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### PERCUSSION INSTRUCTION IN BEGINNING BAND FOR PROGRAMS WITH A SINGLE TEACHER

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PERCUSSION INSTRUCTION IN BEGINNING BAND  
FOR PROGRAMS WITH A SINGLE TEACHER

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School  
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
For the Degree of  
Master of Music

Micah Martin

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, Kansas

May 2017

PERCUSSION INSTRUCTION IN BEGINNING BAND  
FOR PROGRAMS WITH A SINGLE TEACHER

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# PERCUSSION INSTRUCTION IN BEGINNING BAND FOR PROGRAMS WITH A SINGLE TEACHER

An Abstract of the Thesis by  
Micah A. Martin

The primary purpose of this study was to find the best methods for developing students into total percussionists in beginning band programs with only one band director on staff. A total percussionist is defined as one who is capable of playing keyboard percussion, snare drum, timpani, and the accessory instruments. The study consists of a survey to assess individual approaches to percussion instruction in beginning band.

A questionnaire was developed using Google Forms and a link was emailed to band directors in Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas. A link was also posted on the Facebook pages of the Southwest Missouri Music Educators Association and the Missouri Music Educators Association.

Most of the respondents start percussion along with the other band students on both snare drum and keyboard percussion in the sixth grade. About four-fifths of them do not meet with percussionists for rehearsals or lessons outside of class. Around two-thirds indicated that their percussionists do not take lessons outside of school. Over half of them are able to meet class daily. Over half meet at least ninety minutes per week. However, many of the directors believe that they need more time for beginning band, and especially percussion.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	
Statement of Purpose.....	2
Need for the Study.....	2
Procedure.....	3
Research Questions.....	3
Limitations.....	4
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE	
Expansion of the Percussion Section in Band Literature.....	6
Selecting the Beginning Percussion Student.....	16
Recommended Methods for Teaching Percussion in the Beginning Band .....	18
Discipline and the Percussion Section.....	21
III. DESIGN, ADMINISTRATION, AND RESULTS OF THE SURVEY	
Design of the Survey.....	26
Administration of the Survey.....	26
Data Collection.....	27
Results of the Survey.....	27
IV. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS	
Summary.....	67
Conclusions.....	68
Recommendations.....	70
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	73
APPENDIX .....	76
Survey of Band Directors	
Teaching at the Beginning Level.....	77

## LIST OF TABLES

Table A.....	13
Table 1.....	27
Table 2.....	28
Table 3.....	29
Table 4.....	30
Table 4.1.....	32
Table 5.....	33
Table 5.1.....	34
Table 6.....	36
Table 7.....	37
Table 8.....	38
Table 8.1.....	39
Table 8.2.....	41
Table 9.....	43
Table 10.....	45
Table 11.....	46
Table 12.....	46
Table 13.....	47
Table 14.....	48
Table 15.....	48
Table 15.1.....	50
Table 16.....	52
Table 17.....	52
Table 18.....	53
Table 19.....	54
Table 20.....	55
Table 21.....	56
Table 22.....	57
Table 23.....	57
Table 24.....	58
Table 25.....	59
Table 26.....	59
Table 27.....	60
Table 28.....	62
Table 29.....	63
Table 30.....	64
Table 31.....	64
Table 32.....	65

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Throughout the twentieth century the instrumentation of the percussion section in band scores has expanded. By looking at the score for Gustav Holst's *First Suite in Eb*,<sup>1</sup> which uses snare drum, bass drum, timpani, cymbals, tambourine, and triangle, and comparing it with the instrumentation required for David R. Gillingham's *Concertino for Four Percussion and Wind Ensemble*, notice that it requires four players to play a much larger array of both pitched and non-pitched instruments. While the percussion requirements for music of different levels of difficulty may vary, even recent music graded 2½ or 3 may have many more instruments.

While most high school bands are not be able to perform something as challenging as the *Concertino for Four Percussion and Wind Ensemble*, most literature written for concert bands today demands that percussionists possess "... high creativity and sensitivity, as well as consummate skill."<sup>2</sup> As required

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<sup>1</sup> Gustav Holst. *First Suite in Eb for Military Band*, (London, Boosey & Co .Ltd., 1921).

<sup>2</sup> John Kinyon. *The Instrumental Music Director's Source Book*. (Sherman Oaks, CA: Alfred Publishing Co. Inc., 1982) 118.

percussion techniques have changed with more recent literature, so too have the responsibilities of the teacher. For the school music teacher, especially the non-percussionist, the challenges are “many and varied.”<sup>3</sup>

In programs with a single instructor, who may also be teaching other subjects such as choir or music appreciation, finding time for teaching the instruments needed in the percussion section can be a serious challenge.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to find the best methods for developing students into “total percussionists” in beginning band programs with only one band director on staff. A total percussionist is defined as one who is capable of playing keyboard percussion, snare drum, timpani, and the accessory instruments. Most educators agree that teaching all the instruments to percussionists is desirable in meeting the National Standards adopted by MENC in 1994.<sup>4</sup>

### **Need for the Study**

When there is only one band director on the staff, the challenges of finding adequate instructional time increases with every additional instrument they have to teach. In addition, there are very few suggestions in the

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<sup>3</sup> Kinyon, 119.

<sup>4</sup> MENC, *The School Music Program: A New Vision*, (Reston, VA), 1994.

instrumental methods literature for scheduling time for the great variety of percussion instruments that need to be taught.

### **Procedure**

A preliminary survey of literature was used to determine what authorities have to say about incorporating instruction for the percussion section into the band program at the beginning and intermediate level. Additional information was gathered through discussions and interviews with individual teachers and music store personnel.

An initial questionnaire was developed and emailed to regional band directors in Kansas, Missouri, and Arkansas. The topics discussed in the questionnaire relate primarily to the survey of literature, and particularly to the research questions shown in the next section. A link to the survey was also posted on the Facebook page for the Missouri Music Educators Association as well as the Facebook page for the Southwest Missouri Music Educators Association. The questions and statements on the questionnaire were written with the solo band director in mind. The results of the survey were analyzed and summarized by the researcher. Recommendations for teachers and further research concluded the project.

### **Research Questions**

1. Are all percussion instruments taught at the same time in the beginning class, or is the instruction phased in over time?

2. At what point do you start the following instruments:  
Snare Drum, Bass Drum, Keyboard Percussion, Tympani, Conga Drums,  
Djembe?
3. Do all percussion students play all of the percussion instruments?
4. Do beginning students start on percussion or are they transferred?
5. Are brass, woodwind, and percussion taught together?
6. Do all sections meet all the time in the schedule?
7. Are you able to provide any individual or sectional instruction on a periodic basis? How is it scheduled?
8. Do any students receive private lessons? Do they have to pay? Are they taught during school hours? How often? Who is the instructor?
9. Are most solo band directors able to solve the problem of percussion instruction satisfactorily?
10. How do the approaches to scheduling time for percussion students depend on the circumstances of the director's schedule and other factors?
11. What are the most practical approaches to providing additional percussion instruction?

### **Limitations**

Because of the need to send the questionnaire out at the beginning of the school year, the main survey of literature could not be totally completed in

advance. As a result, there may be changes in the questionnaire that might be desirable after the fact.

There was no attempt to determine the percussion skills of each solo band director. The assumption was that all of them are qualified to teach the varied percussion instruments. The response to the survey was voluntary.

In the review of literature, the history of percussion instruments only dealt with instruments used in Western music.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **SURVEY OF LITERATURE**

#### **Expansion of the Percussion Section in Band Literature**

Evidence of percussion instruments can be found in virtually every culture. Tambourines and cymbals are even mentioned in the Bible, "David and all Israel were celebrating with all their might before God, with songs and with harps, lyres, tambourines, cymbals and trumpets.<sup>5</sup>"

The first percussion instruments to enter Western music came from the Ottoman Turks. It was known as Janissary music, named after the elite corps of royal bodyguards.<sup>6</sup> A full Janissary band might include several bass drums, numerous pairs of cymbals, small kettledrums, triangles, tambourines, and at least one Turkish crescent, (called a "Jingling Johnnie" in England). The Turkish crescent consists of an upright pole with a decorative headpiece in the shape of a crescent with other symbols from which hung small bells and jingles and was

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<sup>5</sup> 1 Chronicles 13:8 (New International Version)

<sup>6</sup> Janissary Music. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Janissary-music>. Accessed 10-30-16

decorated with horsetails. Berlioz said the shaking of its "sonorous locks"<sup>7</sup> adds brilliance to marching music. C.F.D. Schubart, (a poet and composer in the 18<sup>th</sup> century), wrote of Janissary music, "No other genre of music requires so firm, decided and overpoweringly predominant a beat. The first beat of each bar is so strongly marked with a new and manly accent that is virtually impossible to get out of step."<sup>8</sup>

The popularity of Janissary music in Europe most likely started in 1720 when it was adopted by the Polish ruler Augustus II. The uniqueness of the sounds led to their wide use throughout Europe as part of a military spectacle. Throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century they were often used in opera scores such as Christoph Gluck's *The Unexpected Encounter*, and Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*. Other composers imitated the Turkish military style as in Haydn's "Military" *Symphony No. 100 in G Major*, the "Rondo alla Turca" movement of Mozart's *Piano Sonata in A Major, K. 331*, and Beethoven's incidental music to *The Ruins of Athens*.<sup>9</sup>

The kettledrums, (or timpani), arrived in Europe during the 15<sup>th</sup> century as a cavalry instrument played on horseback by the Ottomans. As was eastern

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<sup>7</sup> James Blades. [Percussion Instruments and Their History](#). (London, Faber and Faber Ltd., 1984,) 265-6.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Janissary Music. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Janissary-music>. Accessed 10-30-16.

custom, the timpani were paired with the trumpet and seen as a symbol of rank.<sup>10</sup>

Timpani were first introduced to the orchestra by Jean-Baptiste Lully for his opera *Thésée* in 1675.<sup>11</sup> However, an early example of trumpet and “kettledrum” music appears at the beginning of Claudio Monteverdi’s opera *L’Orfeo*.<sup>12</sup> Johann Sebastian Bach wrote perhaps the first kettledrum solo in his Cantata no. 214, *Tönet, ihr Pauken*, (Resound, ye drums,) and he used them again in his *Christmas Oratorio*. Haydn wrote significant parts for the kettledrums, most notably in his *Symphony No. 103*, also known as the “Drumroll Symphony,” and *Missa in tempore belli*, (Mass in Time of War,) which is also known as *Paukenmesse*, (Kettledrum Mass,) due to the extended use of the instrument. It was Beethoven, however, that “liberated”<sup>13</sup> the kettledrums from the trumpets and the typical tonic and dominant tunings. Berlioz scored the timpani in his *Grand Funeral and Triumphal Symphony*, one of the earliest works for wind band to include a percussion section.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Don Michael Randel. *The New Harvard Dictionary of Music*, (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1999,) 425.

