

**STUDENTS' TIME WITH MUSIC IN PRIMARY AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
CONTEXTS: A CASE STUDY IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

by © Catherine Trainor

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to use a qualitative case study to examine time allocation for classroom music in primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. The first part of the thesis is the introduction to the study and research questions. The research questions focus on current contexts in participating schools, decision-making processes for school-wide scheduling, and potential opportunities for improvement. This study includes a survey as well as interviews with music teachers and administrators to determine responses to the research questions. The results of this study found that participating schools typically offer less time for music class than is recommended by the Department of Education, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Various reasons, issues, challenges and opportunities around this finding are explored in the data analysis. It is evident that music educators and administrators alike value music education and seem to be making an effort to do what is best for their students. However, some changes to current practices could potentially allow students' time in music to be maximized to the recommended time allocations.

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Chapter 1 - Introduction

Introduction

Education is widely accepted as an important investment in our future society. However, how exactly to implement public education has been hotly debated. Katie Cole wrote in a 2011 edition of the *Music Educators Journal*: “We teach in a public school system that measures learning strictly by how well students do in reading, writing, and math. But where did these narrow measurements of achievement come from?” (p. 28). Obviously literacy and numeracy are key components in any educational context; but what about the arts? Arts education provides students with “a means to connect emotionally with others and deepen their understanding of the human condition” (Farbman, Wolf, & Sherlock, 2013, p. 4). However, worldwide “The opportunity to learn to understand and work in the visual arts, music, dance, and theatre has been grossly neglected” (Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p. 27). The focus of this study is on the importance of music education specifically, and how classroom music is implemented in public primary-elementary schools in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

Context

Newfoundland and Labrador is the easternmost province in Canada, and home to approximately 530,000 people (Government of Newfoundland & Labrador Statistics Agency, 2016). This study involved primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. In addition to being the provincial capital, St. John’s is the largest metropolitan area in the province by population, with about 200,000 residents (City of St.

John's, 2016). "The City of St. John's is known for its arts community" (City of St. John's, 2016). St. John's and the province of Newfoundland and Labrador are well known for their strong musical tradition, heavily influenced by traditional music brought across the Atlantic ocean by the English and Irish ancestors of many of today's residents. As it was put on the official tourism website, "Around here, music is part of the natural and cultural landscape. You can find it practically everywhere you go - from kitchens and pubs to concert halls and festivals in every corner of the province" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Tourism, 2016).

Background

The province of Newfoundland and Labrador has 2 school districts – the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD), and Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador (CSFP). This study focussed solely on schools that fall under the purview of NLESD.

The amount of time allocated to Newfoundland and Labrador students for different subject areas is determined by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education's *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016). The most recent *Program of Studies* (2016-2017) lists an allocation of 6% of class time for music in the elementary grades (4-6). The document is not as clear on the topic of primary (K-3) education. Instead of listing a specific percentage, in the primary years music is listed as one of 6 subjects that share 30% of class time.

Many of the primary-elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador (including all those that participated in this study) operate on a 7-day cycle for scheduling purposes, with ten

30-minute periods every day. In this context, there are 2100 minutes of instructional time per 7-day cycle, 6% of which would be 126 minutes. Although it is not possible to exactly divide 126 minutes into 30-minute periods, 4 periods per cycle would offer students 120 minutes of music class, which works out to 5.7% of overall instructional time.

As a former music teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador, and through recent research and informal discussions with other music teacher colleagues, I have determined that experiences with music time allocations and class scheduling vary widely. In my own primary-elementary teaching context (2014 – 2015) for example, grade 4-6 students were assigned approximately one hour per cycle less than what is recommended by the Department of Education. While - as noted above - time allocations for primary (K-3) music are more ambiguous, one might assume that the aforementioned 30% of class time would be shared equally among the subjects to which it is allocated. In reality, my kindergarten students during the 2014-2015 school year had more time in physical education class than in music class.

Hence, I felt compelled to look further into the policies and practices around music time allocation in primary and elementary contexts in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The focus on younger students was necessary for logistical reasons, but was also chosen because those are such important, formative years in a child's education. I found that there is a gap in the knowledge about exactly how the guidelines set out in the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) are implemented. In this study, I aimed to uncover issues and challenges, as well as potential opportunities to have students' time in music maximized to recommended time allocations.

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to examine various factors that have an impact on the delivery of music education in primary-elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, I examined policies and practices around time allocation for music instruction. Time allocation is a complex process, and one that involves teachers, school administrators, and both school district and provincial government department of education personnel. Because it is often the role of school administrators to implement provincial educational policies at the school level, it is important to determine administrator attitudes toward music education, and in particular how those attitudes might translate into actions related to the allocation of time for and scheduling of music instruction.

Significance of Study

Participants and the wider musical and educational community will benefit from this study through an increased understanding and awareness of provincial government policies – as well as practices and attitudes - regarding the scheduling of primary and elementary classroom music. They might also benefit emotionally and professionally from the brief period of self- and professional reflection that is a natural part of completing the survey and/or interview. The Newfoundland and Labrador educational system as a whole will benefit from greater analysis of how class time is being allocated and implemented in primary and elementary schools in the St. John's metro area. While I am aware that results from the St. John's metro area are not generalizable to the whole province, shining a light on any part of the education system encourages all those involved to improve upon current practices. The academic community in the field of education stands to benefit from an in-depth case study on the topic of student time

allocation and primary-elementary music education, as there have been relatively few academic studies on this topic, despite its practical relevance in the lives of students and teachers.

Most importantly, the affected students will benefit from a thorough study of how their class time is being scheduled. The ultimate goal is for young students in Newfoundland and Labrador to have a comprehensive music education. Ideally, a comprehensive education in Newfoundland and Labrador would include the appropriate implementation of provincial government policy related to student class time allocation, as outlined in the *Program of Studies* (2016).

“Academics and the arts are often positioned as competitors in a kind of zero-sum game, rather than as partners in a potential educational synergy that holds both intrinsic and instrumental benefits for students” (Farbman et al., 2013, p. 5). Though it sometimes feels like it, it is important to remember that this is not a competition. We all want what is best for the students in our schools. The question is, what exactly does the “best” look like? Especially when, as educators are already painfully aware of, “today’s educators are living in a classic, resource-limited environment, one in which both money and time are constrained” (Farbman et al., p. 9).

There is a gap in the knowledge when it comes to how much time students in Newfoundland and Labrador are spending in music class with a music specialist. It is important to close this gap, so that we can ensure all students are receiving at least the recommended amount of classroom music. This new knowledge will be useful to a variety of groups. The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education will be able to use this research to determine the effectiveness of current policies around student time allocation, and potentially also to write new policies. The Newfoundland and Labrador English School District

will also find the research useful in determining how current policies are being followed. School administrators may read this research and develop a deeper understanding of the policies and practices relating to class time allocation. Finally, other researchers in the academic community may recognize the singularity of this specific research, and opt to do a similar study in a different community, thus closing the gap in the knowledge even further and allowing the results to be more generalizable.

Research Questions

1. What is the current context regarding time allocation for the delivery of K-6 music education in Newfoundland and Labrador? Do primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador provide the Department of Education prescribed time allocation for primary-elementary music education?
2. In schools with varying time allocation for music instruction (above, at, and below the prescribed time allocation), what might be factors, attitudes/perceptions, and challenges around the process of decision-making in this area?
3. Are there potential opportunities and/or recommendations for the process of allotting time for music education in primary-elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Research Design

This case study was a qualitative investigation that included a survey of primary-elementary classroom music teachers in the St. John's metro area of the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD). The initial survey was followed by interviews with

classroom music teachers and administrators in selected schools, as well as interviews with personnel at the NLESD and at the provincial government Department of Education.

Theoretical Framework

This study has been informed by several theories. One of these theories is Pierre Bourdieu's social field theory. Bourdieu's theory can be broken down into 3 basic ideas - those of social field, capital, and *habitus*. Grenfell (2014) summarized these ideas as follows.

“Practice results from relations between one's dispositions (*habitus*) and one's position in a field (capital), within the current state of play of that social arena (field)” (Grenfell, 2014, p. 51). Bourdieu (as cited in Kirby et al., 2000) wrote “the *habitus* is a product of conditionings which tends to reproduce the objective logic of those conditionings while transforming it” (p. 539).

“The social field model is used to portray the complex, contextual, and contested interactions at a particular time or during a particular process—for example, in the realms of educational policy or curriculum construction” (Anfara & Mertz, 2006, p. 163). Anfara & Mertz go on to explain that Bourdieu's social field “can operate at a macro-level (for example, in national and international contexts) or at a micro-level (within a particular group or setting)” (2006, p. 163). For the purpose of this study I looked at the social field at more of a micro-level, within the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. Ladwig (1994) also extolled the virtues of Bourdieu's work. “The sociological perspective of Bourdieu offers valuable potential for understanding both educational policy, per se, and what it means to analyse educational policy” (Ladwig, 1994, p. 343).

Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory also played a role in the design and implementation of this study. "Social cognitive theory subscribes to a causal structure grounded in triadic reciprocal causation. In this triadic codetermination, human functioning is a product of the interplay of intrapersonal influences, the behavior individuals engage in, and the environmental forces that impinge on them" (Bandura, 2013, p. 711). Social cognitive theory applies to this study because the study included looking at the reasons behind human behaviour.

Finally, symbolic interactionism was taken into consideration during the course of this study. Symbolic interactionism is "a form of social constructionism, holding that people react not to some physical reality but to their interpretation of reality based on interaction and communication with other people and things in general" (Castree, Kitchin, & Rogers, 2013). Similarly to Bandura's social cognitive theory, symbolic interactionism was useful because of the close connection between this study and human behaviour.

Value of Music Education

"The arts teach us to know the good, the beautiful, and the profound" (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 8). The benefits of arts education are numerous and well documented. However, "When the opportunities for arts classes and activities are limited because there is simply not enough time during the day, week, and year to include them in a full or sustained way, then the potential for their impact is similarly impeded" (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 9).

Some might argue that, though the arts are important, time is limited and achievement in literacy and numeracy is crucial. Isn't a small amount of time sufficient for arts education? As it turns out, "The amount of time students are given to engage with the arts is intricately bound up with the quality of the experience" (Farbman et al., 2013, p. 10).

Description of Study

In conducting this study, the first step in data collection was document analysis, which was followed by a survey of classroom music teachers in primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada. Afterwards, I requested interviews with the music teachers and principals of the schools that had completed the survey. I also completed interviews with relevant administrators beyond the school level, both at the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education.

Assumptions are truths that might be considered self-evident. In this study, it was assumed that the participants had the professional qualifications required for their positions. It was also assumed that the participants answered truthfully and honestly, to the best of their knowledge. This assumption applies to survey participants as well as to interviewees.

In qualitative research, limitations are those factors over which the researcher has no control. Limitations may also be seen as the weaknesses of a study. Researcher biases may be seen as limitations, particularly in a qualitative study. In this study, while I made every effort to avoid bias, my perceptions and interpretations may have been influenced by the fact that, until recently, I was a music educator in Newfoundland and Labrador. My personal beliefs about the positive value of music education in general may have somewhat coloured my data analysis.

This study was limited to the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District due to the author's personal experience in that district. It was further limited to the St. John's metro area, because many of the schools outside of this area are small, rural schools that - in some cases - may not have access to a music specialist. Finally, the study was limited to primary-elementary schools, because at the grade 7-9 level in Newfoundland and Labrador there is

simply too much variation in how music programs are implemented, and students in grades 10-12 make their own course selections.

This study was conducted in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. Surveys were sent to the music specialists at 33 primary-elementary schools, of which 10 responded. All 10 schools were contacted for further information, from which 8 principals and 5 music teachers completed interviews. Interviews were also conducted with representatives from the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education. As this is a qualitative case study, many of the findings may not be generalizable to other communities.

Summary

Music class is an important part of a child's education at public primary-elementary schools (defined as a public school that offers any of the grades from Kindergarten through to and including grade 6) in many places around the world, and the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador is certainly no exception. In conducting this study I drew from established theories and used research methods that allowed me to follow the pattern of a qualitative case study, ultimately discovering some important facts about how time is allocated for classroom music in the sampled schools. This data is presented in Chapter 4 and analyzed in Chapter 5 of this thesis.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

Value of Music Education

Many people around the world feel passionately about education, which is part of why making decisions about education can be both interesting and challenging. In classrooms, teachers work day in and day out to ensure that when these decisions are made, they are implemented in the best possible way for their students. Arts educators often find themselves needing to advocate for their programs and the inherent value of the arts, in addition to their regular teaching duties. What fault can we find with such advocates, when the arts are currently at risk of “being seen as peripheral and therefore expendable” (Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin, 2013, p. 29)?

One might think that arts education ought not to require advocacy at all. As Farbman et al. (2013) wrote, “given the acknowledged inherent value of the arts—their power to deepen thinking, enhance communication, motivate, and even to transform us as human beings—it seems only fitting that schools should be responsible for providing these enriching opportunities to all their students” (p. 8). However, Cole summarized: “If there is nobody else advocating for us, we need to do it ourselves, and we need to have proof of the benefits of the arts stated in terms that nonmusicians can understand and respect” (2011, p. 28).

The benefit of consistency in arts education is another important consideration. “Research shows that positive encounters with the arts build upon one another, amplifying the effects” (Farbman et al., 2013, p. 9). Certainly, some time for arts education is better than none at all. However, reduction of time for arts “diminishes not only students’ opportunities to experience, engage, and practice these endeavors, but also educators’ capacity to make these classes and activities worthwhile” (Farbman et al., 2013, p. 10).

In a 2013 study, Winner, Goldstein, and Vincent-Lancrin wrote about the current state of arts education internationally, specifically in countries belonging to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). They stated that:

Most people, including policy makers, believe that arts education fosters creativity and possibly other skills conducive to innovation. In knowledge-based societies, innovation is a key engine of economic growth, and arts education is increasingly considered as a means to foster the skills and attitudes that innovation requires, beyond and above artistic skills and cultural sensitivity (p. 21).

In the current educational climate, with much emphasis and time spent on things such as creativity and 21st century learning, this argument seems particularly salient. The same study included the statement that “arts graduates are among the most likely to hold a highly innovative job when it comes to product innovation” (2013, p. 24). However, this type of advocacy is not a new concept. “Given the peripheral position of arts education in school, arts advocates have long argued that arts education fosters non-arts academic skills.” (Winner et al., 2013, p. 22).

In a 2013 study conducted by the National Center on Time and Learning, authors Farbman, Wolf, and Sherlock explained that there are two main reasons for arts education. The first is the “instrumental value” (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 5) of arts, by which they mean arts education teaches students important learning skills. In other words, the arts help students learn how to learn. The second reason is that the arts “enhance personal engagement with our broader society” (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 6), which lends itself more to the “intrinsic value” (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 6) argument.

Colloquial wisdom and inspirational posters often extol the virtues of music education specifically, with claims such as “Music makes you smarter!” However, upon a thorough search for peer-reviewed verification to support such claims, the evidence appears much more mixed. As Flohr (2010) wrote: “Music certainly does not make everyone smarter, but there is a documented effect of positive gains in some domains of learning” (p. 15).

