators assigned to multiple schools.

Chi-square tests of independence calculations for the relationship between the frequency of EMC teachers and their primary area of specialization (band, choir, or orchestra), their school size, or the performing arts credit requirements at their school did not have a significant result. Participants were able to select multiple primary areas of specialization. The relationship between primary area of specialization and prevalence of EMCs was not significant,  $\chi^2 (2,131) = 0.53, p > .05$ .

Table 15.  
*EMC Prevalence by Primary Area of Specialization*

	Band	Choir	Orchestra	Total
Yes – I teach an EMC	45 (43.28)	22 (22.26)	14 (15.46)	81
No – I do not teach an EMC	25 (26.72)	14 (13.74)	11 (9.54)	50
Total	70	36	25	131

$\chi^2 (2,131) = 0.53, p > .05 (P=.76)$ , not significant

Additionally, the relationship between school size and prevalence of EMCs was not significant,  $\chi^2(3,100) = 0.22, p > .05$ . It is important to note that no participants ( $n=0$ ) from the smallest school size (1–87 students) responded to the questionnaire.

Table 16.  
*EMC Prevalence by School Size*

	1,392 and up	619 – 1,391	272 – 618	88 – 271	Total
Yes – I teach an EMC	4 (3.66)	9 (8.54)	35 (35.99)	13 (12.81)	61
No – I do not teach an EMC	2 (2.34)	5 (5.46)	24 (23.01)	8 (8.19)	39
Total	6	14	59	21	100

$\chi^2(3,100) = 0.22, p > .05 (P=.97)$ , not significant

Finally, the relationship between performing arts credit requirement and prevalence of EMCs was not significant,  $\chi^2(2,100) = 1.88, p > .05$ .

Table 17.

*EMC Prevalence by Performing Art Credit Requirements*

	Yes – my school has a performing arts req	No – my school does not have a performing arts req	Other	Total
Yes – I teach an EMC	25 (21.96)	31 (32.94)	5 (6.1)	61
No – I do not teach an EMC	11 (14.04)	23 (21.06)	5 (3.9)	39
Total	36	54	10	100

$\chi^2(2,100) = 1.88, p > .05 (P=.39)$ , not significant

*Note.* The “other” category includes respondents who specified only sixth grade students are required to take a performing arts credit or that their school has a “fine arts” credit requirement that encompasses courses outside of music.

### Participant Interview Results

#### Participant Profiles

##### *Russell*

Russell is in his fourth year of teaching and teaches orchestra, music technology, and piano at a high school in a metropolitan area. Prior to beginning his teaching career, Russell earned a degree in piano performance with a jazz emphasis, composed, produced, and toured with a professional band, and taught private piano lessons. He is a passionate advocate for the EMCs in his program and has done extensive work writing curricula for the courses he teaches. He has previously taught guitar, but another music teacher at his school now teaches that course, in addition to History of Rock and Roll, Music Around the World, and a unified modern band class. In future years, Russell and his music department plan to expand their course offerings to include a Mariachi ensemble and pop orchestra to attract more students to their school music program.

Russell is passionate about his music technology and piano courses because of his personal and professional experiences in these subjects outside of teaching. He hopes to publish

the curriculum he has designed for the courses someday because he feels his experiences have led to an informed and valuable design:

I'd like to think that, you know, melding my experience as a teacher and teaching the course plus my real-world professional experience might yield something that would be really useful as a set of resources for teachers out there. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Besides his professional experience, Russell has no formal training in teaching the EMCs that are a part of his teaching load. However, he finds that as his pedagogy improves through experience, his students produce more meaningful musical outcomes. Russell expresses a desire to advocate for the inclusion of EMCs in schools and in teacher preparation programs and believes that the courses are a key component of the future of music education.

### ***Frank***

Frank has been teaching music in the same school district for 12 years, and he is in his fourth-year teaching at his current high school position. The Colorado Department of Education categorizes his school as urban-suburban. Frank teaches concert band, jazz band, beginning guitar, Recording & Songwriting, and History of Rock & Pop. Frank's load of EMCs came from his administration's desire to make his position a full-time high school position, rather than split between teaching band at the high school and elementary school as his predecessor had done. His Recording & Songwriting and guitar courses were assigned to him by his school's administration, but Frank was able to choose History of Rock & Pop as a course on his teaching load.

Frank feels that the EMCs he teaches are an important part of reaching the general population of students at his school:

I think the benefit [of my course] is it just reaches a kid that otherwise wouldn't have an outlet—a creative outlet at school...It tends to pull those kids in and gives them an opportunity to experience music at their level in a way that they want to. (Frank, Participant Interview)

He also feels that these courses will play an important role in expanding the music teacher FTE available at his school so that the choir position can be full time. Frank has found success in his EMCs as evidenced by maxed out enrollments for his History of Rock & Pop and guitar courses. The Recording & Songwriting course is more specialized so sometimes struggles with enrollment, but Frank is most impressed with the recording products the students in this course are able to produce.

Frank has not received any training to teach these courses and instead has developed the curriculum mostly through resources he has collected from colleagues and his own research. He feels that assessment design is a key component to students enjoying his EMCs and he strives to balance high expectations with a manageable workload. He hopes that the skills students learn in his courses are applicable to their musical lives outside of the classroom:

...because I always told my students this, well really what I want you to do here is not like, I don't want to give you every skill you have, but I want to give you enough tools so that if you start up a garage band, you can go somewhere with it. Or you've got Ableton at home and you know what's going on with it now and how to generally get it to work. There's no way I could teach it all, so I'm hoping to just give enough for them to go, OK, I could do this. (Frank, Participant Interview)

Frank shows a strong commitment to meaningful experiences for his students in his EMCs, even if he does not consider them to be a part of his personal skill set.

## *Harry*

Harry has taught for 25 years at a middle school in a metropolitan area and the 2021–2022 school year was his first year teaching an EMC. Typically, Harry teaches concert band, jazz band, and orchestra, but declining enrollment in his ensemble courses forced him to combine his band and orchestra classes and add a music appreciation course for sixth grade students to his teaching load. Harry cites restrictions from the COVID-19 pandemic and new school district boundaries as reasons for low numbers in his ensemble classes. Harry finds that combining his orchestra and band classes has been a challenge and ultimately a disservice to the students:

And because my numbers were low enough in sixth grade, it was really difficult for my principal—and I understood this—to be able to give me an orchestra class with eleven kids. So that, unfortunately, we combined all sixth-grade instrumental music into what I'm lovingly calling my “bandchestra.” It's not a great situation, but it is what it is...So, [my principal] suggested doing a music appreciation class, which made me cringe a little bit...I've been doing this for a long time, and I've never been asked to teach a music appreciation class before. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Ultimately, Harry hopes to bring his ensemble numbers up again, so he does not need to teach the music appreciation course in future years.

The curriculum for Harry's music appreciation course was developed by gathering materials from colleagues and his own research and experience. Harry has not received any formal training in teaching the course. Despite the difficult situation in which this course was created, Harry feels that the students who are engaged in the course material get a lot out of the content he teaches:



I feel like these kids, honestly, they get done with this course, I think they know more about music than my band and orchestra kids do because we don't get anywhere near as much time to spend on history and how we got to where we are and that sort of thing. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Harry enjoys the freedom his administration has given him to be able to design the curriculum for his music appreciation course and is glad to be sharing his musical knowledge and experiences with students. Harry expresses a strong preference for teaching a music appreciation course over a non-music course option.

### ***Taylor***

Taylor has been a school music teacher for eight years and has taught for five years in her current position at a high school in a metropolitan area. Taylor assists with the school marching band, directs the second concert band, and teaches a percussion class, AP music theory, beginning guitar, and Introduction to Popular Music. When she started her position, her course load was part time and only included the band, percussion, and guitar courses. To increase her FTE, Taylor took over teaching AP music theory and took on a non-music study skills course. During remote learning as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Taylor replaced her non-music course with an online version of Introduction to Popular Music, which has since transitioned to being offered as an in-person course.

Taylor feels that her EMCs are an important part of maintaining her work-life balance, since they allow her to work full time without being responsible for directing top ensembles and attending too many events outside of school. She enjoys that her guitar and Introduction to Popular Music courses allow her to reach a different population of students than those that typically enroll in the ensemble or AP music theory courses:

It's really nice to sometimes not have the high-strung kids who are like freaking out about everything or stressed out about everything and who are just in my class just to have fun. Like, there's no deadline. There's no “we have to go to contest” feeling. So, I really do enjoy that. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

Taylor hopes that her students learn about music in a fun and relaxing environment in her guitar and introduction to popular music courses and knows that these courses are sometimes what motivates students to come to school. She is currently working on a certificate in special needs in the music classroom and hopes to add a unified music course to her music department's course offerings. Taylor's music department and administration have a goal to reach as many students as possible through the courses they offer.

Taylor was required to receive training before teaching the AP music theory course and she expresses a desire to receive professional development for her guitar course. Taylor sees teacher training for EMCs as a real problem, since it is rare for music educators to receive any training for teaching EMCs in college. She feels that undergraduate music students should have more options to learn how to teach these courses since they are such a common offering in most schools. Taylor believes that student teachers should work with EMCs to gain experience and is looking forward to giving her student teacher experience with her EMCs this coming spring semester.

## **Themes**

After transcribing, reviewing, and doing member checks, the following themes emerged as common to all follow-up interview participants: (1) *students*, and (2) *curriculum*. Pattern codes were created to represent all level one codes. Interview data was then examined using the aforementioned pattern codes to check for instances of congruence or dissonance. Given the a

priori nature of the questions asked of each participant (as devised by Sanderson, 2014 and Veronee, 2017) the patterns that emerged clearly informed the themes of *students* and *curriculum*. Common responses regarding *students* centered around student populations, engagement, and learning beyond the classroom. Patterns that emerged within the theme *curriculum* included support from self-research/experience, curriculum design, and preparation. Representative examples of each specific code were indexed by the researcher and organized into a code book (see Appendix K). Supporting data from each major theme is presented below (see Appendices G, H, I, and J for full interview transcripts).

## **Theme #1: Students**

### ***Student Population***

All four participants indicated that their EMCs were enrolled by a population of students that was unique from students enrolled in their ensemble courses. Excluding her AP Music Theory class, Taylor describes the students who enroll in her EMCs as a population that she enjoys teaching:

I enjoy the switch of kids. I love my, obviously, my band kids who I get to have for four years most of the time, especially with marching band. But I really enjoy getting to know the population outside of my music kids. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

Frank describes one of the major benefits of EMCs as the ability to reach a greater population of students at his school:

I think the benefit is it just reaches a kid that otherwise wouldn't have a creative outlet at school. And a lot of the students that end up taking these classes, they don't dig theater, they don't dig art, they dropped out of band if they even tried it way long ago. And some of them just end up here because the counselor's like, so what of these looks interesting?

Like one of those “how are we going to get you to graduation?” conversations. And so, I think the benefit is it tends to pull those kids in and gives them an opportunity to experience music at their level in a way that they want to. (Frank, Participant Interview)

Russell told several stories and spoke at length about the impact his EMCs have had on both students with and without musical experience. For Russell, EMCs are key to giving access to music education to a greater population of students:

So, I would say like, those special moments, you know, where we get to access either a different side of our large ensemble kids, or an entire different part of the student body. I think for me, if we really want to live up to our credo of music for all, right—that's been our slogan in some way or another in music education for the last one hundred plus years, we've been talking about this concept of music for all. And you know, to me these emerging music classes...are a big key. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Harry notes that the students who enroll in his EMC often do not choose to be a part of his class, which is very different from the population of students he typically has in his band and orchestra classes:

I'm not blind to the fact that, especially in seventh and eighth grade, every kid in my class chose to be there. And nobody else in the building can say that. Sixth grade, they're experientials for some of them like, well, I think I want to try this instrument and sometimes it doesn't go well. And that happens. And then those kids they choose later to not continue. So, I have this sort of, this charmed life as a teacher that I get to teach kids who want to do what we're doing. And if they don't, they just move on to something else. That's not true with the appreciation course. (Harry, Participant Interview)

### ***Student Engagement***

Participants described varying degrees of engagement from students in their EMCs. Harry summarizes the engagement from students into three different levels:

And so that's where the frustrating part comes in. There are kids in there who are engaged, who are giving me great responses they like, they get it. And they ask really good questions. And then there's, of course, the group in the middle that do the work, but they just do the work. You know, and then there's, of course, the group that couldn't care less. And that's the unfortunate part is that you end up dealing more with those kids, because they end up being discipline issues... (Harry, Participant Interview)

Russell was not expecting to encounter low engagement from students in his classes and was surprised by “the heavy lift I've had to do at times to just get kids to do stuff” (Russell, Participant Interview). He attributes this struggle to his students’ age, social media, and his school’s community, but finds this as a pattern across both his EMC and ensemble courses. Harry goes on to attribute low engagement from his students to a lack of interest in the course material:

The challenge is anytime you're teaching a course that is not something that somebody chose, especially like this situation. I mean, every kid knows they have to take math, they have to take science and English, they don't get to choose those courses, but they also understand fully that this is part of curriculum, this is part of school. But when they select classes that are supposed to be for their interest and they end up in a class that, quite frankly, they couldn't care less about, that's always going to be a challenge. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Participants described student interest in the course material as something that led to quality musical products from their students’ assignments. Frank saw evidence of a high level of

engagement from his students after they submitted feedback about his guitar course at the end of the semester:

Like I said, yesterday we had our guitar class and I just asked what could have been done differently and they were giving me feedback that wasn't like oh, give us fewer tests or anything like that. They were honestly going, "I wish we had gotten feedback this way." Or "this is one thing that I was never brave enough to ask about in class, but I still don't know, and it doesn't feel like we covered it." And it was from kids that are like, you pull up their grades and they're getting Cs and Ds in all their classes and so that they're engaged enough to know what they could have used more, I feel is a success. (Frank, Participant Interview)

Taylor describes prioritizing the safety and enjoyment of her students in her EMCs as a way to increase their engagement in the course material. She recognizes that for some of her students, "this is the only class they show up to. And whether or not they're failing is like a whole different story, but they show up. And they're there, and usually there's something for them to do..." (Taylor, Participant Interview).

### ***Learning Beyond the Classroom***

Each participant expressed a desire for their students to apply the skills they learn in their EMCs to either musical pursuits beyond the classroom or as tools for success later in life. Russell found success connecting performance skills in his piano class with the life skills students may need in their careers one day:

I will try to tie that into life skills and I'm like, I know that a lot of you are never going to perform on piano again after this semester-long class is over. But you are going to have to go in that job interview and you're going to have to go into, you know, some

kind of public speaking potentially, and you might lead a team, you might become a manager, so performing is about way more than just music. And I think they kind of connect with that. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Frank hopes to make the course material more applicable to students through the design of his assessments. Rather than memorizing facts about decades of popular music, his Survey of Rock & Pop students are given take-home essays that ask them to “put it all together, and make it meaningful, and not just be like this is what's important and this is why you have to do it” (Frank, Participant Interview).

Harry hopes his students will leave his class with a more critical view of the music in their lives:

And who knows? There's no way of knowing in the future how this will affect them. For some of the kids it will just be another class that they do. For other kids, they're going to be more critical of what they hear...Because like a lot of people are just blind to how music is involved in their lives. And so, to have these kids get a little more in depth look into that [is meaningful]. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Taylor found that musical engagement outside of the classroom can still happen within a school context. One of her guitar students auditioned for the school musical because “she just wanted to continue doing something musically” outside of her guitar class (Taylor, Participant Interview).

Both Frank and Russell express a desire to give students the tools they need to continue their musical development outside of the classroom. Frank tells his students:

Well, really what I want you to do here is not like, I don't want to give you every skill you have, but I want to give you enough tools so that if you start up a garage band, you can go somewhere with it. Or you've got Ableton at home and you know what's going on

with it now and how to generally get it to work. There's no way I could teach it all, so I'm hoping to just give enough for them to go, OK, no, I could do this. (Frank, Participant Interview)

Russell expressed a similar idea when describing what his students plan to do with their piano skills after the class ends:

And just the number of kids who's like, you know, yeah, I'm going to keep playing, I have a keyboard at home and before this class started, I didn't know how to read sheet music at all. But we have a piano at home and now I can teach myself songs on sheet music and know what to do. (Russell, Participant Interview)

## **Theme #2: Curriculum**

### ***Self-Research/Experience***

Each participant discussed their prior experiences or interests as an influence on the curricular design of their EMCs. Russell, Taylor, and Harry described experiences that directly contributed to their ability to design instruction in their courses. Russell's experience as a performing musician and pianist contributed significantly to his course design, even though he has never received formal pedagogical training for his EMCs:

Right, no formal training for music technology, you know, again, everything was self-taught, but it was all in the context of professional experience. And I did learn a good bit from a mix engineer who assisted my band as we mixed our first album...So, I learned a lot through that engineer about producing and a lot from my bassist who went to school for music production, but I've received no formal professional development or in school training on it...The piano curriculum was really developed in a similar kind of fashion, but in addition I brought in the experience I had as a private piano teacher. So, there's a



lot of opportunities there as well for student choice and voice and I really try to structure it similarly. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Taylor took guitar as part of a music therapy class in college but describes it as “not my forte” (Taylor, Participant Interview). She received formal training to teach AP music theory, but also indicated a prior interest in the subject: “Theory is one of my favorite classes and I’ve been looking to teach that” (Taylor, Participant Interview). Harry found that his prior experiences as a performing musician and instrumentalist greatly influenced his curricular choices in his music appreciation course:

I’m actually a percussionist. But also, I’m a classically trained percussionist so I played in orchestra and timpani and all that sort of thing, so it’s all interwoven. And I also was in a rock band, you know, I also did cruise ship work and big band stuff. I mean it’s endless. And to be able to pull from all of that, my own experience and dip that into this class is like I always do with my other classes. I think it’s beneficial for the kids. (Harry, Participant Interview)

In contrast, each participant described a significant lack of experience in teaching their EMCs. Frank was tasked with designing a curriculum for both his Recording & Songwriting class and his guitar class without any prior experience in either field:

...and so, I spent that entire fall, in addition to all of the other transition things, creating curriculum for Recording & Songwriting class, having never really done any of that in my life. And so, I did that for two years without any other classes. And during the COVID lockdown of 2020, I was pulled aside and asked, “hey, how are your guitar skills?” I went, “well, there’s probably any number of people that are better at guitar than

I am in this building.” And they went “oh okay thanks for letting us know.” And a month later I had guitar on my roster for the next year. (Frank, Participant Interview)

Similarly, Taylor noted that even the few experiences she had with the subjects of her EMCs during her teacher preparation program were not sufficient for preparing her to teach the courses:

...nobody taught me about like modern day music and how to teach that to kids in a functional way. Even AP music theory like, cool that you take X amount, six semesters, eight semesters of theory. But you're learning theory. They're not teaching you how to teach theory. They're not telling you how to do that. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

### ***Curriculum Design***

Each participant designed their own curriculum for the EMCs they are responsible for. Taylor describes feeling confident in teaching her Introduction to Popular Music course because “it’s my own curriculum, so I’m not worried about it” (Taylor, Participant Interview). Most of the participants indicated that they asked colleagues who had previously taught the course to share materials to help them get started. Harry received resources from a colleague who had previously taught a music appreciation course in his building:

I got in contact, obviously, with our choir director and said, hey I know you've taught music appreciation, what sort of stuff do you have? What have you used? And so, she just sent me everything that she had. And I sort of used that for the framework to figure out how I wanted to go about it. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Harry goes on to say that he probably approached the course differently from his choir colleague since he is an instrumentalist. Harry also described developing the curriculum as the course progressed in order to get the best possible learning outcomes from his students:

And to be perfectly honest with you, first quarter, it kind of developed as it went. I had some ideas of some things I wanted to do. And some of them went better than others, and so I sort of massaged that a little bit for second quarter. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Frank had a similar experience with collecting materials from colleagues and editing them to fit his preferences when he began planning for his Survey of Rock & Pop course:

And so, we already had a Survey of Rock & Pop curriculum approved by the district, and my colleague over at our neighboring high school in the district just sent me over everything he had. I looked into it, I took it and I made it into a format that I wanted to use—more Google Slides a lot more YouTube videos, things like that. (Frank, Participant Interview)

In contrast, Russell felt that the previous teachers of his EMCs did not leave him with useful curricular structures:

So, you know so, it's not like—it's not like when I showed up, they had something that I thought would be valuable to build on. Like music technology, the guy who was teaching that left—both the teachers of both those classes kind of just left in a in a tizzy. The music tech teacher gave me like really nothing to go on. And then the teacher who had been teaching piano was the orchestra teacher and she just used this software called Piano Marvel and really taught the kids nothing. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Russell has written the curriculum he uses for both his music technology and piano courses, and he hopes to publish his work to help other educators who teach these classes.

### ***Preparation***

None of the participants received training to teach their EMCs as part of their teacher preparation programs. When asked about the biggest challenges surrounding teaching EMCs,

participants felt the lack of training and preparation they received was their biggest obstacle.