<sup>11</sup> Randel, 426.

<sup>12</sup> *Encyclopædia Britannica*. <https://www.britannica.com/art/kettledrum> Accessed 9-11-16.

<sup>13</sup> Randel, 426.

<sup>14</sup> Stephen L. Rhodes. *Wind Band History*. [http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband\\_05\\_19thcenturyeurope.htm](http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband_05_19thcenturyeurope.htm) Accessed 10-16-16.

The snare drum was first limited to “works with a martial flavor, such as Handel’s *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and Haydn’s *Military Symphony, no. 100*.<sup>15</sup> The first documented use of the snare drum was in 1706 when the French composer Marin Marais used the instrument in the storm scene of his opera *Alcyone*. Rossini wrote a solo for the snare drum in his opera, *The Thieving Magpie*, but it did not become a standard instrument in the orchestra until Rimsky-Korsakov and other Russian composers in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century began incorporating it more frequently.<sup>16</sup> The snare drum also made its first appearance in band music in Berlioz’s *Grand Funeral and Triumphal Symphony*.<sup>17</sup>

The bass drum was rare in the symphony orchestra until the 18<sup>th</sup> century when Janissary music became popular in Europe.<sup>18</sup> In fact the bass drum was called a Turkish Drum when it was first introduced. Initially it was used for special effects as in Haydn’s *Military Symphony No. 100*.<sup>19</sup> Tchaikovsky and other Romantic composers called for the bass drum and cymbals to be played simultaneously. Verdi asked for hard, loud blows in the “Dies Irae” section of his

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<sup>15</sup> Randel, 244.

<sup>16</sup> Britannica Academic, <http://library.pittstate.edu:3736/levels/collegiate/article/68364> accessed 9-11-16.

<sup>17</sup> Rhodes.  
[http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband\\_05\\_19thcenturyeurope.htm](http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband_05_19thcenturyeurope.htm)  
Accessed 10-16-16.

<sup>18</sup> Randel, 244.

<sup>19</sup> Britannica Academic, <http://library.pittstate.edu:3736/levels/collegiate/article/13654>  
Accessed 10-29-16.

1874 *Requiem*. Like the snare drum and timpani before it, the bass drum was also used in Berlioz's *Grand Funeral and Triumphal Symphony*.<sup>20</sup>

Cymbals came to Europe during the Middle Ages and were depicted in the *Cantigas de Santa Maria*<sup>21</sup>, a collection of over 400 songs celebrating the miracles of the Virgin Mary.<sup>22</sup> They were probably first used in the modern orchestra by Nicolaus Strungk in his 1680 opera, *Esther*. Like the bass drum, the cymbals did not become popular until the Janissary music craze and were used by composers such as Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, and Berlioz in their aforementioned works.

Named for its shape, the triangle was known in Europe by the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It originally had rings attached to it for a jingling effect similar to the Turkish crescent. The triangle entered the orchestra with cymbals and bass drum losing its rings around 1800. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century it was used purely for its sound as in Franz Liszt's *Piano Concerto No. 1 in E-flat Major*, also known as the "Triangle Concerto."<sup>23</sup>

Rounding out the percussion instruments of the Janissary bands is the tambourine. (While the Turkish crescent is a member of Janissary music it is not

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<sup>20</sup> Rhodes. [http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband\\_05\\_19thcenturyeurope.htm](http://www.lipscomb.edu/windbandhistory/rhodeswindband_05_19thcenturyeurope.htm) Accessed 10-29-16.

<sup>21</sup> Randel, 218.

<sup>22</sup> Cantiga. <https://www.britannica.com/art/cantiga#ref6986>. Accessed 10-30-16.

<sup>23</sup> Triangle. <https://www.britannica.com/art/triangle-musical-instrument>. Accessed 10-30-16.

widely used in the orchestra and wind band). The tambourine became familiar to European musicians who observed its use by the Crusaders of the 13<sup>th</sup> century. It was originally played by women as accompaniment to song and dance. During the Janissary music craze in 18<sup>th</sup> century Europe, the tambourine joined the orchestra along with the cymbals, triangle, and bass drum.<sup>24</sup> Among the first orchestral uses of the tambourine is Gluck's *Echo und Narziss*. It soon came to represent the gypsy life in the incidental music to Carl Maria von Weber's *Preziosa* and epitomized Spanish flair in Bizet's *Carmen*.<sup>25</sup>

With the exception of the Turkish crescent, the percussion instruments listed above, (timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cymbals, triangle and tambourine), make up the basic percussion section of the orchestra. That instrumentation also transferred to the military bands of Europe and was eventually used by Gustav Holst in his *First Suite in Eb for Military Band*. This was a revolutionary piece of music in 1909 because most wind band music written at that time were reductions of orchestral music. Holst, however, wanted to make the concert wind band a serious medium and wrote *First Suite* exclusively for wind and percussion instruments.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Tambourine. <https://www.britannica.com/art/tambourine>. Accessed 10-30-16.

<sup>25</sup> Vienna Symphonic Library. [Tambourine](https://www.vsl.co.at/en/Tambourine/History). <https://www.vsl.co.at/en/Tambourine/History>. Accessed 10-30-16.

<sup>26</sup> Gustav Holst. [Compositions: Suite No. 1 in E-Flat Op. 28 No. 1](http://www.gustavholst.info/compositions/listing.php?work=4). <http://www.gustavholst.info/compositions/listing.php?work=4>. Accessed 10-30-16.

One of the few percussion instruments that was not Turkish in origin was the xylophone, which has origins in southeast Asia and Africa.<sup>27</sup> The first mention of the xylophone in Europe was in 1511 by the organist Arnold Schlick who called it a "hultze glechter", meaning wooden percussion.<sup>28</sup> The xylophone most likely made its first orchestral appearance in Saint Saëns' *Danse Macabre* in 1874.<sup>29</sup> The first appearance of the xylophone in the wind band seems to be in Percy Grainger's *Shepherd's Hey* in 1918.<sup>30</sup>

The percussion instruments of the military band would continue to serve as the core of the wind band's instrumentation. Composers would add instruments such as sleigh bells and slapstick to the section throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Some instruments, like keyboard percussion, would remain a constant and others are used for special effects. Other instruments, such as Latin American percussion, were added as musicians became aware of them. The growth of the percussion section can best be seen in Table A.

Gustav Holst's *First Suite in Eb* from 1909<sup>31</sup> uses snare drum, bass drum, timpani, cymbals, tambourine, and triangle. The instrumentation for *La Fiesta Mexicana* by H. Owen Reed from 1949 includes timpani, marimba, tubular bells,

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<sup>27</sup> Xylophone <https://www.britannica.com/art/xylophone>. Accessed 11-26-16.

<sup>28</sup> Blades, 203.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 309.

<sup>30</sup> The Wind Repertory Project. [Shepherd's Hey](http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s_Hey). [http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s\\_Hey](http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s_Hey) Accessed 5-1-17.

<sup>31</sup> Gustav Holst. *First Suite in Eb for Military Band*. (London, Boosey & Co .Ltd., 1921).

4 temple blocks, snare drum, castanets, maracas, 2 tunable tom-toms, bass drum, cymbals, gong, tambourine and an offstage band using a snare drum and bass drum with an attached cymbal. By comparison, in 1999, *Vesuvius* by Frank Ticheli uses timpani, snare drum, bass drum, tom-toms, bongos, suspended cymbal, gong, crotale, marimba, vibraphone, xylophone, triangle, tambourine, temple blocks, ratchet, and slapstick<sup>32</sup>. There are other selections which also use a wide variety of percussion instruments.

Other than these famous works listed in Table A, the expansion of percussion is often seen in easier works as well. For example, *Kronos* by Robert W. Smith calls for bells, marimba, chimes, timpani, snare drum, bass drum, cabasa, triangle, wind chimes, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, and high/low wood blocks<sup>33</sup>. *Fire Dance* by David Shaffer is written for timpani, suspended cymbal, crash cymbals, triangle, cabasa, snare drum, bass drum, bells, guiro, mark tree, toms, and sleigh bells<sup>34</sup>.

**Table A. Expansion of the Percussion Section**

Year Published	Title	Composer and/or Arranger	Percussion Instrumentation
1909	First Suite in Eb <sup>35</sup>	Gustav Holst	timpani, snare drum, bass drum, crash cymbals,

<sup>32</sup> Frank Tichelli. *Vesuvius*, (Brooklyn, NY. Manhattan Beach Music, 1999).

<sup>33</sup> Robert W. Smith. *Kronos*, (Belwin Mills Publishing Corp., 2004).

<sup>34</sup> David Shaffer. *Fire Dance*, (Oskaloosa, IA. Birch Island Music Press, 2001).

<sup>35</sup> Gustav Holst. *First Suite in Eb for Military Band*, (London, Boosey & Co .Ltd., 1921).

			suspended cymbals, tambourine, triangle
1918	Shepherd's Hey <sup>36</sup>	Percy Grainger	xylophone, bells, timpani, triangle, suspended cymbal, crash cymbal, snare drum, bass drum
1937	Lincolnshire Posie <sup>37</sup>	Percy Grainger	timpani, xylophone, glockenspiel, handbells, tubular bells, snare drum, bass drum, and cymbals
1949	La Fiesta Mexicana <sup>38</sup>	H. Owen Reed	timpani, marimba, tubular bells, 4 temple blocks, snare drum, castanets, maracas, 2 tunable tom-toms, bass drum, cymbals, gong, tambourine. offstage band: snare drum, bass drum with cymbal attached
1952	Symphony No. IV <sup>39</sup>	Morton Gould	timpani, bass drum, cymbals, chimes, marching machine, snare drum, tubular bells, xylophone
1967	Variations on a Korean Folk Song <sup>40</sup>	John Barnes Chance	timpani, glockenspiel, vibraphone, xylophone, snare drum, bass drum, suspended cymbals, crash cymbals, gong, temple blocks, triangle

<sup>36</sup> The Wind Repertory Project. [Shepherd's Hey](http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s_Hey).  
[http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s\\_Hey](http://www.windrep.org/Shepherd%27s_Hey) Accessed 10-9-16.

<sup>37</sup> The Wind Repertory Project. [Lincolnshire Posie](http://www.windrep.org/Lincolnshire_Posy).  
[http://www.windrep.org/Lincolnshire\\_Posy](http://www.windrep.org/Lincolnshire_Posy) Accessed 10-9-16.

