ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: HOMESCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

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All people deserve access to quality, affordable music education. However, without participation in local public and private schools, this is not guaranteed to be accessible to children. This study explores where homeschool families obtain music curricula, parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula, and parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Results suggest that homeschool families primarily obtain music curriculum from websites, apps and other technology, the library, and private lessons. Parents in this study value all of the NCAS but most highly value creating, listening, and responding to music. Quite often their chosen music curricula do not have opportunities for creating music. In addition, homeschool families appear to be piecemealing music experiences rather than using one complete music curriculum with goals, objectives, standards, and assessments. Therefore, it is my recommendation that the music education community work together with the homeschool community to create a homeschool music curriculum that meets all of the NCAS and provides flexibility for homeschool families based on personal choice. The present study offers insight into the

homeschool music experience in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and is a building block for more research, both within this community and beyond to the national level.

HOMESCHOOL MUSIC EDUCATION: A DESCRIPTIVE STUDY

by

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List of Abbreviations

COVID-19: 2019 Novel Coronavirus

HSLDA: Home School Legal Defense Association

IMLP: Instrumental Music Lesson Program

MCA: Model Cornerstone Assessments

MPI: Model of Parental Involvement

NAfME: National Association for Music Education

NCAS: National Core Arts Standards

NCES: National Center for Education Statistics

NHERI: National Home Education Research Institute

PFI: Parental Family Involvement Survey

UMD: University of Maryland

Chapter 1: Introduction and Need for the Study

> *Whether children receive their education in a public, private, or parochial school, or at home, music education remains a core subject, and NAfME maintains that adequate music education resources should be available to all students, regardless of how children obtain their education.*

("Homeschooled Students' Participation in Public School Music Education," 2021)

Music educators and professional organizations like the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) and Music for All stand by this statement and the idea of "music for all" as inspiration for reaching all students through music education (*What We Do*, 2010). For music educators like myself, it means reaching all people in my community. I regularly search for the "musical voices to be heard" (Abril, 2006) in hopes of finding more people who desire musical experiences but have difficulty accessing the resources for such education.

My background in music education both as a student and as a teacher is in public schools, but through personal connections and experiences at the University of Maryland (UMD), I found that homeschool families need opportunities to participate in music. UMD offers a wonderful beginner instrumental music class specifically for homeschool students in the spring semester every year and invites those students to come back for summer camp. Dr. Bret Smith, a former professor at UMD, started the Instrumental Music Lesson Program (IMLP) in the early 2000s because he homeschooled his son and noticed that other homeschool students needed or wanted musical experiences (Grisé, 2015). Dr. Smith also wanted to provide his undergraduate students with teaching experience on campus during the course time for this instrumental teaching methods

course (Grisé, 2015). Students come to the lessons with a wide range of musical experiences (Grisé, 2015). These lessons have persisted through COVID-19 as online group instrumental lessons for homeschool families. College students are getting online teaching experience, which is the most personal connection that student teachers can have in this area while campus remains partially locked down and closed to guests.

Homeschool families need more than programs like IMLP from local schools, including institutions of higher education. Some homeschool families use private lessons or online learning as their main form of music education, but private lessons are costly and online learning is unreliable and often geared toward young students (Murphy, 2020). In this study I seek to gain an understanding of homeschool families and their music education curricular materials and their perceptions of music education.

Homeschooling in the United States

It is almost impossible to address homeschooling without defining its origins and making a case for homeschooling in the twenty-first century. Much of the literature on homeschooling is highly political in nature, either in support of it or against it. Therefore, much of the introduction and literature review will be dedicated to the current state of homeschooling and the literature that exists.

Despite the conflict in literature, homeschooling currently exists and has always existed in American history. With the inception of compulsory school attendance laws in the mid 1800s, homeschooling quickly became significantly less common (Barnett, 2013). In 2016 the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported that only 3% of students were homeschooled in urban and suburban areas (with 4% of students

homeschooled in rural areas) ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017).

As the United States battles the novel COVID-19 coronavirus, experts believe that homeschooling numbers will rise in 2020 and through 2021 as families decide that going in person to school and online schooling with their local public school are not viable options (Bhanoo, 2020; Finne, 2020; Morrison, 2020). In a poll conducted by washingtonpolicy.org, 40% of parents reported a preference for homeschooling or online learning during the 2020–2021 school year due to concerns over health and safety caused by COVID. This trend will likely continue past the time of mass COVID infections. The poll from the American Federation of Children reports that "40 percent of parents are more likely to pursue homeschooling or online school after COVID lockdowns end" (Finne, 2020). Despite the lack of popularity of homeschooling in the past, it appears that homeschooling will significantly increase during the 2020–2021 school year.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, scholars discussed reasons for a lack of popularity in home education, in part because of some misleading claims and beliefs about religious preferences or a lack of social and academic opportunities for students educated in the home (Rivero, 2008b). Misrepresentation of homeschool families led by Evangelical Christians in the 1980s created an image that families homeschool for strict religious beliefs (Greenwalt, 2016). While some families do choose to homeschool for religious and lifestyle reasons, contemporary research shows that homeschool families are reflective of the general population and choose school environment or pedagogical reasons more often than religious reasons for homeschooling (Greenwalt, 2016; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). This is even more true given the current circumstances of

public-school families opting for homeschooling during COVID-19 restrictions. Further misrepresentation comes from research that is highly politicized and difficult to accurately summarize because of the individual nature of homeschool families.

Need for the Study

I am a firm believer in the NAfME phrase "music for all," which led me to find communities that are underserved in music education. I found this in homeschool populations who are not served by traditional means of music education, namely that which is provided to the majority of students in private and public schools. This is especially true in states that require music education as a part of the homeschool curriculum but do not allow homeschool students to enroll in individual public-school classes. Some states do not require music as a part of the curriculum, but states including Washington D.C., Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania do require music as a part of homeschool curriculum (*Homeschool Laws by State 2020*, 2020). Washington state and New Hampshire require music appreciation (*Homeschool Laws by State 2020*, 2020). Thirty states allow homeschool students to participate in interscholastic activities; though, five of these states require district approval and another five require partial enrollment in the public school ("Homeschool Sports Access by State," 2014). *Interscholastic activities* often describe athletics but can also include music classes ("Homeschool Sports Access by State," 2014). Another 20 states do not allow homeschool students to participate in school athletics or music classes ("Homeschool Sports Access by State," 2014). For example, in Maryland, students are required to be full time students at a public or private school in order to participate in activities

associated with the school. Music is a required subject for Maryland homeschool students, but these students cannot participate in music in public schools.

Despite the varied requirements for and opportunities available to homeschool students in the U.S.A., access to quality, affordable music educational opportunities, is important for every student. Students enrolled in public or private schools have access to the breadth of music courses offered by their school or district. Homeschooling parents, however, have to put together multiple educational opportunities for their child(ren), including those in music. Homeschooling is in most cases a deliberate choice, but parents in some cases have identified a lack of resources when it comes to pursuing a musical education for their child(ren) (Murphy, 2020). Whether families choose to attend school or engage in education mostly in the home, all deserve to have access to quality, affordable music education.

Theoretical Framework

Homeschool families make deliberate academic and even social choices. In order for homeschooling to truly be successful, a parent must commit to monitor the progress and general education of a child. This requires great involvement from this parent including reviewing a child's work, monitoring child progress, helping with homework, discussing school events or course work with a child, and providing enrichment activities pertinent to school success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement (MPI; Appendix A) suggests that parents choose to be involved in their child's education because they believe it will lead to student success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Parental roles in the MPI are role construction, sense of efficacy for helping children succeed, and perception of general invitations, demands, and opportunities for involvement with children and their schooling (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). When families choose to educate in the home, they are establishing parental role construction. Parents further desire to help their child(ren) succeed in school by becoming involved. Finally, parents obtain perceptions about opportunities presented to be involved in their child(ren)'s education. In the case of homeschooling, children are close to the parent serving as the teacher. The MPI will serve as a way to perceive parental involvement in homeschool children's education as they monitor, implement, and make curriculum choices for their child(ren).

Summary of the Current Study

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). There is scarce research on this subject; therefore, descriptive analysis was the best form of analysis for this study. Respondents were homeschool families from the mid-Atlantic region of the United States who educated at least one child in the home at least part time. Results suggest that homeschool families primarily obtain music curriculum from websites, apps and other technology, the library, and private lessons. Parents in this study value all of the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) but thought creating, listening, and responding to music were the most important. After preliminary analysis of homeschool music curricula, their chosen music curricula mostly have opportunities for listening and responding as well as

connecting music with other subjects. The homeschool music curricula does not have opportunities for creating music. In addition, homeschool families appear to be piecemealing music experiences rather than using one complete music curriculum with goals, objectives, standards, and assessments. From this analysis, I recommend collaboration between the music education community and the homeschool community to create a homeschool music curriculum that meets all of the NCAS and provides flexibility for homeschool families based on personal choice. The present study offers insight into the homeschool music experience in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States and is a building block for more research, both within this community and beyond to the national level.

Definition of Terms

This study is about homeschool families and includes terms that may not be familiar to the reader, or the terms may be used in specific ways for this study. First, the term "homeschool" can be defined as a family who chooses to educate their child(ren) in the home more often or rather than in a local public or private school; however, this definition is an oversimplification and does not truly describe the way homeschool students live and learn (Rivero, 2008a). Sometimes this term is seen as two words, "home school" and other times the phrase, "home education" is used instead. Rivero (2008a) notes that homeschool families "may write homeschooling as one word or two words, or prefer the phrase 'home education' or 'home learning'" (p. 23). I will avoid using the term "homeschooler" as I would not use the term "public schooler." Further, "homeschool" as one word is the most common way the term is seen in literature and thus will be used most often here.