Taylor expressed disappointment in the lack of training she received in her college program:

I think it's really a problem that we don't get these trainings in college. Like I said, I took a guitar class, but it wasn't even a guitar class. It was a therapy class where I did music therapy for two days a week and then guitar for one day a week. And that's it. And I went to a music school, like, I don't think that's fair. I think that's a problem. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

Russell echoed these frustrations with a lack of preparation to teach EMCs and how it can affect student learning:

So, I think the challenge is just a pretty massive lack of support kind of on every possible level, and I think that sets up these teachers for failure a lot, unfortunately. And I think the challenge is then, teachers are left with this attitude of, oh, this is just something I have to teach so that I can get to the good stuff. Which is band, orchestra, choir or whatever their main thing is, right? And I think that's a big challenge because then the kids feel that. The kids feel that their teacher is not as enthusiastic. And even if they can't name that, they intuit it. So, I think all those are pretty significant challenges that I see. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Frank described EMCs as “an important side of music that often gets overlooked” (Frank, Participant Interview), and expressed frustration at a lack of careful planning and preparation from his colleagues, especially in the realm of assessment:

...because I hate going to like CMEA and everybody is like, oh yeah, I just teach this history of music class because it fills up my FTE and I just give everybody these multiple-choice assessments. I'm like, “argh that's why kids hate music!”

So, I really am trying to make those classes something that kids want to join... (Frank, Participant Interview)

Harry mentioned that preparation for his EMC would have been easier if he was given curriculum to work with:

...certainly, it was a challenge at first. Because let's face it, it's much easier to say, OK, here's a curriculum, teach it. To just say alright, you have to teach this course, but you have to make it up. Yeah, I spent quite a bit of time scratching my head going, how do I want to do this? (Harry, Participant Interview)

Participants shared a desire to change the teacher preparation system to include more training in EMCs. Taylor conveyed a wish to change the teacher preparation system through the student teaching process:

Like we should be student teaching with teachers that are not just teaching band and orchestra. You need podium time, yes. But that's what you've spent four years doing. You know how to hear a piece of music...Like, nobody told me this, because you're like, I'm going to be a band director or an orchestra director and we're just going to play music all the time. And it's not. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

Russell discussed his desire to someday earn a doctoral degree or become a fine arts coordinator in order to advocate for proper training and preparation for EMCs:

And that's why, again, one career path I imagine is getting the doctorate and then advocating for it to be a requirement, right? In the same way that a general music methods course would be, you know, required for every music ed student, that a secondary general music methods course would be required. And if a teacher is an instrumental secondary track teacher, then they need to take two semesters instead of just

one. Yeah, because I'm watching our teacher candidate, my band director's student teacher right now, struggle with the course load. Which is very heavily secondary general for my band director right now because of the way he structures the band program. He teaches a lot of these Emerging Music Courses and I'm watching the student teacher struggle because he just didn't feel like he had enough preparation, you know? (Russell, Participant Interview)

Taylor summed up her desire for change in teacher preparation programs with the sentiment that "I think it's really important for people to know that these exist and that 90% of the time, you're going to be teaching something like this" (Taylor, Participant Interview).

## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs, and examine the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on EMCs. Data for this study were collected via questionnaire and follow-up participant interviews. Questionnaire data was used to examine teacher and school demographics and course information, and data from follow-up interviews helped to provide situation-specific context information related to the teaching experiences of four participants. The research questions for this study were:

- What EMCs are currently being taught in Colorado secondary schools?
- What kinds of learning activities do secondary music teachers in Colorado emphasize in their EMCs?
- How have EMCs been affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic?
- What beliefs do secondary music teachers in Colorado have about music learning in the context of EMCs?

Questionnaire data provided a broad picture of the EMC offerings in Colorado secondary schools and the instructional patterns within them. Data from follow-up interviews emphasized how EMCs can positively impact and influence students and the need for teacher training in the curriculum and instruction of EMCs. The following discussion addresses patterns among offered EMCs and educator needs that emerged as important factors in the context of EMCs in Colorado secondary schools.

### **Research Question 1**

The first research question concerns descriptions of EMCs in Colorado and their relationship to the self-reported characteristics of the educators who teach them. The prevalence of each course category in addition to the prevalence EMCs overall was addressed through an analysis of the questionnaire responses.

### ***Prevalence by Course Type***

EMCs were taught by 61% of the sampled participants of Colorado secondary school music teachers. General music and guitar were the most commonly offered courses, appearing on slightly over 20% of sampled educators' teaching loads. Piano (13%), music theory (9%), and technology-based music (7%) were all reported to be taught by less than 15% of survey respondents. Courses categorized as "other" (10%) included drama, IB music, recording & songwriting, modern band, musical theatre, bucket drumming, arts event management & marketing, adapted music for special needs students, Mariachi, and music exploration.

These findings align with the variety of course prevalence presented in previously conducted studies (Abril & Gault, 2008; Colquhoun, 2019; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017) and suggest that the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado is similar to data from neighboring states and nationwide samples. Compared to the 61% of participants who reported teaching an EMC in this study, Sanderson's (2014) study indicated that 71% of surveyed Nebraska secondary schools offered an EMC, Abril & Gault's (2008) study of secondary school principals indicated that 45% of secondary schools offered an EMC, and Colquhoun's (2019) study found that just over 50% of secondary school music teachers in each of the NAfME regions reported offering a non-traditional music course. The conclusion that 61% of Colorado secondary music educators teach an EMC can be considered a contrast to Colquhoun's (2019) finding that the Southwestern



region of NAFME (which includes Colorado and six other states) offered fewer EMCs than other surveyed regions.

The top three courses offered by surveyed Colorado secondary music educators were general music (22%), guitar (21%), and piano (13%). Forty-three percent of the general music courses reported were taught by high school only teachers, followed by 24% being taught by middle school only teachers, and 19% taught by teachers who work with elementary and secondary grades (i.e., teachers in K–12 school settings and teachers who travel between schools). Forty-five percent of guitar courses reported were taught by high school only teachers, 23% were taught by combined middle and high school teachers, and 18% were taught by middle school only teachers. Sixty-three percent of piano courses reported were taught by high school only teachers, followed by 13% being taught by middle school only, combined middle and high school, and combined elementary and secondary teachers respectively.

This reveals a tendency for EMCs to be taught by teachers who only work with secondary grade levels. Previous findings and data from follow-up interviews suggest that many EMCs are created to fill an administrative need, such as filling out a music teacher's schedule at the secondary level (Haning & Tracy, 2018). Both Frank and Taylor described at least one of their EMCs being started to fill FTE requirements in their positions. Frank recalls being surprised by an additional EMC in order to increase his course load:

And when I took over, the principal wanted to make it a goal of having the band teacher be full time in the building and I had no idea what that meant until I got my roster two weeks before school started and saw a Recording & Songwriting class on there... (Frank, Participant Interview)

Music teachers who travel between schools or are responsible for more grade levels may not need EMCs to make their positions full time, which might explain why more EMCs are offered by secondary-only educators.

The top three courses found in this study (general music, guitar, and piano) are similar to other studies that found general music, music theory, and guitar to be the most commonly offered courses nationally (Abril & Gault, 2008; Colquhoun, 2019) and guitar, music theory, and general music to be among the most commonly offered courses in select states (Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). However, these findings are unique in that no other studies have found piano courses to be in the top three offered EMCs and music theory was not one of the most offered courses in the state of Colorado.

No composition courses were reported as a part of this study. This finding may be the result of music educators' reported lack of background in the field of composition and compositional pedagogy (Byo, 1999; Garrett, 2009; Sanderson, 2014; Strand, 2006; Veronee, 2017). Similar to Sanderson's findings (2014), music educators may address composition as a topic of study in other courses but may not feel any of the courses they teach fit solely into the composition category.

### ***Demographic Characteristics and Emerging Music Course Prevalence***

Results from the current study indicate that school level (i.e., high school, middle school, K–8 school, etc.) was the only characteristic to be significantly related to EMC prevalence. Other characteristics examined included years of experience, primary area of expertise, school size, and performing arts credit requirements, but none yielded frequencies beyond what would have been expected, as examined using a chi-square test of independence calculation. The data suggest that high school teachers are statistically more likely to teach an EMC than music teachers employed

at other levels from the current sample of Colorado secondary music educators. This correlation may be unique to the population studied, as Sanderson (2014) found school size significantly correlated with EMC offerings in the state of Nebraska. This may be evidence that there are no consistent predictors of EMC presence across studies or between geographic locations.

In sum, EMCs appeared in more than half (61%) of responses from Colorado secondary music educators and general music, guitar, and piano were the top three most offered course categories. School level may be a predictor of EMC prevalence amongst Colorado educators, but results from the literature suggest demographic predictors of EMC prevalence are inconsistent.

## **Research Question 2**

The second research question investigates the learning activities, enduring understandings, and standards participants report selecting and prioritizing during instruction in EMCs. These curricular components were examined in order to construct an understanding of the learning activities and priorities teachers select for students in EMCs. Quantitative data provides an overall picture for each course category and qualitative data highlights areas of concern for curriculum design and student engagement in specific contexts.

### ***Objectives and Enduring Understandings.***

Survey respondents gave examples of common learning objectives they use in each of their EMCs as open-ended responses. The most common themes from the responses were performing music ( $n=38$ ), music literacy ( $n=23$ ), and music in the context of culture, history, or popular styles ( $n=20$ ). Wiggins & McTighe (2005) find that objectives illustrate what teachers prioritize in regard to concepts students should be familiar with, what is important to know and do, and what will form the core tasks of the instruction. These patterns suggest that EMC

educators emphasize and prioritize performing music, reading music, and cultural contexts for music as important for their students in their EMC curricula.

Respondents were also asked to describe common enduring understandings for their EMCs. The most common responses fell into the categories of lifelong learning and life skills ( $n=30$ ), performing music ( $n=24$ ), and appreciation of music ( $n=24$ ). According to Wiggins & McTighe (2005), enduring understandings are central to a discipline, transferable to new situations, and reveal teachers' beliefs about what understandings are most important for students to be able to apply outside the classroom. Lifelong learning and life skills, performing music, and appreciation of music represent the core knowledge that participants believed to be central to EMCs and represent a desire for students to transfer their learning to new situations.

An emphasis on music performance can be seen between both the learning objectives and enduring understandings participants reported. Performing music was the most common theme for learning objectives and the second most common theme for enduring understandings. Previous studies that have analyzed the curricular design of EMCs such as guitar, piano, and technology-based music courses have also found that educators tend to focus on performance-based skills in their instruction (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Fesmire, 2006; Ruthmann, 2006). These same studies also find music literacy to be a central focus of these courses, which aligns with the second most common learning objective theme in this study. Kubik's (2018) case study found that two EMC educators also emphasized lifelong learning and life skills as enduring understandings in their instruction.

The commonality of music performance and music literacy as emphases in EMCs across studies could be a result of performance and traditional notation-based training that most music educators receive through their teacher preparation programs (*NASM Handbook*, 2021;

Ruthmann, 2006) or teachers' comfort with certain skills related to music learning (Ruthmann, 2006). These findings contrast recommendations from some researchers that secondary general music curricula should focus on musical skills that differ from those found in performance-based classes such as composing, arranging, improvising, critiquing, and listening (Reimer, 2004; VanWeelden & Walters, 2004).

For the interview participants, the enduring understandings of their EMCs were a key component of impacting the students in their courses. In Frank's interview, he described how his course design was based off the enduring understandings he hoped to impart on his students. He asked himself what his students would probably use after completing his guitar class and concluded that they are "probably going to go start a band or just play in [their] room. So that's what I really designed that class after." Russell also expressed a desire "to give kids a musical experience where they walk out of this semester more excited to pursue music in some way after this class." When speaking about how to connect the course content to students' interests and to their culture, Harry said he has the students ask themselves "How does this connect to me? How does this connect to what I know, and what I'm doing, and what I'm listening to?"

This focus on helping students to apply musical skills outside of the classroom and to their musical lives outside of school is similar to findings from previous studies in which researchers found that enduring understandings guide curricular decisions made by teachers (Kubik, 2018; Ruthmann, 2006; Seifried, 2006; VanWeelden & Walters, 2004). Both the interview participants and the questionnaire data point to an emphasis on music in the context of culture, history, or popular styles and lifelong learning in the enduring understandings of EMCs.

Russell also described one student who quit band but found a love for producing and creating music through the tools and skills he learned in Russell's piano course:

And so, one of those kids, the kid who dropped band, you know, he's like after this class, between the learning of piano and the way I was able to produce, like he's starting to play guitar and he's like, "I know, the kind of music I want to create because of what we did in this class. Like I want to keep making music. I want to create music and I know what that is because of the work we did." I'm like, yeah, that exceeds my expectations.

Reading that yesterday, like almost you know, brought me to tears. Like oh my god this is why I teach these classes. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Russell's experience highlights the impact an emphasis on lifelong learning in music can have on a student as they explore future careers or hobbies in music. Similarly, Taylor saw evidence of her selected enduring understandings impacting students when she described a guitar student who auditioned for the school musical's pit orchestra because "she just wanted to continue doing something musically." Enduring understandings are commonly related to application of skills outside of the classroom environment (Wiggins & McTighe, 2005), which can be seen in each of the participant interviews and in the questionnaire response data.

### ***Standards***

The majority of questionnaire participants (91%) report using the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards for Music at least some of the time in their EMCs and gave an approximate percentage of time that they spend on each of the four categories of standards (i.e., Creation of Music, Theory of Music, Expression of Music, and Aesthetic Valuation of Music). Music theory teachers reported spending the largest percentage of time on the Theory of Music standard, whereas Technology-Based Music Course teachers spent the largest percentage on the Creation of Music standard. Both guitar and piano teachers gave the greatest percentage to the Expression of Music standard and the general music teachers reported spending the most time on the

Aesthetic Valuation of Music standard. Teachers who provided information in the “other” course category did not have a clear standard used for the greatest percentage of class time. This finding is not surprising as it is logical that the most emphasized standard is related to the subject of the course (i.e., courses in music theory focus on the Theory of Music standard).

Colorado EMC educators seem to select the standard that most closely relates to the subject of their EMC rather than equally addressing each standard in their instruction. This is a common finding in studies that have analyzed the use of standards in music instruction across levels. Byo (1999) found that elementary music educators cited a lack of time and resources for addressing each of the National Music Standards at the time of the study, and that some teachers felt certain standards were beyond their comfort level. Collins (2016), on the other hand, found that the Core Arts Anchor Standards were all addressed by the majority of participants who taught non-traditional ensemble courses. Results from this current study appear to align with Byo’s (1999) finding that not all standards are addressed equally by music educators in the context of EMCs, though further inquiry is needed to understand how the use and selection of music standards compare between music courses, teaching contexts, and teacher training.

Music education philosopher, Bennett Reimer, often argued for more diverse music course offerings at the secondary level in order to allow educators and students to address musical roles outside of performance. Reimer promoted electives that focus on the “musicianship and listenership dimensions of popular musics” rather than ensembles and performance skills being the sole focus of the secondary music program (Reimer, 2004, pp. 36–37). Reimer reorganized the 1994 National Standards for Music into the roles that each standard requires (see Figure 2). The musicianship roles are those in which musical sound is created and the listenership roles are those that do not by themselves make sound but bring about the intended

musical meanings of music. Reimer conceives these roles as being interdependent: the listenership role requires the musicianship role to provide the music, and the musicianship role requires the listenership role to provide a reason for making music available. This interplay between roles, to Reimer, provides a “viable musical culture” that provides “as much diversity of involvements as there are musical opportunities” (2006, pp. 35).

## Proposed Reconstructed National Standards for Music Education

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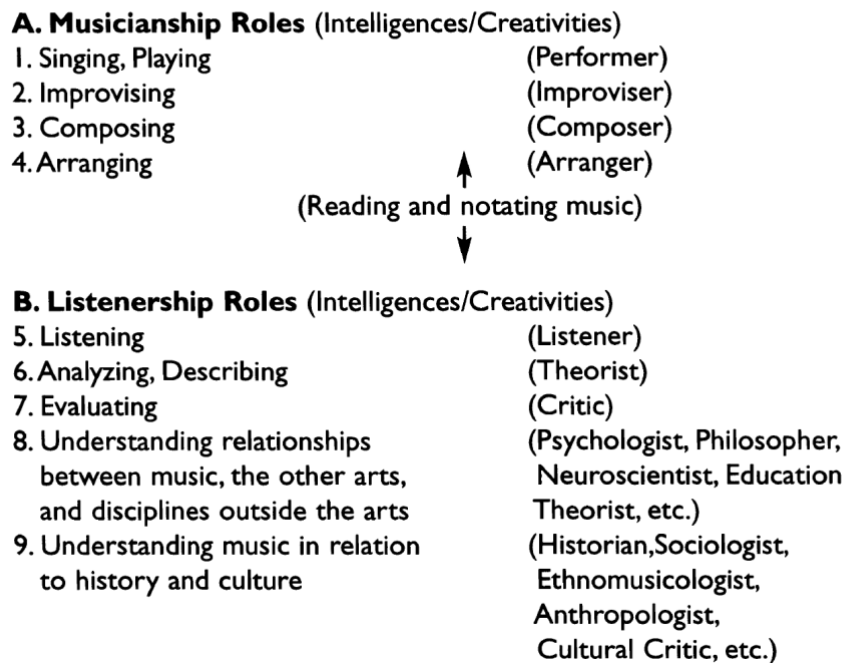


Figure 2. *Reimer’s Reconstructed National Standards for Music Education* (2006, p. 35)

Data collected from the questionnaire and follow-up interviews suggest that the EMCs in this current study encourage students to take on and explore the multiple musical intelligences that Reimer describes. Questionnaire data indicated music theory and general music courses both emphasized standards (Theory of and Aesthetic Valuation of Music) within the realm of listenership roles as described by Reimer (see Figure 2). Courses in the technology-based, guitar,



and piano courses emphasized the standards Expression and Creation of Music, which fall under the musicianship roles.

Russell found that his focus on creating music in his technology-based music course has allowed for students to take on different roles as musicians. He described one student who is a talented violinist and pianist in his orchestra class but has discovered a new musical identity through learning in his technology-based music class:

It's really fun to watch her explore this entirely different side of her musicality and her musicianship. And you know, now she's getting to marry her skills as a pianist with the creativity for the first time. And on these original songs, I'm watching her like record and compose. You know, and it's like that's a thing she's never done...she just has enough knowledge to like, to set herself free and explore, and be free and break out of the world of notation. And explore that other side of herself that she doesn't get to get in touch within our large ensemble courses as much. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Similarly, Harry has found that the knowledge and skills he covers in his music appreciation course allow his students to gain knowledge that is very different from what his band and orchestra students learn:

I feel like these kids honestly, they get done with this course, I think they know more about music than my band and orchestra kids do because we don't get anywhere near as much time to spend on history and how we got to where we are and that sort of thing. (Harry, Participant Interview)

In this study, data collected on the percentage of time EMC educators spend on each of the Colorado Academic Standards for Music and the experiences of the interview participants seem to suggest that in some EMCs, students are spending a great deal of time exploring musical

knowledge beyond performance and perhaps taking on the multiple musical roles that Reimer (2006) described.

### ***Instructional Drivers***

Instruction that is student-driven is an indicator that an educator is using pedagogical practices related to informal music learning. Informal music learning centers on student-driven instruction through students selecting their own repertoire and learning primarily through self-directed or peer-directed avenues (Green, 2002, 2006). Though informal music learning is commonly studied in the context of EMCs, the majority of participants in this study indicated that their instruction is primarily teacher-driven. However, when results were analyzed by category, the data indicated that technology-based music courses and piano courses were reported by participants to be primarily student-driven. Courses categorized as “other” were split evenly between being teacher- and student-driven.

Interview participants described both teacher- and student-driven instructional practices in their EMC classrooms. Following a more traditional and teacher-driven approach, Harry described designing his instruction using his own past experiences and resources: “It’s all based on, you know, my past experience and of course harkening back to the music history courses that I took in college.” Additionally, Frank detailed an example in which he struggled to get students to engage in student-driven discussions surrounding listening examples in his Survey of Rock & Pop course:

I can't remember the journal entry article I got this from, but it was using discussions in class to be like, well, what did you hear? What did you hear? And give the entire list on the board...But I tend to get a lot of introverts in my music classes, and they don't like to talk a lot. So that made that a bit of a challenge. (Frank, Participant Interview).

Russell specifically described the use of informal music learning practices in the instruction of his EMCs. Russell incorporates student choice in his technology-based music course through creative projects:

We use what's called Live Loops in GarageBand. And that's really fun because they get to do something creative and like we talk about arrangement right off the bat and they get to create something right away and have student choice and voice right away and that, I think, is really good because they start off excited. (Russell, Participant Interview)

Russell also allows students to choose music they would like to learn in his piano class. Students have the option to use piano videos of what he calls “Falling MIDI” as a form of graphic notation for learning their chosen music. He finds that “they can learn more challenging music sooner, and also there's a really wide selection of pop songs” to choose from for the students.

Russell’s use of student choice, graphic notation, recordings, and self-directed instruction are all principles of informal music learning outlined by Green’s (2002) work. Though the other interview participants mentioned incorporating student choice in the selection of essay topics (Frank: “We get some really good papers out of that where kids will pick like their favorite band or something like that and they'll start to dig back in history.”) and connecting the curriculum to the music students enjoy (Harry: “My goal was to have the kids have a much better understanding of the music that they listen to now, that they're paying attention to understanding how we got to where we are.”), these are not explicitly principles of informal music learning as outlined by Green (2002).

Studies have examined the use of informal music learning (i.e., student-driven learning) in the context of small ensembles (Allsup, 2003), guitar courses (Kubik, 2018; Rescsanszky, 2017), steel drum classes (Kubik, 2018), and technology-based music courses (Ruthmann, 2006).