<sup>38</sup> The Wind Repertory Project. [La Fiesta Mexicana](http://www.windrep.org/La_Fiesta_Mexicana).  
[http://www.windrep.org/La\\_Fiesta\\_Mexicana](http://www.windrep.org/La_Fiesta_Mexicana). Accessed 10-9-16.

<sup>39</sup> The Wind Repertory Project. [Symphony No. IV \(Gould\)](http://www.windrep.org/Symphony_IV_(Gould)).  
[http://www.windrep.org/Symphony\\_IV\\_\(Gould\)](http://www.windrep.org/Symphony_IV_(Gould)). Accessed 10-9-16.)

<sup>40</sup> John Barnes Chance. *Variations on a Korean Folk Song*. (New York City, NY: Boosey & Hawkes, 1967).

1972	Chorale and Shaker Dance <sup>41</sup>	John Zdechlik	timpani, glockenspiel, xylophone, snare drum, bass drum, crash cymbals, suspended cymbals, triangle
1988	A Child's Garden of Dreams <sup>42</sup>	David Maslanka	glockenspiel, marimba, vibraphone, xylophone, snare drum, bass drum, tenor drum, triangle, tambourine, bongos, crash cymbals, suspended cymbals, hi-hat, gong, tam-tam, antique cymbals, (c, c#, d,) crystal wine glasses, anvil, ratchet, slide whistle, temple blocks, woodblock
1991	Gavorkna Fanfare <sup>43</sup>	Jack Stamp	timpani, snare drum, bass drum, crash cymbals, gong, glockenspiel, tubular bells, vibraphone, crotales, anvil, sleigh bells, triangle
1997	Concertino for Four Percussion and Wind Ensemble <sup>44</sup>	David Gillingham	solo percussion 1: timpani, bells, crash cymbal, bass drums, tam-tam. solo percussion 2: marimba, xylophone, tam-tam solo percussion 3: marimba, hi-hat solo percussion 4: vibraphone, chimes, triangle, bass drums
1999	Vesuvius <sup>45</sup>	Frank Ticheli	timpani, snare drum, bass drum, tom-toms, bongos, suspended cymbal, gong,

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<sup>41</sup> John Zdechlik. Chorale and Shaker Dance. (San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1972).

<sup>42</sup> David Maslanka. A Child's Garden of Dreams. (New York City, NY: Carl Fischer, 1988).

<sup>43</sup> Jack Stamp. Gavorkna Fanfare. (San Diego, CA: Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 1991).

<sup>44</sup> David Gillingham. Concertino for Four Percussion and Wind Ensemble. (Greensboro, NC: C. Alan Publications, 1999.)

<sup>45</sup> Ticheli.

			crotale, marimba, vibraphone, xylophone, triangle, tambourine, temple blocks, ratchet, slapstick.
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### Selecting the Beginning Percussion Student

Beginning band students are often attracted to the percussion section because of the “color of the percussion sound.”<sup>46</sup> Therefore, recruiting for percussion is very easy. When selecting beginning band students it is important to fit them for an instrument “according to their physical and mental capacities.”<sup>47</sup> The same is true for selecting the percussion section. “The physical requirements for becoming a good percussion player are obvious. Natural rhythmic feeling, coordination, dexterity, and agility.”<sup>48</sup> The expression “anyone can play a drum” is a misconception and it should be stressed from the beginning that being a percussionist requires practice and the student is expected to learn snare drum, keyboard percussion, timpani, and accessories.<sup>49</sup> Once students understand these expectations the director can proceed to the percussion test.

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<sup>46</sup> Charles L. Spohn and John J. Tatgenhorst, The Percussion: Performance and Instructional Technique 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed., (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc., 1971), 8.

<sup>47</sup> Larry W. McCormick “The School Percussion Section.” Percussion Anthology: A Compendium of Articles from The Instrumentalist, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Northfield, Ill: The Instrumentalist Company, 1995), 215.

<sup>48</sup> McCormick, 215.

<sup>49</sup> Michael Dick, Starting Beginner Percussion, <file:///D:/Thesis%20Documents/texas%20bandmasters%20june%206,%202016.pdf> accessed 10-9-16)

A percussion test should provide criteria for selecting the percussion student such as singing or playing back rhythmic patterns, keeping time to recorded music, demonstrate an ability to match pitch, and even hold the sticks and play some instruments.<sup>50</sup>

Michael Dick from the Texas Bandmaster's Association recommends using the following rhythm/coordination test:

- Sit in a chair and face me
- Turn a metronome on 72 beats per minute with quarter notes
- Have the students tap their right foot with you mirroring (left foot)
- While tapping the foot, clap your hands with the beat
- They will probably get this – ask them “Is it easy?”, “Which directions did your foot go?”, “What part of the beat were you clapping on?”, etc.
- Then have them tap their foot and clap on the up-beat (this will show a lot)
  - Clap/Count Procedure
    - In 4/4 time
    - Clap/Count Random
      - You count 1,2,3,4
      - Clap on 1,2,3 or 4 – change this up
    - Clap/Count Sequential
      - You count 1,2,3,4
      - Clap on 1 in 1st measure, 2 in 2nd measure, 3 in 3rd measure and 4 in 4th measure
      - This makes them think!
    - Have them tap their right foot, then tap their right leg, then add tapping their left leg in an alternating motion in eighth notes (right, left, right, left, etc.)
    - Go to a table and play some simple-to-hard rhythms for them to play back to you
    - Have them sing/hum a couple of pitches to you (F, Bb)<sup>51</sup>

Dick also says he prefers students with a piano background as that helps

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<sup>50</sup> Gary D. Cook Teaching Percussion, (Belmon, CA: Schirmer Books, 1997), 12.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

them “grasp the concepts more quickly.”<sup>52</sup> John Kinyon agrees stating,

A grounding in piano study which will have provided the serious young student with an understanding of the elements of rhythm and melody as well as familiarity with both treble and bass clefs may well serve as a major qualification.<sup>53</sup>

### **Recommended Methods for Teaching Percussion in the Beginning Band**

Many books discuss the mechanics of playing percussion, but few explain how to teach percussion in the context of a full band rehearsal. In his book, *Teaching Percussion*, Gary Cook writes that “...a regular meeting time for training percussionists *must* be established.”<sup>54</sup> Cook also says that percussion sectionals are necessary and should be a top priority because of the number of instruments a student must learn and all the techniques associated with each instrument.<sup>55</sup> He does not discuss how to teach beginning percussionists in a heterogeneous band class.

As percussionists advance through the band program they will be asked to play a larger variety of percussion instruments. The students will be better prepared for each new challenge if they are required to play everything from the beginning. As Peter Loel Boonshaft puts it, “How sad it is to see a young person

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<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Kinyon, 119.

<sup>54</sup> Cook, 10.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 11.

who possesses great skill on the snare drum, but is incapable of tuning timpani or playing a scale on the xylophone. Certainly students will have strengths and weaknesses, but we cannot allow our students to stunt their growth by only focusing on one area of their education."<sup>56</sup>

There are different philosophies on teaching percussion at the beginning level. One idea is to start percussionists in the second year of band. They are required to have one year on another band instrument.<sup>57</sup> The advantages seem to be that it may limit the number of percussionists and may allow for more attention to the brass and woodwinds. One disadvantage of this approach, from my viewpoint, is that once percussionists have been switched over they are now a year behind in skills on percussion. It may be that some of them can catch up quickly because they have already spent a year reading music.

Regardless of the grade level at which a percussionist begins, instruction should include time on the snare drum and keyboard instruments, (bells, xylophone, marimba, vibes, chimes, and others).<sup>58</sup>

*In Developing the Complete Band Program*, Shelley Jagow recommends students start on keyboard percussion only. Her rationale is that students need to learn musical notation and theory along with the rest of the band. "Be

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<sup>56</sup> Peter Loel Boonshaft. Teaching Music With Purpose, (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2006), 60.

<sup>57</sup> Boonshaft, 61.

<sup>58</sup> Cook, 12.

prepared to explain a sound rationale to parents and students who 'just want to play drums.'"<sup>59</sup> After they have been playing keyboard percussion for a couple months they can be rotated on different percussion instruments as the method book and literature allows. No one should be just a snare drummer or just a keyboard player. The teacher should create a percussion assignment chart so that parts are evenly distributed.<sup>60</sup>

During a beginning band rehearsal, it is important to rotate players throughout the class period. For example, a student who plays snare drum in the warm-up moves to mallets for technical studies and then to bass drum in the method book or literature.<sup>61</sup> Beginning band method books have musical selections that range from four to sixteen measures.

In my own experience as a solo instructor in a beginning band program I have arranged my percussion section in such a way that each student rotates to their right moving from bass drum to snare drum to cymbals to mallets and then back to bass drum. In the course of one beginning band rehearsal a student has played each percussion instrument at least once. This can be modified depending on what percussion instrument the method book requires. Sometimes a

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<sup>59</sup> Shelley Jagow. Developing the Complete Band Program. (Galesville, MD: Meredith Music Publications, 2007) 225.

<sup>60</sup> Jagow, 226.

<sup>61</sup> James A. Middleton, Larry Vanlandingham, et. al. The Complete School Band Program. (West Nyack, NY: Parker Publishing Company, Inc., 1975) 124.

tambourine, triangle, or woodblock is thrown into the mix and there is a station set-up for that as well.

J. Si Millican, author of *Starting Out Right: Beginning Band Pedagogy*, recommends students should start out on snare drum first because it teaches "...proper grip, playing spot, and technique."<sup>62</sup> This approach then transfers to the other percussion instruments. Millican also recommends teaching both snare and keyboard percussion in beginning band. Although, he does not make clear when to introduce the keyboard percussion. However, balancing keyboard percussion with snare drum helps to emphasize to the student that you are teaching "complete percussionists" and not "drummers."<sup>63</sup>

### **Discipline and the Percussion Section**

David G. Reul says that many discipline problems in beginning band are a result of poor planning, with the percussion section being notorious for disruptions. They have a loosely designed seating chart and they occupy the back of the room where they can freely roam. Regardless of the instrument beginning percussionists start on, it is imperative that they be included in the daily lessons. It is the fault of band directors when they spend a large amount of rehearsal time working with the wind section with little or no time devoted to the

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<sup>62</sup> J. Si Millican. *Starting Out Right: Beginning Band Pedagogy*. (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2012) 84.

<sup>63</sup> Millican, 96.

percussion. The percussionists need to be given a seating chart and kept involved throughout the band rehearsal.<sup>64</sup>

In a 1992 article in *The Instrumentalist*, Kerry Hart says, "The physical distance between the podium and percussion section becomes a psychological distance."<sup>65</sup> It is easy to feel close to the flutes and clarinets because they are next to the director at every rehearsal. "The physical set-up alone makes the drummers feel removed from the conductor and the rest of the band."<sup>66</sup> The first challenge is to make percussionists feel like they are a part of the band. Each percussionist should be assigned a part on every selection. They should also be rotated through the various percussion instruments.

