

**A Survey of Band Directors in the United States Regarding Barriers to Developing Successful Band Programs in Majority African American Public Secondary Schools**

by

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## **Abstract**

This study investigated barriers hindering development of successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and strategies employed by band directors to overcome challenges. A mixed-methods survey was administered to 247 participants, including 20 from majority African American public secondary schools and 227 from non-majority African American secondary schools. Quantitative data, contextualized by qualitative responses, indicated the top barriers in majority African American schools included funding and resources, socioeconomic challenges, and scheduling. Top strategies were collaborating with administrators, developing positive band culture, and providing student transportation. In contrast, non-majority African American schools identified scheduling, socioeconomic challenges, and competition with extracurricular activities as their top barriers, while developing positive band culture, connecting with feeder programs, and collaborating with administrators were their top strategies. Factorial ANOVA analyses indicated participants in Title 1 schools rated several barriers, including socioeconomic challenges and student mobility, higher than those in non-Title 1 schools. Also, participants in schools that were both Title 1 and had a majority African American student population rated scheduling significantly higher, indicating the combination of these factors exacerbated challenges. Future research should focus on a) longitudinal studies to determine how band programs in majority African American schools develop and maintain overtime, b) student perspectives to explore their experiences in these programs, c) innovative funding models to address financial limitations of band programs, and d) replicating the current study with a larger sample size to generalize findings.

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As I reach this milestone, marking the end of my formal education, I recognize the pursuit of knowledge is a lifelong endeavor. This dissertation represents an important step in my ongoing commitment to advocating for equal access to music education, fostering innovative teaching practices, and effecting positive change in the world.

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## **Chapter 1**

### **Introduction**

#### **Background: My Positionality and Research Motivation**

Researchers' experiences play a vital role in selecting research topics and how they perceive findings of those topics. In this section, I describe my positionality as a researcher who is also a Black woman band director and how those aspects of my identity served as the motivation for this study.

Growing up, I was surrounded by a predominantly African American culture in an urban city, where the K-12 schools mirrored this demographic. My education started in those elementary and secondary schools, directly experiencing education in this setting, with a history of segregation, economic disparities, and the challenges of urban education.

My involvement in school band throughout middle and high school allowed me to experience the power of music education in schools with a majority African American student population. I realized my passion for music and band. However, I also became aware of the challenges and opportunities of band programs in this setting. Youth from low-income households were disadvantaged as their parents were uninvolved. Therefore, they did not have the support to fully commit to band. Negative influences from the surrounding neighborhoods and environment constantly competed for students' attention, thus, pulling more students away from band. Furthermore, low funding and support from the school district for band programs added to those challenges.

Regardless of those obstacles, the opportunities band programs presented in this environment were considerable. Music was a part of life for many of these students. In addition, music was a way out of poverty, with scholarships and gigs in the local entertainment industry.

Band directors who recognized this potential could help their students use music to work towards a better future. Music gave students, including myself, something to look forward to. The joy of making music, the feeling of belonging within the band, and the opportunity to showcase their talent offered hope and positivity.

I continued my education at a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) located in the southern region of the United States. With its predominantly African American student body, its atmosphere provided continuity of the culture I experienced during my K-12 schooling. Choosing to major in music education, I participated in a variety of musical ensembles, which included the symphonic band, orchestra, marching band, and various other groups. These experiences enhanced my musical knowledge and nurtured an appreciation for the importance of music and band in African American culture.

Taking what I learned, I began a rewarding 16-year-and-counting career as a band director. The majority of these years have been in majority African American, high-poverty, rural, Title 1, secondary public schools—communities characterized by their unique challenges. In these unique settings, I have encountered substantial obstacles while trying to develop and sustain successful band programs.

It was those compounding experiences as a student and a band director that inspired my current research, which is an attempt to document the barriers band directors in similar educational settings face. I aimed to reveal these obstacles in hopes of inspiring change in music education.

In the larger context of music education, school band programs hold an indispensable role in delivering music instruction and nurturing essential life skills such as collaboration, self-expression, and a lifelong appreciation for the arts (Spangler, 2022). However, schools primarily

populated by African American students face a distinctive set of challenges when establishing and sustaining successful band programs (Nussbaum, 2023). This need for a thorough investigation of these challenges and the search for effective solutions is the focus of my research study.

### **Discussion of the Problem**

The underrepresentation of successful band programs in majority African American secondary schools calls for focused research into this issue (DeLorenzo & Silverman, 2021). While previous research had investigated music education challenges, very little focuses on challenges in these types of schools. Although the benefits of music education have been well-documented, including effect on academic achievement, cognitive skills, and creativity (Colwell & Davison, 1996; Mattulke, 2019; Petress, 2005), schools that have a mostly African American student enrollment constantly face challenges that hamper developing successful band programs.

Achieving success in music education, specifically within the context of school band program development, can be measured in numerous ways. These criteria encompass variables such as the band's size, the duration of the program's existence, funding, and the qualifications and experience of the band directors, among other criteria (Deisler, 2011). However, a well-known determinant of success pertains to the program's engagement in band festivals and competitions, both in concert and marching bands. A noteworthy observation is band programs in majority African American public secondary schools participate in these events at a comparatively low rate. Furthermore, when these programs do participate, their performance ratings are often modest to low.

Another measure of successful band programs involves the collective musicianship of the students in these ensembles. Typically, research shows students' musical proficiency in bands in

majority African American schools lags behind that of their counterparts in band programs situated within non-majority African American school environments. These disparities in achievement are not a result of deliberate hindrances on the part of educators. Band directors in these schools consistently aspire to guide their students toward musical excellence and achievement. However, various impediments can hinder the realization of these educational aspirations.

The consequences of failing to address the underrepresentation of successful band programs in majority African American schools extend across a broad spectrum. African American students enrolled in these schools often find themselves deprived of the benefits of music education that extend well beyond the realm of musical competence. They forfeit opportunities for personal growth, collaborative skill development, and the enhancement of self-esteem (Petress, 2005). Most crucially, these students are denied access to the transformative power of music as a vehicle for self-expression, cultural preservation, and academic achievement. Consequently, their overall educational experience remains less enriched and comprehensive, hindering their holistic development.

Furthermore, the ongoing shortage of successful band programs in many of these schools ensures that inequality persists in our educational systems and the systemic injustices embedded within the legacies of segregation and funding disparities continue as well. As a result, students in most majority African American secondary public schools face not only educational disadvantages but also social disparities that can affect their future, perpetuating a cycle of disadvantage.

Despite the extensive body of research in the field of music education, one topic that is underrepresented in the literature is the barriers of band programs within public secondary

schools that serve majority African American student populations. Noteworthy gaps exist in the literature with respect to truly comprehensive studies that address the unique obstacles encountered by band directors at these schools and possible solutions to help deal with such challenges. Failure to fill this gap in the literature causes key information to be unexplored, thus, an incomplete understanding of the problem. This research will attempt to fill this gap by examining the specific barriers faced by band directors within majority African American secondary public schools, proposing possible solutions, and comparing the findings to band programs in non-majority African American schools.

### **Need for the Study**

The importance of this research is in bringing greater awareness to the unique issues these band programs face. Through identifying and discussing these challenges, educators, administrators and policymakers can begin to develop specific strategies to approach resource allocation more equitably for the promotion of music education for all students. Additionally, the findings will contribute to the broader field of music education, promoting more inclusive teaching practices and advocating for policy changes to ensure equitable access to the arts.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

The primary purpose of this research was to investigate the barriers hindering successful band programs in majority African American secondary schools. This study specifically addressed the following research questions:

1. What are the most prominent barriers hindering developing successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional barriers do band directors in these schools view as important?



2. What are the most effective strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers hindering development of successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional strategies, interventions, and/or collaborations do band directors in these schools feel can be implemented to overcome these barriers?
3. Is there a difference among participants' barrier ratings based on the following variables: school majority ethnic populations (majority vs. non-majority African American) and school socioeconomic status (i.e., Title 1 vs. non-Title 1 schools)?

Using a concurrent embedded mixed-methods approach, this study will identify most prominent barriers and effective strategies regarding developing successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools while making comparisons with non-majority African American schools based on school demographic variables. This research seeks to inspire positive changes in policy and resource allocation, ultimately leading to a more nurturing and enriching music education experience for all students.

### **Limitations**

One of the primary limitations of this study was the use of self-report data from band directors. Although their perspectives were valuable, their perceptions and experiences did not contain the full story of what African American band programs faced in majority or non-majority African American secondary schools. They may have interpreted questions differently, which impacted the responses collected from the survey - both quantitatively and qualitatively. Possible sources of bias included personal biases that may have cause some participants to under-report or over-emphasize certain barriers or strategies.

Another limitation was the risk of response bias. This could have resulted in non-response bias, and as a result, responses to the survey may not be generalizable to other band directors.

While the total number of participants was substantial, this study only received the participation of 20 band directors at majority African American secondary public schools. This relatively small sample size may not have been fully representative of the diverse experiences within this group and additionally the findings may not generalize to band directors at similar schools.

Moreover, the study focused exclusively on schools at the secondary level in the United States. Therefore, findings are not generalizable to countries other than the U.S., or to different educational levels.

### **Delimitations**

The primary delimitation of this study was the approach of only examining band directors serving in majority African American secondary public schools. This was done in an effort to address some of the challenges and obstacles unique to these schools that were often omitted by the more general music education studies.

Another delimitation was the inclusion criteria for participants, which included band directors from secondary schools regardless of school ethnic composition or school type. This allows for comparisons to be made between participants in majority African American secondary public schools and non-majority African American secondary schools.

This study employed a mixed-methods approach that involved a quantitative survey which included qualitative open-ended survey questions. The was intended to provide a holistic

view of barriers and strategies, but implies the study is bounded by the instruments used as well as data collected.

Finally, the study centered primarily on the viewpoints and experiences of band directors, rather than those of students, parents, or administrators. While band directors play a central role in shaping band programs, gathering perspectives from other stakeholders could have offered additional perceptions of the challenges and potential solutions.

### **Definitions**

- Majority African American School: defined by the researcher as an educational institution in which African American students make up 51% or more of the student population.
- Non-majority African American School: defined by the researcher as an educational institution in which students from one or more ethnic groups other than African American comprise 51% or more of the total student population.
- Secondary School: “covers ages 11 or 12 through 18 or 19 and is divided into two levels: lower and upper secondary (levels 2 and 3). For the purposes of statistical comparability, the United States has defined lower secondary education as grades seven through nine and upper secondary as grades 10 through 12” (National Center for Education Statistics, n.d.). For the purposes of this study, the researcher defines a secondary school as including grades six through 12 since many middle, junior high, and intermediate schools include grade 6.
- Title 1 Status: “Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESEA) provides supplemental financial assistance to school districts for children from low-income families. Its purpose is to

provide all children the opportunity to receive a fair, equitable, and high-quality education, and to close educational achievement gaps by allocating federal funds for education programs and service” (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021).

- Band Program: defined by the researcher as a school music ensemble that usually includes wind, brass, and percussion instruments. Band programs can include various types of ensembles, such as concert bands, marching bands, and jazz bands. The purpose of a band program is to provide students with music education, performance opportunities, and skill development in playing instruments.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

A well-rounded education would not exist without music education because of its benefits for the social, emotional, and cognitive skills of children. However, research indicates considerable issues in music instruction. The purpose of this literature review is to identify barriers and solutions in music education, especially in school bands.

#### Resource Limitations

Resource limitations hinder music programs. These limitations may include financial barriers, funding shortages, unequal distribution of resources, poor access to materials, and inadequate instructors. Research suggests these variables affect the quality of music programs in various school settings (Abril & Gault, 2008; Bates, 2012; Crooke & McFerran, 2015; Culp & Clause, 2020; DeLorenzo & Marrison, 2021; Fitzpatrick, 2011).

Abril and Gault (2008) conducted a nationwide study, surveying 540 principals about secondary school music programs. The results indicated suburban schools had more funding for music compared to urban and rural districts. This discrepancy in resources impacted the quality of music education offered to students. Schools in more affluent areas could provide more advanced classes and numerous extracurricular ensembles than schools in lower-income areas. The study suggested the need for equitable resource distribution to ensure all students have access to quality music education. This positions resource limitation within the larger context of educational inequality.

Fitzpatrick (2011) explored the difficulties experienced by instrumental music teachers in urban schools. Data collection was conducted through surveys, interviews, and observations. The results revealed the primary difficulties were limited funding sources along with lack of

instruments and resources. Nonetheless, two-thirds of music teachers felt their roles in their students' growth and classrooms as safe spaces for students still had personally and professionally satisfying aspects. The researcher suggested that educators in diverse urban settings require increased funding and professional development, and thus comprehensive support was needed to address lack of resources and preparation to teach in this specific environment. This highlights the particular challenges faced by music educators in these settings and highlights the importance of focused intervention strategies.

Building on the work of Fitzpatrick (2011), DeLorenzo and Marissa (2021) investigated barriers that hinder participation in music education for Black and Latino students as well as educators residing in urban New Jersey. The results of this study show that one of the major reasons fewer musicians go on into careers as music educators is poor wages. This financial barrier deterred talented individuals from aspiring to music educator positions to inspire and teach students. The study demonstrates the consequences of financial constraints to accessibility and diversity in music education by highlighting the interplay between class and educational opportunities. This research offers insights, from an interdisciplinary perspective, exploring the intersection of financial constraints and racial-ethnic disparities, which can contribute systemic barriers.

Culp and Clause (2020) investigated the socioeconomic effects on music participation at the secondary level. They found that band and orchestra participation were more prevalent among students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds than their peers in lower-socioeconomic-status schools. This inequality also created a disparity in the resources necessary for music studies, such as sheet music, instruments, and other resources. The study also noted the value and practicability of participation in music programs were influenced by socioeconomic status. As

such, the research emphasizes the need for targeted responses to the low socioeconomic status-music education gap.

Bates (2012) used a qualitative approach to explore how social class influences participation in music education. Students from a low socioeconomic status background did not have access to instruments, performances, and participation opportunities. These constraints in ensemble placements and festival performances disenfranchised less affluent students. This study adds to the understanding of how financial considerations impact students' musical experiences and opportunities. This mirrors Fitzpatrick's (2011) argument that, however extensive the support, financial barriers are systemic and as such demand systemic solutions.

Crooke and McFerran (2015) explored Australian schools, finding that financial cuts (or restraints) and the loss of music teachers were placed limits on the extent to which meaningful curricular music could be provided. Principal interviews described the impact of school resource constraints on both the purchase of instruments as well as on hiring educators which had been particularly detrimental for low-income students. This study offers a comparative view of this issue with the challenges faced in more than one educational system and highlights the need for an equal resource distribution. Examining the Australian context contributes to our understanding of how resource limitations impact music education globally.

### **Socioeconomic Challenges**

The literature on socioeconomic challenges in band programs indicates these barriers markedly hinder the development of successful music education in low socioeconomic settings. Key factors include limited financial resources, lack of family support, and the high cost of music education (Baker, 2012; Deisler, 2011; Hancock, 2008; Iliff, 2018; Jolly, 2008; Pendergrast & Robinson, 2020).

Jolly (2008) examined the decrease in Texas band program enrollments, as well as its implications for students, schools and communities. Interviews with five music educators and three state music education officials indicated four main challenges: scheduling requirements, overemphasis on band competition, lack of parental support and shifting family values. These challenges were caused by higher academic standards, more competition and a changing family pattern. The study emphasizes that lack of family support and financial difficulties are directly related to socio-economic problems. This article highlights how financial constraints with family and lifestyle changes limit student involvement in band. The author recommends informed decision-making by administrators, increased family support and assistance to mitigate declining enrollments.

Hancock's (2008) study aims to investigate the nature of music teacher attrition and migration through a quantitative descriptive approach and logistic regression models. Combining nationally representative data, the researcher examines the effect of teacher characteristics, school conditions, efficacy, support, and compensation. Among the major findings is that younger and minority music educators were at higher risk for attrition and migration, which is primarily caused by poor working conditions and low salaries. The need for support, efficacy, and salary satisfaction were suggested. The findings demonstrate that economic limitations along with the lack of proper support systems in low-income schools, lead to higher degrees of teacher attrition and migration. Educators should be retained through enhancing workplace support along with building relationships with administrators and parents. This study contributes to the understanding of how socioeconomic issues may cause teacher attrition and migration in low-income schools. Addressing these issues may lead to more stable and effective music education programs.



Deisler's (2011) study investigates the factors contributing to the success of high school band programs, comparing perceptions from high socioeconomic status schools (HSES) and low socioeconomic status schools (LSES). Surveys and open-ended questionnaires were administered to students, teachers, and principals from ten Florida high school band programs. The key findings revealed the most influential factor for band program success was the band director's high expectations. Interestingly, after-school rehearsals were perceived as more influential in successful low socioeconomic status school bands, potentially providing a positive outlet for students and keeping them engaged. The study emphasized the importance of parental support for successful band programs, particularly in high socioeconomic status schools where parents may have more time to contribute. In low socioeconomic status schools, financial constraints often limit parental involvement, making the role of after-school rehearsals more critical as a means of student engagement and retention. This study highlights how socioeconomic factors influence the availability of resources and parental support, which are essential for the success of band programs.

Baker (2012) compiled a description of an effective urban music teacher to examine how teacher preparation programs should prepare future music teachers to teach in urban schools. Participating in the study were 158 elementary, middle, and high school choral directors set in three urban school districts in Texas. Participants who had attended urban schools had the longest duration teaching in urban schools. The most frequently indicated problems were low parental support, funding, socioeconomic status, and cultural diversity. The results of this study directly link with socioeconomic problems because they emphasized how the school setting is grossly affected by the problem of lack of financial support. Participants' views on whether more funding would alleviate most challenges varied. While some wanted more instruments, music,

practice facilities, and private lessons, others saw more concerns with sociological issues such as students' behavior. The results underscore how socioeconomic factors help explain resource availability based on parents' participation levels.

Iloff (2018) explored best practices for teaching high school band in low socioeconomic settings. Through interviews, observations, and analyzing artifacts, such as handbooks and performance calendars, the researcher was able to identify several key challenges and strategies. One critical issue was socioeconomic challenges as the limited resources of schools resulted in lower funding for instruments, uniforms, and travel. This, in turn, hindered the ability of schools to provide their students with a rich band experience. The importance of feeder programs was also underscored as most low-income schools participating in the study did not have them. The third issue was exposure as students at schools for low-income families do not have access to professional concerts or college band performances. Also, student attendance was also a challenge as many students were occupied with other co-curricular activities in the afternoon. This study presented a detailed picture of what challenges a band program in a low-income school could face and be used to create an intervention to bolster the participation of low-income students.

Beveridge (2022) investigated the link between poverty and music education. This study focused on the potential barriers that impede the engagement of low-income students in school music programs. The study synthesized existing research findings to construct a cohesive understanding of the barriers affecting music participation. One of the obstacles was cultural differences and the divide disregarding the interest of the students pursuing classical music. The study also found that more culturally competent teachers and a diverse range of them contributed to the students taking a more balanced music education. The high rates of teacher attrition within

low-income and racially diverse schools increased the obstacles and disrupted the learning experience of the students. The results of this study suggest that teacher cultural competency is essential in developing effective band programs especially in minority serving schools. Most students think that instructors who value music from different cultures value them and their musical experiences. This approach may encourage learners to have more trust and respect for their teachers.

Literature indicates that such factors as financial barriers, lack of family support, and the high cost of participation should be considered as barriers to developing successful music programs. Though these issues are critical according to various studies, Deisler (2011) added that it is also essential to consider other vital factors, such as leadership and expectations. Thus, the offered research demonstrates the need for a comprehensive strategy that focuses on addressing socioeconomic hardships by not limiting available funding but supporting them with increased funding, leadership, and alternative educational practices.

### **Teacher-Related Variables**

The existing literature on teacher-related variables in music education suggests that music educators' preparedness, attitudes, diversity, and rapport notably impact the success of band programs (Abril and Bannerman, 2015; Allen, 2011; Byo, 1999; DeLorenzo & Marrison, 2021; Emielu, 2011; Fiese & DeCarbo, 1995; Iliff, 2018). Studies have consistently found these factors are critical in shaping students' musical experiences and outcomes, particularly in urban and low-income settings.

Fiese and DeCarbo (1995) examined urban music educators and their perceptions of effective teaching strategies. The study included 20 urban music teachers from various states with diverse teaching experiences spanning elementary to high school levels. Employing a

questionnaire with open-ended inquiries, the researchers explored teacher preparedness for urban settings, effective teaching methodologies, and proposals for elevating music education in urban schools. A recurring theme of feeling ill-equipped by their undergraduate and graduate education to navigate urban teaching complexities. This finding emphasizes the necessity for more holistic, urban-focused teacher preparation programs, which can authentically address urban students' unique needs and diverse backgrounds.

Byo (1999) examined teachers' perceptions of implementing the National Standards for Music Education in Florida's elementary schools, focusing on both music specialists and generalists. Music specialists are educators who have specialized training and expertise in music education, often holding degrees in music and dedicated to teaching music as their primary responsibility. In contrast, music generalists are typically classroom teachers who incorporate music into their curriculum but do not have specialized training in music education. Using a survey method to assess views on nine content standards, the study involved elementary school music teachers. The study indicated a notable gap in perceptions between music specialists and generalists, with specialists feeling more comfortable with standards implementation while generalists faced challenges like time constraints and limited resources. This discrepancy indicates that additional training and resources are needed for both groups, emphasizing the importance of careful curriculum planning and resource allocation.

Allen (2011) investigated whether classroom management was the main source of challenges in music classrooms, according to music teachers and administrators. Participants 90 music teachers and 90 administrators working in US public schools, with all participants completing a survey. The results of the study indicated that while classroom management is important, it is not the main challenge. Student motivation and teacher responsibilities were more

pertinent issues. This study's comprehensive approach reveals that addressing these issues may be more impactful than focusing solely on classroom management. The findings suggest the need for improved preservice teacher coursework and updated teacher preparation programs to better align with evolving educational trends.

Emielu (2011) examined the achievement of music education goals in Nigerian secondary and tertiary institutions, focusing on the scarcity of qualified music teachers and high teacher attrition. Participants included students, principals, teachers, and authorities in education in Kwara State, Nigeria. Data were gathered via oral consultation, surveys, observations, and secondary data. It was found the insufficient number of qualified music teachers may have caused a decline in students enrolling in music courses. Kwara State had just 20 music teachers for all secondary schools located in the region. This study is important because it shows how the lack of sufficiently trained teachers can prevent the growth of effective music programs.

Iliff's (2018) study also addresses teacher issues. Interviews and observations were used to explore the issues that are unique to the band directors who work with the bands that are composed of students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds. He identifies some of the perceived barriers, which include exposure and financial constraints, but he reveals that teachers' sophistication and rapport are especially important. In other words, the directors who have good rapport establish environments that are conducive to learning. This study's findings align with the literature that emphasizes the importance of teacher dedication in overcoming barriers and positively influencing student outcomes.

Abril and Bannerman (2015) investigated the effect of micro and meso-level actions on the success of music education programs from the perceptions of elementary general music teachers. A mixed-method approach was used to collect data from 374 randomly selected

elementary general music teachers. Participants completed a survey that targeted their demographics, perceived variables affecting success, teacher-initiated action, and the presence of stakeholders. This research revealed the importance of teacher-initiated actions, such as participating in performances that demonstrate learning and cooperating with colleagues, which are highly effective. The research results show that micro-level variables like scheduling and facilities and meso-level action such as collaboration among district music teachers are also important. The findings of this research have numerous implications for music education; most importantly, it is music teachers who can define the success of their program through actions, such as advocacy, cooperation, and presentation and publicizing their music programs.

DeLorenzo and Marris (2021) investigated the low number of Black and Latino students and teachers in music education in New Jersey. The participants were three undergraduate students majoring in music education and four public school music teachers from Northern and Central urban part of New Jersey, who were Black or Latino. The results indicate that Black and Latino students were more inclined to choose music education as a career if they had a role model of the same race. This article implies the importance of teacher representation and its impact on students' perceptions.

Beveridge (2022) investigated the link between poverty and music education. This study focused on the potential barriers that impede the engagement of low-income students in school music programs. The study synthesized existing research findings to construct a cohesive understanding of the barriers affecting music participation. One of the obstacles was cultural differences and the divide disregarding the interest of the students pursuing classical music. The study also found that more culturally competent teachers and a diverse range of them contributed to the students taking a more balanced music education. The high rates of teacher attrition within

low-income and racially diverse schools increased the obstacles and disrupted the learning experience of the students. The results of this study suggest that teacher cultural competency is essential in developing effective band programs especially in minority serving schools. Most students think that instructors who value music from different cultures value them and their musical experiences. This approach may encourage learners to have more trust and respect for their teachers.

The existing literature on teacher-related variables in music education suggests that factors such as teacher preparation, attitudes, diversity, and rapport with students are crucial for the development and success of band programs. These studies collectively highlight the need for holistic teacher preparation programs, improved resources and training, cultural competence, and teacher diversity to address the unique challenges faced by music educators.

### **Student-Related Variables**

Research indicates that numerous factors affect student participation in band programs (Conway, 2000; Gauzousais et al., 2008; Hoffman, 2012; Kinney, 2010; Pendergast & Robinson, 2020; Silveira, 2013). Particularly, early exposure to music education, family structures, decision-making processes to join music programs, stereotypes associated with gender, and academic achievement, and have been found to impact student participation in band programs. Although the roles of music educators are paramount in creating and facilitating these programs, it is equally important to understand students and the challenges they face.

Conway (2000) studied the effect of gender stereotypes on students' choices of musical instruments. Data collection included interviews with 37 students. The results indicated there are several factors affecting students' choices of musical instruments including characteristics of instruments, elementary teachers' role, parents' influence, the role of peers, and gender

stereotypes. In addition, the family's socioeconomic status, and performance at school should also be considered as those factors may also hinder a student's further participation in music. According to these results, students' choices can be completely or partially attributed to a combination of personal, social, and economic aspects. For these reasons, it is essential for educators to provide sufficient support and equal opportunities while explaining to students that gender stereotypes for choosing musical instruments should not exist.

Gauzousais et al. (2008) explored students' process of decision-making in the high school regarding course selection and, specifically, participation in the band. The study employed focus group discussions to research the variables that affected students' choice of courses. The research findings showed a rather complex perception where while the band members were also referred to as "geeks", they were also perceived as intelligent, successful, and better able to resist peer pressure. This shows that it is indeed a complex perception that affects students' decision making. This study gives students voice, which is key to understanding their perceptions. Understanding the students is for strategizing how to increase student participation in band and music programs.