The term "parent" in this study represents a person such as a guardian or close relative who monitors progress and education of a child educated in the home. I use both singular and plural parent(s) because sometimes there is more than one parent that shares the responsibility of educating and monitoring the education of the child(ren). The same principle applies to the word child(ren), using both singular and plural.

A survey question asked participants about their music teaching style. This question was adapted from the Parental Family Involvement (PFI) Survey that asked about homeschool family general teaching style. Options included combinations of formal and informal learning. Formal and informal learning are defined according to the PFI and literature on formal and informal music learning ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019; Jenkins, 2011). For this study, formal learning is defined as music learning that takes place in a classroom or with a music professional, such as in a private lesson (Jenkins, 2011) or music teaching and learning that comes from a music curricula book or CD. Informal music learning examples include child-led learning and "teaching moments" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). With these definitions, parents chose their music teaching style in the present study.

To date, there is little literature published about homeschool families and their opinions and access to music education, apart from two pieces by Jeananne Nichols (2005; 2012) and a small masters project from Stephanie Myers (2010). While Nichols' and Myers' work focuses on the experiences of homeschool families and students, much of the literature that exists on homeschooling is politicized. Authors argue whether homeschooling is good or bad or right or wrong. While it is important to include this

literature in a study related to homeschooling, I will attempt to leave politics out of this research and instead focus on understanding the experiences of homeschool families.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

In this chapter, I will provide a comprehensive overview of topics related to homeschool music education. This section will begin with a history of homeschooling in order to provide context to the current state of homeschooling. Next, I will examine the reasons families choose to homeschool as well as homeschooling outcomes, in the hopes of providing a contemporary perspective of home education. Finally, I will attempt to concisely summarize the intricacies of curriculum from some of the most intelligent perspectives and summarize general education, postmodern curriculum studies, and music education curriculum specifically, as this study will take information from all of these aspects of the topic of curriculum.

History of Homeschooling

Prior to the passage of compulsory school attendance laws in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, home education was the main source of education for most children in the United States. Recent data suggests that only 3% of students are homeschooled (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017); however, home education used to be the main source of education for children. Prior to the formation of formal public schools, much of student learning took place at home either through formalized practices with a tutor or informally through the master-apprentice learning style with parents (Brewer et al., 2017). In fact, "until Massachusetts passed the first compulsory school attendance law in 1852, homeschooling was the predominant method of teaching children" (Barnett, 2013, p. 342). As population settlements grew denser in colonial times, families quickly turned to formal schooling (Gaither & Gaither, 2017). This trend accelerated in the nineteenth century as many states passed legislation creating a tax that provided free public

education for all white children (Gaither & Gaither, 2017). By the twentieth century, few students were homeschooled (Gaither & Gaither, 2017), with only three percent of students in home education (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017).

Through a series of United States Supreme Court cases *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925) and *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923), homeschooling was officially legalized in the United States. The court ruled that the state cannot standardize its children by forcing them to accept instruction from only public-school teachers (Brewer et al., 2017). During the mid-twentieth century, exclusive formal home education was rare (Gaither & Gaither, 2017). However, in the 1970s, "American educator John Holt emerged as a proponent of homeschooling" and "was instrumental in the growth and direction of modern homeschooling" (Rivero, 2008, p. 24). Holt's advocacy marked the beginning of an era (through the present time) as an "aggressive and concerted political and legal action to make it easier to keep children at home for school" (Gaither & Gaither, 2017, p. 214). Evangelical Christians led the way in continuing to legally and financially support homeschooling in the 1980s, founding the Home School Legal Defense Association in 1983 and ultimately defining the "public face of homeschooling" (Greenwalt, 2016, p. 2). This time in history led to stereotypes and misconceptions about the types of families that choose to homeschool (Rivero, 2008b).

Contrary to common belief, homeschoolers in the twenty-first century are varied in their religious beliefs, political affiliations, and financial status (Connelly, 2008; Greenwalt, 2016). In other words, "the homeschool population does not significantly differ from the general U.S. population," and "it is not really possible to assume anything about the religious beliefs, political affiliations, or financial status of homeschooling

families" (Greenwalt, 2016, p. 2). Advances in technology make it easier for students to learn at home, and laws in states like Michigan allow home educated students to participate in public school classes and sports (Greenwalt, 2016; *Public School Access for Homeschoolers in Virginia*, 2020). COVID-19 has also forced families to choose homeschooling with public schools being unsafe to open and reverting to online education. This new development in public school families homeschooling is likely to have lasting implications for home education trends in the United States.

From colonial times to present day, home education has changed significantly. This is due to the changes in public schooling, laws of compulsory education, technology that allow students to more easily learn at home, and public school conditions due to COVID-19. Because the homeschool population resembles the general U.S. population, families have a variety of reasons for homeschooling, and the home education movement in the United States is likely to significantly change in the next few years.

Reasons for Homeschooling

Reasons for homeschooling have changed significantly over time. Religious reasons were most often cited as the reason for homeschooling in the 1990s (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). "The United States elevates the importance of religious freedom and, historically speaking, Americans generally take a hands-off approach to commenting on parental practices" (Brewer et al., 2017, p.1). However, more contemporary studies discuss ideological, pedagogical, and practical reasons that families choose to homeschool (Brewer et al., 2017; Greenwalt, 2016; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017).

Meehan & Stephenson (1994) Homeschooling in the United States

Meehan and Stephenson (1994) divide reasons for homeschooling into two categories: ideological and pedagogical. Although, there are also some practical, simple explanations for homeschooling. For example, in some rural areas like Alaska, families live too far from the public school, so they are educated in the home (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). Most commonly cited reasons, however, fall under the categories of ideological and pedagogical.

Ideological reasons are primarily religious or philosophical in nature (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). Religious parents, particularly Christian, oppose public school curriculum, considering it too secular. Interestingly, some families actually think the public-school curriculum is too Christian and remove their child(ren) from public school to educate in the home for this reason. At this time, researchers could not come to a consensus on whether curriculum was highly Christian in nature or not. Nevertheless, both of these reasons point to a discontent with modern culture. More positive ideological reasons for homeschooling include the desire for a closer parent-child relationship as well as a desire to improve on moral and character development (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994).

Pedagogical reasons for homeschooling include both social and academic reasons (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). For some families, the desire to give students a more hands-on experience is valued. This approach is not taken in public schools, so families choose to homeschool to give their children a more practical approach to learning. In general, however, dissatisfaction with the public-school instruction is the academic reason for educating in the home. On a more positive note, some parents want to

strengthen or restore family unity. As homeschool families, they can engage in uniting activities by sharing in learning and other daily experiences. Further, some parents want to be present during all stages of development for their children and also value the one-on-one teaching and learning between children and parents (Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). Pedagogical reasons for homeschooling are both positive and negative, sometimes referring to dissatisfaction with public school curricula and teaching and other times pertaining to the value of the family living and learning together in the home.

Meehan and Stephenson's (1994) work was valuable in the early 1990s, and many of these reasons for homeschooling still stand true. However, this work is dated. By considering these reasons and those that are more recent, scholars can gain a better understanding of homeschool families and their history and ideology in relation to reasons for homeschooling.

Greenwalt (2016) Here's How Homeschooling Is Changing America

Greenwalt (2016) brings a much more practical perspective as to why families choose to homeschool and brings in these reasons from his own research. One reason that families may choose to homeschool is because in many states, homeschool child relationships are permitted to participate in public school courses and athletics. By choosing to homeschool, families are still open to the option of public school courses and extracurricular activities. Homeschool children can choose to participate in public school for part of the day, play interscholastic sports, or even take Advanced Placement (AP) courses for college credit. Greenwalt (2016) also argues that more families are choosing to homeschool now more than ever because of changes in the public school system. Changes in technology have provided more opportunities for remote, online learning.

Additionally, homeschooling is more responsive to a child's individual needs and interests. Parents can take advantage of learning experiences as they naturally arise (Greenwalt, 2016). All of these reasons for homeschooling came up in Greenwalt's research and personal interaction with homeschool families, and can certainly be considered contemporary, relevant reasons for families to choose homeschooling.

Brewer (2017) Examining Rationales for Individualizing Education

Similar to Meehan and Stephenson (1994), Brewer (2017) contends that there are two broad categories as to why parents choose to homeschool their children: empirical claims of greater efficiency, effectiveness, or pedagogical appropriateness and ideological reasons informed by a religious or political reason. The Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA) claims that homeschool students achieve academically higher on standardized tests, and one of every four homeschool students are enrolled in grade levels above their age-level peers in public schools (Rudner, 1999). However, Brewer (2017) debates whether these claims are empirically accurate. It is not an appropriate statistical research practice to compare a population of 3% to the entire population of students enrolled in public school (Brewer et al., 2017). Homeschool families are also categorized by higher income, higher parent educational attainment, higher parental involvement, and secure employment, all demographics that can determine academics on their own (Brewer et al., 2017). Therefore, higher academic performance of homeschool students is likely a causal link rather than the effects of homeschooling itself (Brewer et al., 2017).

