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A SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF CURRENT PRACTICES IN TEACHING  
SCHOOL BAND IN CERTAIN MONTANA ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

by

ROLF C. JOHNSON

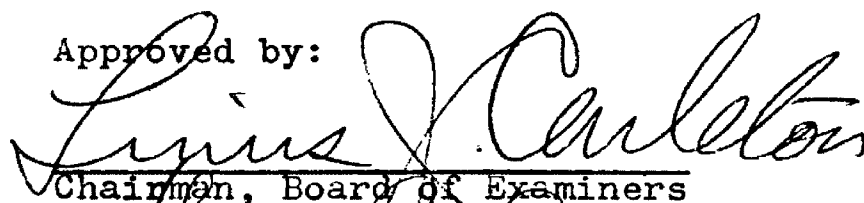
B. A. Montana State University, 1950

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the  
degree of Master of Education

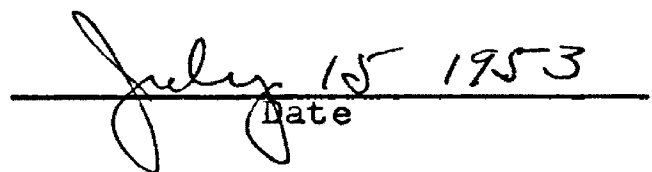
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## CHAPTER I

### THE PROBLEM

The teaching of band in Montana elementary public schools has not assumed an established pattern. Since the curricula of schools within a given classification are very similar and the teaching procedures follow rather parallel lines, it would seem that such schools might profit by operating more standardized elementary band programs.

It was the purpose of this study (1) to collect, analyze, and evaluate information which will be useful to music teachers and supervisors, to elementary and junior high school principals, and to school superintendents in solving problems relative to the elementary band program, and (2) to make recommendations for improvement by comparing these findings with practices outlined by recognized authorities in the field of elementary music.

Leaders in education have recognized the fact that music education plays an important part in the complete physical, mental, emotional, and social development of the child. More specifically, the movement to organize bands on the elementary level has been gaining ground for some

years. The idea is growing that instrumental music is as vital as other phases of public education and should therefore be made a part of the regular curriculum. The social values of group work which students experience while playing in a band have been recognized by educators.

Hobart H. Sommers,<sup>1</sup> Assistant Superintendent of Schools in Chicago, supports the elementary band program by stating that in addition to developing the individual student, the good school music program can also do much to improve school-community relations. He further states that parents are often most interested in the activities of their children when they are in the lower grades. Therefore elementary school children often serve as effectively as public relations agents as do older children.

Do parents feel a need for band work in the elementary school? A survey made by the American Music Conference<sup>2</sup> indicates that (1) 95 per cent of our people think that each child ought to have at least a chance to play an instrument and (2) 85 per cent believe that instruction on musical instruments should be available to every child in school, at the proper grade level.

The music director is not employed solely to teach music but to teach living through music. The importance of

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<sup>1</sup>Hobart H. Sommers, "Another Value of Music Education," N. E. A. Journal, April, 1950, p. 278.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 278.



learning to solve one's own problems can be emphasized very effectively through music, especially through instrumental music. The fundamentals of instrumental music are presented to the young student. As he progresses, more complicated techniques are added. At no time after the preliminary instructions have been given does the instructor solve each problem which confronts the student as he strives to apply to his instrument the instructions given on the printed page. The problems of the instrumentalist are much more personal than those of the academic student. Consider the flute student as an example. The flutist may be alone, or at best, one of a very small number of flute players in the instrumental class. The other members of the class have their own problems and are not concerned with those of the flutist. The fingering chart, which accompanies most class method books, shows the flutist exactly which fingers to use for notes in the upper register, but placing the fingers on the correct keys and blowing the flute in the same manner used for the low notes will very likely not produce the desired tone. A problem peculiar to the flute player has arisen. The instructor may be concerned, but may not have the time to assist the flutist in solving any but the most troublesome problems. Therefore, the flutist, in order to maintain his position in the class, must solve many, if not most, of his own problems.

Gerald R. Prescott<sup>3</sup> presents several good reasons for including instrumental music in the curriculum:

1. The dynamic influence of music on personality, behavior, and character.
2. The influence of music upon the inner life of the individual due to the experiential nature of music.
3. Music falls in line with the present educational trend toward more doing, experiencing, and drawing out of potentialities.
4. The cultural subjects are especially useful in bringing about an emotional and intellectual development of the student.

Prescott<sup>4</sup> includes the elementary school instrumental program in the above statement by advocating the beginning of instrumental instruction in the fifth grade.

Music educators have long advocated the inclusion of instrumental music in the public school curriculum, but it was not until after World War I that educational administrators became aware of its importance. Perhaps the one greatest influence on school administrators was the appearance of a National High School Orchestra at the meeting of the Department of Superintendence of the National Education Association in

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<sup>3</sup>Gerald R. Prescott, Getting Results With School Bands (New York: Carl Fischer Publishing Co., 1938), pp. 13-15.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

Dallas, Texas, in March, 1927. This orchestra, composed of 268 high school students from thirty-nine states, presented eleven concerts during the convention. As a result of these concerts, the superintendents made a public declaration in favor of music as a recognized school subject.

In view of the tendency toward the inclusion of instrumental music in the elementary curricula of Montana schools, a plan of operation should be provided which will produce happier, healthier, and better adjusted children.

The State of Montana has been divided into eight music districts by the Montana Music Education Association. However, District Five, with festival headquarters in Lewistown, has elected to become a part of District Six during some years. Therefore, District Six, with festival headquarters in Billings, becomes one of the largest music districts in the state when it is combined with District Five. It is within the boundaries of the enlarged District Six that this study took place.

District Six, which is located in south central Montana, includes all or part of thirteen counties. (See Appendix II) Those counties which lie entirely within the boundaries of the district are Big Horn, Yellowstone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Treasure, and Golden Valley. The district also includes parts of Fergus, Wheatland, Sweet Grass, Stillwater, Carbon, Rosebud, and Garfield Counties.

The survey was made in the forty-three elementary public schools in second and third class districts within the

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boundaries of District Six.<sup>5</sup> Billings, the only First Class District in the area surveyed, was excluded because of its marked difference in size, curriculum, and division of grades. (See Appendix I for schools)

"Elementary school band" is defined in this paper as any instrumental group within grades one to eight inclusive which uses standard band instruments.

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<sup>5</sup>Montana Educational Directory, State Department of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana, 1951-1952.

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Before analyzing current practices now common in District Six, it would be well to review elementary band teaching procedures which have been proven successful.