Correlational studies that show higher grades for students who study music and other arts are promising, but often ask more questions than they answer. Farbman, Wolf, and Sherlock (2013) wrote succinctly on this topic:

It may very well be that those inclined to participate in the arts are the same students who are more likely to enjoy school and seek to do well there, regardless, or perhaps that schools with substantial opportunities in the arts are also more likely to provide a quality education overall. (p. 6)

Canadian society in general seems to value arts education for a variety of reasons. A 2010 study of music education in Canadian schools found “A positive sign regarding the situation of music education: a majority of respondents ranked each of the 13 potential benefits as ‘very important’” (Hill Strategies Research Inc, Coalition for Music Education in Canada, & Canadian Electronic Library, 2010, p. 36). In this case, the respondents were teachers. The 13 potential benefits surveyed were:

- “Building students’ self-esteem and confidence
- Creating community within the school and the community at large
- Developing a sense of beauty and imagination
- Developing an ability to understand and appreciate a wide variety of musical expressions and an ability to express oneself musically

- Developing creative problem solving skills
- Developing critical and analytical thinking skills
- Developing effective communication and collaboration skills
- Developing self-discipline
- Helping students achieve in other academic areas (e.g. math, reading)
- Helping students share and understand other cultures and generations
- Improving the atmosphere for learning
- Keeping students engaged in school and less likely to drop out
- Nourishing creativity and innovation” (Hill Strategies Research Inc. et al., 2010, p. 36).

Among those potential benefits, “Self-esteem, self-discipline, creativity and musical ability are the four benefits that received the largest number of “very important” rankings (over 70% each)” (Hill Strategies Research Inc. 2010, p. 36).

Music for Music’s Sake

Although advocates of music education often draw these connections between the value of music education and skills that are transferable to other subjects, some would argue for the concept of music for music’s sake. For example, in a 2009 article published in *American Music Teacher*, Shannon Keeler wrote, “often in our attempts to validate musical study, we inadvertently depreciate it” (p. 26). She also described the difference between primary and secondary benefits. Primary benefits are unique to the discipline, while secondary benefits are less exclusive. Keeler argued that using increased math or reading skills as an argument for studying music is detrimental to the cause, because the music education advocate who uses

such arguments is using secondary benefits while ignoring primary benefits. When we point out only secondary benefits, which “should not overshadow the core purpose of music...we are implying that the study of music is not a serious pursuit in and of itself” (p. 27). Primary benefits of music education may include, but are not limited to, self-expression and connection with others. As Keeler put it, “making music is part of what it is to be human” (p. 27).

Current Policies on Student Time Allocation - International

“Over the last 30 years ... arts education has occupied a shrinking place in the life of schools” (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 4). In terms of documentation of current practices regarding subject time allocation for music class, many geographical areas have policy documents available. A sampling of these documents, provided below, cover select countries from around the world, as well as many Canadian provinces.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) report *How much time do primary and lower secondary students spend in the classroom?*, pointed out that in OECD countries “time spent on the arts ranges between 5% and 20% of the compulsory curriculum in primary education” (2014, p. 3). The same organization goes into more detail in their report *Education at a glance 2014: OECD indicators*. Here the report made a statement on arts education in public primary schools around the world:

In Israel and Mexico, arts education accounts for 5% of instruction time, while in Estonia, Germany, Iceland, Norway and Slovenia, it accounts for 15% or more of compulsory instruction time. In Finland, arts education accounts for at least 13% of compulsory instruction time but schools must also allocate additional flexible time to arts, music or crafts (2014, p. 431).

A separate OECD study (2013) included more general information about averages of mandatory arts education in member countries:

In particular, visual arts and music are mandatory in all OECD countries in primary and secondary education. In 2010, in public schools, 9-11 year old and 12-15 year old pupils were taught 99 and 91 hours per year in arts education on average in OECD countries for which information was available, that is, between 2 and 2.5 hours per (school) week. Arts education represented 11% (9-11 year olds) and 8% (12-15 year olds) of their mandatory intended instruction time. (Winner et al., 2013, p. 27)

However, according to Winner et al (2013) it would seem that OECD countries are on the upper end of the spectrum when it comes to mandatory time for arts instruction in public schools.

Worldwide, “The arts are usually taught minimally in the early grades (e.g. at best students may have music or art class once a week for one period) ... and sometimes the arts are relegated to after-school, extra-curricular activities, along with participation in athletic teams” (p. 27).

In the Australian context specifically, Pascoe et al. have written “There is a need for immediate priority on improving and sustaining the quality and status of music education”, and music education in Australian schools could be improved through “increased time in the timetable” (2005, p. v).

Another study, this one set in Sweden, explained that student time allocation in Sweden is largely determined by individual schools. As for the rationale behind those decisions, the study found that in Swedish schools, “time allocation in school seems to be determined to a considerable extent by tradition” (Waldow, 2004, p. 357). Due to this context, the Waldow’s study focussed on two schools, one primary-elementary-middle school and one high school. K. Scola is a primary-elementary-middle school just outside Stockholm. Waldow found that before

1999, of the total 6670 hours of compulsory education at K. Scola, just 215 of those hours were compulsory music education (p. 359).

Since 1999 Sweden has used a system with allows far greater student choice in all subjects except Swedish, English, and math (Waldow, 2004, p. 359). This concept “has become known as the three-subject school” and Waldow comments that “It is feared that a too-far-reaching concentration on the subjects of Swedish, mathematics and English will produce graduates who are good at these subjects, but at nothing else, and that the standard of general education will deteriorate or has already deteriorated dramatically” (p. 364).

Another study published in the *International Journal of Music Education* asked Puerto Rican teachers about the state of music programs in elementary schools in Puerto Rico. The authors found the following:

“school music education in Puerto Rico displays resemblances to that in other countries of the Caribbean, specifically regarding the lack of a well-defined official curriculum, lack of supplies, little relevance of the music content in the school centers, and gaps in teachers’ training. Unfortunately, these characteristics may reflect the situation of school music education in many educational systems of the world” (López-León, Lorenzo-Quiles, & Addessi, 2015, p. 148).

Though Puerto Rican elementary schools have offered music education since 1898, the study’s authors found limited official curricular support for music education in those schools. In the end, the authors stated that, in Puerto Rico, “the great majority of students of school age do not receive musical education provided by specialists” (p. 147).

No Child Left Behind

In 2002, American president George W. Bush signed into law the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). This nation-wide educational policy brought about an immediate focus on reading and math, with expansion to include science in 2006-2007 (Pederson, 2007). “Ostensibly, NCLB was designed to raise overall student educational achievement and to eliminate achievement gaps among varying subgroups of students” (Elpus, 2014, p. 217). However, some educators objected to the focus on testing with such high stakes.

The severity of the corrective actions imposed on schools under the law resulted in school efforts to raise test scores in ways never intended by Congress. For example, researchers have found that under high-stakes testing accountability policies, schools were more likely to suspend students with poor prior test scores on testing days than on other days of the year” (Elpus, 2014, p. 217).

Farbman et al. point out that “with the intense focus on having students achieve proficiency in reading and math, arts education seems dispensable, and time is often shifted away from this area and given instead to classes in tested subjects” (2013, p. 9). For example, “A 2008 national survey by the Center for Education Policy, for instance, found that, on average, districts had reduced elementary school class time for music and art by 35 percent, or 57 minutes per week” (Farbman et al, 2013, p. 9).

In *The Clearing House*, Pederson reported on a study that surveyed education officials from 46 of the 50 states on the impact of NCLB. The respondents reported many changes that came to their schools as the act was implemented. Pederson found that “More than half of the respondents reported that subjects not required to be tested by NCLB receive fewer resources and time in the school day” (2007, p. 290). Of course, those subjects would include the arts.

This finding is significant, as there seems worldwide to be little if any well-planned, deliberate and intentional policy when it comes to the topic of student class time allocation. In this case, scheduling of class time in various subjects seems to have been a by-product of increased standardized testing in so-called “core” subject areas.

In another study related to the No Child Left Behind Act, Kenneth Elpus looked at how NCLB impacted high school students’ enrolment in music courses. “Music educators generally have reported that NCLB has had deleterious implications for music education” (Elpus, 2014, p. 216). Indeed, upon further investigation, he found that NCLB “exacerbated the pre-existing underrepresentation in music courses of Hispanic students, English language learners, and students with Individualized Education Plans” (Elpus, 2014, p. 215). It would appear, therefore, that NCLB caused *more* children to be left behind in the area of high school music course selection; and the problem has yet to be completely solved. Ten years after NCLB was first signed, Parsad & Spiegelman (2012) wrote: “Student access to arts education and the quality of such instruction in the nation’s public schools continue to be of concern to policymakers, educators, and families” (p. 1).

Impact of Socioeconomic Status on Music Education

In a 2012 report published by the National Center for Education Statistics in the United States, authors Parsad and Spiegelman surveyed more than 1200 schools regarding their approach to arts education. On the topic of music education specifically in primary-elementary schools, they wrote “almost all public elementary schools offered music instruction on a weekly basis and throughout the entire school year” (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012, p. 15). However, “almost all” is not equal to “all”, and schools were generally less likely to offer music class if

they had a higher proportion of students living in poverty. “Whether a school offered music instruction varied by its concentration of poverty, measured by the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch” (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012, p. 14). The authors did not offer an explanation as to why this would be the case.

Current Policies on Student Time Allocation - Canada

Because education in Canada falls under the purview of each province and territory (there is no national department of education), there exists a range of policies in provinces and territories across the country around student class time allocation. Some of these policy documents (such as Newfoundland and Labrador’s *Program of Studies*) spell out percentages of class time for music, while others are less specific.

A joint study conducted in 2010 by Hill Strategies Research Inc., Coalition for Music Education in Canada, & Canadian Electronic Library included detailed information about how music education is implemented across Canada. The study stated that nationally, “About 90% of schools that offer Grades 1 to 6 (or some combination of these grades) teach music as a separate subject in these grades” (Hill Strategies Research Inc. et al., 2010, p. 19). One might wonder if this is just an average, with many outliers. The same report stated “In fact, at the elementary level, there are no significant differences from any of the national statistics (mandatory, optional, extra-curricular, limited, none) in any province or region” (p. 19). While the study did not specify the amount or percentage of class time devoted to music education, it did look at what types of music opportunities are available in schools. “Compared with the national average, three music opportunities are available in a particularly high proportion of Atlantic elementary schools: choir, band and the Kodaly method” (p. 25).

In Manitoba, Dr. Francine Morin completed an in-depth study of the reality of arts education in public schools in the 2006-2007 school year. She noted “the majority of divisions in the province are falling short of meeting the Department’s recommended minimum time allocation of approximately 180 minutes per 6-day cycle for Kindergarten to Grade 6 arts education” (2010, p. 95). One of Morin’s recommendations as a result of this study was that “Schools and divisions should develop strategies for meeting the minimum instructional time allotments for Kindergarten to Grade 8 arts education” (2010, p. 3).

The Government of Ontario has published a document that describes in detail the elementary arts curriculum in the province. It stated “Time, space, and a wide variety of tools and materials are necessary for supporting effective learning in the arts” (2009, p. 36). However, the curriculum guide stops short of specifying exactly the amount of time elementary students ought to spend in music class.

In *Time to Learn Strategy*, the Nova Scotia Department of Education (2002) suggested that students in grades K-6 spend 60 minutes per week in music class. This translates to 5.3% of instructional time for students up to and including grade 2, and 4.2% of instructional time for students in grades 3-6. While the report specifies minimum *requirements* for class time in English Language Arts and Mathematics, it is limited to *recommendations* for the other subjects, including music.

The Government of Prince Edward Island Department of Education, Early Learning and Culture specified in its *Education Handbook for School Administrators* (2015) that intermediate students spend 7-13% of their class time allotment on “Art, Music, Industrial Arts, Home Economics, etc.” (p. 122). The same document covered elementary school and listed music as a “required” subject, but did not provide specific percentages of time allotment (p. 48).

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the provincial government has been more precise in its policies on student time allocation than the other Canadian provincial governments above.

However, it is interesting to note that in Newfoundland and Labrador,

“Administrative decisions ... have compromised the integrity of the delivery of arts and cultural education. Hence, despite the existence of quite solid policy and curriculum development at the Department of Education, the arts are often relegated to subordinate positions in schools and curricula. The stated and intended valuing and support for arts and cultural education is not always lived out in our students’ general education” (Rose, 2006, p. 31).

This discrepancy between policy and practice does not mean that music education is not valued in Newfoundland and Labrador. In fact, of the potential benefits of music education, there was one in particular that was valued much more highly in Newfoundland and Labrador compared with the national average. This benefit was “Creating community within the school and the community at large (83% in Newfoundland and Labrador vs. 69% in Canada)” (Hill Strategies Research Inc., 2010, p. 42).

Current Best Practices of Arts Time Allocation

While many schools, school districts, and governments are cutting funding and time for the delivery of arts education, some special schools show us shining examples of the alternatives and possibilities for including more arts education in the school day.

For example, according to Fleming (2013), in the United States of America some schools have been deemed “expanded-learning-time schools”. These schools offer longer school days, which allow them more class time in which to offer, among other subjects, arts

education. Crucial to their success is that, “In addition to extra time for the arts, appropriate staffing and resources have been dedicated accordingly, the report says, as the schools see the arts as valuable to improving student engagement in school as well as achievement in other subjects” (p. 4).

There are also places where arts advocacy is helping to rebuild programs that had previously been reduced in some way.

In Dallas, for example, a coalition of arts advocates, philanthropists, educators, and business leaders have worked for years to get arts into all schools, and to get students out into the city's thriving arts community. Today, for the first time in thirty years, every elementary student in the Dallas Independent School District receives forty-five minutes a week of art and music instruction. (Smith, 2009)

Of course, there are also schools that specialize in the arts and as such offer much more class time for the arts than the local standard. One such school in Canada is Claude Watson School for the Arts, which educates students from grades 4 to 8 under the jurisdiction of the Toronto District School Board. According to the school website, “The school timetable provides for 15 hours of academic classes and 15 hours of arts classes” (Academics at CWSA, 2017).

Music Class Time Allocation

Studies that exist on the topic of music class time allocation are often limited in scope to studies that compare music class time with standardized test scores. Wilkins et al (2003) completed one such study. The authors conducted a survey among principals of 527 schools in Virginia, USA, to determine whether there was any truth to the assumption that standardized

test scores in reading and mathematics would be improved by an increase in subject time allocation for those subjects. Of course, this increase in time for reading and mathematics would necessarily mean a reduction in time allocation for other subjects. The study found that a reduction of class time in music, art, and physical education was not correlated with higher test scores. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that increasing class time in so-called “core” subject areas – to the detriment of the arts and gym class – would not help student achievement.

In another article referencing the same study, Westfall et al (2002) refer to the idea of students spending class time with specialists in the areas of art, music, and physical education. I believe this specification of having *specialist* instructors is an important distinction.

While the Newfoundland and Labrador *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) document does list percentages of time students should spend studying music, it does not specify that the classes need to be led by a music specialist. It is interesting to note that the *Program of Studies* used to have a note that indicated that in viable schools (referring to student enrolment) music was to be taught by a music specialist. “Longstanding practice and tradition remains in this regard” (A. Rose, personal communication, August 17, 2017).

A more in-depth report, summarizing longitudinal information from 4 large databases, was commissioned by the National Endowment for the Arts. In one section of this report, the authors described breaking students - who have all been identified as having low socioeconomic status – into 2 groups: “low arts” and “high arts” (Catteral, Dumais, and Hampden-Thompson, 2010, p. 12). In this way the researchers were able to compare the two groups to each other, as well as to a third group which encompassed students from all households, regardless of socioeconomic status. The results were promising; for example,

among the students from lower socioeconomic status households, the study found that “Eighth graders who had high levels of arts engagement from kindergarten through elementary school showed higher test scores in science and writing than did students who had lower levels of arts engagement over the same period” (Catteral et al., 2010, p. 12). However, the authors cautioned that correlation does not necessarily demonstrate a causal relationship. Part of the introduction to the report mentions a comparison between involvement in the arts and academic and civic achievements, explaining that “To understand the mechanisms by which learning and participating in arts activities might directly influence those outcome areas, more research is needed” (p. 11).