Advocates of homeschooling also argue that it saves taxpayers money, but this advocacy point ignores the individual costs for families (Brewer et al., 2017). The

National Home Education Research Institute (NHERI) suggests that homeschooling families save taxpayers $27 billion annually (Christopher Lubienski et al., 2013). HSLDA further notes that the direct out-of-pocket costs to homeschooling families can be more expensive than sending children to public schools; although, the cost per child decreases as more children are homeschooled because materials and curriculum can be reused (Ray, 2016). Brewer (2017) argues:

> Yet, what is overlooked by the HSLDA in its calculations and estimates on the costs of homeschooling are the *actual* financial costs of homeschooling. While the HSLDA points out that a homeschooling parent will certainly pay more up-front out-of-pocket expenses for curriculum and books (unless the family relies on tax-funded libraries) when compared to the cost of sending children to schools; the HSLDA vastly underestimates the actual total costs. (p. 29)

Brewer (2017) reminds the readers that homeschooling requires a significant financial commitment namely in the way of a forgone salary. Brewer (2017) continues:

> The parent who homeschools during the day is not able to work outside of the home and therefore the decision to homeschool is a sacrifice of a potential source of income – and for those parents who have left a paid position to homeschool, the actual cost burden is not hypothetical. . . the HSLDA also fails to account for additional costs associated with transportation, lunch, utilities, and expenses associated with participation in extra-curricular activities that would be provided by a traditional public school. (p. 29)

Religion and safety are another concern for families when choosing to homeschool (Brewer et al., 2017). However, it can be argued that homeschooling is actually more

dangerous because violence and abuse can be hidden in the home, as in the televised case of the Duggar family in "19 Kids and Counting" (Brewer et al., 2017). The Duggar's chosen curriculum, Alpha Omega, implied that God lets abuse happen and gives questionable reasons for the reason that God allows abuse (Brewer et al., 2017). This kind of education in addition to a lack of oversight in home education can instill unsafe living and learning environments for children, thus, actually creating a less safe environment than that which would be in the public school (Brewer, 2017). Despite such examples of abuse within a homeschooling environment, religious homeschooling advocates continue to suggest that homeschooling provides a safer alternative to public schools (Brewer et al., 2017). These religious advocates suggest that homeschool students avoid hearing "filthy language," and avoid seeing the use of illegal drugs and sexual promiscuity. Much to Brewer's (2017) surprise, these advocates even go as far as to suggest that students in public schools contract sexually transmitted diseases or may be shot to death.

Race-based safety concerns exist for African American families and impact their choice to homeschool. In addition, African American families desire more culturally relevant curricula than what is presented in public schools (Mazama & Lundy, 2015). This promotes both social and academic equity for these families. In fact, in a recent study of homeschool families Brewer (2017) says this about academic achievement:

> There was no difference between the achievement of White homeschooled students compared to African American homeschooled students – a striking difference compared to the persistent racial achievement gap in traditional United States public schools. Yet, while the lack of a racial achievement gap

> among homeschooled students is presented by the HSLDA as evidence of the effectiveness of homeschooling, what is ignored is that White and African American families who homeschool share similar socioeconomic characteristics which are far more likely to explain the student outcomes. (p. 32)

Therefore, it is important to Brewer (2017) to consider socioeconomic status of homeschool families in considering their achievements and reasons for homeschooling. Generally, Brewer (2017) disagrees with the HSLDA advocacy points for homeschooling but notes that there are other positive reasons and factors to consider when families choose to homeschool.

Results from the 2016 Parent and Family Involvement Survey

The Parent and Family Involvement Survey (PFI) updated statistics in 2016 display a wide variety of reasons for homeschooling. The raw data tables from the 2016 PFI express reasons for homeschooling and McQuiggan and Megra (2017) additionally report on and comment on reasons using the results from the 2016 PFI. Respondents "were asked to mark 'yes' to all reasons that applied" (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017, p. 35). The most common reason marked as important was concern about the "environment of other schools," marked by 80% of respondents followed by a "desire to provide more moral instruction" with 67% of respondents. Other reasons noted by respondents in the 2016 PFI included:

> Dissatisfaction with academic instruction at other schools (61%)
> Desire to provide religious instruction (51%)
> Desire to provide a nontraditional approach to child's education (39%)
> "Other reasons" to include family time, finances, travel, and a more flexible schedule (22%)
> Child has other special needs (20%)

Child has a physical or mental health problem (14%)
Child has a temporary illness (4%)

The most important reason families in this study chose to homeschool was "concern about environment of other schools" at 34% ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017).

In summary, researchers and families claim a variety of reasons to educate students in the home. Pedagogically, families feel like they have more control over the curricula at home and can improve upon the curricula provided at the public school. Ideologically, families desire to provide more religious or moral instruction for their child(ren). Further, there are also a variety of practical reasons that families choose to educate in the home such as having more family time and having more time for travel with the flexible schedule that homeschooling allows for.

As with most things in 2020 and 2021, reasons for homeschooling have changed as well. Many parents report that attending public school is unsafe and the alternative, online education through their public school, is not feasible for their child(ren). Assessments have been canceled, and accountability for schools is almost nonexistent (Finne, 2020). Further, the school environment is not likely to feel welcoming to children as students and teachers wear masks to cover their mouths and instill strict policies in order to maintain six feet of distance at all times. There is certainly a lasting impact on homeschooling due to COVID-19, but experienced homeschool families maintain their reasons for educating in the home separate from those who are choosing to educate in the home this school year.

Homeschooling Outcomes

Reasons for homeschooling differ greatly among the population of homeschool families in the United States, making data on homeschooling difficult to summarize (Murphy, 2014). Therefore, most studies on homeschool families are qualitative in nature (Murphy, 2014). State by state data also makes it difficult to do large-scale quantitative research (Gaither & Gaither, 2017). In addition to this variety in the homeschool population, homeschooling is highly politicized (Gaither & Gaither, 2017; Murphy, 2014). All of these factors contribute to little empirical evidence of homeschool outcomes. Despite these issues with research, many authors report the academic and social advantages of homeschooling. Generally, scholars agree that homeschool outcomes are positive, particularly academically. And although there are antiquated ideas about negative social outcomes, researchers have recently debunked these findings, noting that homeschool students are not only more than socially competent but also engage in activities outside school and home more frequently than their public-school peers.

Cogan (2010) Exploring Academic Outcomes of Homeschooled Students

Cogan (2010) conducted a study to analyze academic outcomes for homeschool students. Interestingly, homeschooled students were two and a half times more likely to receive a Pell Grant when compared to the entire group. Academically, homeschooled students reported a significantly higher ACT-Composite score when compared to the overall cohort with homeschool students at 26.5 scores and the overall cohort at 25.0. Homeschool students also earned 14.7 college credit hours prior to entering their freshman year in college in comparison to the general cohort with 6.0 credit hours.

Homeschooled students reported "significantly" higher high school GPAs at 3.74 and transfer GPAs 3.65 when compared to the overall group at 3.54 and 3.44, respectively. GPA continued to be different through the first fall semester of college as well. Homeschool students earned a GPA of 3.37, and the overall cohort earned 3.08 in the first semester of college. This pattern persists through the first and then fourth year with homeschool students earning a GPA of 3.41 and the general cohort receiving 3.12 in the first year, and homeschool students earning 3.46 and the general cohort earning 3.16 in the fourth year. Overall, "when considering GPAs, the homeschool variable had a positive impact on first-year GPA when considering all of the factors." (p. 24)

Homeschooling did not have an impact on retention in comparison to the cohort for the first fall to fall school year in this study. In the end, homeschool students did achieve a higher retention rate at 88.6% compared to the overall population 87.6%. Further, homeschool students achieved a higher graduation rate 66.7% when compared to the overall population 57.5%. Cogan (2010) summarizes his work:

> Descriptive analysis reveals homeschool students possess higher ACT scores, GPAs and graduation rates when compared to traditionally-educated students. In addition, multiple regression analysis results reveal that students, at this particular institution, who are homeschooled, earn higher first-year and fourth-year GPAs when controlling for demographic, pre-college, engagement, and first-term academic factors. Further, binary logistic regression results indicate there is no significant difference between homeschooled student's fall-to-fall retention and four-year graduation rates when compared to traditionally-educated students while controlling for these same factors. (p. 24)

Cogan (2010) clearly states the method of his study and how he gets to the results, but he uses the word "significantly" questionably, as if it means statistical significance. However, this word should be interpreted with caution. The numbers in this study are too close to consider if they are indeed statistically significant, though, the raw numbers themselves do show higher GPAs and retention rates in comparison to non-homeschool students at the institution in this study.

Ray (2010) Academic Achievement and Demographic Traits of Homeschool Students

Ray (2010) conducted a study in order to discover more about demographic and academic achievements of homeschool students. They used a standardized test as well as a pre-test survey to determine qualifications for the sample in the study. Results indicated that homeschool students achieved high academic results. The home-educated typically score 15 to 30 percentile points above public school students on standardized academic achievement tests (Ray, 2016). Homeschooling itself may not be the reason for this high academic achievement. Instead, they might be because of family attributes associated with homeschooling. Ray (2010) elaborates:

> There are statistically significant differences in achievement among homeschool students when classified by gender, amount of money spent on education, family income, whether either parent had ever been a certified teacher (i.e., students of non-certified parents did better), number of children living at home, degree of structure in the homeschooling, amount of time student spends in structured learning, and age at which formal instruction of the student began. (p. 43)

However, Ray (2010) insists that significant differences are only explained by parent education level. Other variables, while notable, do not explain any statistically significant variance (Ray, 2010). Further, while inquiries from this time suggest that varying reasons for homeschooling might decrease academic achievement, there is no evidence from this study to indicate that is the case (Ray, 2010).

Martin-Chang et al. (2011) The Impact of Schooling on Academic Achievement

Martin-Chang and colleagues (2011) start by pointing out the flaws in the current research on homeschool outcomes including studies sponsored by HSLDA (Home School Legal Defense Association). The sample in the HSLDA study and others are not representative enough to be generalizable to all homeschool students. This leads to misinterpretation of results and errors in comparing homeschool and non-homeschool students. Additionally, standardization of the testing situation was another issue with the methodology in many of the studies. Other research has shown that when the tests are given by a trained assistant, the scores of homeschooled students and public-school students do not differ (Martin-Chang et al., 2011).