Kinney (2010) investigated the variables associated with students' initial enrollment and continuation in urban school band programs. Participants comprised 402 sixth grade and 340 eighth-grade students from 4 urban middle schools. Data were collected through surveys. The findings indicated that academic achievement, family structure, and gender were critical predictors of initial band enrollment. The student-related factors discussed have numerous implications for schools to help mitigate student-related factors. Regarding academic achievement, schools can support band-interested students by providing tutoring. For family structure, schools should train their educator to interact positively with the diverse backgrounds



of their students' families. Finally, schools should also introduce inclusive recruitment approaches that support all the children's interest in music.

Hoffman (2012) explored middle school wind band classrooms, focusing on student identity formation and shifts. The study involved six middle school students from a diverse public school in the eastern U.S., spanning most of an academic year. Data collection methods included observations, interviews, and weekly journal entries, with thematic analysis framing the results using social identity theory, identity theory, and critical theory. Findings reveal that students often categorized their peers into groups and opted for band to blend in and avoid standing out. This research provides valuable insights into how peer influence and self-perception impact students' enrollment decisions and commitment to band programs. However, the study's small sample size limits its generalizability, suggesting the need for further research with larger populations.

Silveira (2013) examined the motivations behind students' participation in honor music ensembles. The research involved 264 middle and high school students who were part of these ensembles, using surveys to uncover the variables driving their involvement. The results indicated that musical variables held more weight than social reasons for participation. This study contributes to our understanding of intrinsic motivations in music education, but its cross-sectional design limits the ability to assess changes over time. Longitudinal studies are needed to explore how these motivations evolve.

Pendergrast and Robinson (2020) examined musical interests and learning conditions preferred in different music courses by 827 secondary students, taking into consideration the sociodemographic profiles of the students. Participants-recruited from both urban and suburban settings-described they preferred teacher-led instruction, as well as student-directed instruction,

small-group learning environments. Surprisingly, the study did not find a strong correlation between music preference and results in performance, it was very close to random chance when considering other variables like availability and scheduling. The study is important as it provides insights into the hidden student preferences that can be used to inform educators and policymakers for future educational strategies.

These studies collectively emphasize the need for a comprehensive approach to music education, tailored to address the diverse needs and backgrounds of students. The implications of these findings shed light on the importance of understanding and addressing student-related variables to enhance the effectiveness and inclusivity of music education programs.

### **Curriculum and Educational Variables**

In school music and band programs, curriculum and educational factors have a deep impact on their development and effectiveness. Different researchers (Abril & Gault, 2008; Abril, 2009; Angel-Alvarado et al., 2022; Boyle, 1992; Burland, 2020; Kratus, 2007; Miles, 1993; Miller, 2023; Pendergrast & Robinson, 2020) have pointed out these factors cover various aspects, such as the availability of a variety of courses, the influence of standardized education policies, students' interest in arts subjects, and how relevant the curriculum is to students' cultural backgrounds. This section delves into how these factors affect the success of band programs.

Boyle (1992) identified major obstacles to program evaluation for secondary school music programs. The researcher argued that music education evaluation of that time did not adequately measure the goals of efficient music education as most evaluation was on group performance, leaving individual creativity, aesthetic appreciation and personal musical growth. Boyle suggested using the evaluation model created by the Music Educators National Conference(MENC), including objectives, leadership, curriculum, materials, facilities and

outcomes. This model makes a case for both formative and summative evaluations to ensure data driven program improvement and decision-making. The researcher employed a qualitative research design and included a mix of principals, supervisors, teachers, and students to capture the effectiveness and sufficiency of music programs. The findings suggest the need for a complete approach to evaluation which is student-centered, supportive of the multiple goals of music education and relevant to policy.

Miles (1993) conducted a nationwide survey of high school band directors to identify the current academic problems and strengths of public high school bands. The study found critical challenges, such as academic problems, scheduling difficulties, funding issues, and reduced staff positions, which resonate with the findings of Boyle (1992) regarding resource constraints. However, Miles also shed light on the strengths of band participation, including discipline, music education and skill development, and social development. The study concludes with a call for national instructional guidelines and professional development opportunities, which aligns with Boyle's emphasis on comprehensive evaluation but extends the conversation to the need for structured national standards. This study is relevant as it provides empirical data on the challenges faced by high school bands, further validating the necessity for systemic changes in music education.

Kratus (2007) critiqued the traditional large-group performance-based music education practices, arguing they are disconnected from contemporary music experiences. The study calls for a reimagining of music education to align with real-world music experiences, a perspective that challenges the conventional approaches discussed by Boyle (1992) and Miles (1993). Kratus's emphasis on aligning music education with societal needs points to a trend toward more individualized and relevant music experiences. This study is relevant for its

forward-thinking approach, advocating for a paradigm shift that could address declining student interest and resource allocation issues.

Abril and Gault (2008) investigated the status of music in secondary schools in the United States, focusing on principals' perceptions. Their survey of 540 secondary school principals indicated that rural and low SES schools offered the least variety of music courses, emphasizing critical resource disparities. This study also pointed out the negative impact of education mandates like No Child Left Behind (NCLB) on music programs, a finding that contrasts with Boyle's (1992) more general critique of traditional evaluation methods. Abril and Gault's study emphasizes the importance of educational policies in shaping music education, emphasizing the need for policy advocacy to ensure equitable access to music programs. This study is crucial for understanding the systemic barriers imposed by educational mandates and their impact on curriculum diversity and resource allocation.

Abril (2009) extended the examination of music education's status, emphasizing its value, prevalence, and the challenges it faces. The study found that over 90% of public elementary and secondary schools offer music programs, emphasizing the pivotal role of music specialists in teaching. However, Abril also notes the reduction in time allotted for arts education due to standardized testing pressures, echoing the concerns raised by Abril and Gault (2008). This literature review and analysis provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of music education, making a notable contribution by synthesizing numerous studies to highlight the overarching trends and challenges. This study is essential for its broad scope and its ability to contextualize individual findings within the larger framework of music education's challenges and values.

Crooke and McFerran (2015) explored the challenges and opportunities of implementing music programs in Australian schools through interviews with four school principals. Their study pointed out the shortage of financial and staffing resources and resistance from various school community segments, similar to the challenges identified by Miles (1993). However, they also emphasized the enabling role of administrative support in demonstrating commitment and creativity, suggesting that strong leadership can mitigate some resource limitations. This study's focus on the implementation process offers practical insights into overcoming barriers, making it a valuable addition to the literature on music program development and leadership.

Pendergrast and Robinson (2020) examined public secondary school students' interests in various music courses and their preferred learning conditions based on musical involvement and sociodemographic characteristics. The participants were 827 students selected from the urban and suburban school districts. They were taking various academic and elective courses, both school-music and out-of-school music courses. Participants completed a survey. The results showed that school-music, out-of-school music, and nonmusic participants preferred a combination of teacher- and student-guided instruction. However, out-of-school music participants and those not involved in music preferred small groups and their choice of music, which indicates their need for more personalized and autonomous learning. Second, various factors, such as scheduling, extracurricular activities, and structural barriers, affect enrollment in music courses regardless of interest. In this regard, the authors suggest that schools should ensure students are exposed to alternative music courses, such as in composition and solo performance. This study suggests the optimal conditions for learning music should be more flexible and inclusive and that schools should expand their range of music courses.

Angel-Alvarado et al. (2022) investigated the inequities in music education in Chilean schools, focusing on curriculum and resource disparities. Their study indicated critical challenges, particularly in the Northern and Southern zones, due to centralized resource allocation and budget constraints. This study's findings on the national curriculum's lack of cultural diversity resonate with the literature's call for more inclusive and equitable music education practices. The study's recommendations for increased funding and enhanced administrative support are critical for addressing the systemic inequities shed light on in previous studies.

Miller (2023) examined access, enrollment, and outcomes of music courses at the high school level in Maryland. The study found that only 22% of students were enrolled in music courses, with critical disparities based on race and gender. Miller's findings on the overrepresentation of White music teachers and the impact of teacher experience on enrollment align with the literature's emphasis on the need for diversity and equity in music education. This study's use of logistic regression and multilevel modeling provides robust quantitative data, making it a valuable contribution to understanding the demographic and institutional factors affecting music education access.

These studies suggest a multilayered impact on the development and effectiveness of school music programs. While there is consensus on the importance of comprehensive evaluation and equitable access, the studies also indicate critical disparities and challenges that need to be addressed to ensure the sustainability and inclusivity of music education programs.

### **Cultural- and Diversity-Related Barriers**

School music programs face unique challenges related to cultural and diversity-related barriers (Albert, 2006; Alcalá, 2023; Baker, 2012; Bates, 2012; Bond, 2017; Butler et al., 2007;

Claufs & Pigott, 2021; DeLorenzo and Marrison, 2021; Escalante, 2019; Kuehne, 2020; Messinetti, 2007). These barriers encompass a wide range of issues, including cultural insensitivity, stereotypes and discrimination, the need for culturally relevant pedagogy (CRE), marginalization of cultural practices, racial identity, and the importance of creating an inclusive environment.

Albert (2006) explored strategies used by instrumental music teachers in low socioeconomic status (SES) middle schools to recruit and retain students. Using qualitative methods, Albert conducted interviews with Midwest middle school teachers, administrators, and parents, supplemented by classroom observations. The study emphasizes the importance of exposure to the band program, culturally relevant ensembles, and strong teacher-student relationships as key factors in recruitment and retention. The findings emphasize that visibility, positive teacher qualities, and a supportive environment are crucial for student participation. This research is relevant to this study as it emphasizes the need for culturally sensitive approaches in engaging low SES students, a critical factor for enhancing diversity in music programs.

Butler et al. (2007) examined equity and access issues in music education, focusing on race, ethnicity, and culture. They presented a conceptual model with five interconnected categories shaping music education for diverse students. The study emphasizes the important role of teachers, whose beliefs and attitudes toward multicultural education notably influence instruction. It emphasizes the necessity of acknowledging students' cultural backgrounds and integrating multicultural principles into the curriculum. This conceptual model is crucial for understanding how culturally responsive teaching can foster an inclusive environment, aligning with research on developing equitable music education practices.

Baker (2012) documented the attributes of an effective urban music teacher to inform teacher preparation programs. Participants included 158 choral directors from elementary, middle, and high schools in three urban districts in Texas. Teachers completed a questionnaire and a supplementary survey. There were several frequently cited challenges, including cultural diversity. The results suggest that university training should focus on preparing teachers for the unique demands of urban schools, emphasizing culturally responsive teaching and engagement strategies. This study emphasizes the importance of professional development tailored to the needs of urban music educators, which is crucial to research on supporting minority students and fostering inclusive learning environments.

Bates (2012) examined the marginalization of cultural practices in music education due to social class biases. Using qualitative methods, Bates explored personal narratives and reflections from music educators and students. The study found that dominant cultural groups often expect others to assimilate, marginalizing lower-income students' cultural practices. Bates advocates for a non-hierarchical approach to music education that values diverse musical practices. This study's emphasis on social class impacts provides a broader context for research on creating inclusive music programs.

Bond (2017) investigated the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy (CRE) in music education. Analyzing existing research, Bond emphasized the challenges teachers face when integrating CRE, such as resistance to changing traditional teaching methods and anxiety about teaching diverse music styles. The study calls for embracing culturally sustaining pedagogy to create inclusive and effective music education practices. This research is critical for understanding the complexities of applying CRE in music programs.



Escalante (2019) examined the relationship between race, Latinx students, and music education in the United States. Using post-qualitative methods and racial formation theory, Escalante conducted in-depth interviews with Mexican American students involved in mariachi programs. The study reveals how racism and colorblind ideologies shape Latinx students' experiences in music education, challenging preconceived notions about Latinx identity. This research advocates for a race-conscious approach in music education and encourages unconventional methodologies, providing a vital perspective for addressing racial issues.

Kuehne (2020) explored culturally responsive pedagogy in music education and its influence on students' learning experiences. Using a mixed-methods approach, Kuehne gathered data from over a thousand pre-service music educators. The study indicated a deficit mindset among participants regarding “at-risk” students, emphasizing the need for a shift towards asset-based thinking and culturally responsive teaching. This research emphasizes the importance of acknowledging students' cultural backgrounds in educational practices, which is crucial for enhancing diversity in music programs.

DeLorenzo and Marris (2021) explored the underrepresentation of Black and Latino students and teachers in music education. Through surveys and semi-structured interviews with Black and Latino music educators and students in New Jersey, the study emphasizes cultural shocks experienced by minority students in predominantly White institutions. The results suggest that minority representation in teaching staff can influence students' career choices in music education. This study is noteworthy as it offers insights into the barriers faced by minority educators and students, which is directly relevant to promoting diversity in music education.

Clauhs and Pigott (2021) investigated the experiences of African American students in a summer music camp. Using qualitative methods, they explored how the camp environment,

racial identity development, and musical opportunities impacted student engagement. The study found that racial identity and representation among instructors notably influenced students' experiences. This research emphasizes the need for diverse musical offerings and culturally responsive instruction, which aligns inclusive music education.

Alcala (2023) explored the experiences of Hispanic and Latino/a/x educators in music education, focusing on the barriers they encounter at different educational levels and throughout their careers. The study emphasizes financial limitations, lack of resources, cultural stereotypes, and underrepresentation as critical barriers. Alcala advocates for changes in recruitment and audition processes to attract more diverse students. This study emphasizes the importance of mentorship and representation, providing crucial insights for creating inclusive and equitable music education environments.

These studies emphasize the importance of culturally responsive teaching, diverse educators, and inclusive curricula in addressing cultural and diversity-related barriers in music education, underscoring the critical need for culturally responsive practices to promote diversity in the field.

### **Systemic and Structural Barriers**

Systemic and structural barriers within school music programs pose critical challenges that impact the overall quality and inclusivity of music education. These barriers include geographic disparities, the lack of mandatory music courses, limited collaboration, outdated models, academic pressures, deficit thinking, the need for asset-based thinking, the influence of band culture, building independent musicians, lack of diverse offerings, time constraints, and constant changes in the education system (Abril & Gault, 2008; Burland, 2020; Helton & Paetz,

2021; Henley & Barton, 2022; Libby, 2022; Staub, 2019; William, 2011). This section explores these challenges and discusses strategies to mitigate their impact effectively.

Abril and Gault (2008) investigated the status of music in secondary schools in the United States, focusing on principals' perceptions. Their study, involving 540 principals from public and private secondary schools, utilized surveys analyzed through quantitative tests and thematic analysis. The results indicated that only 34% of schools required music courses. Additionally, suburban schools had a greater number of music teachers per school compared to urban and rural schools, indicating a critical disparity in resource allocation. This lack of mandatory music education results in inconsistent access to music programs, limiting students' exposure to the benefits of music education. Implementing policies to make music education a mandatory part of the curriculum could help ensure equitable access for all students, which aligns with the broader literature emphasizing the need for policy changes to support music education inclusively.

Williams (2011) addresses the decline in enrollment in traditional large ensembles within American K–12 music education programs. His study sheds light on how the outdated model of music education, centered around these large performance groups, may drive the decrease in student participation. Williams advocates for exploring alternative music education models, suggesting a fundamental shift in music education to attract a broader student base. By reducing class sizes, adopting student-centered learning methods, and embracing modern technologies and instruments relevant to students' diverse interests and cultures, the field can strive to engage a wider spectrum of students. This proposal aligns with recent trends in the literature that emphasize innovative approaches to music education.

Staub (2019) sheds light on the importance of shifting from deficit thinking to asset-based thinking in music education. His qualitative study involved interviews with music educators to explore their perspectives on student capabilities. Staub argues that recognizing and leveraging students' strengths and cultural backgrounds can transform the educational experience, fostering a more inclusive environment. This approach is crucial for addressing the systemic barriers that perpetuate inequities in music education. By adopting an asset-based framework, educators can create more supportive and empowering learning environments, a notion supported by other researchers advocating for culturally responsive pedagogy.

Burland (2020) examined the state of music education in England, focusing on the decline in student interest in arts subjects due to government spending cuts and the prioritization of core subjects by the English Baccalaureate (EBacc). This study's findings about the marginalization of music education align with Abril and Gault's (2008) observations on the impact of educational mandates. Burland also discusses the role of Music Education Hubs in increasing participation among diverse backgrounds, providing an in-depth view of both challenges and potential solutions. This study is critical for its examination of external pressures and resource competition, contributing to a broader understanding of how policy and economic factors influence music education.

Helton and Paetz (2021) focused on disparities in music education access and enrollment linked to geographic location. Their study, using quantitative analyses, demonstrated that while differences in access and enrollment exist across different areas, individual school-level variables play a larger role than broader trends. The researchers emphasized geographic barriers, including transportation challenges and limited access to music instruction, particularly in rural areas. To address these issues, the study suggests exploring alternative solutions such as virtual instruction,

satellite programs, or partnerships with community organizations. This aligns with the broader trend in the literature, emphasizing the necessity of tailored solutions to address regional differences.

Henley and Barton (2022) examined challenges and inequalities within music education in the UK, focusing on whole-class instrumental tuition (WCET) programs. Their research, part of the Music Commission's inquiry, involved fieldwork, surveys, focus groups, and a rapid evidence review. The study uncovered crucial themes in music education progression, emphasizing pupil and participant voices, diversity, inclusion, collaboration, and transition points. Participants stressed the need for better communication and collaboration among stakeholders to align music education with young learners' interests. Addressing geographical disparities, the study found urban areas like London offered more opportunities for music activities, while rural areas faced critical challenges. The researchers called for stronger engagement between music hubs, schools, and higher education institutions, as well as collaborations with professional musicians and ensembles. This comprehensive approach to collaboration and resource sharing is essential for overcoming systemic barriers in music education.

Libby (2022) explored the experiences of high school band directors in rural United States schools, using a transcendental phenomenological approach. Through interviews and follow-up discussions with ten participants, the study indicated themes of purpose, preparedness, and perseverance. Recruitment and retention challenges emerged as recurrent issues, often stemming from conflicts between band participation and other extracurricular activities. The study also emphasized schedule conflicts, transportation limitations, and the overall loss of student interest as critical barriers. Libby emphasizes the importance of tailored training and

professional development for band directors, as well as the vital role of parents, community members, and administrators in supporting and nurturing music education programs. This study contributes to the broader literature by addressing the unique challenges faced by rural music programs and emphasizing the need for community involvement and support.

These studies imply that addressing systemic and structural barriers in school music programs requires comprehensive, localized solutions. Researchers have consistently emphasized the significance of policy changes, innovative educational models, asset-based thinking, and strong community collaborations to address these barriers effectively. These findings emphasize the need for a holistic approach to reforming music education, ensuring it is inclusive and accessible to all students, regardless of their geographic location or socioeconomic status.

### **Gender and Minority-Related Barriers**

Gender and minority-related barriers can hinder access, representation, and overall inclusivity in music education (Elpus & Abril, 2019; Hancock, 2008; Salvador & Allegood, 2014; Sheldon & Hartley, 2012). These barriers encompass gender disparities, underrepresentation in leadership roles, racial identity and stereotypes, and minority status. This section explores the impact of these challenges as well as strategies to promote gender and minority inclusivity within band programs.

Hancock (2008) investigated music teacher attrition and migration. Through an in-depth analysis of nationally representative data, the researchers explored the influence of diverse aspects such as music teacher characteristics, school conditions, efficacy, support, and remuneration on the likelihood of attrition and migration among music educators. The findings shed light on predictors of attrition and migration risk. Gender disparity becomes apparent as female music teachers demonstrate a greater attrition/migration risk, though this effect

diminishes when considering school conditions and teacher efficacy. The study emphasizes the relevance of minority status, revealing that minority music teachers are more prone to attrition/migration risk, influenced by variables including working conditions and remuneration. This study provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by minority music educators, suggesting that promoting gender and minority inclusivity requires a comprehensive approach that addresses these barriers and fosters a supportive and diverse musical community. Hancock's research is relevant to this study, as it emphasizes the systemic obstacles encountered by educators from underrepresented groups. These barriers may be mirrored in the experiences of minority students, potentially impacting the inclusiveness and accessibility of band programs as a whole.

Sheldon and Hartley (2012) investigated the underrepresentation of gender and ethnic diversity within wind-band leadership roles. The study analyzed data over a 12-year span, examining the participation of conductors. The research uncovers a consistent lack of representation for both women and ethnic minorities in prominent wind-band leadership positions. The historical link between bands and the military ingrained sociological biases, and the challenge of balancing work and family life for women are proposed as potential variables contributing to these inequities. The authors also stress the influential role of mentors and role models in inspiring individuals of similar gender and ethnicity to pursue leadership roles. This study is critical because it emphasizes the systemic barriers within leadership roles in music education, suggesting that targeted mentorship and role modeling are critical for increasing diversity. Sheldon and Hartley's work is relevant to this study by emphasizing the necessity of taking active steps to address inequalities based on gender and minority status. Their findings

shed light on the crucial role that inclusive representation plays in fostering equitable participation within band programs.

Salvador and Allegood (2014) examined disparities in the availability of music programs in public schools in the Detroit, Michigan, and Washington, DC, metropolitan areas. Their primary focus was on analyzing the relationship between the proportion of nonwhite students and access to music education initiatives. Using a comprehensive mixed-methods research approach, the authors carefully analyzed data related to structural access, diversity of music offerings, and additional resources. Their investigation centered on the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant correlation between a school's racial composition and its ability to provide music education. Through a detailed analysis, the authors uncovered complex findings that challenged conventional assumptions, emphasizing the need for equitable access to music education that transcends demographic boundaries. This study is critical for understanding the structural barriers that exist within music education and provides a framework for addressing these disparities through localized policy decisions. Salvador and Allegood's research emphasizes the necessity of tailoring strategies to specific contexts to achieve equitable access to music education. This has critical implications for educational policymakers, emphasizing the need for adaptable, context-aware approaches in educational initiatives.

Elpus and Abril (2019) investigated the demographic composition of U.S. high school music ensembles using data from the High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs). The study utilized logistic regression analysis to estimate the likelihood of students enrolling in any music ensemble while considering various demographic characteristics, such as birth-assigned sex, race/ethnicity, prior academic achievement, and native language. The results indicated critical gender disparities in music ensembles, primarily driven by the overrepresentation of



females in choir and orchestra. Gender disparities can be a barrier to developing successful music programs due to certain instruments or roles being perceived as more suitable for one gender over another. This study emphasizes the importance of challenging gender stereotypes in music education, ensuring equal access to instruments and roles, and fostering an inclusive environment where students can freely explore their musical passions.

These studies call for comprehensive strategies to address gender and minority barriers, such as policy reforms, mentorship programs, and equitable resource distribution. Promoting diversity and inclusivity can create a more representative musical environment for all students, thus enhancing the overall quality of music education programs.

### **Social Justice-Related Areas**

Social justice-related areas in music education include challenges that affect access, equity, and inclusion within the field (Grogan, 2022; Lewis & Christophersen, 2021; Spangler, 2022). These barriers point out the need for a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to music education that addresses various aspects of social justice.

Lewis and Christophersen (2021) explored the pedagogical context and processes of social justice in music education from the practitioner's perspective. The study involved two researchers: Judy, a white female public school music teacher in the U.S., and Catharina, a white female higher education music education professor in Norway. They wrote vignettes about their lived experiences with social justice in music education, which they discussed over video chats to identify common themes. The study indicated that expressions of social justice are not generalizable, as every context is unique. Judy's vignette depicted how cultural vernacular affects teacher-student interactions, while Catharina's vignette emphasized how institutions disqualify those with untraditional talents. This study emphasizes the contextual nature of social

justice, underscoring the need for tailored approaches to address these issues in different educational settings. While the vignette methodology provides in-depth insights, its limited generalizability hinders broader applicability.

Grogan (2022) investigated the practices of two high-achieving band directors working in high-poverty schools to determine the organizational and instructional strategies contributing to their success. The study utilized participant observation, semi-structured interviews with band directors, student focus groups, parent interviews, and thematic analysis. Findings indicated the band directors created positive classroom environments by establishing clear expectations, providing extensive student support, and maintaining high musical standards. This study emphasizes the importance of student autonomy, cultural reflexivity, and relatedness in developing student motivation and increasing achievement. Grogan's research sheds light on effective strategies for fostering an inclusive learning environment in high-poverty settings, directly addressing social justice concerns. However, the reliance on observations and interviews might introduce bias, as participants may modify their behavior knowing they are being studied.

Spangler (2022) focused on integrating social and emotional learning (SEL) within public secondary urban school band programs. This qualitative case study involved band classes, interviews with students, band directors, and administrators, and online surveys. The study emphasized the critical impact of teacher-student relationships on fostering engagement and participation, aligning SEL principles with a humanistic approach centered on holistic student development. This research emphasizes the role of SEL in enhancing students' socio-emotional growth and its potential to overcome hindrances to student participation and achievement in minority schools. While Spangler's study provides valuable insights into the benefits of SEL, its qualitative nature means the findings may not be easily generalizable to other contexts.

The exploration of social justice in music education reveals a complex environment where access, equity, and inclusion are crucial. The interaction between the findings of these studies shed light on the complexity of implementing social justice in music education. It is clear that while some universal principles can guide educators, a one-size-fits-all solution is unattainable.

### **Summary**

Research on barriers to successful school band programs has primarily focused on financial support, resources, and socioeconomic challenges while underemphasizing the impact of systemic, structural, and cultural obstacles. Although some studies have explored issues related to teachers and students, a thorough understanding of these barriers and their impact on band program success has not yet been attained. This gap is particularly evident in majority African American schools, where there is a scarcity of studies addressing the unique challenges faced in this context.

I aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by band directors in majority African American public high schools to address this research gap. Comparisons will also be made to band programs in schools with a non-majority African American student population. This approach is beneficial as it allows for a broader analysis of the different contextual challenges and potential solutions across diverse school settings. This research seeks to identify the most successful approaches and solutions for overcoming these barriers. By doing so, the study will contribute to understanding the factors influencing band program success in schools, with a focus on that have a majority African American student population. This deeper understanding will inform the development of context-specific strategies

and interventions to effectively address these unique challenges, ultimately leading to more equitable and thriving music education environments for all students.

## **Chapter 3**

### **Methods and Procedures**

#### **Research Design**

The research design for this study adopted a concurrent embedded mixed methods approach that collected both quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously during a single data collection phase, as outlined by Creswell (2009). The primary element of the survey was quantitative as I employed a survey questionnaire with close-ended questions and Likert scale response items. The secondary method was more qualitative, employing open-ended questions on the same survey, allowing participants to respond in their own words. Combining both elements allowed me to gain a holistic understanding of what challenges band directors encountered and the strategies and interventions they employed to try to address them.

#### **Participants**

Participants were secondary-level band directors currently teaching in the United States. Their insights were essential for developing an understanding of the difficulties experienced by these band programs and for pinpointing potential obstacles to student success. Participants were recruited through the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) membership list and band director and/or music education groups on social media.