Most authorities agree that elementary band students should begin at the age of nine or ten years or in the fourth or fifth grade, depending on the physical and mental development of the child. Theodore F. Normann,<sup>6</sup> associate professor of music, University of Washington, advocates the fourth grade as a starting point for band in an elementary school which includes grades one to six. Prescott<sup>7</sup> says that a child should usually not be introduced to a band instrument until he has reached the fifth grade. Edwin Franko Goldman,<sup>8</sup> however, suggests the age of eight or nine for beginning band students.

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<sup>6</sup>Theodore F. Normann, Music in the Public Schools, (Philadelphia: Oliver Ditson Company, 1941), p. 67.

<sup>7</sup>Prescott, Op. cit., p. 51.

<sup>8</sup>Edwin Franko Goldman, Band Betterment, (New York: Carl Fischer Inc., 1934), p. 15.

The instrumentation of an elementary band may depend on such factors as funds available for instruments, the number of instruments owned by the school, and the number of high school band instruments available to the elementary band. Mr. Normann<sup>9</sup> suggests the following instrumentation for an elementary band:

2-4 flutes	2-4 horns
6-12 clarinets	2-3 tubas
1-2 Eb saxophones	1-2 snare drums
4-6 cornets	1 cymbals
2-3 trombones	

Building the instrumentation of an elementary band is a problem common to all directors of young bands. The likes and dislikes of the students must be considered as well as the adaptabilities of students to certain instruments. Mr. Prescott<sup>10</sup> offers his readers excellent advice concerning this problem in the following statement:

In making these adaptations the teacher should consider the immediate needs of the organization. Full and well balanced instrumentation is built over a period of years; it cannot be attained in a short time by starting a child on a needed instrument to which he is ill-adapted.

Prescott adds that it is good educational policy to arouse the interest of a child in his chosen instrument and then transfer him later to an instrument to which he is better adapted.

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<sup>9</sup>Norman, op. cit., p. 67.

<sup>10</sup>Prescott, op. cit., p. 22.

Since the beginning of rapid growth of school bands, the class method of instruction, which includes full band rehearsal and sectional rehearsal, has gradually surpassed the private instruction method of training young players. Although the individual instruction method has its advantages, the experts cite a great number of advantages of class lessons. Prescott<sup>11</sup> makes the following statement:

Educationally, class lessons are an advance over individual work because of the collective spirit they generate; because of their emphasis on cooperative and musical unity and accompanying social implications; and because of their economy of teaching time.

Goldman<sup>12</sup> lists the benefits of ensemble playing as follows:

1. Provides good ear training.
2. Improves moderation of tone.
3. Gives a better idea of the importance of time and rhythm.
4. Tends to make the student play the music exactly as it is written.
5. Gives the student a better knowledge of other instruments and a better idea of what the other players in the band are doing. It also increases his knowledge of the sounds and effects of various combinations of instruments.

According to Normann,<sup>13</sup> the music publishers have recognized the advantages of class method instruction and

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 33.

<sup>12</sup>Goldman, op. cit., p. 22.

op. cit., p. 69.

are supplying material so arranged that the students learn to play in the band without studying privately. The material progresses easily in difficulty, thus allowing the entire group to advance at the same rate.

In a study conducted by Norval L. Church<sup>14</sup> concerning present practices and needs in the field of elementary instrumental music, it was found that eighty per cent of the schools surveyed provided special teachers for instrumental class instruction; fifty-one per cent provided special teachers for band classes only; and only thirty-two per cent provided special teachers for individual instrumental instruction. All schools, the survey showed, are low in providing special teachers for each type of instrument.

The class method of instruction does not follow a definite pattern. Prescott<sup>15</sup> has outlined very clearly the five most commonly used methods:

I. The Wholesale Method - All string, woodwind, brass and percussion instruments together in one class.

II. The Full Band Method - All band instruments in one class.

III. Families of Instruments - All woodwind instruments in one class, all brass instruments in one class, and all percussion instruments in one class.

IV. Like Instruments - Class of clarinets, class of cornets, etc.

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<sup>14</sup>Norval L. Church, "Present Practices and Needs in the Field of Elementary School Instrumental Music," Music Educators National Conference, Vol. 30, 1939-40, p. 229.

<sup>15</sup>Prescott, op. cit., p. 17.



V. Private Lessons - Each pupil is taught privately.

Prescott advocates Plan IV as the most desirable. A class of instrumental music students playing identical instruments enables the instructor to present problems common to all members of the class. It eliminates idle time as all members of the class are doing the same thing at the same time.

The full band method, however, is the most widely used because of the economy of time it affords. Gehrkens<sup>16</sup> believes that the full band method has greatly reduced the "mortality percentage" of beginning students, for learning in a group is not nearly so tedious nor discouraging as learning by one's self. He adds that the greatest difficulty of operating such a band method is securing a teacher who knows all the instruments.

Scheduling the elementary band is a problem which must be worked out carefully with the school administrators. Normann<sup>17</sup> believes that in many cases scheduling problems remain unsolved because the instrumental teacher fails to present the administration with a workable plan. Normann states that the ideal plan would be to have a daily period set aside for elementary band, but if that is impossible, two rehearsals a week should be the minimum. He describes

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<sup>16</sup> Karl W. Gehrkens, Music in the Grade Schools, (Boston: C. C. Birchard and Co., 1949) p. 180.

<sup>17</sup> Normann, op. cit., p. 64.

four plans for the inclusion of the band program in an overcrowded elementary schedule:

1. Begin thirty minutes before school time and use the first thirty minutes of school time to complete the hour.
2. Use the last half hour before noon or at the close of school and complete the hour by staying after school for thirty minutes.
3. Schedule all instrumental classes on Saturday.
4. Use the rotation or "stagger" plan. Children are excused from a different class each week, changing from the first period in the morning one week to the second period in the next week and so on through the entire schedule. It is true that the rotation plan may meet with some opposition from other than music teachers. The elementary school principal can be very helpful in this kind of scheduling.

Concerning the time allotted for band work, Charles Boardman Righter<sup>18</sup> states:

The more progressive schools have long maintained daily rehearsals of from forty to eighty minutes for each major group and the minimum time allowance for any degree of constructive work is usually set at three one hour rehearsals each week. A comprehensive program of instrumental training should probably provide additional periods for individual or group instruction.

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<sup>18</sup>Charles Boardman Righter, Success in Teaching School Orchestras and Bands, (Minneapolis: Paul A. Schmitt, 1945,) p. 47.

Concerning instructional materials to be used in training the elementary band, Paul Van Bodengraven<sup>19</sup> lists four requirements for an elementary band method:

1. It must present the problems of the instrument in a logical and unhurried manner and at no time should the difficulties involved be so great as to discourage the young player.