Arnaud et al (2013) studied music education as it relates to academic performance. The authors found that students who chose to do music courses tended to have better performance in all subject areas than those students who did not choose to sign up for music courses (p. 260). The problem with this type of research is that, while it generally supports music education, it tends to focus on correlation and makes limited (if any) attempts at discovering causation. Yes, there have been plenty of studies that show a correlation between academic success in all subject areas and participation in music. But what does that really mean? It could mean that students who come from families with greater socioeconomic status are more likely to sign up for music class. After all, some studies show that students from a higher socioeconomic class achieve better in school. The correlation could also mean that higher achieving students tend to choose music class. Or it could mean that participation in music actually impacts achievement in other subject areas. My point is simply that until there are further studies done in this area, we don’t know for sure. It is also worth noting that the aforementioned study’s relevance in the Newfoundland and Labrador context is limited, given that primary-elementary students in the

province have mandatory music class throughout their first 7 years of schooling (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2015, p. 5-7).

The Role of Principals in the Delivery of Music Education

In 2006, Abril and Gault published a study that described the results of a survey of American elementary school principals on the topic of music education. While the research did not go into the specifics of how much instructional time students spend studying music, it did reveal that “principals were aware that certain factors had a negative effect on the music program: No Child Left Behind Act, budget, standardized tests, and scheduling” (Abril & Gault, 2006, p. 18). It is factors such as those listed above that I aimed to discover in the Newfoundland and Labrador context. While I recognize that these factors are different in Newfoundland and Labrador, it stands to reason that there would still be identifiable elements that negatively impact music programs.

Hill Strategies Research Inc. wrote in their 2010 Canadian study *A Delicate Balance: Music Education in Canadian Schools* that, when it comes to the potential benefits of music education, “There are substantial differences between the perceptions of principals and teachers” (p. 37). The greatest difference was with the benefit “Developing critical and analytical thinking skills”, which was ranked “very important” by 69% of teachers versus 52% of principals (Hill Strategies Research Inc., 2010, p. 37).

Christine Finnan wrote in *The Urban Review* about the importance of the role of administrators in scheduling student time, specifically centred on “non-academic learning activities” such as yoga instruction:

Creating a weekly elementary school schedule that allows for maximum student learning is an essential administrative function. With increased accountability pressures,

administrators scrutinize any time expenditures that are not directly related to student academic learning, and they are reluctant to allocate time to nonacademic pursuits or even to subjects other than reading and mathematics (Finnan, 2015, p. 27)

Summary

Overall, there is limited literature on the topic of subject time allocation for music education in general, and primary-elementary music specifically. What research does exist, as is often the case with advocacy for music education, relates to student participation in music and standardized test results. Though many policy documents exist which outline how much time students should spend in music class, there has been comparatively little research into whether or not these policies are being followed or implemented. Hence the need for ongoing research in music education (especially in Newfoundland and Labrador) and an in-depth analysis of how time is allocated for music education at all levels of schooling, particularly at a few schools which may not currently be following the time allocations as outlined in the *Program of Studies* document (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016).

Chapter 3 - Methodology

Introduction

In *State of the Art: Arts and Cultural Education in Newfoundland and Labrador*, Dr. Rose (2006) concluded from her province-wide study that music and art “are not always available to students, nor they are always provided the time allocations mandated by the Department of Education” (p. 28). There has not been a study of this scope since this one.

The purpose of the current study was to investigate elements that influence the delivery of primary-elementary music education in public schools in the metro area of St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, especially as those elements relate to class time allocation. The research questions included asking about the current context, the process of decision-making, and potential opportunities/recommendations for the scheduling process for music class. This study was conducted over the course of the 2016-2017 school year.

I emailed an online survey link to music teachers at all 33 primary-elementary schools in the St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador metro area. The 10 responses to this survey allowed me to identify schools that may not have the prescribed time allocation for music as outlined in the Department of Education *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016). While Dr. Rose (2006) did not specify the grade levels in question, I focused on primary-elementary schools. At the junior high level there are many variations in how the curriculum is delivered, which would further complicate this preliminary part of my research. As well, the scope of the study is necessarily limited to the St. John’s metro region, because rural schools have their own unique set of complicating factors in this area. For example, in some cases small rural schools may not employ music specialists.

When the surveys were completed, I requested interviews with the principals of all 10 of the primary-elementary schools from which I had received completed surveys. I interviewed the administrators at these schools to determine their perceptions and attitudes about music education, as well as the motivation behind their programming and scheduling decisions as it relates to music education. In addition, I requested interviews with the music teachers at these same schools to determine their perceptions and understandings about the allocations of time and the possible impact on music curriculum implementation. I also gathered further information through interviews with relevant professionals/administrators at both the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (St. John's region) and the provincial Department of Education, to explore potential additional factors that have an impact on the allocations of time for music education in primary and elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador. A total of 15 interviews were completed, some via telephone (which were later transcribed) and others via email.

Why Qualitative Research?

Qualitative research “is the most robust and inclusive means of attempting to understand the complexities of education and processes of schooling” (Cooley, 2013, p.258). Given the number of players involved in the decision-making processes in the field of education, and the potential impact of those decisions on the education of the province's youth, it is important to be as inclusive as possible in selecting research participants.

Qualitative research commonly begins with “an exploratory research question about what people think, and how they act, and why” (Tite, 2010). In this study, my first question was about the current context of classroom music time allocation. The subsequent questions were

about what administrators and other key players think about the value of classroom music education in primary-elementary schools, and how they make decisions about the allocation of time for the teaching and learning of music as per the guidelines set by the provincial Department of Education. What are the issues and challenges around allocations of time and the scheduling of music classes, and is there consistency from school to school in implementing current provincial guidelines? What are the perceptions and understandings of music educators and other partners (e.g. Department of Education and School District music programs specialists) in the delivery of primary-elementary music education?

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) state that in qualitative research “the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis”, and “the human instrument has shortcomings and biases that can have an impact on the study” (p. 16). In this study I addressed the issue of human subjectivity, as I investigated how administrators subjectively view music education. “A driving aim of ... qualitative work must be to attempt to understand a social experience or phenomena in the terms of those involved and to think through it in terms of an observer (laden, of course, with one’s biases)” (Cooley, 2013, p. 258). As an observer, my own subjectivity came into play as well. As a music educator and advocate for music education, I have strong beliefs and values in this area. Fortunately, as Cooley writes, “the notion of the activist researcher needs space in the academy for sheltering and growth” (2013, p. 257).

Furthermore, Merriam and Tisdell write that qualitative researchers “are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (2016, p. 6). As an experienced educator, I am conscious of the complexities of scheduling and programming for an entire school. Cooley further comments that an important goal of qualitative research “must be to attempt to

understand a social experience or phenomenon in the terms of those involved” (2013, p. 258). This is why I aimed to discover - through interviews with school administrators, music educators, and provincial government and school district personnel - the context in which administrators are making decisions about music education, and how these decisions impact teachers, students, and the overall delivery of primary-elementary music education in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Finally, validity was also an important consideration in my research. This is why I gathered data about how music classes are scheduled in advance of the interviews. Specifically, I analyzed how many hours of music class students are participating in each cycle, which allowed me to see any discrepancy between the percentage of music class time recommended in the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) and reality. In this way I ensured that there is “a close fit between the data and what people actually say and do” (Tite, 2010).

Methodology

This research takes the form of a case study. A case study is “an in-depth examination of a single social unit (individual, group or beyond) or phenomenon, although in some instances this could include a small number of exemplars” (Dick, 2014, p. 86). In this case study, I completed an in-depth study of the phenomenon of music class scheduling in public primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, with several schools chosen as exemplars. Dick further wrote that in a case study “the unit or phenomenon is studied within its normal context” (p. 86). In order to follow this recommendation I looked at how music is regularly scheduled; in average schools, in an average year, within the Newfoundland and Labrador context.

I determined that a case study is the most appropriate methodology to use in order to adequately address the research questions as outlined in chapter 1. The case study approach allows the researcher to do an in-depth study of a relatively small sample. Using this methodology gave me the freedom to explore not only the current state of music class time allocation in these schools, but also some of the reasons behind that current state.

According to Snyder (2012), a qualitative case study should contain description that is thick and rich. Snyder further wrote that a “robust case study” is marked by “approaching the research with flexibility, willingness to modify the research design as it unfolded, and continual interaction with participants in the analysis of the data” (p. 19).

Tite (2010) wrote that a case study typically uses an extreme reputational sampling strategy. She went on to write that the rationale of a case study is “to study a bounded system such as a process, activity or situation that is either typical or extreme or recommended for some reason”.

In this case study, I was interested in learning more about the phenomenon of instructional time allocation for music in Newfoundland and Labrador schools; and potentially, the under-representation of music education class in primary and elementary schools, as per prescribed time allocations by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Gall, Gall & Borg in Sogunro (2012) wrote that qualitative research studies “make little use of numbers or statistics but instead rely heavily on verbal data and subjective analysis” (p. 4). Hence, this study made great use of interviews with administrators, teachers, and relevant school district and provincial government personnel. Verbal data is at the crux of qualitative research, and this qualitative case study is no exception. One must also consider that all analysis has a degree of subjectivity, since the researcher must work with the data in order to analyze it.

As a qualitative researcher, I acknowledge this fact and aimed to accept it while keeping my work as valid as possible.

I recognize that the results of this study are not generalizable to the rest of Newfoundland and Labrador, let alone other provinces or countries. However, as Schofield pointed out, “many qualitative researchers actively reject generalizability as a goal” (2009, p. 70). This is because qualitative researchers view each case as very much individual and unique. The same author went on to write “the idea of sampling from a population of sites in order to generalize to the larger population is simply and obviously unworkable in all but the rarest situations for qualitative researchers, who often take several years to produce an intensive case study of one or a very small number of sites” (2009, p. 74). As my main goal was to establish the reasons behind administrator decisions about time allocation and scheduling, I am aware that these reasons differ on a case-by-case basis.

Both informal and formal theory are an important part of this research study. In consideration of informal theory, I have to remember that I am researcher-as-instrument. Merriam and Tisdell wrote that “Rather than trying to eliminate these biases or ‘subjectivities,’ it is important ... to make clear how they may be shaping the collection and interpretation of data” (2016, p. 16). For example, I come to my research with the assumption that music education is important to the education of all students, and is therefore worth advocating for.

“Symbolic interactionism focuses on the *symbolic* dimensions of human communication” (Tracy, 2013, p. 51). Athens (2010) went into further detail in stating “the central tenet on which symbolic interaction rests is that people’s actions result from their interpretations of the situations that confront them in their everyday lives” (p. 92). This theory is a critical part of my study, as the *Program of Studies* document (Government of

Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) is only as effective as the interpretations of it in the minds of school administrators. The other 2 formal theories I mentioned in Chapter 1 (Bandura's social cognitive theory and Bourdieu's social field theory) were also critical to this study.

Methods

Methods differ from methodology in that methods are the strategies used for data collection. Tite (2010) divided the possible methods for qualitative research into two categories: observation & interviewing, and non-interactive methods.

This study began with a non-interactive method, in the form of an emailed survey to music educators in primary-elementary schools in the area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. See Appendix B for a list of survey questions. Following analysis of the school schedules and time allocations for music, I moved from non-interactive methods into Tite's (2010) second category: observation and interviewing. At this stage I contacted and requested an interview with school administrators (principals and/or assistant principals), as well as music teachers and individuals in relevant positions at both the School District and provincial Department of Education. See Appendix C for interview guides. I completed interviews (via telephone or email) with all those participants who agreed to my interview request. These professionals were able to provide great insight into the complex world of instructional time allocation.

LeCompte and Preissle (as cited in Tite, 2010) list a variety of sampling techniques that I could have drawn upon to select the schools which participated in the more in-depth interviewing process. In this study the main sampling technique utilized was purposive sampling; however, I also used elements of extreme case and convenience sampling techniques. In purposive sampling the researcher chooses "participants who have specific characteristics or

features” (Higginbottom, 2004, p. 15). In this case study, the aforementioned “specific characteristic” was the scheduling of music class - I looked for schools that followed the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) recommendations, as well as any that scheduled music above or below the recommended time allocation.

Extreme case sampling is used when “the individual or site selected varies extremely from the norm for a given population” (LeCompte and Preissle in Tite, 2010). After I surveyed the schools, I looked through the data for extreme cases or outliers – that is, those schools that vary most from the prescribed scheduling of music class.

As well as the above sampling techniques, there was a small degree of convenience sampling. Convenience sampling involves “the selection of the most accessible subjects” (Marshall, 1996, p. 523). It was only possible to interview those administrators and other relevant professionals who were willing to participate in the interview and research process.

Data Analysis

In the 2016 edition of *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*, authors Merriam and Tisdell wrote extensively on the topic of data analysis. Their description of the connection between data collection and analysis is quite clear:

Data collection and analysis are simultaneous activities in qualitative research. Analysis begins with the first interview, the first observation, the first document read. Emerging insights, hunches, and tentative hypotheses direct the next phase of data collection, which in turn leads to the refinement or reformulation of questions, and so on. It is an interactive process throughout that allows the investigator to produce believable and trustworthy findings. (p. 191)

I thus resolved to consider potential analysis for all data in this study as it was collected.

The next question was how exactly to go about data analysis in a qualitative study such as this one. Merriam and Tisdell stated that data analysis is “the process of making sense out of the data”, and “the process used to answer your research questions” (2016, p. 202). In this context, “making sense” involves finding recurring themes in the data, which could potentially provide answers to the research questions. Once those themes have been identified, they must be coded so that the researcher is able to organize the data in such a way as to answer the research questions.

At the beginning of the process of data collection and analysis, coding is fairly open. Open coding means the researcher is open to any potential emerging themes. The researcher might also alternate between looking at the overall situation and individual responses. Of course, throughout this process one must be aware of and guard against personal biases as much as possible (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

In the beginning of the data analysis process, the qualitative researcher will find many potential categories with which to code the data. As the research progresses, researchers will gradually narrow these down to 5-6 overall themes. There are certain necessary features found in categories of qualitative data analysis. Categories should be labelled very specifically, with clear titles that allow the researcher to keep the data organized. However, the categories ought also to be exhaustive. This means that every bit of data deemed “important” by the researcher can fit into one of the aforementioned categories. Finally, categories must be mutually exclusive, meaning that each piece of relevant data may only fit in one of the categories (Merriam & Tisdell 2016, pp. 213-214).

Data management is a crucial, if painstaking, part of any study, whether qualitative or quantitative. Merriam & Tisdell (2016) broke qualitative data management into 3 sections. The first of these is preparation, which includes practical considerations after raw data collection, such as typing notes and transcribing interviews. The second is identification, during which the researcher will code the data and begin to assign categories. The third and final section of Merriam & Tisdell's data management is manipulation. It is at this stage that the researcher narrows down the number of categories and begins to identify emerging themes (p. 222).

As far as data analysis is concerned, it differs slightly based on the type of qualitative research involved. Qualitative research may take the form of phenomenological analysis, grounded theory, ethnographic, narrative, or a case study. While my research fell under the category of case study, for many types of analysis "the basic strategy is still inductive and comparative" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 227).

Specific to a case study, it is important that after data analysis, the researcher is able to project in his or her writing a clear grasp of the case at hand. Merriam & Tisdell stated that "Conveying an understanding of the case is the paramount consideration in analyzing the data" (2016, p. 233). Through many thorough readings of all the data in a case study, a qualitative researcher codes important information into categories, which in turn provide emerging themes and allow for an accurate summary report.

In this study, I began with a list of potential categories of analysis based on the research questions. As I collected my data I added to this list, so that when I had completed all the interviews I had a fairly comprehensive collection of categories. From there, I compiled all the interview data and coded it based on the categories of analysis, occasionally changing the list slightly by adding or removing a category as necessary.

This case study might also be considered a multiple-case study. Data has been collected from several schools, allowing for comparison of data not only from multiple sources within a school, but also between different schools. Merriam & Tisdell describe these “two stages of analysis” as “the *within-case analysis* and the *cross-case analysis*.” (2016, p. 234). As it applies to this study, the within-case analysis involved looking at various sources of information (the survey and interviews) from within one school. Cross-case analysis involved comparing data from different schools.