In this study, the researchers attempt to correct these errors by using correct methodology including sampling and distribution of assessments. They used seven different measures to assess academic outcomes. To assist with this, they divided the homeschool students into two groups, “structured” and “unstructured” to define the type of curricula the parents reported using. Even in this study, the sample was so small that they could not carry out the original analysis that they planned. This study concluded that children who received structured homeschooling were superior to the children enrolled in public school across all seven subtests. When comparing the test scores of the children

attending public school and children receiving structured homeschooling, the researchers also concluded that homeschool students have higher scores across a variety of academic areas (Martin-Chang et al., 2011). Unlike previous research, "there is no evidence that this difference is simply due to the family's income or the mother's educational attainment" (p. 200).

However, outcomes for unstructured homeschool students were different. In all seven academic outcome measures, public school students had higher mean grades in comparison to unstructured homeschool students. In conclusion, study suggests that the unstructured homeschooled students score below their expected grade level on the standardized test, and that "even with this small sample, performance differences are relatively substantial" (p.200). This study also eludes that the students "who are being taught at home in a structured environment score significantly higher than the children receiving unstructured homeschooling" (p. 200). These researchers work hard to ensure correct method and interpretation of the results but note that the ill-defined and relatively small size of the homeschool community make sampling the homeschool population near impossible (Martin-Chang et al., 2011).

Non-academic Outcomes of Homeschooling

Critics of homeschooling also often condemn social aspects of homeschooling, considering it to be socially isolating and diminishing social justice (Apple, 2000; Chris Lubienski, 2000). Despite these theories and claims, there is little empirical evidence to support this (Murphy, 2014). Research designs in homeschooling research do not conclusively prove negative outcomes (Ray, 2016).

One study found that homeschooling families are significantly more likely to participate in public life through a broad range of civic activities, compared to public school families (Smith & Sikkink, 1999). Homeschool students are "regularly engaged in social and educational activities outside their homes and with people other than their nuclear-family members" (Ray, 2016, p. 2). Personal accounts of homeschool students contend that they get the majority of schoolwork completed in the home in the first half of the day and leave the home to engage with the community for the remainder of the day (Rivero, 2008b).

The home-educated are doing well, typically above average, on measures of social, emotional, and psychological development (Ray, 2016). Research measures include peer interaction, self-concept, leadership skills, family cohesion, participation in community service, and self-esteem (Ray, 2016). Other authors further suggest that homeschooling actually informs many public-school movements (Greenwalt, 2016; Murphy, 2014). Again, there is little empirical evidence to support this, but observable patterns do exist, especially in personal accounts and qualitative research.

Both academically and socially, researchers have pointed to positive impacts of homeschooling for students. Some authors argue that these findings are due to factors outside of homeschooling. However, many researchers have gone to lengths to establish good sampling and methodological techniques in their studies which suggest that homeschool students are academically high achieving and socially successful, despite other variables associated with homeschooling.

Homeschooling Research in Music Education

Very little research exists on homeschoolers in the realm of music education. In part, this is because much research on music students is focused on large ensembles and public-school children. As with all other research on homeschooling, each homeschool situation is unique, also making research specific to homeschool students in music education difficult to summarize. That being said, one of the most prolific writers on music education and home educated students is Jeananne Nichols. Her work covers a variety of specific situations regarding music education access for homeschool families. Additionally, in preparation for this study, I piloted a local study to determine the needs of homeschool families in Maryland. Although much smaller in participants and breadth of study, a masters degree thesis survey also exists about music for homeschool families in an area of Missouri by Myers in 2010. Below is a summary of published information that exists about homeschoolers and music education.

Nichols (2005) Music Education in Homeschooling: A Preliminary Inquiry

In this phenomenological study, Nichols interviews three families about their reasons for homeschooling and their choices for music education. One family chose to homeschool in order to provide a consistent educational experience for their children after noticing that their twin sons were having vastly different experiences in a public-school kindergarten. This family required their children to take piano lessons, both in a private and group setting at a local college. They also took music classes as a part of a local elementary school outreach program (Nichols, 2005).

Another family with nine children chose to educate their children in the home mostly to instill Christian values and "promote a family-centered model of socialization"

(Nichols, 2005, p. 32). This family required their children to try an instrument but allowed them to change instruments or stop music study altogether if they did not enjoy it (Nichols, 2005).

The last family in this study initially chose to educate their children at home to promote Christian values but soon realized that the more important reason for their children was to individualize instruction. Despite the fact that one parent was a band teacher, this family used outside resources to provide music education for the children (Nichols, 2005).

One family in this study sees music as an enhancement to the homeschool curriculum while the other two families see it as curricular, in line with other subjects like math, reading, science, and foreign language (Nichols, 2005). This study is enlightening as a published work and accentuates the individualized reasons for homeschooling and the further individual needs for music education.

Nichols (2012) Music Education in Homeschooling: Jamie's Story

This case study followed Jamie, a home educated student who accessed music education from private lessons, music classes in homeschool learning cooperatives, and public school, community college, and civic bands, choirs, and orchestras (Nichols, 2012). This study is unique in that it focuses on Jamie, the student, and her perceptions of "music learning in the homeschooling environment, and the issues surrounding her attendance at the local public school to participate in music classes" (Nichols, 2012, p. 115).

Jamie and her sister were homeschooled after they moved across the country and found the adjustment to a new school too difficult. With the homeschooling schedule,

Jamie found that she could complete schoolwork more efficiently and spend more time pursuing musical interests. Jamie was in various music groups in the local high school, community college, and community all at the same time. Nichols notes that Jamie could do a lot of things that her public-school peers could not, such as enroll in all of the music classes offered at the public school, learn multiple instruments at the public school, and change her schedule at will (Nichols, 2012).

This case study offers much information to music educators on a mode of schooling that is not widely studied. Because large ensembles are socially engaging, the critique of homeschooling as a socially isolating environment is discredited here in Jamie's narrative (Nichols, 2012). Additionally, it seems as if Jamie's family rejected most aspects of the local public school but gladly accepted expertise from the music teachers (Nichols, 2012). In this study, Jamie criticized the "uneven quality of music teaching in her homeschool community" (Nichols, 2012, p. 124), reminding music educators in public schools of the opportunity to reach out to the local homeschool population. Nichols (2012) makes an important note about the NAfME slogan "music for all," prompting the notion that music educators should provide homeschooled students with "meaningful musical opportunities… regardless of their mode of schooling" (Nichols, 2012, p. 124). Nichols investigates homeschooled music education students and families in both her studies, one more broadly involving multiple, varying cases of homeschool families who seek music education outside of the home. The other study is a single case study of a student, Jamie, who accesses music education out of the home in the form of community music and music in a variety of school settings. These works are unique and valuable contributions to the field of music education.

Myers (2010) Homeschool Parents' Self-Reported Activities in Music

This study titled “Homeschool Parents' Self-Reported Activities and Instructional Methodologies in Music” sampled a small region of Missouri with 43 respondents participating from a selection of three zip codes. Participants, homeschool parents and home teachers, were asked about their own musical experience, types of musical activities that their family participated in, and about their curriculum design. Most respondents indicated that they had expertise in reading music, playing an instrument, singing, and understanding music theory. Many also noted that they had college music degrees and a piano in the home. Less respondents, however, indicated experience with music history, improvisation, and curriculum (Myers, 2010).

Seventy-seven percent of respondents said that they used lessons and activities in the home with parents and family as their primary source of music education. Sixty-seven percent indicated private lessons as music education. Another 40% each used co-op groups or community ensembles as music education for their child(ren). Computer software was used by 33% of respondents, and 16% of families used online or video instruction. Parents took responsibility for 42% of music curriculum design while 26% of families purchased music from a company. Some mentioned specific method books, internet, and library resources. Only one respondent indicated that they did not use a formal curriculum. Most instruments studied included keyboard (91%), voice (77%), and strings (63%). All respondents in this study indicated that their homeschool child(ren) sang or used an instrument as a part of their music education (Myers, 2010).

This study also used the 2000 NAfME Goals to discuss the ways in which homeschool families experience their music education. Myers summarizes these NAfME goals reported by homeschool parents as such:

> More than half of parents indicated that their children learn the following five skills: "Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music" [86%, n=37), "Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music" (74%, n=32), "Understanding music in relation to history and culture" (72%, n=31), "Reading and notating music" (67%, n=29) and "Listening to, analyzing, and describing music" (56%, n=24). About half of respondents indicated that their children are learning about "Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts" (49%, n=21) and "Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments" (49%, n=21). Less than half of respondents indicated that their children were learning about "Evaluating music and music performances" (44%, n=19) and "Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines" (19%, n=8) (p. 22).

Participants reported experiencing 150 minutes of music instruction per week. This is high in comparison to the local Missouri district public schools, despite the fact that music education in these public schools is taught by professionals with degrees in music and most homeschool parents reported experience with music but not music degrees (Myers, 2010).

While this study was small, unreliable in methodology, and ungeneralizable, it is still extremely important work and is the closest study to the current research. More of this research would be valuable in a larger, more nationally representative sample with

proper methodology to come to a consensus about homeschool music education experiences and curriculum.

Homeschool Curriculum

Homeschool curriculum is studied very little. Given that one of the main reasons families choose to homeschool is dissatisfaction with academic instruction and the ability to customize or individualize curriculum, there is a great opportunity for change and alternatives within the homeschool curriculum (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017; Ray, 2016). One of the most robust sources of information about homeschool curriculum comes from the PFI. Jesse Thomas also conducted a study on academic curriculum and homeschooling approaches in 2017. Scholar Michael W. Apple gives his perspective on homeschool curriculum. Though few in number, these resources are a valuable part of homeschool education literature.