2. The material used should emphasize tone and embouchure rather than technical display.

3. The material must be interesting enough to attract the pupil.

4. Rhythmic problems should not be emphasized until a certain amount of control over the instrument has been obtained.

Prescott<sup>20</sup> states that the elementary band director should choose a method book which contains:

1. General instruction and information pertaining to the care and use of the instrument.

2. Pictorial presentation of hand, wrist, and embouchure positions.

3. An accurate and complete fingering chart.

4. Correct starting tones.

5. Thorough and logical presentation of fundamentals.

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<sup>19</sup>Paul Van Bodengraven, Organizing a School Band, (New York: Walter W. Mueller, Publishers, 1938,) p. 9.

<sup>20</sup>Prescott, op. cit., p. 59.

6. All materials progressively arranged in teachable order.
7. Musical and melodious exercises.
8. Exercises to develop the use of all practical fingerings.
9. Preferred fingerings freely indicated.
10. Interesting and stimulating procedure.
11. Simple and concise statements in footnotes, explaining to pupils and teacher why drill is necessary on the fundamentals of music.
12. Supplementary materials for individual problems.
13. The book should contain several exercises that can be played by all the instruments together to give full band experience.

Normann<sup>21</sup> believes that there is no lack of good elementary instrumental materials. He says

The music publishers of America have been nothing if not ingenious in providing materials for the young orchestra and band. It would seem that there could arise no problem to which they, in some way or another, have not given consideration. True, it must be admitted that much of the published material is not of the highest musical quality. But such a condition is not due so much to the publisher's failure to meet a need, but rather to instrumental teachers who lack to taste and desire to demand better music.

Financing the elementary band program creates a much greater problem in the elementary school which has no connection with a high school. Where the elementary school and the high

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<sup>21</sup>Normann, op. cit., p. 69.

school are in the same system, one band room may be used for both the elementary and the high school bands. Many of the instruments can be used by both groups, and the instrumental teacher's time can be divided between the two schools of the system. From another point of view, however, the independent elementary school band has an advantage over the combined system. Members of the independent elementary band may take more pride in their organization, the instruments will be available for more practice, and the teacher's time and efforts will be more fully directed toward the development of the one band.

Norval L. Church<sup>22</sup> found that funds for financing elementary band instruction are furnished almost entirely by boards of education. Individual lessons are financed about equally by individual student fees and boards of education.

The financing of the purchasing of instruments is found to be more diverse. It is common practice for the boards of education to buy the more expensive and unusual instruments. Normann<sup>23</sup> recommends that the school purchase the following named instruments for an elementary band:

2 Eb tubas

2 horns (French horns are recommended)

1 baritone

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<sup>22</sup>Church, op. cit., p. 229.

<sup>23</sup>Normann, op. cit., p. 68.

1 bass drum

1 pair of cymbals

1 oboe

1 bassoon (recommended for eighth grade only)

In addition to the salary of the instructor and the purchase of instruments and materials, only one major item of expense remains, namely, the purchase of uniforms. Quite frequently the high school band will turn their old uniforms over to the elementary band. Band parents' clubs and civic organizations often finance the purchase of elementary band uniforms.

Promoting the elementary band program may or may not be necessary, depending on the community. In a school in which there has never been an organized instrumental group, considerable selling may be necessary in order to get a band program underway. The community, the administration, and the children themselves must be convinced that an elementary band should be organized. If the elementary students are given an opportunity to hear an active high school or city band, very little promoting may be necessary.

In case the elementary band has been organized for some time, it faces a problem which is not common to the high school band. Each year the elementary band must replace those members which it loses by graduation. As it is the lowest organized band, it can receive no replacements with

previous experience, whereas the high school band receives experienced players who graduate from the elementary band.

Prescott<sup>24</sup> recommends utilizing the universal curiosity about instruments and music-making to interest young students in band work. Instrumental demonstrations on all the band instruments should be held frequently for elementary students. Normann<sup>25</sup> also recommends the display and demonstration of instruments as the most effective means of creating interest in instrumental music. He also suggests a concert of interesting music played by a presently organized group as a great incentive to prospective young musicians.

Band parents clubs, or band booster clubs, as they are often called, have become wide spread during the last few years. Such a club may be a branch of the Parent Teachers Association. Quite often the Parent Teachers Association itself takes the responsibility of supporting the band. Normann<sup>26</sup> mentions several ways in which such clubs can be of assistance to a school band. They raise funds for musical equipment, provide transportation and chaperonage for trips, handle ticket sales for concerts, and boost the enrollment of bands by encouraging children

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<sup>24</sup>Prescott, op. cit., p. 23.

<sup>25</sup>Normann, op. cit., p. 48.

<sup>26</sup>Normann, op. cit., p. 115.

to take band in school. The Billings Band Booster Club<sup>27</sup> sponsored the U. S. Navy Band concert in October, 1952, and in that manner raised several hundred dollars for the Billings High School Senior Band.

A thorough search through the card indexes of the libraries of Montana State University and Eastern College of Education did not uncover a great amount of material concerning elementary bands. However, most writers, in their discourses on bands in general, have included considerable information useful to educators who are interested in elementary band work. A careful study of practices recommended by Prescott, Goldman, Normann, Church, Gehrkens, Righter, Van Bodengraven and other well known authors is intended to guide experienced as well as inexperienced band directors and administrators in organizing and maintaining successful elementary band programs.

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<sup>27</sup>The Billings Gazette, Tuesday Evening, March 17, 1953, p. 3.



## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey was made in the forty-three elementary public schools in second and third class districts within the boundaries of Music District Six. The questionnaire was addressed to the band director in each case.

Thirty-four of the forty-three elementary public schools in the district responded to the questionnaire, which represents a seventy-nine per cent return. However only sixteen of the thirty-four schools reported elementary bands. The results of the questionnaire are therefore based on information received from the sixteen elementary schools ranging in size from sixty-six students to nine hundred ninety-five students.

The number of band students in the sixteen schools ranged from eight in the second smallest school to eighty in the largest school. It is interesting to note that in the eight smallest schools, the number of band students is 15.3 per cent of the total school enrollment whereas in the eight largest schools, the number of band students is only 8.2 per cent of the school enrollment. Table I lists in order of their enrollment the sixteen schools, the number of band

students in each school, and the percentage of band students in each school. The numbers assigned in Table I will be used in following tables also. The reader should note that the numbers represent rank order of school size, with the smallest school having the smallest number.