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are important considerations in any academic study; however, they may be considered differently in qualitative research. Leung (2015) wrote “Validity in qualitative research means ‘appropriateness’ of the tools, processes, and data” (p. 325). Meanwhile, on the subject of reliability the same author wrote “the essence of reliability for qualitative research lies with consistency” (p. 326). Merriam & Tisdell (2016) seem to have taken a similar view in their book, stating “Ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the investigation in an ethical manner” (p. 237).

A researcher’s first consideration in this area is internal validity. In qualitative research, “Internal validity deals with the question of how research findings match reality” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 242). The question in internal validity is “are the findings *credible*, given the data presented?” (p. 243). A good way to ensure internal validity is to use triangulation of data.

Carter et al. (2014) described triangulation as “the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of phenomena” (p. 545). Later in the same article the authors elaborated on this definition, stating that triangulation

can also be considered “a qualitative research strategy to test validity through the convergence of information from different sources” (p. 545).

There are 4 generally accepted types of triangulation. According to both Merriam & Tisdell (2016, p. 245) and Carter et al (2014, p. 545) these types are:

- Method triangulation
- Investigator triangulation
- Theory triangulation
- Data source triangulation

While all these types of triangulation are beneficial to the validity of qualitative research, method triangulation and data source triangulation are the types used in this study.

Method triangulation “involves the use of multiple methods of data collection about the same phenomenon” (Carter et al., p. 545). In the case of this study, the phenomenon being studied was the scheduling of classroom music in primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador. The methods of data collection included document analysis, a survey, and interviews.

Data source triangulation is the practice of acquiring data from different “types of people” (Carter et al., 2014, p. 545). The aforementioned documents include publicly available information such as the provincial government Department of Education’s *Program of Studies* (2016); the surveys were emailed to every teacher of classroom music in the sample group; and the interviews were conducted with teachers and administrators in selected schools, as well as relevant personnel at the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education. This variety of sources provides a firm grounding upon which to base analysis and conclusions drawn in the final

chapter of this thesis. After all, triangulation “is a powerful strategy for increasing the credibility or internal validity of your research” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 245).

An additional way to increase internal validity in qualitative research (beyond triangulation) is respondent validation, also known as member checks. This involves the researcher soliciting feedback on the emerging themes and preliminary findings from some of the respondents (Merriam & Tisdell 2016). The respondent validation process ensures that the researcher’s interpretation of the results match with the respondents’ intended message.

Reliability is another important consideration in any type of research, but must be treated differently in qualitative versus quantitative research. In quantitative research, the word reliability “refers to the extent to which test scores are free of measurement error” (Muijs, 2004, p. 71). By contrast, in qualitative research the question of reliability comes down to “*whether the results are consistent with the data collected*” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 251). Any researcher must be conscientious in his or her data analysis, but when it comes to reliability, a qualitative researcher needs to constantly check throughout the process of data analysis to ensure the findings match the message that the participants were trying to convey. In this way, “if the findings of the study are consistent with the data presented, the study can be considered dependable” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 252).

As for external validity in qualitative research, extrapolation is more appropriate than generalization (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This preference is because qualitative research deals with specific settings and participants. Transferability is naturally limited because the original researcher cannot prepare for every potential setting to which others may wish to transfer the study findings. Thus, qualitative research tends to employ reader generalizability. “Reader or user generalizability involves leaving the extent to which a study’s findings apply to other

situations up to the people in those situations” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 256). In this way the user of the study (and not the researcher) can determine the extent to which the study is useful in his or her context. As it pertains to this study, it is up to the reader to discern whether findings in the specific context of metro area primary-elementary schools in St. John’s, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada would be applicable to his or her circumstances.

Audit Trail

An audit trail is essentially a log of how the data was collected and analyzed. This can be kept in the form of a research journal, or in records memoranda written by the researcher. The audit trail should be a detailed account of how the study was conducted (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For the purpose of this study, an audit trail was kept in the form of an electronic document, in which was recorded such information as dates and times of interviews and significant steps in the process of data collection and analysis.

Summary

A great deal of research, along with careful thought and consideration, went into the methods and methodology of this qualitative case study. Through document analysis, the survey, and interviews, I believe I was able to collect the data I needed to answer my research questions. This data is presented, organized under categories of analysis, in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4 - Presentation of Data

Introduction

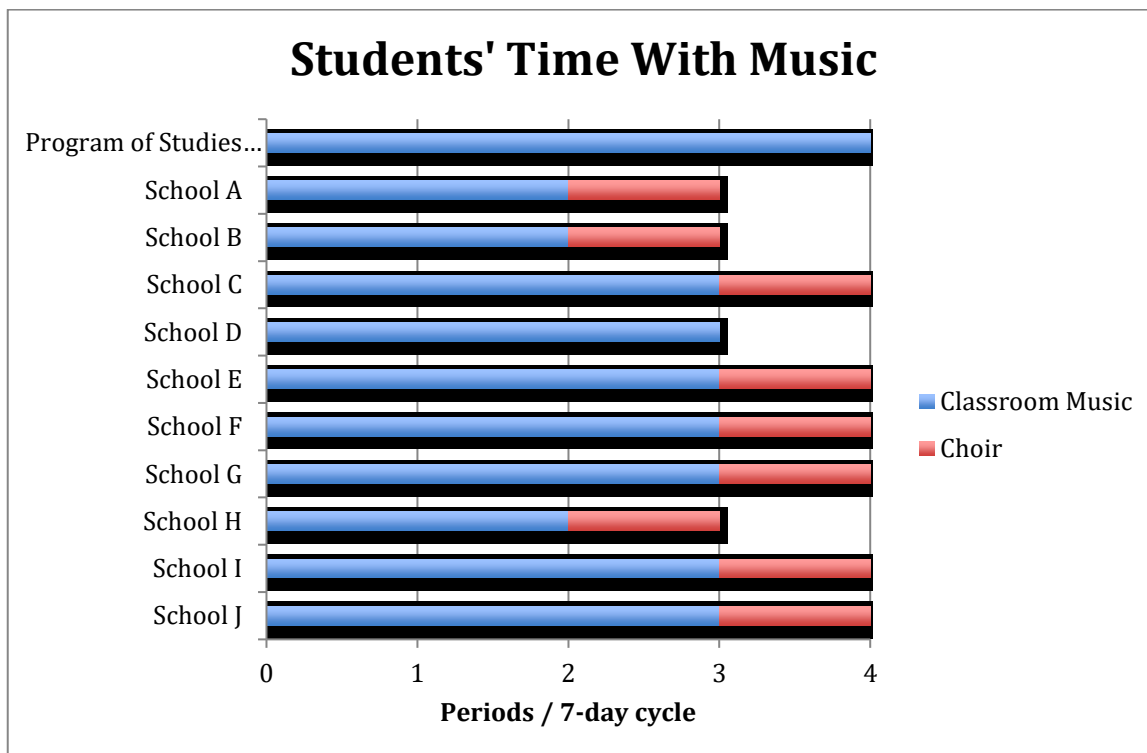
This research is a qualitative case study investigating the scheduling of and time allocation for classroom music in primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador. This study involved collecting data via document analysis, a survey, and interviews. These methods allowed me to answer my research questions, of which there are 3. I looked at the current context of music education in participating schools, how decisions are made when it comes to scheduling of and time allocation for classroom music, and potential opportunities for improvement.

Throughout the next two chapters schools will be referred to by letter (School A, School B, etc.), while individual participants will be referred to by 5-letter code (see Appendix A for details).

Survey Results

All the primary-elementary schools to which the survey was sent included some combination of grades kindergarten to 6. Those same schools all operate on 7-day cycles, with 30-minute periods and 10 periods per day. All 10 of the primary-elementary schools that responded reported having 3 music periods per cycle, although the responses broke down into 3 basic categories. Three schools reported having 3 music classes plus a class for choir, two schools reported having 3 music classes in total (2 music classes plus a choir class), and the remaining 5 schools did not specify whether choir was included in the reported 3 music classes per cycle or counted separately. Further clarification on this point was received through the interview process. The final result is that 6 of the participating schools offer students 3 music classes and one choir class per cycle, 3 of the participating schools offer students 2 music

classes and one choir class per cycle, and the 1 remaining participating school offers students 3 music classes per cycle, with no choir time. This data (survey data including clarification from interviews) is represented in the following chart.



On the same survey, participant music teachers were asked whether they have any other teaching or administrative duties in their schools, as well as if they had any additional comments. The vast majority of respondents said they do not teach any other subjects besides music, they do not have any other administrative duties, and they had no other comments.

Interview Results

The following interview data includes quotes from both music teachers and principals, as well as other relevant administrators from the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education. The

data is organized under distinct, labelled categories of analysis, which emerged from the research questions as well as the interview process. These categories are:

- Current context
 - Class time
 - Choir time
 - Band time
- Process of decision making - Factors that affect scheduling
 - Physical space
 - Time
 - Human resources
 - *Program of Studies*
 - Student needs
 - Teacher preference
 - Other subject requirements
- Attitudes – The value of music education
 - Self-expression
 - Experiencing success
 - Enjoying school
 - Culture
 - Intellectual benefits
 - Educating the whole child
 - Inclusion

- Perceptions
- Challenges
 - Challenges in scheduling
 - Challenges in covering the curriculum within the given time

Current context:

Class time. At the beginning of the interviews, participants were asked about the current context in their schools for music class time. This question was about classroom music specifically, not including choir time. Some participants simply stated the facts: “3 music classes and one choir” (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017); “each class has 3 music periods a cycle. However, one of those 3 periods they are joined with other classes at their grade level as kind of a choir music period” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). For administrators above the individual school level, the first question was about how scheduling decisions are made. One administrator wrote in an email interview “Scheduling of instructional time is site-sensitive and falls under the purview of the school’s administrator” (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017).

Other participants commented further with opinions on current class time. For example, participant SHPTI commented “to me the number of periods that we have here is not adequate. I would prefer 3 music, at a minimum 3 classroom music periods and a choir as separate. But here, I guess their decision was made with the staffing allocation that, you know, everyone gets 3 periods but it’s only 2 that are the classroom music and one is a combined group for a choir” (personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Finally, some participants seemed to just realize during the interview that their students' time in music class was not equal to the recommended percentage in the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016). "We only have 90 minutes, right? Three 30s in 7 days, we only really have 90 minutes of class time...So we're not even up to the recommended, right? So we're really lacking, kind of, another 15 minutes somewhere, right?" (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017).

Another participant commented "obviously if we're only doing 4.2% that's not as much as we should have, it should have more than that. In some cases, well, if we have 3 plus a choir and they want to include your choir as part of your allocation, you're probably making it up there. But still, I mean, I would like to see them more than 3 times a cycle, you know, 4 times would be great" (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017).

Choir time. The participants were generally more verbose on the topic of choir time, possibly because there was much more variety in how choir was implemented. The principals, whose responses are included first in this section, understandably had less to say on the topic than the music teachers, who were asked about their ability to cover curriculum outcomes during choir time.

Three principals commented on choir class time. One simply listed "30 minutes per cycle for grades 1-6" (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017), while another principal explained in slightly more detail, "We have over 120 students per grade level with almost 900 students all together. Grades one to six have 2 periods of choir scheduled for 60 plus students each time." (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). The principal from School C further elaborated: "So in our schedule, for example, students could receive three 30-minute music classes but we have extra classes then in the music schedule, so we

provided each grade level with a choir class.” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017).

Another relevant administrator (beyond the school level) also commented on choir time as a way of covering the music curriculum, saying:

“our choir classes are co-curricular ensembles, right? And so, if you read the opening of the curriculum guide, you will see that there is an expectation that co-curricular ensembles are something that support the singing-making and music-making and the experiences that we want to have in our classrooms. So, that’s where an administrator looks at what they have to do in order to meet all the course curriculum outcomes for all the courses that are offered in their school. And they decide, do I have a choir period? Is a multi-grade? Is it per grade level? That depends on how much time that they have. And so, I support having choir periods in the school, because I know how that supports the curriculum that we have to meet. And there’s other benefits that happen, there’s other learnings that take place in that time that are cross-curricular, actually. You know, we can meet other outcomes that way. So, yes, I support the choir periods, for sure.”
(ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Many of the music teachers who completed interviews had opinions on and experience with choir time in their schools. For example, one said:

“Students take a mandatory choir period once a cycle to increase their music time. I understand that many schools have mandatory choir time, which I do not have a problem with... but this is most often on top of three music periods, not two. Choir is usually used for performance outcome delivery, but I often have to use the time to

achieve other outcomes – formal listening, specifically – which I think is to the detriment of the students.” (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

The music teacher at School A stated, “choir should absolutely be a mode of delivery of the music curriculum. Right now, however, I think it is used as a holding pattern in many situations, so that other goals might be achieved” (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017). The music teacher at School B wrote about needing more support during choir in her email interview:

“At School B, I have three classes at a time – upwards of 75 students. I have heard horror stories from other teachers who have between 4-6 classes at a time for choir groups, with very little other adult support. If choir is to become a legitimate mode of delivery – and I think it could – the thought behind choir has to change. Numbers in choir groups have to decrease, other adult support has to be introduced consistently, and the mentality of choir as an “alternate activity” for all students to do while other school decisions are made has to change.” (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

Meanwhile, when asked in a telephone interview about whether choir is a mode of delivery of the curriculum, another teacher said:

“Yes, I would. I mean, there’s certain outcomes that do involve singing and that sort of thing. I often try to in choir periods include, you know, concepts that you’re working on in class, and anything like your part-singing, ostinatos, that’s all reaching outcomes. The only thing is it’s very difficult to assess during choir on any kind of an individual basis because the numbers are so large. So you know that assessment would have to take

place in their regular music period. But, I certainly think choir can assist in delivering the curriculum.” (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017)

Even a music teacher who is not directly affected by choir scheduling had an opinion:

“I don’t have choir as a part of my schedule but I do think, in limited amounts, choir is a useful mode of delivery in assessing singing. It shouldn’t come at the expense of music class as choir does not include the 1-on-1 component that is critical for student success with some of our course outcomes. Instrument playing, movement/dance, play based learning through music are very important and are not possible in the same way during a choir period with 100 students.” (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

One music teacher in particular was quite vocal on the subject of choir time and went into great detail explaining the thought process behind her opinion. She began by explaining that

“choir is not supposed to replace the classroom music time, so in those classes, we are advised one class cannot be choir. When I went to my school, when I was teaching elementary, first stream, last period, 2:30, all of a sudden I had 4 classes of grade 6s coming down for choir. And I said “hang on, this is music class time.” “No, we always have choir now”. I was like “No, it’s not”. So, I had to bring that up with the administration. Three classes have to be assigned as music curriculum classroom time. Not choir.” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Then she spoke about the logistics of trying to have a choir with so many young children.

“And I find when I have done choir it’s been the extra half hour, you just get a half hour, right? At most. My school right now has a half hour extra, we have no choir because there’s 8 streams of children, K-3. I cannot and I have not figured out a way yet

to manage that. Because you don't want choir to be babysitting, you want choir to have a group, you know, a specified number of children. I've worked with up to 100. I would take 100, but still, we have so many! We have double that. And then, it has to, you know, they're all so little, and I have to get them, bring them down, so you're not going to get your, a good half-hour of class, you know?" (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Finally, she responded to the question about whether choir time is used to cover curricular outcomes.

"I think in choir, if you have all the children you can cover some topics, obviously. That touch the curriculum. You can do the basics, you can do tempo, dynamics, style of music, all that stuff. But choir repertoire is not classroom repertoire. Your choices for choir are themed, they're a little bit longer, you're not doing your, 'I'm going to do a do song today, and it has 8 notes in it, and that's all we're singing for the concert'. In the real world, that doesn't happen. You know, If you were presenting to the parents in a class-type thing, like 'this is something we do in class', that would be different. But if you're presenting a choir and singing Christmas time, at the arts center, you're not doing Doggy, Doggy, Where's Your Bone?." (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Most music teachers seemed to feel similarly about the concept of choir as a mode for curriculum delivery.