Thomas (2017) Parent Perspectives: Curriculum and Homeschooling Approaches

Public school curriculum materials are well understood, in part because of state standards (Thomas, 2017). However, much less is known about homeschool materials (Thomas, 2017). The purpose of Thomas' (2017) study was to understand homeschool curriculum and teaching styles. This study surveyed 1,055 homeschool parents and conducted follow-up interviews with nine participants (Thomas, 2017). There was no other description of the participants who were surveyed in this study (Thomas, 2017). Results of Thomas' (2017) study of homeschool teaching styles were as follows:

- Traditional- "boxed" pre-packaged system (5%)
- Unschooling- focuses on individual learner, varies based on learning style and personality (13%)
- Eclectic- combination or mix of boxed/traditional, homemade curriculum and/or individualized curriculum (68%)

- Classical- trivium, teaching model that emphasizes concrete thinking and memorization of facts in elementary school, analytical thinking in middle school and abstract thinking and articulation in high school (14%)

Some respondents in this study indicated that these curriculum options did not appropriately address the reality of their curriculum choices (Thomas, 2017). Thomas (2017) admitted that future study should include better curriculum response options for homeschool participants. In this study, 21% of homeschool parents reported using curriculum packages (Thomas, 2017). These included:

Sonlight Curriculum
A Beka Book
My Father's World
Heart of Dakota
Classical Conversations
Well Trained Mind

One interview participant indicated that they originally used store-bought materials but realized that there were mistakes and decided to create their own materials (Thomas, 2017). Families also reported using state standards on the Department of Education website to create their own curricular materials (Thomas, 2017). Cost was noted as a reason not to use boxed curriculum. Pre-packaged curricula are more expensive than piecemeal (Thomas, 2017). Technology use in instruction was also surveyed in this study:

Not used (2%)
Infrequently used (30%)
A key source (64%)
Main source of instruction (4%)

Homeschool families in this study use technology as "a key source." In addition to online resources, families use curriculum packages, software programs, and independent books for curriculum (Thomas, 2017). Thomas (2017) suggests that more understanding of the

homeschool experience, including the vast choices for curricula, will remove the stigma of homeschooling (Thomas, 2017).

McQuiggan and Megra (2017) Homeschooling in the United States

There is established, generalizable information on the reasons that families choose to educate their child(ren) in the home, especially due to national surveys like the Parental-Family Involvement Survey (PFI); however, there is much less information about what exactly homeschool curriculums look like. The little information that does exist comes from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) report on "Homeschooling in the United States" based on the 2012 and 2016 PFI. This is the only nationally distributed survey to question homeschool families specifically related to homeschool student's experiences including the sources of curriculum and reasons for homeschooling.

As noted previously, dissatisfaction with academic instruction was the second most common reason noted for homeschooling in the 2015-2016 PFI (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). The desire to provide religious instruction was the third most common reason respondents chose to homeschool (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). Other reasons associated with curriculum include the ability to customize or individualize the curriculum, accomplish more academically than in private or public schools, and teach a particular set of values and beliefs to children (Ray, 2016). In any case, flexibility with curriculum is a great advantage to homeschool families (Thomas, 2017).

Homeschool families may choose a variety of curriculum styles, frequently described as either "informal/unstructured" or "formal/structured." Some families use a structured curriculum, others do not have a structured curriculum (often described as

"unschooling"), and others still use a combination of these structured and unstructured approaches (Martin-Chang et al., 2011; Ray, 2010; Thomas, 2017). Most families use some combination of structured and unstructured curriculum (Thomas, 2017). This fact is likely not represented in the PFI because families are only given two choices, either "mostly or strictly informal learning" or "mostly or strictly formal curriculum." Therefore, the 2016 PFI reports that 81% of families use "mostly or strictly formal curriculum" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019).

Many researchers have noted that much of homeschooling curriculum is now online (Ray, 2010; Thomas, 2017). This is supported by the 2016 PFI that reports that 66% of homeschool families use websites to access curriculum ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Online curriculums allow students to participate in academics in a variety of physical settings and engage socially with teachers and students outside of the home. Online curriculums and websites are also typically low cost, an advantage to families who have only one income with one working parent and one parent who remains in the home to instruct the child(ren). To support this thought, according to the 2016 PFI, 21% of homeschool families were considered "poor" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Poor is defined as "incomes below the poverty threshold" and is "a dollar amount determined by the federal government to meet the household's needs, given its size and composition" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019, p. 2).

For the purposes of this study, it was most valuable to look at the 2016 PFI sources of curriculum results that specifically pertain to high school students. Seventy-five percent of parents of homeschooled high school students report "mostly or strictly" using a formal curriculum ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). The four most

common places that homeschooled high school students get their curriculum and books from are:

> Websites (61%)
> The library (58%)
> A bookstore (52%), and
> A homeschool catalog (48%) ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019)

The PFI provides a comprehensive, national sample of curriculum sources from homeschool families that suggests that most families use a strict formal curriculum and access these materials from websites, the library, bookstores, and homeschool catalogs.

Researchers have an understanding of where homeschool curriculum comes from, but it is difficult to know what exactly is in each homeschool curriculum. There are some implications for curriculum such as state or local requirements, but other than this, the homeschool curriculum options are quite flexible. One type of formal curriculum used by homeschool families includes premade lessons that are often bought as a package (Thomas, 2017). However, Thomas (2017) only gives examples of Christian curriculum in his work. Without a comprehensive list of packaged homeschool curriculums and a content analysis of these materials, it is difficult to gain an understanding of homeschool curriculum content.

Researchers do have some understanding of how structured and unstructured curriculum impacts student academic success. Students with a structured homeschool curriculum have higher academic achievement, as measured by the Woodcock-Johnson Test of Achievement A Revised, in comparison with those homeschooled students who do not have a structured curriculum and in comparison, to their public school peers (Martin-Chang et al., 2011). In a different study, Ray (2010) found that students enrolled in a full-service curriculum did not perform any differently from those who were not.

Martin-Chang et al. (2011) concludes that whether the materials are purchased or self-made, the pivotal factor seems to be whether the child is mentored by a knowledgeable teacher in tasks that specifically target culturally important skills (including activities such as reading and arithmetic). It can be concluded that the majority of homeschool families use structured curriculum from websites and the library at low or no cost. Families also purchase curricula from bookstores and homeschool catalogs, likely with the intention that they will find a curriculum that will suit their unique needs as homeschool families.

Apple's Perspective on Homeschool Curriculum

Apple has looked into homeschooling more than many other authors. Like most literature on homeschooling, Apple takes a side, noting the societal impacts of homeschooling. Although Apple states that homeschooling includes a wide spectrum of political, ideological, religious, and educational beliefs, he categorizes homeschoolers as either "Christian" or "inclusive" (Apple, 2018). However, later, he says that a large population of homeschool families are religiously conservative going as far as to call them "authoritarian populists" (Apple, 2000). Apple recognizes that homeschooling families sometimes believe that public schooling interferes with their children's potential and that there is a serious danger when the state intrudes into the life of the family (Apple, 2018). Overall, Apple does not see homeschooling as an appropriate model for education.

The homeschool curriculum includes lessons in mathematics, literacy, social studies and other subjects, homework assignments, tests, and instructional materials, much like a public school curriculum (Apple, 2018). However, in the case of homeschool

families there is an entire industry dedicated to providing curriculum supplies and supplements for homeschooling (Apple, 2018). These curricula are rigorously sequenced and tightly controlled. They are often purchased on the internet through for-profit organizations (Apple, 2018). While it is important to have curricula materials for homeschool families that meet their immediate needs and sometimes the child's interest, there is little research on these for-profit materials (Apple, 2018). Therefore, Apple (2018) calls for more research on the topic of homeschool curriculum.

"The curriculum has always been the result of tensions, struggles, and compromises" (Apple, 2018, p. 35). Apple understands this in the way he poses national standards as a guide for curriculum reform, noting that standardized test scores were not originally intended to track the fulfillment of these national standards. He argues that textbooks, the privatization of schools, and social movements, including homeschooling, further undermine the good intentions of national standards and curriculum reform. There are a great number of complexities that make curriculum and its current state of reform difficult to implement and make equitable for students, teachers, and schools.

Music Education Curriculum

Music education curriculum is constantly changing, attempting to engage twenty-first students. Popular music is making an impact on music education and curriculum in the twentieth and twenty-first century. Popular music is a way that students can engage in informal learning both in and out of the classroom. That being said, there are some parts of music curriculum that cannot be forgotten, such as the planning of the curriculum and a defined philosophy associated with the music class. Despite the fact that many music educators feel that lesson planning and writing are not applicable to music, lessons and

planning yield more effective instruction (Standerfer & Hunter, 2010), so it is important to find creative ways to incorporate a curriculum that is specific to music. Music curriculums exist for homeschool families, but there is little information about exactly what content is in these curricula. The little information that does exist comes from a pilot study and some personal accounts that suggest that these homeschool music curricula are designed for a Pre-K–6 audience and is completed online or in workbooks.