TABLE I

TOTAL ENROLLMENT, BAND ENROLLMENT, AND PER CENT OF THE BAND ENROLLMENT OF THE SIXTEEN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF DISTRICT SIX WHO REPORTED BANDS

School Number	Total Enrollment	Band Enrollment	Per Cent of Band Enrollment
1	66	12	18.2
2	67	8	11.9
3	90	14	15.5
4	112	15	13.4
5	116	12	13.4
6	144	14	7.2
7	238	50	21.7
8	247	50	20.2
9	272	57	20.9
10	294	30	10.2
11	360	20	5.5
12	469	14	3.0
13	470	18	3.8
14	703	49	6.9
15	856	65	7.5
16	995	80	8.5

More schools offered band for the first time in the fifth grade than in any other grade in these sixteen schools. Table II shows that the three schools which offered band in the fourth grade are among the four largest schools surveyed. It can also be seen very clearly that the fifth grade falls very close to the center of the distribution of schools by size.

TABLE II

GRADE IN WHICH ELEMENTARY BAND IS FIRST OFFERED  
IN THE SIXTEEN DISTRICT SIX SCHOOLS REPORTING  
BANDS

School Number	Lowest Grade In Which Elementary Band Is Offered
13	4
14	4
16	4
3	5
4	5
5	5
6	5
7	5
8	5
9	5
10	5
1	6
2	6
11	6
15	6
12	7

Although the survey did not burden respondents with the task of listing complete instrumentation of their groups, it did request an indication as to which of the standard band instruments were not used in the lower limits (fourth and fifth grades) of the elementary band even though those instruments might be available. Table III represents those instruments in

the order of descending frequency as reported by the sixteen directors. As can readily be noted, very few double reeds, heavy basses (BBb sousaphones), and French horns were being used in the lower (fourth and fifth) grades.

TABLE III

INSTRUMENTS NOT RECOMMENDED FOR THE LOWER LIMITS OF THE ELEMENTARY BAND (GRADES FOUR AND FIVE) IN ORDER OF DESCENDING FREQUENCY AS REPORTED BY THE SIXTEEN DIRECTORS

INSTRUMENT	Number of Directors Not In Favor Of Using
Baritone Saxophone	12
Bass trombone	11
Bassoon	10
Oboe	9
Bass clarinet	7
French horn	7
Tympani	7
Scotch drum	6
BBb sousaphone	6
BBb tuba	6
Marimba	6
Alto Clarinet	4
Eb Tuba	4
Xylophone	4
Field drum	3
Eb sousaphone	3
Tenor saxophone	3
Bells	2
Melophone	1
Alto horn	1
Trumpet	1
Alto saxophone	1

The instructional procedures most commonly used are the combination of full band rehearsal, sectional practice

(like instruments together), and some individual instruction. The full band rehearsals ranged from thirty to fifty minutes in length with twelve of the sixteen schools reporting forty-five minute periods. Seven schools schedule three elementary band rehearsals weekly; six schools have fewer than three practices; and only three schools reported more than three weekly rehearsals. The schools averaged less than two sectional practices of twenty-nine minutes per week. One half of the schools reported some individual instrumental instruction. Instructional procedures now in use in the sixteen schools are further explained in Table IV. There is no apparent relationship between school size and rehearsals per week.

TABLE IV

ELEMENTARY BAND INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURES CURRENTLY FOLLOWED IN THE SIXTEEN SCHOOLS

School Number	No. of Full Band Rehearsals Per Week	No. of Sectional Practices Per Week	Periods of individual instruction weekly
11	1	2	2
6	1	1	1
14	1	4	1
5	1	2	0
4	2	0	0
3	2	2	1
2	3	2	0
8	3	1	1
7	3	0	0
10	3	5	0
9	3	2	4
13	3	1	0
15	3	0	0
12	4	0	0
16	4	3	1
1	5	2	2

It would seem that scheduling elementary band rehearsals is creating no great problem as there were no schools which reported holding elementary band rehearsals during the noon hour, after school, in the evenings, or on Saturdays. Elementary band rehearsals are reported as being held during every hour of the day with the exception of the ten o'clock period. Many schools utilize the eight to nine a.m. period.

The instructional and program materials used by the sixteen directors include eighteen publications. The elementary band method which is most commonly used is Maurice Taylor's Easy Steps to the Band. A complete list together with authors and publishers is given in Table V.

TABLE V

ELEMENTARY BAND INSTRUCTIONAL AND PROGRAM MATERIALS  
RECOMMENDED BY THE SIXTEEN DIRECTORS

Name of Book	Author	Publisher	Bands Using
Easy Steps to the Band	Maurice D. Taylor	Mills Music	5
Beginners' Band Book	Weber	Belwin	2
Elementary Method	N. W. Hovey	Rubank Inc.	2
Ensemble Drill	Fussell	Schmitt	2
First Semester Band Book	Buchtel	Rubank	2
Foundation to Band Playing	Griffen	Jenkins	2
Boosey Hawkes Method	Skornicka & Bergiem	Boosey-Hawkes	1
Building the Band	Chenette	Rubank	1
Elementary Band Course	Van Duesen	Rubank	1
Elementary Method	Skornicka	Rubank	1
Lockhart Book I	Lockhart	Witmark & Sons	1
Modern School Band Method	Elvin Freeman	Robbins	1
Paving the Way	Whistler	Rubank	1
Prep	Phillips	Schmitt	1
First Steps	Whistler & Hummel	Rubank	1
Second Semester Band Book	Buchtel	Rubank	1
Short-Cut Band Method	Metcalf	Fillmore	1
Universal Teacher	Maddy & Giddings	Willis	1

No great financial problems were indicated on the questionnaires. As every elementary school which responded was part of a system which included a high school, the financial burden of instruments, equipment, and instructor's salary was shared by the high school. Instructional and program material, however, was provided by the high school band department in very few cases. In five schools, the students paid for instruction books; in ten schools the music fund (combined elementary and high school) carried the burden of instructional material; one music teacher reported that she purchased the elementary band materials with personal funds.

No definite conclusions can be drawn concerning the relationship of beginning age to ultimate achievement in an advanced band. However, the data as shown on Table VI do show that every first chair player with the exception of three in advanced bands of the sixteen schools received his early instrumental training in the grades or in junior high school. Of the one-hundred-three first chair players listed, fifty-seven per cent began in the sixth and seventh grades, twenty-two per cent began in the eighth and ninth grades, and twenty per cent began in the fourth and fifth grades. It becomes evident that advanced bands in this group of schools were comprised of rather young players as shown by the fact that fifty-two per cent of the first chair players were found in grades eleven and twelve and forty-eight per cent were found in grades seven to ten.