Each study found that student-led strategies such as individual practice time, promotion of student leadership, student choice, and creative experiences were all effective instructional strategies in the context of EMCs. Findings from this study imply that Colorado music educators may need more training on how to implement informal and student-led instructional practices that differ from those found in a traditional ensemble setting if they are to be used effectively in EMC instruction (Kubik, 2018).

In sum, research question two finds instruction in EMCs is varied but often focuses on music performance and the transfer of skills to lifelong learning contexts. EMC educators engage students in various musicianship and listenership roles through the use of each of the four Colorado Academic Standards for Music, and the standard that is emphasized depends on the course subject. Teachers also use informal and formal music learning techniques, as evidenced by the presence of both teacher- and student-driven instruction, but more training may be needed for Colorado educators to implement informal and student-led instructional practices consistently and effectively.

### **Research Question 3**

The third research question examined instruction, enrollment, and availability of EMCs in relation to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Data from the questionnaire provides a broad understanding of the pandemic's effects on EMC instruction, enrollment, and availability, and follow-up interview data highlights specific instances of change from the pandemic in various learning contexts.

#### ***Instruction***

Instruction was investigated through the instructional objectives and enduring understandings of each EMC. Few participants indicated that the COVID-19 pandemic had

caused the enduring understandings ( $n=7$ , 9%) or the instructional objectives ( $n=11$ , 15%) to change in their EMCs, though some change was present. It seems that the COVID-19 pandemic had little effect on the learning activities and curricular design of EMCs during the 2021–2022 school year. Studies conducted on the instructional changes from band directors (Hash, 2021) and choir directors (Kurt, 2021) during the pandemic have found that even during fully remote instruction, music educators continued to focus on performing, listening, and music literacy and only changed the format in which this instruction was delivered and assessed.

### ***Enrollment***

Participant responses indicated that 35% educators experienced an increase in enrollment in their EMCs during the 2021–2022 school year as a result of the pandemic. Rationale for increased enrollment are beyond the scope of this study but possible reasons could include playing or singing restrictions in ensemble courses, increased availability of EMCs (see below), or interest from students in the course subjects (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020).

### ***Availability***

Twenty-four percent of participants gave responses describing EMCs that were started in order to mitigate instructional challenges as a result of the pandemic. Thirteen respondents selected the option “this course was started to mitigate the instructional challenges of the pandemic” and an additional five gave answers related to the course being created to accommodate scheduling and enrollment needs as a part of the optional open-response details with the “other” response. Previous research has shown that EMCs are generally created in order to fulfill administrative needs and it seems that this pattern may have continued through the pandemic with the population sampled (Collins, 2016; Haning & Tracy, 2018; Kubik, 2018).

Harry and Taylor described the creation of a new EMC offering being added to their course load during the pandemic. Although not every participant attributed the course creation to pandemic learning needs, Harry had direct experience with the pandemic's effects on his teaching responsibilities. The pandemic prevented Harry from being able to recruit for his sixth-grade ensemble courses. In addition to decreased enrollment from new district boundaries, he was forced to combine his sixth-grade band and orchestra classes and add a music appreciation course to his teaching load.

So that, unfortunately, we combined all 6th grade instrumental music into what I'm, uh, lovingly calling my "bandchestra." It's not a great situation, but it is what it is. And then because of that, well, you know there's an open section then. So got to put another 25 to 30 kids in seats. So, [my principal] suggested doing a music appreciation class, which made me cringe a little bit. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Since his music appreciation course is acting as a placeholder until Harry can increase enrollment in his band and orchestra classes, he hopes to not have to teach the music appreciation course in future school years.

My professional goal is to not teach this class again \*laughs\*. Honestly, I need to build up my numbers so that I have a separate class for my string players next year. I really feel like it's a disservice to them this year. As much as I try to work with them as best I can, under the circumstances, it's not good. (Harry, Participant Interview)

Contrastingly, Taylor added her Introduction to Popular Music course to meet the need for more online electives for students at her school during remote learning. She used the course to replace a non-music study hall from her teaching responsibilities and has since been able to transition the course to an in-person learning context that she hopes to continue.

The third year I actually taught a non-music class called ACE. It's a success class for incoming freshmen. And then last year we needed more online electives, and so they let me create my own class, which is my Survey of Rock/Intro to Pop, and I gave up my ACE class for that. (Taylor, Participant Interview)

Despite the disruption to learning caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, it seems to have allowed for more EMCs to become a part of music teacher course loads and encouraged more students to enroll in them. This perhaps could be related to Kaschub's (2020) assertion that the COVID-19 Pandemic has forced music educators to ask important questions, like "what are the absolute essential learnings for my music students regardless of the format in which their learning opportunities are delivered?" (p. 19). EMCs may have been a viable option for exploring music course delivery when some performance methods (such as singing, playing wind instruments, or rehearsing in large groups) became dangerous. Some courses that were started to fill the instructional needs of the pandemic, such as Harry's music appreciation course, may discontinue as music instruction returns to pre-pandemic conditions and modalities. However, other courses, such as Taylor's Introduction to Popular Music course, may continue and allow for a shift away from filling administrative needs and towards focusing on student interests and needs.

The COVID-19 pandemic appears to have increased the administrative need for EMCs in secondary schools and as a result, also increased enrollment in these courses. Whether these courses will continue beyond the instructional needs of the pandemic still needs to be explored.

#### **Research Question 4**

The fourth research question seeks to understand educator opinions and beliefs about EMCs and explores concerns surrounding students and curriculum. Questionnaire and interview

data reveal that participants believe EMCs have a positive impact on enrolled students. Follow-up interview data further illustrate participants' beliefs surrounding EMCs and the need for more teacher training and resources to improve EMC instruction.

### ***Stakeholders***

Questionnaire participants were asked to rank the positive reaction from various stakeholders to their EMCs on a Likert-type scale (1=strongly disagree, 2=somewhat disagree, 3=neither agree nor disagree, 4=somewhat agree, 5=strongly agree). The mean scores for each stakeholder population and each EMC category were above  $M=3$ , indicating that participants generally believed stakeholders either viewed their EMCs positively or were neutral on the subject. The highest mean scores across all reported EMCs came from administrators ( $M=4.16$ ) and students ( $M=4.32$ ). It is important to note that the data collected in this study came only from teachers and the information presented is only the respondents' perceptions of how colleagues, students, administrators, and parents have reacted to their EMCs. These findings align with Abril & Gault's (2008) determination that secondary principals are generally supportive of the music programs at their school. Abril & Gault (2008) conclude that understanding the perceptions of people in the school community can be a helpful strategic tool for educators looking to build awareness and support for their school music programs. Findings from this study may help EMC educators advocate for their programs beyond just administrators.

The lowest mean scores came from non-music colleagues ( $M=3.91$ ) and parents ( $M=3.78$ ). Though these scores were the lowest, they trended closer to a neutral rather than negative opinion about EMCs. Again, these findings may help educators to target advocacy efforts for their EMCs.

### ***Beliefs About Students***



Interviewees described the students who enrolled in their EMCs as unique from students that typically enroll in their ensemble courses. Frank described the students who normally enroll in his EMCs as students who are typically not involved in other arts and as “kid[s] that otherwise wouldn't have a creative outlet at school.” Both Russell and Taylor said that they enjoy the “switch of kids” (Taylor, Participant Interview) and reaching “a different side of our large ensemble kids, or an entire different part of the student body” (Russell, Participant Interview) through their EMCs. Harry expressed stark contrast between ensembles and EMCs when he described ensemble teaching as “a charmed life” where he gets “to teach kids who want to do what we're doing. And if they don't, they just move on to something else” (Harry, Participant Interview). However, he found this was not the case in his music appreciation course and that he sometimes had to spend more time and attention on students who were not interested in the course material.

The experiences of Russell, Taylor, and Harry align with what has been found in the literature about students who enroll in EMCs. Generally, EMCs are enrolled by students who are not already a part of the ensemble courses in the music department (Bula, 2011; Collins, 2016; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Dammers, 2012; Fesmire, 2006; Freedman, 2019; Veronee, 2017). Additionally, students who do not participate in school music have been found to have very different desires and interests in music course offerings than those who already participate (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020). Pendergast & Robinson's (2020) study found that students who participate in music outside of school had a stronger preference for student-driven instructional modalities, including small group learning environments and repertoire choice, when compared to school music participants. EMC educators who utilize a student-driven instructional format may find that their courses are more attractive to students who do not yet participate in school

music. Pendergast & Robinson (2020) concluded that secondary music education programs could benefit from both traditional and emerging music curricula to provide current music students with musical experiences they value (e.g., performance-based large ensembles) while also providing more opportunities for new populations of music students (Miksza, 2013; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020).

In contrast to some research that has found EMCs can increase music department enrollment, Elpus & Abril (2019) suggest that EMCs are better for diversifying the student population enrolled in music courses. Class size limits on EMCs, (e.g., a guitar course may only allow as many students as there are instruments available) may result in limited overall music department growth compared to ensemble courses that can enroll many more students at once. Instead, Elpus & Abril (2019) suggest that EMCs can diversify student enrollment by attracting students interested in exploring musical skills and instruments outside of traditional ensembles. The courses taught by Frank, Harry, Russell, and Taylor all attracted new students to their programs and have potentially allowed for some music department growth and diversity in the population that enrolls in their course offerings, as evidenced by the “different part of the student body” they each describe teaching in their EMCs (Russell, Participant Interview).

### ***Beliefs About Teacher Training and Preparation***

Interview participants had a variety of experience with the subject matter of their EMCs, from professional level experience in the field to no prior knowledge or skills about the subject. Despite these differences, each participant expressed a desire for more resources and training for teaching their EMCs.

While many of the participants were able to reach out to colleagues who had developed curriculum and materials for teaching EMCs, Russell found that he needed to write the

curriculum on his own (Russell: “It's not like when I showed up, they had something that I thought would be valuable to build on.”) and ended up using his prior experiences to write curricula for his piano and technology-based music courses. Participants also found that their curricula shifted as they taught it in order to meet the needs of the students in their courses (Harry: “And to be perfectly honest with you, first quarter, it kind of developed as it went.”) and that they needed to adapt materials to fit their instructional style (Frank: “I looked into it, I took it, and I made it into a format that I wanted to use—more Google Slides a lot more YouTube videos, things like that.”). Taylor expressed frustration at the lack of preparation she received for teaching her EMCs despite their prevalence in the field: “I think it's really important for people to know that these exist and that 90% of the time, you're going to be teaching something like this” (Taylor, Participant Interview).

Other research studies have found a lack of training to be a barrier for offering EMCs (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007) and as one of the biggest challenges in teaching EMCs (Colquhoun, 2019; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Researchers frequently recommend that preservice teacher education programs consider offering courses related to the curricular design and instruction of EMCs and that funding and resources be made available for in-service teachers to seek out and attend professional conferences and training to aid in their instruction. Russell summarized the problem when he said, “I think the challenge is just a pretty massive lack of support kind of on every possible level, and I think that sets up these teachers for failure.”

## **Summary**

Survey and interview data suggest that EMCs are offered in more than half of Colorado secondary schools and that these courses are an impactful part of student musical learning at the secondary level. Learning in EMCs are tied to the subject matter and to musical skills and

understandings that focus on the lifelong appreciation and practice of music. Data suggests these courses are becoming increasingly available due to administrative and scheduling needs that have been spurred on by the on-going COVID-19 pandemic. In order to effectively design and teach EMCs, educators desire more resources and training at both preservice and in-service levels. Questionnaire respondents provided data on a wide variety of EMC offerings and interview participants further colored these findings by specifying the experiences and needs of EMC educators.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The following theoretical implications stem from threats to validity in this study and suggested changes to the study design and sampling procedures. The researcher-designed Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Questionnaire (Appendix D) was found to be a valid and reliable measure of demographic, school, and EMC characteristics for secondary music educators in Colorado. However, inconsistencies between measures could be improved in order to clarify the data and findings. For example, Q13 of the School and Music Department Data section asked participants to select the courses they were teaching during the 2021–2022 school year from eight options: Ensemble (band, choir, orchestra, or other performing groups), Music Theory, Composition, Technology-Based Music Course, Guitar, Piano/Keyboard, General Music (including the history of rock/pop, music appreciation, world music, etc.), and Other. Participants were later asked to classify each of their EMCs into one of seven categories: music theory, composition, technology-based music, guitar, piano/keyboard, general music, and other. Responses from Q13 indicated that one participant taught a composition course, however no compositions courses were recorded in the individual EMC descriptions. This may be the result of inconsistent definitions of what courses constitute as

EMCs between the researcher and participants. Future research could explore moving the role of categorizing EMCs to the research team rather than asking participants—who may have inconsistent understandings and definitions of EMCs—to categorize their courses based on course titles and common learning activities.

This study sampled participants based on their geographic location and Colorado Music Education Association (CMEA)-designated district. While this proved to be an effective method for reaching participants from a variety of regions in the state of Colorado, no participants from the smallest school size (between one and 87 students) submitted responses. In order to improve the generalizability of the results, future researchers may consider an alternative sampling method based on school size. Researchers could also consider geographic locations designated by the Colorado Department of Education, rather than by CMEA. Adding a geography-based demographic measure to the questionnaire would also help to clarify the relationship between EMC prevalence and school classification as rural, suburban, or urban.

## **Practical Implications**

### ***For Teachers***

1. Music educators should consider the value of EMCs as a part of their music programs when deciding on course offerings. EMCs create an opportunity to expand the musical skills and roles students can explore (Reimer, 2004) and can diversify the population of students involved in the secondary music program (Elpus & Abril, 2019).
2. Current and potential EMC educators should consider student interests and needs when designing course curricula. Instructional goals and activities that are related to student backgrounds and interests result in impactful and meaningful experiences for the students (Haning & Tracy, 2018). Comments from interview participants indicated that a high

level of student engagement led to more meaningful musical experiences, discussions, and products in EMCs.

***For administrators and leaders in music teacher preparation***

1. Administrators should support music educators' pursuit of more training and resources in EMCs. Especially if EMCs are started to meet administrative needs, such as scheduling and enrollment as described by both questionnaire and interview participants, administrators should make their best effort to ensure teachers are prepared and confident to teach their EMCs. Support could come from funding to attend conferences and professional development, time off to observe other teachers, professional development credit for self-study, and funding for resources such as books, music, software, and instruments.
2. Leaders in music teacher preparation should begin offering courses for preservice music teachers in EMC subjects (such as technology-based music, guitar, and history of rock and pop) or offer secondary general music courses that assist young educators in designing curricula, collecting or creating resources, conducting self-study, and non-traditional music pedagogy such as informal music learning. Student teaching placements can also be selected so that preservice teachers gain experience in EMC classrooms with expert teachers. A lack of training is cited as one of the largest barriers to offering EMCs (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007) and challenges to educators already teaching EMCs (Colquhoun, 2019; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Interview participants frequently expressed a desire for more preparation in the instruction and design of their EMCs.
3. Preservice teachers that have a musical skillset outside of traditional ensembles should be permitted to enroll in music teacher education programs. Colleges and universities

accredited through NASM require students to have and gain traditional ensemble-based skills, leaving little room for preservice teachers with experience in other instruments or musical professions (*NASM Handbook*, 2021). Interview data indicates that EMC educators benefit from experience in the EMC subject they teach and that skills beyond those of traditional music training are becoming valuable to school music programs (Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Reimer, 2004). Administrators should also consider the benefit of hiring music educators with a wide variety of musical experiences and skills.

### **Suggestions for Further Study**

The availability of Emerging Music Courses varies between many studies conducted at both state (Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017) and national levels (Abril & Gault, 2008; Colquhoun, 2019), and between studies focused on particular course categories such as guitar (Fesmire, 2006), piano (da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; McCalla, 1989), and music technology (Dammers, 2012; Dorfman, 2008). Future research needs to clarify what factors most influence the availability of EMCs and how their prevalence may be changing over time. Research is also needed to determine whether EMCs that were started as a result of the COVID-19 Pandemic are still offered in post-pandemic learning conditions.

Individual teacher beliefs about a broad range of course categories are difficult to discern. Most studies that have analyzed teacher preference for certain EMCs focus on educators who do not currently teach such courses and ask participants to rank certain course types based on their willingness to teach them (Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014). Further study is needed to determine if teacher perception of EMCs changes after some experience in the subject matter or experience teaching them. Whether or not educators have received training and feel

prepared to teach a course would also glean more information about the role teacher preparation can play into the success of these courses in secondary schools.

The perspective of students is notably missing from this and other studies investigating EMCs. An understanding of EMC offerings and instruction is not complete without considering the opinions and experiences of the students who are enrolled in these courses. Future studies should consider examining the learning and experiences of middle and high school students in EMCs in order to create a complete picture of these courses in secondary schools.

## **Conclusion**

EMCs are one of many options for music educators looking to expand access and options for secondary students beyond traditional ensemble music courses. However, music teachers are commonly asked to teach EMCs without appropriate pedagogical or curricular training (Bauer et al., 2003; Colquhoun, 2019; da Silva Pozenatto, 2021; Dorfman, 2008; Fesmire, 2006; Garrett, 2009; Juchniewicz, 2007; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Researchers have found that the prevalence of EMCs in the United States varies by region and across time (Abril & Gault, 2008; Dammers, 2012; Fesmire, 2006; Sanderson, 2014; Veronee, 2017). Data gathered from this study suggest that EMCs are offered by more than half (61%) of Colorado secondary music teachers and that these courses are an impactful part of student musical learning at the secondary level. Learning in EMCs appears to be tied to the subject matter and to musical skills and understandings that focus on the lifelong appreciation and practice of music. Furthermore, this study finds that these courses are becoming increasingly available due to administrative and scheduling needs that have been spurred on by the COVID-19 Pandemic. EMCs represent a growing need for music educators to deliver curricula that is modern, inclusive, and focused on the musical interests of students. Music educators who are well trained and confident in their



ability to impact students through EMCs have the power to offer a broader and more comprehensive music education to a diverse population of students looking for a creative outlet and opportunity at school.

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## APPENDIX A

### ADULT PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT

#### Department of Music, Theatre, and Dance

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**Formal Study Title:** AN INVESTIGATION OF EMERGING MUSIC COURSES IN COLORADO SECONDARY SCHOOLS

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Dr. Erik Johnson, Associate Professor of Music

**CO-PRINCIPLE INVESTIGATOR:** Madeleine Cort, MME Student

#### **WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

For questions or concerns about the study, you may contact **Madeleine Cort** at **575-644-5443**.

For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints, or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted, contact the CSU Institutional Review Board at: [RICRO\\_IRB@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu); 970-491-1553.

#### **WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?**

The purpose of this research study is to explore the prevalence of non-ensemble music courses (also called Emerging Music Courses or EMCs) in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, investigate the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on EMCs in Colorado, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs (i.e., instructional practices, learning objectives, and enduring understandings).

#### **WHY AM I BEING INVITED TO TAKE PART IN THIS RESEARCH?**

You are being asked to participate in the study because you fit these criteria: currently teaching music at a secondary school in the state of Colorado.

#### **WHERE IS THE STUDY GOING TO TAKE PLACE AND HOW LONG WILL IT LAST?**

**Strand I:** The study will take place at a time and place convenient to you. The questionnaire will be distributed via email and will take approximately 15–20 minutes to complete.

**Strand II:** This portion of the study will include interviews of selected participants. The interview will take place in a private location of the participant's choosing and will last approximately one hour.

#### **WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO?**

**Strand I:** If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to do the following:

- Complete a questionnaire

**Strand II:** If you volunteer to participate in this part of the study, you will be asked to do the following:

- Complete an interview with the researcher. Questions will address your experiences and opinions teaching a non-ensemble (also known as Emerging Music Course or EMC) music course.

### **ARE THERE ANY BENEFITS FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

There may be no direct benefit to you as a participant in this study. However, we hope to learn more about Emerging Music Courses available to secondary students in the state of Colorado and the teaching practices of the educators who teach them. This information could help the researcher make recommendations to teachers and administrators about best practices in secondary music classrooms that benefit student learning.

### **WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS?**

There are no known risks included with this study. While the level of risk is minimal, you may become uncomfortable answering some questions about others' reactions to the courses you teach and the level of support you feel from your school community.

### **WILL I RECEIVE ANY COMPENSATION FOR TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY?**

You will not be compensated for participating in this research.

### **WHO WILL SEE THE INFORMATION THAT I GIVE?**

All information gathered in this study will be kept as confidential as possible. Your privacy is very important to us, and the researchers will take every measure to protect it. Your information may be given out if required by law; however, the researchers will do their best to make sure that any information that is released will not identify you. No reference will be made in written or oral materials that could link you to this study. For this study, we will assign a code to your data so that the only place your name will appear in our records is on the consent and in our data spreadsheet which links you to your code. Only the research team will have access to the link between you, your code, and your data. All records will be stored in an encrypted, cloud-based storage system at CSU for three years after completion of the study. After the storage time, the information gathered will be destroyed. We may be asked to share the research files with the sponsor or the CSU Institutional Review Board ethics committee for auditing purposes. You should know, however, that there are some circumstances in which we may have to show your information to other people. For example, the law may require us to show your information to a court *OR to tell authorities if we believe you have abused a child, or you pose a danger to yourself or someone else.*

The research team works to ensure confidentiality to the degree permitted by technology. It is possible, although unlikely, that unauthorized individuals could gain access to your responses because you are responding online. However, your participation in this online survey involves risks similar to a person's everyday use of the internet.

### **DO I HAVE TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?**

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study or in any part of this study. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice to your relations with

CSU. You are encouraged to ask questions about this study at the beginning or any time during the research study.