Formal and Informal Music Education

Most students experience music in school settings formally, with a teacher leading, directing, and engaging students in music learning. When students encounter informal music learning, it is typically outside of the classroom. Other differences between formal and informal learning are the end goals (Jenkins, 2011). Jenkins (2011) elaborates:

> The ends of formal learning tend to be clearly defined in advance of the means. In fact, formalizing the instructional strategy no doubt evolved to ensure that a particular set of ends were attained rather than some other. Tasks are often broken down into incremental, successive approximations of the target behavior, the ends-in-view. (p. 182)

In music education, the ends of informal learning tend not to be clearly defined or even clearly separate from the means (Jenkins, 2011). Jenkins (2011) argues that informal learning approaches are often more appropriate for situations where the learner's body is involved, and formal approaches are best when the content is conceptual. However, music education poses unique learning opportunities that may differ from this take (Jenkins, 2011). In private lessons, "the relationship between instructor and student tends

to focus and be elaborations on conceptual and rule-governed behavior whereas informal instructional approaches tend to focus and be elaborations on sense governed experiential behavior" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 183).

There is a great trend toward informal music learning, and "music educators have been especially concerned with finding better ways to spark student interest in classical and other types of music traditionally taught in schools" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 188). Some consider formal music learning to constrain students' creative experiences (Jenkins, 2011). Jenkins (2011) discusses the potential opportunities and challenges to formal music learning:

> … formal learning might be seen as a perceived need to constrain the range of ways a person can adopt. Perhaps the quest for uniformity, which is so common in modern society, motivates social institutions to insist on shaping the variety of individual expressive activities of its members. If true, there is a positive side and a negative side to this. On the positive side, formal instruction enables society to run smoothly, and affords its members the opportunity to more easily identify and relate to one another. On the negative side, formal instruction restricts individual tendencies to seek their own voice, to express themselves in unique ways.

Most teachers employ informal strategies to complement formal approaches. In addition to a curriculum plan and execution, the "means for achieving some of those ends may be guided largely by the learner, and may even occasionally encourage a sense of play in the pursuit of target goals" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 185). Although the word "play" entices a sense that students are playing rather than learning, informal music experiences provide ample

learning opportunities for students and produce expert musicians, often in the form of popular musicians.

Popular Music in Curriculum

Popular music can be learned in informal or formal settings, but it is most commonly learned in informal music education. The inclusion of popular music is trending in music curriculum as another way for students to connect the outside world with the inside world of school music (J. Barrett, 2007). However, this approach has been incorporated more in Great Britain and Australia than in North America, where it has been met with greater resistance (J. Barrett, 2007) because of the strong influence of western art music in American music classrooms.

Lucy Green has studied and published information on informal music making, often cited as popular music. Informal music making emphasizes collaboration among students and the role of the teacher as an advocate or tutor, rather than the direct instructor of a large ensemble of students (J. Barrett, 2007). Advocates of popular music as a part of formal music curriculum believe that it should be included as a part of a more progressive and enjoyable music curriculum. “Formal music education and informal music learning have for centuries been sitting side by side, with little communication between them” (Green, 2002, p. 216). Green (2002) noticed that many students drop music courses in school but continue to listen to popular music. From her research, Green (2002) determined that there are five characteristics that popular music learners engage in: “(1) learner initiated choice of music; (2) copying recordings by ear; (3) collaborative work in “friendship groups”; (4) holistic immersion in projects rather than sequential, step-by-step approaches; and (5) simultaneous involvement in creating, performing,

improvising, and listening from the start, rather than a progression from basic technique to broader musical concerns" (Green, 2002, p. 127).

Popular musicians often feel that they miss out on opportunities to read music while formally educated musicians miss out on opportunities to be motivated and energized by the enjoyment of playing popular music (Green, 2002). With these lessons from Lucy Green, educators can create a curriculum that is engaging to a larger audience of students and enhance the experience of musicians trained in the western classical tradition.

For music educators, it is important to recognize the need for creative thinking and a wider range of musical behaviors and expectations for students and learning (J. Barrett, 2005, 2007). Music educators can engage a larger variety of students by creating multiple avenues of engagement (J. Barrett, 2007). And by engaging more students, teachers can uphold the "music for all" notion (J. Barrett, 2005). This can involve adding more musical styles, like popular music.

Writing Music Curriculum

Curriculum cannot be studied without also considering philosophy and assessment as well as the act of writing the curriculum itself (Conway, 2002, 2015). Colleen Conway has made many important contributions to the field of music education and curriculum in both practice and publication. Her expertise is best served in both practitioner's articles as well as an edited book on the subject of music curriculum. The practitioner publication, *Curriculum Writing in Music,* gives music educators direct instruction to creating a variety of types of music curriculum, depending on the context of the music course. Like any good educator and author, Conway reached out to a variety of

professionals in the field of music education to write the chapters of the book *Musicianship - Focused Curriculum and Assessment* (Conway, 2015). Much of the information related to music curriculum will be summarized from both the article and the book because the information from the book supports the arguments in the article.

Philosophy, assessment, and curriculum are all innately connected in education (Conway, 2002, 2015). Determining program philosophy is one of the first steps Conway recommends when creating a curriculum (Conway, 2002, 2015). Other music curriculum necessities include program goals and beliefs, developmental skills or benchmarks, required resources, sample teaching strategies/lesson plans, and sample assessment strategies (Conway, 2002, 2015). While Conway makes many suggestions for writing the curriculum document, she also notes that "there is no one correct way to write a curriculum, and decisions about design depend on the teaching and learning context" (Conway, 2002, p. 55). There are various types of curriculum. Objective - based curriculum, literature - based curriculum, skill - based curriculum, knowledge - based curriculum, and grade - age related curriculum all have their place in music education, depending on the teaching and learning environment (Conway, 2002).

Conway (2002) notes that in her experience, many teachers do not have a curriculum or follow state and national standards as their curriculum. However, these standards are not a curriculum (Conway, 2002). For this reason, and to engage the teacher in professional development, Conway (2002) recommends that teachers be a part of the curriculum development process. When teachers are involved in the creation of the music curriculum, they are more likely to implement it (Conway, 2002). Conway (2015) also suggests focusing on active music making including moving, singing, playing,

improvising, composing, reading, and listening to music (Conway, 2015). Creating a curriculum that includes ideas for philosophy and assessment is an important part of a music program and engages both teachers and students in the learning process.

Standards

In order to put assessment into practice, standards must be put into place. Standards exist in various forms in music education. There are national standards such as those put forth by the National Association for Music Education (NAfME), and there are standards that teachers put into place in their classroom or at the district level. Whether national or local, standards are set in order to outline specific desired learning outcomes, objectives, knowledge, skills, and abilities (Payne et al., 2019). Standards define expectations and are necessary for establishing valid and reliable assessments (Payne et al., 2019). National music standards should be used to inform classroom and district-based standards of learning to provide the clearest curriculum and forms of assessment.

In 2014, NAfME produced music standards, the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) to guide classroom teachers by providing "teachers with frameworks that closely match the unique goals of their specialized classes" ("Standards," 2021). These standards still hold strong today and include Creating, Performing, Responding, and Connecting ("Standards," 2021). The NCAS are primarily used for K–12 teachers, and they are the best musical standards that the education community has for all music learning environments. NAfME clarifies "these voluntary standards allow a great deal of flexibility for states, districts, and teachers to develop unique curriculum" ("The New National 2014 Music Standards - Here's What NAfME Wants You to Know," 2014). Rather than creating curriculum for each unique musical situation, the NCAS are a

variety of standards for many different settings. Though these standards are used primarily used for K–12 settings, they can be used in all music learning environments, including homeschool environments.

One issue that comes to light when addressing standards as a precursor to assessment is that music teachers often confuse performance standards and content standards (Payne et al., 2019). This sets up assessment to provide the wrong kind of information or worse, no information at all. After all, as Payne et al. (2019) suggests, assessment is vital for informing students of their progress, informing teaching practices, and informing stakeholders. To combat this, teachers should determine the type of assessment needed to best address their standards.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of music curriculum and is defined as an action or instance of making judgement about intended learning (Payne et al., 2019). Music curriculum authors and teachers must include assessment as a part of a fully thought and planned music classroom. In the music classroom, assessment can and should be used for making students aware of their progress and improvement and accountability (Payne et al., 2019). Improvement and accountability apply to all stakeholders in a school and starts with improving teaching. Further, accountability measures from assessment can be used for advocacy. For all of these reasons, music assessments should be planned and executed carefully starting with defining standards and exploring appropriate methods of assessment.

Assessments support standards. The supplementary assessments for these NCAS is the Model Cornerstone Assessments (MCAs). The MCAs provide assessment tasks

that are measured, authentic, engaging, and prepare students for a future with music (Payne et al., 2019). These MCAs help teachers put the standards and assessment procedures into place in their unique classroom settings.

Performance is one of the most common forms of assessment in music. Despite the need for improvement and accountability, some question whether assessment is suitable in music because of its naturally expressive nature (Denis, 2018). Authentic performance in music is subjective (Denis, 2018). In a study involving festival-type assessments, Denis (2018) notes that non-music factors were predictors of assessment scores. However, the fact remains that music teachers are responsible for providing valid and reliable information of their students' performances (Scott, 2012). "Teachers are also responsible for providing feedback to help students extend their understanding of musical concepts" (Scott, 2012). In music, feedback is often synonymous with assessment because judgment of performance is such a common form of assessment. Pedagogues like Conway (2015) agree that feedback and assessment should be a part of formal music lesson planning. Although a teacher can plan assessment, it is a complicated process in music, particularly due to the creative and performance aspects in music.

Both formative and summative forms of assessment should be used in a music classroom; although, formative assessments are used most often (Denis, 2018). Formative assessment is listening to performance and giving a judgment (Denis, 2018). This typically plays out to be error detection and identification in music classes (Denis, 2018). Summative assessments are also valuable and are the source of grades and even teacher evaluations (Denis, 2018). As Denis (2018) suggests, both formative and summative assessments should be used in the music classroom.