TABLE VI

A COMPARISON OF BEGINNING GRADE AND PRESENT GRADE OF FIRST CHAIR PLAYERS IN ADVANCED BANDS OF THE SIXTEEN SCHOOLS

Instrument	No. of Play- ers Reported	Cases In Each Grade Group								
		<u>Present Grade</u>					<u>Beginning Grade</u>			
		7-8	9	10	11	12	4-5	6-7	8-9	10-12
Flute	8	1	2	3		2	4	2	2	
Oboe	2		1			1		1		1
Bassoon	1		1						1	
Clarinet	12		3	2	3	4	3	8	1	
Alto Saxophone	11		3	8	4	1	2	8	1	
Tenor Saxophone	6		1	2	2	1	4	2		
Cornet	12		1	2	3	6	3	7	2	
Trombone	11	2	1	1	2	5	1	7	3	
Horn	9			4	1	4	2	3	4	1
Baritone	10		2	2	4	2	1	6	2	1
Bass	10		4	2	1	3	1	6	3	
Drums	11		2	4	1	4	2	7	2	



Elementary bands of District Six were not merely training bands. Of the sixteen bands, ten reported that they played concerts and three of the ten also played for athletic events. Six bands are training groups only.

Only one of the sixteen music teachers was engaged in full time elementary music work. Seven teachers reported that they taught music in both the elementary and high school departments; eight (one half) of the teachers also taught academic subjects as well as elementary and high school music. Director's salaries were, for the most part, financed by both the elementary and secondary budgets. One director's salary was paid entirely from the elementary budget; four were paid entirely from the high school budget; ten derived their salaries from both budgets; and one teacher reportedly did not know from which budget her salary was paid. The directors of the sixteen bands have had an average of 8.6 years of experience, ranging from one year to thirty-three years in band work. Eight, or one half, of the directors have had less than five years of experience; two directors fell in the five to ten year class; five music teachers were in the ten to twenty year division; and one director reported thirty-three years of experience in the music field.

Promotion of elementary bands was reported as being done mainly by three methods: talks by directors, demonstrations of instruments, and concerts by presently organized bands. Instrumental displays, the use of pre-band instruments

and having prospects "sit in" with the band were also mentioned as possible ways of creating interest in band.

Band Parents Clubs have not gained wide popularity in District Six. Only five schools reported successful clubs; nine directors stated that they had never experienced assistance from such clubs; and two directors did not respond to the question.

A copy of the digest of results of the questionnaire was sent to each of the thirty-four respondents. The digest appears in this paper as Appendix E.

## CHAPTER IV

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This paper was a study of band teaching procedures in the elementary public schools of District Six, Montana Music Education Association. The purpose of the study was to analyze, evaluate, and compare elementary band procedures in the above mentioned schools with those procedures recommended by the authorities in the field of elementary instrumental music.

Questionnaires were sent to the band directors of the forty-three elementary schools (excluding Billings Public Schools and rural schools) to secure the information necessary for the analysis of current practices in the field. Thirty-four of the forty-three schools responded, resulting in a seventy-nine per cent return on the questionnaire. The sixteen schools that reported having elementary bands became the source of information for the study.

The study covered seven major topics, namely, (1) age level of beginning band students, (2) instrumentation, (3) class instructional procedures, (4) scheduling of band classes, (5) instructional materials, (6) financing the elementary band program, and (7) promoting the elementary band program.

The authorities in the field of public school music which were consulted in the review of related literature were Karl W. Gerhrkens, Edwin Franko Goldman, Theodore F. Normann, Gerald R. Prescott, Charles Boardman Righter, and Paul Van Bodengraven.

An analysis of the results of the questionnaire revealed several pertinent facts which are discussed in the conclusions and recommendations in this chapter.

Assuming that a seventy-nine per cent return on the questionnaire affords a good over-all picture of elementary band conditions in District Six, MMEA, it becomes evident that there is room for considerable improvement. The fact that in only sixteen of the thirty-four schools which reported were there elementary bands is rather discouraging. Leaders in education have recognized the value of music as a factor in the complete physical, mental, emotional, and social development of the child. Therefore, those schools which do not include the band program in the curriculum are not offering their students a well-rounded education. Administrators and boards of education should be made aware of the importance of this phase of school life.

The age level of elementary band students in District Six falls very near to that recommended by the authorities. In the review of related literature, it was noted that the recommended age level for beginning band students is between the fourth and fifth grades. The survey of District Six

placed the level a fraction above the fifth grade. The recommendations of the sixteen band directors who reported placed the beginning level at an average of grade 4.8.

The instrumentation of elementary bands in District Six follows rather closely the instrumentation recommended by Mr. Normann. The French horn and double reeds, however, which the authorities recommend strongly for the upper elementary grades, are being used very little. The comparison of beginning age of students to ultimate achievement in an advanced band revealed that very few French horns or double reed instruments are being used in the high school bands of these schools, so the lack of those instruments very likely accounts for their little use.

Very few students in the schools surveyed were taking private instrumental instruction. According to Prescott, that is not necessarily an undesirable situation. He feels that class lessons are an advantage over individual lessons. Sectional practices in which like instruments are rehearsed as a class are not held as frequently as the authorities recommend. Scheduling the full elementary band rehearsal evidently creates much less of a problem than does the scheduling of sectional practices.

One hour daily for full elementary band rehearsal is recommended by the authorities in elementary instrumental music, but the findings of the questionnaire indicate an

average of 2.7 rehearsals of 43.7 minutes per week provided for the elementary bands of District Six. Most schools in third class districts operate on the eight period schedule which provides forty-five minute class periods. The band period would therefore be approximately forty-five minutes long in those schools. The sixteen directors recommended a period of 47 minutes at least three days weekly for elementary band rehearsals. In the light of this information, administrators should be encouraged to provide a longer period for elementary band and make every effort to increase the number of periods per week in order that the group may be permitted to progress at a normal rate.

A rather wide sampling of elementary band instructional material has been provided by the sixteen directors. According to Normann, publishers have provided band instructors with good training and program material. Each director is encouraged to choose the material which best suits the needs of his group by carefully studying the requirements of a good band method.

Instructional and program materials are the main item of expense connected with the elementary bands of District Six. As was previously stated, instruments are shared with the high school band in most of the schools surveyed. The method by which instructional materials are purchased is questionable in only one school; there the music director purchases the

music materials with personal funds. In the other fifteen schools, instructional and program materials are financed by (1) the music fund, (2) the elementary text book budget, and (3) by the students purchasing their own books. These methods are all recommended by the authorities, but method number three, the purchase of books by the students, is recommended only for schools where funds from other sources are not sufficient.

An average of thirty-one elementary band students per school would indicate that band promotion in those sixteen schools that have elementary bands has been good. The eighteen schools which reported that they carry on no elementary band programs should be the target of promotion in order that students who attend those schools may also enjoy the benefits of instrumental music. Methods of creating interest in band reported by the sixteen band directors of District Six are very nearly identical with those suggested by the authorities. One exception is the Band Parents Club. Only five of the sixteen directors have found such a club helpful; nine directors do not recommend the club; and two directors did not submit answers to the question. Most of the authorities cited in Chapter II recommend band boosters clubs of one type or another as very helpful in promoting the band program, in financing the purchase of uniforms, and in providing transportation and chaperonage for band trips.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

In the light of information gained by a careful review of related literature and through the response of seventy-nine per cent of the schools surveyed, the following recommendations are made:

1. A much higher percentage of elementary schools should be carrying on band programs. The survey reveals that at the present time, only forty-seven per cent of the elementary schools in District Six include the band program in their curriculums.

2. Presently organized elementary bands should strive to improve the instrumentation of their groups. This point is more thoroughly covered in Recommendation Six.

3. Class instructional procedures in District Six are following quite closely the recommendations of the authorities. Several schools could greatly improve their band programs by including at least one sectional practice weekly for each section of the band. Several bands reported two or three full band rehearsals weekly with no provisions for sectional or small-group instruction. It is in the sectional rehearsal that the director can discover and remedy individual difficulties and weaknesses.

4. Although scheduling has evidently created no great problem in the sixteen schools which have bands, several



schools should be encouraged to increase not only the number of rehearsals per week but also the length of the rehearsal periods. The present average of 2.7 periods per week of 43.7 minutes should be increased to at least three, and preferably five, periods of a minimum of 45 minutes and preferably 55 minutes duration.

5. In order to choose the instructional and program material that best suits his needs, the director should be familiar with several good elementary methods and junior band program books. Directors should take advantage of the willingness of publishers to supply free sample copies of band music. Practically every music publishing house carries a complete stock of elementary band method books, junior band program books, and individual practice studies.

6. The manner in which elementary bands in District Six are being financed follows rather closely those practices discovered in the review of related literature. School administrators should, however, be encouraged to provide more of the "color instruments," namely, double reed instruments, bass and alto clarinets, and French horns for their elementary bands. Most of these instruments can be handled very nicely by seventh and eighth grade students.

7. Slightly less than nine per cent of the students in the sixteen elementary schools are participating in band work at the present time. If the figure were extended to

to include the eighteen schools which reported no elementary band programs, the percentage would be discouragingly low. It is in the latter group of schools - 53 per cent - that the promotion of elementary band work should be equally emphasized.

8. More full-time music teachers are needed in District Six. One half of the sixteen teachers who are teaching elementary band in District Six at the present time are required to divide their time between music and academic subjects.

9. As a final word, the writer strongly recommends a thorough study to determine (1) why the band program is not included in the elementary curriculums of certain Montana schools and (2) to learn what can be done to bring about the organization of active concert-playing bands in as many Montana elementary schools as possible.

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## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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## APPENDIXES

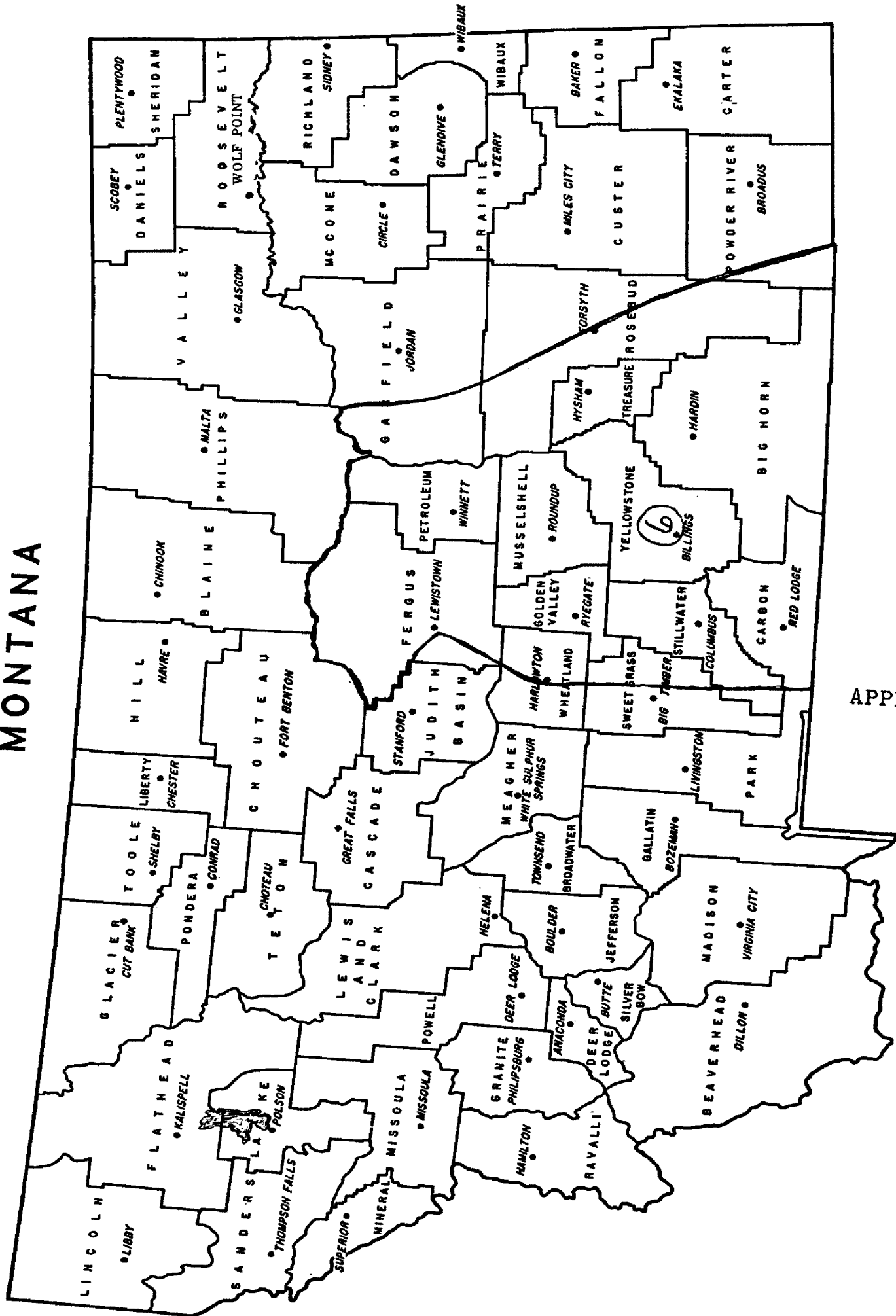
APPENDIX A.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS IN DISTRICT SIX, MONTANA MUSIC  
EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

	<u>School</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>	
Third Class Districts	Sumatra . . . . .	21	
	Rapelje . . . . .	36	
	Shawmut . . . . .	39	
	Melstone . . . . .	40	
	Buffalo . . . . .	42	
	Grassrange . . . . .	43	
	Broadview . . . . .	48	
	Reedpoint . . . . .	48	
	Judith Gap . . . . .	51	
	Musselshell . . . . .	57	
	Winnifred . . . . .	61	
	*Lavina . . . . .	66	
	*Roy . . . . .	67	
	Ryegate . . . . .	72	
	Klein . . . . .	77	
	Moore . . . . .	79	
	Winnett . . . . .	88	
	Custer . . . . .	89	
	*Colestrip . . . . .	90	
	Wyola . . . . .	100	
	Shepherd . . . . .	105	
	Lame Deer . . . . .	107	
	Roberts . . . . .	111	
	*Belfry . . . . .	112	
	*Edgar . . . . .	116	
	Absarokee . . . . .	116	
	Denton . . . . .	117	
	Joliet . . . . .	117	
	*Park City . . . . .	144	
	Second Class Districts	Fromberg . . . . .	151
		Hysham . . . . .	153
		*Bridger . . . . .	238
*Columbus . . . . .		247	
Lockwood . . . . .		250	
*Red Lodge . . . . .		272	
*Lodge Grass . . . . .		294	
Harlowton . . . . .		352	
*Forsyth . . . . .		360	
*Worden . . . . .		469	
*Roundup . . . . .		470	
*Hardin . . . . .		703	
*Laurel . . . . .	856		
*Lewistown . . . . .	995		

\*Schools which reported elementary bands.

# MONTANA



APPENDIX B.



APPENDIX C.

Laurel, Montana  
November 20, 1952

Dear Fellow Music Educator:

The information you can supply by answering the accompanying questionnaire to the best of your ability will be of great help to me in making a survey and evaluation of current practices in teaching band in certain elementary schools in District Six, Montana Music Education Association.

It is extremely difficult to find two elementary school systems in Montana in which the band program is carried on in the same manner. The problem of setting up an effective and efficient band program in the elementary school is very apparent. It is hoped that some worthwhile and helpful conclusions may be reached as a result of the study. A digest of the study will be sent to all those who indicate they wish to receive one.

The time and effort you have spent in aiding me in this study is deeply appreciated.

Very truly yours,

Rolf C. Johnson  
Band Director

APPENDIX D.

A SURVEY AND EVALUATION OF CURRENT PRACTICES IN TEACHING SCHOOL  
BANDS IN CERTAIN MONTANA ELEMENTARY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

The term "elementary school band" refers to an instrumental group within grades one to eight which is using standard band instruments.

YES NO Do you have an elementary school band program in your school? If the answer is YES, please complete the questionnaire. If the answer is NO, kindly return the questionnaire unanswered. Thank you.

Please circle the letter or letters of the word or words which make the statement most applicable to your situation:

1. A B C D Individual instruction (not paid private lessons) is given (A) during school time (B) before school (C) after school (D) in the evening

2. A B C D Training materials (instruction books etc) are paid for by (A) the students (B) the school music fund (C) the elementary text book budget (D) other sources \_\_\_\_\_

3. A B C D The elementary band director teaches (A) only in the elementary school (B) in both elementary and high school (C) other academic subjects also

4. A B C D The elementary school band director's salary is paid (A) out of the elementary budget (B) out of the high school budget (C) out of both the elementary and high school budgets (D) from other sources (name) \_\_\_\_\_

5. A B C The elementary band has (A) no uniforms (B) full uniforms (coat or cape, trousers and hat or cap) (C) Partial uniforms

6. A B C D If answer to question five is B or C, please indicate how the uniforms are purchased: (A) by the students, (B) from the music fund, (C) by the district budget (D) by community or parent organizations

7. A B C D The elementary band (A) is a training band only (B) plays concerts (C) plays for athletic events

\*Please answer the questionnaire even though your elementary band may include a small number of high school students for training purposes. If so, how many high school students are there in your elementary band? \_\_\_\_\_

Please supply the word or number which makes the statement most applicable to your situation:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The lowest grade from which elementary band students are accepted.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. The hour or hours (time of day) during which full elementary band rehearsal is held.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. The average number of periods per week each student receives individual instrumental instruction. (Not paid private lessons)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Length in minutes of each individual instruction period.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. The average number of periods per week each student receives class or sectional instruction. (not full band)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Length in minutes of class or sectional instruction.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. The average number of full elementary band rehearsals per week.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Length in minutes of full elementary band rehearsals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Percent of elementary band instructor's salary which is paid out of the elementary school budget.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. The average number of elementary band students in your school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. The average number of band members who take private band instrumental lessons outside of school.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. The number of years of band teaching experience the director has had. (on any level; elementary, high school, or college)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. The number of school-owned instruments which are not in use at the present time.

Please check the methods you have used in "selling" the band program and enlisting new members:

- 1. Talks and announcements by the director
  - 2. Demonstrations of band instruments
  - 3. Display of band instruments
  - 4. Concert or demonstration by the advanced band
- Other methods:

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Name the full ensemble beginning method or methods you are using:

Name	Author	Publisher
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If you accept beginners from grades four and/or five, please draw a line through the names of instruments you WOULD NOT use in those grades even though the instruments were available:

flute	bass trombone	tympani
oboe	baritone horn	cymbals
clarinet	alto horn	triangle
alto clarinet	mellophone	bells (flat)
bass clarinet	French horn	bells (glockenspiel)
alto saxophone	E♭ tuba	marimba
tenor saxophone	BB♭ tuba	xylophone
baritone saxophone	E♭ sousaphone	
bassoon	BB♭ sousaphone	
cornet	snare drum	
trumpet	field drum	
trombone	bass drum	
	Scotch drum	

If you are also the director of the advanced band (high school band or senior band) please supply the following information concerning the first chair or outstanding players of that group. If you do not direct the advanced group, kindly refer this question to the proper person if possible.

INSTRUMENT	PRESENT GRADE	GRADE IN WHICH PLAYER ENTERED ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
Clarinet		
Cornet or trumpet		
Flute		
Alto saxophone		
Tenor saxophone		
Trombone		
Horn (French, Alto)		
Baritone horn		
Bass		
DRUMS		
Others:		

Please answer the following questions in the light of your own experience, success, or failure in teaching elementary school band:

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. How long (in minutes) should the elementary band period be?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. To insure a successful elementary school band, what should be the minimum number of rehearsals per week? (Length of period as in question one)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. In what grade or at what age should elementary students be accepted for beginning band?  
grade \_\_\_\_\_  
age \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Which of these instructional procedures is most practical and effective for beginning band: (A) full band rehearsal, (B) families of instruments together (i.e. all brasses) (C) like instruments together, (i.e. all clarinets) (D) individual instruction, (E) a combination or combinations of A,B,C, & D
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. If answer is E, what combination would you recommend? (Indicate by letters in question 4)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Have you used the rotation system of sectional rehearsals? (Taking students out of other classes on a schedule by which they miss a different class each week)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. If so, did the system meet with serious opposition from other teachers?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Would you recommend the rotation system of sectional rehearsals?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. What is the best full band elementary method you have used?  
Title \_\_\_\_\_ Author \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Have you experienced active, cooperative assistance from a community band booster's club? (Supply name of club, if you wish) \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11.