**Participant Consent:**

By clicking the link to the survey and selecting “YES, I voluntarily agree to participate in this research” as the answer to the first question, you acknowledge that you have read the information stated and voluntarily wish to participate in this research. This also acknowledges that you have received an electronic copy of this document containing 3 pages.



## APPENDIX B

PROTOCOLS

IRB APPROVAL NOTICE

**kuali**



**COLORADO STATE  
UNIVERSITY**

The protocol listed below has been approved by the CSU IRB Determinations Fort Collins on Wednesday, October 13th, 2021.

PI: Johnson, Erik

Submission Type and ID: Initial 2747

Title: An Investigation of Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools Approval Date:

Wednesday, October 13th, 2021

Continuing Review Date: no date provided Expiration

Date: Monday, October 12th, 2026

The CSU IRB (FWA0000647) has completed its review of protocol 2747 An Investigation of Emerging Music Courses in Colorado Secondary Schools. In accordance with federal and state requirements, and policies established by the CSU IRB, the committee has approved this protocol under Exempt review.

Any additional comments regarding this approval are included below. If you have additional questions about this, please contact RICRO IRB Staff.

### Please note:

- This protocol will need to undergo Continuing Review and approval prior to no date provided. Any additional changes to this approved protocol must be obtained prior to implementation of those changes, by submitting an amendment request to the CSU IRB for review/approval.

Good luck in your research endeavors!

Initial exempt determination has been granted October 13, 2021, to recruit adults with the approved recruitment and consent procedures. The above-referenced research activity has been reviewed and determined to meet exempt review by the Institutional Review Board under exempt category 2(ii) of the 2018 Requirements.

Risk Level:

MINIMALFunding:

NONE

## Attachments

Consent	Cort_Adult Participant Informed Consent.doc	Adult Participant Informed Consent Form
RecruitmentMaterials	Cort_Email Invitation to Participate in Questionnaire.docx	Email Invitation to Participate in Questionnaire
RecruitmentMaterials	Cort_Email Invitation to Participate in Post-Survey Interview.docx	Email Invitation to Participate in Post-Survey Interview
MethodologySection	Cort_Methodology Draft.docx	Methodology Section Draft
MethodologySection	Cort_Questionnaire and Interview Questions.docx	

## APPENDIX C

### EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

My name is Madeleine Cort, and I am a graduate music education student at Colorado State University. For my thesis, I am studying non-ensemble music courses (also called Emerging Music Courses or EMCs) in secondary schools in Colorado. The purpose of this study is to explore the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, investigate the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on EMCs in Colorado, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs. This research will help to inform the future practices of music educators who teach EMCs in secondary schools.

We would like you to take an online survey. Participation will take approximately 5–15 minutes. Your participation in this research is voluntary. If you decide to participate in the study, you may withdraw your consent and stop participation at any time without penalty.

We will be collecting personal and school demographic data such as your gender, racial or ethnic group, and the number of years you have been teaching school music, in addition to the number of students who attend your school, the courses you are teaching this school year, and your school's fine arts credit requirements. When we report and share the data with others, we will combine the data from all participants. Your data will be kept confidential; your name and data will be kept separately in an encrypted file and on a password-protected computer accessible only to the research team. While there are no direct benefits to you, we hope to gain more knowledge on the non-ensemble music courses available to secondary students in the state of Colorado and the teaching practices of the educators who teach them.

There are no known risks to participation in this study. It is not possible to identify all potential risks in research procedures, but the researchers have taken reasonable safeguards to minimize any known and potential (but unknown) risks.

To indicate your willingness to participate in this research and to continue on to the survey, click here: [http://colostate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0J52gnCpXlcGKua](http://colostate.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0J52gnCpXlcGKua)

If you have any questions about the research, please contact Madeleine Cort at [macort@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:macort@rams.colostate.edu) or my advisor Dr. Erik Johnson at [e.johnson@colostate.edu](mailto:e.johnson@colostate.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: [RICRO\\_IRB@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu); 970-491-1553.

Sincerely,  
Madeleine Cort  
Master's Student in Music Education  
Colorado State University

Dr. Erik Johnson  
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## APPENDIX D

### EMERGING MUSIC COURSES IN COLORADO SECONDARY SCHOOLS QUESTIONNAIRE

This survey investigates Emerging Music Courses in the state of Colorado.

Emerging Music Courses (EMCs) are considered secondary music courses that are less common than traditional music courses in U.S. public school music education programs but are growing in popularity and curricular definition.

Emerging Music Courses include:

- Music Theory courses
- Composition courses
- Technology-Based Music courses
- Guitar courses
- Piano courses
- General Music courses
- Other courses that are non-ensemble based

This survey should be completed by educators who teach an Emerging Music Course and those who do not.

Q1 Please select one, indicating that you have read the consent form and the above statement, and agree to participate in the research study.

- ☐ YES, I voluntarily agree to participate in this research (1)
- ☐ NO, please exit me from this survey (2)

#### Demographics

Q2 How many years have you been teaching school music?

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Q3 How many years have you been teaching at your current school (including the 2021-2022 school year)?

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Q4 What grade levels do you currently teach? (select all that apply)

- ☐ PreK
- ☐ Kindergarten
- ☐ 1<sup>st</sup> Grade
- ☐ 2<sup>nd</sup> Grade
- ☐ 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade

- ☐ 4<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 5<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 6<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 7<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 8<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 9<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 10<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 11<sup>th</sup> Grade
- ☐ 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

Q5 Briefly describe previous music teaching positions you have held (e.g., K-5 general music, 6-8 grade orchestra teacher, high school guitar teacher).

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Q6 What is your gender?

- ☐ Male (1)
- ☐ Female (2)
- ☐ Non-binary / third gender (3)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (4)

Q7 What is your race or ethnic group?

- ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander American (1)
- ☐ Black or African American (2)
- ☐ Hispanic American (3)
- ☐ Native American (4)
- ☐ White or European American (5)
- ☐ Prefer not to say (6)
- ☐ Other, please specify (7) \_\_\_\_\_

Q8 What is your highest degree earned?

- ☐ Bachelor's Degree (1)
- ☐ Master's Degree (2)
- ☐ Doctoral Degree (3)

Q9 Please check all areas with which you feel are your primary areas of specialization.

- ☐ Band (1)
- ☐ Choir (2)
- ☐ Orchestra (3)
- ☐ Elementary General (4)
- ☐ Guitar (5)
- ☐ Piano (6)

- ☐ Secondary General (7)
- ☐ Other, please specify (8) \_\_\_\_\_

#### School and Music Department Data

Q10 How would you classify your school?

- ☐ Middle School (1)
- ☐ K-8 School (2)
- ☐ High School (3)
- ☐ Other, please specify (4) \_\_\_\_\_

Q11 Approximately how many students attend your school?

- ☐ Over 2,500 (1)
- ☐ 1,500 - 2,499 (2)
- ☐ 500 - 1,499 (3)
- ☐ Less than 500 (4)

Q12 Emerging Music Courses are secondary music courses that are less common than traditional music courses in U.S. public school music education programs and include Music Theory courses, Composition courses, Technology-Based Music courses, Guitar courses, Piano courses, General Music courses and other music courses available to secondary students that are non-ensemble based

Are you teaching an Emerging Music Course during the 2021-2022 school year?

- ☐ Yes (1)
- ☐ No (2)

Q13 Which courses are you teaching during the 2021-2022 school year? (select all that apply)

- ☐ Ensemble (band, choir, orchestra, or other performing groups) (1)
- ☐ Music Theory (2)
- ☐ Composition (3)
- ☐ Technology-Based Music Course (4)
- ☐ Guitar (5)
- ☐ Piano/Keyboard (6)
- ☐ General Music (including the history of rock/pop, music appreciation, world music, etc.) (7)
- ☐ Other, please specify (8) \_\_\_\_\_

Q14 Are students required to complete a performing arts credit at your school?

- ☐ Yes (1)

- ☐ No (2)
- ☐ Other, please describe (3) \_\_\_\_\_

### Emerging Music Courses

Q15 Please answer the following questions about ONE Emerging Music Course that you are teaching during the 2021-2022 school year. There will be an opportunity to add information about additional courses at the end of this survey.

What is the name of the course?

\_\_\_\_\_

Q16 In which category would you place this course?

- ☐ Music Theory (1)
- ☐ Composition (2)
- ☐ Technology-Based Music Course (3)
- ☐ Guitar (4)
- ☐ Piano/Keyboard (5)
- ☐ General Music (including the history of rock/pop, music appreciation, world music, etc.) (6)
- ☐ Other, please specify (7) \_\_\_\_\_

Q17 Describe the schedule for this class (for example, meets 4 times a week for a total of 200 minutes a week for one semester).

\_\_\_\_\_

Q18 How did this course come into existence? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ I wanted to start something new (1)
- ☐ I needed another class to fill my schedule (2)
- ☐ I inherited the course (3)
- ☐ My administration suggested it (4)
- ☐ Other, please specify (5) \_\_\_\_\_

Q19 How long has this course been available at your school?

- ☐ 1 year or less (1)
- ☐ 2-5 years (2)
- ☐ 6-10 years (3)
- ☐ 11-20 years (4)
- ☐ 21+ years (5)

Q20 Do you use the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards for Music in your curricular design and lesson planning for this course?

- ☐ Never (1)
- ☐ Sometimes (2)
- ☐ About half the time (3)
- ☐ Most of the time (4)
- ☐ Always (5)

Q21 Approximately what percentage of time do you spend on class instruction, activities, and assessments related to each of the four strands of the 2020 Colorado Academic Standards for Music?

Expression of Music: \_\_\_\_\_ (1)

Creation of Music: \_\_\_\_\_ (2)

Theory of Music: \_\_\_\_\_ (3)

Aesthetic Valuation of Music: \_\_\_\_\_ (4)

Total: \_\_\_\_\_

Q22 What are some common learning objectives and/or goals that you have for your students in this course?

Q23 What enduring understandings do you hope for students to take away from this course?

Q24 In terms of student learning, this class is more:

- ☐ Teacher-Driven: The teacher runs most of the classes (1)
- ☐ Student-Driven: The students run most of the classes (2)

Q25 To the best of your knowledge, what percentage of students in this class are also enrolled in a performing ensemble course at your school?

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Q26 How did you acquire training for this course? (please select all that apply)

- ☐ College music education course (1)
- ☐ Conference/clinic/in-service (2)
- ☐ Self-research (3)
- ☐ Self-experience (4)
- ☐ Community Members (5)
- ☐ I have not received or sought specialized training specific to the teaching of this course. (6)
- ☐ Other, please specify (7) \_\_\_\_\_



Q27 Please select all the ways in which this course is supported by your school's administration.

- ☐ Addressing scheduling (1)
- ☐ Supporting additional training (2)
- ☐ Providing funding (3)
- ☐ Supporting curricular goals (4)
- ☐ I don't feel my school's administration supports this course (5)
- ☐ Other, please specify (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q28 I feel the response from my school's administration to this course has been positive.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q27 I feel the response from my music colleagues to this course has been positive.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q29 I feel the response from my non-music colleagues to this course has been positive.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q30 I feel the response from students to this course has been positive.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)
- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q31 I feel the response from parents to this course has been positive.

- ☐ Strongly disagree (1)
- ☐ Somewhat disagree (2)
- ☐ Neither agree nor disagree (3)
- ☐ Somewhat agree (4)

- ☐ Strongly agree (5)

Q32 How has this course been affected by the onset of the COVID-19 Pandemic in March of 2020? (please check all that apply)

- ☐ This course was started to mitigate the instructional challenges of the pandemic (1)
- ☐ Enrollment has increased (2)
- ☐ Enrollment has decreased (3)
- ☐ The enduring understandings for this course have changed (4)
- ☐ The instructional objectives have changed (5)
- ☐ Other, please describe (6) \_\_\_\_\_

Q33 Do you have an additional Emerging Music Course that you are teaching during the 2021-2022 school year to add?

- ☐ No (1)
- ☐ Yes (2)

#### Final Question

Q34 If you are willing to be contacted for a follow-up interview regarding Emerging Music Courses, please provide your email address below. Your answers to this survey will remain anonymous.

\_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for participating in this research!

If you have any questions about this project at any time, you can contact the Principal Investigator at: [macort@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:macort@rams.colostate.edu) or [e.johnson@colostate.edu](mailto:e.johnson@colostate.edu). If you have any questions about your rights as a volunteer in this research, contact the CSU IRB at: [RICRO\\_IRB@mail.colostate.edu](mailto:RICRO_IRB@mail.colostate.edu); 970-491-1553.

## APPENDIX E

### EMAIL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN POST-SURVEY INTERVIEWS

Dear Participant,

My name is Madeleine Cort, and I am a graduate music education student at Colorado State University. For my thesis, I am studying non-ensemble music courses (also called Emerging Music Courses or EMCs) in secondary schools in Colorado. The purpose of this study is to explore the prevalence of EMCs in Colorado's secondary public schools, examine the learning activities currently used in EMCs, investigate the COVID-19 pandemic's impact on EMCs in Colorado, and explore the beliefs teachers have about music learning in the context of EMCs. This research will help to inform the future practices of music educators who teach EMCs in secondary schools.

You are being invited to participate in the next portion of this study. If you volunteer to participate, we will coordinate a time and place at your convenience where I will conduct an interview with you. Interview questions will pertain to your perceptions and experiences teaching an Emerging Music Course.

Your participation in the study is strictly voluntary and any information gathered will be kept anonymous and confidential. If you have any questions about the study, feel free to contact me at [macort@rams.colostate.edu](mailto:macort@rams.colostate.edu) or contact my advisor, Dr. Erik Johnson at [e.johnson@colostate.edu](mailto:e.johnson@colostate.edu).

Please respond to this email if you are interested in participating. I look forward to hearing from you and learning more about your experience!

Thank you for taking the time to consider participating in this study.

Sincerely,

Madeleine Cort  
Master's Student in Music Education  
Colorado State University

Dr. Erik Johnson  
Associate Professor of Music Education  
Colorado State University

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

**Emerging Music Courses**

- 1) Tell me a little bit about the EMCs that are a part of your teaching load this school year.
- 2) What is your story on how you came to teach an Emerging Music Course?
- 3) What training have you received or sought out for teaching this course (these courses)?
- 4) Has teaching an Emerging Music Course met your expectations? How so?
- 5) What role do Emerging Music Courses play in your professional goals? The goals of your music department?
- 6) What do you think are some of the benefits and challenges of including Emerging Music Courses in a secondary music program?
- 7) Do you feel that the EMCs you teach are meaningful and/or impactful to the students that take them?
- 8) Are there any other thoughts you would like to share about Emerging Music Courses and your experiences with them or beliefs about them?

## APPENDIX G

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS: RUSSELL

**MC:** And I have an hour allotted for us, but it will probably take less time than that. I just wanted to give us some more time than required. OK great is it OK If I just jump in with some questions for you?

**R:** Please do. Go for it, yep.

**MC:** So, uhm, you completed my survey, so you know that I'm studying emerging music courses, which are essentially the non-ensemble courses that we offer to secondary students. You might hear me call them EMCs for short throughout this interview, so can you just start by telling me a little bit about the emerging music courses that are part of your teaching load this year?

**R:** Yeah, absolutely so this year, uh I teach music technology and then I teach piano. So, music technology is in our computer lab. It's mostly a GarageBand-based course. I wrote the curriculum for it. And if you have some follow up on that, I'll just kind of give you a quick overview and then if you have further questions about it, of course I'm happy to go into depth. But yeah, so that's music technology and I can talk about the curriculum a lot since I wrote it. And then beginning piano...It's technically called beginning piano, but the way I have it set up students can repeat the course if they like. And they can kind of do some different things with it over multiple semesters if they, if they want to take it more than once. And then I also, with that course, wrote the curriculum for that. Still developing it—that one I feel like is a little more of a work in progress. So that's what I'm teaching this year as far as those not ensemble emerging music courses. And then for previous years, I've also taught Guitar I and Guitar II, so those are options at our school. And we do have History of Rock and Roll and Music Around the World at our at our school as well. I don't teach those, but those courses are offered. So that kind of, I think, captures not only just what I teach, but everything at [name of school].

**MC:** OK, great, perfect. Thank you so much for that. Well since you were talking about the curriculum for those classes, why don't we go ahead and jump into that just a little bit. Can you tell me more about the process you went through designing the curriculum for both of those classes?

**R:** Yeah, absolutely so uh these two you know, I feel, particularly passionate about because, uh, I kind of came into music education, through a little bit of a different route than most folks. I was a performance major in my undergrad—I was a piano performance major with a jazz studies emphasis. And then following college I did about five years touring with my band. I wrote most of that music and composed it, produced it electronically, I toured and gigged with an Ableton Live set up a live rig that involved Ableton Live, which is a pretty industry standard piece of music software for live performance. Uhm, and I learned a lot—you know one big disappointment I had with my undergraduate education, actually, you know being a jazz studies emphasis, was that there was really no music technology or digital composition like class. You know, my only composition arranging class was pretty traditional, like big band jazz stuff.

Because we had a great professor who was an arranger for [inaudible]. So, I was able to, you know, self-teach everything related to music technology. I produced a ton of music and really fell in love with that whole thing. I fell in love with creating music electronically, from the compositional standpoint but also from the standpoint of the technical side like mixing and audio engineering. I just like really came to love that work. And then—yeah, I got more and more into it. I started to do that professionally for different artists and started to get you know, paid to do mixing for other people. As well as—sorry it's really windy. Just get into my car here. I continue to produce my own solo music. Uhm and yeah, so that's kind of like my background and I'm just going to pause for a moment while I get my car over here.

**MC:** No worries, no worries.

**R:** Thanks. Super windy. There we go. Should be able to hear me I think through my blue tooth. Can you hear me?

**MC:** Oh yeah, I can hear you fine.

**R:** Beautiful, OK, great so that was my professional background and I just bring that up because I think it's helpful to understand kind of like some of the life real world professional level experience that went into that curriculum design. And when I first got my position at [school], it was really like a pretty...you know, the orchestra program needed a lot of rebuilding, so it was kind of an amalgamation of two people's jobs who had left, and music technology was included in that, and I was, you know, I jumped at that chance to create something. So, I knew that we had a Mac lab and that all my students in the district have one-to-one tech and once they get to secondary, so they all have an iPad. So, I knew GarageBand was going to be a really good choice for that curriculum just because I knew GarageBand. I had created music with it, I've been producing with it when I was in college. That's what I started on before I got to Ableton and I knew that with the Mac lab that would, that would be a good choice, and I was pretty amazed because it had been about a decade since I had seriously used GarageBand. You know, I was really blown away by what Apple had done with it since then.

So yeah, the curriculum I ended up building, and I just kind of broke it down into these like big concepts that start really technical. More technical in terms of like mixing, you know, technique things like how do we—and I make it much simpler because it really is an introductory level course and I try to like incorporate much higher-level thinking. But things like you know what is gain structure and how does that operate. We don't talk about it quite in those technical terms, but we talk about the way to balance volume so they can get a good well-crafted mix. We talk about panning and EQ and those are like the big tools I talk about with mixing. We talk about audio effects and then we have a recording unit where we actually get to use microphones, you know, audio interfaces, and professional level studio quality microphones. I've kind of been building a mic locker at school since I showed up and using just budget money from here and there to buy some nice mics. And they actually get that experience of recording both using their iPad mic, they'd have available after the class, and then also using some you know high quality microphones. And then from the recording unit like that's kind of where the technique ends and then we jumped into the creativity and we do a remixing unit where the kids get, you know, to choose from remix competitions that are published online, they get to choose the song they want

to remix, and we talk about some of the kind of basic remixing techniques. And then the class ends with just really creating their own original music using GarageBand, and it's pretty much experiential learning rather than super—you know, I don't—I talk about things like song form and stuff like that, but I really let them just like learn by playing and experimenting and trying to find their artistic voice. Then we talk about aesthetic and genre and vibe and things like that to help guide them.

So yeah, when I when I built the curriculum, I really thought about OK, what would I have loved to have known leaving high school. As I started to produce music and I got into college and was you know, a jazz—like I was, you know a skilled pianist, but had never really received any training in this digital production thing. And I thought about, what would I have wanted to know as I left high school if I wanted to have the skills I needed to get started as a producer. And that's kind of what I think is like I hope that the kids leave the class with all the skills they need to produce music at a basic level and make it sound good. And also, be happy with the final product. And yeah. That's kind of—and I wanted to structure it—you know the development, the thought process in the sequencing of the curriculum was if I start with technique, you know, it'll be a little bit of a tough first like month, month and a half of the semester—and it is just a semester long course by the way.

**MC:** OK.

**R:** Yeah, just the semester long, you know the first month and a half will be a little difficult. But you know because it'll just—I'll have to like win them. But then once they have that technique, we can dive into the artistry, and they'll end on a more fun, creative note and they'll be left with that experience. And so, I think that's proven to be pretty effective. Um, what I did through COVID and especially this year as I got back into the classroom is I now start them actually on the iPad before we start using computers. And we use what's called Live Loops in GarageBand. And that's really fun because they get to do something creative and like we talk about arrangement right off the bat and they get to like create something right away and have student choice and voice like right away and that, I think, is really good because they start off excited. And then I'm like OK, now we got to talk about mixing and that's like a little bit of a slog and I get better at it every semester and my materials get more refined every semester, you know. And then we kind of circle back into the artistry and the creativity towards the end, so. Kind of a little bit of a spiral built in there. Before it's just a way to engage them so that they don't just like glaze over right away. Yeah, does that make—I don't know any other questions about the kind of curriculum development or what that looks like, etc.