Another problem is the literature. The percussion parts are so different from brass and woodwind parts that the percussion students can feel separated on a musical level. Hart suggests implementing percussion ensembles in beginning bands to teach young percussion students how to play musically so they can understand their role within the band.<sup>67</sup>

A third problem suggested by Hart is that most percussionists do not own their own instrument. While the brass and woodwind sections have an

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<sup>64</sup> David G. Reul. Getting Started With Middle Level Band. (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference, 1994) 21.

<sup>65</sup> Kerry Hart. "Disruptive Percussion Sections." Percussion Anthology: A Compendium of Articles from The Instrumentalist, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Northfield, Ill: The Instrumentalist Company, 1995) 775.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid, 775.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 775.

instrument to assemble and maintain, the percussion section can walk in to the band room knowing that most of their equipment is already set-up, and that they only have to retrieve a few items from a cabinet or storage room. The director can foster a sense of propriety by assigning each student a percussion instrument to care for and set-up rotating responsibilities over time. The discipline of the percussion section will improve as students learn to take care of and maintain their equipment.<sup>68</sup>

The final problem Hart mentions is the inevitable multi-measure rest. If a triangle player misses a note after fifty-two measures of rest the director is less tolerant of the player missing one note and more forgiving of a flute player missing one note in a long series of notes. Every conductor has rehearsed a section of music and stopped just before a percussion entrance. The director can solve this matter by telling the percussion players to relax, (or look over their coming entrance) until the section of music has been worked out.<sup>69</sup>

If a band has a heavy percussion section one solution suggested by Peter Loel Boonshaft is to have students play "air" drums.

In an effort to have every percussionist play as often as possible without creating so much volume as to be overwhelming, I suggest building or buying comparatively silent instruments to augment traditional instruments. This is simply the use of practice pads taken to the extreme.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Ibid, 775.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid, 775.

<sup>70</sup> Boonshaft, 54.

For example, if a piece of music calls for seven players but you have fifteen percussionists you would assign the parts to seven players while the remaining eight play air instruments that are either a practice pad or made out of a cardboard box. (Air xylophone, bells, and etc. would be cut into the shape of the keyboard layout). The air drummers are staged behind and to the side of the traditional instrument creating a "...diagonal row moving away from the conductor."<sup>71</sup> During the course of the rehearsal students can switch from the air instruments to the traditional instruments instantaneously because they will have their sticks or mallets in their hands and the music is already on the stand. It is up to the director to ensure that every student has had a turn on a traditional instrument and then post a permanent part assignment prior to the concert. "The bottom line is that all the percussionists are on task and truly engaged in rehearsals."<sup>72</sup>

The director should teach the percussion section responsibility. The percussionists need to be shown how to care for, maintain, transport, and store their equipment. Percussionists need to know when to play and when not to play.<sup>73</sup> "One of the things you find with any level group is you need to keep expectations clear."<sup>74</sup> Understanding what causes students to misbehave is the

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 55.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 56.

<sup>73</sup> Millican, 85.

<sup>74</sup> Dr. Russell Jones, interview by author, Pittsburg, Kansas, September 12, 2016.

key to preventing percussion section problems. When percussionists receive attention they will reciprocate during rehearsals.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Hart, 776.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **DESIGN, ADMINISTRATION, AND RESULTS OF THE SURVEY**

#### **Development of the Survey**

A questionnaire was developed to determine methods of instruction used by band directors who teach or have taught beginning band as a solo teacher. The statements and topics on the questionnaire were drawn from the researcher's and advisor's experience. The questions were compiled into a Google Form for ease of administration and data collection.

#### **Administration of the Survey**

In August 2016 the questionnaire was posted on the Missouri Music Educator's and Southwest Missouri Music Educator's Facebook pages and emailed to directors using the Pittsburg State University Jazz Festival email list and a list of Arkansas band director's emails from the advisor. The PSU Jazz Festival email list contained 146 emails and the Arkansas band director email list contained twenty-three emails. A link to the survey was posted a second time to the MMEA and SWMMEA Facebook pages a month later in order to gain more responses. In total thirty-one band directors completed the survey.

## Data Collection

By using Google Forms, the questionnaire results are automatically collected and organized into graphs and charts. The results were also downloaded as a spreadsheet to view individual answers.

## Results

The results of the survey are presented in the following tables. The tables appear in the order in which they occurred in the questionnaire. Following each of these tables will be a short discussion in response to the results. The blank column is used when an answer was left blank by the respondent.

### Results for Question 1

The first question is, "Are you the only band director in your school or district?"

**Table 1. Number and Percentage of Sole Directors in their School or District.**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	%No	Blank	%Blank
31	21	67.7%	10	32.3%	0	0%

The table shows over a two-thirds majority of surveyed directors are the sole band director for beginning band.

## Results for Question 2

The second question is, "If you answered 'No' to the previous question, have you served in the past as the only beginning band director in a school district or building?"

**Table 2. Number and Percentage of Band Directors Answering "No" to Question 1 that Taught Beginning Band Alone in the Past.**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	%No	Blank	%Blank
17	17	100%	0	0%	14	54%

The table shows the directors who answered "No" to Question 1 have taught beginning band alone at a previous school or district. This question has fewer respondents because it is only required based on the answer to Question 1.

Since the questionnaire is intended for directors who teach beginning band by themselves a caveat follows Question 2 as follows,

If you answered no to questions 1 & 2, you do not need to continue. If you wish to continue the survey you are welcome to do so. If you were the sole director in the past, answer according to what you did at that time.

According to the results, all thirty-one directors who started taking the survey completed it, although some may have started and not sent it in.

### Results for Question 3

The third question is, "What is the approximate size of your school district in grades 6-12?"

**Table 3. Size of Respondent's School District by Size for Grades 6-12.**

Response Options	Number of Responses	Response %	Estimated Grade Level Population Range
Under 50	0	0%	0
51-100	2	6.5%	7-15
101-200	3	9.7%	14-28
201-300	4	12.9%	29-43
301-400	2	6.5%	44-57
401-500	4	12.9%	57-71
501-600	2	6.5%	72-85
601-700	1	3.2%	86-100
701-800	1	3.2%	101-114
Over 800	12	38.7%	114+

The table shows the size of each respondents' school district for grades 6-12 where they currently or previously taught beginning band as the sole director. The "Average Grade Level Population" was figured by dividing the lowest and highest populations for each level by seven, (for the seven grades 6-12). In order to keep a whole number, the quotient was rounded up based on the numbers following the decimal point. The most common school size for grades 6-12 was "Over 800." That means an average of at least 114 students per grade level. There was no response for schools with a 6-12 population under fifty. It is likely that there were no school systems that small.

### Results for Question 4

The fourth question is, "How many students start in beginning band on average?"

**Table 4. Beginning Band Size and School Populations**

Beginning Band Size	Grade Level Population Range	Estimated Grade Level Population Average	Estimated Percentage of Students in Band	6-12 Population Range	Responses and Percentage of Responses
14	14-28	21	67%	101-200	1 - 3.2 %
15	7-15	11	100% *	51-100	2 – 6.5%
17	7-15	11	100% *	51-100	1 – 3.2
18	14-28 57-71	21 65	85% 27%	101-200 401-500	2 – 6.5
20	44-57	51	39%	301-400	2 – 6.5
25	14-28 29-43 57-71	21 35 65	100% * 71% 38%	101-200 201-300 (2 responses) 401-500)	4 – 12.9
30	29-43	35	85%	201-300	2 – 6.5
30 per school	114+	114	26%	Over 800	1 – 3.2
35	57-71	65	53%	401-500	1 – 3.2
50	114+	114	43%	Over 800	1 -3.2%
60	114+ 72-85	114 79	52% 75%	Over 800 (2 responses) 501-600	3 – 9.7

63	114+	114	55%	Over 800	1 - 3.2%
70	114+	114	61%	Over 800	1 - 3.2%
75	86-100	93	80%	601-700	2 - 6.5%
100	114+	114	87%	Over 800	1 - 3.2%
140	114+	114	100% *	Over 800	1 - 3.2%
150	114+	114	100% *	Over 800	2 - 6.5%
180	114+	114	100% *	Over 800	1 - 3.2%
200 in 5 schools	114+	114	35% (per school)	Over 800	1 - 3.2%

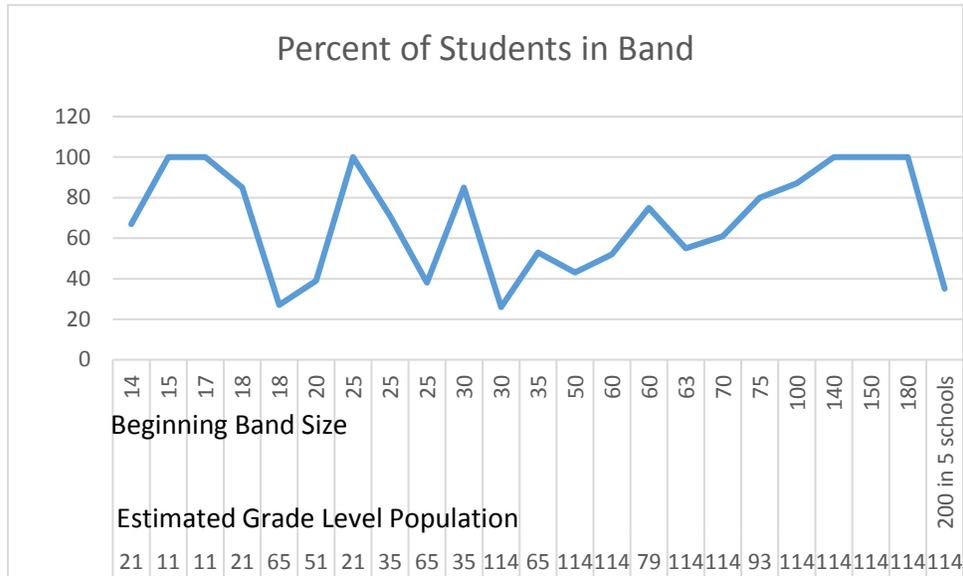
\*In the above table, all estimated percentages above 100% were rounded down to 100%.

The estimated percentage of students participating in band ranged from approximately 26% to 100%. These are rough approximations but they give us a general idea.