The sampled population of secondary school band directors was well-suited to this research. This research benefited from the inclusion of band directors who taught in these schools at the time of data collection, providing the expertise and firsthand experiences directly from those implementing band programs. Their insights provided data that identified what challenges existed and explored potential solutions. This variety of viewpoints facilitated an in-

depth examination around the difficulties related to successfully developing band programs in these educational settings.

### **Online Survey**

An online survey was developed using Qualtrics. The anonymous survey was administered to band directors at the secondary school level throughout the United States. The survey consisted of four sections. Section 1 included items about the demographic details of the participants, their school, and their band program. Section 2 asked participants to rate potential barriers to successful band program development, using a Likert response scale (where 1=tested and not a barrier to 5=not tested but significant barrier) for 41 barriers. Two open-ended questions asked participants to state any additional barriers they foresaw and provide narrative insights into the barriers viewed as the hardest ones to overcome. Strategies and solutions implemented to address barriers were explored in Section 3. Participants completed a similar Likert scale evaluation of a list of 33 strategies and solutions. A not applicable (N/A) rating option had been added to capture scenarios in which the participant was unfamiliar with or did not employ the strategy. Three open-ended questions also specifically highlighted if there were additional strategies participants believed would reduce or eliminate barriers, insights regarding the key elements of their most effective strategies, and opinions on the importance of collaboration. In Section 4, participants had a single open-ended response item to provide any other comments, insights, or feedback they wanted to share.

### **Piloting the Survey**

I administered the survey to a small sample of band directors that represented the target population, which consisted of band directors who taught in secondary schools in the United States. This pilot test solicited feedback regarding the clarity of questions, length, and time

required to complete the survey, appropriateness of response options, internal consistency, face validity, and external validity. This feedback was used to enhance the reliability and validity of the survey.

### **Data Collection**

Data for this study were collected through a Qualtrics survey, drawing participants from within the nationwide (U.S.) band director community. Recruitment efforts involved email invitations and social media outreach. The link to the survey was sent to participants using email. The sources for gathering email addresses included the NAFME Research Assistance Program (2023), social media groups focused on music education and band directors, and music education and band director associations. The data collection period, spanning January and February 2024, included reminders and follow-up communications to optimize response rates. Ethical considerations and confidentiality measures were observed throughout the research process, and all data collected was treated with the utmost respect for participants' privacy.

### **Data Analyses**

The survey data were analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques and qualitative techniques.

#### ***Quantitative Analyses***

In the quantitative data analysis phase of this dissertation, SPSS version 28 served as the primary data analysis tool to gather insights from the survey data. In Section 1: Demographics, question 1 was analyzed using percentages. Questions 2-12 were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as cross-tabulations, percentages, and frequency distributions. Question 13 was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentages. Question 14 was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions. Question 15 was analyzed using descriptive

statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation. Question 16 was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as percentage, mean, median, standard deviation, and cross-tabulation. Question 17 was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequency distribution and percentages. In Section 2: Barriers and Section 3: Strategies and Solutions, the Likert scale responses were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, median, and standard deviation to rank barriers and strategies by their perceived significance.

A Factorial Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted to compare viewpoint differences regarding barrier ratings. This analysis evaluated whether there were significant differences in participants' ratings based on the following variables: school's majority student population ethnicity and the school's socioeconomic status (i.e., Title 1 vs. non-Title 1 schools). Factorial ANOVA enabled the assessment of whether significant differences existed between multiple groups when multiple categorical independent variables were present (Witte & Witte, 2017). All statistical tests were set at an alpha significance level of .05. Partial eta-squared ( $\eta^2$ ) was the effect size used to measure the strength of the relationships school's majority student population ethnicity and school socioeconomic status (independent variables) and the ratings of the barriers (dependent variable).

### ***Qualitative Analyses***

Thematic analysis was used to extract insights from the responses to the open-ended survey questions. The first step involved a read-through of the responses to become familiar with the data and gain an overview of the context and diversity of responses. After the initial read-through, I manually coded common themes, ideas, and patterns. This process included a close reading of each response with the application of codes to address specific topics or ideas. I refined these codes further to better reflect what was revealed from carefully reading each



response. New codes were created as needed. The identified themes were based on the frequency and relevance of specific concepts found within the data. Throughout this process, codes and themes were cross-referenced to refine the analysis and ensure a deep understanding of the research questions.

**Table 1**

*Data Analysis Plan*

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Survey Items</i>	<i>Data Type</i>	<i>Data Analysis Procedure</i>
1. What are the most prominent barriers hindering developing successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional barriers do band directors in these schools view as important?	Section 1 Demographics, Questions 1-17  Section 2 Barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all 41 Likert scale questions – Not a barrier to A significant barrier</li> <li>• 2 open-ended questions</li> </ul> Section 4 Additional Comments <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 open-ended question</li> </ul>	- Ordinal  - Nominal  - Qualitative data	Descriptive Statistics -Frequency -Distributions  Thematic analysis
2. What are the most effective strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers that may hinder the development of successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional strategies, interventions, and/or collaborations do band directors in these schools feel can be implemented to overcome these barriers?	Section 1 Demographics, Questions 1-17  Section 3 Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all 33 Likert scale questions – Not effective to Most effective</li> <li>• 3 open-ended questions</li> </ul> Section 4 Additional Comments 1 open-ended question	- Ordinal  - Nominal  - Qualitative data	Descriptive Statistics -Frequency -Distributions  Thematic analysis
3. Is there a difference among participants' barrier ratings based on the following variables: schools with majority African American student populations and school socioeconomic status (i.e., Title 1 vs non-Title 1 schools)?	Section 1 Demographics, Questions 1-17 Section 2 Barriers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all 41 Likert scale questions – Not a barrier to A significant barrier</li> <li>• 2 open-ended questions</li> </ul> Section 3 Strategies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 open-ended questions</li> </ul> Section 4 Additional Comments 1 open-ended question	- Ordinal - Nominal	Factorial ANOVA

## **Researcher and Participant Bias**

It is important to consider the possibility of researcher bias and participant bias. As a researcher, my experiences as an instrumental band director in majority African American schools informed this study. Possibly these experiences may have led to a biased interpretation of the research data and the importance ascribed to the findings but every effort was made to reduce this bias. Also, study participants, particularly band directors at African American majority schools, are also likely to have brought their own biases due to their lived experiences and perspectives. These biases may have influenced their decision to take part in the study and, in turn, their responses.

I took several measures. As a researcher, I used self-assessment and reflexivity to perform this task. This was an ongoing (likely never-ending) examination of my “filters” for perspective, what I'd seen and experienced, and any possible bias. I also kept a log of thoughts and responses to the research topic through the process of data analysis and writing. The process of keeping a record and reflecting was pivotal for me to moderate my perspectives and keep the research as objective as possible.

In addition, the data were analyzed systematically utilizing a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. This mixed-method approach with qualitative components addressed potential bias in the results and increased objectivity.

## **Summary**

This chapter described the methods and procedures employed in this study to explore barriers and strategies for developing successful band programs within majority African American secondary public schools while making comparisons to band programs in non-majority African American secondary schools. I used a concurrent embedded mixed methods

approach with qualitative components, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data to gain a comprehensive view of the challenges faced by band directors. Participants were band directors who taught secondary grade level students in the United States. Data were collected via an online anonymous survey. For the quantitative data, an SPSS analysis was carried out to detect demographic differences that might exist for barriers or strategies while qualitative responses were coded to add a more comprehensive understanding of this issue. Precautions were also taken to mitigate researcher and participant bias. The next chapter will discuss the findings of these analyses, providing a holistic perspective on most prominent barriers and facilitators that emerged from this study.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Results**

The study investigated secondary band directors' perceptions of the challenges hindering the success of band programs in predominantly African American secondary public schools. The research aimed to identify the strategies and approaches band directors use to address these challenges. Additionally, the study explored differing perspectives on these issues across various demographic categories. I used Qualtrics to create the survey for participants to complete in order to gather data for this study. Participants were selected through purposive sampling from membership lists of the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and relevant social media groups. A total of 18,489 email invitations were distributed through the NAfME Research Assistance program, with additional recruitment via survey links posted in various music education and band-related social media groups. Out of the 337 participants who started the survey, four participants did not consent to continue, 1 did not answer the consent question, and 1 answered "no" to the question of whether they were currently a band director teaching secondary school-level band students. Consequently, 247 participants met all the inclusion criteria and completed the survey, resulting in 247 usable responses for the study. Due to the non-probability sampling methods used, it is not possible to calculate an overall response rate. Therefore, the analysis of this study is based on the 247 usable responses of the participants who completed the survey.

#### **Participant Demographic Information**

Understanding the demographic background of the participants is important for understanding the findings and interpreting the results accurately. This section provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of all participants. However, it must be reiterated

the focus of this study was specifically on the 20 respondents teaching in majority African American secondary public schools, with comparisons being made to other participants based on various demographic variables.

### ***Participants in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

The primary focus of this research was the participants who taught in majority African American secondary public schools. The sample comprised 20 participants, with 40% (8 participants) identifying as female and 60% (12 participants) identifying as male.

In terms of race and ethnicity, 20% of the participants (4) were African American, 10% (2) were Hispanic, 65% (13) were White, and 5% (1) self-identified as multiracial.

Regarding educational attainment, 15.00% of the participants (3) held a Bachelor's degree, 55% (11) had a Master's degree, another 15.00% (3) possessed a Specialist or Master's + 30 degree, and 15% (3) had earned a Doctorate degree.

In terms of certification areas, the majority of participants (90%, 18) were certified in Instrumental Music. Additionally, 45% (9) were certified in Vocal Music, 45% (9) in Elementary General Music, 35% (7) in Music Theory, and 35% (7) in Music Technology. Other specified certification areas included K-12 Music (1), K-12 Music (ALL) with an instrumental music focus (1), Music Appreciation (1), and Music Exploration and Identity (1), collectively representing 20% (4).

The participants' years of experience as secondary band directors were distributed as follows: 55% (11) had 0-10 years of experience, 30% (6) had 11-20 years, and 15% (3) had 21-30 years. When considering overall years of teaching music, 45% (9) had 0-10 years of experience, 35% (7) had 11-20 years, and 20% (4) had 21-30 years. Regarding the years spent at

their current school, 85% (17) had been at their current school for 0-10 years, 10% (2) for 11-20 years, and 5% (1) for 21-30 years.

The current teaching grade levels for the participants were distributed as follows: 60.00% (12) taught 6th grade, 70% (14) taught 7th grade, 70% (14) taught 8th grade, and 40% (8) taught 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th grades. Demographic data for participants in majority African American secondary public schools is summarized in Table 6 and Table 7.

**Table 2**

*Demographic Data for Participants in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender		
Female	8	40
Male	12	60
Race/Ethnicity		
African American	4	20
Hispanic	2	10
White	13	65
Self-identify as:	1	5
Multiracial		
Level of Education		
Bachelor's degree	3	15
Master's degree	11	55
Specialist or Master's + 30 degree	3	15
Doctorate degree	3	15
Certification Area		
Instrumental Music	18	90
Vocal Music	9	45
Elementary General Music	9	45
Music Theory	7	35
Music Technology	7	35
Other (Please specify):	4	20
K-12 Music	1	
K-12 Music (ALL) - instrumental music focus	1	
Music Appreciation	1	
Music Exploration and Identity	1	

Years as Secondary Band Director		
0-10	11	55
11-20	6	30
21-30	3	15
Years Teaching Music		
0-10	9	45
11-20	7	35
21-30	4	20
Years at Current School		
0-10	17	85
11-20	2	10
21-30	1	5
Current Teaching Grade Levels		
6	12	60
7	14	70
8	14	70
9	8	40
10	8	40
11	8	40
12	8	40

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### ***Schools and Bands in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

In terms of the type of school, 80% of the 20 participants taught in traditional public schools, while 10% taught in other types of schools, including public magnet schools and public-school charter districts. Additionally, 5% taught in charter schools, and 5% taught in private schools.

The participants were located in various states, with the highest representation in Georgia (30%). Other states included Ohio (15%), North Carolina (10%), Tennessee (10%), Virginia (10%), Kansas (5%), Louisiana (5%), Maryland (5%), Mississippi (5%), and New York (5%).

Regarding the geographical area of the schools, 65.00% of the participants taught in urban schools, 25.00% in suburban schools, and 10% in rural schools. All participants (100%) taught at Title 1 schools.

The total school enrollment varied, with 55% of the participants teaching at schools with enrollments between 501-1000 students. Schools with enrollments of 1-500 students accounted for 20%, 1501-2000 students for 15%, 2001-2500 students for 5%, and 1001-1500 students for 5%.

Band program enrollment also varied among the participants. A total of 45% had band programs with 51-100 students, 25% with 101-150 students, 20.00% with 1-50 students, 5% with 151-200 students, and 5% with 251-300 students.

The ethnic composition of students in the participants' schools was diverse. Due to the inclusion criteria for these participants, Black or African American students constituted the largest group, averaging 67.95%. Hispanic students averaged 13.60%. White students averaged 13.90%. Asian American students averaged 3.10%. Students identifying as 'Other' made up 1.20% on average. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students were the least represented, averaging 0.15%. American Indian or Alaska Native students comprised 0.10% on average.

Additionally, the ethnic composition within the band programs in majority African American secondary public schools was detailed as follows: Black or African American students were the majority, averaging 68.05%. White students comprised 15.45% on average. Hispanic students averaged 12.70%. Asian American students averaged 2.55%. Students identifying as 'Other' averaged 1.25%. Both Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students and American Indian or Alaska Native students had an average representation of 0.00%. Demographic data for participants' schools and band programs in majority African American secondary public schools is summarized in Tables 3, 4, and 5.



**Table 3***Summary of Demographic Data for Participants' Schools and Band Programs in Majority**African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Type of School			School Geographical Area		
Charter school	1	5	Rural	2	10
Private School	1	5	Suburban	5	25
Traditional public school	16	80	Urban	13	65
Other:	2	10	Title 1 School		
Public magnet school			Yes	20	100
Public school charter district			No	0	
State Location			Total School Enrollment		
Georgia	6	30	1-500	4	20
Kansas	1	5	501-1000	11	55
Louisiana	1	5	1001-1500	1	5
Maryland	1	5	1501-2000	3	15
Mississippi	1	5	2001-2500	1	5
New York	1	5	Total Band Enrollment		
North Carolina	2	10	Jan-50	4	20
Ohio	3	15	51-100	9	45
Tennessee	2	10	101-150	5	25
Virginia	2	10	151-200	1	5
			251-300	1	5

**Table 4***School Ethnic Composition for Participants in Majority African American Secondary Public**Schools*

<i>Ethnicity/Race</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	20	0.10
Asian American	20	3.10
Black or African American	20	67.95
Hispanic	20	13.60
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20	0.15
Other	20	1.20
White	20	13.90

*Note.* Missing  $n = 0$

**Table 5***Band Ethnic Composition for Participants in Majority African American Secondary Public**Schools*

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	20	0
Asian American	20	2.55
Black or African American	20	68.05
Hispanic	20	12.70
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	20	0
Other	20	1.25
White	20	15.45

*Note.* Missing  $n = 0$

***Participants in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

The study included 227 participants who taught in Non-majority African American secondary schools. The gender distribution among the participants was 36.60% female ( $n = 83$ ), 62.60% male ( $n = 142$ ), with a small percentage preferring not to disclose their gender (0.40%,  $n = 1$ ) or identifying as non-binary (0.40%,  $n = 1$ ).

In terms of race and ethnicity, the majority of participants identified as White (86.80%,  $n = 197$ ). African American representation was 4.80% ( $n = 11$ ), followed by Hispanic participants at 4% ( $n = 9$ ). Other racial and ethnic groups included Asian American (2.20%,  $n = 5$ ), American Indian or Alaska Native (0.40%,  $n = 1$ ), and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander (0.40%,  $n = 1$ ). Additionally, 0.40% ( $n = 1$ ) identified as Black but not African American, and 0.90% ( $n = 2$ ) preferred not to disclose their ethnicity.

The educational qualifications of the participants varied, with the majority holding advanced degrees. Specifically, 51.10% ( $n = 116$ ) had a Master's degree, 31.30% ( $n = 71$ ) held a Bachelor's degree, and 13.20% ( $n = 30$ ) had a Specialist or Master's + 30 degree. Doctorate

degrees were held by 3.50% ( $n = 8$ ) of the participants, while 0.90% ( $n = 2$ ) had a high school diploma or GED.

Regarding certification areas, a large proportion were certified in Instrumental Music (98.20%,  $n = 223$ ), followed by Vocal Music (59.50%,  $n = 135$ ) and Elementary General Music (61.20%,  $n = 139$ ). Additional certifications included Music Theory (52.40%,  $n = 119$ ) and Music Technology (32.60%,  $n = 74$ ). Various other specialized certifications were also reported (such as Drama, Jazz, Orchestra & Classroom music K-12, etc.), reflecting the diverse qualifications of the participants.

Experience levels among the band directors varied, with 44.50% ( $n = 101$ ) having 0-10 years of experience as secondary band directors, 24.20% ( $n = 55$ ) having 11-20 years, 21.10% ( $n = 48$ ) having 21-30 years, 8.80% ( $n = 20$ ) having 31-40 years, and 1.30% ( $n = 3$ ) having over 40 years of experience. Correspondingly, years teaching music ranged from 0-10 years (38.30%,  $n = 87$ ), 11-20 years (27.80%,  $n = 63$ ), 21-30 years (22.50%,  $n = 51$ ), 31-40 years (10.10%,  $n = 23$ ), and over 40 years (1.30%,  $n = 3$ ).

Regarding tenure at their current schools, 67.80% ( $n = 154$ ) had been at their current school for 0-10 years, 21.60% ( $n = 49$ ) for 11-20 years, 7.90% ( $n = 18$ ) for 21-30 years, 1.80% ( $n = 4$ ) for 31-40 years, and 0.40% ( $n = 1$ ) for over 40 years. One participant (0.40%) did not disclose their years at the current school.

Finally, the grade levels taught by participants ranged from 6th to 12th grade, with 61.20% ( $n = 139$ ) teaching 6th grade, 62.60% ( $n = 142$ ) teaching 7th grade, 63.40% ( $n = 146$ ) teaching 8th grade, and 70.50% ( $n = 160$ ) teaching 9th through 11th grades. Additionally, 69.20% ( $n = 157$ ) were involved in teaching 12th grade students. Demographic data for participants in non-majority African American schools is summarized in Table 6 and 7.

**Table 6***Demographic Data for Participants in Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Gender			Level of Education		
Female	83	36.6	High school diploma/GED	2	90
Male	142	62.6	Bachelor's degree	71	31.3
Prefer not to say	1	0.4	Master's degree	116	51.1
Self-identify as: non-binary	1	0.4	Specialist or Master's + 30	30	13.2
Race/Ethnicity			Doctorate degree	8	3.5
African American	11	4.8	Certification Area		
American Indian or Alaska Native	1	0.4	Instrumental Music	223	98.2
Asian American	5	2.2	Vocal Music	135	59.5
Hispanic	9	4	Elementary General Music	139	61.2
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	1	0.4	Music Theory	119	52.4
White	197	86.8	Music Technology	74	32.6
Prefer not to say	2	90	Other	24	10.6
Self-identify as: Black, African American	1	0.4			

**Table 7***Summary of Teaching Experience Participants in Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Years as Secondary Band Director</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
0-10	101	44.50
11-20	55	24.20
21-30	48	21.10
31-40	20	8.80
41+	3	1.30
Years Teaching Music		
0-10	87	38.30
11-20	63	27.80
21-30	51	22.50
31-40	23	10.10
41+	3	1.30

Years at Current School		
0-10	154	67.80
11-20	49	21.60
21-30	18	7.90
31-40	4	1.80
41+	1	0.40
Missing	1	0.40
Current Teaching Grade Levels		
6	139	61.20
7	142	62.60
8	146	63.40
9	160	70.50
10	160	70.50
11	160	70.50
12	157	69.20

### ***Schools and Bands in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

The demographic analysis of schools and band programs in non-majority African American institutions provides a comprehensive overview of the diversity within these educational environments. The majority of participants taught in traditional public schools (89.4%), followed by private schools (7.5%), a smaller portion of participants taught in charter schools (1.8%), and the smallest portion of participants taught in other unique school types such as military-dependent, public-private hybrid, and STEAM public schools (1.3%).

Geographically, the schools were dispersed across numerous states, with notable concentrations in Florida (6.2%), Pennsylvania (6.6%), Ohio (5.7%), and New York (5.3%). This widespread distribution emphasizes the varying regional contexts in which these schools operate. Most schools were situated in suburban areas (44.9%), followed by rural (39.6%) and urban settings (15.4%), indicating a substantial representation across different community types.

The socioeconomic status of the schools was also considered, with 41.7% of the schools identified as Title I schools, reflecting a large portion of the student population coming from

low-income families. Enrollment sizes varied, with the largest proportion of schools having enrollments between 501-1000 students (34.8%), and smaller enrollments (1-500 students) representing 30.0%.

Band program sizes showed diversity as well, with the majority of bands consisting of 51-100 members (36.6%). Smaller bands with 1-50 members accounted for 19.8% of the total, while larger bands, comprising over 150 members, were less common. The largest band recorded had an enrollment between 651-700 members, though this was an outlier.

The data regarding the ethnic composition of school populations in non-majority African American schools reveals diversity among the student populations. The representation of American Indian or Alaska Native students is relatively minimal, with a mean of 1.10%, indicating limited presence in most schools. Similarly, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students also have low representation, with a mean of 0.55%. Asian American students constitute a more substantial portion of the student body, averaging 5.07%, though this figure varies widely among the schools surveyed. Hispanic students display a more pronounced presence, with a mean of 17.34% and a high variability, indicating notable differences in representation across schools. Black or African American students, while not in the majority in these schools, still showed notable presence with a mean of 11.46%. This data suggests that while these schools are not majority African American, Black students still form an important part of the student population. The largest group by far is White students, with a mean representation of 62.16%. This noteworthy presence of White students indicates these schools are predominantly composed of White students, but the high standard deviation also points to a wide range in the proportion of White students across different schools. Other racial groups, categorized under "Other," have a mean representation of 2.31%, indicating varied but generally low representation.

The data on the ethnic composition of band program populations in non-majority African American schools provides an insightful look into the diversity within these musical groups. This analysis reveals notable variations in the representation of different ethnic groups among band program participants. American Indian or Alaska Native students have a minimal presence in band programs, with a mean of 1.18%, indicating they are rarely represented. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander students also show low representation, with a mean of 0.55%. Asian American students are more represented in band programs compared to American Indian or Alaska Native students, with a mean of 5.16%. However, there is substantial variability, suggesting their participation levels differ notably between schools. Hispanic students constitute a large portion of band program participants, with a mean of 15.99%, reflecting considerable variability in their representation. Black or African American students have a mean representation of 9.24%, indicating a notable but inconsistent presence across different schools. The most represented group in band programs is White students, with a mean of 65.42%. This suggests that White students are predominantly involved in band programs in these schools, though there is a wide range in their representation. Other ethnic groups, categorized under “Other,” have a mean representation of 2.44%, indicating varied but generally low participation. School and band program demographics for participants in non-majority African American schools is summarized in Tables 8, 9, and 10.

**Table 8***Summary of School and Band Program Demographics for Participants in Non-majority African**American Schools*

<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
Type of School			South Carolina	5	2.2
Charter school	4	1.8	South Dakota	3	1.3
Private School	17	7.5	Tennessee	7	3.1
Traditional public school	203	89.4	Texas	10	4.4
Other:	3	1.3	Utah	5	2.2
military dependent	1		Vermont	1	0.4
Public-Private hybrid	1		Virginia	6	2.6
STEAM public school	1		Washington	6	2.6
State Location			West Virginia	3	1.3
Alabama	7	3.1	Wisconsin	5	2.2
Arizona	8	3.5	School Geographical Area		
California	9	4	Rural	90	39.6
Colorado	5	2.2	Suburban	102	44.9
Connecticut	3	1.3	Urban	35	15.4
District of Columbia	1	0.4	Title I School		
Florida	14	6.2	Yes	107	41.7
Georgia	6	2.6	No	120	52.9
Idaho	2	0.9	Total School Enrollment		
Indiana	6	2.6	1-500	68	30
Kansas	9	4	501-1000	79	34.8
Kentucky	6	2.6	1001-1500	38	16.7
Louisiana	5	2.2	1501-2000	23	10.1
Massachusetts	3	1.3	2001-2500	9	4
Minnesota	7	3.1	2501-3000	6	2.6
Missouri	7	3.1	3001-3500	1	0.4
Montana	2	0.9	3501-4000	1	0.4
Nebraska	4	1.8	4501-5000	1	0.4
Nevada	2	0.9	5001+	1	0.4
New Hampshire	1	0.4	Total Band Enrollment		
New Jersey	7	3.1	Jan-50	45	19.8
New Mexico	1	0.4	51-100	83	36.6
New York	12	5.3	101-150	53	23.3
North Carolina	7	3.1	151-200	24	10.6
North Dakota	1	0.4	201-250	10	4.4
Ohio	13	5.7	251-300	7	3.1
Oklahoma	4	1.8	301-350	3	1.3
Oregon	9	4	351-400	1	0.4
Pennsylvania	15	6.6	651-700	1	0.4



**Table 9***School Ethnic Composition for Participants in Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Ethnicity/Race</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1.1
Asian American	12	5.07
Black or African American	26	11.46
Hispanic	39	17.34
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	12	0.55
Other	5	2.31
White	141	62.16

**Table 10***Band Ethnic Composition for Participants in Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>%</i>
American Indian or Alaska Native	3	1.18
Asian American	12	5.16
Black or African American	21	9.24
Hispanic	36	15.99
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	12	0.55
Other	6	2.44
White	149	65.42

**Research Question 1 What are the most prominent barriers impacting developing successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional barriers do band directors in these schools view as important?**

To answer the first part of research question 1, which asked about the most prominent barriers hindering the development of successful band programs, I analyzed the quantitative findings using descriptive statistics. Among the overall participants, 8.10% ( $n = 20$ ) reported teaching in schools where the majority of students are African American. Of this group, 18 participants rated 41 potential barriers using a Likert response scale from 1 (not a barrier) to 5

(significant barrier). To address the second part of research question 1, regarding additional barriers identified by directors, I analyzed open-ended qualitative responses to identify recurring themes in their responses to the open-ended survey questions.

***Quantitative Findings: Barrier Ratings in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to rate the significance of 41 potential barriers that could hinder the development of successful band programs. Utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, participants evaluated each barrier, with 1 indicating no hindrance and 5 representing a significant obstacle to program success. An analysis of the mean ratings provided by participants who taught in majority African American secondary public schools indicated the top barriers were Funding and Resources ( $M = 4.22$ ), Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students ( $M = 4.22$ ), and Instrumental Access for Students ( $M = 4.11$ ). Conversely, the participants assigned the lowest ratings to Gender ( $M = 1.50$ ), Underrepresentation of Students ( $M = 1.83$ ), and Race ( $M = 1.89$ ). Barrier ratings for participants in majority African American secondary public schools are summarized in Table 11.