**MC:** Oh no, that's perfect. That makes a lot of sense, and it sounds like your curriculum development comes from mostly like your own personal and professional experiences, like outside of teaching.

**R:** Yes, exactly, and that's why I feel—you know it's an area in teaching where I feel pretty secure just because, yeah, I mean I have, you know, I could go get the CDE certification, it's not on my license right now, you know but the [inaudible] you know, like certification. That I could go get that from the Department of Education tomorrow, I just haven't done it yet, you know. But I have the hours, certainly, I need for that, so I feel pretty good about it. And it's been a lot of fun

to write. It's the kind of thing that I do hope someday to publish. Just because you know, it's one of those things that not a lot of traditional music education pathway people necessarily have as much experience in. And I'd like to think that you know, melding my experience as a teacher and teaching the course plus my real-world professional experience might yield something that would be really useful as a set of resources for teachers out there.

**MC:** Oh, definitely, and would you say it's probably the same for your piano curriculum since you studied piano during your degrees?

**R:** Yep, very similar and I really try to bring so...kind of the way it worked with my path into music ed was that I did the touring with my band and because, you know that's very hard to monetize, I ended up starting to teach private piano lessons back in [city], where I grew up and lived after college and I went to college there too. And yeah, that like experience teaching private piano is actually what got me really inspired and enthusiastic about becoming a classroom teacher. You know it was, for me, the transition from performance to education was not one of like, you know, oh performance didn't work out, now I'm a teacher. It was like, no, I actually preferred teaching. I found I—it was shocking—I was like totally shocked because I was like, I'm going to tour until the day I die and I'm going to, you know be a performer only till the day I die, and I was working a day job and my mom was like why are you doing that? Like go teach piano. I'm like, I don't know. And I started teaching piano and I just was shocked that I loved it. And I loved working with kids, and I really loved just inspiring them and helping them along on their musical growth and journey. And as I fell out of love with touring and that really wasn't working the way I hoped it would—it wasn't just—wasn't the experience I hoped it would be. I wasn't loving it the way I thought I would. Just education kept calling me and that's kind of how I ended up there.

So yeah, the piano curriculum was really developed in a similar kind of fashion, but in addition I brought in the experience I had as a private piano teacher. I really, try to center that—so there's a lot of opportunities there as well for student choice and voice and I really try to structure it similarly where the beginning of the class is a lot of like from the front teaching where we're just talking about some music, you know, some basic concepts. And I do want to incorporate more things like, Nearpod is a thing that a lot of fellow educators talk about that I don't use enough. But I've heard great things about, and I do want to do—like some of it is, I think, just has to be lectured, you know? When you're talking about like rhythmic values, like I involve them, I engage them, of course, but like it's hard. It's just one of those things where I'm mixing up kind of like student driven learning where they're guiding themselves through like a slideshow and answering some questions and doing a quiz afterwards with a knowledge check and then some of this more lecture based but the first unit is really that. And then, you know, once they have enough skills to start reading sheet music, then it's a lot more independent work and I do a ton of independent check-ins with the kids, so. Like I'm just—and because we have a lab, it's the same lab that music technology is in, so they're on the computer with a 61 key keyboard and GarageBand and headphones, so it's very easy for me to like just go over to a kid, be like, OK, how's this going? Let's talk about it. And do like pseudo private instruction with them within the classroom setting. And I love that. That's worked well.



We also do in class recitals, so you know we have the units that are structured curriculum that I'm guiding. And the students have an opportunity to kind of choose the level they want because I feel that, you know, some of them come in as kids in orchestra, band, or choir so they know how to read music, they know how to do those things. It's just a matter of translating it on to piano. Some of them are in high school and they're a junior and they haven't taken a music class in school, since elementary school, right? So, there's a huge wide range of kids. And it's not like we offer multiple levels of the course at this juncture, so I can't really like differentiate to be like OK, you can test into advanced piano, it's not like that. So, I have different levels in each unit of the sheet music for the assessment, so each unit has sheet music for assessment that they record in GarageBand, and I grade their recording. And they get the opportunity to choose the level that they feel is appropriate for them, and if I feel like they're way off base I'll talk to them about that. So that's like all sheet music driven. But then, I'm not sure if you're familiar with this, like, full way of piano learning that's emerged where it's kind of like a piano roll on a piece of music software turned upside down, and the notes like fall from the top of the screen. Have you ever seen a video like that?

**MC:** Oh yeah, I've seen those kinds of things on YouTube and some of my students in my piano class would show me that too.

**R:** Yes, so I let them, for their in-class recital, they choose a song that they want to present to the class. And you know, they get some time in class to work on that. I kind of structure it where, OK, now you're working on stuff for your unit assessment. OK, now you're working on the recital song, and so for the recital song I allow them to choose, like I call it, "Falling MIDI" is what I call it for lack of a better, more kind of graphic notation system. And so, they're welcome to learn that way, you know, and a lot of them elect to do that because they can learn faster than they would through sheet music. They can learn more challenging music sooner, and also there's a really wide selection of pop songs. And it's hilarious this semester, it's been a ton of anime music like kids have just been—have been like learning anime songs. It's hilarious. I love it. I mean, I think it's great. And so that's one way that I really try to empower them and bring in some opportunities for student choice. And then the recital gives them an experience of performing in front of people even though it's not a performance class. And, you know, I will try to tie that into life skills and I'm like, y'all, you know, I know that a lot of you are never going to perform on piano again after this semester-long class is over. But you are going to have to go in that job interview and you're going to have to go into, you know, some kind of public speaking potentially, and you know, you might lead a team, you might become a manager, so performing is about way more than just like music, you know. And I think they kind of connect with that and you know we're at the end of the semester here, so they're starting to do their final reflection. We just had our last in class recital yesterday, and with those I ask them to self-evaluate and evaluate a peer. And the peer never sees the evaluation and they—have them rate on like musicality to whatever extent it's possible on the, you know, semi-weighted keyboards but we talk a little bit about it and notes and rhythms and things like that. And I asked them, you know, what did you think about the recital experience? Which was a question I did not ask the other year I taught it pre-COVID. And I've been really happy with the number of kids who have said I actually love this. I love the in-class recital thing. You know, it's been really great, and I think it's really well structured and that was kind of a very pleasant surprise, so that was an idea I got from this guy—

oh, I don't remember his name. He did this classroom guitar in the biggest public school district in Nevada. The one that's around Las Vegas.

**MC:** Oh, OK.

**R:** Bill...Bill something? I signed up for his newsletter. His like, teaching guitar newsletter and I got his book when I had to teach guitar because I knew basically nothing about guitar and um. Yeah, and that was an idea he suggested with in-class recitals, and I found it, honestly, it turns to be shockingly like a good positive experience even when kids get nervous like, you know, I'm super supportive. I don't grade their performance. It's not like getting a grade on how well they perform. It's just about the experience and then I grade their reflection. You know, and the quality of their reflection based on the performance, so.

**MC:** Sure, sure, that makes a lot of sense. So, I think you kind of already answered this question, but I'll just ask it in case you have anything to add. What training have you received or sought out for teaching these courses.

**R:** Yeah, totally so. Right, no formal training for music technology, you know, again, everything was self-taught, but it was all in the context of professional experience. And I did learn a good bit from a mix engineer who assisted my band as we mixed our first album, like our first real studio album. because we did this really dense, like almost orchestral-scale music. Even though it's electronic, you know, I always played in orchestra, that's why I teach orchestra. So, the way I composed and produced music was kind of orchestral in nature—really, really dense, you know, arrangements. So, I learned a lot through that engineer about producing and a lot for my bassist who went to school for music production, but I've received no formal professional development or in school training on it. Piano, I think, you know, it's just the years and years of formal piano training I received both on jazz and classical music and also, you know, my degree is in performance. So, I think that was pretty self-explained. And then guitar. Yeah, I mean because I wasn't—well and many music education degree plans don't even include a secondary general methods class to begin with. But so even if I had done the music ed major, I don't think I would have gotten much training. But guitar was a funny one for me to teach because, you know, those—like I'm a couple classes in front of the kids basically, ahead of the kids. That was definitely the situation with guitar. I think it worked because piano and guitar are instruments that have a lot of cross pollination of knowledge. So, I think some of the formal training in piano worked to teach guitar. But that was one where I felt a little out of my depth.

And then the only other one that I didn't mention was the kind of modern band type class. Which was going to be a performing class and I started it the first COVID semester, you know, March 2020, like spring Semester 2020 is when it began. And then I tried to see them through COVID and that was kind of a wreck. And that one, you know, the formal training was going to come from—well the training you know was going to come from my experience playing in a band, right. And I played in wedding bands, and I've played a ton of pop covers, and played in pop cover bands too in addition to the original music. So that was that one so. Yeah, I mean it's been mostly life experience and then my degree—my masters was in music ed through [university]. My undergrad, like I said, was piano performance so. Yeah, I hope that kind of adds—that answers what you need for that question.

**MC:** Yeah, that's perfect. So, my next question for you is, has teaching these courses met your expectations and if you could elaborate on how so.

**R:** What a great question. Yeah, met expectations...I would say...what has been...This is just a thing about high schoolers in you know the late 2010s/early 2020s in general, especially through COVID, I mean, even within my orchestras, I think I've been a little bit shocked by sometimes a lack of motivation. Like—and I'm not even talking about motivation to practice, I'm just talking like motivation to just play in class. And that's not universal, but I've been pretty amazed at the way some students are just not—they are just not, you know...I mean part of the reason I wanted to teach orchestra, right, was my own experience in orchestra was like, I love this place, I love this community, and everyone was pretty enthusiastic. And I figured getting into teaching music, it being an elective, right, that most of my students would be pretty enthusiastic. And I found that the number of students who are just not engaged on an even basic level, and that includes orchestra, and I don't know if that's just my community. I don't know if that's just high schoolers in general right now. I think it's a little bit of both. I think it's a little bit of—and it's funny because I love technology, but I think social media—you know I'm one of the early elder Millennial fogies, who's like, so yeah, I don't know it's good for us. But you know, I think there's a lot of factors. But I guess the thing that maybe hasn't met my expectations is just the amount—the heavy lift I've had to do at times to just get kids to do stuff. Again, not homework, I really make a point to not give homework. I make a point to try to give kids sufficient class time and even be very flexible with my curriculum to where some semesters we get through everything I want to do, and some semesters we don't because the group just needs more time for the unit. So, I'm flexible. But even still sometimes just getting kids to like put the proverbial pen to paper, you know, put the fingers to the keyboard or the clicks on the mouse to like do things. Sometimes that's been a thing that has not met expectations, but. That's been a broader thing. I would say though otherwise I've been pretty happy, you know, and as I've become a better teacher, right? Like I'm in year 4 now, so as I become a better teacher for sure, right, over these first three—full three years and now three and a half, uhm, I would say that my expectations have been continued, you know, what I expect continues to be met at a higher level as my pedagogy improves. Because there isn't a curriculum in my district for this stuff. There's no curricular maps. There's no, you know, there's no really anything. And with um—these are anonymous, right? \*laughs\*

**MC:** Oh yes. Yes, everything is completely anonymous, and I'll change your name and the name of your school. Everything, yeah.

**R:** Awesome. Yeah. With all due respect to my colleagues, you know, like I think I have a great, you know, and I have much to learn from them in the ensemble world, but I have a great deal more knowledge than I think they do in, you know, the world of music technology and piano just because of my life experience and what I've studied and what I've done. So, you know so, it's not like—it's not like when I showed up, they had something that I thought would be valuable to build on. Like music technology, the guy who was teaching that left—both the teachers of both those classes kind of just left in a in a tizzy. Like um, you know the music tech professor or teacher—excuse me not professor—teacher gave me like really nothing to go on. And then the teacher who had been teaching piano was the orchestra teacher and she just used this software called Piano Marvel and really taught the kids nothing. Like she's just like sat there and let the

software teach them hypothetically, and I'm—that's not how I roll. So yeah, so I would say that as I've developed curricula, as my pedagogy has improved, my expectations continue to be met. And sometimes even surpassed. I've got a kid in music technology he's on his third go around in this class, which is awesome. He just keeps taking it. Yeah, it's sweet and I just keep adapting things for him and letting him kind of have more and more independent time where it's almost like he's doing an independent study in the course, but he keeps repeating the unit projects because I think there's value in doing another remix and creating new original songs. And like his remix, this last unit where we did the remixes, I liked his song better than the original. And I played it for my drummer because he came and stayed with me for all of November and we did some recording together, he lives in [city] still. And my drummer too was like, I like his remix better than the original, you know?

**MC:** That's so cool.

**R:** Yeah, so that's awesome. And then I have these like these special moments where, you know, I've got a girl who shows up 30 minutes late, chronically late, every morning because it's first thing in the morning music technology. Shows up chronically late, right? You know, and like it's been really hard to engage her, but for whatever reason, the remix unit really clicked with her. And she was like, mister, like can you listen to this? And I'm like, yeah, of course, like. And she's, you know—she seemed really nervous about it, and it was before she turned it in, she wanted some guidance, which I encourage them to like seek my feedback before, obviously, they're done. And I was like [student name] this is phenomenal. Like this is really good. She's like, really!? I'm like, yeah! Like, you hit it out of the park, this is really good. And then same thing with her original songs like, you know, that's how we end the semester is to create two original songs in GarageBand and Apple Loops makes that really easy, even if they have no knowledge about how to like, play on a piano or, you know, make a beat. And like, her original songs are great. So, both for kids who—and then I've got another kid, you know, in music tech, who's—you know, she's—all state—made All State Choir, All State Orchestra already this year, she auditioned for all state band on piano, she is, you know my concertmaster, in my auditioned orchestrated, even though she's better at piano than violin. You know she's just one of those kids who is just a freak, you know, in our large ensemble courses. But she's in music tech this semester, she's a senior. And it's really fun to watch her explore this entirely different side of her musicality and her musicianship. And you know, now she's getting to marry her skills as a pianist with the creativity for the first time. And on these original songs, I'm watching her like record and compose. You know, and it's like that's a thing she's never done. And she's improvising, not the things she doesn't do. And even though we haven't gotten to ever like have a piano lesson together about jazz and how to improvise, you know she just has enough knowledge to like, to set herself free and explore, and be free and break out of the world of notation. And explore that other side of herself that she doesn't get to get in touch within our large ensemble courses as much.

So, I would say music tech has met and at times exceeded my expectations. And then piano, similar experience. Same thing like I said already, right, with the like the recitals. I was blown away by the number of kids who are like I loved the recitals, you know. And just the number of kids who's like, you know, yeah, I'm going to keep playing, I have a keyboard at home, and you know before this class started, I didn't know how to read sheet music at all. But we have a piano

at home and now I can teach myself songs on sheet music, you know, and know what to do. So, I would say like, those special moments, you know, where we get to access with either a different side of our large ensemble kids, or an entire different part of the student body. You know, I think for me, right, if we really want to live up to our credo of music for all, right—that's like our, been our slogan in some way or another in music education for the last 100 plus years we've been talking about this concept of music for all. And you know, to me these—I love emerging music classes, I really like that, you know, that language you're using. And I think that those are big key, right? So, in that sense, my expectation was I guess, going in my expectation in these classes is I'm going to give kids a musical experience where they walk out of this semester more excited to pursue music in some way after this class, you know. And I think that generally most of them seem excited after. Not everyone you know, not—you and I know it's never going to be everyone but most of them do genuinely seem excited to go forward and keep going in some way, shape or form. And yeah, I've got a kid in music tech, also who like, he was in band, and he dropped band. He was a tenor saxophonist. But like, or excuse me, he's in piano, but he's started producing beats. Because I let them—some of them really wanted to produce songs in piano and so I let them do that for the recital too this year. That was like a huge thing, I just kind of like felt it was intuitive. It was like I had a kid, who just—he wants to be a music producer and then you know, he was like, can I show the class my music that I'm producing instead of playing something for the recital? I'm like, yeah absolutely, why not? And then like two more kids started to get excited about making beats. And then another kid. And I'm like, yeah, let's do it. And so, one of those kids, the kid who dropped band, you know, he's like after this class, between the learning of piano and the way I was able to produce, like he's starting to play guitar and he's like, I know, the kind of music I want to create because of what we did in this class. Like I want to keep making music. I want to create music and I know what that is because of the work we did. I'm like, yeah, that exceeds my—like reading that yesterday, like almost you know, brought me to tears. Like oh my god this is why, yeah this is why I teach these classes. It's because you know for me, I almost quit music because, you know, I had a really intense classical teacher in middle school on piano. I had only done classical lessons, you know, and I loved playing piano, but she wanted me to practice like three hours a day. She wanted to put me on that like concert pianist track, and I like that was not for me at twelve years old. So, I almost quit. And I did stop taking lessons for a while. And it was Blues—I started taking with the [city] like kind of local Blues legend and improvising was like, oh my God, I love this. And then my mentor, who changed my life, this guy [name], you know, in [city], who's now the head of school at [arts high school], which is big private music, you know, private performing arts school in [city]. Uhm, you know he just like made me fall in love with music again. So, my hope is that maybe, just maybe I get even a few kids who get that experience. Then more and more as the curriculum gets refined it seems like kids are starting to have that click, which is awesome, so.

**MC:** That's so great. I just love hearing those stories about your students. That's the best part.

**R:** Yeah, thank you. Yeah exactly. Yeah, that's like the grist for the mill right. It keeps you going, when things get hard, yeah.

**MC:** Oh definitely, all the time. So, my next question for you is: What role do these emerging music courses play in your professional goals, and also in the goals of your music department?

**R:** Yeah, awesome love that. Yeah, my professional goals, you know long term, uh, yeah, I love teaching, I have a lot of different directions I think I may go. I may go the doctorate in music education route. And if so, I really am a firm believer like—[university] just added—one of my mentors teaches it, you know, they just added a secondary general methods course, which I think is fantastic.

**MC:** That's so great.

**R:** It's just a semester, it's the only one semester, it should be a year, but it's really great that they finally looked up and realized, yeah, you know, our teachers are going out into the field, you know, and they're becoming in service teachers, and they have no preparation for what's being asked of them. And you know, I think I have this—my first mentor teacher—my first mentee teacher. So, I became a mentor teacher because someone left partway through the year, and so there's a new teacher in our district and they really needed a mentor. And so, I agreed to do that, and I'm really excited about that. And I'm really excited that, you know, as a mentor teacher I as my mentee—as I continue to do that work is, you know, I continue—however long I continue in my current position in our district, then I have more experience to share with them, right, as they're teaching similar classes in their new position. Uh, so I'm excited about that.

You know, if I do go the Doctorate route and I try to pursue a career as a professor, you know, in music education, then I think that that would be a big thing I would advocate for. That you know, more colleges incorporate a secondary general methods course and that I could help guide that, you know, and teach that course. So, from that perspective, I think it's really good experience to develop. I, you know, as I go forward or potentially interested in, you know if a Fine Arts coordinator position opens up in the neighboring district, maybe, you know or curriculum—I also, I'm in love with curriculum design. Maybe that probably came across at this point so. I also think about pursuing a doctorate in like curriculum design, or doctorate in music education, but for the purpose of designing curriculum, you know, even private sector potentially um, or in conjunction with, you know public education and public school teachers. And so, I think that the more I teach these courses, the more that potential career path is illuminated. Like I said, you know I'm interested in publishing these curricula, so teaching them kind of furthers that professional goal. And from a point of view of Fine Arts coordinating or curriculum coordinating for a district, I think that doing more than just teaching a large ensemble makes you a more attractive candidate, and I think I would have more to offer in that position if I ever got that opportunity because there would be more to share with those teachers in the district and more to advocate for. And in general, like I talked about, you know, my personal philosophy on the future of music education. You know, the one thing I didn't say is that I believe there will always be a place for large ensemble music ed. But I think that large ensembles need to adapt to the times and we're not very flexible as a profession. Even though since Tanglewood in 1967 I think we've been talking about being nimble and responsive, I don't think we do a great job of it always. In a broad sense, in band, orchestra and choir, and I think part of being nimble is like OK as kids maybe are less interested—like I had a kid who dropped orchestra going into high school because he's like, I just am not interested. But that same kid is in my music tech class and he's blossoming, you know? And so, who am I to say that it's wrong of him to change directions as he becomes a high schooler? Or who am I to say that it's wrong for him to do three years of orchestra, decide he doesn't want to continue to pursue that, but would rather pursue music

technology because he's doing really cool things and he's passionate. And so, um, so I'm a big advocate for these courses in general. And I think teaching them helps me become a better advocate.

As far as the goals in our music department, I feel lucky to be in a department with people who are on the same page about these things. You know, there's not anyone in our department who's like these courses are stupid and shouldn't be taught, you know. Because I just, I think those kinds of people exist in our profession and I think that there are people who are very traditionalist. And that's, again no disrespect intended to those folks, but who believe that you know music literacy begins and ends—I was at a, uh, a roundtable at CMEA a couple years ago in a session where someone said music literacy begins and ends with being able to translate notated music onto an instrument. And I just personally, I just think that is the farthest thing from the truth. I think music literacy is, you know, part of literacy is being able to write. You know we wouldn't call someone literate in the English language if they couldn't write something original in that language. If they couldn't, you know, generate original thought. And so, for me, music literacy goes way beyond, um, way beyond being able to just translate something you read onto the page. So uhm, yeah. So, I think I'm fortunate that my department really also would like to see every single student at my high school take at least one class. One music class over time. So, I think we all see these courses like—and we're doing nothing but expanding our offerings. We're um, you know, like we also are starting to offer a unified modern band class. My band director teaches that. I think that's awesome. You know, it's kids who are—I don't know if you're familiar with the unified model. It started kind of in sports, where you know, typically functioning students are playing sports alongside students with special needs.