"So that's my feelings on choir. I love choir. I used to have 2 and 3 choirs. I'm upset that this is not happening at my school, but like I said, it's just numbers and space and time and it's just not working this year. But you can't teach the full curriculum in choir.

But you can overlap some topics. Some elements of music will obviously come out, you know?” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Band time. The majority of respondents made very little if any comment on the topic of band time. This was due to the fact that I contacted classroom music teachers, who are often separate from itinerant band instructors. However, the question was asked and the data included here in order to be quite clear as to whether or not band is included in the time allocation for classroom music. One former itinerant band teacher, who is now in a different position, described her experiences:

“My program was a pull-out program. And so, I dealt with 4 schools in every year that I did that. So I was working closely with the music teacher and the principal in deciding for me what days I would be there, because I would share the classroom, or I would need a space to have my class. And so, I had insight into knowing what that administrator in those cases was considering. But for me, my classroom wasn’t directly involved. So I didn’t have to consider choir classes or the number of times per cycle or those things, because where I had a pull-out program, I built the schedule in each school based on the spaces I had available.” (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Another interviewee, a principal, described a similar situation for band in her school:

“And the band person is external, and the biggest limit for the band person in scheduling is space in our building, currently. So he’s just scheduled in where the space is available for, I think he’s here 2 and a half days or 1 and a half days.” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017)

Other comments on band time were largely the same, if more brief. However, one music teacher made an intriguing statement about her school using band time as a way to supplement classroom music time and meet the requirements for music class time:

“To further increase their music time, students at School B are almost universally told to participate in band, which on the surface I think is fantastic. But, band is meant to be a separate program, to support and develop classroom music, not to force a situation where students meet their music timing allotments.” (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

Process of Decision Making - Factors that Affect Scheduling

The largest section of data in my interviews was under the category of “Factors that Affect Scheduling”. As such, I broke this data down into more specific sub-categories: Physical Space, Time, Human Resources, *Program of Studies*, Student Needs, Teacher Preference, and Other Subject Requirements.

Physical space. Space in the school was consistently listed by both music teachers and administrators as an important factor that affects how scheduling happens at their primary-elementary schools. One music teacher described the struggle in detail:

“Another accommodation was made for overlapping space, so if the cafeteria was used... because no school has 2 gyms, 2 music rooms, so if the cafeteria was being used for gym, band, and extra music, you had to make sure that those weren’t clashing as well. So, an extraordinary kind of scheduling effort was needed for those things in our school.” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

The same music teacher further described the difficulty of giving students equal experiences in the variety of spaces she has had to deal with.

“Right? And then, as I was saying, the space is limited, and you know, that influences our school, and it changes what you can do, if you are assigned to teach in a regular classroom for a certain portion of the day. So I had cafeteria time, then I was in classrooms sometimes; I could not do what I was doing in the music room in the classroom ... I don’t care how big your trolley is, you cannot do the same. I couldn’t make a circle in most classrooms, because of the desk space and all that. So, you know, that’s a whole lot of things, so what I would do, because it does affect the question, it’s a lot of, you know, information for you to work with, but it affects the schedule. For example, when I taught grade 6, the grade 6 afternoon slot I had, the grade 6 classroom was never big enough, with lots of desks in them and all that, I offered - I asked to use the computer lab. So booked out computer lab time and 1 class out of 3 in an afternoon slot I had my grade 6’s do Music Ace and Composer Biographies. So it was worthwhile effort, you know, it was a worthwhile subject to do, dealing with the curriculum, but my choice of space changed because I wanted to get the most out of the environment I had. Right? ... Instead of me trying to take 30 grade 6’s in that room with a pile of desks for one half-hour, clear out the floor and do a circle game, or do xylophone. I can’t get all that up over the stairs, I can’t make the circle with all the desks, it takes half the time to move everything, so I was trying to take advantage of the best time allotment for the 30 minutes for the children.” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Other music teachers described similar issues with physical space in their schools, particularly sharing larger spaces such as the gymnasium or cafeteria with their school’s physical education teacher. The music teacher at School A wrote in an email interview that “the gym teacher is half gym/half classroom. The schedule is influenced by when she teaching gym

and when she is teaching in the classroom” (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

School B’s music teacher described sharing space with both the physical education and band teachers:

“My schedule is limited to two cycle days, as the gym is split between the gym teacher, the band teacher, and me. From what I can gather, the schedule has run this way for at least the last five years, and probably longer. This is due to the size of the school – two elementary classrooms are attached mobile units, and the IRT and ESL teachers have closet sized ‘classrooms’.” (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

She then went on to theorize that the lack of space in her school may be a reason the students have less music class time than is recommended in the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016): “At School B, because of the rotating schedule they have created due to lack of space, I have only two classroom music classes with each grade – only 60 minutes of a prescribed 84 in primary and 105 in elementary” (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

Three of the principals who completed interviews also commented on the challenges in creating school-wide schedules while limited by physical space in the building. One in particular listed it as a major factor:

“Right now the main thing is a space to have music and the size of each class. All spaces in our school is now being used for regular classrooms. Therefore, the spaces that are left are small so the teacher with the smaller class on any given day takes the smaller room.” (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017)

While another administrator listed physical space in a list of other factors that affect scheduling at the school. “Well, obviously, number of personnel, students with needs, personnel to provide coverage of those students with needs, class size, space for the scheduling - space for the classes to happen. So yes, those are the things” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017).

Finally, one principal actually said she *doesn't* experience challenges with physical space at her school: “we’re very fortunate here because we do have a music room and a band room, so we do not have, we don’t have any outside pressures right now, in terms of space” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Time. The music teachers and principals who participated in this research did not comment much on how the total amount of instructional time influences scheduling at their schools. However, one of the other administrators (beyond the school level) who completed an interview told a story of her experience trying to help principals with this issue:

“I’ve had instances in, where principals have called me because they thought there wasn’t enough music, and they wanted to find ways to give more because of the impact that it’s had on the school. I mean I’ve had those conversations, with administrators asking me to come up with assistance as to, how can they have more choir, or how can they have more. But it wasn’t because the teacher wasn’t getting what was scheduled or what was available. It wasn’t because they weren’t getting their 5%, it was because they wanted to find ways to enrich the program at the school.” (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Human resources. Many participants mentioned some form of human resources as a factor when it comes to scheduling of class time. Specifically, most of them talked about specialist teacher allocations for their schools.

One principal perhaps phrased it most simply: “Like all other subjects, it comes down strictly to specialist allocation. This administrator believes in the value of the arts but can only work within the human resources provided” (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

Other principals reported similar human resources-related concerns when it came to scheduling. When asked about it, one said “the staffing, you know, what’s our unit allocation for music” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). Another responded “Staffing determines number of periods of music provided ... Classes will have one hour of back to back music and gym and the other periods are on separate days” (SIPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). The same administrator also mentioned “availability of student assistants” (SIPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Some principals also talked about the challenge of coordinating schedules with other schools that “share” the same specialist teachers. One explained it the following way: “School administrators make the schedule with input from phys. ed., music and band teachers, who all are ‘shared’ with other schools. So, schedules are co-ordinated among the schools involved” (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

Another principal listed as a factor “Availability of staff (shared between schools)” (SIPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). When asked about what factors affect scheduling, a final administrator stated “The days the music teacher is here. She is .75 position.

We try to go alternate days for music. The band teacher is shared among 3 schools. He does his own scheduling” (SFPEI, personal communication, February 20, 2017).

Many of the music teachers who completed interviews reported similar concerns about scheduling of part-time specialist teachers. One music teacher spoke briefly about her current situation:

And we also take into consideration we have one and a half gym and one and a half music. The other half-time teacher teaches at another school. So those days and times have to be slotted and accommodated, because another school’s schedule - this other teacher works with another school’s schedule. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

The same music teacher then further elaborated on a more complicated scheduling situation she had to work with in the past:

So, that’s what we have to do. Now, I have in my experience, at the same school when our school was K-6, we have had the experience of having to accommodate 6 different schools’ schedules, because we had a band teacher, two gym, and two music, so we had 5 teachers; the band teacher being in 4 schools and only certain days, so we used to block him out; then the other gym teacher being in 2 places, so you had to make sure it wasn’t - you know, it was tricky between those two schools, which day was he here, which day was he there. Another accommodation was made because one school probably started and ended at different times than our school. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Finally, she commented on the element of specialist teacher allocations.

...what's the allotment of teachers, because yearly the allotment could change. We could have 4 streams one year, 5 streams next. One grade level could have more streams than another grade level, depending on our numbers of children, and the number of teachers allocated by population of the school... So that's another factor, that we wouldn't have any control over, but when we're plugging in we have to make sure that those numbers all fit. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

One other music teacher commented on the particular challenges of staffing in smaller schools.

I think most schools with full time teaching staff make these allotments work in similar ways, but in smaller schools, as staffing is cut, so-called "creativity" in curriculum delivery often ends up in specialist area cuts. (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

While another spoke about how she gets to have some input into the scheduling of music classes at her school. "So, basically, we kind of do our own, but we're, you know, I guess limited in terms of time because, you know, you're a full-time person and these are the people you have to teach, sort of thing." (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017)

Finally, one of the other administrators (beyond the school level) I interviewed explained in detail how scheduling happens at most schools in Newfoundland and Labrador:

So, an administrator looks at the allocations that they have, for all of their programming for the school as a whole, and they get so much for specialists, so much they have to different programs. And specialists you might have your physical education teacher, your guidance, your music teacher, and maybe even some other things to consider. So, they look at that as a whole and they would build their schedule that way. Above the

principal level is a Senior Educational Officer, and we say SEO, or Senior Educational Officer, and that person has a family of schools. So one SEO may have a number of K-6 schools or K-12 schools or intermediate only or high school only. And maybe if the administrator requests, they can get some supports, and an SEO may be involved in scheduling. But primarily, it's the role of the administrator. (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Program of Studies. Both the music teachers and principals who completed interviews commonly mentioned the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016), at least in passing, as a factor that contributes to scheduling decisions at their schools.

In an email interview, the principal from School A wrote “All scheduling decisions basically come down to allocation. We have an expected amount of periods for each subject as outlined by the Department of Ed, and we stick as close to that as possible” (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

The principal of School C said in a telephone interview that the school's schedule is “completed with administration, and we ensure that we have 3 gym, 3 music classes” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017). The same principal also listed “required allocation time or required time for the curriculum to be covered” as a factor that affects scheduling.

Two other principals made brief comments on the topic in email interviews: “All scheduling is based on the recommended allotment in the program of studies.” (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017) and simply “complying with Program of Studies” (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

Another principal who mentioned following the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) wrote that he makes decisions “Based on allocation and

providing each class with equal opportunity to access all curricular areas. Scheduling is done by the principal.” (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

Three schools also had music teachers who commented on scheduling based on the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016). The music teacher from School D said in a telephone interview that scheduling “takes many days, cause we’ll start off, and we have to make sure of the number of minutes...” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). Another music teacher spoke about how classroom teachers schedule their time with the students. “Classroom teachers then do up their own schedule based upon the, I guess the allocations within the Program of Studies” (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017). An additional music teacher who mentioned the *Program of Studies* offered more of an opinion. “I think the language of the Program of Studies is a bit loose, so that there is flexibility around what these percentages mean, and how they should be allotted” (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

One of the other administrators (beyond the school level) who completed an interview had the following to say about scheduling as it relates to the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016). “Scheduling is determined by the Program of Studies and what has been allocated by the Department of Education. And the person who would make those decisions with regards to the scheduling per school is done at the administrative level” (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017).

Student needs. In this category comments are included from both music teachers and administrators about a variety of reasons for scheduling decisions that are related to what is perceived to be best for the students, or some aspect of student life that affects scheduling decisions.

When scheduling music class for the youngest children in the school, several interviewees reported practical considerations. The principal of School H said in a telephone interview, “the kindergartens aren’t done first thing in the morning or last period of the day because they would lose so much of those class periods, because they have to get ready for the end of the day” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). One of the music teachers also talked about the same issue; “For example, it’s difficult to put a kindergarten class at the very end of the day, for a few reasons. Mostly, getting them ready to go home takes forever” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). The same music teacher continued “Right? It’s hard to - sometimes we have to, because it’s the only period left - but we try to accommodate kindergartens not being first period or last period” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017).

Another factor related to student needs that one of the more experienced music educators spoke about was the need for music and physical education classes to be relatively equally spaced throughout the cycle, and for lessons not to be too long.

If you’re making a schedule for gym and music, you can’t have music on day 1, 2, and 3, and then not see the kids for 5 days. You really have to spread it out so at least there’s - you’re seeing them, you know, maybe one day, then a break, then another day, and a couple of days, then another day. Right? So more frequently is better. It’s like if the principal said, “Ok, you teach them for an hour.” Because one school we had 45 minutes. The primary classes got changed to 45 minutes because teachers wanted more prep time. Also another thing. They wanted “planning time”, they called it. So they wanted bigger chunks. So here we were as primary teachers with the kids for 45 minutes. The gym teacher - the kids were falling down, didn’t want to run after 10,

wanting 25 drinks, right? So you're not getting anything out of the kids. So, the length of time is affected, their productivity. And also, you can't have music day 1, 2, and 3, and then don't see them for 6 days. They have truly forgotten everything you've said, at a young age... You have to do it frequently and regularly and repetitively. That I definitely know." (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Three of the principals made other, shorter comments that related to making scheduling decisions based on student needs. One said in a telephone interview, "So it's more just what fits with the children in terms of their age and whether or not, you know, what's the best time for different age groups" (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). Another listed "...giving a variety of time slots for each class (some in am and others in pm)" as a factor that affects scheduling (SIPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). The principal of School B wrote in an email interview about "ensuring equal phys. ed. and music time for student groups..." (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

Finally, one music teacher mentioned overcrowding: "what also affected it was the overcrowding in our particular school. You know, all primary children affects the scheduling as well" (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017), and one principal mentioned a special extra music class: "So, you know, children that have pervasive needs have their own time slot that's over and above their classroom period" (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Teacher preference. In some cases, interviewees spoke and wrote about teacher (either music teacher or classroom teacher) preference being taken into account when it comes to scheduling of music classes in their primary-elementary schools.

Two of the music teachers referenced being given a set number of periods for each class, but having some freedom as to the scheduling of those classes. For example, the music teacher from School D said “the gym teacher and I take on scheduling gym and music classes. So we decide - we don’t get to decide how many minutes. So, all the music is 3 periods in a 7 day cycle” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). A music teacher from School C said she and the other music teacher at the school “were allowed to get together and figure out our own schedule” (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017). The principal from School H reiterated this point. “I’ve always allowed the music and the gym teacher to do up the schedule. Like I give them what their allotment is and then they do up the schedule themselves” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

More specific elements of teacher preference were also mentioned in the interviews. One music teacher wrote “In terms of how gym and music are actually scheduled, they typically fall back-to-back in order to give classroom teachers a larger block of prep time” (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017). A principal commented about trying to take the music teacher’s preparation and mindset into account.

I prefer to consult with the teachers because they usually, you know, some of them would prefer to have grade 2, grade 2, grade 2, back to back, so that they’re kind of in the one mindset with what they’re teaching for the day. (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017)

Another principal also thought the idea of keeping things convenient for the teacher was important. “Also I try to keep grade levels close together so teacher preparation for music teacher is similar.” (SFPEI, personal communication, February 20, 2017).

Overall, it was a similar message from most interviewees: “specialist teachers are typically given input into creating their schedules for the year” (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017).