Assessment should be documented in a variety of ways. These include (but are not limited to) rubrics, portfolios, checklists, rating scales, recordings, and even self-assessment and self-evaluation (Denis, 2018). These assessments should look for and define musical behaviors in musical contexts. Unfortunately, assessments in music classrooms often observe non-musical actions (Denis, 2018). Denis (2018) reports that in elementary music classrooms, effort, participation, individual performance using informal observation, group performance, and behavior were the most common assessments. Instead, "assessment tasks should allow students to apply their learning in ways that represent their own understanding and skills" accompanied by a scoring device to help teachers and students document the learning (Payne et al., 2019, p. 40). With proper documentation, teachers can display learning to students and stakeholders.

Assessment is vital to implementing curriculum. Standards must be put into place to ensure that correct assessment techniques and documentation are used. With proper feedback, students and stakeholders can be informed of student progress and improve on teaching while also advocating for music education.

Private Lessons in Music Education

Private lessons are a unique part of music education. These lessons are one-on-one with a teacher who is a master's degree in performance. Private lessons are typically for instrument or voice and are paid for and taken outside of regular schooling for children. Authors have studied private lessons in relation to their historic, Western tradition in the "private teaching, private learning" environment (Davidson & Jordan, 2007), satisfaction with private music lessons (Rife et al., 2001), and even the use of

internet-based video conferencing for private lessons (Dammers, 2009). All of these studies provide valuable insight into the unique nature of private music lessons.

Davidson and Jordan (2007) "Private Teaching, Private Learning"

The idea of "private teaching, private learning" is described as a historic, Western practice of one-on-one music education. Some practices in this tradition are good and some are not valuable as a part of best practices in music education. Although there is no nationally or internationally accepted curriculum for private music lessons, teachers do have curriculum as a part of their practice. Sometimes these are nationally recognized and other times the curriculum is "a negotiated contract between teacher and student" (Davidson & Jordan, 2007, p. 729). These private lessons are part of a teacher-apprentice model where an expert teacher of an "older artist of exemplary skill" works with a pupil to perform certain music (Davidson & Jordan, 2007, p. 730). There are many advantages to this one-on-one approach, particularly the attention to the student and bond between teacher and student. Also, the modern model of private lessons supports professional musical goals, taking lessons for fun, and even taking lessons as a part of social etiquette (Davidson & Jordan, 2007).

However, there are some negative aspects of private lessons both socially and pedagogically. Socially, private lessons are mostly reserved for those of a high socioeconomic status. Lessons are costly, and there is additional cost for a quality instrument and other complementary materials like books. While the bond between teacher and student may be positive, it may also be problematic. If a student does not like their teacher, they are less likely to be dedicated to practicing and learning. Young students may have a particularly difficult time connecting with their private teacher

because of the age difference or the emotional maturity of the young one (Davidson & Jordan, 2007).

While teaching practices and curriculum in the public school are observed and moderated by administrators and national or state standards, private teachers have more flexibility. Their musical performance skills may be valued over their pedagogical qualifications. Davidson and Jordan (2007) found that these one-on-one teaching settings often do not have good teaching habits. For example, there is more talking and less demonstration in private lessons, despite extant research that suggests that students learn better through demonstration than talking. Also, disapproval is used more often in private lessons although educators and researchers know that approval is better for positive learning results. Davidson and Jordan (2007) also argue that there are more close-minded approaches to how students learn in the "private-teaching, private learning" environments.

Private lessons have good aspects and poor ones. On the positive side, private lessons give musicians a one-on-one experience with a performance master, helping students achieve their goals. "Most who go on to become professional musicians have achieved their musical instrumental skills through an education outside of their mainstream school work" (Davidson & Jordan, 2007, p. 737). On the other hand, private lessons are primarily reserved for high income families because the lessons and necessary materials are costly. This causes inequities that historically repeat themselves. Private teachers. Are also more likely to have poor teaching habits like talking instead of demotivating and using disapproving comments over positive feedback.

Rife et al. (2001) Children's Satisfaction with Private Music Lessons

Despite the fact that private music teachers do not always use best practices for teaching music, children are generally satisfied with the lessons, especially if they choose to continue to practice for the lessons. This is because feelings of satisfaction act like a positive reinforcer (Rife et al., 2001). These feelings of satisfaction are vital to learning how to play an instrument (Rife et al., 2001). In their study about children's satisfaction with private music lessons, Rife et al (2001), reported that students enjoy more non-musical benefits of private lessons than their teachers. Children who like to practice were more likely to be satisfied with their lessons, and children who were satisfied with their lessons were more likely to practice (Rife et al., 2001). Motivation plays a key part in student satisfaction and subsequent success in private lessons (Rife et al., 2001).

Dammers (2009) Utilizing Internet-Based Video Conferencing for Instrumental Music Lessons

Dammers (2009) explored the use of internet-based video conferencing for instrumental music lessons. This study might be different if replicated today, but findings suggest that many of the advantages, disadvantages, and challenges of online lessons might be the same. In 2009, virtual instrumental music lessons were rarely used. After all, music is inherently interpersonal and requires live communication and collaboration often between multiple musicians. However, some online music experiences existed like the Philadelphia Orchestra Global Concert Series. The Philadelphia Orchestra would charge $15 for a digital concert as well as backstage access and discussion with the musicians as a part of the Internet2 project. Further, the orchestra engaged in podcasts and posts on topics such as racial and social justice and women in the arts (Dammers, 2009).

These online learning opportunities inspired Dammers (2019) to explore internet-based music lessons. This led to a case study of private lessons of a teacher and brass student who engaged in online private instrumental music lessons. They found advantages, disadvantages, and challenges to the online lesson format. Surprisingly, both teacher and student did not have issues with connectivity. Assessment of sound and rhythm and general pacing was also not an issue. Challenges to this form of lessons included a video and audio delay. This meant that the teacher and student could not play duets or play together. The interpersonal dynamic was also a challenge. Both the teacher and the student felt like they did not get to know each other as well. Additionally, the teacher found it hard to see what was happening, particularly pertaining to embouchure. This was exacerbated by the inability to move around the room and move the camera to properly see these physical issues. There was also not enough control over sound and dynamics. The primary advantage was the convenience of being able to take the lessons remotely. Other advantages included the teacher asking more questions, a good pedagogical behavior. Also, there was a temporary novelty effect. In the end, Dammers (2009) concluded that the lessons were "functional but not equivalent" (p. 23).

Private lessons exude a variety of advantages and disadvantages. Private music lessons are unique to music in that most career musicians and those who major in music take private lessons to remain competitive in the field. Advantages include one-on-one attention and opportunities for positive reinforcement (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). However, private lessons are primarily reserved for those with high incomes and can be pedagogically inefficient and socially unjust (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). Private music

lessons will continue to be required for reputability in the music industry, and technology is making this more available in a variety of settings and to a variety of students.

Technology in Music Education

Because technology is a common form of education for homeschool students, it is valuable to address technology and its role in music education curriculum. After all, technology is no longer an optional part of everyday life; it is a necessity. Technology can be a tool to enhance music experiences when used effectively. However, sometimes music classrooms turn "techno centric," with the lesson or learning goals revolving around the technology (Bauer, 2015). Technology is most effective when a teacher determines desired learning outcomes and then determines what technology is appropriate to use to enhance these learning objectives (Bauer, 2015).

Technology is embedded in everyday life in the twenty-first century. Computers may now be considered a common household appliance in addition to the fact that many states include technology requirements as a part of their state learning standards, even for music (Bauer, 2015). Including technology in curriculum can be difficult for teachers because they often understand and interact with technology differently than their students (Wise et al., 2011). A teacher's knowledge of the technology determines how effective the technology is (Bauer, 2015). Not only is it important for teachers to consider how technology can be implemented into music curriculum, it is also important to consider how technology changes the way students learn. For example, young students who now regularly engage with technology prefer to work in groups rather than working as individuals and also prefer instant gratification for short-term goals instead of delayed rewards for long-term objectives (Leong, 2012).

Technology should be included in music curriculum to provide a more engaging experience for students, create a more accessible learning environment (for students with special needs or students like those who are homeschooled), and to incorporate twenty-first century skills. Considering technology as a part of music curriculum is an important part of ensuring that music education stays relevant (Bauer & Dammers, 2016), but it serves a greater purpose to provide music education to students who might not otherwise be able to access it, like those who are educated in the home.

YouTube in Music Education

While many strides have been made with the use of technology in music education, YouTube might be one of the most impactful in both formal and informal learning environments. YouTube has transformed media expression, communication, and education. Musicians across the world are able to access and share music videos and recordings through this medium at little or no cost. YouTube has the potential to be transformative, socially and politically (Kellner & Kim, 2010). However, much of the material is expressed in narcissism, consumerism, and capitalism (Kellner & Kim, 2010). There are success stories from YouTube fame, which Latta and Thompson (2011) explore in the success of a YouTube musician. Further, the collaborative and. informal education that YouTube provides is desirable for beginning musicians (Kruse & Veblen, 2012). Any advantages that can come of YouTube in a formal classroom music education setting are thwarted, however, when schools block YouTube from school networks (Cayari, 2011; Kruse & Veblen, 2012). It is the hope of many authors and researchers that YouTube can be a power for good in the classroom and become a new opportunity for both formal and informal music learning.

YouTube As A Place for Critical Pedagogy

Because of the autonomous nature of YouTube, it is a tool with the potential for great social and even political change. Despite the historic efforts of Dewey and Freire, education is still viewed and often practiced as students acquiring knowledge from knowledge-keepers (Kellner & Kim, 2010). YouTube has the potential to change this because of the variety of interactive features (Kellner & Kim, 2010).