**MC:** Oh, I see, yeah.

**R:** Uh, it's awesome. Yeah, so that's why it's unified is because it's general and special ed students, you know combined and so. You know he's teaching that, but with modern band, so it's, you know, they're doing covers and there's kids with, you know, really heavily adapted and differentiated, you know, tools. But learning a little about piano and drums and things like that. And they're singing alongside typically functioning students supporting them. So that's you know—it's kind of—it's a performing ensemble, but it's not traditional, certainly. Next year we're incorporating mariachi and we're actually calling it regional Mexican—what is it? Regional Mexican music. So that's Norteño and things or Norteña, things like that I'm not really, honestly very familiar with any of those styles or genres. But that's a new thing. I'm going to start a pop orchestra next semester, or next year, and that's going to include some electric instruments for the first time. Um, so you know, we see broadly that we just want to really encapsulate that music for all philosophy. And so, it's nice that you know, though, you know we are more on the same page than not in my department about pretty much everything. That's really special. And yeah, that's, uh, we see that these courses fulfill those goals for our student body of just engaging everybody as much as possible.

**MC:** That's so great. You're making me think that I should just change my thesis to like a case study of your school.

**R:** \*Laughs\* Well, hey Maddy, that's cool.

**MC:** Listen, it's a little late now but...

**R:** It's a little late for that. That's like, you know, if you ever want to—sure if you ever want to do a future research study, please feel free to call me up.

**MC:** Yeah, maybe in the future. OK, I just have three more questions for you. So, the next one is, what do you think are some benefits and challenges of including emerging music courses in the secondary music program? And you've definitely spoken to this just a little bit, but if you want to elaborate on benefits and challenges at all.

**R:** Yeah, yeah benefits, you know I think are the things I spoke to, uh, in various ways that we can engage a broader part of the student body, right? We can encapsulate the mission—the stated mission of like NAFME and music for all. Um, we can engage students with popular music and contemporary music styles in a way that is just simply harder in large ensembles because the rep is just not as good often. You know, I mean plenty—and I incorporate plenty of arrangements in my orchestras and pop music. But you know, often it's just like it's just not very accessible for a variety of reasons. And it's just easier to do it authentically and in a robust way. And these, yeah, these emerging music courses—so I think those are some of the benefits. Also, you know it's a way for kids to get that graduation credit, potentially like the fine art or you know, so we have a fine art and a practical art graduation requirement in my district. You know so, piano, guitar count as a fine art. Music technology counts as an applied art, you know, so they can get that in a way that's hopefully, hopefully meaningful to them. And I, you know, believe of course, as a music educator, musician, that music is just like the best thing that humans have ever created. So, you know, when we give kids a chance to reconnect with that part of themselves in a way that they wouldn't otherwise if we were to only offer large ensembles. Because again, I don't think we're ever going to get, you know to even 75% of the student body, if all we offer is band, orchestra, choir. You know, I just don't know that that's realistic, and I think that's OK. But I do think if we continue to broaden our options, like I want to teach a hip hop course that is both the history and the performance techniques and is a performing group as well. Like you know, that's one trend of mine, right? I think the more we can offer, the better, so I think those are benefits.

And I think that's enough, probably on that. I think challenges are the lack of training and professional development available, and quality curricula available right. And I think that the problem with a lot of methods courses—not methods courses excuse me—but method books, like examples of piano and guitar are that they are heavily standard notation based. And guitar for example, I could not, you know, like it took me—again, all due respect to my band director who was the one previously teaching it. But it took me quite a lot of convincing to get him to believe that tab even belonged—tablature even belonged in the curriculum, you know? And he's a very flexible, wonderful human, who really is always willing to grow. And you know, once I convinced him he was full hog in right. You know he's totally up for it, so it just it took him a while to get out of that, you know, he's been a band director for 23 years and he taught guitar as if it was band on guitar, you know. And uh, and not that he taught chords and stuff too, but it's just the way that a lot of the method books are structured are not authentic to the experience of guitar. And I don't think that they leave kids with a lasting positive experience on the instrument. Because, to me, the job is not to get kids to be like you know, a master of reading sheet music.



You know, even at the—even at the most basic whole note, half note, quarter note level, you know, like I don't think that's even my job. I think my job is to just get them the skills they need to keep developing and growing. So that involves sheet music, but it also involves chords, and it also involves those falling MIDI videos and tab and learning that ear, right? And that's one thing I want to do more of going forward in the piano class. So, I think the challenge is that like—well, because and it's—I say this with absolutely no fault to the teachers, because they're just not prepared in the teacher preparation programs well enough. So, they're thrown into this environment where OK to have a full-time position, they get to teach maybe two or three orchestras, but then they have to teach guitar, piano, and music tech. And no one ever taught them how to teach that. They don't have a curriculum available to them, they're just you know, they don't have a principal, necessarily, who understands. If they're lucky, they have a Fine Arts coordinator who understands, but I think even our Fine Arts coordinator right now in our district, who—I really like her, but it's a new position that our district just added a couple years ago. She was like full choir teacher you know, like, she never taught AP music theory, for example, right? Uhm, engage those courses. So, I think the challenge is just a pretty massive lack of support kind of on every possible level, and I think that that sets up these teachers for failure a lot, unfortunately. And I think that it challenges then, then teachers are left with this attitude of, oh, this is just something I have to teach so that I can get to the good stuff. Which is band, orchestra, choir or whatever their main thing is right? And I think that's a big challenge because then the kids feel that. The kids feel that their teacher is not as enthusiastic. And even if they can't name that, they intuit it, right so. I think all those are pretty significant challenges that I see. And that's why, again, one career path I imagine is getting the doctorate and then advocating for every—for it to be a requirement, right. In the same way that a general music methods course would be, you know, required for every music ed student, that a secondary general music methods course would be required. And if a teacher is an instrumental like secondary track teacher, then they need to take two semesters instead of just one, so. Yeah, because I'm watching our teacher candidate—my band director's, you know, student teacher, his teacher candidate right now, struggle with the course load. Which is very heavily secondary general for my band director right now because of the way he structures the band program he teaches a lot of these emerging music courses and I'm watching the student teacher struggle because he just didn't feel like he had enough preparation, you know?

**MC:** Yeah, interesting. Great, OK, perfect. You've definitely already answered this question, but I want to give you the chance to add anything if you would like. Do you feel that your emerging music courses are meaningful or impactful to the students that take them?

**R:** I do, yeah, I really—I do. And I think at first it was just, you know, a blind optimism that it would be. And it wasn't always and now that like this year, I feel like it's really starting to gel. And yeah, I'm seeing those—and by the way, you know if you want to see some like—if it's helpful to see any direct student quotes from, you know, I'm happy to share some screenshots of like reflections and stuff, especially because I'm just getting final reflections in right now. I'd be happy to send you direct student words if that's appropriate, and I think it's legal because it would be anonymous on their part. So, you can feel free to talk to advisor about that. But yeah, I mean you can see their words about it and it's uh...yeah, it's pretty cool to see those things start to come in. For sure.

**MC:** Great, that's awesome. Thank you so much for sharing that. Alright, the last question is super easy, and it's just are there any other thoughts you'd like to share about these courses and your experiences with them or your beliefs in them?

**R:** I don't think so. You know, I think, as you can tell, I'm not particularly concise, right?

**MC:** No, it's good in this setting.

**R:** Good, good. I'm glad it's helpful. I'm giving some pretty sprawling answers. I just—yeah, I think it's just I'll reiterate that I think they're really valuable, you know. And uh, my wish is just that—. I was really excited by your survey because I think the more research that's done and published, and the more these things are talked about—and I hope maybe you can write an article based on your study that gets published, you know, in MEJ or something, you know. Or you know the research journal that I'm forgetting for some reason, the name of right now that's...

**MC:** JRME

**R:** Thank you, yeah. That's the one. Yeah, yeah. I think the more we talk about this stuff, the better off we will be, the more we will set up teachers for success and that will leave them more excited about teaching these courses. And in addition, I guess the only other thing I'll say that maybe I haven't said quite this way before is, I believe—my big like belief is that there should be a new position and a new track in music ed—music teacher preparation programs, uhm, that focuses on jazz and contemporary music. So, I believe that we should have right, like our instrumental track, our choral track, our general elementary track, right? And then a jazz and contemporary music track. Where jazz majors—because I have this former student right now, I was his mentor, gave him private jazz lessons, he's a pianist, uhm, but also French horn player. And all state—like got it in to all state band and choir is, you know, another just amazing kid who's now, you know, in his junior year. And he was successfully, for the first two years, a jazz major, jazz piano major and also a music ed major, a dual major. And then they decided that he could no longer be a music education major if he was also a jazz piano major. And to me that breaks—that breaks my heart because what is that saying? That's saying—that's sending a message to this, this future educator that jazz and contemporary music are not as valuable as, you know, Western art music, um you know, traditional band, orchestra, choir world, right? And that he has to then focus more on classical styles. And I'm not saying those things aren't valuable. I absolutely think they are, but I believe that if we created this new track of jazz and contemporary music and started to allow a teacher preparation program to incorporate that kind of thing, I think that would be really valuable. Now, I don't necessarily want you to say so much about that in what you publish because it's kind of my mastermind like, kind of create a position in the future, but feel free.

**MC:** I see, yeah.

**R:** I mean, I want people to think about that, I really do. Because then you could incorporate a secondary general methods course, or in addition, conversely not conversely, but alternatively or in addition, I think that a secondary general, like, focus like that being a track with a music teacher preparation. Yeah, you know, if you want to grow the music program, then you need

more options and you need training. And so, if you created a track in music teacher prep that involves secondary general music, what you're calling these emerging music courses, right? Not performing ensemble, not performing classes. Then you prepare teachers at a really high skill level to teach those courses. I think we would be unstoppable as a profession, and I think the growth we would experience would potentially be astronomical. Granted, the school would have to want that and provide the resources, but at a school like mine and a district like mine that does have pretty good support for the arts, and I've been really lucky to have incredible administration. Like you know, when I started the music tech class had nine kids and it was one semester, offered for just one semester. I'm now at 27 this semester and another 23 next semester, right? And that's like whatever 400% growth in three school years through COVID. Right?

**MC:** Wow, yeah.

**R:** Pretty awesome.

**MC:** Wow, yeah, yeah, that's impressive.

**R:** Thanks. So, you know it's like—. And I'm not trying to pat myself on the back too much, but I do feel that part of that is that I wrote this curriculum through training in the sense of life training, right? So yeah, so I guess my belief is that we need to really rethink music teacher prep in a pretty big way, and either create some new tracks to prepare teachers for these courses but—or just offer better training to our, you know, our large ensemble teachers. Because I also don't want to, then, suddenly have large ensemble teachers have to go part time, I don't want that either, right? That's not my—that's not the issue. I want everybody to have a job, you know.

**MC:** Yeah, yeah, definitely. Perfect well thank you so much. That's all of the questions I had to ask you and I'll just reiterate to you that I'm going to remove any identifying information from the transcript and from what I report for my thesis. And also, if you're interested, I'm going to be presenting my findings at CMEA at one of the research sessions just this next month so, uhm, you can find me there for sure. If you're interested in in seeing what I find.

**R:** Oh, that is my pleasure. Yeah, absolutely my pleasure. Alright, take care. Happy Friday.

**MC:** Thank you so much.

## APPENDIX H

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS: FRANK

**MC:** OK, I think we're recording. Great. OK, so are you ready to just jump in with some questions?

**F:** I am.

**MC:** OK, so you took my survey, uh, a while ago so you know that I call these non ensemble classes—I call them emerging music courses for the purposes of this study. And so, you might hear me refer to them as EMCs for short, but can you just tell me a little bit about the emerging music courses that are a part of your teaching load this year?

**F:** Yes, so this year I have, in the fall, beginning guitar and recording and songwriting, and in the spring, I have another beginning guitar class and a history of rock and pop. We also had an advanced guitar class that was on the schedule, but it was under-enrolled and so it's not going to carry this year. But that's normally something that we offer in the spring.

**MC:** OK, great um, tell me a little bit about your story of how you came to teach these classes.

**F:** So, this is actually my 12th year in this school district, but it's only my 4th year at the school and so my predecessor, when he was teaching here, he only taught band and then part of his teaching load was at an elementary school doing beginning band. And when I took over, the principal wanted to make it a goal of having the band teacher be full time in the building and I had no idea what that meant until I got my roster two weeks before school started and saw a recording and songwriting class on there, of which I'd never taught and my predecessor didn't do but had been done by our choir teacher who retired a few years ago. And so, I got his teaching materials, which was just a lump of unorganized papers about four inches tall with no actual developed curriculum, and so I spent that entire fall, in addition to all of the other transition things creating curriculum for recording and songwriting class, having never really done any of that in my life. And so, I did that for two years without any other classes. And during the COVID lockdown of 2020, we uh—I was pulled aside and asked, hey, how are your guitar skills? I went well, there's probably any number of people that are better at guitar than I am in this building. And they went oh OK thanks for letting us know. And a month later I had guitar on my roster for the next year. And then during last school year, uh, I'm still looking for some classes to fill in and going, “Well, what can I teach?” because they kept having me teach like computer classes or theater tech classes, and I was like I might as well just pitch something that I want to teach that can just become part of my schedule. And so, we already had a history of rock and pop curriculum approved by the district, or the class was approved by the district, and my colleague over at our neighboring high school in the district just sent me over everything he had. I looked into it, I took it and I made it into a format that I wanted to use—more Google Slides a lot more YouTube videos, things like that. And we ran that for the first time last spring. And it's, uh, in this—it's going to run this next spring and it's maxed out, so. And we went from having like 12 beginning guitarists in a class to, I have almost 50 beginning guitarists this school

year. And recording and songwriting still tends to be my lowest enrolled class, because it's a little more specialty, but that usually gets between 15 and 20 kids signed up for it.

**MC:** Great, so if I understand correctly, it sounds like guitar was started during like remote teaching during COVID or as a as a result of COVID or not really?

**F:** That was assigned to me. It uh—I think, I think guitar had been in this school for years but had never really been formalized into anything. And so, when I got it, I was given the Essential Elements for guitar, that course book. And I didn't play guitar before I got assigned this course, so I thought well, what better way to learn than the material I have. And I used that book for four days and I went, I cannot—I don't even like playing out of this book. I can't teach this book. And so, um, I turned it into a more structured, formalized more like a garage band, sort of set up. A little less formalized, classical guitar, a little more, well, what are you probably going to actually use this for after one semester? And you're probably going to go start a band or just play in your room and right focus on. So that's what I really designed that class after.

**MC:** OK great, so you touched on this a little bit, but my next question is what training have you received or sought out for teaching these classes?

**F:** Um, I have no training that, uh, that I just have. And I'm not, I haven't—I also haven't looked into it because it seems that every time I have a summer, I'm creating a new class. And so, a lot of the training comes from like, I'll take the recording and songwriting class, it was OK, what did the guy before me kind of do and how can I make this a little more structured. And so, finding resources online, kind of going through as much stuff as I can. I don't know of any classes that are actually being offered as far as training and if there are at some point hopefully, I have free time to take them because I'd like to shore up that. The guitar class I kind—I've kind of treated it as an independent study because I didn't have the time to commit to private lessons. But I've also been given professional development time to pursue what I need to help structure that class, so I've put in I think for four credits of professional development now of just independent study during the summer. Uhm, and for the first summer it was OK, how do I just play this instrument? In this last summer it was more, OK, the next step is bar chords and finger picking and getting that underway. And then for the history of rock and pop, since there was already something established at the other school, I took his stuff. And he also used, I do not have the name of the book he used, but he used a college textbook and he just turned that into a lecture course. And so, I took that and that was pretty much my professional development was, how is this taught elsewhere? How can I adapt it more to what high school would do and what would be interesting to high schoolers?

**MC:** Great, that's excellent. My next question is has teaching these emerging music courses met your expectations, and if you could elaborate on how so.

**F:** Probably the one that I've been most impressed with is the recording and songwriting class. And it's not to say that every product that comes out of that class is amazing, but every so often, like, kids get a lot out of it. The final project that they're working on now is they have an option based on their comfort level, it's either using everything that we've learned this semester

write and record 6 minutes of original music. And the other option if they're not comfortable with that is a research paper on some career path in the music industry. Because a lot of kids get to the end of this class and go well, I don't want to be a songwriter. I don't want to be a performer. Well, OK, then what can we do at the end of this that isn't brutal? Let's make it, OK look into something that you might do, whether it's a tour manager or something of that nature. And so, I've been most impressed with the products that come out of that, especially the recording products.

Uhm and then guitar. Guitar is still a little weird. We're still trying to figure out what it entails. And I work with the kids on it like we just had our final period yesterday. They submit their final online, but in class I asked well what would be better? What could make this class better? And a lot of the students said I don't know if we could take in many more skills, if any skills. But they did say, like, they gave me some feedback if we could have known this, this would have cleared this up. And so that's still a work in progress. Advanced guitar, the hard thing with that class is I'll get kids in there that had—never took the beginning guitar class and so they just come in and they just want to shred. And they just want credit for it and so that's—that's a class I've not really got a handle on. And I won't be teaching it next semester because my plan would be, take what I did last year, refine it just a little bit, and then once I finally got that class running at the end of the semester, go, OK, what would have made this better? What would you have liked to do differently? So really looking at what the kids need.

Um, history of rock and pop, that fell a little short of my expectations and the only reason I say that is the kids really enjoyed the material they learned in the class, and they appreciated the way I did assessment in that class. I got a lot of really good feedback on that, but one of the things I was trying to do was avoiding what is essentially undergraduate history of music—history of Western music, which is just kind of a drag, and it takes a lot of the fun out of it. And it kind of had a little bit of that. The way I did the assessment made it uh, quite a bit more applicable to their lives. But at the end of the day, I was trying to get this class to be a little more, well, let's have a conversation on this. Like this was one of our listening examples from the day. I can't remember the journal entry article I got this from, but it was using discussions in class to be like, well, what did you hear? What did you hear? And give the entire list on the board. Like pick one of these things and listen for it and then point out what you notice to help other kids go, oh yeah, I heard that or oh and another kid goes, I didn't notice that. But I tend to get a lot of introverts in my music classes, and they don't like to talk a lot. So that made that a bit of a challenge. And so, while it wasn't a failure, it just didn't quite end up the same way I was thinking it would.

**MC:** Sure, yeah, definitely. It's interesting to hear about the way your curriculum and the way you're teaching these classes is developing as you as you teach them. I have some similar experiences. My next question for you is about the role these classes play in your professional goals, like your own personal professional goals and also in the goals of the music department at your school.

**F:** So, I'll start with the music department goals. So, we have one part time choir teacher here and my ultimate goal is hopefully to get it to the point—because we're kind of a small school, I only have two concert bands and a jazz band, and that's the extent of the instrumental side of what I do. My hope is to get the program up to enough numbers where we have two jazz bands

and three concert bands then I'll be happy there, but that's five classes. And so, the ultimate hope is that well, by developing these and making them something that's structured and good and really well rounded is maybe eventually we can start getting a choir teacher in here that's full time and starting to build up that side. And so that's me, as also the department manager for performing and visual arts going, well how can we build this program? It also in our course handbook, a previous assistant principal redid our course handbook and started to put all of our electives into kind of like elective paths. So, there's like the visual art path or the theater path, and so they all got clumped together and kind of like, well, this is how you could progress through this. And so, kids use that to be like, well, I really want to explore this. This is the path I would like to go, let's see where that takes me. And so, I was able to get these four classes established as a popular music pathway. And I kind of structured them so that the beginning guitar, recording and songwriting, and history of rock, they kind of, you can jump to any of those from what we do. And I actually kind of sell it that way at the end of the semester. Beginning guitar just finished, well, if you want to know more like how to use this, go to recording and songwriting. Or do you want to learn the history of how the guitar is used in the United States? Come to history of rock and pop. And the same for those other classes. So, they're somewhat cyclical, except for advanced guitar, which is just kind of right now an offshoot of beginning guitar.

As far as like my relationship with these classes I like, I love classical music with jazz right behind it. But I also, uh, the band that I run outside of school, the semiprofessional band I run, it's a pop-funk group. And so like, I love this music. I get really excited when the Marine Band comes out with a new recording, and I got just as excited with Adele's new album and the new Silk Sonic album that dropped. And so, uh, to me, it, like guitar is not my thing. I am not good at it. It's not what I do in my free time, but I also know that that's like the basis of everything that I enjoy outside of the instrumental side of my job. And so, I really like it as far as like I really wanted these classes to be, not just—because I hate going to like CMEA and everybody is like, oh yeah, I just teach this history of music class because it fills up my FTE and I just give everybody these multiple-choice assessments. I'm like, argh that's why kids hate music. So, I really am trying to make those classes something that kids want to join, and the history of rock class has grown into that. The guitar classes have and recording and songwriting's getting there. So, it's not anything I do in my free time, but I love teaching it because I love seeing that side of of the creativity at our school.

**MC:** That's great, thank you for that. Uhm, my next question is what do you think are some of the benefits and challenges of including these classes in a secondary music program?

**F:** I think the benefit is it just it reaches a kid that otherwise wouldn't have an outlet—a creative outlet at school. And a lot of the students that end up taking these classes, they don't—they don't dig theater, they don't dig art, they dropped out of band if they even tried it way long ago. And some of them just end up here because the counselor's like, so what of these looks interesting? Like one of those how are we going to get you to graduation conversations. And so, I think the benefit is it tends to pull those kids in and gives them an opportunity to experience music in—at their level in a way that they want to. And there's success to a greater or lesser degree. Some kids, I know I'm not going to save every kid, but I'll at least try to give them a good experience. And uh—but I also know that a lot of kids it starts to be the reason they show up to school. One

of our social studies teachers, last fall, uh pulled me aside and he's like man, I got this kid in my class second period and I can almost guarantee if it weren't for your recording and songwriting class, he wouldn't come to school, and I wouldn't see him. And so, uh, I think there's a lot of benefit in that. And both in exploring that side of music and just keeping kids involved in the school. The downside is trying to—trying to create a class that's an elective that has a standard of expectation but isn't burdensome. And because I don't want it to be oh my gosh, it's an elective and he expects all this stuff and it's not fun, just don't take it because that doesn't help anybody. And so that is one challenge. I don't have any like behavior issues in these classes. Uhm, they tend to be pretty straightforward. I'm a little more of a laid-back guy though, so I don't know if every band teacher could come in here and have a positive experience like I do because I'm a different type of guy, but. Uhm but yeah. And then the other challenge is just trying to get kids signed up for it. It's almost to the point where I have to do a minimal amount of recruiting, but here in January I'm going to be visiting every study hall, and we have three every class period, and just talking about these classes and getting kids involved in them. Because I also try to avoid having freshmen sign up for these classes. It tends to overwhelm them. Yeah.

**MC:** Interesting. OK, great. You've touched on this just a little bit, but do you feel that the—these courses that you teach are meaningful or impactful to the students that take them?

**F:** Yes, yeah. I have, um—I have a lot of good feedback from students on the classes. Like I said yesterday, we had our guitar class and I just asked what could have been done differently and they were giving me feedback that wasn't like oh, give us fewer tests or anything like that. They were honestly going, I wish we had gotten feedback this way. Uh, or this is one thing that I was never brave enough to ask about in class, but I still don't know, and it doesn't feel like we covered it. And so, um—and it was from kids that are like you pull up their grades and they're getting Cs and Ds in all their classes and so that they're engaged enough to know what they could have used more, I feel is a success. And um...and I know they also take it seriously too, because the recording and songwriting students, as much as I try to not have the project be stressful at the end of the semester, I still get Remind texts that are like I have no idea what I'm doing, I've got myself into a corner, I don't know what's happening here. And so, I know they're taking it serious and they want it to go well and they're probably not doing anything like this for any of their other classes. So again, it's not every kid. But yeah, I definitely feel it has an impact and I hear that a lot from history of rock and pop too. They really enjoyed that and because a lot of the assignments are, well, OK, now, how do you connect this to the music you're listening to now?

**MC:** Great, well we're moving through pretty fast, which is great. I just have one more question for you and it's are there any other thoughts or experiences you'd like to share about your emerging music courses or your beliefs about them?

**F:** So, I really, I mean, I've kind of shared a little bit of about my beliefs. I think...I think it's an important side of music that often gets overlooked. I don't know if I particularly agree with some of the ways it's done like in other places. Like if someone were to come to me and say, hey, we're going to have a popular music ensemble, I think I would be deer in the headlights. And I also kind of struggle with that one too. Because we're in band like, yeah, I got 50 flute players, we're going to have 50 flutes in here from—I don't know if that's as easy to do when you have 20 kids, sign up for a class and ten of them play guitar and none of them want to pick up bass. And



you've got 20 drummers or something like that. But finding a way, like, well, because I always told my students this, well really what I want you to do here is not like, I don't want to give you every skill you have, but I want to give you enough tools so that if you start up a garage band, you can go somewhere with it. Or you've got Ableton at home and you know what's going on with it now and how to generally get it to work. I don't—there's no way I could teach it all, so I'm hoping to just give enough for them to go, OK, no, I could do this. And uh...and I've kind of touched on this, like I also think it needs to be applicable and I think a lot of that comes down to assessment too. Like for, for my guitar classes, I don't do any in person assessments. I'll give in person feedback, but we use our learning management system, and they can submit audio or video and I—that's how we do our assessment. It's really quick. We don't waste time in class. I give lots of time in class for kids to work together. It's not always used wisely, but for the kids that need that time, they use it really well. And I think that would be another thing is, if someone were to come in and be like wow the second half of this class has no structure. And yeah, you're right, it's less structured, but, I mean, you also need a chance to fail too. And then um...the assessment for my recording and songwriting class, I alluded to this, I don't give any multiple-choice tests, uh at all. And I think I gave one multiple choice test one semester for my recording and songwriting class, and I prepped them on it and everything and it was just, it was a train wreck. No one studied for it, they they only looked at it the night before. Uh, they kept nothing that they learned on that. And I was like, well, this was a waste of time. And so, I actually took this from my graduate program when I was doing—when I was doing it at [university], one of my professors was a big fan of take-home essay tests. And you had like 2 days at home to do these essay tests. And we're like, a take home essay test? This is great. And then we all realized we spent like 9 hours on it because we didn't want to get it wrong. And it—and so I was like, well, what if I took that take home essay test gave the kids a week to do it? Yeah, they'll probably wait till the night before, but they have the option. And instead of like who—like, name the five people that were there for the birth of rock and roll. Just say, alright, well go ahead and give me a list of them and then from those five who was the one that most resonates with you? Chuck Berry, Elvis Presley and then like, relate it to why it's important. Talk about why it's important, not just regurgitate the information and so then they're taking the stuff that's important and giving it to themselves. And I do that with, oh, the birth of rock and roll, uh, the pre-rock. And then the 60s is just chaotic because so much happened in the 60s that like there's—if I was given a multiple-choice test on the 60s, I'd fail it and I teach it. And so, I decided to make it more, um, like they make a Google Slide. And they don't have to even present it, they just have to make it like they would present it. And I don't remember it off the top of my head. I think it's got to be a minimum of 15 slides. They have to at least talk about, uh, something from like the soul movement, something from what's happening in rock, the rise of pop. They have to mention the Beatles in there at some point and just things like that. So really, it's what's your big takeaway from the 60s? Not regurgitate 60s. And then the last unit that I have time for is the 70s and 80s and like just the beginning of 90s with grunge. And the final isn't even over those decades because the final I give is a full paper. It's like an 8-to-10-page paper. But um—and I got this from another Music Educators Journal where the student picks a concept, it doesn't even have to be a band or a style of music, it could be something. And they investigate that concept through like production, distribution, um, the uses of the music. And so, I talk a lot about that. Like you know, there's a way different—the oh, the influences and what it influenced because when you're talking about hip hop, it's a way different path to hip hop than it was to Céline Dion. And so, they—we get some really good papers out of that where kids will pick like

their favorite band or something like that and they'll start to dig back in history. And then like all of a sudden, they're like I was not expecting Buddy Holly to be one—something that I started here in Green Day. And so, uh, really using those papers as a way to like put it all together and make it meaningful and not just be like this is what's important and this is why you have to do it. So that's—that's my big thing. Assessment is kind of—kind of my favorite thing, and I think it's always done somewhat poorly \*laughs\*. And I think that's one of the main reasons kids end up hating classes.

**MC:** Sure, yeah, definitely. And especially in these classes where they're, you know, maybe just there for fun, but they don't really want to do homework or playing tests or that kind of thing.

**F:** Well and that's part of it for recording and songwriting. I started the semester by saying homework in this class is a choice. I give you enough time to do all of your work in class with my help. If you choose to not use the class time that way, that's your choice. And um, but I think that's...I think that's a big part of it too is like, how can we do everything in class to the point that we can except for like the take home test for recording and songwriting, so.

**MC:** Right, right. Definitely, well great. Thank you so much, this has been really excellent, and I really appreciate you sharing your experiences with me so that I can put some context to my data in my thesis. So, I really appreciate it.

**F:** Well, thank you so much. I appreciate you reaching out to me. My pleasure to do this.

## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS: HARRY

**MC:** Great, are you ready for the first question?

**H:** Hit me.

**MC:** Alright, so first I'd just like to start with, tell me a little bit about the emerging music course or courses that are part of your teaching load this school year.

**H:** So typically, I teach all the band and orchestra and jazz band, so all the instrumental music classes. And um, I haven't had to do anything other than that for quite some time. But with the—a couple of things happened this last year that caused us to have to do some shifting. One, obviously, COVID affected the numbers of kids that are taking, uhm, my courses, mainly because I didn't get the opportunity to get in front of them like last year. Really, I couldn't go visit the elementary schools, they couldn't come here, that sort of thing. So that ability to get in front of those kids ahead of time was a problem. And then, our school district changed our boundaries and, uh, decreased our intake by, it was like 120 students. So, we literally lost 6 FTE in the building. Within that they dropped the, I should say 2 of our elective teachers. So, we went down from 8 to 6. So fewer seats available or fewer teachers available, right? And because my numbers were low enough in 6<sup>th</sup> grade, it was really difficult for my principal—and I understood this—to be able to give me an orchestra class with eleven kids. So, that, unfortunately we combined all 6th grade instrumental music into what I'm, uh, lovingly calling my “bandchestra.” It's not a great situation, but it is what it is. And then because of that, well, you know there's an open section then. Uh, so got to put another 25 to 30 kids in seats. So, he suggested doing a music appreciation class, which made my—me cringe a little bit. But then he also gave me the complete carte blanche to teach whatever I want. Now understand this is year 26 in the building for me. Uhm, so well, I've been doing this for a long time, and I've never been asked to teach a music appreciation class before. The last time I had to teach something that wasn't music, I did film studies. That was neat. Anyway, uh...so that's how it came about. So, it's a 6th grade level 9 week—technically, it was eight weeks this quarter—9-week music appreciation that meets every other day for 90 minutes because we're on a block schedule, so. Uh, did that actually answer the question?

**MC:** Yeah, it does. So, it sounds like this course just started this last school year?

**H:** First time I've ever taught it. I think, uhm, last year I'm pretty sure our choir teacher taught a 7th grade appreciation class because, as you can imagine, choir numbers were down last year due to the fact that they weren't singing, so. But yeah, this is the first time I believe at this level, we've had music appreciation.

**MC:** OK, great. Um, my next question for you, and—is what training have you received or sought out for teaching this course?

**H:** I didn't—you know, actually, um—I contact, I got in contact, obviously, with our choir director and said, hey I know you've taught music appreciation, what sort of stuff do you have? What have you used? Uhm, and so she just sent me everything that she had. And I sort of used that for the framework to figure out how I wanted to go about it. And to be perfectly honest with you, first quarter, it kind of developed as it went. I had some ideas of some things I wanted to do. And some of them went better than others, and so I sort of massaged that a little bit for second quarter. And I also had less time in second quarter. Not only fewer days to me, but also, uhm, we had other interruptions into the schedule as well, so I reduced the number of classes that I had. So, some of the things that I did first quarter I wasn't able to do second quarter. But it worked out okay. The basic framework, um, came in very—quite nicely. I found some really, really good music history videos on YouTube. And so, a lot of the class is responding to those videos. And I, of course, I am—most of them are like mini, 14-15 minutes long. But then we, you know, we build on that, and we talk about all that sort of thing. And I feel like, um—I feel like these kids honestly, they get done with this course, I think they know more about music than my band and orchestra kids do because we don't get at near, anywhere near as much time to spend on history and how we got to where we are and that sort of thing.

**MC:** That's interesting. Great, so it sounds like you pulled curriculum materials from the choir director and maybe some resources that you found, but you haven't pursued any formal training for teaching this course?

**H:** Correct. It's all based on, you know, my past experience and of course harkening back to, you know, the music history courses that I took in college. And also, having taught for this long, I have a much, much better understanding now than I did when I was in school about the time periods and how they affect the musical playing now and all of that. You know, being involved with that has been a much better teacher than, quite frankly, sitting in a classroom going, I don't know if I'm ever going to use this. Turns out you do.

**MC:** Great perfect, alright we'll go on to our next question here and that's has teaching this emerging music course met your expectations and how so?

**H:** Um, yeah, I, I think so. You know there's, unfortunately, in any class that kids are in that they didn't necessarily choose, you have issues, of course. And that's true of anything. And I have been—I'm not blind to the fact that, especially in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade, every kid in my class chose to be there. And nobody else in the building can say that. 6<sup>th</sup> grade, they're experientials for some of them like, well, I think I want to try this instrument and sometimes it doesn't go well. And that happens. And then those kids they choose later to not continue. So, I have this sort of, this charmed life as a teacher that I get to teach kids who want to do what we're doing. And if they don't, they just move on to something else. That's not true with the appreciation course. And so that's where the frustrating part comes in. There are kids in there who are engaged, who are giving me great responses they like, they get it. And they ask really good questions. And um...and then there's, of course, there's the group in the middle that do the work, but they just do the work. You know, and then there's, of course, the group that couldn't care less. And that's the unfortunate part is that I have to deal—you end up dealing more with those kids, because they're you know, they end up being discipline issues and whatnot, but um. I think in general, I'm satisfied with the way the course is coming out. Like, my goal was to have the kids have a much

better understanding of the music that they listen to now, that that they're paying attention to understanding how we got to where we are. Right? Because most of them are just completely blind to it. And there's like there's a couple of great videos, there's one I just showed yesterday that shows 15 different songs that have the same chord progression as Pachelbel's Canon. Right? And it's like, see? And to be able to explain to them that everything that they listen to is based on what was being done in the, in the classical period. And they can see that. They don't necessarily understand all of it. Like yesterday we talked about the theory of music and why we use the twelve-tone system and all that. And I know a lot of it went over their heads, but they have a better—at least they have a better understanding now of why music is the way it is, how it works, how we put the notes together. There's—you get to a point where again, it's like, the eyes glaze over and you can only get so deep into it, but. I think to answer your question directly, yeah, I'm satisfied with the result that I'm seeing from the kids who are engaged, who are paying attention. That they are—they are coming out of this, they get it. And when I ask the questions, you know, so what's the most important thing you guys get out from that? And they answer totally the way you would expect them to, so that tells me it's working.

**MC:** Great, perfect. My next question is what role does this course play in your professional goals and in the goals of your music department?

**H:** My professional goal is to not teach this class again \*laughs\*. Honestly, I want to—I need to build up my numbers so that I have a separate class for my string players next year. I really feel like it's a disservice to them this year. As much as I try to work with them as best I can, under the circumstances, it's not good, it's just not good, um so. I mean, that's the honest answer. I don't want to teach this class again. Not necessarily because I don't like teaching the class, but because it's taking the place of something that should be there instead, which hasn't been a problem until this year. I've had decent—actually and last year the numbers were low, of course, but I got good numbers, good enough numbers to support separate classes for my different—the different disciplines, and so that's my goal. My goal is to rectify that so that it's not a thing anymore. So, we're serving those string players instead of jamming into somewhere they don't really belong.

**MC:** Sure, that makes a lot of sense. Especially since it's such a new class and came about kind of because of the COVID emergency, so.

**H:** Yeah, that's pretty much it.

**MC:** Right, great. OK, so you've touched on this a little bit, but tell me what you think some of the benefits and challenges of including these courses in a secondary music program are.

**H:** Well, I think um...I mean, if we're being honest, this class is a hole filler. Really. It's a place to put kids so we don't have 54 in a PE class. Right, they already have really big classes. We have six places for kids to go on any period during the length of time. Choir, whatever I'm teaching, art, two PE, and STEM based class. And so, um...sorry will you repeat the question?

**MC:** Sure, I was asking about the benefits and challenges of these courses in a secondary music program.

**H:** OK, so a benefit would be that I actually was able to talk, I think, four of the kids in my, um, that were in my music appreciation class into joining my band class. Hey, what do you think, right? So that worked out. And then the challenge really is, as I mentioned before, yeah, the challenge is anytime you're teaching a course that is not something that somebody chose, especially like this situation. I mean, every kid knows they have to take math, they have to take science and English, they don't get to choose those courses, but they also understand fully that this is part curriculum, this is this is part of school. But the—when they select classes that are supposed to be for their interest and they end up in a class that, quite frankly, they couldn't care less about, that's always going to be a challenge. In every scenario that's going to be a challenge. One of the ways that I have worked this course is in trying to incorporate—you know, I do all the history. I don't go all the way back to Baroque, but I do all the history, in order for them to understand how it connects. But there's also aspects of it where we include, like what's—how this connects to modern music, right? Um, I also do, like I do a bit with Stomp, or we have this, is this music, right? Um, our last class we're going to watch the Blue Man Group. And again, how does this fit? How does all of this fit together into everything we've talked about? So, the biggest challenge is getting them to engage in something they had no necessarily any interest in prior to this. And uhm, I think I'm seeing pretty decent benefits with that. There's just some kids who just aren't going to. It's uh—they're just not going to. No matter what you do. Uhm, but it's, what I find interesting in this particular class, with one of my biggest discipline kids in the class has some great responses. He's an intelligent kid. He just likes to goof around. He likes to talk with his buddy. But when he turns in his work, it's thought out. I mean, he really actually is paying attention. That's the weird part. You wouldn't know from watching this kid in class that he's actually absorbing the material. So, I think that's kind of fun to see that show up, you know. So that's the biggest challenge, I think is—it is for me to...um, to go about it in a way that where I'm really still engaging the kids. And trying to do what the whole purpose of the class is, instead of just marking time, if you will.

**MC:** That makes sense. Thank you. Um, we're moving through pretty quick here, so this is great. We only have two questions left. And again, you've touched on this just a little bit, but in case you have anything to add, do you feel that this emerging music course you teach is meaningful or impactful to the students that take it?

**H:** So yeah, it can be. The ones who are engaged, I feel like they are coming away with it. I mean it's interesting because I got a number of the kids that have some experience either with piano, or they played an instrument before, or they actually paid attention to their elementary school music classes. And uhm, they ask really good questions. And in fact, one of the things I do early on in the course is this sheet that has—it says what is music at the top and it asked three questions that are supposed to be answered three different ways. This is three things I know about music, three things I would like to know about music, and three things I think I will learn about music. And they, so they fill those in. And this is very insightful for me to start off with, well what are they coming with, right? And what do they want to learn from this? And what is—what are their expectations, really? And like this one says where are instruments from? Like who named the instruments? These sort of things. These are good questions. Like, huh? Yeah OK, I can see that. So, I use this and then the best part about this, I think for me, this is going to be the last thing on the back of this page, the first question says, what is music? Write your definition. And then there's a line. You can see that. And then

below it, again, it says: Music is... And at the end of the course, Thursday, tomorrow, last day, they're going to answer that question again. And compare it to their first answer. Like when you first came in, this was day one. What did you think music was? Now what do you think it is? And this single piece of paper alone will answer that question. Did these guys get anything out of this? Did they actually learn something from this course, or were they just hanging out, right? And it'll be interesting, because like this little girl couldn't even answer all the questions on day one. So, we'll see. But it, it does um... I can't lie, when I'm grading the papers and I'm looking at the stuff that they've written down, it does give a real sense of satisfaction when the kids are telling me the things that I expect to hear. Like what did you get—what, you know, um... So for instance, you know, when we're studying the different history points in music. Like who were three important composers from this time? Give me more extra credit, giving more right? So, they're paying attention, listening for these composers. And then I'll say, like, tell me three things that are important about this time period. Three things that you got from this video that seem like they're important parts of this. And when the kids, especially when they're comparing this point in history to the last one we studied, well compared to the classical period now in the romantic period they're not doing this anymore. Now they're doing that. Yes, that's right, that's what I'm looking for! That's very satisfying. It definitely—like any teacher, it says OK, they get it. Right? And of course, there's the other kids that you know... I got kids like I don't know. It's "IDK" they can't even write "I don't know." IDK, I dunno. I don't think that's English. OK, well. I can't—I don't know what to do for you, but uhm. It definitely gives me a sense of satisfaction that there's enough of the kids in the classes that are responding in the way you would expect. That it, that it makes me—it makes it feel good to continue to teach the course. I will tell you that when I taught film studies, I enjoyed the first semester that I taught it. I have some background in the area actually, and the kids developed, they developed um... they had to do storyboards, they had to do scripts. They actually filmed their own movie at the end of the course. And it was kind of fun, but it seemed like the further I got into it the less and less the kids cared and then it got really hard to teach. Uhm, plus I felt like I did—I spent a lot of time in that class lecturing, just talking. This one, there's the interaction with the video, I interrupt the video and I'll talk—I'll expand on points and whatnot. I'll go directions that I know the video is not going to go so that we can cover more material. And so, engaging with the kids that way. It's not just push play, right? Uhm, and so it's kind of fun. I get to share some of my own experiences, which are pretty vast. I did a lot before I started teaching. And to incorporate that all into the lessons I think helps them better understand. All of this makes sense and fits together with what they're listening to now or whenever they listen to something they don't know, their parents' music or whatever, they have a better idea of why it is what it is, you know? So, I think, um, that certainly provides an impetus to continue and, you know, try to, try to engage and you know focus—I decided a long time ago in all of my classes, I'm going to focus on the kids that are benefiting from this and not on the ones who I'm not going to make a difference for. So, long answer.

**MC:** No, that's great. That's perfect. Final question for you. Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share about this course and your experiences in it or your beliefs about it? Any final, concluding things you'd like to share?

**H:** Well, I think that... gosh, to teach a music appreciation class at the middle school level... I mean, you could imagine, you could go in any number of directions. Right? I'm an

instrumentalist, so I went that direction. Um, I think my choir director when she teaches it, she goes more the vocal route. Which makes sense, right? You know, virtually everybody sings, uhm, whether they admit to it or not. They listen to their music, and they sing along so that nobody else is around for a lot of folks. I have, um, I have five kids, three of them still live at home. And they're singing all the time in my house, sometimes when it's not OK \*laughs\*. But um, the fact that given the opportunity to teach the course in a way that makes sense to you as an individual teacher, I think it makes all the difference. The fact that my principal said straight up, look, teach it however you want. You know, do however you want to do it. You want to try and pull kids out of there into your band and orchestra classes, then more power to you. That gave me some freedom, certainly, it was a challenge at first. Because let's face it, it's much easier to say, OK, here's a curriculum, teach it. To just say alright, you have to teach this course, but you have to make it up. Yeah, I spent quite a time, quite a bit of time scratching my head going, how do I want to do this? But once it started coming together, started finding more and more resources. Um, we do this whole unit on, uhm, Edvard Grieg, and the Peer Gynt Suite. And it's so fun to expose the kids to a piece of music that they've heard before, but they know nothing about. Like everybody's heard *In the Hall of the Mountain King*, they just don't know that they have, or where it's from, or what the deal is, and so we did a whole unit on that. And that, again, was based on the information I got from my choir director. This whole thing I'm like, OK, that's kind of fun. They know this piece, um. That's one.

Whenever we get to the end of a particular period, I'll play some of the music from that period, of course my favorite part is pieces of those parts of music and whatnot, I'm a big fan of Copland. Uhm and uh, you know, like just literally yesterday, with Pachelbel's Canon, I played, you know, a full string version of it and just said, now listen to this. Tell me when you think you've heard this before and for the first, I don't know, 28 measures or so they're like...hm? Anybody who's a musician as soon as you hear the cello part, you know what you're listening to. But as soon as the \*sings violin melody from Pachelbel's Canon\* they're like oh I know, I know this song! I'm like OK, yeah well here's the fun part about this. This one and Spring by Vivaldi, if you ever watch a movie or a TV show where there is a string quartet, they're going to be playing one of these two songs, you watch. So that's fun to, to you know—but I think that as long as teaching this course was given the ability to go whatever direction they felt they wanted to go, there's no limit to the amount of information that's available. And I mean, geez, you could, I mean you could grind this down and just teach one period of history. And just beat that to death but kids aren't going to stay interested in that. How does this connect to me? How does this connect to what I know, and what I'm doing, and what I'm listening to? And so, it's fun to relate—you know, that's one of the things that I do is like we go over and play some chord progression, or you know, see this this is rock and roll. Oh, this is the Blues. Oh, wait a minute this is also this song from the classical period, you know. This one I have—I don't know if you've ever seen Mr. Holland's Opus but one of the best scenes is when he plays the song by the Turtles and they're like, oh, that's the Turtles. He's like, no, that's Bach. They're like what!? So uh, you know, I think ultimately, uhm, I would rather be teaching a strings class in the 6th grade at this time. But if I have to teach something, or if I have to be involved in the class, I'm glad it's not a study hall. I'll tell you that. The fact that I'm teaching about music is better than something else, like film studies. Uhm, at least, at least I'm getting to share my passion and expose these kids to stuff that otherwise they wouldn't be exposed to, right? And who knows? There's no way of knowing in the future how this will affect them. For some of the kids



it will just be another class that they do. For other kids, they're going to be more critical of what they hear. Like the, you know, we talked in a portion of the class about how the music equals emotion in films and TV and commercials. You know, do you ever notice the drug commercials, [the] music [is] all happy. Hm? Pay attention to that. So those, those sort of, those lightbulb moments are fun for me to experience with those kids. Because like a lot of people—a lot of people are just blind to how music is involved in their lives. And so, to have these kids get a little more in depth look into that. I mean, again, I'm—it's, you know, making the best of—making lemonade, if you will, out of a lemon situation. But I think again, harking back to as long as the teacher is able to teach this course in a way that makes sense to them, that makes sense to me. Because, again, I teach it totally different than my choir director would. Probably different than maybe even a string player would. I'm actually a percussionist. But also, I'm a, you know, classically trained percussionist so I played in orchestra and timpani and all that sort of thing, so um. It's all interwoven. And I also was in a rock band, you know, I also did cruise ship work, you know, big band stuff. I mean it's endless. And to be able to pull from all of that, my own experience and dip that into this class is like I always do with my other classes. I think it's beneficial for the kids. Uhm, I wouldn't want to necessarily be in charge of writing a curriculum for a course that everybody had to teach. Although I will say on the heels of that I've got a really good foundation that other people could work from. I wouldn't suggest teaching it as a 90-minute block class. \*laughs\*

**MC:** That's tough, especially with middle school.

**H:** Yeah, 7th grade is bad enough and then 6th grade at the end of the day for 90 minutes...yee haw.

**MC:** Yeah, no kidding \*laughs\*. Well, great thank you so much. Those are all of my questions for you. I appreciate you taking the time out of your morning to to speak with me about your course. It was really enlightening to hear about it, especially since one of my research questions is focused on how the COVID-19 pandemic has maybe, like, affected these courses so it's really great to hear your perspective.

**H:** You bet. Thanks so much.

## APPENDIX J

### INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS: TAYLOR

**MC:** OK, excellent, we are recording. So, I'll just jump in with the first question if that's alright?

**T:** Okay.

**MC:** Alright, great. So, you know from taking my survey that I'm calling these courses that are the non ensemble courses we teach to secondary students, I'm calling them emerging music courses. You might hear me refer to them as EMCs for short but tell me a little bit about the EMCs that are part of your teaching load this school year.

**T:** Yeah, I teach three of them. I teach AP music theory, I teach beginning guitar, which is a semester long class. And then I teach a semester long survey of rock or intro to pop music class.

**MC:** Great, that's excellent, can you tell me a little bit about your story on how you came to start teaching these courses?

**T:** Yeah, for sure, uhm, this is my 8th year teaching. I'm from [state], so originally kind of built to be an assistant band director, which is hard to come by here in Colorado. Um, I am lucky I am an assistant band director here in [city], but I only teach—I assist with the marching band and then I have a second band and we have a separate percussion class, so I have that, also. That's two of my classes. But when I first started here, I was only part time, I was 0.6. And uhm, I started with my band, percussion, and guitar class. They knew they wanted a guitar class when they hired me and next year, they liked me, so they gave me, uhm, AP music theory. Kept AP music theory and then the third year I actually taught a non music class and, uh, called ACE. It's a success class for incoming freshmen. And then last year we needed more online electives, and so they let me create my own class, which is my survey of rock, intro to pop, and I gave up my ACE class for that.

**MC:** Great, OK, so it sounds like that last class, the survey of rock and pop was almost as a result of remote teaching, and the pandemic, is that right?

**T:** It is yes.

**MC:** OK, great.

**T:** And this year it switched over to in person, which is great, and they're even trying—they'd like me to teach two next semester, but I don't want to do 6 classes, so.

**MC:** Right, OK yeah. Did you have um...it sounds like you had choice in the survey of rock and pop class, but the other two classes, the theory class and the guitar class, was that more dictated by administration, which classes those would be?

**T:** Uhm, no our, well—the guitar, yes. When I got hired on they knew—they didn't have one previously, this is my sixth year at [school]. The director before me taught our third orchestra, the band, and percussion and he was just a 0.6 and was happy being a 0.6. I wasn't. I had my masters and, um, wasn't going to stay somewhere where I wasn't being fully utilized. Uhm so I took the guitar despite not—I mean I took guitar in college, but it's not my forte. And it's not something I feel very strong in even after six years. But the following year when we were looking for a fourth class, our choir teacher had been teaching AP music theory and IB every other year and she had enough people for a fifth choir. And so, I took over that and I asked for that. I—AP, or theory is one of my favorite classes, and I've been looking to teach that anyway, so I kind of took that one from her. And then, now it's kind of—I've had it for three years now and we haven't done IB at all, but our IB numbers at our school are lower so they don't really need the elective. If it ever came to the point where our IB numbers were higher again, it would be within their jurisdiction to make sure that I teach IB every other year as well.

**MC:** Sure, interesting. I've never heard of a school doing AP and IB, so that's really interesting.

**T:** Yeah, [school] was one of the first ones to have IB in Colorado, and so for a very long time we were known as that school. It's like something like 53% of our kids are choice enrolled kids. The majority of our kids is choice enrolled, but that's changed as more schools throughout Colorado offer IB and so our choice enrollment is going down because kids can go to their home schools for IB now. And so, we're in this transition between AP and IB, and who that—like what the identity of the school is. Now that we're not known as IB.

**MC:** Yeah interesting. Alright. Well, my next question is about training. Have you received or sought out any training for any of these courses?

**T:** Yes, I took uh...I took the AP course and then I will take an IB one actually this next coming year, just in case it gets handed over to me. Guitar I haven't, which is probably why I feel so rough with it, but I did ask this year and I think it depends. That was before they wanted me to take the IB. I don't know if they would give me training for two things in one year. I'd rather do guitar if I'm going to continue to teach guitar, um, as I said, it's not my forte. And I don't feel passionate about guitar so it's hard for me to teach, and I think that taking a class on it would probably be the best way to do it. But they did get me into the—I had to be AP trained and I have to be IB trained if I do those. The survey of rock, no. That one I—but I made up that class. It's my own curriculum and so I'm not too worried about it.

**MC:** That makes sense. Uhm, I actually, I did—I also taught guitar when I was teaching and there's a really great summer program called the Teaching Guitar Workshop, which I highly recommend.

**T:** Yeah, that's the one I'm trying to sign up for. They don't have any July courses right now and that's just easier for me, but they're—I've been in contact with them. They're trying to see which schools are going to be open for, like housing people, or...yeah.

**MC:** Yeah, yeah, it's a little complicated because they just jump around to whatever school will host them. So, I got lucky and went to it in Colorado Springs, but I think...

**T:** Yeah, none of them are in Colorado this year, but there's no July ones and they just said that it's uh...they're just waiting to hear back from more schools across the country to see who will be open for COVID.

**MC:** Sure, sure, interesting. Well, I hope you can take that at some point.

**T:** Yeah, thank you.

**MC:** It definitely helped me a lot. Because I was in the same boat where I was like, I don't like teaching guitar and then I took the class, and it helped a lot so.

**T:** Yeah, awesome.

**MC:** Great, so my next question is, has teaching emerging music courses met your expectations and if you could elaborate on how so?

**T:** Yeah, I mean, I really enjoy it. I enjoy the switch of kids. I like having—I love my, obviously, my band kids who I get to have for four years most of the time, especially with marching band. But I really enjoy getting to know the population outside of my music kids. I began teaching in [state] at a Title I school, and that's, so that's kind of near and dear to my heart. [My school] isn't typically that, isn't considered Title I and isn't—doesn't typically have that population. So having my guitar class and my intro to pop class where it's like a free for all for who I will get is really, it's kind of a break for me from having to like—I don't want to say deal with, that's not the correct way to say it. But my band kids are IB students most of the time. They're, even my band, they're pre-IB or pre-AP or they're going to be the smartest and I get that. That's who I was too. But it's really nice to sometimes to not have the high-strung kids who are like freaking out about everything or stressed out about everything and who are just in my class just to have fun. Like there's no deadline. There's no “we have to go to contest” feeling. So, I really do enjoy that. As I've said about guitar, it's different because I just don't have what I want through guitar yet. But I do love those students, and they typically—I have a lot of students who take guitar more than once, just so they can fill their electives. And second time through, they just end up being like a helper, and they know that because I've always had a group of helpers. And so, they know that if they can take it a second time and just be, basically, like a student helper-type person.

**MC:** That's great. Excellent, so my next question is what role do these courses play in your professional goals and also in the goals of your music department at your school?

**T:** Uhm, we pride ourselves on our music department here or our Fine Arts department. And so, if we could have as many kids as possible, and that's actually like our admin's goal too. All my classes, all these emerging music classes are for...to get more kids involved in music or extracurricular type things. And that's...they're—the way they see it is that, and it's true, is that if a lot of these kids that are not in band or orchestra, or have never been in band and orchestra, if they take my guitar class or my um...or my survey of rock, they're more likely to take another one of my courses later on, and it's true. I've also had, it's not a lot, but I've

had two or three kids like join my percussion class because once they start learning music then they start wanting to do more. I've had guitar kids join our marching band to be in the pit. And so, I think that that's...kind of the goal. I had a guitar kid this year, this week actually, auditioned for the musical, which I have nothing to do with. But she just wanted to continue doing something musically. And so, I think that's—we're really lucky with our admin. And they...they really, really encourage Fine Arts at our school and keeping kids in Fine Arts. So, I think as a school goal that's part of it. Professionally, honestly, as I said, I've always wanted to be an assistant director. I don't—I love what I do. I love my job. I also love that I have a life outside of my job and that's as I said, I knew, I've known since 9th grade I wanted to be a band director. And I've known since 9th grade I didn't ever want to be a head high school band director. Um, I enjoy doing my job. I enjoy keeping kids in band or music. But I don't feel the need to have to do that with my entire life all the time. Being here until 9:00 PM every night or, you know, all my weekends are taken or...So it's hard for me to say. Right now, these align perfectly because that's less—I don't have the top band and I don't have the top orchestra like my coworker does, you know. That's all he thinks about. It's all he does, you know. And I don't have that problem and we work really well here together because he knows that. He doesn't have a problem with me having my life and then doing what I'm supposed to here. And I just know that that's who he is. Is a...live, breathe, everything is band and orchestra for him, so. It's where that goes, yeah. I'm currently adding on to my masters, though. I'd like to have a special needs class. I'd like to have a, um, a unified music class here, and so I'm getting a certificate to add on to my master's in special needs in the music classroom. So, I guess right now those five classes are not like—my goal right now, one only goal right now is to finish this certificate so I can have—I'd like to be able to talk—I'd like to be able to present at CMEA or CBA to talk about music and special needs in the music classroom. I don't think that's something that we talk about or do enough anywhere, so. But that's already something I've talked about with my, I mean, my principals know. It's already something we have planned for the future.

**MC:** That's so great. I know there are adaptable music courses, or, you know, different names that they give to it. Or like you said, unified music programs. So that's really great. What a cool thing to do. What do you think are some of the benefits and challenges of including emerging music courses in a secondary music program like yours?

**T:** I think it sometimes deters from our regular classes. Our, uhm, I mean I've had kids who were like, well, I like you, but I don't want to practice for band. So, I'll just go sign up for your “blank” other class and I hate that. I really do. And I try really hard to persuade kids not to do that, but if that's the only choice in keeping them in the music program, then, that's what it is. It also gets really hard with like my AP numbers. It's really hard for me to keep AP numbers because the kids who should be taking AP music theory are the top band or top orchestra kids. And they usually can't fit AP into their schedule if they're taking IB classes and already taking that top band or top orchestra just scheduling wise. So that really stinks. My numbers in that class are really low because it's really hard for me to get those kids into my class. So that's always been a problem.

**MC:** Sure, definitely always enrollment as a problem, you know. Uhm, great. I know you've spoken about this a little bit already, but do you feel that the emerging music courses you teach are meaningful or impactful to the students that take them?

**T:** Yeah, definitely. I think for some of my kids—I know for some of my kids this is the only class they show up to. And whether or not they're failing is like a whole different story, but they show up. And they're there, and usually there's something for them to do, even if it's not exactly what they're supposed to be doing. Uhm, my philosophy on those two classes are—AP is different, obviously because it's a college level course—but my survey of rock and my guitar class are music is supposed to be fun. And music is supposed to be relaxing and not stressful in any way, especially considering everything else that they're dealing with right now. And so, I think that usually keeps my kids pretty—I think giving them that trust from the beginning usually keeps them around. They know that I'm not going to push them or beg them, or...I push them in a different way, you know. But I'm not like do this or die. You know, that's dramatic. But like this isn't math class. This isn't science class. You don't have to have this to graduate. Should you fail? No. But you don't need it to graduate. Like if you're happy, if you're being safe, if you're in my classroom and you have a safe space that's not you doing stupid things out in the street or on the football field or whatever else they're doing right now, then fine. And so, I think that's part of the reason why my admin also likes those classes, so.

**MC:** Great, that's perfect. We're moving through quick, so this is great. I just have one more question for you. Are there any other thoughts you'd like to share about these courses and your experiences with them or your beliefs about them?

**T:** No, I mean. I think it's like a super—or I don't know. It's been 10 years since I graduated college, so I don't—I think it's really a problem that we don't get these trainings in college. Uhm, like I said I took...I took a guitar class, but it wasn't even a guitar class. It was a therapy class where I did music therapy for two days a week and then guitar for one day a week. And that's it. Like—and I went to a music school, like it's not—I don't think that's fair. But I think that's a problem—I mean, that's something we're struggling here with at [school] is we've got all these singleton classes, these one-off classes that make it really hard for kids to choose. And I'm like I don't know anything about [university], I really don't. Uhm, but [other university]—the amount of music courses, my ex-husband got his doctorate there, and the amount of courses they have for music kids to take is overwhelming. And I'm like, they don't need that. Like that's cool. The history 1960 to 1970 music. Very specific. Cool, they don't need that. What are they going to do with that in the actual classroom, you know? And so like, didn't have a guitar class, but they don't tell you, like you're going to probably get—you're probably going to teach guitar. Especially if you teach—I'm different, but mostly if you teach or you're going to teach guitar, like probably. Um, you're not—you know the survey of rock class, I got really lucky because teachrock.org is totally free and I could—adaptable. That's awesome, great, but nobody taught me about like modern day music and how to teach that to kids in a functional way. Uhm, even AP music theory like, cool that you take X amount, 6 semesters, 8 semesters of theory. But you're learning theory. They're not teaching you how to teach theory. They're not telling you how to do that. Anyway, I just think that like is a real downfall for a lot of people, a lot of places is they like drill into you that you have to be this great musician, which you do. But you spend so much time in a practice room instead of like, you should be teaching. Like you should be doing these extra classes and like seeing that. Or, you know, I have a...I have my first ever student teacher in the spring, which I'm really excited about. But when she emailed, I was like I'm not a band—like I'm a band teacher. You'll get experience on a podium. But I also teach these. And

she's like oh my gosh, I've never even thought about those they sound awesome. And I was like good! Like we should be student teaching with teachers that are not just teaching band and orchestra. Like you need podium time, yes. But that's what you've spent four years doing. You know how to hear a piece of music. They're not teaching you how to teach other classes that you could have, you know. Or that you're going to have to grade papers for. Like, you know, you—I didn't grade papers until year five of teaching. And all of a sudden, I was like man, this sucks. Like nobody told me that this was a, you know—because we don't—you're like I'm going to be a band director or an orchestra director and we're just going to play music all the time. And it's not. And that's OK. Like I said, I thoroughly enjoy it now. I love the breakup of my schedule now. I just wish it was something that—I mean, I'm really glad—that's why I took your survey. Because I think it's really important for people to know that these exist and that 90% of the time, you're going to be teaching something like this.

**MC:** Yeah great. Well, thank you. I've had similar experiences, so that's half the reason I decided to take on this subject for my thesis, so I'm glad it's resonating with other people as well. That we're trying to get the information out there. This is great. Thank you so much!

**T:** Thank you, yeah, thank you so much.

## APPENDIX K

### THEME #1 CODE BOOK: STUDENTS

Pattern	Code	Description	Example
Student Population	uni	Unique population from ensemble students	"...it reaches a kid that otherwise wouldn't have a creative outlet at school." (Frank)
	ens	Ensemble students explore new musical skills in EMCs	"...where we get to access either a different side of our large ensemble kids..." (Russell)
Student Engagement	high	Positive results from high student engagement	"...so that they're engaged enough to know what they could have used more, I feel is a success." (Frank)
	low	Struggles to work with students with low engagement	"But when they select classes that are supposed to be for their interest and they end up in a class that, quite frankly, they couldn't care less about..." (Harry)
Learning Beyond the Classroom	music	Musical skills beyond the classroom	"...I want to give you enough tools so that if you start up a garage band, you can go somewhere with it." (Frank)
	life	Life skills to be used beyond the classroom	"I will try to tie that into life skills..." (Russell)



## THEME #2 CODE BOOK: CURRICULUM

Pattern	Code	Description	Example
Self-Research/ Experience	prior	Prior experiences in the subject matter	"...I brought in the experience I had as a private piano teacher." (Russell)
	none	No prior experience in the subject matter	"...nobody taught me about like modern day music and how to teach that to kids in a functional way." (Taylor)
	inter	Personal interest in the subject matter	"Theory is one of my favorite classes and I've been looking to teach that." (Taylor)
Curriculum Design	coll	Assistance from colleagues	"I got in contact, obviously, with our choir director..." (Harry)
	edit	Efforts to edit and refine course materials	"...I took it and I made it into a format that I wanted to use..." (Frank)
	evol	Course design evolving each year	"...it kind of developed as it went." (Harry)
Preparation	train	Description of training or preparation	"I think it's really a problem that we don't get these trainings in college." (Taylor)
	change	Change teacher preparation programs	"...that a secondary general music methods course would be required." (Russell)
	help	Desire to influence and help other/future teachers	"...we should be student teaching with teachers that are not just teaching band and orchestra." (Taylor)