Other subject requirements. There was some variety in the responses when it came to the question of whether and/or how consideration for other subject comes into play in scheduling of music classes. The principal from School G gave a particularly thorough answer.

This is a large school so scheduling is done taking into consideration the following Music, gym, library, choir, band, Literacy Blocks and Numeracy Blocks. Literacy and Numeracy blocks are scheduled daily, the other subjects are spaced out throughout the 7 day cycle for each class so not to overlap with another subject. (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017)

This was not the only interviewee to mention literacy and numeracy blocks. The principal from School B also listed “ensuring uninterrupted literacy blocks” as an important factor affecting school-wide scheduling (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

Some interviewees also talked about how music class time is often also the classroom teacher’s preparation or meeting time. One administrator said in a telephone interview that “typically - and this is what I’ve heard from music teachers - is that, when those students are in their care, then the classroom teacher has a spare” (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017). A music teacher spoke about choir time being used as meeting time for the classroom teachers. At that school, “teachers have PLC (‘divisional’) meetings once a cycle. I teach choir during this time, so that all primary or all elementary teachers can be available for an hour to set learning goals and create long term planning guidelines” (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

The principal from School H stated that “Usually the gym and music schedule kind of dictates our classroom schedule...Right, like that’s where we start. We start with our gym and music and then everything else can work around that” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Attitudes - The Value of Music Education

Toward the end of the interviews, participants were invited to share their views on the value of music education to students in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as to their own students specifically. These responses have also been broken down into sub-categories including self-expression, experiencing success, enjoying school, culture, intellectual benefits, and educating the whole child.

Self-expression. One music teacher and two principals commented on how one of the advantages of music class is that it gives students a chance to express themselves. The music teacher from School A wrote in an email interview that her students “have such disadvantages in their lives in general, that when they come to school, and specifically to music classes they are eager to learn, eager to express themselves, eager to dance and move and clap and sing” (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

The principals who mentioned this topic had similarly positive things to say about music education. For example, one said, “I think it is very important for students to experience music and develop an appreciation for it. Our teacher exposes our students to a variety of musical experiences (genres, instruments, rhythm and dance). A wonderful creative outlet” (SIPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017). The other said that “Music increases the avenues of expression available to students” (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

Another administrator (beyond the school level) also extolled the value of music education as it relates to self-expression. “It provides an outlet for creativity and self-expression by engaging students’ imaginations, enabling exploration of their identities and fostering communication in many ways and at many levels” (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017)

Experiencing success. Another point, which was mentioned several times by different participants, was that of music class giving students the opportunity to experience success at school.

The principal at School A wrote “Class time for music is very important to students. It is our opportunity to expose them to diverse learning opportunities and give them a chance to shine” (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017). The music teacher at School B seemed to take a more negative view of the same value:

School B has a value for performance, but they only are able to see the value of music learning as it relates to their personal success. Concerts and assemblies are celebrated, but I do not believe that there is a great value of music for the intrinsic value of self-expression. It is interesting to note that School B has not cut their gym time – students get their proper amount of gym classes per cycle. The school community has put proper value on physical education, but not, I believe, on music education. (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

The principal of School C also had a lengthy comment on the topic:

We try to support our music program here at school, which is our curriculum program along with any extra-curricular pieces and band and we just, we know that some students shine in that area where they may not shine in the classroom. And, it’s very

important to be inclusive, so that everybody, you know, it shouldn't be where kids get cut, or, you know, aren't allowed to participate. It should be inclusive for everybody who wants to be involved. It's about fostering a love of students, not, you know, creating the next person to be in the symphony orchestra. (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017)

Finally, the principal from School H spoke in a telephone interview about students feeling good about themselves in music class:

The students love music. You know, it's an opportunity for the students that struggle or have to work really hard in some of the, like the math and the language, it's, you have other kids that shine and this is their talent, this is their strength. And, you know, most people, they all have the opportunity to ex - not excel, but to do well, and they feel good about themselves when they do a music program. (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017)

Enjoying school. Some participants spoke to the value of music education being a way to help children enjoy going to school.

One music teacher wrote "My students love music class and know that they will be expected to work, participate and have fun. I've seen growth in them since September and it truly is the best part of being an educator" (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017). The music teacher from School A wrote "Music time is vital to the lives of these students, and I can see their joy in music making every day" (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017). Another music teacher spoke about what it is that students enjoy so much about music class.

I'm really lucky, primary students love music. I think it's struggle with singing a little

bit older, when they get older. But my students, my primary kids love coming to music, and they love, if I do one little thing they're happy. But their favourite part is moving. They want to move, they want to participate, they want a game at the end, they want an action song, they want to play an instrument, they want to move their body; and that's definitely their favourite. Right? If I sat down and I had them sit for 30 minutes, I would not be their favourite teacher. So, just keeping in mind, the primary students loving it, but they've also, they need to move too, right? Learn their confidence, and enjoy.

(SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Three principals I spoke with expressed similar thoughts, though in less detail. The principal from School C said "Just like phys. ed. and hockey players, you know? It's about, K-6 is all about creating a love, and skills, and a love of becoming life-long learners of music" (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017). The principal from School H said that music class is "extremely important, you know, and I think the children love it. They look forward to having their music class time" (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Finally, the principal from School G wrote in an email interview "I consider our school to have a very valuable music program and both of the music teachers working here value planning and student engagement. Students enjoy music class" (SGPEI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

When asked about the value of music education, another administrator said:

Anything that allows our children and our students to have positive, creative experiences, where they are moving and singing and, you know, involved in the arts together is a positive and important experience for our children. And, you know, when

they first come to us in the primary-elementary grades, those positive experiences are really, really important. Because as they age and as schools become more rigid, and more tasks and different types of learnings are part of their school career, you know, well, I guess what I'm trying to say is that I would like that that could continue. (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Culture. Some participants mentioned in their interviews the connection between classroom music and culture. One principal commented "Music is an integral part of not only the culture of Newfoundland and Labrador, but of human culture" (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017), while a music teacher wrote "I believe we have a culture with the arts and music at its roots, and I love seeing children playing games, singing, and learning together" (SAMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

One principal wrote in an email interview "Classroom music is vital to our children. It is a cultural connection to their heritage and to the overall well-being of children. Music is another important part of a child's learning" (SFPEI, personal communication, February 20, 2017).

Finally, one of the music teachers wrote that:

...teaching cultural material informs students about our own place and people as well as fostering empathy and understanding of other places in our world. This teaching of empathy and understanding through music is, and will be, more and more important in our world in the years ahead. (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

As one other administrator put it:

Music enriches life. It is a way to understand our cultural heritage and to participate in the making of both our present and future cultures. Music is an important tool through

which young people become more culturally aware, develop a better understanding of differences and similarities of cultures, and as a result, become more appreciative, tolerant and respectful of all people. Through musical experiences, students develop an understanding of their own beliefs, the beliefs of others, and of how our value systems are shaped by these beliefs. (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017)

Intellectual benefits. Both music teachers and administrators recognized in their interviews the value of music education in brain development. For example, the music teacher at School C wrote:

The great potential that exists with music education in school is in its developmental power of young minds. This is especially true in the age where children have trouble with attention and focus. This is not to say that music should not be taught for music sake, but it's an added bonus that it helps brain development in terms of academics and socialization. (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

Two of the principals also commented in this area. One wrote in an email interview "When taught correctly, it should involve critical thinking, problem solving etc. as with all other subjects" (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017), while the other commented specifically about learning to play an instrument: "Learning to play an instrument enhances the child's brain development and improves intellectual and emotional skills such as reading comprehension, mathematics, spelling, and listening and motor skills" (SBPEI, personal communication, February 21, 2017).

One other administrator (beyond the school level) had a fairly lengthy comment on the subject. First she spoke about strategies to keep students engaged:

...we can teach through differentiated instruction, with strategies and in ways that are through an arts lens. We can flip those things around so that our children are able to maintain that, which also we know from research that that maintains their focus and in some cases keeps children in school. It assists them in their learning. We know with boys, specifically, that when they move that's what helps them in their learning, because they need that kind of motion to get the brain activated. That's a fact. (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Which she followed up with a comment that music class is very important.

...and it needs to continue to be important, and ways that we can have strategies that allow teachers to teach other subject areas in the same way we would do that I think can only benefit learning as a whole. Not just for their music learning, but, you know, it increases their math learning, or their English language arts learning. All kinds of learnings increase when we have that in school. (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

Another administrator wrote in an email interview that

Through the study of music, students think critically to solve a wide variety of challenges. Composition, performance, improvisation, and analysis present specific problems for the creator to solve that demand the use of musical knowledge and musical imagination. Musical problem solving promotes an acceptance of diverse solutions, as solutions are in a constant state of change and evolution. (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017)

Educating the whole child. Both administrators and music teachers mentioned in their interviews the idea of educating the whole child. The principal from School A started by talking

about how “We need to be teaching global children and music is one of the mediums to do this. Music is as important to children as any other subject” (SAPEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017).

Another principal said “I believe that music and the arts are extremely important to the overall education of all children. It allows for a holistic approach to education and students. Most students value education however not all students value it” (SEPEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017). While yet another said in a telephone interview “I think it’s extremely important for students to move, to have that musical relationship. I just think it builds the mind and the spirit. I think it’s extremely important in the school” (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017).

Only one principal went into great detail on this particular topic. The principal from School C said,

I believe that the arts are extremely important for children in Newfoundland and Labrador. I think a love of music fosters better child development; it fosters social skills, self-assurance, self-esteem, cultural effects. Taps into talent, like not everybody is academic, some people are arts inclined. I think everybody should be given the opportunity to - it should be fully inclusive - so everybody should be given the opportunity to participate in band, in choir, in those activities. We offer a drama program here actually, after school on Mondays from 4-6, which is as well integrated into music with a musical or play at the end of the year. So, for a well-rounded child, you certainly need highly accessible phys. ed. and music classes in a school. (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017)

While not many music teachers mentioned educating the whole child, the two that did were quite thorough. One said that music class is

...very valuable, I think it's just as valuable as any other subject. You know, I think that if we're going to teach the whole person, and teach them... I mean, I don't believe that music is just because it helps other subjects, but it does, you know, and that's a by-product. But I think in and of itself, music is something that all students should have training in, and it, you know, develops the whole child, and it certainly is something that they should all have, as far as I'm concerned. (SCMTI, personal communication, December 12, 2017)

While the other, when asked about the importance of music class to students, said,

Ok, absolutely important. Right? I think it's absolutely critical. It's extremely important. Develops all aspects of the child's growth, from a single child to being part of a group. Even that small concept of they're one person and now they're part of a group. That happens in the music room very seamlessly. Using circles, playing games, passing balls, passing sticks, singing songs, playing instruments, you know? That part of a child's growth is huge, that social piece. And learning that you're now by yourself, you're with a group now, and that requires different kinds of concentration. I think - I've got some notes here, I'm trying to make sure I got to say everything. You really made me think today! I sat down reading all this, going "Wow, this is a lot to think about." What else? Also, their musical expertise, right? You can - you count on the musical expertise. They have a responsibility when they're part of a group, when they're performing with others. It gives you focus, critical thinking, creativity, confidence, it does it all. We do it really fast, music teachers, we do it really well, and I think it really touches on everything.

And I could go into, the songs are multicultural, right, you can talk about the songs being multicultural. All the physical pieces of playing music. The listening required to play music well, even if it's an 8-beat song, you know? Even if it's a 2-note song. Tuning things up. I mean, the listening alone that we require in a music classroom for half an hour is so critically important to the child's development in their whole life. I always say, if you don't have listening, you don't have learning. I really believe that strongly. And I tease the kids, you have two ears and one mouth. Let's use our ears twice as much, and our mouth less. And we teach them that all the time. And listening is not always silent. Like, we talk about silence, yes, you have to be quiet, but you have to teach the children, it's not always just not talking. It's listening with our whole body.

(SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Finally, two other administrators (beyond the school level) commented. "I think we can teach other subject areas through the lens of the arts" (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017).

Music is an important part of the human experience. Music education is fundamental to the aesthetic, physical, emotional, intellectual and social growth of the child through musical experiences that engage both cognitive and affective domains. It is both a language and an art. (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017)

Inclusion. One music teacher and two principals talked about how the inclusion model currently employed in schools in Newfoundland and Labrador affects classroom music in their schools.

The music teacher started by talking about how extra teaching periods in music teachers' schedules are sometimes filled with time as Instructional Resource Teachers (IRT)

instead of offering more music-related instruction. “I’ve filled up my whole schedule, the half-time teacher is mostly filled up but has, say, 5 periods free...They will often be used in an IRT role in our school. So they’ll go in and support classroom teachers” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). She reiterated this point again, “So if they’re noticing, ok, you’re blank; it’s often not used as more music time, it’s used as helping the other teachers” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017), then offered an opinion on the topic:

So if I had 5 extra periods of music, right, you know, why couldn’t I have a choir? Why couldn’t I have this? It’s not often used as music, it’s mostly used as IRT support - in these days, especially with inclusion and all that kind of stuff. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

The same music teacher spoke later in the interview about another way the inclusion model impacts her music classes, in the form of interruptions to class time. “...all the interruptions, behaviour in the classroom, right? All the behaviours. The inclusion model of education, assistants coming in, coming out, coming in, you’ve got lots of interruptions that way” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). When asked about whether she feels she has enough class time to cover the curriculum, she once again mentioned inclusion, “there’s not enough time, there never is. And like I said, the inclusion model, I find quite challenging” (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017). Finally, School D’s music teacher gave an example of how these interruptions happen:

So, the inclusion model is difficult, because if you have a child, if you start your class, and we all come in, and I have my routine set. Then a child is at the door, they don’t want to come in. So they’re having a tantrum at the door. Then the door is slammed. Then they run through the class. Then they run out of the class. Then the student

assistant is called. You could be 10-12 minutes on a child. And I'm not saying it's the child's fault, I'm saying this is the reality now in our schools. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

The principals who mentioned inclusion did not go into as much detail on the subject. The principal from School C spoke about being inclusive in scheduling; "And then we schedule other activities, and then if we can make it more inclusive we do that. Like we might offer alternate gym or alternate music, depending on the number of periods" (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017). The other principal also spoke to how trying to be inclusive affects the school-wide schedule.

Now there may be some, I guess, some tweaking in terms of, if there's a class that has a student with a special need, then in that case we may have to, if we don't have like a student assistant available at a certain period because there are so many high needs at a certain period. Or like if it's lunchtime or whatever for a student assistant. In that case we may switch the schedules, but that's all done within the first couple of weeks. So that does influence whether or not we have student assistants available to travel with our special needs children to music classes and things like that. And we do have a, I think we had an extra couple of periods available this year, that we did do a special needs music period. (SHPTI, personal communication, February 18, 2017)

Perceptions

One music teacher spoke at length about interpersonal conflicts caused by misperceptions of others as to what exactly is involved in classroom music. For example, she began by saying "I just think we've got the best of everything in the music room. We've got a lot going on, and not as many people know about that as should, I don't think" (SDMTI,

personal communication, January 15, 2017). Next, she spoke about having classroom teachers come with her on a music field trip.

...we used to bring our teachers to help supervise, and I remember these 3 grade 6 teachers coming one time, and we did a session here, we did another session on dance, then we did this, then we talked about this, and that. And they followed through the sessions and at the end of it they said, “Oh my God, how do you guys do all that in 30 minutes?” I was like “Yeah, this is kinda what we do.” Right? Absolutely blown away by how much we were accomplishing in such little time. So I thought, yeah, that’s an insight, cause teachers don’t realize that. It’s still a frill for a lot of teachers, because that’s what they experienced in their school. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Then the music teacher spoke about the importance of support from school-level administrators.