**Table 11**

*Barrier Ratings in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Miss.</i>		
Funding and Resources	18	2	4.22	1.11
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	18	2	4.22	0.94
Instrumental Access for Students	18	2	4.11	1.18
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	18	2	4.11	1.13
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	18	2	4	1.19
Competition with other school extracurricular activities	18	2	3.56	1.25
Parental and Community Support	18	2	3.50	1.10
Administrative Support	18	2	3.50	1.34

Social emotional learning	18	2	3.39	1.15
Student mobility	18	2	3.33	0.97
Student attendance	18	2	3.33	1.03
Teacher Duties	18	2	3.22	1.17
Student Discipline	18	2	3.22	1.00
Feeder programs	18	2	3.17	1.25
Transition points (such as progressing from middle school to high school)	18	2	3.17	0.99
Too many course offerings beyond band	18	2	3.11	1.32
Testing	18	2	3.11	1.23
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	18	2	3.06	1.31
Academic achievement	18	2	2.89	1.32
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs within the School District	18	2	2.83	1.43
Student Interest in Band	18	2	2.67	0.97
Cultural relevance of ensembles and/or courses	18	2	2.67	1.37
School Location	18	2	2.67	1.41
Job satisfaction	18	2	2.61	1.09
Governmental support	18	2	2.56	1.25
Lack of collaboration	18	2	2.56	0.78
Policy mandates	18	2	2.50	1.10
Teacher perception of students	18	2	2.39	1.34
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	18	2	2.39	1.38
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	18	2	2.33	0.97
Student learning preferences	18	2	2.28	0.90
Teacher training/preparation	18	2	2.17	1.30
Student perception of the band director	18	2	2.17	0.99
Student identity	18	2	2.17	0.86
Teacher-student relationships	18	2	2.11	1.13
Underrepresentation of teachers	18	2	2.11	1.23
Overemphasis on competitions	18	2	2	1.19
Cultural competence of the band director	18	2	2	1.19
Race	18	2	1.89	0.96
Underrepresentation of students	18	2	1.83	1.10
Gender	18	2	1.50	0.71

***Quantitative Findings: Barrier Ratings in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

The top three barriers identified by participants who taught in non-majority African American secondary schools were School Scheduling and Time Constraints ( $M = 3.8$ ), Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students ( $M = 3.5$ ), and Competition with Other School Extracurricular Activities ( $M = 3.4$ ). In contrast, the lowest three barriers identified were Gender ( $M = 1.4$ ), Race ( $M = 1.5$ ), and Teacher-Student Relationships ( $M = 1.6$ ). Table 12 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the ratings given by participants in non-majority African American schools. Table 13 compares the barrier ratings in majority and non-majority African American schools.

**Table 12**

*Barriers Ratings in Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Miss.</i>		
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	201	26	3.77	1.22
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	201	26	3.49	1.28
Competition with other school extracurricular activities	201	26	3.41	1.33
Funding and Resources	201	26	3.32	1.30
Too many course offerings beyond band	201	26	3.07	1.43
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	201	26	3.06	1.32
Transition points (such as progressing from middle school to high school)	201	26	3.05	1.24
Instrumental Access for Students	201	26	2.93	1.30
Student Interest in Band	201	26	2.83	1.17
Student attendance	201	26	2.70	1.31
Feeder programs	201	26	2.70	1.56
Social emotional learning	201	26	2.63	1.26
Teacher Duties	201	26	2.63	1.27
Student Discipline	201	26	2.63	1.33
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	201	26	2.61	1.35
Parental and Community Support	201	26	2.59	1.18
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	201	26	2.54	1.46
Governmental support	201	26	2.52	1.37
Student mobility	201	26	2.41	1.28

Testing	201	26	2.41	1.26
Academic achievement	201	26	2.40	1.22
Job satisfaction	201	26	2.28	1.21
Lack of collaboration	201	26	2.28	1.28
Administrative Support	201	26	2.23	1.27
Policy mandates	201	26	2.17	1.23
Cultural relevance of ensembles and/or courses	201	26	2.13	1.09
Student perception of the band director	201	26	2.05	1.15
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs within the School District	201	26	2.02	1.35
School Location	201	26	1.99	1.22
Student learning preferences	201	26	1.97	0.99
Teacher training/preparation	201	26	1.94	1.15
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	201	26	1.92	1.29
Underrepresentation of teachers	201	26	1.92	1.09
Teacher perception of students	201	26	1.86	1.08
Student identity	201	26	1.85	0.97
Cultural competence of the band director	201	26	1.85	1.03
Underrepresentation of students	201	26	1.77	1.05
Overemphasis on competitions	201	26	1.67	1.08
Teacher-student relationships	201	26	1.60	0.96
Race	201	26	1.50	0.86
Gender	201	26	1.36	0.74

**Table 13**

*Comparison of Barriers Ratings in Majority and Non-majority African American Schools*

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>Majority</i>			<i>Non-majority</i>		
	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Funding and Resources	18	4.22	1.11	201	3.32	1.30
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	18	4.22	0.94	201	3.49	1.28
Instrumental Access for Students	18	4.11	1.18	201	2.93	1.30
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	18	4.11	1.13	201	3.77	1.22
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	18	4	1.19	201	3.06	1.32
Competition with other school extracurricular activities	18	3.56	1.25	201	3.41	1.33
Parental and Community Support	18	3.50	1.10	201	2.59	1.18

Administrative Support	18	3.50	1.34	201	2.23	1.27
Social emotional learning	18	3.39	1.15	201	2.63	1.26
Student mobility	18	3.33	0.97	201	2.41	1.28
Student attendance	18	3.33	1.03	201	2.7	1.31
Teacher Duties	18	3.22	1.17	201	2.63	1.27
Student Discipline	18	3.22	1	201	2.63	1.33
Feeder programs	18	3.17	1.25	201	2.7	1.56
Transition points (such as progressing from middle school to high school)	18	3.17	0.99	201	3.05	1.24
Too many course offerings beyond band	18	3.11	1.32	201	3.07	1.43
Testing	18	3.11	1.23	201	2.41	1.26
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	18	3.06	1.31	201	2.54	1.46
Academic achievement	18	2.89	1.32	201	2.40	1.22
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs within the School District	18	2.83	1.43	201	2.02	1.35
Student Interest in Band	18	2.67	0.97	201	2.83	1.17
Cultural relevance of ensembles and/or courses	18	2.67	1.37	201	2.13	1.09
School Location	18	2.67	1.41	201	1.99	1.22
Job satisfaction	18	2.61	1.09	201	2.28	1.21
Governmental support	18	2.56	1.25	201	2.52	1.37
Lack of collaboration	18	2.56	0.78	201	2.28	1.28
Policy mandates	18	2.50	1.10	201	2.17	1.23
Teacher perception of students	18	2.39	1.34	201	1.86	1.08
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	18	2.39	1.38	201	1.92	1.29
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	18	2.33	0.97	201	2.61	1.35
Student learning preferences	18	2.28	0.9	201	1.97	0.99
Teacher training/preparation	18	2.17	1.30	201	1.94	1.15
Student perception of the band director	18	2.17	0.99	201	2.05	1.15
Student identity	18	2.17	0.86	201	1.85	0.97
Teacher-student relationships	18	2.11	1.13	201	1.60	0.96
Underrepresentation of teachers	18	2.11	1.23	201	1.92	1.09
Overemphasis on competitions	18	2	1.19	201	1.67	1.08
Cultural competence of the band director	18	2	1.19	201	1.85	1.03
Race	18	1.89	0.96	201	1.50	0.86
Underrepresentation of students	18	1.83	1.10	201	1.77	1.05
Gender	18	1.50	0.71	201	1.36	0.74

*Note.* Missing  $n = 2$  for Majority African American and Missing  $n = 26$  for Non-majority African American.

### ***Qualitative Findings: Additional Barriers in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to identify additional barriers to developing successful band programs in schools similar to their own. The most frequently recurring barrier was school scheduling and time constraints, noted by four directors. Directors experienced issues with uncooperative school registrars, conflicting course schedules, and short rehearsal periods. One director commented, “We have significant scheduling issues. Our registrar essentially controls the school’s schedule and, despite our efforts to inform her of our needs, she continues to schedule as she pleases.” Another director remarked, “Class scheduling is a major issue. Many band students have to take a class that conflicts with band rehearsal, and the principal plans to add more AP and Honors courses, often during band practice.” A third director stated, “Scheduling is the second biggest. I see my kids on average 2.5 hours a week unless I hold after-school sessions.” Lastly, one director noted, “We also have an early college program that splits our students further in 7th and 8th grade.”

Lack of communication from the previous director was mentioned twice. This issue created continuity problems, leaving new directors less informed about the current state of the band program. One participant explained, “If the previous director had been more proactive with communicating the issues and communicating what he has gotten done so far, maybe my 1st year wouldn't have been as difficult.” Another participant stated, “In my situation, a poor plan of transition made most of my planning time spent on digging through an unorganized band room for resources... There were no records of music, inventory of instruments, and many of these instruments lacked the resources to maintain functionality.” This comment also reflects the barrier of instruments and equipment maintenance.

Socioeconomic status was noted twice as a prominent barrier. Directors faced challenges such as students being unable to practice at home due to their family's socioeconomic conditions. Additionally, they noted parent and student apathy. One director observed, "Housing type seems to matter (though it is certainly linked to socioeconomic status). Kids living in apartments (compared to stand-alone houses) can't practice easily, and kids who walk to school don't want to carry instruments." This comment also reflects the barrier of housing and practice limitations. Another participant noted, "In my experience, parent involvement and investment in their student's education strongly correlates with that student's success, regardless of socioeconomic status or race and ethnicity. There is a noticeable amount of parent apathy at my school that translates to student apathy. Background does seem to matter here but more on socioeconomic status than race." This statement also reflects the barrier of parent and student apathy.

Access to private lessons was mentioned once as a barrier. A participant noted, "Lack of access to a quality university/advanced musicians to help provide lessons." In addition, funding and resources were cited once as a challenge, with a participant stating, "Money is the biggest issue."

Inequitable distribution of band programs was noted once. One director mentioned, "Lack of consistent school---schools close and get reconfigured forcing teachers to rebuild every year. Students are not automatically registered in band for the next year even if they participated before and it is up to the student to communicate to new band teacher since there is no communication amongst the district for past student enrollment. There is also no ensemble period, only lessons. Major discrepancies between schools in terms of instrument distribution." This response also reflects the barriers of registration and communication and school stability.



Language barriers were identified once, with one director simply noting, “Language barriers.” Also, support from other teachers was identified once, with one participant mentioning, “The only other barrier I can think of that is relevant is the attitudes of teachers that are outside of the Integrated Arts fields. When other teachers do not believe the arts are equally as important as their class and actively show this to students, it can become a strong barrier for the program to overcome.”

Teacher retention was cited once. A director noted, “It's not easy working in schools like mine. Too many music ed students are looking for the 'perfect place.' Those places are few and far between and very hard to get into.” In addition, teacher training and preparation were mentioned once, with a participant stating, “Little access to PD for teaching in title one programs.” Also, underrepresentation of teachers was noted once, with one director observing, “Our school is majority African American/Black and every band director in our district (6- two elementary, two middle, two high) is white. It is never something anyone has said anything about but it is a stark contrast to other subject areas etc.” This response also reflects the barrier of race.

Table 13 summarizes the additional barriers in majority African American secondary public schools and the number of times they were mentioned.

**Table 14***Additional Barriers in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	4
Lack of Communication from Previous Director	2
Socioeconomic Status	2
Access to Private Lessons	1
Funding and Resources	1
Housing and Practice Limitations	1
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs	1
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	1
Language Barriers	1
Parent and Student Apathy	1
Race	1
Registration and Communication Issues	1
School Stability	1
Support from Other Teachers	1
Teacher Retention	1
Teacher Training and Preparation	1
Underrepresentation of Teachers	1

*Qualitative Findings: Additional Barriers in Non-majority African American Secondary**Schools*

School scheduling and time constraints were the most frequently recurring barrier, cited 18 times. Participants emphasized challenges such as “block scheduling takes students away from band class for consecutive semesters” and “students are pushed to take as many AP classes as possible, reducing the availability for band in their schedule.” Additionally, one participant noted, “it’s really just scheduling,” emphasizing the pervasive issue.

Parental and community support was cited 14 times. Participants pointed out the lack of engagement and support from parents, with one stating, “parents do not support the school,

except as a babysitter and transportation for their kids.” Another reported, “Lack of parent support for students to continue when band is anything less than fun.” Moreover, a participant mentioned, “parent support is low.”

Administrative support was identified as a prominent barrier 11 times. Many participants expressed frustration with their administrators, as evidenced by one stating, “ineffective administration who do not care about the arts.” Another pointed out the disconnect between district administration and band programs: “district administration saying they value music but don't show it with school schedules & budgets.” The lack of understanding and support from administrators was also emphasized: “administrators deciding how a band program should be run even when they do not understand how to run a band program.”

Funding and resources were cited as a barrier nine times. Participants noted issues such as, “mainly funding - we don't have any,” and “budget allocation to the program and scheduling.” One participant succinctly captured the struggle, stating, “funding really is our biggest problem,” illustrating the widespread impact of financial constraints.

Teacher training and preparation also emerged as a barrier, mentioned nine times. Participants discussed the inadequacy of professional development and preparation, with comments like, “Meanwhile the feeder programs are run by completely unqualified teachers who somehow got sort of grandfathered into their positions, who are often actively biased and racist towards students, teach them incorrect technique, don't teach at all, can't play their own instrument, or some combination of the above.” Additionally, another participant noted, “highly qualified music teachers at all levels” as a necessary but lacking element, indicating a gap in teacher preparedness.

Competition with other school extracurricular activities was cited eight times.

Participants pointed out the emphasis on sports over music, with one noting, “a focus on sports instead of music.” Another commented, “sports are the main focus of my school and takes away from my music classes,” pointing out the conflict between band and athletic programs.

Access to private lessons was mentioned seven times, with participants emphasizing the difficulty in obtaining private instruction. One participant lamented, “access to private lessons teachers and other supplemental staff such a[s] percussion techs.” Another emphasized the geographic challenge, stating, “too far from colleges... my closest ones are an hour away. It's difficult to get people to come in to offer lessons, or clinics, etc.”

Feeder programs, teacher retention, and student motivation were each cited seven times as barriers. Participants pointed out issues such as “broken feeder system, lack of collaboration,” and the high turnover of teachers: “high teacher turnover, low school enrollment, lack of full time jobs.” Additionally, participants noted challenges with student motivation: “student work ethic is lacking” and “students struggle to stay in place and pay attention.”

Other less frequently recurring themes include community culture and outsider perception of the band program (5 mentions each), school culture (5 mentions), limited or no band course offerings, policy mandates, socioeconomic status, and transportation (4 mentions each). Additional themes that were mentioned three times or less, such as academic achievement, cultural relevance of ensembles, inadequate facilities, language barriers, low enrollment, and more, can be briefly acknowledged without detailed quotes. See Table 15 for a summary of the additional barriers in non-majority African American secondary schools and the number of times they were mentioned. Table 16 shows a side-by-side comparison of the additional barriers in majority and non-majority African American schools.

**Table 15***Additional Barriers in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	18
Parental and Community Support	14
Administrative Support	11
Funding and Resources	9
Teacher Training and Preparation	9
Competition with Other School Extracurricular Activities	8
Access to Private Lessons	7
Feeder Programs	7
Teacher Retention	7
Student Motivation	6
Community Culture	5
Outsider perception of the band program	5
School Culture	5
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	4
Policy Mandates	4
Socioeconomic Status	4
Transportation	4
Band Director Perceptions of the Role as Teacher and Director	3
Housing and Practice Limitations	3
Insufficient Number of Staff	3
Student Identity	3
Support from Other Teachers	3
Technology Distractions	3
Too Many Course Offerings Beyond Band	3
Academic Achievement	2
Cultural Relevance of Ensembles and or Courses	2
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	2
Language Barriers	2
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	2
Student Perception of the Band Director	2
Student Rapport with Each Other in Band	2
Student Skill Levels	2
Teacher Duties	2
Testing	2
Transition Points	2
Collaboration	1

Collaboration with Other Music Colleagues	1
Community apathy toward education programs	1
Cultural Competence of the Band Director	1
Culture Within the Band Program	1
Distance Learning	1
Idealistic Expectations	1
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs Within the School District	1
Low expectations of previous director	1
Mandatory Participation in Band	1
Mentorship	1
Perception of Band Director Expertise	1
Perception of Time Commitment	1
Program Structure Issues	1
Religious and Cultural Beliefs	1
School Location	1
School rezoning	1
School Size	1
Social Emotional Learning	1
Student Mobility	1
Survey Clarification	1
Visibility of Ensemble Performances	1

**Table 16**

*Comparison of Additional Barriers in Majority African American and Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>	
	<i>Majority African American</i>	<i>Non-majority African American</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	4	18
Lack of Communication from Previous Director	2	0
Socioeconomic Status	2	4
Housing and Practice Limitations	1	3
Parental and Community Support	1	14
Access to Private Lessons	1	7
Funding and Resources	1	9
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs	1	0

Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	1	0
Language Barriers	1	2
Parent and Student Apathy	1	0
Race	1	0
Registration and Communication Issues	1	0
School Stability	1	0
Support from Other Teachers	1	3
Teacher Retention	1	7
Teacher Training and Preparation	1	9
Administrative Support	0	11
Community Culture	0	5
Outsider Perception of the Band Program	0	5
School Culture	0	5
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	0	4
Policy Mandates	0	4
Transportation	0	4
Band Director Perceptions of the Role as Teacher and Director	0	3
Insufficient Number of Staff	0	3
Student Identity	0	3
Technology Distractions	0	3
Too Many Course Offerings Beyond Band	0	3
Academic Achievement	0	2
Cultural Relevance of Ensembles and/or Courses	0	2
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	0	2
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	0	2
Student Perception of the Band Director	0	2
Student Rapport with Each Other in Band	0	2
Student Skill Levels	0	2

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### ***Qualitative Findings: Most Difficult Barriers in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to identify the most difficult barrier they faced and explain the challenges it caused. Participants identified several prominent barriers impacting band programs. The most frequently recurring barrier was school scheduling and time constraints, cited five times. Participants described difficulties in coordinating class schedules for effective band practices. One noted, “The single biggest barrier at the moment is school scheduling. The counselors who do the scheduling make it extremely difficult to have a functional program, or any kind of multi-year program.” Another stated, “Our seventh grade band is split across six classes. They barely get to work together prior to a performance and each group is too small to be a proper ‘large ensemble’.” A participant added, “Testing and Scheduling because they go hand in hand. In my district, if they do not earn a basic or higher on their state test, then they lose their elective and are put in RTI. So many kids want to be in band, but can't because they are multiple grade levels behind in ELA or math.” Another noted, “In an attempt to be more culturally relevant, our school attempts to create opportunities for students to diversify their student experience with student rotations. The leadership would like for all students to rotate through all exploratory content, eliminating year-long beginner band.” Lastly, a participant remarked, “My largest barrier is class scheduling. Our school district has made a large investment into honors, AP, and International Baccalaureate (IB) programs. A significant portion of band members are in these classes—some of which are scheduled at the same time as band with no alternative class period option.”

Funding and resources were cited four times as larger barriers. One participant described, “I have \$34,000 worth of mold damage, 130 students, and only 60 working instruments. Our



district is supposed to provide instruments to all students, but I can't get any admin to agree to fix the mold because of how expensive it is, and my budget is only \$2k a year for everything including music, instruments, repairs, and supplies like reeds." Another echoed, "Funding and resources—since the pandemic, the price of instruments has increased greatly, and we have not had an increase to our budget to help overcome the inflation." A participant emphasized, "Being this is my first year in the district, I am in the midst of rebuilding the program essentially from the ground up. The biggest hurdle I have had to face so far is a lack of instruments and money to fix the outdated instruments we have. The Treasurer has been supportive and purchased us a number of new instruments so that we are outfitted for this year." Another summarized, "Funding & instruments."

Less frequently recurring barriers included student discipline, administrative support, competition with other school extracurricular activities, cultural relevance of ensembles and courses, instrument access and distribution, instruments and equipment maintenance, parent and student apathy, parental and community support, socioeconomic status, student mobility, teacher duties, testing, too many course offerings beyond band, and transportation. Each of these barriers was cited once or twice, reflecting a range of challenges faced by band programs. For example, one participant emphasized the lack of parental support, stating, "The biggest barrier I have had personally is student discipline and parental support. If the kids don't want to be there and the parents don't want to be involved, it's hard to move forward." Another participant's response cited parent and student apathy, stating, "Students (and their families) with diverse cultural backgrounds sometimes do not see the relevance or benefits of participating in instrumental ensembles." These less frequently recurring barriers, while not as common, still pose critical challenges to the success of band programs in majority African American secondary public

schools. See Table 17 for a summary of the most difficult barriers in majority African American secondary public schools and the number of times they were mentioned.

**Table 17**

*Most Difficult Barriers in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	5
Funding and Resources	4
Student Discipline	2
Administrative Support	1
Competition with Other School Extracurricular Activities	1
Cultural Relevance of Ensembles and or Courses	1
Instrument Access and Distribution	1
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	1
Parent and Student Apathy	1
Parental and Community Support	1
Socioeconomic Status	1
Student Mobility	1
Teacher Duties	1
Testing	1
Too Many Course Offerings Beyond Band	1
Transportation	1

***Qualitative Findings: Most Difficult Barriers in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

School scheduling and time constraints emerged as the most frequently cited barrier, with 39 mentions. Participants emphasized issues such as lack of consistent class time, scheduling conflicts with other classes, and insufficient rehearsal time. One participant noted, “The schedule in a small district is a barrier to developing and keeping a high school program going.” Another stated, “Our band (and choir and orchestra) classes are not given enough time to adequately teach our students.” Another participant shared, “Academic classes and testing constantly take priority

over band classes, leading to missed days and students missing class to accommodate an academic goal.”

Competition with other extracurricular activities was a prominent barrier, with 22 mentions. Directors expressed that students are often overcommitted, making it challenging for them to fully participate in band activities. One director mentioned, “Students are spread so thin. There are too many choices.” Another added, “The most difficult barrier has been the high number of other extracurriculars offered to students.” One more director shared, “Students are involved in so many different endeavors. Our band program is strong but we still lose students to the perception they cannot be in band because they are an athlete, or high achieving student, or work, or numerous other identities.”

Funding and resources were critical challenges for many band programs, also with 22 mentions. Participants reported difficulties in obtaining financial support for instruments, uniforms, and other essentials. A participant shared, “Funding – or lack thereof – has been the most difficult barrier to overcome.” Another explained, “Lack of resources. Many students are from low-income families, and aren’t necessarily able to rent an instrument.” An additional participant noted, “The biggest barrier in my program has been funding. We are operating on a shoestring of a shoestring of a shoestring of a budget that regularly gets seized and diverted for other purposes anyway.”

Issues with feeder programs were also frequently recurring, with 15 mentions. Directors noted the quality and consistency of middle school programs directly impact high school band enrollment and preparedness. One participant stated, “The main school that feeds into my high school has a very weak band program.” Another noted, “Lack of feeder programs in my feeder program has been the greatest barrier in my program.” Yet another participant shared, “Low

enrollment at the feeder program has been incredibly difficult to overcome with our current scheduling system.”

Lack of administrative support was emphasized as a critical barrier, with 13 mentions. Directors reported feeling unsupported by their administrations, which affected their programs’ growth and success. One participant mentioned, “The biggest challenge that our entire music department faces is lack of support from administration.” Another shared, “Lack of understanding by administration on how to create a successful band program.” One more participant stated, “Dealing with micromanaging administrators who do not listen to experts in their field.”

Inadequate facilities for rehearsals and performances were a notable barrier, with 12 mentions. Directors described challenges such as limited space and poor-quality rehearsal rooms. One participant stated, “The biggest barrier I have faced in growing my program at this school has been inadequate facilities for rehearsals and performances.” Another noted, “Our facilities are old and inadequate.” Another director shared, “Scheduling and facilities, as manifestations of the above issue.”

Less frequently recurring barriers included community culture, socioeconomic status, parental and community support, access to quality instruments, extensive duties of band directors, transition points between educational levels, insufficient number of staff, academic achievement pressures, impact of COVID-19, limited or no band course offerings, availability of numerous course offerings beyond band, school size, generating student interest, student discipline, focus on testing, teacher retention, student motivation, transportation issues, social-emotional learning needs, language barriers, maintenance of instruments and equipment, student mobility, student attendance, perception of students by teachers, teacher-student relationships,

religious and cultural beliefs, perception of the band director’s expertise, underrepresentation of students, cultural relevance of ensembles, community apathy toward education programs, lack of governmental support, perception of the band director’s role, visibility of ensemble performances, technology distractions, and inequitable distribution of band programs within the school district were mentioned but with notably fewer mentions. See Table 18 for a summary of the most difficult barriers in non-majority African American secondary schools and the number of times they were mentioned. Table 19 shows a side-by-side comparison of the most difficult barriers in majority and non-majority African American secondary schools.