Kellner and Kim (2010) root their argument for YouTube as a transformative pedagogical tool in Dewey and Freire. Dewey's socially reproductive school of thought can be played out on YouTube because of the decentralized and interactive features. Musicians can post videos and respond to videos with other videos or text comments. People can voluntarily participate in mutual education, making it a place for learner-centered education. Along with Freire's philosophy, YouTube can be used for self-fulfillment and empowerment, and there are no age limits, making learning lifelong. Further, learners participate in "learning by doing" and self-education. There are many positive aspects of YouTube that make it empowering for learners and also provide an agency for social change by democratizing knowledge (Kellner & Kim, 2010).

However, with great power comes great risk. YouTube has the power to do all of the above in relation to education, but thus far, it has done very little of that. Instead, it contains a "hidden curriculum in dominance of online culture" (Kellner & Kim, 2010, p. 17). When Kellner & Kim (2010) looked at one potentially socially transformative problem-posing YouTube video, it had 80 responses, but only 20 of the videos were directly related to the question. Further, despite the collaborative features, it is mostly used for watching videos and promotions and advertisements. Worst of all, according to

Kellner and Kim (2010), much of YouTube expresses "narcissism, rampant materialism," consumerism, and capitalism (p. 25). While YouTube has great potential for revolutionary educational practices, it is mostly used for watching videos. Beyond that, much of what is on YouTube is negative or consumerist. It is the hope of Kellner and Kim (2010), that YouTube can be used for positive political and social change in the near future.

YouTube Instructional Videos

Kruse and Veblen (2012) studied 40 instructional YouTube videos from five folk websites, looking at pedagogical and musical content. They determined that the majority of these videos were geared towards beginners, and much of the instruction was a piece in a larger curriculum of instruction. Teachers were mostly white males, which parallels what is seen in formal music education classrooms as well. The videos were centered on technique but also touched on theory and melody. The researchers noted that teachers demonstrated both correct and incorrect ways of playing the instrument and did not often use voice to demonstrate. Repetition was the main teaching tool, and improvisation was underrepresented (Kruse & Veblen, 2012).

These YouTube videos were somewhat reflective of what we see in music classrooms, white males demonstrating and using techniques like modeling and repetition to teach. However, some other aspects of these videos might be unique to YouTube, including some incorrect modeling as well as a large amount of speaking and little to no vocal demonstration (Kruse & Veblen, 2012). Despite the positive aspects of these videos as well as the opportunity to connect with others and socialize, YouTube is often

blocked in schools (Kruse & Veblen, 2012). In future, researchers should work to determine exactly how students use YouTube in schools and for education.

YouTube As an Outlet for Music Performance and Informal Learning

YouTube has changed music performance. "Technology affects the way people create, consume, and share art, media, and performance" (Cayari, 2011, p. 3). YouTube allows viewers to learn informally through watching songs or lessons (Cayari, 2011). While it is usually a resource or innovation for music educators, one educator, Juhasz, chose to teach an entire music course on YouTube in a formal learning environment. Juhasz learned that teaching the class by YouTube only was not as successful as anticipated. Teaching by YouTube also requires proper technique and a well-established curriculum (Cayari, 2011).

Although Juhasz used YouTube for formal music learning, it is most used to learn informally. Wade Johnston gained YouTube popularity and learned all he needed about technology, music, and marketing informally. Collaboration was a key part of Johnston's YouTube fame. He not only collaborated with people on YouTube but also with his father, band members, and best friend who gave him feedback throughout the production process. In this way, Johnston reflected Green's (2002) notion of how popular musicians learn in that his work on YouTube enhanced musical aspects of consumption, creating, and sharing (Cayari, 2011).

Despite the successes of Juhasz and Johnston, Cayari (2011) notes that YouTube is often blocked completely from school devices. Cayari (2011) suggests YouTube should be used as a resource in the music class and students should learn to use YouTube for collaboration and creation (Cayari, 2011). The consensus among researchers (Cayari,

2011; Kellner & Kim, 2010; Kruse & Veblen, 2012) is that YouTube should be used by musicians and music educators, and it has been successful as a way of teaching and learning for some musicians.

Homeschool Music Education Curriculum

Music education curriculum for homeschool students can come from many different sources. First, a homeschool family may seek out private music instruction, in which case, the curriculum is decided by the teacher, possibly with student or parent input. Another resource, which my pilot study found was popular, is online resources. There are some print resources available for music education, but most of these are workbooks or songbooks. As with other activities, many families participate in music outside of the home. With such a wide variety of community music experiences, it is not possible to analyze the specific curriculum associated with each experience. However, these experiences are conceivable based on listening and performing experiences.

Online Resources for Homeschool Music Education

Results from this pilot study showed that homeschool families frequently seek resources outside of the home for music education, especially online resources. These resources are often free or low cost. The programs and websites that participants specifically stated in responses include YouTube, Classics for Kids, All-In-One Homeschool, Teachrock.org, Wondershare Filmora, Hoffman Academy, SmartMusic, and Abeka. These websites cover a vast array of music topics that support performance, music appreciation, electronic music creation, music history, music theory, and other music topics (Murphy, 2020).

The major issues with these online resources is that they are intended for a young audience, there is no feedback or assessment, and some of these websites require the expertise of a music teacher to be used effectively. Classics for Kids, All-In-One Homeschool, Hoffman Academy, and Abeka are all intended for young audiences, mostly elementary school. Teachrock.org, on the other hand, does have recommended lessons for high school students. However, this website, along with SmartMusic requires the teacher (or student) to have previous musical knowledge. Finally, one of the largest standing issues with online resources is that they rarely give feedback, especially for performance. Some of the workbooks like Abeka or All-In-One Homeschool have answer keys for the activities presented. Wondershare Filmora, a site for creating electronic music, has no direct instruction or feedback. YouTube and Hoffman Academy lessons provide no assessment or feedback option (Murphy, 2020). YouTube does have collaborative features, but it is unclear if the students in this study posted videos or comments or only consumed instructional videos and listened to music, as research suggests (Kellner & Kim, 2010).

The issue that derives from not having assessment and feedback options is that the lessons, program, or curriculum often do not have standards and objectives. Teachrock.org is an exception to this, providing clear national and even some state standards to each lesson. As noted previously, though, this website is best used as a supplemental resource for teachers with musical knowledge. It is important to understand and apply standards or objectives in order to give students the best musical experience. Homeschool families should have access to a music curriculum that reflects NCAS if this is something that they value. However, it is difficult to encompass creating, performing,

and responding when a family is essentially piecemealing music experiences. That is not to say that homeschooled students are not getting these experiences, but it is difficult to assess and measure learning in so many different facets.

Summary

A summary of this vast literature review points back to the purpose of this research—to share the experiences, perspectives, and values of homeschool families and their music education curricula. In order to gain a better understanding of the complexities of homeschooling itself as well as music education curriculum, it is important to study the origins of homeschooling which became significantly less popular after the inception of compulsory education in the late 19th century, early 20th century (Barnett, 2013). Reasons for homeschooling can be traced back primarily to pedagogical or ideological reasons; further, the PFI indicates that the majority of families are concerned about the environment of other schools (Brewer et al., 2017; "Homeschooling in the United States," 2019; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017; Meehan & Stephenson, 1994). Some critics express concern about the academic and social outcomes for homeschool families because they do not have the same oversight that public schools do. However, researchers have gone to great lengths to study the homeschool population to find that students primarily educated in the home in fact have higher academic achievement than their public school peers as well as socially dynamic lives (Cogan, 2010; Martin-Chang et al., 2011; Ray, 2010, 2016; Smith & Sikkink, 1999). However, sampling such a small group, at only 3% of the entire population of student-aged persons, is extremely difficult and requires caution in methodology and the interpretation of results (Martin-Chang et al., 2011; Murphy, 2020).

Because of the difficulty in obtaining quantitative research of such a unique population, much research about homeschool families is qualitative in nature. This is also because homeschool families are unique and sometimes better served with qualitative work like case studies. Jeananne Nichols certainly understands this as she is one of the most prolific writers of homeschool students in music education. Homeschool students also experience music education in unique ways. This is further exacerbated Nichols' findings that homeschool families choose to educate in the home for a wide variety of reasons, including providing a Christian education, the ability to individualize education, to participate in multiple extracurricular music experiences, and even for more practical reasons like a family that moves or travels often (Nichols, 2005, 2012). This work further emphasizes the unique nature of homeschooling.

Homeschool curriculum is studied little in content, but there is some information from the PFI and other researchers illuminating some about what and where homeschool families obtain curriculum. Most homeschool families use a structured curriculum, and there is evidence to suggest that this produces better academic results (Martin-Chang et al., 2011; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). The majority of families obtain their curriculum from websites and libraries, notable free or low-cost venues ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Bookstores and homeschool catalogs also continue to meet the unique curricular needs of homeschool families (Apple, 2000; "Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). In the end, Apple (2000) suggests that homeschool curriculum is much like that of public schools.

As if homeschool curriculum was not studied little enough, homeschool music education curriculum is studied even less. However, scholars can gain quite a bit of

information from the study of music education curriculum that is trending for music educators. Popular music is a contemporary way to engage students in both formal and informal learning settings. Writing music curriculum is also important to study. Philosophy, standards, and assessment are all vital parts of music curriculum (Conway, 2002, 2015). NCAS are a valuable part of music education curriculum and help music educators set goals. Performance is the main form of assessment in music; however, it can be difficult or inappropriate to assess creative performance (Denis, 2018). Documenting assessment is important for informing stakeholders about accountability as well as informing students about their progress (Payne et al., 2019).

Private lessons are a unique part of music education. Private lessons are necessary to pursue a career or advanced education in music. Emphasis of Western European music traditions and poor teaching techniques like negative feedback and more talking than demonstration concern some professionals with the nature of private lessons (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). