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A STUDY OF CERTAIN PRACTICES OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN
MONTANA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS HAVING AN ENROLLMENT OF
FIVE HUNDRED OR MORE

A Professional Paper

by

Kenneth William Barry

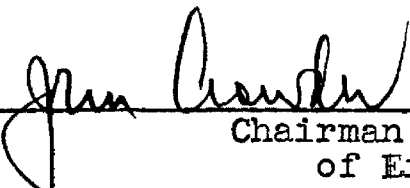
B.E., Montana State Normal College, 1939

Presented in partial fulfillment of the
requirement for the degree of Master of Music in
Music Education

Montana State University

1949

Approved:


Chairman of Board
of Examiners


Dean, Graduate School

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INTRODUCTION

Music has been a part of the public schools for many years. With the aid of a state course of study, the guidance of a state music supervisor, and the recommendations of the National Music Educators Conference, the elementary music program in Montana schools has constantly improved. The earliest guidance by a state music supervisor was intended primarily for rural schools because larger city schools had the advantage of administrative help through the superintendent and principals even though they may not have been trained music educators. Eventually, it was seen that the assistance of the state music supervisor in problems of rural schools would also benefit the city schools in working out their problems. Often times the two school systems found a similarity in the nature of their problems. Through combined efforts of Montana Music Educators Association, Montana Educational institutions of Higher Learning, and the State Department of Public Instruction, the problems of music education are being studied with the intention of offering suggestions or possible solutions for them. Alert music educators take pride in keeping up with current trends.

Efficiency in teaching may largely depend upon the awareness of existing practices.

THE PROBLEM

This study is an analysis of certain practices in the teaching of music in Montana elementary schools having an enrollment of 500 or more pupils to determine the significance of these practices. The analysis will deal with these four phases:

1. Singing
2. Theory and Fundamentals
3. Listening to Music
4. Instrumental Instruction

No attempt will be made to compare any of the schools being studied as to the merit of their teaching, nor to evaluate the success of their music education program.

Enrollments of participating schools are as follows:¹

Anaconda-----	938
Billings-----	3654
Butte-----	3330
Great Falls-----	4010
Helena-----	1493
Missoula-----	2550
Bozeman-----	1129
Hardin-----	1046
Havre-----	875
Kalispell-----	1439
Lewistown-----	887
Livingston-----	892
Miles City-----	900

¹Enrollments listed as of September 1, 1946 in the Montana Educational Directory, issued by the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, Helena, Montana.

Cut Bank-----	635
Glasgow-----	730
Glendive-----	636
Hamilton-----	578
Laurel-----	650
Libby-----	532
Sidney-----	646
Polson-----	515
Whitefish-----	671
Wolf Point-----	523

Data for this analysis was secured in these three ways: (a) questionnaire,² (b) personal interviews with music teachers and supervisors, and (c) information made available by the State Music Supervisor in a recent state survey.³ The data followed by an analysis for each of the four phases will be presented in the order previously listed. Some parts of the questionnaire were not treated in this paper because the information was irrelevant to the study, or it was difficult to make a clear cut interpretation due to faulty construction of the questionnaire, or the responses were insufficient to make a valid analysis.

Singing

Of the two commonly recognized approaches, vocal and instrumental, used in the carrying out of the music program,

²See Appendix for a copy of this questionnaire. Further reference, in this paper, to the questionnaire used in obtaining data indicates the one in the appendix.

³Unpublished Music Survey by State Supervisor of Music, Mr. Ronald Cook; Department of Public Instruction, Capitol Building, Helena, Montana. Conducted in 1947 to obtain information from Administrators pertaining to their school music program.

the one most frequently employed is singing. Several methods of teaching singing are now in practice. The following data pertains to five methods which are: (a) Rote, (b) Syllables, (c) Place or Position, (d) Numbers, and (e) Letters. This information was secured through the investigator's questionnaire and will be presented by graphs on the succeeding pages.

Rote Singing is the learning of a song through a process of imitation, by phrase or the whole song, after it has been sung by the teacher. Figure 1 below shows by percentage the use of this method in teaching songs in each grade level.

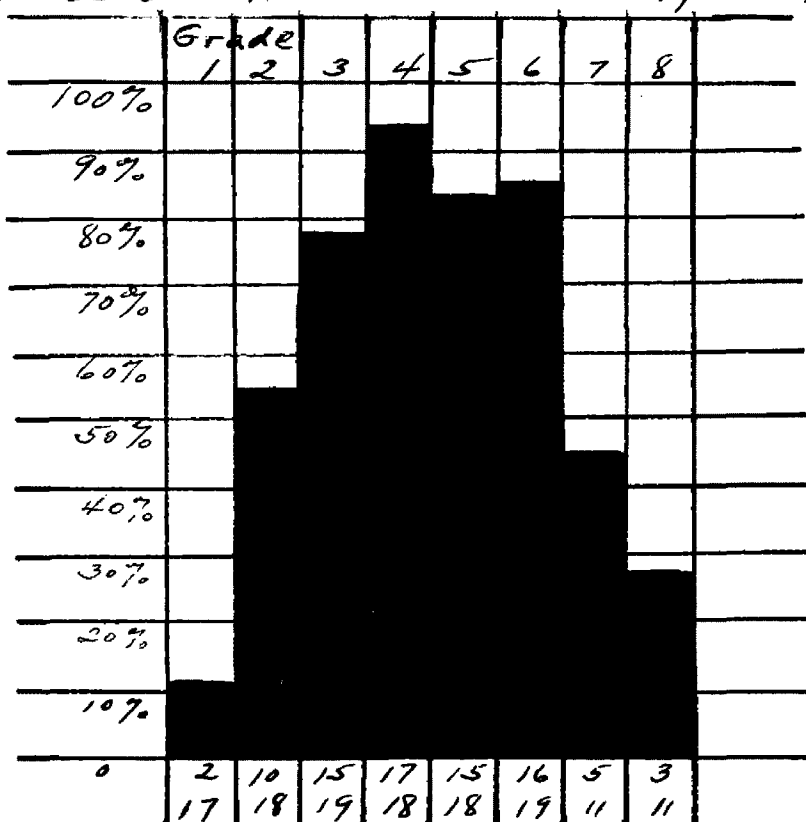
Figure 1
The Use of Rote Singing as a Teaching Method



* The top number shows the number of teachers using this method. The bottom number is the total number of responses to this section of the questionnaire. This applies to Graph II, III, IV, and V.

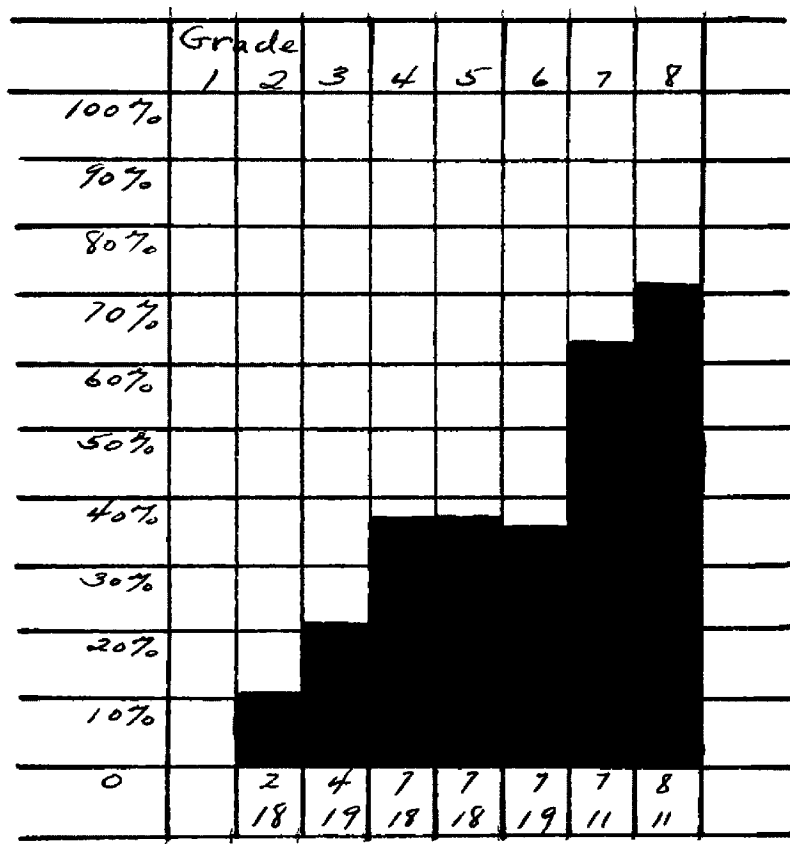
The Syllable method or the tonic sol-fa system with a movable "do" is commonly used in the teaching of sight reading. The use of this method is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2
The Use of Syllables as a Teaching Method



In the Place or Position method, the melody is sung after studying the diatonic and chromatic intervals from one tone to another. In Figure 3, which follows, the use of this method is shown.

Figure 3
The Use of Place or Position as a Teaching Method



Learning a song by Numbers is still another method. Instead of calling the keynote "do", it is called "1". In like manner, do-re-fa-sol-la-ti- and -do- would be 1-2-3-4-^{mi} 5-6-7- and -1-, or, -8-. ^{The use of} This method is indicated in Figure 4.

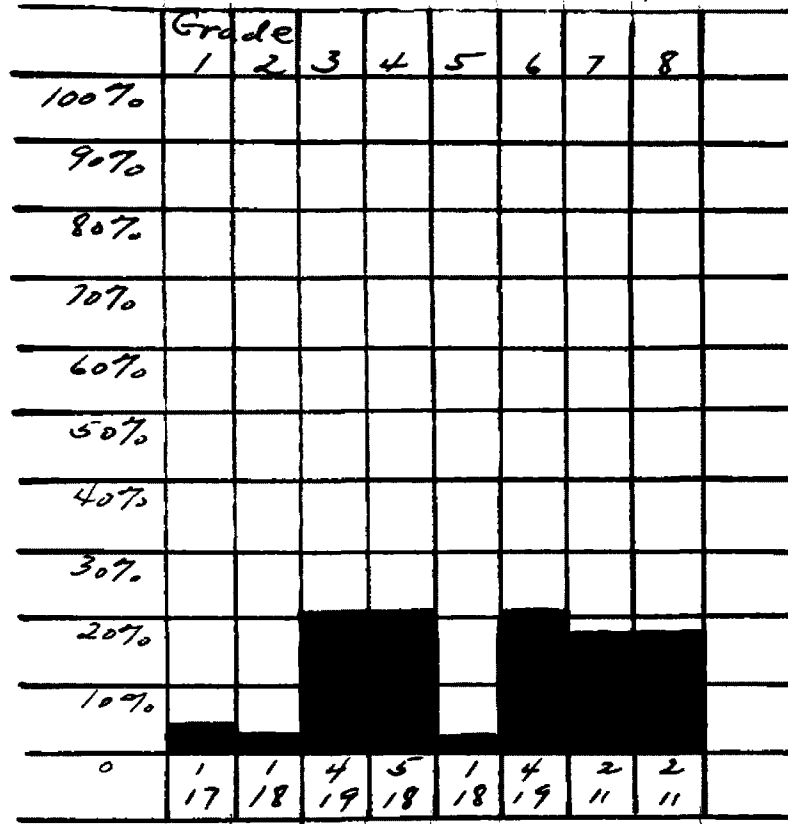
Figure 4
The Use of Numbers as a Teaching Method

	Grade							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
100%								
90%								
80%								
70%								
60%								
50%								
40%								
30%								
20%								
10%								
0	0	0	2	3	2	2	2	2
	17	18	19	18	17	19	11	11

Singing the notation of the song according to the name of the line or space where each note is located is known as the method of Letters. ^{The use of} This method is illustrated in Figure 5.

Figure 5

The Use of Letters as a Teaching Method



After having examined these five graphs illustrating the use of Rote, Syllables, Place or Position, Numbers, and Letters as a teaching method, it will be observed that:

Figure 1 shows that rote singing as a teaching method decreases in use from grade one through grade eight.

Figure 2 indicates that (a) syllables are presented in second grade to prepare for the sight reading program which receives (b) emphasis in grades four, five, and six, and (c) syllables are not used in the seventh and eighth grade as much as in the intermediate grades.

Figure 3 illustrates the common use of place or position method for teaching in the upper grades.

Figure 4 gives a picture excluding the use of the number method entirely until third grade level. In comparison to Graphs I, II, and III this method is little used.

Figure 5 points out that letters are used in all grades, particularly third and fourth, and sixth, seventh, and eighth. However, the use of this method is quite limited.

Having seen the use of these five methods of teaching singing, two tables will now be presented. The first makes a comparison of rote and syllables, and the second is a comparison of part singing.

A comparison of the average number of songs learned by rote and syllables from grades one through eight is seen in Table I.

TABLE I

A COMPARISON OF THE NUMBER OF SONGS LEARNED
BY ROTE AND SYLLABLES, GRADES I THROUGH VIII

GRADE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
ROTE	63	69	48	35	30	26	22	27
SYLLABLES	0	27	47	64	59	55	55	52
TOTAL	63	96	95	99	89	81	77	79

It is seen that the number of songs learned by rote after grade two tends to become fewer in the succeeding grades. The learning of songs by syllables rapidly increased in grades two, three, and four where the peak was reached. A slight decrease in the number of songs learned by syllables occurred in grades five, six, seven, and eight. The total number of songs learned by both methods decreases after grade four.

A comparison of part singing is illustrated in Table II.

TABLE II
A COMPARISON OF PART SINGING BY GRADE

GRADE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
FOUR PART							2	6
THREE PART					1	19	21	20
TWO PART				9	22	26	18	17
UNISON	27	22	29	25	18	22	18	17

Note: The numbers represent classroom units.

This table indicates that unison singing is used from grade one through eight. In some cases two-part harmony is begun in the fourth grade but the common practice is to introduce it in the fifth grade. Three-part singing is generally introduced in sixth grade and a few seventh and eighth grades use four-part songs.

In a recent unpublished music survey conducted by the State Music Supervisor,⁴ the Administrators were asked, "Does your elementary school have a select chorus? Number?" Out of the twenty-three schools being studied,

⁴Montana State Music Supervisor's Survey of 1947 to all School Administrators.

11 responded "no"

2 gave no responses

8 answered "yes"

2 indicated "yes", but qualified it

It is evident by this data that many elementary schools do not devote much time to select choruses.

Summarizing this phase of music education, Singing, it was found that (a) rote singing decreases in use after grade one, (b) syllables receive emphasis in the intermediate grades, (c) place or position singing is commonly used in the upper grades, (d) numbers are used from third grade on but only by a few, and (e) letters, though infrequently used, are employed in all grades. Rote singing decreases in use with grade advancement. The peak of syllable work appears in fourth grade followed by a slight decrease in succeeding grades. The total number of songs learned by both methods within a grade decreases after grade four. Unison singing is found in all grades. Two and three-part songs are emphasized in grades five and six. Four-part songs are not used extensively in upper grades. Elementary schools do not devote much time to select choruses.

Theory and Fundamentals

The teaching of theory and fundamentals deals with the content and technical aspects of the score. These fundamentals were arbitrarily divided into ten elements by the investigator. The elements pertaining to the structural aspects of a score were listed in the questionnaire and checked according to the grade in which they were taught. The succeeding Table III, indicates by a red letter "A" where each element first receives special attention, and the blue letter "E" indicates where the strongest emphasis is placed in teaching.

TABLE III

ASSIGNMENT OF ELEMENTS TO GRADES

	GRADES							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Staff--lines and spaces		A				E		
2. Measures, Bar, Double Bar		A				E		
*3. Clefs: Treble, Bass, Alto, Tenor			A			E		
4. Notes, Rests,--Values and Rhythms		A				E		
5. Letter names of notes; major scales and keys			A			E		
6. Repeat Mark, First and Second Endings, D.C.--D.S.--and Coda Mark				A		E		
7. Symbols, figures and abbreviations				A		E		
8. Enharmonic tones, minor scales and keys					A	E		
9. Music writing, intervals and chords, conducting					A	E		
10. Dictionary of musical terms					A	E		

*Note: Majority of responses underlined treble clef for third grade.

An analysis of Table III reveals the fact that these elements are assigned for study in definite grades. The first five elements of staff, measures, clefs, rhythm, and major keys are introduced either in second or third grade. The remaining five elements of signs, symbols, minor scales and keys, music writing, and musical terms are introduced in the fourth and fifth grades. The major emphasis upon the first eight elements occurs in the sixth grade. Greater attention is given to music writing, intervals and chords, conducting, and dictionary of musical terms in grades six, seven, and eight.

A summary of this analysis presents the following practices:

Grade I --- no fundamentals taught

Grade II -- staff, measures, rhythms

Grade III - clefs, letter names, major scales and keys

Grade IV -- signs, symbols, figures, abbreviations

Grade V --- minor scales and keys, music writing, intervals and chords, conducting, musical terms

Grade VI -- no new fundamentals presented

Grade VII - no new fundamentals presented

Grade VIII- no new fundamentals presented

Listening to Music

Listening to music is another important phase of music education, for it is in this approach that other learning than that of making music takes place. For example, it develops discriminatory listening, broadens the experiences in different types of music literature, and provides an opportunity to study form and analysis.

Being exposed to the lives and music of various composers is a part of the listening program. The following Figure 6 gives a general picture of this phase of listening to music in the school systems included in this survey. (See Figure 6 on the next page.) This information was secured by the data received from questionnaires. It is seen that this phase of music education is not used extensively in primary grades. A great variation exists as to the number of composers studied in any one grade level. The studying of composers and their music as a part of music education does not always continue grade by grade.

By distributing each number within the graph to various composers, a list was compiled showing the composers to which children were exposed regardless of grade level. (See Table IV on page 18.) The composer first on the list was studied the most number of times; the composer listed last was studied the least number of times. This list gives only the names of those who were mentioned four times or more.

Figure 6

THE GRADE IN WHICH COMPOSERS WERE STUDIED

GRADE :		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
SCHOOL	1								
	2								16
	3				4	4	3	2	5
	4			6	3	4	4	3	8
	5				4	7	14	1	
	6				3	7	11	5	4
	7								
	8			3	4	6	7	15	15
	9								
	10								
	11				3	4	9	16	15
	12		2	4	4	14	14		
	13			7	8	9	12		
	14			1	4	4	15		
	15								
	16				4	6	3		
	17						16	16	16
	18		3	9	7			7	7
	19						14	14	14
	20	1	1	3	6	14	15	18	18
	21			9			5		
	22								
	23				6	5	5		

Note: the number within the shaded area indicates how many composers were studied.

TABLE IV
COMPOSERS LISTED BY FREQUENCY OF BEING TAUGHT

COMPOSER	FREQUENCY	GRADE WHEN INTRODUCED	GRADE OF EMPHASIS
Beethoven	45	II	VI
Mozart	43	II	IV and VI
Haydn	43	III	IV-VI-VIII
Brahms	43	I	VI
Schubert	42	III	V and VI
Schumann	38	III	VI
Tschaikowsky	36	III	VI
Handel	36	II	VI
Grieg	36	III	VI
Chopin	35	IV	VI
Bach	35	II	VI
Mendelssohn	27	III	VI
Wagner	21	III	VI
Liszt	20	V	VI
Verdi	16	IV	VIII
Gounod	11	II	VIII
Sebelius	10	V	VIII
Weber	8	III	VI
Gluck	5	V	VI
Offenbach	4	V	VIII
Franz	4	V	VIII

It is evident by this table that certain composers and their music are taught more frequently than others. Brahms was the only composer introduced in grade one.

1 composer was introduced in grade one

5 composers were introduced in grade two

8 composers were introduced in grade three

2 composers were introduced in grade four

5 composers were introduced in grade five

no composers introduced in grades six, seven, eight

In regard to emphasis, Table IV (on the preceding page) illustrates the following:

no composers were emphasized in grades one-two-three
2 composers were emphasized in grade four
1 composer was emphasized in grade five
12 composers were emphasized in grade six
no composers were emphasized in grade seven
6 composers were emphasized in grade eight

Data obtained by the questionnaire further revealed this information in regard to the number of appreciation classes held during a month.

1. none
2. some
3. irregular
4. one
5. one or two
6. two
7. two or three
8. three
9. three or four
10. four
11. four or five
12. five
13. six
14. eight

This indicates a wide variation in the use of listening to music as a part of the whole music education program.

Summarizing this phase, it was found that music appreciation or listening lessons are not used extensively in the primary grades. A great variation exists as to the number of composers studied in any one grade level. The studying of composers and their music does not continue grade by grade. Certain composers are studied more frequently than others. The emphasis on studying composers is mainly in the sixth grade. Little or no uniformity exists as to the number of music appreciation classes conducted in a month in different schools.

Instrumental Instruction

The instrumental program is important in rounding out music education for it is a means of further expression and participation and lays the groundwork for more skilled participation in the high school.

Schools included within the scope of this survey have reported their instrumental program as depicted in Figure 7, which is seen on the next page.

The investigator has broken this program down into three phases: (a) Rhythm band and Pre-band instruments (the green lines on the graph), (b) Orchestra (the blue lines,) and (c) Band (the red lines).

After examining this graph, it is observed that the rhythm band the pre-band instruments have had little emphasis placed on them in the primary grades.

In addition it was found that out of the school systems included in this study:

- 4 have rhythm band
- 5-6 have pre-band
- 10 have string instruction
- 1 has strings but not band
- 2 start strings but not band
- 1 starts band before strings
- 6 have band only
- 15 have bands
- 9 have both band and orchestra

FIGURE 7

THE INSTRUMENTAL PROGRAM BY GRADES
 (Green for pre-band and rhythm band; blue-orchestra; red-band)

GRADE	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII
SCHOOL 1								
2								
3								
4								
5								
6								
8								
8								
9								
10								
11								
12								
13								
14								
15								
16								
17								
18								
19								
20								
21								
22								
23								

Note: Broken green line indicates irregular use.

A summary of this information shows a lack of instrumental instruction for primary grades. There are more bands than orchestras in the elementary schools. About two-fifths of the schools have both band and orchestra. Most schools start band before orchestra.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Certain conclusions may now be drawn concerning practices of music education in the music programs of Montana elementary schools having an enrollment of 500 or more as presented and discussed in this paper.

The development of music reading appears to conform in general to the attainments as set up by the 1942 Montana State Course of Study with respect to rote singing, the use of syllables, sight reading, and the progression from unison to two and three-part singing. Selected choruses do not seem to have been emphasized in the schools included within the scope of this study as the data indicates they are comparatively few in number. Little use is made of simple rhythm and melodic instruments in these twenty-three school systems. Montana elementary schools included in this study provide considerable opportunity for participation in band and orchestra in the intermediate and upper grades. The listening program is not uniform in the Montana elementary

schools which were studied and is not consistently developed throughout all grades.

Recommendations

Because of these findings and their implications, the following suggestions for further study in elementary music education are made:

1. More use of simple rhythmic and melodic instruments as a supplement to the general music education.
2. Comparing the values of orchestra and band in determining the functional use thereof.
3. Encourage better practices and procedures of listening activities.
4. An analysis of the music reading practices.
5. Investigation of factors which influence the attitudes of elementary school children toward present practices.
6. Determine the extent to which music may influence personality development and how effectively do present practices contribute to this end.
7. Determine the extent to which elementary schools are providing for individual differences.
8. The place of class piano in general music education.
9. An analysis of creative learning and its application to the music education program.
10. The determination of the criteria for the selection of music literature for children.
11. The place of rhythmic activities in the music education program.
12. Consideration of problems involved in the self-contained classroom:
 - (a) teacher training
 - (b) inservice training
 - (c) adapting course of study to ability of teacher

APPENDIX

The following questionnaire, made by the investigator, was used in securing data for this study.

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. Check how you teach a new song for various grade levels.

ROTE _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
SYLLABLES _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
NUMBERS _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
LETTER NAMES _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
PLACE OR POSITION _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____

II. Check the type of singing your class does.

UNISON _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
TWO PART _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
THREE PART _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____
FOUR PART _____ IN GRADES _____,_____,_____,_____

III. During a year, how many songs are taught;

BY ROTE IN GRADES 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
BY SYLLABLES-GRADES 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

IV. Check the methods which you consider most valuable with a "1" for learning to read music---and a "2" for the method you use most frequently.

SYLLABLES _____ LETTER NAMES _____
NUMBERS _____ PLACE OR POSITION _____

V. What books or series of books are used in various grades?

NAME OF BOOK _____ FOR GRADE _____ HOW MANY _____

NAME OF BOOK _____ FOR GRADE _____ HOW MANY _____

NAME OF BOOK _____ FOR GRADE _____ HOW MANY _____

NAME OF BOOK _____ FOR GRADE _____ HOW MANY _____

(USE REVERSE SIDE IF MORE SPACE IS NEEDED)

VI. What pre-band instruments do you teach? _____

(a) How often each week? _____ for grade __, __, __

(b) How long is the class period? _____

VII. How many in Band? _____

By grade: 4th _____ 5th _____ 6th _____ 7th _____ 8th _____

How many in orchestra? _____

By grade: 4th _____ 5th _____ 6th _____ 7th _____ 8th _____

How many minutes per week for band? _____

How many minutes per week for orchestra? _____

What Band Methods are used?

Beginners _____

Advanced _____

What Orchestra Methods are used?

Beginners _____

Advanced _____

How many school owned instruments? _____

VIII. How many in Boys Glee Club? _____

By grade: 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

How many in Girls Glee Club? _____

By grade: 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

How many in Mixed Chorus? _____

By grade: 1 ___ 2 ___ 3 ___ 4 ___ 5 ___ 6 ___ 7 ___ 8 ___

If you have any special vocal groups, will you explain about them?

(please use reverse side -- thank you)

IX.

Circle the grades you teach	How many music periods do you teach each week?	How many minutes for each class per week?	How many Appreciation classes are taught in a month	Indicate by number, the type of part singing; 1--S.A. 2--S.S.A 3--S.A.T. 4--S.A.B. 5--S.A.T.B.
1				
2				
3				
4				
5				
6				
7				
8				

- X. Check the grades in which the following fundamentals are taught.

	GRADES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Staff--lines and spaces									
2. Measures, Bar, Double Bar									
3. Clefs: Treble, Bass, Alto, Tenor									
4. Notes, Rests, -- Values and Rhythms									
5. Letter names of notes Major Scales and Keys									
6. Repeat Mark, First and Second Endings, D.C.--D.S.--and Coda Mark									
7. Symbols, figures and abbreviations.									
8. Enharmonic tones, Minor Scales and Keys.									
9. Music writing, intervals and chords, conducting.									
10. Dictionary of Musical Terms.									

XI. Check the grade when a composer is studied.

GRADE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
WAGNER								
VERDI								
TSCHAIKOWSKY								
LISZT								
BEETHOVEN								
SCHUMANN								
HANDEL								
GRIEG								
SCHUBERT								
GOUNOD								
MOZART								
OFFENBACH								
MENDELSSHOHN								
FRANZ								
CHOPIN								
GLUCK								
BACH								
WEBER								
HAYDN								
SEBELIUS								
BRAHMS								
list any others								

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