**Table 18**

*Most Difficult Barriers in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
School scheduling and time constraints	39
Competition with other extracurricular activities	22
Funding and resources	22
Feeder programs	15
Lack of administrative support	13
Inadequate facilities for rehearsals and performances	12
Socioeconomic status	8
Parental and community support	7
Access to quality instruments	7
Extensive duties of band directors	5
Transition points between educational levels	5
Insufficient number of staff	4
Academic achievement pressures	4
Impact of COVID-19	4
Limited or no band course offerings	4
Availability of numerous course offerings beyond band	4
School size	4
Generating student interest in band	4
Student discipline	4
Focus on testing	3
Teacher retention	3
Student motivation	3
Transportation issues	3

Social emotional learning needs	2
Language barriers	2
Maintenance of instruments and equipment	2
Student mobility	2
Student attendance	2
Perception of students by teachers	1
Teacher-student relationships	1
Religious and cultural beliefs	1
Perception of band director's expertise	1
Underrepresentation of students in band programs	1
Cultural relevance of ensembles and courses	1
Community apathy toward education programs	1
Lack of governmental support	1
Perception of band director's role	1
Visibility of ensemble performances	1
Technology distractions	1
Inequitable distribution of band programs within the school district	1

**Table 19**

*Comparison of Most Difficult Barriers in Majority and Non-majority African American*

*Secondary Schools*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>	
	<i>Majority African American</i>	<i>Non-majority African American</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	5	39
Funding and Resources	4	22
Student Discipline	2	4
Administrative Support	1	13
Competition with Other School Extracurricular Activities	1	22
Cultural Relevance of Ensembles and/or Courses	1	1
Instrument Access and Distribution	1	0
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	1	2
Parent and Student Apathy	1	0
Parental and Community Support	1	7
Socioeconomic Status	1	8

Student Mobility	1	2
Teacher Duties	1	0
Testing	1	3
Too Many Course Offerings Beyond Band	1	4
Transportation	1	3
Feeder Programs	0	15
Inadequate Facilities for Rehearsals and Performances	0	12
Access to Quality Instruments	0	7
Extensive Duties of Band Directors	0	5
Transition Points Between Educational Levels	0	5
Insufficient Number of Staff	0	4
Academic Achievement Pressures	0	4
Impact of COVID-19	0	4
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	0	4
School Size	0	4
Generating Student Interest in Band	0	4
Student Motivation	0	3
Social Emotional Learning Needs	0	2
Language Barriers	0	2
Student Attendance	0	2
Perception of Students by Teachers	0	1
Teacher-Student Relationships	0	1
Religious and Cultural Beliefs	0	1
Perception of Band Director's Expertise	0	1
Underrepresentation of Students in Band Programs	0	1
Community Apathy Toward Education Programs	0	1
Lack of Governmental Support	0	1
Perception of Band Director's Role	0	1
Visibility of Ensemble Performances	0	1
Technology Distractions	0	1
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs Within the School District	0	1

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## *Summary*

The comparison of quantitative and qualitative data collected from participants in majority African American secondary public schools and non-majority African American schools uncovers both unique and common obstacles in the process of building successful band programs. This analysis provides valuable insights into the challenges faced by band directors in these two unique school environments and signifies the need for customized strategies to address the specific needs of each school type.

In majority African American secondary public schools, the most prominent barriers identified include funding and resources, with a high mean rating of 4.22, and socioeconomic challenges faced by students, also with a mean rating of 4.22. Other critical barriers in these schools include instrumental access for students (mean rating of 4.11), school scheduling and time constraints (mean rating of 4.11), and maintenance of instruments and equipment (mean rating of 4.00). The qualitative data reveals that directors in these schools frequently recurring challenges such as managing class schedules, the impact of students' socioeconomic status on participation, and the lack of consistent funding and resources. Additionally, barriers like student discipline, inadequate administrative support, and parent and student apathy were emphasized, which are crucial factors in the success of any band program.

In non-majority African American schools, the most prominent barriers include school scheduling and time constraints (mean rating of 3.8), socioeconomic challenges faced by students (mean rating of 3.5), and competition with other extracurricular activities (mean rating of 3.4). Insufficient funding and resources also emerged as a critical issue, with a mean rating of 3.3. The qualitative data from these schools indicates that directors frequently cited school scheduling issues, lack of parental and community support, inadequate administrative support,



and funding constraints. Additionally, challenges related to teacher training and preparation, competition with sports and other activities, and limited access to private lessons were prevalent, which can greatly impact the quality of a band program.

Both school types shared common barriers, such as funding and resources, socioeconomic challenges, and school scheduling constraints. However, notable differences were found in the emphasis on parental and community support and administrative support, which were more prominent issues in majority African American secondary public schools. Additionally, majority African American secondary public schools faced unique challenges related to social-emotional learning, student mobility, and cultural relevance of ensembles, which were less emphasized in non-majority African American schools.

The research reveals that while logistical and financial challenges are universal, the influence of parental/community involvement, administrative support, social-emotional factors, and student mobility vary between predominantly African American and non-majority African American schools. This implies that strategies for strengthening band programs should be customized to meet the specific needs of each school type. The consistently minor impact of race and gender suggests these are perceived as less important obstacles compared to other challenges. These findings shed light on the hurdles band directors face in developing and sustaining their programs, with differences observed between majority African American and non-majority African American school environments, and this information can be used to develop targeted interventions and support systems for band directors in these different settings.

**Research Question 2 What are the most effective strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers hindering development of successful band programs in majority African American secondary public schools and what additional strategies, interventions, and/or collaborations do band directors in these schools feel can be implemented to overcome these barriers?**

The first part of research question 2 asks about the most effective strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers that may hinder the development of successful band programs. I analyzed the quantitative findings using descriptive statistics to answer this research question. I performed qualitative coding to identify recurring themes in participants' responses to the open-ended survey questions regarding additional strategies, interventions, and/or collaborations band directors feel can be implemented to overcome these barriers to answer the second part of the research question.

***Quantitative Findings: Strategy and Solution Ratings in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to rate the significance of various strategies used to overcome barriers to developing successful school bands in majority African American secondary public schools. Utilizing a 5-point Likert scale, participants evaluated each strategy, with 1 indicating not effective and 5 representing most effective. Participants could also rate a strategy as N/A if it did not apply to them or if they had no knowledge or experience implementing it. An analysis of the mean ratings provided by participants who taught in majority African American secondary public schools indicated the top strategies were band directors working with the school administration to create band-friendly schedules ( $M = 5, SD = 0.378$ ), providing transportation for students without rides home after rehearsals and performances ( $M = 4.47, SD = 1.187$ ), and

developing a positive and supportive band culture fostering responsibility and respect ( $M = 4.47$ ,  $SD = 0.915$ ). Conversely, the participants assigned the lowest ratings to soliciting donations to provide food at rehearsals and performances ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = 1.454$ ), establishing flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = 1.121$ ), and exploring performance opportunities that emphasized artistry and creativity over competition and ratings ( $M = 3.6$ ,  $SD = 1.298$ ). Strategy and solution ratings are summarized in Table 20.

**Table 20**

*Strategy/Solution Ratings in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Val.</i>	<i>Miss.</i>		
Work with the school administration to create band-friendly schedules that accommodate rehearsal and performance times.	15	5	5	0.38
Provide transportation for students that do not have a ride home after rehearsals and performances	15	5	4.47	1.19
Develop a positive and supportive band culture that fosters responsibility and respect	15	5	4.47	0.92
Engage in discussions with policymakers to ensure the inclusion of band programs in educational mandates	15	5	4.40	1.24
Collaborate with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation	15	5	4.33	0.90
Strengthen connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students.	15	5	4.33	0.98
Collaborate with other extracurricular programs to coordinate schedules and minimize conflicts.	15	5	4.20	1.08
Advocate for improved rehearsal and performance spaces within the school.	15	5	4.13	1.51
Develop a flexible curriculum that accommodates students' varying backgrounds and experiences.	15	5	4.13	1.13
Communicate regularly with administrators about program needs and successes.	15	5	4.07	1.10
Foster an inclusive and diverse band culture that celebrates all backgrounds, races, and genders.	15	5	4.07	1.39
Collaborate with local community organizations to support students in need	15	5	4	1.46
Provide ongoing professional development specifically for band directors	15	5	4	0.93

Provide professional development and training for band directors in cultural competence	15	5	4	1.31
Establish clear expectations for behavior and consequences to reduce discipline issues within the band program.	15	5	3.93	1.10
Establish a booster club to involve parents and community members in supporting the band program financially and through volunteer work	15	5	3.87	1.51
Administrators expand course offerings to include band classes	15	5	3.87	1.41
Collaborate with universities to provide training opportunities for music education students.	15	5	3.87	1.06
Provide opportunities for students to get to know their new band director and peers before the transition points	15	5	3.87	0.92
Diversify the band repertoire to include music from various cultures and genres.	15	5	3.87	1.46
Incorporate culturally relevant and inclusive teaching materials and approaches	15	5	3.87	1.51
Recruitment concerts and presentations	15	5	3.80	0.94
Increase salaries and benefits to attract and retain more qualified band directors	15	5	3.80	1.42
Seek grants and funding to purchase and repair instruments	15	5	3.80	1.37
Offer diverse musical selections to appeal to a broader range of interests.	15	5	3.80	1.47
Collaborate with other schools and band directors to share resources and experiences	15	5	3.80	1.21
Facilitate a seamless transition process, including orientation sessions and auditions if necessary	15	5	3.73	1.16
Offer extracurricular or after-school band programs if full courses are not feasible	15	5	3.60	1.77
Solicit donations to provide food at rehearsals and performances	15	5	3.60	1.45
Establish flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals	15	5	3.60	1.12
Explore performance opportunities that emphasize artistry and creativity over competition and ratings	15	5	3.60	1.30
Recruit band directors that reflect the student population of the school	15	5	3.60	1.30
Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and dedication of band directors and staff to increase job satisfaction	15	5	3.40	1.55

*Note.* Rating of 6 = N/A – Participants selected this option if they had not used or were unfamiliar with a strategy/solution.

***Quantitative Findings: Strategy and Solution Ratings in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

The top-rated strategies were developing a positive and supportive band culture that fosters responsibility and respect ( $M = 4.53, SD = 0.97$ ), strengthening connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students ( $M = 4.45, SD = 1.18$ ), and collaborating with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation ( $M = 4.39, SD = 1.10$ ). These strategies are perceived as highly effective in overcoming barriers and contributing to the success of school band programs.

Conversely, the strategies that received the lowest ratings were establishing flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals ( $M = 3.69, SD = 1.64$ ), offering diverse musical selections to appeal to a broader range of interests ( $M = 3.70, SD = 1.36$ ), and advocating for improved rehearsal and performance spaces within the school ( $M = 3.75, SD = 1.63$ ). Strategy and solution ratings are summarized in Table 21. A comparison of strategy/solution ratings for majority and non-majority African American secondary schools is found in Table 22.

**Table 21**

*Strategy/Solution Ratings in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>f</i>		<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
	<i>Valid</i>	<i>Miss.</i>		
Develop a positive and supportive band culture that fosters responsibility and respect	159	68	4.53	0.97
Strengthen connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students.	159	68	4.45	1.18
Collaborate with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation	159	68	4.39	1.10
Provide opportunities for students to get to know their new band director and peers before the transition points	159	68	4.26	1.16

Work with the school administration to create band-friendly schedules that accommodate rehearsal and performance times.	159	68	4.20	1.22
Increase salaries and benefits to attract and retain more qualified band directors	159	68	4.19	1.55
Engage in discussions with policymakers to ensure the inclusion of band programs in educational mandates	159	68	4.19	1.40
Foster an inclusive and diverse band culture that celebrates all backgrounds, races, and genders.	159	68	4.17	1.27
Provide ongoing professional development specifically for band directors	159	68	4.15	1.26
Administrators expand course offerings to include band classes	159	68	4.14	1.53
Explore performance opportunities that emphasize artistry and creativity over competition and ratings	159	68	4.12	1.29
Seek grants and funding to purchase and repair instruments	159	68	4.10	1.49
Establish clear expectations for behavior and consequences to reduce discipline issues within the band program.	159	68	4.09	1.27
Communicate regularly with administrators about program needs and successes.	159	68	4.09	1.08
Recruitment concerts and presentations	159	68	4.06	1.04
Provide transportation for students that do not have a ride home after rehearsals and performances	159	68	4.06	1.69
Facilitate a seamless transition process, including orientation sessions and auditions if necessary	159	68	4.04	1.38
Collaborate with universities to provide training opportunities for music education students.	159	68	4.03	1.43
Offer extracurricular or after-school band programs if full courses are not feasible	159	68	4.02	1.78
Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and dedication of band directors and staff to increase job satisfaction	159	68	3.99	1.40
Recruit band directors that reflect the student population of the school	159	68	3.95	1.50
Establish a booster club to involve parents and community members in supporting the band program financially and through volunteer work	159	68	3.94	1.52
Collaborate with other schools and band directors to share resources and experiences	159	68	3.94	1.19
Develop a flexible curriculum that accommodates students' varying backgrounds and experiences.	159	68	3.94	1.28
Collaborate with other extracurricular programs to coordinate schedules and minimize conflicts.	159	68	3.93	1.27
Collaborate with local community organizations to support students in need	159	68	3.91	1.29
Solicit donations to provide food at rehearsals and performances	159	68	3.89	1.65

Diversify the band repertoire to include music from various cultures and genres.	159	68	3.86	1.23
Incorporate culturally relevant and inclusive teaching materials and approaches	159	68	3.76	1.30
Provide professional development and training for band directors in cultural competence	159	68	3.76	1.55
Advocate for improved rehearsal and performance spaces within the school.	159	68	3.75	1.63
Offer diverse musical selections to appeal to a broader range of interests.	159	68	3.70	1.36
Establish flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals	159	68	3.69	1.64

**Table 22**

*Comparison of Strategy/Solution Ratings in Majority and Non-majority African American*

*Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Majority African American</i>			<i>Non-majority African American</i>		
	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Work with the school administration to create band-friendly schedules that accommodate rehearsal and performance times.	15	5	0.38	159	4.20	1.22
Provide transportation for students that do not have a ride home after rehearsals and performances	15	4.47	1.19	159	4.06	1.69
Develop a positive and supportive band culture that fosters responsibility and respect	15	4.47	0.92	159	4.53	0.97
Engage in discussions with policymakers to ensure the inclusion of band programs in educational mandates	15	4.40	1.24	159	4.19	1.40
Collaborate with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation	15	4.33	0.90	159	4.39	1.10
Strengthen connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students	15	4.33	0.98	159	4.45	1.18
Collaborate with other extracurricular programs to coordinate schedules and minimize conflicts	15	4.20	1.08	159	3.93	1.27
Advocate for improved rehearsal and performance spaces within the school	15	4.13	1.51	159	3.75	1.63

Develop a flexible curriculum that accommodates students' varying backgrounds and experiences	15	4.13	1.13	159	3.94	1.28
Communicate regularly with administrators about program needs and successes	15	4.07	1.10	159	4.09	1.08
Foster an inclusive and diverse band culture that celebrates all backgrounds, races, and genders	15	4.07	1.39	159	4.17	1.27
Collaborate with local community organizations to support students in need	15	4	1.46	159	3.91	1.29
Provide ongoing professional development specifically for band directors	15	4	0.93	159	4.15	1.26
Provide professional development and training for band directors in cultural competence	15	4	1.31	159	3.76	1.55
Establish clear expectations for behavior and consequences to reduce discipline issues within the band program	15	3.93	1.10	159	4.09	1.27
Establish a booster club to involve parents and community members in supporting the band program financially and through volunteer work	15	3.87	1.51	159	3.94	1.52
Administrators expand course offerings to include band classes	15	3.87	1.41	159	4.14	1.53
Collaborate with universities to provide training opportunities for music education students	15	3.87	1.06	159	4.03	1.43
Provide opportunities for students to get to know their new band director and peers before the transition points	15	3.87	0.92	159	4.26	1.16
Diversify the band repertoire to include music from various cultures and genres	15	3.87	1.46	159	3.86	1.23
Incorporate culturally relevant and inclusive teaching materials and approaches	15	3.87	1.51	159	3.76	1.30
Recruitment concerts and presentations	15	3.80	0.94	159	4.06	1.04
Increase salaries and benefits to attract and retain more qualified band directors	15	3.80	1.42	159	4.19	1.55
Seek grants and funding to purchase and repair instruments	15	3.80	1.37	159	4.10	1.49
Offer diverse musical selections to appeal to a broader range of interests	15	3.80	1.47	159	3.70	1.36
Collaborate with other schools and band directors to share resources and experiences	15	3.80	1.21	159	3.94	1.19
Facilitate a seamless transition process, including orientation sessions and auditions if necessary	15	3.73	1.16	159	4.04	1.38
Offer extracurricular or after-school band programs if full courses are not feasible	15	3.60	1.77	159	4.02	1.78



Solicit donations to provide food at rehearsals and performances	15	3.60	1.45	159	3.89	1.65
Establish flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals	15	3.60	1.12	159	3.69	1.64
Explore performance opportunities that emphasize artistry and creativity over competition and ratings	15	3.60	1.30	159	4.12	1.29
Recruit band directors that reflect the student population of the school	15	3.60	1.30	159	3.95	1.50
Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and dedication of band directors and staff to increase job satisfaction	15	3.40	1.55	159	3.99	1.40

*Note.* Missing  $n = 5$  for Majority African American and Missing  $n = 68$  for Non-majority African American.

### ***Qualitative Findings: Additional Strategies and Solutions in Majority African American***

#### ***Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to identify additional strategies and solutions that can address barriers and foster development of successful band programs in schools like the one in which they taught. The findings indicate all strategies were mentioned only once. Booster Club Formation, mentioned once, was emphasized for its potential to support band programs. One band director noted, “Booster programs can work if parents have time and are motivated. They have helped at this school in the past, but the recent cohort of parents have disengaged.” This disengagement has resulted in challenges in fundraising and volunteering, diminishing the effectiveness of booster clubs in recent years.

Collaboration with Other Music Teachers, mentioned once, was seen as a beneficial strategy for enhancing band programs. A director emphasized the importance of working together, stating, “Working together as an entire music department.” This collaboration can foster a more supportive and resourceful environment for band programs.

Director Positive Mindset, also mentioned once, was identified as a crucial factor. One director emphasized the importance of perseverance and intention, saying, “Grit and intention of the director.” This mindset can drive the success of band programs despite various challenges.

Funding, mentioned once, was recognized as a prominent barrier. One participant pointed out the need for equitable financial support, stating, “Equitable funding amongst the district.” Adequate funding is essential for providing necessary resources and opportunities for students.

Mentorship, mentioned once, was suggested as a strategy to support band programs. A director explained, “Streamlining the process of having more student teachers would help. When this idea was suggested, I was told the process takes quite some time and not all student teachers are willing to work at just any school.” This suggests the potential benefits and logistical challenges of implementing mentorship programs.

Parental Support, mentioned once, was noted for its potential impact on band programs. One director shared, “Booster programs can work if parents have time and are motivated. They have helped at this school in the past, but the recent cohort of parents have disengaged.” This repeated statement emphasizes the importance of active parental involvement.

Perform to Garner Support, mentioned once, was suggested as a way to increase community backing. A director recommended, “Perform for stakeholders in order to garner more support.” Regular performances can raise awareness and generate enthusiasm for the band program.

Professional Development, mentioned once, was identified as necessary for addressing specific educational needs. A director proposed, “Professional development classes on trauma, ADHD (how the brain works with it and how to use it to help kids learn), understanding 504s

and IEPs in the band room.” These training sessions can equip directors with the skills to better support their students.

Resource Allocation for Low Income Students, mentioned once, was emphasized as an essential strategy. One director mentioned, “Our County was recently able to purchase a large amount of instruments for use at the middle schools (6-8) for students that probably wouldn’t be able to afford renting or purchasing them on their own.” Providing instruments to low-income students can notably enhance their participation and success in band programs. Additional strategies/solutions are summarized in Table 23.

**Table 23**

*Additional Strategies/Solutions in Majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Booster Club Formation	1
Collaboration with Other Music Teachers	1
Director Positive Mindset	1
Funding	1
Mentorship	1
Parental Support	1
Perform to Garner Support	1
Professional Development	1
Resource Allocation for Low Income Students	1

***Qualitative Findings: Additional Strategies and Solutions in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

The most frequently recurring strategy was Advocacy, mentioned seven times. Participants emphasized the importance of educating legislators and administrators about the significance of music education to secure proper funding and scheduling. One participant stated, “If legislators and administrators are educated about the importance of music education, then music education will be more of a priority in our schools.” Another emphasized the need for

advocacy by saying, “You just have to convince students and parents that your program is worth the time and effort.” A third participant noted, “Trying to educate the administrators on how to develop a successful band program.”

Collaboration with Other Music Teachers, mentioned six times, was another prominent strategy. Band directors stressed the value of working closely with their peers. One director mentioned, “Time to collaborate during the school day and be present in each other's classes.” Another shared, “Consistent Collaboration between music educators...” Additionally, a participant echoed the need for strong district-level collaboration: “Strong collaboration and support among district music team members.”

Administrative Support was mentioned five times. Participants indicated that administrative backing is essential for the success of band programs. One participant stated, “District support on staffing and facilities.” Another noted, “Working with the administration and school board for financial resources.” A third emphasized, “Administrative support is crucial for proper funding and scheduling of music programs.”

Better School Scheduling was also mentioned five times, with participants emphasizing the need for flexible and supportive scheduling to accommodate band programs. One participant shared, “A curriculum that supports the music program by allowing students to attend the coursework without the conflict of required classes.” Another participant stated, “My main issue is scheduling.” A third emphasized, “Making sure a kid who wants to take band can take band without problems with scheduling is a major problem.”

Increase Number of Music Staff was mentioned five times as well. Participants emphasized the necessity of hiring additional music staff to ensure effective band program management. One participant stated, “School Districts need to provide more teachers when

classes are too large for one person to handle.” Another noted, “Hiring an elementary music teacher (or 2).” A third participant mentioned, “Provide additional support staff (either part-time or full-time) to assist in band classes.”

Mentorship, mentioned five times, was identified as a key strategy for supporting new band directors. This strategy was mentioned in reference to directors and students. One participant emphasized, “Assigning a dedicated mentor for new band directors who is a fellow band director.” Another shared, “Find a mentor! They've been there and can help you through it.” A third emphasized, “Develop and implement a student leadership/mentorship program.”

Relationship Building with Feeder Programs was mentioned five times. Participants noted the importance of establishing strong connections with feeder schools to support band program development. One participant shared, “Arrange opportunities for students to interact with students from feeder schools, i.e., joint concerts.” Another emphasized, “Having the high school directors visible and accessible in the middle schools can help with retention.” A third participant noted, “Early communication to feeder school parents with information regarding band in the secondary schools.”

Other less frequently recurring strategies included Director Positive Mindset, Support from all Stakeholders, Administrative Relationship Building, Communication with all Stakeholders, Effective Recruitment Strategies, High Expectations, Hiring Qualified Music Teachers, Resource Allocation for Low Income Students, Seeking External Resources, Booster Club Formation, Collaboration with Teachers, Community Trust Building, Engagement through Participation, Flexible Scheduling, Parental Communication and Engagement, Perform to Garner Support, Student-Teacher Relationships, After-School Rehearsals, Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling, Bilingual Training, Culturally Relevant Music Selection, Culturally Relevant

Teaching, Diverse and Appropriately Challenging Music Selection, Diversity in Recruitment, Female Mentorship and Representation, Funding, Inclusive Music Education Policies, Offer Different Music Ensembles and Courses, Offer More Daily Class Periods to Accommodate More Electives, Parental Support, Peer Tutoring, Professional Development, Respectful Treatment of Students, Student Choice, Student Transition Support, and Transportation Support for Rehearsals. See Table 24 for a summary of additional strategies/solutions in non-majority African American secondary schools and the number of times they were mentioned. A comparison of additional strategies/solutions in majority and non-majority African American secondary schools is found in Table 25.

**Table 24**

*Additional Strategies/Solutions in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Advocacy	7
Collaboration with Other Music Teachers	6
Administrative support	5
Better School Scheduling	5
Increase Number of Music Staff	5
Mentorship	5
Relationship Building with Feeder Programs	5
Director Positive Mindset	4
Support from all stakeholders	4
Administrative Relationship Building	3
Communication with all stakeholders	3
Effective Recruitment Strategies	3
high expectations	3
Hiring Qualified Music Teachers	3
Resource Allocation for Low Income Students	3
seeking external resources	3
Booster Club Formation	2
Collaboration with Teachers	2
community trust building	2
engagement through participation	2
Flexible Scheduling	2

Parental communication and engagement	2
Perform to Garner Support	2
Student Teacher Relationships	2
after-school rehearsals	1
Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling	1
Bilingual Training	1
culturally relevant music selection	1
culturally relevant teaching	1
Diverse and Appropriately Challenging Music Selection	1
diversity in recruitment	1
Female Mentorship and Representation	1
Funding	1
Inclusive Music Education Policies	1
Offer Different Music Ensembles and Courses	1
Offer More Daily Class Periods to Accommodate More Electives	1
Parental support	1
Peer Tutoring	1
Professional Development	1
respectful treatment of students	1
Student Choice	1
Student transition support	1
Transportation support for rehearsals	1

**Table 25**

*Comparison Additional Strategies/Solutions in Majority and Non-majority African American*

*Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>	
	<i>Majority African American</i>	<i>Non-majority African American</i>
Booster Club Formation	1	2
Collaboration with Other Music Teachers	1	6
Director Positive Mindset	1	4
Funding	1	1
Mentorship	1	5
Parental Support	1	1
Perform to Garner Support	1	2
Professional Development	1	1

Resource Allocation for Low Income Students	1	3
Advocacy	0	7
Administrative Support	0	5
Better School Scheduling	0	5
Increase Number of Music Staff	0	5
Relationship Building with Feeder Programs	0	5
Support from All Stakeholders	0	4
Administrative Relationship Building	0	3
Communication with All Stakeholders	0	3
Effective Recruitment Strategies	0	3
High Expectations	0	3
Hiring Qualified Music Teachers	0	3
Seeking External Resources	0	3
Collaboration with Teachers	0	2
Community Trust Building	0	2
Engagement Through Participation	0	2
Flexible Scheduling	0	2
Parental Communication and Engagement	0	2
Student Teacher Relationships	0	2
After-School Rehearsals	0	1
Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling	0	1
Bilingual Training	0	1
Culturally Relevant Music Selection	0	1
Culturally Relevant Teaching	0	1
Diverse and Appropriately Challenging Music Selection	0	1
Diversity in Recruitment	0	1
Female Mentorship and Representation	0	1
Inclusive Music Education Policies	0	1
Offer Different Music Ensembles and Courses	0	1
Offer More Daily Class Periods to Accommodate More Electives	0	1
Peer Tutoring	0	1
Respectful Treatment of Students	0	1
Student Choice	0	1
Student Transition Support	0	1
Transportation Support for Rehearsals	0	1

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***Qualitative Findings: Most Effective Strategies and Solutions in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to describe the specific strategies or solutions that yielded the best results in developing a successful band program at their school and to detail the barriers that were overcome as a result. The most frequently recurring strategy was Clear behavioral expectations, which emerged twice in the responses. Band directors emphasized the importance of establishing clear rules and consequences to maintain discipline and focus within the band. One director stated, “Implementing a strict code of conduct helped reduce disruptions and allowed students to focus on their musical development.” Another noted, “Clear behavioral expectations have been crucial in creating a respectful and productive rehearsal environment.”

Culturally relevant music selection was mentioned twice, indicating its significance in engaging students. A director shared, “Selecting music that reflects the cultural backgrounds of the students has increased their interest and participation.” Another added, “Students feel more connected and motivated when they see their culture represented in the music they perform.”

High expectations also appeared twice in the responses. Directors emphasized that setting high standards for performance and behavior encouraged students to strive for excellence. One director mentioned, “Maintaining high expectations has pushed students to achieve more than they thought possible.” Another reflected, “High expectations have fostered a sense of pride and accomplishment among the students.”

Advocacy was mentioned once, underscoring the need for proactive support for the band program. A director described, “Advocating for the program to school administration and the community has helped secure necessary resources and support. “After-school rehearsals were

emphasized once as a beneficial strategy. One director noted, “After-school rehearsals provided additional practice time, which was essential for improving performance levels.”

Anti-discrimination policies were mentioned once, with directors noting their impact on creating an inclusive environment. A director stated, “Implementing anti-discrimination policies helped address biases and ensure all students felt valued.” Community trust building was identified once as a key strategy. A director shared, “Building trust with the community has been vital in gaining support and participation in band activities.”

Diversity in recruitment was mentioned once, emphasizing the importance of inclusive practices. A director noted, “Actively recruiting students from diverse backgrounds has enriched the band's cultural and musical experience.” Effective recruitment strategies were mentioned once. One director emphasized, “Using targeted recruitment efforts, such as outreach to feeder schools, has increased student enrollment in the band program.”

New teacher challenges were identified once as a barrier. A director mentioned, “As a new teacher, understanding the school's culture and gaining students' trust were initial challenges.” Relationship building with feeder programs was noted once as beneficial. A director shared, “Developing strong relationships with feeder programs ensured a steady stream of well-prepared students joining the band.”

Respectful treatment of students was mentioned once, emphasizing its importance. A director stated, “Treating students with respect has fostered a positive and supportive learning environment.” Seeking external resources was identified once as a crucial strategy. A director noted, “Securing grants and donations from external sources provided necessary funding for instruments and uniforms.” Student-teacher relationships were mentioned once, emphasizing their impact. A director shared, “Building strong relationships with students has been key to

motivating and retaining them in the band program.” Transportation support for rehearsals was identified once as an important strategy. A director noted, “Providing transportation for students to attend rehearsals has significantly increased attendance and participation.” See Table 26 for a summary of the most effective strategies/solutions in majority African American secondary public schools and the number of times they were mentioned.

**Table 26**

*Most Effective Strategies/Solutions in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Clear behavioral expectations	2
Culturally relevant music selection	2
High expectations	2
Advocacy	1
After-school rehearsals	1
Anti-discrimination policies	1
Community trust building	1
Diversity in recruitment	1
Effective recruitment strategies	1
New teacher challenges	1
Relationship building with feeder programs	1
Respectful treatment of students	1
Seeking external resources	1
Student teacher relationships	1
Transportation support for rehearsals	1

*Qualitative Findings: Most Effective Strategies and Solutions in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

Relationship Building with Feeder Programs and Director Positive Mindset were each mentioned 17 times. Band directors stressed the importance of connecting with feeder schools to ensure a steady influx of students. One director noted, “Visiting the next door elementary school for a petting zoo and performance helped increase numbers of beginning band students this last

year.” Another emphasized, “Our best strategy is vertical alignment with the high school band program and two feeder middle school programs.”

Student-teacher relationships were mentioned ten times, emphasizing their importance. Directors emphasized, “Developing relationships with students to allow them to trust me. This helps me encourage them when needed but also pushes them beyond where they think they can achieve.” Another director reported, “The strategy of meeting/getting to know students before the full transition to new director has overcome the barrier of students not feeling invested in the program. In order to be successful, meeting the students and asking them questions helped me to identify what they preferred and did not prefer in their program, what could be changed and what couldn't, increasing transparency and fostering trust between teacher and students.”

Administrative Relationship Building was mentioned nine times, with directors underscoring the necessity of open communication and collaboration with school administrators. One participant noted, “Open communication about needs with administrators and building personal relationships with them to establish trust.” Another participant responded, “Communication is the key concept that I have learned to use to build a program. Speaking with administrators to let them know what is going on and also to make them aware of what I need to be successful.”

Collaboration with Other Music Teachers (7 mentions) and Effective Recruitment Strategies (6 mentions) were also prominent. Directors noted, “Collaborating and sharing resources with my high school program has been very helpful in ensuring the success of my students and program.” For recruitment, one shared, “Recruiting concerts and presentations have helped grow the band.”

The less frequently recurring themes include Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling and Community Trust Building (each mentioned five times), emphasizing the importance of directors being involved in school schedules and establishing community trust. Other themes mentioned fewer than five times were seeking external resources, diverse and appropriately challenging music selection, engagement through participation, advocacy, after-school rehearsals, booster club formation, clear behavioral expectations, flexible scheduling, offer different music ensembles and courses, hiring qualified music teachers, high expectations, inclusive environment, better school scheduling, collaboration with teachers, culturally relevant music selection, administrative support, classroom management, support from all stakeholders, student choice, communication with all stakeholders, respectful treatment of students, resource allocation for low income students, alternative assessment methods, professional development, parental communication and engagement, female mentorship and representation, mentorship, increase number of music staff, inclusive music education policies, collaboration with parents, culturally relevant teaching, bilingual training, funding, and transportation support for rehearsals.

See Table 27 for a summary of the most effective strategies/solutions in non-majority African American secondary schools and the number of times they were mentioned. A comparison of the most effective strategies/solutions in majority and non-majority African American secondary schools is found in Table 28.

**Table 27**

*Most Effective Strategies/Solutions in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Relationship Building with Feeder Programs	17
Director Positive Mindset	17
Student Teacher Relationships	10
Administrative Relationship Building	9

Collaboration with Other Music Teachers	7
Effective Recruitment Strategies	6
Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling	5
Community Trust Building	5
Seeking External Resources	4
Diverse and Appropriately Challenging Music Selection	4
Engagement Through Participation	4
Advocacy	4
After-School Rehearsals	3
Booster Club Formation	3
Clear Behavioral Expectations	2
Flexible Scheduling	2
Offer Different Music Ensembles and Courses	2
Hiring Qualified Music Teachers	2
High Expectations	2
Inclusive Environment	2
Better School Scheduling	2
Collaboration with Teachers	2
Culturally Relevant Music Selection	2
Administrative Support	1
Classroom Management	1
Support from All Stakeholders	1
Student Choice	1
Communication with All Stakeholders	1
Respectful Treatment of Students	1
Resource Allocation for Low Income Students	1
Alternative Assessment Methods	1
Professional Development	1
Parental Communication and Engagement	1
Female Mentorship and Representation	1
Mentorship	1
Increase Number of Music Staff	1
Inclusive Music Education Policies	1
Collaboration with Parents	1
Culturally Relevant Teaching	1
Bilingual Training	1
Funding	1
Transportation Support for Rehearsals	1

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**Table 28***Comparison Most Effective Strategies/Solutions in Majority and Non-majority African American**Secondary Schools*

<i>Strategy/Solution</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>	
	<i>Majority African American</i>	<i>Non-majority African American</i>
Clear Behavioral Expectations	2	2
Culturally Relevant Music Selection	2	2
High Expectations	2	2
Advocacy	1	4
After-School Rehearsals	1	3
Anti-Discrimination Policies	1	0
Community Trust Building	1	5
Diversity in Recruitment	1	0
Effective Recruitment Strategies	1	6
New Teacher Challenges	1	0
Relationship Building with Feeder Programs	1	17
Respectful Treatment of Students	1	1
Seeking External Resources	1	4
Student Teacher Relationships	1	10
Transportation Support for Rehearsals	1	1
Director Positive Mindset	0	17
Administrative Relationship Building	0	9
Collaboration with Other Music Teachers	0	7
Band Director Involvement in School Scheduling	0	5
Engagement Through Participation	0	4
Diverse and Appropriately Challenging Music Selection	0	4
Booster Club Formation	0	3
Flexible Scheduling	0	2
Offer Different Music Ensembles and Courses	0	2
Hiring Qualified Music Teachers	0	2
Inclusive Environment	0	2
Better School Scheduling	0	2
Collaboration with Teachers	0	2
Administrative Support	0	1
Classroom Management	0	1
Support from All Stakeholders	0	1
Student Choice	0	1
Communication with All Stakeholders	0	1

Resource Allocation for Low Income Students	0	1
Alternative Assessment Methods	0	1
Professional Development	0	1
Parental Communication and Engagement	0	1
Female Mentorship and Representation	0	1
Mentorship	0	1
Increase Number of Music Staff	0	1
Inclusive Music Education Policies	0	1
Collaboration with Parents	0	1
Culturally Relevant Teaching	0	1
Bilingual Training	0	1
Funding	0	1

***Qualitative Findings: Collaboration in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools***

Participants were asked to elaborate on how collaboration with other stakeholders can enhance the growth and success of band programs in schools like the one in which they taught. Increased administrative support was the most frequently recurring theme, occurring three times. Directors emphasized the importance of support from school administration in facilitating the success of band programs. One director emphasized, “I have a new principal who is a sax player, and just having someone who gets what I do has made it so much easier to get resources and support.” Another mentioned, “Everyone would be in agreement about the direction of the program and how best to foster it. Directors can’t build a program on their own or with their admin actively hindering them.” A third response noted, “The grant that I mentioned has gone a long way to lowering the barrier to access (particularly for instrumental music) but we have noticed that more students in 6th grade doesn't necessarily translate to more students of varying backgrounds being involved in high school. I think better support for our teachers at the middle school level, particularly in cultural competence and responsiveness, would be helpful in retaining students.”



Parental advocacy was mentioned twice as a critical factor. One director shared, “It helps when parents can speak on your behalf either in rooms you’re not in or when you are not there.” Another pointed out, “Collaboration in my community is difficult because administrators think about what will raise test scores, not what will produce well-rounded students. Having a strong parent advocacy group has helped. Even if it is just a few strong-willed parents.”

Regular updates and newsletters also appeared twice in the responses. Directors believe that keeping stakeholders informed about the band program's activities and needs is crucial. One stated, “It would help them better understand how the band operates, the various performances that students are attending, and the financial needs of the program.” Another emphasized the importance of frequent communication: “Frequent communication with administrators and parents helps the support systems know what is going on with a program and what help is needed.”

Stakeholder awareness of the benefits of band was noted twice. Directors emphasized the importance of stakeholders understanding the positive impact band programs can have on students. One participant noted, “It is important for all the stakeholders to see the difference band can make in the kids' lives. I hold my students to academic and behavior standards and you see the classroom involvement in other classes increase and behavior issues decrease.” Another mentioned, “Treat band programs as the academic offering they are rather than an extracurricular activity they are.”

Collaboration with other music educators was identified as a theme. One director commented, “Collaboration puts all of us on the same page. When the stakeholders provide a unified front for the students, the students will work to the expectations and standards that are set to them.”

One participant emphasized collaborative problem-solving and resource optimization. They noted, “Collaboration is one of the keys to growing a band program and helping it succeed. Collaboration allows for many more ideas and for the director to not feel the entire program hinges on just their hard work and determination.”

Culturally enriched curriculum and repertoire was mentioned as an important aspect. One director stated, “The grant that I mentioned has gone a long way to lowering the barrier to access (particularly for instrumental music) but we have noticed that more students in 6th grade doesn't necessarily translate to more students of varying backgrounds being involved in high school. I think better support for our teachers at the middle school level, particularly in cultural competence and responsiveness, would be helpful in retaining students.”

Improved scheduling was implied as a byproduct of collaboration, with one participant reiterating the barrier of scheduling issues. This participant noted, “The biggest barrier now is scheduling. Students are incorrectly scheduled and given bad information when selecting courses. Administration are the key to fixing this since it involves multiple staff members.”

Increased student achievement in band was mentioned as a theme. One director remarked, “It is important for all the stakeholders to see the difference band can make in the kids' lives. I hold my students to academic and behavior standards and you see the classroom involvement in other classes increase and behavior issues decrease.”

Increased student pride in band was another theme identified. One response emphasized, “I think it takes a community to take a band program to the next level. When students see their parents, community members, and even their own parents behind the scenes of making the band program successful, it gives students a sense of pride to be a part of a winning team.”

Parental fundraising was mentioned as a potential support mechanism. One director noted, “Parents could make a huge difference if they fundraised and volunteered.” Parental volunteering was also seen as beneficial. One response pointed out, “Parents could make a huge difference if they fundraised and volunteered.”

Positive reinforcement and motivation was identified as a theme. One director stated, “If someone is a part of something, they will care more about it and will be more supportive. It's important to be positive with the group of people listed above and let them know of your successes as well as your needs.” See Table 29 for a summary of collaboration themes in Majority African American secondary public schools and the number of times they were mentioned.

**Table 29**

*Collaboration Themes in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Increased administrative support	3
Parental advocacy	2
Regular updates and newsletters	2
Stakeholder awareness of the benefits of band	2
Collaboration with other music educators	1
Collaborative Problem-Solving and Resource Optimization	1
Culturally Enriched Curriculum and Repertoire	1
Improved scheduling	1
Increased student achievement in band	1
Increased student pride in band	1
Parental Fundraising	1
Parental Volunteering	1
Positive reinforcement and motivation	1

### ***Qualitative Findings: Collaboration in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools***

Community engagement was the most frequently recurring theme, appearing 27 times. Participants emphasized that community support is crucial for the success and growth of band programs. One participant noted, “If our community (the school, staff, parents, others) support band, then band will be successful. It took 6 years for me to begin to change the culture around band in this community.” Another stated, “Community buy-in is so crucial to fostering a healthy program. It would then allow the program to grow healthy.” Additionally, “Establishing the band as a significant and living part of the community will help to garner support and keep music education a priority of those living in the area.”

Increased administrative support was mentioned 24 times, emphasizing the importance of school administration in the success of band programs. One director commented, “You cannot be successful without Administrative support, parental and community support and the personal conviction to meet your challenges head on to find solutions and compromises.” Another added, “Collaboration with stakeholders only works out if there's something in it for everyone. In the case of the administration, they're already satisfied with 20 band kids, even though I think we should have 50.” A third noted, “In the end, your admin controls the money and the time and without these two things it is hard to grow a music program.”

Strengthened support networks appeared 22 times, with participants stressing the importance of building positive relationships with all stakeholders. One participant stated, “Collaboration is essential for any sort of success, I believe. Our jobs are challenging enough as it is, and any amount of support (whether via a booster organization, funding from admin, parent volunteers, etc.) is going to help ensure the program is sustainable. Instances I am aware of in which a director is largely unsupported with few to no opportunities for collaboration often result

in positions that become "revolving doors" as nobody wants to stay there for an extended period of time." Another remarked, "It's all about the stakeholders! Build positive relationships with all the movers and shakers in your community. Be the kind of person they would want to support." Additionally, "Forming strong relationships encourages us to work with and for one another."

Stakeholder awareness of the benefits of band was cited 20 times, emphasizing the need for stakeholders to understand the value of band programs. One response noted, "When stakeholders are aware of the band program they can then be involved with it if they desire. If stakeholders have no idea about the band then they have no way to connect with it and help it be built." Another stated, "A positive image and established benefits of music throughout the community creates an expectation that all students benefit from music programs and should be participating in them at some level." A third commented, "Awareness of your program's status and needs is number one! So many people outside the program don't know what we need or what we don't have, making those people aware of our needs and what is going on is the number one way of getting things moving toward the right direction!"

Parental involvement was emphasized 18 times as a crucial factor for band program success. One director emphasized, "Success builds upon success, by getting parents involved and supportive of the program, THEY speak to other parents. Once that starts rolling, parents want their children to join!" Another added, "It is SO important to get parents involved. It starts by inviting them to concerts and other band events, as well as providing students opportunities to connect with their families through their instrumental playing." Additionally, "Having parent support to get logistical items done at events and provide additional financial support is a huge success to any program."

Increased financial support was mentioned 15 times, underscoring the need for adequate funding. One response stated, “In the end, your admin controls the money and the time and without these two things it is hard to grow a music program.” Another remarked, “There are a lot of donations and fundraising, as well as turnout to concerts and events by the community. I appreciate them so much!!” Additionally, “Advocate for equal funding between athletics and band. I get one assistant band director stipend when football gets 11 assistant coach stipends???”

Improved scheduling appeared eight times, with participants noting that better scheduling could enhance band participation and retention. One director mentioned, “We have supportive administration, but they also support electives more broadly and don’t want to create conditions that might funnel more kids into music at the expense of other offerings, so we really have to compete for our kids, even once they’re in the program.” Another noted, “Scheduling issues.”

Greater program visibility and recognition was cited six times. One response emphasized, “The more they see the band and think of the band the more likely they are to support the band. We try to be active in concession stands at athletic events and have a band booster table selling school spirit merchandise at community functions/events.” Another commented, “It can help increase awareness of our program's accomplishments, needs, and value to student learning and school culture.” Additionally, “Maintain visibility of the program; ensure adequate funding; keep lines of communication open.”

Higher student participation and retention also appeared six times. One participant stated, “RAISE YOIR PARTICIPATION NUMBERS!! If directors and kids don't invest the blood, sweat, and tears, then no one will want to invest the money.” Another noted, “Prioritize student participation in band. Our guidance counselors actively encourage students to quit band.”

Additionally, “Doing so will provide more opportunities for students to participate in a music class/band program.”

Positive reinforcement and motivation were mentioned six times, with participants noting its importance for student engagement. One director remarked, “In general, more support means a more favorable view of the program amongst the community, and this tends to trickle into the kids.” Another added, “Communication in a positive direction will facilitate a better vision of the expectations of the music program.” Additionally, “The more they see the success and enjoyment of kids in our programs, the more supportive they will be.”

Encouragement from stakeholders was emphasized five times, with participants noting its role in motivating students and directors. One response stated, “Encouragement from stakeholders.” Another remarked, “Students need to see collaborative, collegial relationships among colleagues, administrators, etc. to know their band director cares about people, including individual students.” Additionally, “Especially if a student struggles behaviorally or with other classes, if parents feel you are rooting for their kid in band and they are achieving then you will have tremendous support from them.”

Collaboration with other music educators was cited three times, emphasizing the benefits of inter-school collaboration. One response noted, “Collaboration with our 4 middle schools has been the biggest key to what we have done at the high school. We have different events throughout the year where students are exposed to one another. Exchange concerts, Marching Band intro day, school visits, etc.” Another stated, “When people are on the same page, EXCELLENCE can happen. Because I actively collaborate, I have seen a 166% increase in band growth since the beginning of the school year.” Additionally, “If you can convince them to buy

in to team-teaching between middle/high, then I believe the programs will all benefit drastically, from beginners to graduating seniors.”

Creating a sense of belonging appeared three times. One participant emphasized, “When more parts of the school community feel connected to the band program, the successes are shared. If those successes are being celebrated by more members of the school community, and students see themselves being celebrated by those people, they want to be a part of that group.” Another noted, “It helps the students to see they are a part of something bigger than themselves. It also shows students that more people care about their involvement in the program than just themselves.” Additionally, “Having social outings that do not have to do with performance.”

Expanded performance opportunities also appeared three times. One response emphasized, “Seasonal concerts encourage more students to join.” Another noted, “Simply by word-of-mouth and chances for non-traditional public performance opportunities...if people like what you offer, they'll ask you to contribute outside of school to something new and different for the student to experience!” Additionally, “Communication and awareness of the Band's needs and activities by other members of the school community have been beneficial in coordinating schedules to resolve any conflicts and promoting such activities to raise awareness in the surrounding community.”

Reducing band director workload was mentioned three times, emphasizing the benefits of support in managing responsibilities. One participant stated, “Trying to run an entire fine arts program as one person can be exhausting and will burn teachers out, causing a decline in appreciation for the music program being built.” Another added, “Collaboration in the forms of volunteerism and donations allows for the collection of resources the school may otherwise be unable to access. It also puts a larger, more experienced group of people to work meeting the



band's needs and solving its problems instead of the director trying to handle it alone.”

Additionally, “My community has been very supportive in the financial aspects of maintaining the band program. I also have a booster club with a team of volunteers that helps take care of some of the additional duties for me and allows me to focus more on teaching the students.”

Local business sponsorships also appeared two times. One participant emphasized, “When community leaders see the success of a band program, they are more likely to support with time and money.” Another added, “Collaboration with stakeholders only works out if there's something in it for everyone. In the case of the administration, they're already satisfied with 20 band kids, even though I think we should have 50. With parents, they want to be able to influence or institute policy. We have, however, had success soliciting sponsorships from community organizations and wish to continue building those relationships.”

Access to expert advice and mentorship was mentioned once. However, it was in regard to stakeholders trusting the band director’s expertise. One participant stated, “The band director must serve as the best and primary advocate for the program. After all, they are the one in the position for the long term (theoretically). They possess the most knowledge about the strengths and weaknesses of their program at any given moment in time. The band director MUST communicate effectively with all stakeholders to have a chance at growth and solving systemic problems.”

Collaborative problem-solving and resource optimization was emphasized once. One director noted, “Collaboration always helps to get things done quicker. If more people are working toward a solution, then it will most likely be achieved faster.”

Culturally enriched curriculum and repertoire was also mentioned once, with a participant emphasizing, “I would like to see the school bring in speakers or community members that

represent minorities, so students can interact with those different than themselves. We have such small populations of minorities at my school, they often don't get the chance to interact with people that are different.”

Increased student pride in band was cited once. One participant stated, “Students can see they are wanted.” See Table 30 for a summary of collaboration themes in non-majority African American secondary schools and the number of times they were mentioned. A comparison of collaboration themes in majority and non-majority African American secondary schools is found in Table 31.

**Table 30**

*Collaboration Themes in Non-majority African American Secondary Schools*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>
Community engagement	27
Increased administrative support	24
Strengthened Support Networks	22
Stakeholder awareness of the benefits of band	20
Parental involvement	18
Increased financial support	15
Improved scheduling	8
Greater Program Visibility and Recognition	6
Higher Student Participation and Retention	6
Positive reinforcement and motivation	6
Encouragement from stakeholders	5
Collaboration with other music educators	2
Local business sponsorships	2
Creating a sense of belonging	3
Expanded Performance opportunities	3
Reduce band director workload	3
Access to expert advice and mentorship	1
Collaborative Problem-Solving and Resource Optimization	1
Culturally Enriched Curriculum and Repertoire	1
Increased student pride in band	1
Professional Development and Skill Enhancement	1

**Table 31***Comparison of Collaboration Themes in Majority and Non-majority African American**Secondary Schools*

<i>Themes</i>	<i>Number of Mentions</i>	
	<i>Majority African American</i>	<i>Non-majority African American</i>
Increased Administrative Support	3	24
Parental Advocacy	2	0
Regular Updates and Newsletters	2	0
Stakeholder Awareness of the Benefits of Band	2	20
Collaboration with Other Music Educators	1	2
Collaborative Problem-Solving and Resource Optimization	1	1
Culturally Enriched Curriculum and Repertoire	1	1
Improved Scheduling	1	8
Increased Student Achievement in Band	1	0
Increased Student Pride in Band	1	1
Parental Fundraising	1	0
Parental Volunteering	1	0
Positive Reinforcement and Motivation	1	6
Community Engagement	0	27
Strengthened Support Networks	0	22
Parental Involvement	0	18
Increased Financial Support	0	15
Greater Program Visibility and Recognition	0	6
Higher Student Participation and Retention	0	6
Encouragement from Stakeholders	0	5
Local Business Sponsorships	0	2
Creating a Sense of Belonging	0	3
Expanded Performance Opportunities	0	3
Reduce Band Director Workload	0	3
Access to Expert Advice and Mentorship	0	1
Professional Development and Skill Enhancement	0	1

## *Summary*

The combination of quantitative and qualitative findings from both majority African American secondary public schools and non-majority African American schools indicated distinct strategies and solutions for overcoming barriers to successful band programs.

In majority African American secondary public schools, key strategies included collaborating with school administration to create band-friendly schedules and providing transportation for students. Developing a positive and supportive band culture and engaging in discussions with policymakers also emerged as effective strategies. Additionally, fostering connections with feeder schools and collaborating with other extracurricular programs were emphasized as crucial for supporting band participation and minimizing conflicts. Qualitative findings emphasized the importance of booster clubs, collaboration with other music teachers, a positive director mindset, equitable funding, mentorship, and parental support in enhancing band programs in these schools.

In non-majority African American schools, top-rated strategies included developing a positive and supportive band culture, strengthening connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students, and collaborating with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation. Community engagement and parental communication were emphasized as top-rated strategies. For qualitative data, advocacy was the most frequently recurring theme, with directors stressing the importance of educating legislators and administrators about the significance of music education to secure proper funding and scheduling. Collaboration with other music teachers, administrative support, and better school scheduling were also frequently cited as essential for program success. Increasing the number of music staff, mentorship, and relationship building with feeder programs were identified as key

strategies, along with fostering a positive band culture, effective recruitment strategies, and high expectations for students. The qualitative data further emphasized the importance of creating an inclusive environment, offering diverse musical selections, and ensuring resource allocation for low-income students. Directors also noted the value of flexible scheduling, community trust-building, and engagement through participation in enjoyable performances and extracurricular activities.

Overall, the findings indicate that while majority African American secondary public schools benefit notably from administrative collaboration and structural supports, non-majority African American schools find community engagement and advocacy more impactful. Both groups, however, recognize the importance of professional development, strong relationships with stakeholders, and inclusive practices in building successful band programs.

**Research Question 3 Is there a difference among participants' barrier ratings based on the following variables: school majority ethnic populations (majority vs. non-majority African American) and school socioeconomic status (i.e., Title 1 vs. non-Title 1 schools)?**

A series of 41 factorial ANOVAs were conducted to examine the influence of school socioeconomic status (Title 1 vs. non-Title 1) and majority African American student population on participants' ratings of various barriers faced by band programs in secondary public schools. The independent variables were school socioeconomic status, categorized as Title 1 vs. non-Title 1, and the majority student population ethnicity in the school, categorized as majority African American vs. non-majority African American. The dependent variable was the participants' ratings of the barriers.

The issue of risk of Type I errors must be addressed given the 41 tests conducted in this study. With this number of tests performed, the probability of obtaining at least one false positive

result by chance alone is substantial. This risk of error necessitates a cautious approach to interpreting the results. It is important to interpret the significant findings from this study as preliminary and in need of further confirmation.

### ***School Socioeconomic Status (Title 1 yes/no)***

My analysis showed significant differences in participants' barrier ratings based on Title 1 status. Participants in Title 1 schools rated several barriers higher than participants in non-Title 1 schools. They rated socioeconomic significantly higher ( $M = 4.12$ ) than participants in non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.95$ ), showed a significant main effect,  $F(1, 216) = 13.86, p < .001$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.06$ , indicating a medium effect size for Title 1 status on this barrier. This suggests that Title 1 status had a noticeable and moderate impact on the severity of socioeconomic challenges faced by students. Participants also rated student mobility significantly higher ( $M = 2.93$ ) in Title 1 schools than in non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.01$ ),  $F(1, 216) = 6.56, p = 0.01$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ , suggesting a small to medium effect size. This indicated that Title 1 status moderately increased the challenges associated with student mobility. Participants rated social-emotional learning higher in Title 1 schools ( $M = 3.08$ ) than in non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.28$ ), showing a significant main effect,  $F(1, 216) = 6.34, p = 0.01$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ , with a small to medium effect size. This emphasized the greater challenges in social-emotional learning in Title 1 schools. Participants in Title 1 schools rated school scheduling and time constraints slightly lower ( $M = 3.77$ ) compared to non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 3.83$ ),  $F(1, 216) = 5.59, p = 0.02$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ , indicating a small effect size. This suggests a small, but significant impact of Title 1 status on participants' ratings of scheduling. They rated testing higher ( $M = 2.73$ ) compared to non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.19$ ), showing a main effect,  $F(1, 216) = 3.99, p = 0.05$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.02$ , indicating a small effect size. This pointed to a smaller but meaningful impact of Title 1 status on testing. Participants rated

parental and community support higher in Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.92$ ) compared to non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.4$ ),  $F(1, 216) = 5.83$ ,  $p = 0.02$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ , suggesting a small to medium effect size. This indicated lower levels of support in Title 1 schools. They also rated administrative support higher in Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.56$ ) compared to non-Title 1 schools ( $M = 2.09$ ),  $F(1, 216) = 4.45$ ,  $p = 0.04$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.02$ , indicating a small effect size. This suggested a smaller but meaningful impact on administrative support in Title 1 schools. Factorial ANOVA results for title status are summarized in Table 32 and Table 33. Although 41 tests were conducted, the table presents only the significant findings. The other 34 tests were not significant and are not shown in the table.

**Table 32**

*Significant Factorial ANOVA Results for Title 1 Status*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>F (Title 1)</i>	<i>p (Title 1)</i>	<i>Partial <math>\eta^2</math> (Title 1)</i>
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	13.86	<.001	0.06
Student Mobility	6.56	0.01	0.03
Social Emotional Learning	6.34	0.01	0.03
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	5.59	0.02	0.03
Parental and Community Support	5.83	0.02	0.03
Administrative Support	4.45	0.04	0.02
Testing	3.99	0.05	0.02

**Table 33**

*Comparison of Significant Factorial ANOVA Barriers in Title 1 and Non-Title 1 Schools*

<i>Barriers</i>	<i>Title 1</i>			<i>Non-Title 1</i>		
	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	113	4.12	1.02	106	2.95	1.23
Student mobility	113	2.93	1.25	106	2.01	1.14
Social emotional learning	113	3.08	1.27	106	2.28	1.12
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	113	3.77	1.22	106	3.83	1.22
Parental and Community Support	113	2.92	1.17	106	2.4	1.18
Administrative Support	113	2.56	1.38	106	2.09	1.22
Testing	113	2.73	1.31	106	2.19	1.17

### ***Majority African American Student Population (yes/no)***

None of the barriers were significantly influenced by the majority African American student population alone ( $p < .05$ ). This indicated that, when considered alone, the majority African American student population did not significantly influence the ratings of any of the barriers.

### ***Interaction Effect***

The interaction between Title 1 status and majority African American student population indicated a significant effect on school scheduling and time constraints. The combination of being a Title 1 school and having a majority African American student population significantly exacerbated participants' ratings of school scheduling and time constraints,  $F(1,216) = 6.56$ ,  $p = 0.01$ , Partial  $\eta^2 = 0.03$ , suggesting a small to medium effect size. This interaction effect implied that schools which were both Title 1 and had a majority African American student population faced more severe scheduling and time constraints compared to schools that were either Title 1 without a majority African American population, majority African American without being Title 1 or neither. This compounded difficulty highlighted the unique and more severe challenges faced by these schools.

Factorial ANOVA results for the interaction between Title 1 status and majority African American secondary public schools are summarized in Table 34 and Table 35. Although 41 tests were conducted, the table presents only the significant interaction effects. The other 40 were not significant and are not shown in the table.



**Table 34**

*Significant Factorial ANOVA Results for Interaction Between Title 1 Status and Majority African American School (Yes/No)*

<i>Barrier</i>	<i>F (Interaction)</i>	<i>p (Interaction)</i>	<i>Partial η<sup>2</sup> (Interaction)</i>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	6.56	0.01	0.03

**Table 35**

*Interaction Effects of Title 1 Status and Majority African American School Status on Ratings for School Scheduling and Time Constraints*

<i>Title 1 Status</i>	<i>Majority African American School</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Yes	Yes	18	4.11	1.13
Yes	No	95	3.71	1.23
No	Yes	0	0	0
No	No	106	3.83	1.22

*Note.* There were no participants' schools that were both non-Title 1 and majority African American present in the dataset. Therefore, the mean and standard deviation could not be calculated.

### ***Summary***

In summary, there were significant differences in how participants from Title 1 schools and non-Title 1 schools rated barriers. Participants from Title 1 schools rated barriers higher than participants in non-Title 1 schools. Being a majority African American school did not show a difference in barrier ratings by itself. However, participants in schools that were both Title 1 and had a majority African American student population rated scheduling and time constraints higher. These findings suggest that socioeconomic status played a crucial role in barrier ratings and that when combined with ethnicity, it could lead to compounded challenges in certain areas.

## **Overall Summary of Findings**

The research study aimed to investigate the challenges that hinder the success of band programs in majority African American secondary public schools. It also aimed to identify the strategies used by band directors to address these challenges and explore variations in perspectives across demographic categories. The study collected data from 247 band directors through an online survey, with 20 participants teaching in majority African American secondary public schools and 227 in non-majority African American schools.

The analysis identified various barriers that affect band programs in majority African American secondary public schools. These barriers include funding and resources, socioeconomic challenges, access to instruments, school scheduling, and equipment maintenance. Qualitative findings also emphasized issues such as student discipline, administrative support, and lack of interest from parents and students. In non-majority African American schools, most prominent barriers include school scheduling, socioeconomic challenges, competition with other extracurricular activities, and inadequate funding.

Effective strategies for overcoming barriers in majority African American secondary public schools include collaborating with the administration to create band-friendly schedules, providing transportation, fostering a positive band culture, and engaging policymakers. Qualitative data emphasized the importance of booster clubs, collaboration with music teachers, a positive director mindset, and equitable funding. In non-majority African American schools, strategies focused on community engagement, advocacy, collaboration with music teachers, administrative support, and improved scheduling.

The results of the factorial ANOVA analyses showed that Title 1 status had a significant impact on several barriers. Participants from Title 1 schools rated several barriers higher than

those from non-Title 1 schools. Title 1 schools faced more socioeconomic challenges, student mobility, social-emotional learning issues, scheduling difficulties, testing pressures, and lower parental, community, and administrative support compared to non-Title 1 schools. However, participants in schools that were both Title 1 and had a majority African American student population rated scheduling and time constraints higher.

In conclusion, this study focuses on the unique challenges encountered by band programs in predominantly African American secondary public schools and the tactics utilized by band directors to overcome these obstacles. The findings emphasize the necessity for tailored interventions and support systems designed to address the specific needs of band programs in Title 1 schools and those catering to predominantly African American student populations. By tackling these challenges and implementing effective strategies, band directors can strive to establish successful and flourishing music programs in these educational environments.

## Chapter 5

### Discussion

#### Top Barriers in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools

For band programs in majority African American secondary public schools, funding and resources emerged as the highest-rated barrier, both quantitatively and qualitatively. The lack of financial support severely hampers the development of these programs, affecting everything from instrument acquisition to maintenance and repair. Participants frequently mentioned the dire consequences of inadequate funding, with one stating: "I have \$34,000 worth of mold damage, 130 students, and only 60 working instruments. Our district is supposed to provide instruments to all students but I can't get any admin to agree to fix the mold because of how expensive it is." This statement highlights the critical state of resources, emphasizing the urgency of financial interventions. The impact extends beyond instruments, affecting staffing, performance opportunities, and the ability to purchase essential materials like sheet music and uniforms. This finding aligns with previous research by Miller (2023) and Helton and Paetz (2021), who identified the critical impact of funding on band program development. Moreover, it reflects broader systemic inequities in education funding, as noted by Fitzpatrick (2011), who found that urban schools often suffer from limited funding sources compared to schools in more affluent areas. Addressing this funding disparity is crucial for establishing equitable music education environments and ensuring that all students have access to the numerous benefits of participating in well-resourced band programs.

Socioeconomic challenges, tied with funding as the highest-rated barrier, were emphasized in both quantitative and qualitative responses. Participants noted that socioeconomic status profoundly affects students' ability to participate in band programs: "Housing type seems

to matter... Kids living in apartments... can't practice easily, and kids who walk to school don't want to carry instruments.” This observation is echoed in the literature, where Jolly (2008) highlighted that students from low-income households face critical obstacles, such as lack of parental support and financial constraints, which impede their full participation in music programs. The socioeconomic barriers extend beyond financial issues, encompassing broader social and environmental factors. Beveridge (2022) discussed how poverty and cultural differences create additional hurdles for low-income students in music education. The absence of a stable home environment conducive to practice, coupled with the inability to afford instruments or private lessons, notably disadvantages these students (Culp & Clause, 2020). Consequently, addressing these socioeconomic challenges requires comprehensive support systems that extend beyond school boundaries, ensuring that all students have equal opportunities to participate in band programs.

School scheduling and time constraints were frequently mentioned as prominent barriers. Participants described the complex scheduling issues that hinder band program development: “Right now it's class scheduling. A lot of band students have to take a class that is only offered during the same period as band rehearsal.” This issue is compounded by the prioritization of academic courses over extracurricular activities, often resulting in conflicts that force students to choose between band and other classes. This finding aligns with the research of Pendergrast and Robinson (2020), who noted that structural barriers such as scheduling conflicts notably impact student enrollment in music courses. The importance of equitable scheduling is further emphasized by Abril and Gault (2008), who found that educational mandates and school policies often marginalize music education, making it difficult for students to commit to band programs.

Therefore, addressing scheduling issues is essential for fostering an environment where music education is valued equally alongside academic subjects.

Instrumental access emerged as a critical barrier, with many students lacking the necessary instruments to participate in band programs. Participants highlighted the difficulty of obtaining and maintaining instruments: “The biggest hurdle I have had to face so far is a lack of instruments and money to fix the outdated instruments we have.” This lack of access not only affects students' ability to learn and perform but also discourages continued participation in band programs. Fitzpatrick (2011) emphasized the importance of providing instruments and resources to ensure equitable access to music education. Inadequate instrument availability is a systemic issue that disproportionately affects schools in lower socioeconomic areas (Culp & Clause, 2020). Therefore, ensuring that all students have access to quality instruments is a fundamental step towards achieving equity in music education.

Administrative support was emphasized as a prominent challenge in qualitative data. Participants described a lack of focus and support from school administrators: "Administration not focused on fine arts class development. Classes are used as dumping grounds or to get a credit for graduation." This lack of support often results in insufficient resources, inadequate scheduling, and a general undervaluing of music education within the school curriculum. This issue is highlighted in the studies by Baker (2012), who discusses the importance of administrative support in the success of urban music education programs, and Fiese and DeCarbo (1995), who emphasize the unique challenges faced by urban music teachers due to insufficient administrative support. The persistence of this problem across decades, as evidenced by these studies, suggests a systemic issue in educational leadership that continues to marginalize music education despite its known benefits. Furthermore, the characterization of music classes as

"dumping grounds" indicates a fundamental misunderstanding of the cognitive, social, and emotional benefits of music education, pointing to a need for better education and advocacy at the administrative level.

Parental and community support were highlighted as crucial factors in the success of band programs. Participants noted that parental involvement directly correlates with student success: "In my experience, parent involvement and investment in their student's education has a very strong correlation with that student's success." However, many participants also reported a noticeable lack of parental support, which translates to student apathy and diminished program success.

This finding aligns with Deisler's (2011) research, which emphasized the importance of parental support for successful band programs, particularly in high socioeconomic status schools where parents may have more time to contribute. In contrast, low socioeconomic status schools often struggle with limited parental involvement due to financial constraints and other socioeconomic factors (Jolly, 2008). Therefore, fostering strong parental and community support is essential for overcoming barriers and ensuring the sustainability of band programs.

### **Most Effective Strategies and Solutions in Majority African American Secondary Public Schools**

One of the highest-rated strategies identified through both quantitative and qualitative data was the collaboration with school administration to create band-friendly schedules. This approach is essential because it directly addresses one of the most prominent barriers—scheduling conflicts—that hinder student participation in band programs. Participants emphasized the importance of working closely with administrators to ensure that band classes do not conflict with other academic requirements. One participant noted, "The biggest barrier now

is scheduling. Students are incorrectly scheduled and given bad information when selecting courses. Administration are the key to fixing this since it involves multiple staff members.”

This finding is consistent with what Pendergrast and Robinson (2020) observed, where structural barriers like scheduling conflicts were a major impediment to student enrollment in music courses. Establishing clear and open lines of communication with administrators can help align the school's scheduling priorities with the needs of the band program, thereby increasing student enrollment and retention. Moreover, this proactive engagement ensures that the importance of music education is recognized and integrated into the broader academic framework, which is critical for the long-term sustainability of band programs.

Creating a positive and supportive band culture was another highly rated strategy, frequently mentioned in qualitative responses. This strategy involves fostering an environment where students feel valued, respected, and motivated to excel. Participants highlighted the importance of setting clear expectations for behavior and performance. One participant shared, “Establishing clear expectations of behavior in class and not wavering has done wonders for my classes.”

Similar to the findings of Abril and Bannerman (2015), this study emphasizes the importance of clear behavioral expectations in creating a conducive learning environment. By maintaining high standards and consistent expectations, band directors can cultivate a culture of discipline and respect, which is crucial for the success of the program. This approach also aligns with Fitzpatrick's (2011) recommendation for improved classroom management strategies to enhance student engagement and achievement. Furthermore, a supportive band culture can positively impact student retention, as students are more likely to remain committed to a program where they feel appreciated and challenged.



Providing transportation for students was identified as a critical strategy for ensuring that all students can participate in after-school rehearsals and performances. Transportation issues can be a critical barrier, particularly for students from low-income families who may not have access to reliable transportation. One participant noted the positive impact of providing transportation: “There was one year that the school provided a bus for afterschool tutoring and athletics and band could use it as well. That really helped with after-school rehearsal attendance.”

This strategy aligns with Fitzpatrick's (2011) findings, which highlighted the importance of logistical support in urban schools to increase student participation in music programs. Ensuring that students have access to transportation can notably reduce absenteeism and enhance the overall effectiveness of the band program. Additionally, providing transportation demonstrates a commitment to inclusivity, ensuring that all students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have the opportunity to participate fully in the band program.

Engaging in discussions with policymakers to ensure the inclusion of band programs in educational mandates was identified as a top-rated solution. Participants emphasized the importance of these discussions to ensure that band programs are included in educational mandates and receive adequate support. One participant highlighted the significance of this engagement: “Advocating for your program to admin.”

In line with Elpus (2014) and Elpus and Abril's (2011) findings, which demonstrated the impact of educational policies on music programs, this study underscores the necessity of proactive engagement with policymakers and school administrators. Elpus (2014) showed that exclusion from mandates can reduce enrollments and resources, while Elpus and Abril (2011) highlighted the role of policies in equitable access. Ensuring band programs are recognized and supported through educational mandates can help secure the necessary funding and resources to

sustain and expand these programs. This proactive stance not only addresses immediate needs but also fosters a culture of support and recognition for music education at higher administrative levels, potentially leading to more systemic and lasting changes.

Collaboration with feeder schools was frequently mentioned as an effective strategy for developing band programs by participants in majority African American secondary public schools. Participants noted that establishing strong relationships with middle schools and elementary schools can help build a pipeline of interested and motivated students. One participant shared, “Developing a better relationship with feeder programs has helped the most. This school is unique in that 5 different middle school feed into 3 high schools and the students select which high school they want to go to.”

This strategy aligns with Deisler's (2011) recommendation for increased collaboration among music educators to foster a supportive network for students transitioning between educational levels. Deisler’s study emphasized the importance of community and school relationships, which can include feeder school collaborations, as a key factor in the success of band programs. By working closely with feeder schools, band directors can ensure that students are adequately prepared and enthusiastic about joining the high school band program. Iliff (2018) also highlighted the importance of effective practices and community engagement, indirectly supporting the strategy of early interest and participation fostered through feeder school collaborations.

Additionally, this collaboration helps create a seamless transition for students, reducing the anxiety associated with moving to a new school and increasing their likelihood of continuing their musical education. Ensuring strong feeder school relationships can build a supportive community and foster long-term commitment to band programs.

Maintaining clear behavioral expectations was highlighted as one of the most effective strategies for managing band programs. Participants emphasized the importance of setting and enforcing high standards for student behavior to create a disciplined and focused learning environment. One participant stated, “Establishing clear expectations for behavior and consequences to reduce issues in the band room.”

This finding resonates with Allen's (2011) study, which found that clear behavioral expectations and effective classroom management are crucial for student success in music education. By establishing and maintaining consistent expectations, band directors can create a positive and productive learning environment that supports student achievement and program success. Clear behavioral expectations not only improve classroom management but also foster a sense of accountability and responsibility among students, which are essential traits for their overall development.

### **Comparison of Barriers and Strategies Between Majority and Nonmajority African American Secondary Schools**

Funding and resources are prominent barriers in both majority and nonmajority African American schools. However, the impact is more severe in majority African American schools due to systemic inequities in resource allocation, resulting in insufficient funding. One participant from a nonmajority African American school noted, “We find as many entities as we can that will help us fund instruments for students.” This issue is consistent with the findings of Deisler (2011), who found differences in fundraising capabilities and community support between low and high socioeconomic schools, and Beveridge (2022), who discussed the additional hurdles faced by schools in less affluent areas due to underfunding and resource allocation disparities. The proactive engagement of communities in these areas helps bridge

funding gaps, allowing for more stable and resource-rich band programs. This disparity may stem from nonmajority schools' ability to leverage better community support and fundraising capabilities.

School scheduling and time constraints are critical barriers impacting both majority and nonmajority African American schools. In majority African American schools, the issue is particularly acute, which may be due to rigid scheduling policies that conflict with band programs. Conversely, nonmajority African American schools, while also dealing with scheduling issues, often have more flexibility to create additional rehearsal opportunities. A participant shared, “Since my district won’t solve the schedule problem, I created extra ensemble opportunities on my own time, and volunteered.” This proactive approach aligns with Pendergrast and Robinson's (2020) recommendation for educators to develop creative solutions to institutional barriers. The flexibility in nonmajority schools may stem from better administrative flexibility and community support.

Administrative support is crucial for the success of band programs and represents a prominent barrier in both types of schools. In majority African American schools, there is often a lack of focus on fine arts development, which may be caused by broader systemic issues and budget constraints. In contrast, nonmajority African American schools report more success with administrative support when actively building relationships. One participant mentioned, “Open communication about needs with administrators and building personal relationships with them to establish trust.” Fitzpatrick (2011) found that effective advocacy and communication with school leaders are essential for securing necessary resources. The ability to foster personal relationships and clearly communicate the needs and successes of the band program may help these schools gain the necessary backing from administrators, highlighting the importance of strategic

advocacy in securing support.

Parental and community support is a crucial factor that varies notably between the two settings. In majority African American schools, there is often a lack of parental involvement, which critically impacts student engagement and program success. This lack of involvement may stem from economic pressures and limited availability of parents to participate in school activities. In nonmajority African American schools, there is often more robust parental and community engagement. One participant noted, “Parents could make a huge difference if they fundraised and volunteered.” Beveridge (2022) observed that parental involvement is a key factor in the success of music programs, particularly in higher socioeconomic areas. The active involvement of parents and the community not only provides financial and logistical support but also fosters a sense of community and shared responsibility for the success of the band program. This disparity may be caused by socioeconomic factors and varying levels of community engagement.

Both types of schools recognize the importance of building strong relationships with administrators. This strategy is especially critical in majority African American schools, where administrative support is often lacking. In contrast, in nonmajority African American schools, fostering relationships with administrators often leads to more immediate success. One participant noted, “Communication with administrators and fostering a good band culture... My budget increased once the disparity was highlighted.” Abril and Bannerman (2015) and Fitzpatrick (2011) highlighted the importance of strong administrative relationships in securing resources. The ability to effectively communicate needs and demonstrate the value of the band program may lead to increased funding and support in these schools, showcasing the benefits of strategic relationship-building.

After-school rehearsals are a widely employed strategy to address scheduling conflicts and provide additional practice time. Majority African American schools rely on these sessions to compensate for limited in-school rehearsal time. Conversely, nonmajority African American schools also use after-school rehearsals but often have more resources and support to facilitate these sessions. A participant stated, “Adding in extra rehearsals after school has significantly pushed my program forward.” Fitzpatrick (2011) emphasized the importance of logistical support for increasing student participation, particularly in urban settings. The ability to offer well-supported after-school rehearsals may ensure that students receive adequate practice time, contributing to the overall success and quality of the band program.

Incorporating culturally relevant materials is a strategy emphasized in majority African American schools to better engage students and reflect their cultural backgrounds. One participant shared, “I have arranged and sought out music that reflects my kids’ culture and interests.” DeLorenzo and Marissa (2021) stressed the importance of culturally responsive teaching in fostering an inclusive and supportive learning environment. Similarly, nonmajority African American schools also recognize the importance of cultural relevance, although their focus is often broader, addressing diverse student populations. One participant noted, “Focusing on pep band literature and including more relevant musical selections has been huge for us.” This approach supports Pendergrast and Robinson's (2020) recommendation for inclusive and relevant curriculum development. By ensuring the curriculum reflects diverse backgrounds and interests, educators can create a more engaging and inclusive educational experience for all students.

Establishing clear behavioral expectations is a common strategy in both types of schools due to its universal importance in creating a conducive learning environment. Majority African American schools emphasize discipline and respect to maintain productivity. One participant

stated, “Establishing clear expectations for behavior in class and not wavering has done wonders for my classes.” Allen (2011) found that effective classroom management is crucial for student success in music education. By setting and consistently enforcing high standards of behavior, educators can create an environment conducive to learning and achievement.

Similarly, nonmajority African American schools also stress this strategy, focusing on building trust and mutual respect. A participant mentioned, “Clear expectations of behavior in class and not wavering has helped significantly.” Fitzpatrick (2011) highlighted the importance of classroom management to enhance student engagement and achievement. This shared emphasis may indicate the critical role of clear behavioral standards in fostering a supportive and structured educational environment.

### **Difference in Barrier Ratings Based on Title 1 Status (Yes/No) and Majority African American Student Population (Yes/No)**

The third research question in this study asks whether there is a difference among participants' barrier ratings based on the following variables: schools with majority African American student populations and school socioeconomic status (i.e., Title 1 vs. non-Title 1 schools). A series of 41 factorial ANOVA were conducted to answer this question. The results indicated there is a difference among participants' barrier ratings.

Title 1 status significantly impacted several barriers within schools. Participants from Title 1 schools rated socioeconomic challenges faced by students significantly higher than participants from non-Title 1 schools. Title 1 schools are designed to support students from low-income families, but these socioeconomic challenges remain a critical barrier. These students often lack access to basic resources and educational materials, which hinders their academic performance and overall school experience. The financial struggles faced by families in Title 1

schools can contribute to higher absenteeism and lower academic achievement. Similar to findings in Jolly (2008), the additional strain on resources due to economic hardship exacerbates these issues, making it challenging for students to engage fully in their education. This may suggest that Title 1 status intensifies socioeconomic barriers more than in non-Title 1 schools.

Student mobility was rated significantly higher in Title 1 schools. This is a common issue in Title 1 schools, where students frequently move in and out due to housing instability and economic pressures. This constant turnover disrupts learning continuity and creates challenges for both students and teachers. Teachers must frequently adjust to new students, which can detract from the overall quality of instruction and negatively affect classroom dynamics. Fitzpatrick (2011) discusses how socioeconomic instability prevalent in Title 1 school communities increases student mobility. This may indicate that Title 1 status leads to higher student mobility compared to non-Title 1 schools.

Social-emotional learning was perceived as a greater barrier in Title 1 schools. Title 1 schools often have limited resources for social-emotional learning (SEL) programs despite the high need for such support among students facing socioeconomic hardships. These students may experience higher levels of stress, anxiety, and trauma, impacting their ability to engage fully in their education. The lack of adequate SEL programs in Title 1 schools can exacerbate these issues, making it difficult for students to thrive academically and personally. DeLorenzo and Marissa (2021) emphasize the importance of SEL in supporting students' overall well-being, which is often neglected in underfunded schools. This may stem from Title 1 schools having fewer resources to implement effective SEL programs compared to non-Title 1 schools.

Interestingly, school scheduling and time constraints were rated slightly lower in Title 1 schools, contrary to expectations. This unexpected finding warrants further investigation, as it



contradicts the notion that Title 1 schools might face more severe scheduling constraints due to the need for additional support services (Abril & Gault, 2008).

Parental and community support in Title 1 schools is often limited due to the economic struggles faced by families. Parents may have less time and fewer resources to engage with the school community, which can diminish the overall support network for students. This lack of involvement can hinder fundraising efforts, volunteerism, and overall engagement with school programs, impacting student success. Beveridge (2022) highlights how socioeconomic barriers limit parental involvement, which is crucial for student success. This may suggest that Title 1 status negatively impacts parental and community support compared to non-Title 1 schools.

Administrative support in Title 1 schools may be constrained by the demands of meeting federal funding requirements and addressing the complex needs of a low-income student population. Administrators in these schools often have to prioritize immediate academic needs over long-term program development, which can limit their ability to support band programs and other extracurricular activities. DeLorenzo and Marissa (2021) point out that the lack of administrative support in urban schools is a critical barrier to program sustainability. This may indicate that Title 1 schools experience more critical administrative support challenges compared to non-Title 1 schools.

Testing-related challenges are more pronounced in Title 1 schools, where there is increased pressure to perform well on standardized tests to maintain funding and meet accountability standards. This focus on testing may lead to a reduction in instructional time for non-tested subjects, such as music and arts, thereby impacting the development and success of band programs. The emphasis on testing may stem from the accountability measures tied to Title 1 funding, which prioritize academic achievement in core subjects over enrichment programs, as

discussed by Fitzpatrick (2011). This may suggest that Title 1 status exacerbates testing-related barriers more than in non-Title 1 schools.

The interaction between Title 1 status and a majority African American student population exacerbates school scheduling and time constraints. This interaction indicates that the combination of being a Title 1 school and having a majority African American student population intensifies scheduling issues. This may be due to the compounded effects of economic disadvantages and systemic inequities that disproportionately affect African American students in low-income schools. Fitzpatrick (2011) notes that the dual burden of addressing the needs of a socioeconomically disadvantaged student population while managing the specific challenges faced by majority African American schools creates additional scheduling conflicts and resource allocation issues. This interaction effect highlights the complexity of addressing multiple, intersecting barriers in these educational environments.