Principals need to have an appreciation and understanding of the arts in a school. I’m very lucky, I’m in a school that I’m supported, anything I need, I have. I’m delighted I have a music room right now, because many teachers don’t. And I’m giving, I’m given a lot of respect for what I can accomplish with the children. And my principal, I’ve been in other situations not as nice. But my principal trusts me to do a good job, she doesn’t look over my shoulder, she compliments me and supports me. So I’m extremely lucky. But I do think principals have to have an appreciation of the arts, you know? (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Another thing the music teacher from School D mentioned was the issues caused by music class being preparation time for classroom teachers, such that classroom teachers perceive music time as not just another subject, but specifically their preparation time.

I think it's unfortunate, music teachers are still preparation times for others, other teachers in K-6. Like, the scheduling makes it that we are prep times. And unfortunately, it becomes personal a little bit, when it's cancelled. So if I'm in the gym, I know 10 teachers just missed their prep time. It's not my fault, I'm still working, and I'm missing my prep time too, I'm in the gym all day. But I know they're feeling that, "Well, why am I losing mine?" And it's because they're, it's always been, right?

(SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

She continued later in the interview along the same lines.

It's unfortunate that it's sort of back-to-back like that, one or the other. And it happens more than once a year. It happens lots of times. Every time I have a concert, every time I have an assembly, you know? So, I think that's in most schools, and it's just too bad. I have a really great relationship with my teachers, and they're good to me, and they understand that. And I've kind of spoken up a little bit here and there when I had to. I had a teacher say - and I can do it nicely - but I had a teacher say "Oh, you're 4 days in the gym." Because we have a small gym and 8 streams, we have to do 2 of everything. Two of every concert, that's another point. Two of every concert, two of every assembly. Our school doesn't fit the whole population, right? And they'll say "Oh, I'm missing two of my preps". Then I smile and I say "I'm missing 4". And I just make it, like "Oh, right". That's kind of what I got from the teacher: "Oh right, yeah", and then she walked away. It's like, mmmm, be careful what you say. I miss 4 sitting down half

hours to do my work today because I've got 150 kids in the gym. And I'm not, it's not like "nah-nah-nah-nah", that kind of way, it's more like, you don't really get it, do you? (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

Challenges

Many of the interviewees in this study mentioned facing some challenges in their schools. These challenges have been arranged into sub-categories that include challenges in scheduling and in covering the curriculum in the given time.

Scheduling. The participants who spoke about challenges in scheduling were generally either administrators of some kind, or music teachers who have input into the scheduling of music classes at their schools.

The music teacher from School D spoke about the challenges of scheduling music classes when you have to take other schools' schedules into account, "...and full day kindergarten also affects your scheduling too. That's huge" (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017).

The principal from School E described the challenges as part of a broader description of how scheduling in general happens at that school.

While the actual schedule is done in May/June the planning is ongoing. Notes are taken throughout the year on tweaks needed and suggestions are taken from teachers. Usually it is discussed at a staff meeting and all suggestions are noted. The scheduling of how many periods for each course is taken from the Department of Education program of studies where percentages are given that need to be considered and followed as closely

as possible. I have used a computer program at Junior High level but I do the schedule by hand at elementary level. (SEPEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

Finally, another administrator (beyond the school level) said more generally that “the challenges that those administrators face when it comes to programming - especially in a school that may be K-12 - those challenges are really great, and the choices that they make are often quite difficult” (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017).

Covering the music curriculum within the given time. Several music teachers had strong opinions when asked about covering the primary-elementary music curriculum within the given instructional time.

One music teacher wrote in an email interview about the challenges caused by scheduling physical education class and music class back-to-back, saying “There is usually disruption in getting the students back into class after getting a drink and time is lost typically on the music end” (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017).

Students are typically difficult to settle after gym and time is lost to classroom management. It is noticeable to me as there are several classes that I have before gym and after gym on different days of the cycle and I can tell a marked difference in behaviours. Plus, energy levels are typically low after a vigorous gym class and it’s harder to get the students singing out then in music. (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

The same music teacher mentioned the possibility of going deeper into the curriculum if more class time were available.

I find that it is an average amount of time. It could definitely be better which would enable me to delve further into teaching more advanced concepts and in-depth composer

study (rather than just touching on some of these areas). However, it could be worse...some schools are doubling classes for music and gym which really limits the actual time you get to spend with the individual child. (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

He went on to write about how the time leading up to a concert affects coverage of the curriculum.

...during concert prep time, the allocation is woefully inadequate as I am forced to teach to the concert and lots of curricular concepts have to be left to achieve the goal. That's not to say that curriculum isn't taught during concert season, just that it's not as broad and varied as I would prefer and deem necessary to the whole education of the child. (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017)

The music teacher from School D also had strong opinions on the challenge of covering the curriculum within the given time.

There's never enough time to do the curriculum. I have never ... got to cover everything properly. And I will honestly say that to you... It's a little easier in primary to cover more of the material. I have found once the recorder is introduced in grade 4, so much time is based on recorder. And yes, you can spend some time overlapping what you're teaching, with recorder and singing and all that stuff, but it does take a tremendous amount of time to change over and teach the children an instrument. They're losing a little bit of singing, they're losing their reading the tone ladder, you know? You only got that much time, right? (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

In addition to the above comment, the music teacher from School D spoke about the interruptions that contribute to this situation.

Your concerts, you have to cancel classes because you're getting ready for concerts of having concerts. Assemblies in your schools. We have 8 streams of all grade levels, and keeping everyone on track and together is a challenge there. Not enough time to practice, so if I teach the children something, there's just not enough time to keep it going without trying to introduce something else. So I find that lack of time there. They touch on it, we do a little bit, do a little bit, and then we move on. And, you know, I'd like to spend a little more time with them, so it kind of sinks in. I'd probably wait longer than most... And then we have children missing out of class, so you're doing a big make-conscious lesson on something like a tika-tika in grade 3, and you know what? You cannot wait for 8 streams of kids to all be in the class. That's just an impossibility... So you repeat, or you do your best, or you try to review quickly, so you know, all those factors are so out of your control. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

The music teacher at School B also expressed similar concerns about preparation for performances.

During concert time, and during class assembly times, outcomes-based instruction nearly stops. Because I am most often in the building only once a week, I have to begin preparing much earlier than is typical, and I have to use class time, choir time, and I often schedule extra visits during their regular classroom time on non-music days just to be performance ready. The expectations from families is very high that their children have an active performance experience, and in general, parents do not seem to be aware or concerned that their children are not getting the music time they are suggested to have. (SBMEI, personal communication, February 15, 2017)

One other music teacher spoke about class sizes being an issue, especially when there are 2 teachers in the regular classroom but the music or physical education teacher is expected to handle the full group on his or her own.

In kindergarten there is a class of 29 and 27. Twenty-seven kindergartens by myself. In the regular classroom there's team teaching. In the music room and gym, cause a lot of this is exactly the same for the gym teacher, in music and gym they are - I am- by myself with all 27 kindergartens. So that is a huge issue when it comes to curriculum delivery, knowing your children well. I do not know those children. I'll come up on my second report card, how can I know all those children and everything they can do in music, when I can't put a name to all of them yet? That's incredible! And I'm a very experienced teacher! And I can proudly say I used to be able to do that. Name everyone by name, and know my kids, know my classes, right? As an aside, I've taught in elementary situations, I've had 36 in my room. Just me. And that was grade 2 and grade 5, I've experienced that. Team-teaching in the regular room, in the music and gym, by yourself... That's a big thing, and it's not getting addressed, really. Right? So, there's all kinds of reasons for that. (SDMTI, personal communication, January 15, 2017)

One more music teacher commented on this topic, and spoke more generally.

...you try to fit everything in, you know, you're trying to do your Orff, you're trying to do some forms of composition, you're trying to do movement, and, you know, so, I find it's always a dilemma that "Oh, I got lots of work done this month, but I didn't spend enough time on composition, I need to do that" or "I need to..." You know, you're always finding that you're trying to fit everything in as best you can, and trying to make

up for any area you neglected, to try to pick that up in the next cycle type of thing.

(SCMTI, December 12, 2017)

Two administrators (beyond the school level) also spoke on this topic, the first coming from the perspective of someone who has been involved in curriculum development.

...as people who were developing the curriculum, we needed to know what was doable.

How many classes were we dealing with, in order to ensure that we weren't overloading the curriculum and the outcomes for the teachers, right? It doesn't make sense if you prepare something for 100 classes and you only have 50 classes, let's say. So we needed to know those percentages... which was 5% at that time. And so, those numbers, for what I know of the K-6 music curriculum would match for me... You know, I've read outcomes, I've worked with teachers on a regular basis, and looking at their yearly plan and strategies that they would use to meet those outcomes, and so it is a doable - it is doable, when that 5% has been allocated. (ORA1, personal communication, January 28, 2017)

The second administrator made a similar statement. "Recommended time allotments are one of the factors that come to bear during the curriculum development process" (ORA2, personal communication, March 16, 2017).

Conclusion

Though the number of interviewees was relatively limited (15 interviews in total), I believe a lot of very useful information emerged from these interviews. The participants were candid and willing to share their opinions freely, which was particularly helpful.

Through the interview process I learned that even though the participants are working in different contexts, with different pressures, issues, and concerns, all the interviewees with

whom I spoke displayed thoughtful, analytical, and perceptive understandings of the complexities of connecting policies around time allocations for primary-elementary music education with delivery practices.

The data collected was very informative, and when organized under the categories of analysis was critical in shedding light on my research questions. The data analysis in Chapter 5 draws the connection between the survey/interview data presented in the current chapter and the research questions presented in Chapter 1.

Chapter 5 – Analysis of Data

Introduction

This chapter includes a synthesis and analysis of data obtained from the document analysis, survey and interviews. The content of this chapter is organized according to the research questions posed in Chapter 1 along with discussion, conclusions, and suggestions for further research.

Research Question One

What is the current context regarding time allocation for the delivery of K-6 music education in Newfoundland and Labrador? Do primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador provide the Department of Education prescribed time allocation for primary-elementary music education?

As noted earlier in this document, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education publishes a document every year called the *Program of Studies*, which includes guidelines for what percentage of class time K-12 students in the province should spend studying each subject area. The *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) suggests allocating 6% of elementary (grades 4-6) students' class time for music. Though this allocation was for the 2016-2017 school year, it is worth mentioning that going back as far as the first *Program of Studies* in 1988, the allocation has been 6%. The *Program of Studies* is more ambiguous about the allocation for primary students' music class time, including music in a list of 6 subjects that share 30% of class time. Regardless, none of the schools that responded to this study, through the survey or interviews,

reported any difference in the amount of music class time allocated for primary (grades K-3) versus elementary (grades 4-6) students in the same school.

Through both the survey and interview results, I learned that while there is some variety in interpretation, the schools I studied all reported similar methods for delivering K-6 classroom music education. For example, on the survey, all 10 of the music teachers who responded said that their primary-elementary schools offer three 30-minute periods of classroom music per 7-day cycle. However, as noted earlier, schools vary in whether they consider choir part of that time.

All the schools studied were consistent in the basics of their scheduling - students attend ten 30-minute classes per day, and follow a 7-day cycle. These numbers compute to 2100 minutes of class per cycle. In schools with 90 minutes of that total devoted to classroom music, students are spending 4.3% of their time in music class. If students were offered 6% of class time as music class, they would spend 126 minutes per cycle in classroom music, or just over 4 periods per cycle.

Some schools offer choir in addition to classroom music, while others include choir time within those 3 periods, and still others don't offer choir at all. Upon discovering this discrepancy, I contacted the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education for further clarification. A representative responded, saying that for primary-elementary schools, "Choral experiences, an integral part of the program, are to be offered along with the classroom program at the elementary level, but are not to replace allocated time for the core music classroom program" (ORA3, personal communication, February 28, 2017).

Band was mentioned by some participants as well. In primary-elementary schools that offer a band program, all interviewees reported that it is operated as a pull-out program - that is,

students are “pulled out” from their regular classes to attend band practice. Band is typically offered only to upper-elementary students and is considered separately from the regular classroom music program, often taught by a different teacher.

Summary analysis

In all 10 of the schools that participated in this study, students are consistently missing out on at least one 30-minute music class per cycle compared to what is recommended in the *Program of Studies*. This discrepancy between policy and practice may not seem like a big issue, but it is troubling because of its consistency between schools. There are 190 teaching days in a school year, which is 27 seven-day cycles. A student who gets 3 periods (as opposed to the recommended 4 periods) of classroom music over their primary and elementary years would therefore be missing 189 music classes, or 94.5 hours of music instruction in total by the time they start grade 7. Less time for arts education “diminishes not only students’ opportunities to experience, engage, and practice these endeavors, but also educators’ capacity to make these classes and activities worthwhile” (Farbman et al., 2013, p. 10).

Given that I got the impression that the principals I spoke with believed they were following the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) recommendations, I am left to question whether administrators have another source of information from which they got the idea that 3 periods per cycle is the standard. Was there perhaps something along the lines of a meeting, memo, or other document not available to the public, which broke down the recommendation by periods per cycle as opposed to percentage of class time or number of minutes? If this is the case, it will be important for Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education personnel, Newfoundland and Labrador

English School District personnel, school administrators, and teachers to be fully apprised and aware of such policies and/or seemingly now common practices.

If 3 periods per cycle for music class is the common practice, further questions are raised. Is 3 periods per cycle going to become a new norm? Though 90 minutes per cycle does not meet the standards of the current policy, at what point does practice become policy? If this practice of 3 periods per cycle becomes policy, it may be a small change, but small changes can make a big difference over time.

Question Two

In schools with varying time allocation for music instruction (above, at, and below the prescribed time allocation), what might be factors, attitudes/perception, and challenges around the process of decision-making in this area?

Factors. As presented in Chapter 4 of this thesis, participants reported numerous factors that affect scheduling decisions at their schools. Although I spoke with teachers and administrators from ten different schools, the factors they reported were almost identical.

One of the most frequently mentioned factors was physical space. When scheduling music classes, administrators must take into account whether there is classroom space for the students and teachers. Depending on the individual school building, music classes may happen in the music room, in the gymnasium, or in the students' homeroom.

Another factor was time - it seems that many principals value music education, and some have reached out to administrators above the individual school level looking for advice on how to increase the amount of music education students have access to.

Human resources was a very commonly mentioned factor that affects scheduling and time allocation. For the most part, participants spoke about specialist teacher allocation. For

example, some administrators also have to take into consideration the schedules of other schools, in cases where music specialists are “shared” between multiple schools. A few participants also mentioned the complication of student assistant schedules.

Interestingly, many of the interviewees spoke about the necessity of following the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) recommendations for subject time allocation. For example, one principal said “we ensure that we have 3 gym, 3 music classes” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017), implying that 3 music classes per cycle is the “required allocation time” (SCPTI, personal communication, February 3, 2017). This data indicated to me that though the schools I studied do not offer students the full recommended amount of music class time, the principals I spoke with believe they are following the *Program of Studies*.

“What is best for the students” was also brought up as a factor by many participants. This factor includes considerations such as not scheduling kindergarten classes first or last period, as they need more time to get ready than older students. Ideally music classes will also be spaced fairly equally throughout the cycle to ensure students retain knowledge between classes, and classes will vary by time of day, with some in the morning and some in the afternoon.

Both teachers and administrators spoke about teacher preference being given some consideration while the schedule is being developed for the next school year. Some music teachers are given quite a lot of freedom to work out their own schedule in collaboration with the physical education teacher. For example, in School D the music teacher is given 3 periods per cycle with each class, but she can choose when those periods are placed in the cycle provided they don’t conflict with physical education classes. Even in schools where that is not

the case, administrators often mentioned trying to accommodate music teacher preferences, such as by scheduling the same grade one after another, or trying to accommodate classroom teacher preferences by scheduling music and gym classes back-to-back, thus allowing the classroom teacher to have a full hour of preparation time.