The smallest band size was 14, which includes one school or 3.2% of those surveyed. The largest band size was 180, which includes one school or 3.2% of those surveyed. The most common beginning band size is twenty-five, which includes 12.9% of the schools surveyed. The response "30 per school" did not specify how many schools were involved. The response, "200 in 5 schools" means an average of at least forty beginning band students per school.

The graph below best illustrates the trend between Beginning Band Size, Average Grade Level Population, and Percentage of Students in Beginning Band.

**Table 4.1 Percentage of Students in Beginning Band**



The schools that initially showed over 100% were rounded down to 100%. At any rate there is no clear trend or correlation with grade level size and beginning band size. We might expect to see larger percentages in smaller schools but that does not seem to be the case here.

The most stable trend is seen between band sizes of sixty to 100. At band sizes of 140 and up and it is assumed that the trend would either plateau or drop.

Since there is not a steady trend overall, the beginning band size of a given school can depend on any number of factors such as recruiting efforts,

successes or history of band program, administrative support, and the abilities of the teacher.

### Results for Question 5

The fifth question is "How many percussionists do you start on average?"

**Table 5. Average Number of Percussionists in Beginning Band**

Number of Percussionists Started	Responses	Response Percentage
0	1	3.2%
0 All students had to play a wind instrument for a year and then audition to start percussion	1	3.2%
0-2	1	3.2%
2	2	6.4%
2-3	1	3.2%
3	4	12.9%
4	6	19.3%
5	1	3.2%
5 per school	1	3.2%
7	5	16.1%
7-8	1	3.2%
8	3	9.6%
11	1	3.2%
15	1	3.2%
20	1	3.2%

Depends how many can pass the coordination test that is administered by me.	1	3.2%
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The results were grouped together by like numbers from smallest to largest in the above table. The most common number of beginning percussionists is four with six responses or 19.3% of the responses. The second most common number of beginning percussionists is seven with five responses or 16.1%.

There were two responses for zero starting percussionists. Two respondents clarified their answers by saying that anyone who wanted to play percussion had to spend a year on a wind instrument. One of the directors has different numbers each year depending on how many students pass a coordination test, but did not give an estimate or average of how many started.

**Table 5.1 Percentage of Percussionists in Beginning Band**

Beginning Band Size	Number of Percussionists Started	% of Percussion in Whole Band
14	0	0%
15	2-3%	13.3% to 20%
17	4	23.5%
18	2-3	11.1% to 16.7%
20	2-3	10% to 15%
25	0-4	0% to 16%

30	4-5	13.3% to 16.6%
30 per school	4	13.3%
35	7	20%
50	7	14%
60	7	11.7%
63	8	12.7%
70	4	5.7%
75	7-8	9.3% to 10.7%
100	20	20%
140	This respondent did not specify how many percussionists they start in beginning band although they admit they start percussion later in the year based on various factors.	
150	8-15	5.3% to 10%
180	11	6.1%
200 in 5 schools	5 (per school)	12.5%

The table shows that the percentage of percussionists that start in beginning band can vary based on director preference, student choice, and other factors. The percentages mostly ranged between 10% and 20%. The highlighted cells show those schools with a percentage below 10% and above 20%. When sections are put in terms of percentages you can truly see which sections of the band are more dominant. The school that starts seventeen in band is comprised of nearly 25% percussion while the school that starts 180 is only 6.1% percussion. The percentage of other sections in the band was not asked on this

survey. However, it is important to note that percussion parts in band literature are not intended for a single player.

It is interesting to observe that the larger schools in general have a lower percentage of percussionists than the smaller schools. There are two possible reasons for this. One reason is that a certain number of players are needed to cover all the percussion parts. Another possibility is to supply a reasonable number of players for marching band.

### **Results for Question 6**

The sixth question is, "Did (or do) you have difficulty trying to schedule adequate instruction time for the variety of percussion instruments that need to be taught?"

**Table 6. Number and Percentage of Directors Having Difficulty Scheduling Instruction Time for Variety of Percussion Instruments.**

Total Responses	Yes	% Yes	No	% No
31	22	71%	9	29%

The table shows that a clear majority of surveyed directors have difficulty scheduling instructional time for teaching the variety of percussion instruments.

## Results for Question 7

The seventh question is, "Do you teach other subjects besides band?"

**Table 7. Subjects Taught Other than Band**

Subject	Responses	Response %
Choir	6	19.4%
Orchestra	0	0%
Music Appreciation	12	38.7%
Elementary General Music	2	6.5%
Guitar Class	1	3.25
Other (including band)	17	54.8%

All thirty-one directors surveyed responded to Question 7 but there are 38 total responses as directors were allowed to select more than one choice. Those who selected more than one answer taught: Music Appreciation and Elementary General Music; Choir and Music Appreciation; Music Appreciation and Music Theory; Music Appreciation and Piano; and Music Appreciation and Guitar Class.

For the "Other" option the respondents were allowed to enter a response. The "Other" responses were Music Theory, Piano or they did not teach a subject

other than band. Out of thirty-one respondents, fourteen, or 45.2%, did not teach a subject other than band.

### Results for Question 8

The eighth question is "What is your role in the band program in your school? Select all that apply."

**Table 8. Director's Role in Their Band Program**

Role	Responses	Response %
High School Director	21	67.7%
Assistant High School Director	2	6.5%
Middle School Director	25	80.6%
Assistant Middle School Director	3	9.7%
Intermediate School Director	3	9.7%
Assistant Intermediate School Director	0	0%
Elementary School Director	7	22.6%
Assistant Elementary School Director	0	0%
Other	1	3.2%

Question 8 allows the respondent to select multiple options because a head director at the high school may be the assistant at the middle school and vice-versa. This assumption was only true for two of those surveyed. Of those one was the Assistant High School Director and the Middle School Director. Another was the High School Director and Assistant Middle School Director. The remaining respondents were either the head, (or only) director at all levels or they taught just middle school.

The one respondent who selected "Other" is also the District Accompanist. Based on the response to Question 7 they also teach Choir and Music Appreciation. That teacher also indicated in Question 6 to having a difficult time finding adequate instruction time to teach the various percussion instruments.

The next table deals with the related question of "Did band directors who teach subjects other than band also have a difficult time finding adequate instruction time to teach the various percussion instruments?" This is shown in the table below.

**Table 8.1 Directors Teaching Subjects Besides Band Who Answered 'Yes' to Question 6.**

Has Difficulty Scheduling Time for Percussion	Subjects Taught Besides Band	Role in the Band Program
Yes	Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation, Elementary General Music	High School Director, Middle School Director, Intermediate School

		Director, Elementary School Director
Yes	None	Assistant High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	Choir, Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director, District Accompanist
Yes	Music Appreciation, Music Theory	High School Director, Assistant Middle School Director, Intermediate School Director
Yes	Choir, Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	No	Middle School Director
Yes	None	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	I teach no other subjects	Middle School Director
Yes	just band	High School Director
Yes	Choir, Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	Choir	High School Director, Middle School Director, Elementary School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation, Piano	High School Director, Middle School Director, Elementary School Director
Yes	N/A	High School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation	High School Director, Elementary School Director
Yes	No	Middle School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	None	High School Director
Yes	No	Middle School Director
Yes	None	High School Director, Middle School Director
Yes	Music Appreciation, Guitar Class	High School Director, Middle School Director, Intermediate School Director

Of the thirty-one respondents, twenty-two (70%), said they had difficulty finding adequate instruction time to teach the various percussion instruments. Of those twenty-two, twelve taught one class other than band, and seven taught more than one class that was not band. Twenty of the respondents in Table 8.1 are either the head director at the high school, middle school, intermediate, and/or elementary school, or they are the sole director for the school district. Between the remaining two respondents one is the assistant director at the high school and head director at the middle school and the other is the head director at the high school and the assistant director at the middle school.

The reason for having difficulty scheduling instruction time for percussion is clear as nineteen, or 61%, out of thirty-one respondents teach a class other than band. This means time spent preparing lessons, grading assignments, and possibly rehearsing outside of normal school hours.

Nine of the teachers indicated that they did not have difficulty scheduling adequate rehearsal time for teaching percussion. Their roles and responsibilities are shown in the table on the following page.

**Table 8.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Directors Who Do Not Have Difficulty Scheduling Instruction Time for Beginning Percussion.**

Does Not Have Difficulty Scheduling Time for Percussion Instruction	Subjects Taught Besides Band	Role in the Band Program
No	None	Middle School Director
No	None	Elementary School Director

No	None	Middle School Director
No	None	Middle School Director, Elementary School Director
No	Choir	High School Director, Middle School Director
No	Choir	High School Director, Middle School Director, Assistant Middle School Director
No	Music Appreciation	High School Director, Middle School Director
No	Elementary General Music	High School Director, Middle School Director, Elementary School Director
No	None	Assistant High School Director, Middle School Director, Assistant Middle School Director

Of the nine who do not have difficulty scheduling time for teaching beginning percussion five, or 55.6%, do not teach a subject other than band. Three out of those five only teach band at one level. None of those three teach high school band. Only four out of nine, or 44.4%, teach a class other than band. The reason these four do not have difficulty scheduling instruction time for percussion is unclear. Only one of these four start percussion in the second year of band.

## Results for Question 9

The ninth question is “What method book do you use for beginning band?”

**Table 9. Method Book Used in Beginning Band**

Method Book	# Used	% Used
Accent on Achievement	2	6.5%
Essential Elements	9	29%
Essential Elements 2000	7	22.6%
Measures of Success	1	3.2%
Sound Innovations	3	9.7%
Standard of Excellence	7	22.6%
Traditions of Excellence	2	6.5%

There were two versions of Essential Elements given as a response, “Essential Elements”<sup>76</sup> and “Essential Elements 2000.”<sup>77</sup> The original series of “Essential Elements” was published in 1991.<sup>78</sup> It may be assumed that the respondent meant “Essential Elements 2000” but only answered “Essential

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<sup>76</sup> Tom C. Rhoades, John Higgins. Essential Elements. (Milwaukee, WI. Hal Leonard Corporation, 1991).

<sup>77</sup> Tim Lautzenheiser, et. al. Essential Elements 2000: Conductor Book 1. (Milwaukee, WI. Hal Leonard Corporation, 1999).

<sup>78</sup> Rhodes.

Elements” as it is more commonly known. Regardless, they are listed as two different responses in the table.

The most common method book used by the respondents is Essential Elements at 29%. The second most common method books are Essential Elements 2000 and Standard of Excellence both at 22.6%.

Essential Elements 2000,

takes a complete percussion approach. Each regular student page is expanded to a two-page spread which includes the optional auxiliary percussion parts and clear playing instructions for all instruments.”<sup>79</sup>

The keyboard percussion music is in the last forty-eight pages of the book.<sup>80</sup>

Standard of Excellence provides three possible systems for starting percussion. System 1: Starting in private lessons or like-instrument (homogenous) settings. Directors may choose how they want their beginning percussionists to start. With System 1 they may choose to begin on snare only or keyboard percussion only. The director’s choice will determine which page in the percussion book their percussionists start.<sup>81</sup>

System 2: Starting the percussion as a section. In this system students will have two books. One book contains music for drums and mallets and a

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<sup>79</sup> Lautzenheiser, 11.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, 11.

<sup>81</sup> Bruce Pearson. Standard of Excellence Conductor Book 1 (San Diego, CA. Neil A. Kjos Music Company, 2004). 37

second book contains music for timpani and auxiliary percussion. The author, Bruce Pearson, recommends using both books from the beginning.<sup>82</sup>

System 3: Starting in full band settings. "All students begin together on page 6 (score page 74). Even if some or all students have used one of the other starting systems, page 6 is the best place to start at the first full band rehearsal."<sup>83</sup> In the student percussion book page 6 takes up a two-page spread. Unlike Essential Elements 2000, Standard of Excellence is set up where the left page is the snare drum and on the right page is the keyboard percussion page. It continues in this format for the remainder of the book. The "drums" page introduces bass drum and the auxiliary instruments such as triangle, crash cymbals, suspended cymbal, tambourine, and woodblock.<sup>84</sup>

### Results for Question 10

The tenth question is, "Do you use any supplemental books for percussion in beginning band?"

**Table 10. Supplemental Books for Percussion in Beginning Band**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	% No	Blank	% Blank
31	6	19.4%	25	80.6%	0	0%

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, 37.

<sup>84</sup> Pearson, 6.

It does not come as much surprise that 80.6% of the respondents do not use a supplemental percussion book in beginning band as the questionnaire is intended for those directors who teach beginning band by themselves.

### Results for Question 11

The eleventh question is, "If you answered 'Yes' to the previous question please list the supplemental books you use for percussion in beginning band."

**Table 11. Supplemental Percussion Books**

Book	Responses
Wessels Books	1
Heim-Drum Class Method	1
Can't remember name at this time	1
Simple Steps to Successful Beginning Percussion, Wylie	1
Band Awards System	1
Not books, but plenty of handouts	1

Answering question eleven was optional and only received six responses. The directors who answered use a variety of supplemental percussion books.

### Results for Question 12

The twelfth question is "What grade-level is beginning band?"

**Table 12. Grade Level in Which Beginning Band Starts.**

Grade Level	Response Number	Response Percent
Fifth Grade	11	35.5%
Sixth Grade	18	58.1%
Seventh Grade	2	6.5%
Other	0	0%

Over half of the respondents have beginning band in sixth grade. Thirty-five percent start in fifth grade and the remaining 6.5% begin in seventh grade.

### **Results for Question 13**

The thirteenth question is "How long is your beginning band class time?"

**Table 13. Length of Beginning Band Class Time**

Class Length	Response Number	Response Percent
20-30 Minutes	7	22.6%
31-39 Minutes	4	12.9%
40-49 Minutes	14	45.2%
50+ Minutes	6	19.4%

Almost half of the respondents have a class that is 40-49 minutes long. Questions regarding days per week and school scheduling systems are answered in Questions 14 and 15. Table 15.1 breaks down individual responses to each of these three questions.

### **Results for Question 14**

The fourteenth question is "How many days per week does beginning band meet?"

**Table 14. Number of Days Per Week That Beginning Band Meets**

Number Per Week	Response Number	Response Percent
1	0	0%
2	3	9.7%
2 ½ (alternating days)	4	12.9%
3	3	9.7%
4	3	9.7%
5	18	58.1%

**Results for Question 15**

The fifteenth question is “Which scheduling style best describes your situation for beginning band?”

**Table 15. Scheduling Types for School Districts**

Scheduling Type	Response Number	Response Percent
Traditional Scheduling	20	64.5%
Block Scheduling	2	6.5%
Rotating Scheduling	7	22.6%
Modular or Flex Scheduling	0	0%
Other	2	6.5%

The majority of respondents have traditional schedules where they meet five times a week at the same time. Block scheduling is rare at the elementary school level. Block scheduling is characterized by “longer class periods (approximately ninety minutes in length).”<sup>85</sup> The alternative form of block

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<sup>85</sup> Darwin E. Walker. Teaching Music: Managing the Successful Music Program. (New York, NY: Schirmer Books, 1998) 141.

scheduling is sometimes known as A/B or odd/even. This involves a “prescribed block of four courses on day one and a different set of four courses on day 2.”<sup>86</sup> Rotating scheduling is based on traditional scheduling except classes are interchanged to “add an additional class without lengthening the school day. In essence, what results is a seven-period schedule in a six-period day.”<sup>87</sup> Modular or Flex Scheduling “changes schedule patterns on a weekly as well as a daily basis...module lengths stay the same for the entire length of the schedule...the average is twenty minutes in length.”<sup>88</sup> The two respondents who selected “Other” could fill in what their scheduling is like. One wrote, “Meet with like instruments one day per week.” This respondent also said beginning band is five days per week at 40-49 minutes. It can be assumed each day might be a different section coming in for rehearsal. While this may be a very focused rehearsal for individual instruments it seems as though building consistency would be problematic. The other respondent wrote “Students meet during enrichment.” They also meet four days a week for 20-30 minutes. For some schools this may be the best solution to keep band in the schedule. They mention on a later response that they split into like-instrument classes for a shorter class period.

Questions twelve through fifteen deal with the scheduling of beginning band. While there may be a clear majority for each response, the scheduling

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 134

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 138.

type and length of class times vary from school to school. The responses have been organized by length of class time and grade level.

**Table 15.1 Individual Scheduling Responses**

Grade Level for Beginning Band	Length of Beginning Band	Days Per Week of Beginning Band	Schedule Style for Beginning Band
5 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	2 1/2 (alternating days)	Rotating scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	3	Rotating scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	3	Rotating scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	2 1/2 (alternating days)	Block scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	31-39 minutes	5	Rotating scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	31-39 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	31-39 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	31-39 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	31-39 minutes	5	Rotating scheduling
5 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	2	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	2	Rotating scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	20-30 minutes	4	Students meet during enrichment
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	2	Rotating scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling

6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	5	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	4	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	2 1/2 (alternating days)	Block scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	3	Traditional scheduling
6 <sup>th</sup>	50+ minutes	2 1/2 (alternating days)	Rotating scheduling
7 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	4	Traditional scheduling
7 <sup>th</sup>	40-49 minutes	5	Traditional scheduling

There are two respondents who meet 2 1/2 days a week for 20-30 minutes, which is normally not considered an adequate amount of time. (They are highlighted in a dark gray). One is on block scheduling and the other is on a rotating schedule. Another respondent meets for 20-30 minutes 2 days a week on a rotating schedule, (highlighted in light gray). Establishing consistency from lesson to lesson might be a challenge for these three bands.

### Results for Question 16

The sixteenth question is "Have you ever requested scheduling changes to help with beginning band instruction?"

**Table 16. Directors Who Requested Scheduling Changes**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Yes, and They Accepted All or Part of My Request	13	41.9%
Yes, and they Denied My Request	9	29%
No	9	29%

Thirteen of the respondents made a scheduling request that was totally or partially accepted. Nine had their requests denied and another nine did not make a request. In total twenty-two, or 71%, made a scheduling change request with 59.9% having all or part of their requests accepted.

The scheduling changes that were accepted are answered in Question 17.

### Results for Question 17

The seventeenth question is "If part of your request was accepted please explain."

**Table 17. Scheduling Requests That Were Accepted.**

Responses	Response Number
I requested daily contact.	1
We used to have beginning band 3 days a week for 30 minutes. I requested more time.	1

How we divide brass and woodwind classes. Unfortunately, percussion gets stuck with either woodwind or brass.	1
6 <sup>th</sup> grade band used to be every day but they tried to get rid of it altogether. After protesting, they agreed to allow band to meet twice a week for 25 minutes.	1
I requested that beginning band meet in two classes that alternate days with percussion meeting every day, and that my class time was extended from 35 minutes to 45 minutes.	1
We can split like-instrumentation but for shorter class periods.	1
I usually need to change some schedule to get all my woodwinds in one class and brass and percussion in the other.	1
Multiple classes for beginners, split sectionals.	1
I requested that I only have two sections of beginning band as opposed to four. That was approved. I also asked for homogeneous classes. That was denied.	1

There is a lot of variety in these requests and responses, but these nine teachers were able to get some schedule changes made which usually met their needs more satisfactorily.

### Results for Question 18

The eighteenth question is "Do you start students on percussion in beginning band?"

**Table 18. Directors Who Start Percussion in Beginning Band.**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	% No
31	26	83.9%	5	16.1%

The majority of band directors who took the survey start percussion in beginning band. One reason may be that the respondent is the only director at that school or district and it is easier to for them to start all the instruments at once.

### Results for Question 19

The nineteenth question is "If you answered 'No' to the previous question, at what point do you start percussionists?" This question is only required if the respondent answered "No" to question eighteen. There were only five responses for question nineteen.

**Table 19. When Directors Start Beginning Percussion Other than Beginning Band**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Second Semester/later in the year of beginning band	0	0%
Second Year of Band	3	60%
Other	2	40%

For the "Other" option, the respondents were allowed to submit their own response. The "Other" responses were "After six weeks or so, all students must play off requirements in my 'rank system' to make an "A." This respondent explains:

All who make an A are then qualified to attempt the coordination test. If passed, they are allowed to switch to percussion. It is the ONLY way to go as those who are playing percussion now know all of their notes, and mallet percussion is a breeze. Since they are all coordinated, the complications of rolling, rhythms are not difficult to overcome."

Three of the respondents said they start percussionists in the second year of band. The remaining respondent said he/she start percussionists the “3<sup>rd</sup> year or after as needed.” The reason for this may be that they only start fourteen students on average in beginning band and in order to limit the number of percussionists they transfer students from a brass or woodwind instrument to cover a percussion part. This is intriguing because on question twenty they said there is a separate class for percussion in beginning band.

### **Results for Question 20**

The twentieth question is “Is there a separate class for percussion in beginning band?”

**Table 20. Directors Who Have a Separate Class For Beginning Percussion**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	% No	Blank	% Blank
31	8	25.8%	23	74.2%	0	0%

Of the thirty-one responses only eight have a separate class for beginning percussion students.

### Results for Question 21

The twenty-first question is "On which instrument(s) do your beginning percussion start?"

**Table 21. Instruments On Which Beginning Percussion Start**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Snare drum/practice pad	1	3.2%
Keyboard Percussion	6	19.4%
Alternates between snare/pad and keyboard percussion	19	61.3%
Woodwind or Brass Instrument	5	16.1%

Almost two-thirds of directors use the same idea as Gary Cook suggests, to start percussionists on both snare and keyboard percussion. Only five, or 16.1%, start percussionists on a woodwind or brass instrument.

### Results for Question 22

The twenty-second question is "If you chose 'Woodwind or Brass Instrument' on the previous question, select the response that best describes your rationale for not starting on percussion immediately. Select all that apply." This question only had six responders and sixteen responses. Only five people should have answered, based on the previous question. The question may have been unclear to one director. Respondents were allowed to select multiple answers.

**Table 22. Rationales for Not Starting Students on Percussion Immediately.**

Options	Response Number
Makes beginning instruction more efficient	3
Allows for more selectivity for percussionists	6
Allows easier control of numbers in percussion section	2
Musicianship can be transferred effectively to percussion from other instruments	4
Other	1

There is one response for "Other" and the respondent chose to clarify his/her answers. They chose "Makes beginning instruction more efficient" and "Allows easier control of numbers in percussion section." Their "Other" response is "After initiating this method, I had percussionists instead of drummers who were capable of achieving greatness immediately."

### **Results for Question 23**

The twenty-third question is "Do the beginning percussionists meet for rehearsal or lessons outside of class time?"

**Table 23. Percussionists Who Meet for Rehearsal or Lessons Outside of Class Time.**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Yes, as a full section	3	9.7%
Yes, as individual or small group lessons.	0	0%
Both	3	9.7%
No	25	80.6%

Out of thirty-one respondents twenty-five, or 80.6%, do not meet for lessons or rehearsal outside of class time. This is not surprising since 71% indicated on Question 6 that they have difficulty scheduling time to teach a variety of percussion instruments.

### Results for Question 24

The twenty-fourth question is “Do any of your beginning percussionists take lessons outside of school? Select all that apply.”

**Table 24. Percussionists That Take Lessons Outside of School**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Yes, with me.	3	9.7%
Yes, with another teacher in the band program or school district.	1	3.2%
Yes, at a music store.	5	16.1%
Yes, at a private studio.	4	12.9%
No.	20	64.5%

Almost two-thirds of the students do not take private lessons. Of those who do, about ten percent take lessons with their band teacher. The other twenty-five percent study with someone else.

### Results for Question 25

The twenty-fifth question is “Do you regularly schedule individual lessons or small group lesson for beginning band outside of class? Select all that apply.”

**Table 25. Directors That Regularly Schedule Lessons Outside of Class**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Yes, during study hall.	0	0%
Yes, before or after school.	4	12.5%
Yes, but pulled out of other classes.	0	0%
Very rarely or never.	28	87.5%

Clearly the vast majority of percussion students do not meet outside of scheduled class time.

**Results for Question 26**

The twenty-sixth question is "Are these lessons voluntary?" This is not a required question and only received twenty responses. The assumption is that the answers on this question were from the respondents whose students had some kind of instruction outside of regular class time as indicated in questions 24 and 25. This question may not have been clear to all respondents.

**Table 26. Number and Percentage of Voluntary Lessons**

Total Responses	Yes	%Yes	No	% No	Blank	% Blank
20	15	75%	5	25%	0	0%

Three-fourth of the respondents to question twenty-six give voluntary lessons. It can be assumed the remaining twenty-five percent have lessons that are compulsory or do not offer lessons whatsoever.

## Results for Question 27

The twenty-seventh question is “Briefly describe how you incorporate the percussion section into a lesson with the entire band.” This is a short answer question as respondents was required to write their own answers.

**Table 27. How Directors Incorporate the Percussion Section in a Full Band Lesson.**

I would have the full group play the exercise, then have each section play the exercise. Since the snare lines were typically different, I would often have the snares accompany the other sections.
During our run of scales (G, C, F, Bb, Eb, Ab, Db in quarter/eighth pattern) with the winds, the percussionists play rudiments designed to fit into the scale pattern. (that's just one instance)
They play their part in the book
Follow the lesson plans in the teacher resource book. If the lesson is wind specific, the percussionist have time to go into our practice rooms to work on rudiments/review keyboard exercises.
The same way as I do with each instrument.
I use the method book lines as a means to learn and practice percussion techniques while the wind players play the corresponding lines of music.
I have other students do homework, while I work with each section
Play same exercises as other instruments
They cover mallet and drum parts in the book
In an outside rehearsal, we include perc when prepping for a concert.
They participate just like any other student.
As set forth by the text

We follow the lesson progression in the method book.
Keyboard percussion is during regular class time. Snare is after school
It ain't easy - individual assignments in graduated instructional management system
Keyboard is easy in that they are playing along the same lines on melody parts. Their warm-up is slightly different in that we work on scales and sticking exercises while woodwinds wait.
They stand next to the flute and play bells until November. I switch them to pad in November and teach both bells/snare for the rest of the school year. They are in my woodwinds class. I do not have the time to have them meet on their own in the schedule.
Focus on any new material for any instrument, then apply that with the whole band exercises.
Only after all sections are combined on full band music
The percussion section learns notes on their keyboard instruments as the wind players do.
I treat them just like any other instrument section in the band. If they have special instructions or something different I spend time on it with them.
We only incorporate percussion with winds when preparing for a combined performance and after groups have prepared individual parts already.
All students learn theory and we work on rhythms as a group
We have all like instrument classes. We then meet before school to pull all the students together to prepare for a concert.
I have them count their part/say the sticking while everyone else counts/says their note names, as well as by section.
I like having them in brass because they help them with pitches. When we play from the book, everyone plays together. When I work with individuals or sections, all others have something else to do, per my instruction (go through fingers, sizzle rhythms, etc.).
We discuss many unison rhythms and notes

Many times start mallets, or modify snare for more technical rhythms
We stuck to the book for the most part. They played their parts in the book.
Using the method book, we use the instruction provided.
Slowly work them into regular group

There are no unexpected answers in this section. Most of them have their students play along with the rest of the group, with some playing drums and some playing mallets.

### Results for Question 28

The twenty-eighth question is "Is instruction available during the summer?"

**Table 28. Directors Who Make Instruction Available During Summer**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
No	18	62.1%
Yes, as voluntary scheduled classes	2	6.9%
Yes, for lessons	3	10.3%
Compensated by School	2	6.9%
Paid for by individual students	6	20.7%
Other	2	6.9%

This was not a required question and only received twenty-nine responses out of thirty-one total who completed the survey. Only two directors were compensated by the school for voluntary scheduled classes.

There were two who selected "Other." Their responses were "No, if the student seeks out a teacher" and "1 week band camp."

### Results for Question 29

The twenty-ninth question is "What is your primary applied instrument family?"

**Table 29. Primary Applied Instrument Family of Surveyed Directors**

Instrument Family	Response Number	Response Percent
Woodwind	8	25.8%
Brass	19	61.3%
Percussion	4	12.9%

The majority of respondents play an instrument other than percussion. Only four, or 12.9%, are percussionists. Only one of those four said they have difficulty scheduling time for teaching percussion instruments. Another starts their beginning percussionists on a woodwind or brass instrument. None of the directors who are percussionists meet outside of class time for rehearsal or group lessons.

Below is a list of how the four percussionist directors incorporate the percussion section into a lesson:

- The percussion section learns notes on their keyboard instruments as the wind players do.
- All students learn theory and we work on rhythms as a group
- We have all like instrument classes. We then meet before school to pull all the students together to prepare for a concert.
- Many times start mallets, or modify snare for more technical rhythms.

### Results for Question 30

The thirtieth question is “If you are the primary private lesson instructor, do you charge, or are lessons free, or are you compensated by your school district?”

**Table 30. Payment Options for Private Lessons**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Charge	4	23.5%
Free	12	70.6%
Compensated by school district	1	5.9%

This was not a required question and received seventeen responses. Most of the respondents, 70.6%, offer private lessons for free.

### Results for Question 31

The thirty-first question is “If applicable, when do you give lessons? Check all that apply.”

**Table 31. Times that Directors Give Lessons**

Options	Response Number	Response Percent
Before school	2	11.8%
During school	1	5.9%
After school	16	94.1%
Evenings	1	5.9%
Weekends	0	0%

This question was not required and only received seventeen responses. It is not surprising that of the seventeen responses ninety-four percent of the directors give lessons after school. Many directors have marching band practice that meets before school starts and are therefore unavailable for lessons at that time. Another possibility is the director has a supervision duty in the hallway, cafeteria, or parking lot before school.

### **Results for Question 32**

The thirty-second question is "If you have any additional thoughts or suggestions please include them here. Thank you again."

**Table 32. Additional Thoughts or Suggestions**

Never start percussion - their parts are much too easy at the beginning which makes them bored and causes behavioral issues. I wait until we hit the part of the book where they are playing sixteenth notes with bounces and they are challenged. My experience in the classroom comes from the Orange County Schools in Orlando, FL
I'm happy to tell you via phone call (if you want)
To begin on snare drum, I currently require students to take 2 years of piano lessons outside of school; they may already have had the lessons, or they may begin lessons at the same time that they begin band. If they choose to not do this, they may begin on keyboard percussion. However, it is becoming increasingly difficult to start and maintain strong players.
I am a part time teacher. I teach 2 hours per day, four days a week. No Friday instruction.
I am lucky enough to be in a very different teaching situation at this point. Starting students how I did in the past is not an effective teaching method for the playing demands of modern percussionists.

This question was not required by all respondents and only received five responses. It is in short answer format to give each respondent a chance to give extra feedback that may not have been asked in the survey.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to find the best methods for developing students into total percussionists in beginning band programs with only one band director on staff. A total percussionist is defined as one who is capable of playing keyboard percussion, snare drum, timpani, and the accessory instruments. While other students in the band program focus on one instrument, the beginning percussionists are learning multiple instruments each with its own technique. A questionnaire was developed to determine how band directors work with and schedule beginning percussionists. All thirty-one respondents to the questionnaire are currently the sole directors at the beginning level or have been the sole director in the past.

It is clear from the results that there is a great variety among the directors surveyed with respect to school size, size of beginning classes, scheduling, when they start percussion, what percussion instruments they start on, what year they start, and specialization of the teachers.

Most of the respondents start percussion along with the other band students on both snare drum and keyboard percussion in the sixth grade. About four-fifths of the respondents do not meet with percussionists for rehearsals or lessons outside of class time. Around two-thirds indicated that their percussionists do not take lessons outside of school. Over half of them are able to meet class daily and over half of them meet at least ninety minutes a week. About 70 % of the directors have made requests for schedule changes; about 40% of those were successful. Many of the directors feel a need to have more time for beginning band and especially percussion.

### **Conclusions**

Interestingly, the larger schools started a smaller percentage of percussionists than the smaller schools. That may be because it is generally not recommended that percussion parts be doubled in concert band and because you can get by with six or seven in most marching bands and because some players on other instruments play percussion in the marching band.

Twenty-six of respondents, or 84% of the subjects in this study, start percussion in beginning band.

Only eight respondents have a separate class for beginning percussion. Almost two-thirds of directors start percussionists on both snare and keyboard percussion. The remaining directors start percussion on a woodwind or brass instrument.

Forty-five percent of the respondents have a beginning band class that is 40-49 minutes long. Twenty-two percent of the respondents have a class length of 20-30 minutes. Fifty-eight percent of the respondents meet five days a week. Sixty-four percent of the respondents are on traditional scheduling, and 22 percent are on a rotating schedule.

Scheduling time for beginning band itself is a challenge for some directors as 41 percent made scheduling requests and had their request completely or partially accepted. Twenty-nine percent had their request denied, and another 29 percent did not make a scheduling change request.

The most common method book used is *Essential Elements*.<sup>89</sup> The second most common method book is *Standard of Excellence*.<sup>90</sup> Eighty percent of the respondents do not use supplemental material for their percussion students.

Over half of the respondents have beginning band in sixth grade, with thirty-five percent beginning in the fifth grade and only 6 percent beginning in the seventh grade.

*Opportunity to Learn Standards for Music Instruction*, an MENC publication, recommends that instrumental classes in elementary school meet “at least two times per week for a total of at least ninety minutes.”<sup>91</sup> Although

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<sup>89</sup> Rhoades.

<sup>90</sup> Pearson.

<sup>91</sup> Paul. R. Lehman. Opportunity to Learn: Standards for Music Instruction. (Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference,) 4.

the numbers are not exact, we can reasonably estimate that over two-thirds of these programs meet the recommended 90 minutes or more per week.

Twenty-two of the teachers, or 71%, said they have difficulty scheduling adequate time for percussionists. 80.6 percent of the respondents do not meet with percussionists for rehearsals or lessons outside of class time. Also 64.5% indicated that their percussionists do not take lessons outside of school. Of those who do, about ten percent take lessons with their band teacher and the remaining twenty-five percent with someone else. Three-fourths of the respondents give voluntary lessons at available times, including summer.

Sixty-two percent do not offer lessons during the summer. Only two of the directors who offer lessons during the summer were compensated by the school district for voluntary scheduled classes. Of those directors who do give private lessons 70.6 percent give private lessons for free. Not surprisingly 94 percent of the directors that give private lessons do so after school.

Of the thirty-one responses to the questionnaire only four directors were percussionists. Sixty-one percent played a brass instrument and 25 percent played a woodwind instrument.

### **Recommendations**

Teachers who have trouble scheduling time to teach beginning percussionists are encouraged to make a scheduling request to their administrator. Based on the survey results 71% of the respondents made a scheduling request with 59.9% of those requests being approved. For example, a

scheduling request may be to start beginning band a year earlier. Only two of the respondents have beginning band in the seventh grade. If a schedule can be worked out with their administration another year of instruction would be beneficial for both the percussion section and the rest of the band. Even the 58.1 percent of respondents who have beginning band in sixth grade may benefit from an additional year of instruction. Another option would be to create a separate percussion class. Only a quarter of the respondents have a separate class for beginning percussion. The option of using summer for band classes and private lessons should be explored if the administration is willing to consider it.

Two-thirds of the respondents indicated their percussionists do not take lessons outside of school. It would be beneficial for directors to recommend or require percussion students to take private lessons with a percussionist who can teach a variety of percussion instruments

The most common method book used among the respondents is *Essential Elements*. This may not be the best choice for directors who want to start their percussion students on both snare and keyboard percussion as the keyboard percussion music is in a different part of the book from the snare music.<sup>92</sup> *Standard of Excellence*, however, uses a two-page spread which has snare on the left page and keyboard percussion is on the right page.<sup>93</sup> If students are

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<sup>92</sup> Lautzenheiser, 11.

<sup>93</sup> Pearson, 37.

switching instruments during a class period *Standard of Excellence* saves time from unnecessary page turns.

Many bands often have too many percussionists. In order to limit the number of percussion players in each section it may be useful to accept percussionists who begin their skills on a brass or woodwind instrument. When the student switches to percussion they will already know how to read music. This may also limit the number of players in the percussion section to those students who are serious enough to learn another instrument first. Some of the respondents already use this method. One director verified their response by saying, "I had percussionists instead of drummers who were capable of achieving greatness immediately."

If the director wants to start percussion in beginning band it is recommended to give preference during the recruitment process to those students who have a piano background, as recommended by Michael Dick. Students with this prior experience will be expected to understand the layout of keyboard percussion instruments, already have a sense of rhythm and pitch, and can read music.

I would recommend a further study which evaluates the quality and comprehensiveness of high school percussionists and compare those results with the instruction percussionists receive at the beginning level.

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## APPENDIX

## Survey of Band Directors Teaching at the Beginning Level

Thank you for completing this brief survey. I am working on a thesis at Pittsburg State University on scheduling time for percussion instruction at the beginning level. At this time, I am simply trying to identify teachers who are the sole directors in a beginning program or who have been the sole director in the past. Thanks again.

**Any information that you provide, including names and school districts, will be kept anonymous.**

Micah Martin  
Carl Junction R-1 School District  
Assistant Band Director, Percussion Instructor  
Graduate Student, Pittsburg State University

1. Are you the sole beginning band director in your school district or building?
  - a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. No \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. If you answered no to the previous question, have you served in the past as the sole beginning band director in your school district or building?
  - a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. No \_\_\_\_\_

**If you answered no to questions 1 & 2, you do not need to continue. If you wish to continue the survey you are welcome to do so. If you were the sole director in the past, answer according to what you did at that time.**

3. What is the approximate size of your school district in grades 6-12?

- a. 50-100
- b. 101-200
- c. 201-300
- d. 301-400
- e. 401-500
- f. 501-600
- g. 601-700
- h. 701-800
- i. Over 800

4. How many students start in beginning band on average?

\_\_\_\_\_

5. How many percussionists do you start on average?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Did (or do) you have some difficulty trying to schedule adequate instruction time for the variety of percussion instruments that needed to be taught?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

7. Do you teach other subjects besides band? Select all that apply.

- a. Choir \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Orchestra \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Music Appreciation \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Elementary General Music \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Guitar Class \_\_\_\_\_
- f. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

8. What is your role in the band program at your school? Check all that are appropriate

- a. High School Director \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Middle School Director \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Elementary Director \_\_\_\_\_  
Assistant \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

9. What method book do you use for beginning band?

\_\_\_\_\_

10. Do you use any supplemental books for percussion in beginning band?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

11. If you answered "Yes" to the previous question, please list the supplemental books you use for percussion in beginning band?

\_\_\_\_\_

12. What grade-level is beginning band?

- a. 5<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- b. 6<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- c. 7<sup>th</sup> \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Other \_\_\_\_\_

13. How long is your beginning band class time?

- a. 20-30 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. 31-39 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- c. 40-49 minutes \_\_\_\_\_
- d. 50+ minutes \_\_\_\_\_

14. How many days per week does beginning band meet?

- a. 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- b. 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- c. 2 1/2 \_\_\_\_\_ (alternating days)
- d. 3 \_\_\_\_\_
- e. 4 \_\_\_\_\_
- f. 5 \_\_\_\_\_

15. Which scheduling style best describes your situation for beginning band:

- a. Traditional Scheduling \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Block Scheduling \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Rotating Scheduling \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Modular or Flex Scheduling \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other \_\_\_\_\_

16. Have you ever requested scheduling changes to help with beginning band instruction?

- a. Yes, and they accepted all or part of my request. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Yes, and they denied my request. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. No \_\_\_\_\_

17. If part of your request was accepted, please explain.

\_\_\_\_\_

18. Do you start students on percussion in beginning band?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

19. If you answered "No" to the previous question, at what point do you start percussionists?

- a. Second Semester/later in the year of beginning band \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Second year of band \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Other \_\_\_\_\_

20. Is there a separate class for percussion in beginning band?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

21. On which instrument(s) do your beginning percussion start?

- a. Snare drum/practice pad \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Keyboard percussion \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Alternate between snare/pad and keyboard percussion \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Woodwind or brass instrument \_\_\_\_\_

22. If you chose "Woodwind or brass instrument" on the previous question, choose the response that best describes your rationale for not starting on percussion immediately. Select all that apply.

- a. Makes beginning instruction more efficient. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Allows more selectivity for percussionists. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Allows easier control of numbers in percussion section. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Musicianship can be transferred effectively to percussion from other instruments. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Other. \_\_\_\_\_

23. Do the beginning percussionists meet for lessons outside of class time?

- a. Yes as a full section. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Yes as individual or small group lessons. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Both. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. No. \_\_\_\_\_

24. Do any of your beginning percussionists take lessons outside of school?

Select all that apply.

- a. Yes, with me. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Yes, with another teacher in the band program or school district. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Yes, at a music store. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Yes, at a private studio. \_\_\_\_\_
- e. No. \_\_\_\_\_

25. Do you regularly schedule individual or small group lessons for beginning band outside of class? Select all that apply.

- a. Yes, during study hall. \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Yes, before or after school. \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Yes, but students are pulled out of other classes. \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Very rarely or never. \_\_\_\_\_

26. Are these lessons voluntary?

- a. Yes \_\_\_\_\_
- b. No \_\_\_\_\_

27. Briefly describe how you incorporate the percussion section into a lesson with the entire beginning band.

---

28. Is instruction available during the summer?

- a. No
- b. Yes, as voluntary scheduled classes
- c. Yes, for lessons
- d. Compensated by the school
- e. Paid for by individual students
- f. Other

29. What is your primary applied instrument family?

- a. Woodwind \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Brass \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Percussion \_\_\_\_\_

30. If you are the primary private lesson instructor, do you charge for lessons?

- a. Charge \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Free \_\_\_\_\_
- c. Compensated by school \_\_\_\_\_

31. If applicable, when do you give lessons. Check all that apply.

- a. Before school \_\_\_\_\_
- b. During school \_\_\_\_\_
- c. After school \_\_\_\_\_
- d. Evenings \_\_\_\_\_
- e. Weekends \_\_\_\_\_

32. If you have any additional thoughts or suggestions, please include them here. Thank you again.

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33. Contact Information:

a. Name \_\_\_\_\_

b. School Name \_\_\_\_\_

c. School District \_\_\_\_\_

d. Email \_\_\_\_\_