### **Key Themes on the Role of Collaboration in Developing Successful Band Programs**

This section examines the most prominent themes surrounding the role of collaboration in developing successful band programs. In majority African American secondary public schools, increased administrative support is vital. This is evident from comments like, “Everyone would be in agreement about the direction of the program and how best to foster it. Directors can’t build a program on their own or with their admin actively hindering them.” Such support is essential for overcoming scheduling challenges and resource limitations. Kuehne (2020) emphasized that culturally responsive teaching and strong administrative backing are crucial for minority-serving schools. This reliance on administrative support highlights a systemic issue where administrators' understanding and value of music programs directly influence their success. Similarly, increased administrative support was frequently cited by participants in nonmajority African American

schools as well. For instance, one respondent noted, “Collaboration has helped me advocate for my program with my principal. She trusts me to make the best decisions for my program and has allowed me to re-structure to benefit the students.” This reflects the broader need for administrators to actively support music programs, aligning with the findings of Burland (2020) who discussed the role of administrative policies in fostering equitable music education environments. The frequent mention in both contexts suggests that while the need for administrative support is universal, the manifestation of this support may differ based on the specific challenges faced by each demographic.

In majority African American schools, parental advocacy emerged as a crucial factor. Participants highlighted the importance of parents speaking on behalf of the program, with one stating, “It helps when parents can speak on your behalf either in rooms you’re not in or when you are not there.” This underscores the need for strong parental involvement to influence administrative decisions and community support. Salvador and Allegood (2014) found that parental engagement notably impacts the sustainability of music programs in diverse settings. This finding indicates that in majority African American schools, parental voices are often the most effective advocates for resource allocation and program visibility. In nonmajority African American schools, parental involvement was even more emphasized, with one participant asserting, “To have a successful band program you must have good students, administrative support, parental support, booster support, and community support.” This suggests a broader, more systemic approach to parental involvement, aligning with Grogan's (2022) findings on the critical role of parental and community support in high-poverty schools. The emphasis on booster support in nonmajority schools also reflects a more organized and possibly resource-rich environment where structured parent groups can notably contribute to the program's success.

The importance of regular updates and newsletters was highlighted in majority African American schools as a means to maintain stakeholder engagement. One participant mentioned, “Frequent communication with administrators and parents helps the support systems know what is going on with a program and what help is needed.” This strategy ensures transparency and continuous support, which is critical in environments where resources are limited. This aligns with Helton and Paetz's (2021) findings that consistent communication is essential for overcoming geographic and resource disparities in rural music programs. By ensuring all stakeholders are informed, these updates help build a more cohesive and supportive community around the band program. In nonmajority African American schools, regular updates were part of a broader strategy to foster community engagement and ensure stakeholders are informed and involved. One respondent noted, “Communication and awareness of the Band's needs and activities by other members of the school community have been beneficial in coordinating schedules to resolve any conflicts.” This broader approach to communication helps integrate the band program into the wider school culture, as discussed by Libby (2022). The difference in emphasis suggests that while communication is universally important, its role in majority African American schools is more about bridging gaps caused by systemic inequities, whereas in nonmajority schools, it is about maintaining a well-oiled support mechanism.

Raising stakeholder awareness of the benefits of band programs was emphasized in both school types. In majority African American schools, the focus was on demonstrating the academic and behavioral benefits of music education. A respondent shared, “I hold my students to academic and behavior standards and you see the classroom involvement in other classes increase and behavior issues decrease.” This aligns with the findings of DeLorenzo and Marrison (2021), who emphasized the need for culturally relevant pedagogy to enhance minority students'

engagement and achievement. The dual focus on academic and behavioral outcomes highlights the holistic impact of music programs in these contexts. In nonmajority African American schools, increasing stakeholder awareness was linked to fostering a sense of community and ensuring sustained support. One participant mentioned, “When stakeholders see the positive aspects of the band program for the lives of their students, they become supporters in future challenges.” This broader community-focused approach is supported by the work of Williams (2011), who highlighted the importance of community engagement in sustaining music programs. The different focuses reflect how cultural and demographic contexts shape the ways in which stakeholders perceive and support music education.

Community engagement is crucial in nonmajority African American schools. Participants repeatedly emphasized its importance, with one stating, “Community is everything. The more of those groups you have fighting for you and your students, the better when things get difficult.” This reflects a broader, more integrated approach to collaboration, aligning with the findings of Salvador and Allegood (2014), who stressed the importance of community involvement in sustaining music programs. The extensive mention of community support highlights a well-established network of support that can be mobilized for various needs. In contrast, while community engagement was mentioned in majority African American schools, it was not as frequently highlighted, suggesting different priorities and challenges. This difference might be due to the more pressing need for direct administrative and parental support in these schools, as indicated by the data. The disparity also suggests that in majority African American schools, community engagement efforts might need to be more deliberate and strategic to overcome systemic barriers.

For nonmajority African American schools, the creation of strengthened support networks

was crucial. One participant remarked, “Collaboration is essential for any sort of success, I believe. Our jobs are challenging enough as it is, and any amount of support...is going to help ensure that the program is sustainable.” This aligns with the broader literature on the importance of building robust support networks to address systemic barriers (Staub, 2019). The emphasis on sustainability indicates that these networks are not just about immediate support but about long-term viability and growth. In majority African American schools, while support networks were important, the focus was more on direct support from administrators and parents, reflecting different structural and resource challenges. This nuanced approach highlights the importance of tailoring collaboration strategies to the specific needs and contexts of different school demographics. The focus on immediate, hands-on support in majority African American schools suggests a reactive approach to addressing ongoing challenges, whereas nonmajority schools might be more proactive in building and maintaining these networks.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study has illuminated the complex challenges facing band programs in majority African American secondary public schools, while also highlighting effective strategies for overcoming these barriers. Key findings emphasize the critical impact of funding disparities, scheduling conflicts, and the need for strong administrative support. The study underscores the importance of culturally relevant teaching approaches and the vital role of collaboration among stakeholders.

Recommendations include advocating for equitable funding, implementing flexible scheduling, enhancing administrative support, and addressing socioeconomic barriers. Promoting cultural relevance in curricula, strengthening collaboration with community partners, and providing specialized professional development for band directors are essential. Additionally,

schools should focus on creating inclusive environments that celebrate diversity and foster student engagement. Implementing mentorship programs, leveraging technology for resource sharing, and developing innovative fundraising strategies can further support program sustainability. These multifaceted approaches aim to create more inclusive, sustainable, and successful band programs that can thrive despite systemic challenges, ultimately benefiting students' musical education and overall academic experience.

### **Future Research Directions**

Future research should address several critical questions: How do band programs in majority African American schools develop and maintain over time? What benefits and challenges will be revealed by studying these programs longitudinally? Finally, what causes some programs to succeed or fail, and how can they tailor and adopt effective strategies to these particular band programs? A longitudinal study that involves repeated measures and assessments of survey data in addition to qualitative interviews and observations could provide quantitative and qualitative analysis over a long period of time.

Future research on band programs should also incorporate student perspectives to determine their experiences, motivations, and the larger outcomes of their participation in those programs, such as academic achievement and social development. A mixed-methods approach, incorporating large-scale surveys to generate quantitative results as well as interviews, case studies, and ethnography to gather qualitative data, contributes to the existing literature documentation of factors that propel student success and engagement in band programs.

Inquiry into innovative models of funding and resourcing would also be essential in addressing the financial limitations of band programs. Research could establish what alternative funding and resourcing strategies in majority African American or low-income majority schools

help maintain these programs. Methods used in this research could include financial analysis, surveys, and interviews with school financial personnel, administrators, as well as grantmaking organizations.

Also, replicating this study with a more substantial sample size of band directors from majority African American schools would be beneficial. An increased sample size would help generalize the findings and bring a greater awareness of the underlying barriers and strategies of these programs.

Addressing these future research recommendations will facilitate scholars and practitioners in developing an in-depth understanding of barriers and opportunities in music education and how to establish inclusive and equitable music programs for all students.

## **Closing**

In conclusion, this study revealed that, while band programs in these 20 majority African American secondary public schools faced more complex barriers compared to the non-majority African American schools, the most prominent challenges were exacerbated by the intersection of socioeconomic factors and racial demographics, rather than racial composition alone. This finding underscores the need for targeted, intersectional approaches in addressing these challenges.

This research highlighted the resilience and creativity of band directors who navigate these complex educational landscapes to provide meaningful musical experiences for their students. Despite critical barriers, pathways exist to develop thriving band programs that enhance students' musical abilities and contribute to their overall educational experience and personal growth.

Moving forward, it is crucial that educators, administrators, policymakers, and



communities collaborate to implement the recommendations outlined in this study. By addressing systemic inequities, fostering inclusive environments, and leveraging the power of music education, we can create more equitable and enriching educational experiences for all students.

This research serves as a call to action, urging stakeholders to recognize the transformative potential of music education and commit to supporting these vital programs. Ultimately, the success of these band programs represents a step towards a more just and culturally vibrant educational system that values and nurtures the diverse talents of all students.

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# Appendix A: Survey



## Information Sheet and Consent Form

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)

### INFORMATION LETTER for a Research Study Entitled:

#### A Survey of Band Directors in the United States Regarding Barriers to Developing Successful Band Programs in Majority African American Secondary Schools

You are invited to participate in a research study that aims to explore the perspectives of band directors in the United States concerning the challenges that impede the development of successful band programs, with an additional focus on band programs in majority African American secondary schools. It seeks to identify significant obstacles, and effective strategies for overcoming them, and to compare perspectives of band directors in majority African American schools with the perspectives of band directors who teach in non-majority African American schools, as well as make comparisons based on factors such as band director ethnicity, school type, and socioeconomic status. This research is being conducted by Leslie A. Holmes, under the guidance of Dr. Jane Kuehne within the Auburn University Department of Curriculum & Teaching. Your participation is requested because you are presently employed as a band director in a U.S. secondary school and are 18 years of age or older.

**What will be involved if you participate?** If you decide to take part in this research, we kindly request your participation in completing a survey. The estimated time commitment for this survey is approximately 15 minutes.

**Are there any risks or discomforts?** There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this survey. To ensure complete anonymity and minimize potential risks, the survey is entirely anonymous. You have the option to not participate in this survey by selecting "NO, I do not wish to participate" on the consent form and withdraw from the survey.

**Are there any benefits to yourself or others?** Participating in this study does not provide any direct benefits. However, your valuable input could contribute to the advancement of band programs in secondary schools by sharing your experiences and insights. Moreover, this research may offer valuable information for music educators and scholars interested in establishing equity in music education for all students.

**Will you receive compensation for participating?** Participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no compensation. We believe that your involvement will serve the greater good of music education.

**Are there any costs?** There are no costs associated with your participation in this study. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and if you choose to do so, your data will be removed as long as it remains identifiable. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not adversely affect your relationship with Auburn University, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the College of Education.

**If you change your mind about participating,** you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Once you submit your data, it is anonymous and cannot be withdrawn. Your decision to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the College of Education, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the Music Education Program.

**Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.** We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by ensuring all collected data is anonymous and encrypted for storage. The data gathered through your participation may be used for educational purposes, publication in a professional journal, and/or presentation at a professional conference.

**If you have questions about this study,** please contact the primary researcher, Leslie Holmes at lzh0066@auburn.edu.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant,** you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board via phone at (334) 844-5968 or email at IRBAdmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP. PRINT THIS PAGE OR [DOWNLOAD IT HERE](#).**



Do you wish to continue with this study?

- YES, I wish to participate.
- NO, I do not wish to participate.

**Section 1: Demographic Information**

Are you currently a band director who teaches secondary school-level band students in a school setting?

- Yes
- No

Please indicate your gender.

- Female
- Male
- Prefer not to say
- Self-identify as

Please indicate your race/ethnicity.

- African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian American
- Hispanic
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Prefer not to say
- Self-identify as:

What is your highest completed level of education?

- High school diploma/GED
- Associate degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Specialist or Master's + 30 degree
- Doctorate degree

In what areas are you certified to teach? Select all that apply.

- Instrumental Music
- Vocal Music
- Elementary General Music
- Music Theory
- Music Technology
- Other (Please specify):

What secondary-level grades do you currently teach? Select all that apply.

- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- 11
- 12

Including the current school year, how many years of experience do you have as a secondary school band director? Type the number.

Including the current school year, how many years have you taught music (at any level) in total? Type the number.

Including the current school year, how many years have you taught at your current school?  
Type the number.

In which type of school do you currently teach?

- Charter school  
 Private School  
 Traditional public school  
 Other:

Please select from the dropdown box the location for the school in which you teach.

In what geographical area is your school located?

- Rural  
 Suburban  
 Urban

Is the school at which you currently teach a Title 1 school?

- Yes  
 No

Approximately, how many (total) students attend your school? Type the number.

What is the estimated percentage for each ethnicity among your school's total student population?

White	<input type="text"/>
Black or African American	<input type="text"/>
Asian American	<input type="text"/>
Hispanic	<input type="text"/>
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<input type="text"/>
American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>
Total	<input type="text"/>

Approximately, how many (total) students are in your band program? Type the number.

What is the estimated percentage for each ethnicity among the total number of students in your band program?

African American	<input type="text"/>
American Indian or Alaska Native	<input type="text"/>
Asian American	<input type="text"/>
Hispanic	<input type="text"/>
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	<input type="text"/>
White	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>
Total	<input type="text"/>

## Section 2: Barriers to Developing Successful Band Programs

Please rate the following barriers based on their significance in hindering the development of successful band programs in secondary schools like the one in which you currently teach. Use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not a barrier and 5 = A significant barrier.

	1	2	3	4	5
Funding and Resources	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instrumental Access for Students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instruments and Equipment Maintenance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inadequate Facilities for Band Rehearsals and Performances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Socioeconomic Challenges Faced by Students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student mobility	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Social emotional learning	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher Duties	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher training/preparation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher-student relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Job satisfaction	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Teacher perception of students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Interest in Band	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student Discipline	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student attendance	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student perception of the band director	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student identity	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Student learning preferences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Low Enrollment in Band Classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Limited or No Band Course Offerings	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Too many course offerings beyond band	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Scheduling and Time Constraints	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Feeder programs	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overemphasis on competitions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Testing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Academic achievement	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural relevance of ensembles and/or courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural competence of the band director	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parental and Community Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inequitable Distribution of Band Programs within the School District	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrative Support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
School Location	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Competition with other school extracurricular activities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Governmental support	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Transition points (such as progressing from middle school to high school)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lack of collaboration	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Policy mandates	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gender	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Race	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Underrepresentation of students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Underrepresentation of teachers	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what other barriers (not listed in this survey) prevent the development of successful band programs in schools like the one in which you currently teach?

Consider the barriers that you rated on this survey and the barriers that you identified in the previous question.

Identify and describe the specific barrier that has been the most difficult for you to overcome while trying to develop a successful band program in the school where you currently teach.

Be sure to elaborate on the additional challenges caused by this barrier.

**Section 3: Strategies and Solutions**

Please rate the following strategies and solutions based on their effectiveness in overcoming barriers that may hinder development of successful band programs in secondary schools like the one in which you currently teach. Use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = Not effective and 5 = Most effective. If you have not used or are not familiar with a strategy, rate it as "Not Applicable."

	1	2	3	4	5	Not Applicable
Recruitment concerts and presentations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with feeder schools to encourage early interest and participation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish a booster club to involve parents and community members in supporting the band program financially and through volunteer work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Increase salaries and benefits to attract and retain more qualified band directors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Administrators expand course offerings to include band classes	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer extracurricular or after-school band programs if full courses are not feasible	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seek grants and funding to purchase and repair instruments	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with local community organizations to support students in need	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Solicit donations to provide food at rehearsals and performances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide transportation for students that do not have a ride home after rehearsals and performances	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advocate for improved rehearsal and performance spaces within the school	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Offer diverse musical selections to appeal to a broader range of interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with other schools and band directors to share resources and experiences	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide ongoing professional development specifically for band directors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with universities to provide training opportunities for music education students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Work with the school administration to create band-friendly schedules that accommodate rehearsal and performance times	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish flexible scheduling options, such as before or after school rehearsals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Collaborate with other extracurricular programs to coordinate schedules and minimize conflicts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish clear expectations for behavior and consequences to reduce discipline issues within the band program	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	1	2	3	4	5	Not Applicable
Develop a positive and supportive band culture that fosters responsibility and respect.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicate regularly with administrators about program needs and successes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Strengthen connections with feeder schools to ensure a smooth transition for incoming students.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a flexible curriculum that accommodates students' varying backgrounds and experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide opportunities for students to get to know their new band director and peers before the transition point.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilitate a seamless transition process, including orientation sessions and auditions if necessary.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explore performance opportunities that emphasize ability and creativity over competition and ratings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Foster an inclusive and diverse band culture that celebrates all backgrounds, races, and genders.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recognize and celebrate the accomplishments and dedication of band directors and staff to increase job satisfaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Diversify the band repertoire to include music from various cultures and genres.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorporate culturally relevant and inclusive teaching materials and approaches.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide professional development and training for band directors in cultural competence.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Engage in discussions with policymakers to ensure the inclusion of band programs in educational mandates.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruit band directors that reflect the student population of the school.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

In your opinion, what other effective strategies or solutions (not listed in this survey) can address the identified barriers and foster the development of successful band programs in schools like the one in which you currently teach?

Consider the strategies and solutions that you rated on this survey and those that you identified in the previous question.

Describe the specific strategy and/or solution that has yielded the best results for you while trying to develop a successful band program in the school where you currently teach.

Also, describe the barrier(s) that was overcome as a result.

How can collaboration with other stakeholders (school administration, parents, community, etc.) enhance the growth and success of band programs in schools like the one in which you currently teach?

**Section 4: Final Comments**

Please provide any additional comments you'd like to make about this topic or this survey.

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# Appendix B: Institutional Review Board Approval

Revised 09/13/2023

AUBURN UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM (HRPP)

## EXEMPT REVIEW APPLICATION

For assistance, contact: **The Office of Research Compliance (ORC)**

Phone: 334-844-5966 E-Mail: [IRBAdmin@auburn.edu](mailto:IRBAdmin@auburn.edu) Web Address: <http://www.auburn.edu/research/vpr/ohs>

**Submit completed form and supporting materials as one PDF through the [IRB Submission Page](#)**

*Hand written forms are not accepted. Where links are found hold down the control button (Ctrl) then click the link..*

### 1. Project Identification

Today's Date: **November 18, 2023**

**Anticipated start date of the project:** September 30, 2023

**Anticipated duration of project:** 1 Year

**a. Project Title:** A Survey of Band Directors in the United States Regarding Barriers to Developing Successful Band Programs in Majority African American Secondary Schools

**b. Principal Investigator (PI):** Leslie A. Holmes

Degree(s): PhD in Music Education

Rank/Title: Graduate Student

Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching

Role/responsibilities in this project: Research design, survey development, recruitment, data collection, data analysis, dissemination

Preferred Phone Number: (601) 618-0234

AU Email: [lzh0066@auburn.edu](mailto:lzh0066@auburn.edu)

**Faculty Advisor Principal Investigator (if applicable):** Jane Kuehne, PhD

Rank/Title: Associate Professor

Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching

Role/responsibilities in this project: Advising in research design, survey development, data analysis, and dissemination

Preferred Phone Number: (334) 844-6852

AU Email: [kuehnjm@auburn.edu](mailto:kuehnjm@auburn.edu)

**Department Head:** Paul G. Fitchett, Ed.D.

Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching

Preferred Phone Number: (334) 844-4434

AU Email: [pgf0011@auburn.edu](mailto:pgf0011@auburn.edu)

Role/responsibilities in this project: Approval

**c. Project Key Personnel** – Identify all key personnel who will be involved with the conduct of the research and describe their role in the project. Role may include design, recruitment, consent process, data collection, data analysis, and reporting. ([To determine key personnel, see decision tree](#)). *Exempt determinations are made by individual institutions; reliance on other institutions for exempt determination is not feasible. Non-AU personnel conducting exempt research activities must obtain approval from the IRB at their home institution.*

Key personnel are required to maintain human subjects training through [CITI](#). Only for EXEMPT level research is documentation of completed CITI training NO LONGER REQUIRED to be included in the submission packet.

NOTE however, **the IRB will perform random audits of CITI training records to confirm** reported training courses and expiration dates. Course title and expiration dates are shown on training certificates.

**Name:** Leslie A. Holmes

Degree(s): **PhD in Music Education**

Rank/Title: Graduate Student

Department/School: Curriculum and Teaching

Role/responsibilities in this project: Research design, survey development, recruitment, data collection, data analysis, dissemination

- AU affiliated?  Yes  No If no, name of home institution: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- Plan for IRB approval for non-AU affiliated personnel? [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- Do you have any known competing financial interests, personal relationships, or other interests that could have influence or appear to have influence on the work conducted in this project?  Yes  No

- If yes, briefly describe the potential or real conflict of interest: [Click or tap here to enter text.](#)

- Completed required CITI training?  Yes  No If NO, complete the appropriate [CITI basic course](#) and update the revised Exempt Application form.

- If YES, choose course(s) the researcher has completed: [Human Sciences Basic Course](#)

9/8/2024

[Responsible Conduct Training](#) - completed 12/11/2023.



## Appendix C: Information Letter



### COLLEGE OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM & TEACHING

(NOTE: DO NOT AGREE TO PARTICIPATE UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL  
STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)  
INFORMATION LETTER

for a Research Study Entitled:  
"A Survey of Band Directors in the United States Regarding Barriers to Developing Successful Band  
Programs in Majority African American Secondary Schools"

**You are invited to participate in a research study** that aims to explore the perspectives of band directors in the United States concerning the challenges that impede the development of successful band programs, with an additional focus on band programs in majority African American secondary schools. It seeks to identify significant obstacles, and effective strategies for overcoming them, and to compare perspectives of band directors in majority African American schools with participants who teach in non-majority African American schools, as well as make comparisons based on factors such as band director ethnicity, school type, and socioeconomic status. This research is being conducted by Leslie A. Holmes, under the guidance of Dr. Jane Kuehne within the Auburn University Department of Curriculum & Teaching. Your participation is requested because you are presently employed as a band director in a U.S. secondary school and are 18 years of age or older.

**What will be involved if you participate?** If you decide to take part in this research, we kindly request your participation in completing a survey. The estimated time commitment for this survey is approximately 15 minutes.

**Are there any risks or discomforts?** There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in this survey. To ensure complete anonymity and minimize potential risks, the survey is entirely anonymous. You have the option to not participate in this survey by selecting "NO, I do not wish to participate" on the consent form and withdraw from the survey.

**Are there any benefits to yourself or others?** Participating in this study does not provide any direct benefits. However, your valuable input could contribute to the advancement of band programs in secondary schools by sharing your experiences and insights. Moreover, this research may offer valuable information for music educators and scholars interested in establishing equity in music education for all students.

**Will you receive compensation for participating?** Participation in this study is voluntary and there will be no compensation. We believe that your involvement will serve the greater good of music education.

**Are there any costs?** There are no costs associated with your participation in this study. You have the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and if you choose to do so, your data will be removed as long as it remains identifiable. Your decision to participate or withdraw will not adversely affect your relationship with Auburn University, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the College of Education.

**If you change your mind about participating,** you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Once you submit your data, it is anonymous and cannot be withdrawn. Your decision to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the College of Education, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the Music Education Program.

**Any data obtained in connection with this study will remain anonymous.** We will protect your privacy and the data you provide by ensuring all collected data is anonymous and encrypted for storage. The data gathered through your participation may be used for educational purposes, publication in a professional journal, and/or presentation at a professional conference.

5040 HALEY CENTER  
AUBURN UNIVERSITY, AL  
36849-5212

PHONE:

334-844-4434

FAX:

334-844-6789

WWW.AUBURN.EDU

The Auburn University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
Document for use from  
12/11/2023 to \_\_\_\_\_  
Protocol # 23-611 EX 2312

**If you have questions about this study**, please contact the primary researcher, Leslie Holmes at lzh0066@auburn.edu.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board via phone at (334) 844-5966 or email at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE IF YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH PROJECT. IF YOU DECIDE TO PARTICIPATE, THE DATA YOU PROVIDE WILL SERVE AS YOUR AGREEMENT TO DO SO. THIS LETTER IS YOURS TO KEEP. PRINT THIS PAGE FOR YOUR RECORDS OR DOWNLOAD IT HERE.**

**To indicate your consent to participate in this study, click on "I consent" below:**

[I consent] - the participant will continue to survey question #1 in Section 1: Demographic Information

[I do not consent] - the participant will continue to end of the survey

The Auburn University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
Document for use from  
12/11/2023 to -----  
Protocol # 23-611 EX 2312

## Appendix D : Recruitment Email

### Recruitment Email Template

Subject: Research Survey: Band Directors in U.S. Secondary Schools

Dear Band Director,

I trust that your school year is continuing on a positive note.

My name is Leslie Holmes, and I am currently pursuing a Ph.D. in music education at Auburn University.

I am reaching out to ask if you would complete my online survey (link below) for my dissertation research. My study focuses on band directors' perspectives about barriers for developing successful band programs, with an additional focus on band programs in majority African American secondary schools. I am looking to identify significant obstacles, and effective strategies for overcoming them in both majority African American schools *and* non-majority African Americans schools.

Your contribution to this important topic is highly valued, and your input will significantly enhance our understanding of secondary school band programs.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation will play a crucial role in the success of this research endeavor.

Wishing you continued success in your endeavors as a dedicated music educator.

SURVEY LINK: [https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0r2O83f9t9OK9ka](https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0r2O83f9t9OK9ka)

Kind regards,

Leslie A. Holmes  
PhD Candidate, Auburn University  
[lzh0066@auburn.edu](mailto:lzh0066@auburn.edu)

<p>The Auburn University Institutional Review Board has approved this Document for use from <u>12/11/2023</u> to <u>-----</u> Protocol # <u>23-611 EX 2312</u></p>
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## Appendix E: Social Media Post

### Social Media Post

My name is Leslie Holmes and I am a Ph.D. student in music education at Auburn University. I am reaching to ask you to complete my online dissertation survey (link below). My study focuses on band directors' perspectives about barriers for developing successful band programs, with an additional focus on band programs in majority African American secondary schools. I am looking to identify significant obstacles, and effective strategies for overcoming them in both majority African American schools and non-majority African Americans schools. Your contribution to this important topic is highly valued, and your input will significantly enhance our understanding of secondary school band programs. Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. Your participation will play a crucial role in the success of this research endeavor.

Thank you in advance!

Leslie A. Holmes  
PhD Candidate, Auburn University  
[lzh0066@auburn.edu](mailto:lzh0066@auburn.edu)

SURVEY LINK: [https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_0r2O83ft9OK9ka](https://auburn.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_0r2O83ft9OK9ka)

The Auburn University Institutional  
Review Board has approved this  
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12/11/2023 to -----  
Protocol # 23-611 EX 2312