If you are interested in receiving a digest of the study, please sign below:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX E.

DIGEST OF QUESTIONNAIRE CONCERNING ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BANDS

BANDS IN DISTRICT 6, NMEA

The state of Montana has been divided into eight music districts by the Montana Music Education Association. However, District Five, with festival headquarters in Lewistown, has elected to become a part of District Six during some years. Therefore, District Six, with festival headquarters in Billings, becomes one of the largest music districts in the state when it is combined with District Five. It is within the boundaries of the enlarged District Six that the study took place.

District Six, which is located in south central Montana, includes all or part of thirteen counties. Those counties which lie entirely within the boundaries of the district are Big Horn, Yellowstone, Musselshell, Petroleum, Treasure, and Golden Valley. The district also includes parts of Fergus, Wheatland, Sweet Grass, Stillwater, Carbon, Rosebud, and Garfield Counties.

The survey was made in the forty-three elementary public schools in second and third class districts within the boundaries of District Six. Billings, the only First Class District in the area surveyed, was excluded because of the difference in size, curriculum, and division of grades.

"Elementary school band" is defined in this paper as any instrumental group within grades one to eight inclusive which uses standard band instruments.

OUTLINE OF RESULTS

There are forty-three elementary public schools  
in District Six (Not including rural schools)

Thirty-four schools responded to the questionnaire-  
79% return

Sixteen of the thirty-four schools have elementary  
bands--47%

Average number of elementary band students--31

Grade in which elementary band is begun--Average 5 plus

Grade in which directors feel elementary band  
should begin--Average 4.8

Length of individual instruction--Average  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour  
twice monthly

Sectional instruction - 1.7 periods per week

Instructional procedures recommended:

Full band only - recommended by 3 directors  
Families of instruments only - 3       "  
Like instruments together - 4       "  
Individual instruction - 3       "  
Combination of full band and  
    sectional practice - 8       "  
(Some directors indicated more than one method)

Hour of elementary band rehearsals - Every hour of  
the day from 8 A. M. to 3 P. M. with the exception  
of 10 A. M.

Average length of elementary band period - 43.7 minutes

Average length of elementary band period  
recommended by directors - 46.9 minutes

Average number of elementary band periods  
per week - 2.7 periods

Average number recommended by directors - 3.7 periods

Rotation system of sectional practice - 4 yes  
- 11 no

Find that other teacher object to rota-  
tion system - 5 yes  
- 2 no

Would recommend the rotation system - 6 yes  
- 6 no

Financing elementary band instruction books:

Students pay for their books - 5 schools  
Paid out of the music fund - 10 schools  
Elementary text book budget - 3 schools  
Music Director furnishes music - 1 school

Financing Elementary Band Director's Salary:

Elementary budget only - 1  
High school budget only - 4  
From both budgets - 10  
Did not know - 1



Elementary Band teacher teaches:

Elementary school music only - 1  
High school and el. school music - 7  
H.S. & El. music & academic subj.- 8

Band Parents Clubs:

Have used successfully - 5 yes  
- 9 no  
- 2 no answer

Methods used in "selling" the elementary band program:

Talks - 15  
Demonstrations - 12  
Displays of instruments - 9  
Concerts - 10  
Use of pre-band instruments - 1  
Prospects "sit in" with band - 1

RELATIONSHIP OF BEGINNING AGE TO ULTIMATE ACHIEVEMENT  
IN ADVANCED BAND:

Averages of present grade and beginning grade of  
first chair players:

<u>Instrument</u>	<u>Present grade</u>	<u>Beginning grade</u>
Clarinet	10.6	6.5
Cornet	11.2	6.3
Flute	10.	6.2
Alto Sax	10.3	6.6
Tenor Sax	10.3	7.
Trombone	10.5	7.8
Horn	10.2	7.
Baritone	10.6	7.3
Bass	10.3	6.2
Drums	10.6	6.5
Oboe	10.5	9.
Bassoon	9.	8. (1 reported)

METHOD BOOKS FOR FULL ELEMENTARY BAND

No. of bands using	Name of Book	Author	Publishers
2	Elementary Method	N. W. Hevey	Rubank Inc.
1	Lockhart Book I		Witmark & Sons
1	First Steps	Whistler & Hummel	Rubank
5	Easy Steps to The Band	Maurice D. Taylor	Mills Music
1	Elementary Method	Skornicka	Rubank
1	Modern School Band Method	Elvin Freeman	Robbins
1	Paving the Way	Harvey S. Whistler & Herman A Hummel	Rubank
1	Ensemble Drill	Fussell	Paul A. Schmitt
2	First Semester Band Book	Buchtel	Rubank
1	Prep	Parscott Phillips	Schmitt
1	Building the Band	Chenette	Rubank
1	Elementary Band Course	Van Duesen	Rubank
1	Universaly Teacher	Maddy & Giddings	Willis Music Co.
2	Foundation of Band Playing	Fred O. Griffen	Jenkins Music Co.
1	Short-Cut Band Method	Metcalf	Fillmore
1	2nd Semester Band Book	Buchtel	Rubank
2	Beginners Band Book	Weber	Belwin
1	Boosey Hawkes Method	Skornicka & Bergiem	Boosey Hawkes

Elementary band is a training band only - 6 schools  
Elementary band plays concerts -10 schools  
Plays for athletic events also - 3 schools  
Private lessons outside of school -40 total in all  
16 schools  
Experience of directors - Average 8.6 years  
School owned instruments not in use 21 total in all  
16 schools

Instruments not recommended for students in the  
4th and 5th grades:

<u>INSTRUMENT</u>	<u>NO. of directors Not in favor of using</u>
Oboe	9
Alto clarinet	4
Bass clarinet	7
Alto sax	1
Tenor sax	3
Baritone sax	12
Bassoon	10
Trumpet	1
Bass trombone	11
Alto horn	1
Mellophone	1
French horn	7
Eb tuba	4
BBb tuba	6
Eb sousaphone	3
BBb sousaphone	6
Field drum	3
Scotch drum	6
Tympani	7
Bells	2
Marimba	6
Xylophone	4

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This digest is sent to you in appreciation of  
your assistance in making the elementary band survey  
for a professional paper.

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