Finally, some school-based administrators expressed in their interviews that they take the requirements of other subjects into account when scheduling music classes. This consideration mostly came in the form of scheduling literacy and numeracy blocks, which are a daily occurrence in many primary-elementary classes in Newfoundland and Labrador and are often scheduled first, with other subjects working around them. However, some schools schedule music and physical education classes first, and work other subjects in afterwards.

Attitudes/perceptions. All participants professed to value music education as an important piece of the educational mosaic. Their reasons for appreciating music education varied somewhat, but were generally similar enough to be organized into categories.

Several interviewees mentioned that music class gives students an outlet for self-expression. Participants also spoke about students having the opportunity to experience success in music class, especially those students who don't always get similar opportunities in other subject areas.

Along a similar line of reasoning, some participants reported that one of the reasons they value music education is how much the students seem to enjoy music class. Several participants also mentioned how music class affords students the chance to connect with their culture, and with cultures from around the world. As one music teacher put it, "teaching cultural material informs students about our own place and people as well as fostering empathy

and understanding of other places in our world” (SCMEI, personal communication, February 14, 2017).

Intellectual development was another benefit spoken about by participants in this study. This point came up in two different ways - interviewees either spoke about general brain development, or about the gains in other subject areas due to music education. Music teachers and both school- and non-school based administrators also mentioned the idea of music helping to educate the whole child.

Attitudes also came into play during interviews when the topic of inclusion came up. One music teacher spoke about being used as in-class support during “extra” periods in her schedule, and about the interruptions in “inclusive” music classes due to behaviour issues, which can be exacerbated by the fact that there is not always a student assistant available. Administrators seemed more concerned with working around student assistant schedules, and also trying to offer extra special needs music classes when possible.

One music teacher spoke in the interview about perceptions others have about music class. She mentioned the importance of administrative support for the music program at a primary-elementary school, and also her experiences with classroom teachers’ perceptions of classroom music. For example, the interviewee reported other teachers being surprised by how much the students did on a music field trip, and also being concerned about missing their preparation time when the music teacher was running concert practice.

Challenges. During the interviews, participants were asked about the challenges they face in their positions (as they relate to time allocation and scheduling), as well as about how others perceive music education.

Administrators generally spoke about challenges in scheduling primary-elementary music classes. The challenges in scheduling included factors such as taking other schools' schedules into account when sharing a specialist teacher between multiple schools, and also scheduling full-day kindergarten. The 2016-2017 school year was the first year that schools in Newfoundland and Labrador offered kindergarten classes for the full school day. Prior to this change, kindergarten students in the province attended school for only half the school day, either for a morning or an afternoon session.

Music teachers more commonly spoke about the challenges they face in trying to cover the curriculum within the instructional time they have with the students. They generally seemed to feel that they would be more capable of covering the curriculum within the allotted time if there were no interruptions. Some of the interruptions participants mentioned included student behaviour issues and preparation for performances in concerts and assemblies. These challenges are augmented by the fact that the amount of time these teachers start off with in their schedules is not as great as the amount of time the curriculum was specifically designed for.

Summary analysis. In conducting this research, I determined that there are many factors, attitudes, challenges and perceptions that affect scheduling and time allocation for music education at the primary-elementary level. While it is unfortunate that administrators face so many different pressures, it was heartening to see during the interviews that those same school-level administrators are clearly trying their very best to accommodate those varying influences. Ultimately, they (and all the participants I spoke with) want what they perceive to be the best for their students. This finding is consistent with a 2010 study of music education in Canadian schools, which stated "A positive sign regarding the situation of music education: a

majority of respondents ranked each of the 13 potential benefits as ‘very important’” (Hill Strategies Research Inc, Coalition for Music Education in Canada, & Canadian Electronic Library, 2010, p. 36).

Despite the positive efforts, these results (showing that students consistently do not get the recommended amount of music instruction) also raised some questions about accountability. Who exactly is in charge of ensuring that the *Program of Studies* recommendations are being followed? There does not appear to be a system of accountability. The lack thereof could be a problem, because the personnel I spoke with at the Government of Newfoundland Department of Education and at the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District indicated that time allocation for music education was outside of their authority. If no one is responsible, then what incentive is there for school-based administrators to ensure they are following the *Program of Studies*, when they have so many other complexities to deal with?

Question Three

Are there potential opportunities and/or recommendations for the process of allotting time for music education in primary-elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Administrators at the school level seem to have some freedom in the scheduling of different subjects within their primary-elementary schools. This apparent flexibility theoretically affords them the opportunity to follow the *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) and offer the recommended 6% of class time for music class, which equivocates to 4 classes per 7-day cycle. This allotment, according to the representative I spoke

with from the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, would not include choir time.

Several of the music teachers and administrators who completed interviews had useful recommendations when it came to scheduling decisions, such as scheduling music classes relatively evenly throughout the cycle, striving to increase maximum student retention of knowledge between lessons. Music teachers also tend to prefer not to have their classes back-to-back with physical education classes, as this causes students to be tired in music class and time to be lost getting water. However, these preferences are just that - preferences. Other teachers may have different opinions, and administrators must balance a multitude of factors when making scheduling decisions for the entire school.

Summary analysis. Ideally, administrators at primary-elementary schools in Newfoundland and Labrador would immediately start scheduling four 30-minute periods per 7-day cycle, in addition to (not including) time for choir rehearsals. When operating in 30-minute periods, 4 classes per 7-day cycle is as close as one can get to the *Program of Studies* recommendation, and is still slightly below the recommendation.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, it is common for students at primary-elementary schools to be offered the opportunity to sing in school choirs. These choirs often perform at school functions and music festivals, and their rehearsals are often scheduled during class time. However, as mentioned previously in this thesis, these rehearsals are not meant to be included in the 6% of class time allocated for music class. It seems that both music teachers and school-level administrators are unclear on this particular point. This is understandable, as the *Program of Studies* does not explicitly state that choir and/or band are not intended to be incorporated in

the 6% figure. I only discovered this fact by directly contacting the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education.

It seems that the specifics of exactly how principals would be able to make the change from 3 to 4 periods per cycle would vary from school to school, as different factors affect each school's decision-making process. This conclusion was similar to a study I found which included a survey of principals of some American elementary schools: "principals were aware that certain factors had a negative effect on the music program" (Abril & Gault, 2006, p. 18). Indeed, the principals with whom I spoke mentioned quite a variety of factors that influence their scheduling decisions and, by extension, the amount of time allocated for each subject. They all seemed to be making an effort to take these factors into account, but the factors are simply so numerous that satisfying all of them is a major challenge.

Recommendations for Further Research

While this study uncovered some important information, further investigation into the subject of time allocation, especially in primary-elementary music education, would surely yield even more knowledge.

This study focussed on NLESD schools in the St. John's metro area - it would be prudent to expand the range to include schools in other communities elsewhere in Newfoundland and Labrador, as well as the French-language school district, Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador.

In addition, administrators in rural areas face their own unique challenges in scheduling, and would almost certainly have a different perspective to offer. A further study would be a step in the direction of a place where the data may be generalizable. Expansion to other areas of Canada could also be an option, although different provinces and territories have different

guidelines for how class time should be allocated. It would be especially helpful on a national scale to have a comparative study that covers all provinces and territories.

Given that I did not come across any schools that offer the full recommended 6% of class time for classroom music in the elementary grades, further research could also entail looking at the breakdown of how time is distributed for all subject areas, not only music. Is the inconsistency between subject time allocation in primary-elementary schools and the recommended guidelines in *Program of Studies* (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2016) limited to music? Or are numbers slightly off in other subject areas as well?

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there is also the concern of accountability. Is there someone, at the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education or at the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, who is responsible for ensuring that recommendations in the *Program of Studies* are implemented? It would be my hope that this research would bring to light the aforementioned issue of accountability for further study by the Department of Education, the school district, and any other stakeholders in the education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Finally, a more in-depth look at the factors that affect scheduling and time allocation decisions would be very informative. In my conversations with those administrators who agreed to be interviewed, it seemed that they were all trying their best to follow the *Program of Studies* recommendations for class time allotment. It appeared, however, that myriad other influences also come into play, and administrators are working to find a solution that will please everyone.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine various factors that have an impact on the delivery of music education in primary-elementary schools in the St. John's metro area of Newfoundland and Labrador. Specifically, I examined policies and practices around time allocation for music instruction.

This study has been a fascinating exercise. I believe that the participants and I uncovered some valuable information about how music class is scheduled in their schools. It would appear that while the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education's document *Program of Studies* (2016) recommends what works out to 4 music classes per cycle for elementary students, in practice the schools that I studied offer only 3. There also seems to be some confusion as to whether choir is included in the *Program of Studies* allocation, though I have learned that it is intended to be separate. Music class is valued by both teachers and administrators, but, as discussed earlier in this thesis, other factors come into play when it comes to school-wide scheduling. Hopefully more investigation will be done into those considerations, so that principals can more easily determine which of the factors should be given priority.

Newfoundland and Labrador has a long history of excellence in K-12 music education. The province has a solid foundation and history of valuing music education, especially in the kindergarten to grade 6 years. Primary-elementary music education is most often delivered by music specialists, and includes classroom, choral, and instrumental music programs. This foundation includes a comprehensive curriculum, which is designed specifically with the time allocation from the *Program of Studies* in mind (i.e. four 30-minute periods per 7-day cycle).

I believe it is fair to say that if the full amount of recommended time is not provided within the schedule, it stands to reason that it is not possible for teachers to deliver the full curriculum as it was designed. This disconnect raises several critical questions. If the curriculum is not being fully covered, which parts are being left out? Who decides which concepts to cover or not to cover? Does this time constraint contribute to teacher stress and fatigue? And perhaps most importantly, what is the overall impact of this time deficit and corresponding partially covered curriculum on student learning?

I chose to write this thesis on the topic of time allocation because I saw first-hand as a music teacher in the provinces (2011-2015) discrepancies between my colleagues' and my own experiences with scheduling of the music classes we were teaching. The reason for my focus on the primary-elementary age group is that these are such important, formative years in a child's education. In Newfoundland and Labrador we have a strong *Program of Studies* document and a comprehensive primary-elementary music curriculum, which is arguably unparalleled in Canada. Presumably, the time allocations in the *Program of Studies* were chosen in ways that matched curriculum needs with student learning. However, as I have uncovered in this study, there appears to be a disconnect between policy and practice, given that all 10 of the schools I studied were consistent in offering less music class time than recommended.

The schools I studied were all providing students with at least 36 fewer minutes per 7-day cycle of classroom music than is recommended in the *Program of Studies*, with 3 of the schools providing even less than that. While this may seem small, and we may only be straying a small amount from Department of Education recommendations currently, when one starts whittling away at minutes they turn into hours. Those students who are missing 36 minutes of

music class per 7-day cycle are missing more than 16 hours of music instruction per year, or over 113 hours of music instruction by the time they finish grade 6.

A strong foundation in music education can have a big impact over time, and even more so through generations. Newfoundland and Labrador has the policies in place for that strong foundation. However, discrepancies such as the ones discovered in this study threaten to chip away at it, and there is simply no way to predict exactly how much will be left when all is said and done.

It is my hope that this thesis has shed some light on the important issue of music class time allocation in Newfoundland and Labrador primary-elementary schools, and might lead to further analysis and study in this area – in this provincial context, as well as nationally and internationally.

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Appendix A

For the purpose of this study, participants were given pseudonyms in the form of a code that was generated using the school with which they were associated, whether the participant was a music teacher or an administrator, and if the participant completed his or her interview via telephone or email.

Schools that participated in this study are labelled alphabetically A through J. For example: School A, School B, etc. The first 2 letters of each participant's pseudonym reflect this labelling system: SA = School A.

The third letter in each pseudonym represents the participant's role at the school. Principals have the letter "P" as the third character in their pseudonyms, while music teachers have the letter "M" in the same place.

The final 2 letters in each pseudonym indicate whether the interview was completed via telephone or email. "TI" denotes telephone interviews, and email interviews are represented by "EI".

Thus, the pseudonym SAPEI represents the information "School A, Principal, Email Interview", and the pseudonym SDMTI represents the information "School D, Music teacher, Telephone Interview".

Finally, any interviewees who were not associated with a particular school were coded as "ORA" (Other Relevant Administrator) with a number immediately following for the purpose of distinguishing between individuals in the "ORA" category.

Appendix B

The following is a list of questions as they appeared in the survey, which was sent electronically to all classroom music teachers at primary-elementary schools in the metro area of St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada.

1. Which grade levels are taught at your school?
2. To which grade levels do you teach classroom music?
3. How many days are there per cycle at your school?
4. How many periods per day are there at your school?
5. How long (in minutes) is each period?
6. How many music classes are regularly scheduled per cycle for each grade? Please be as specific as possible.
7. Does your school provide in-class schedule time for choir? Band? Other? If so, what amount of time is allotted for each? Please be as specific as possible.
8. Do you teach other subjects besides music? If so, which subjects?
9. Are there any other teaching or administrative duties you perform at your school? If so, what are they and what amount of time is assigned?
10. Do you have any additional comments?
11. What is your name?
12. At which school(s) do you teach?
13. Are you willing to be contacted again with an invitation to participate in an interview? If yes, how would you prefer to be contacted?

Appendix C

Though I allowed the interviews to be fairly open-ended, I did have a guiding list of questions for each interviewee. Interviewees were asked slightly different questions based on their role in the education process.

School-Level Administrator

- Which grade levels are taught at your school?
- How many days are there per cycle at your school?
- How many periods per day are there?
- How long (in minutes) is each period?
- How many music classes are regularly scheduled per cycle for each grade?
- Does your school provide in-class schedule time for choir? band? other? If so, what amount of time is allotted for each?
- How does the school-wide scheduling process happen at your primary-elementary school?
- What are some factors that influence general scheduling decisions at your school?
- What are some factors that influence classroom music scheduling decisions at your school?
- How important do you think class time in music is to the overall education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador? What is the value of classroom music to your students?

Music Teacher

- What do you know about how the school-wide scheduling process happens at your school?

- Current time allocations for primary-elementary music class are published in the provincial government's Program of Studies. In primary grades it is 5% of class time, which is an average of 12 minutes per day. In elementary grades the requirement is 6% of class time, which is an average of 15 minutes per day. Do you think this is adequate for the delivery of the prescribed curriculum?
- Do you experience any challenges in delivering the prescribed curriculum within the allotted time?
- How important do you think class time in music is to the overall education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador? What is the value of classroom music to your students?

Newfoundland and Labrador English School District Personnel

- How are scheduling decisions about instructional time made at the primary-elementary level? What are the roles of the provincial government, school district personnel, school administrators, and teachers in the process?
- What are some important considerations when it comes to scheduling of music classes specifically?
- Current time allocations for primary-elementary music class are published in the provincial government's Program of Studies. In primary grades it is 5% of class time, which is an average of 12 minutes per day. In elementary grades the requirement is 6% of class time, which is an average of 15 minutes per day. Do you think this is adequate for the delivery of the prescribed curriculum?
- Some of my survey respondents listed choir as one of their music periods. Do you know if choir time counts as part of music class time?

- Are there challenges in subject/teacher time allocations that have an impact on the implementation of primary-elementary music education?
- How important do you think class time in primary-elementary music is to the overall education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador?

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education Personnel

- How are scheduling decisions about instructional time at the primary-elementary level? What are the roles of the provincial government, school district personnel, school administrators, and teachers in the process?
- What are some important considerations when it comes to scheduling of music classes specifically?
- Current time allocations for primary-elementary music class are published in the provincial government's *Program of Studies*. In primary grades it is 5% of class time, which is an average of 12 minutes per day. In elementary grades the requirement is 6% of class time, which is an average of 15 minutes per day. Do you think this is adequate for the delivery of the prescribed curriculum?
- Are there challenges in subject/teacher time allocations that have an impact on the implementation of primary-elementary music education?
- How important do you think class time in music is to the overall education of children in Newfoundland and Labrador?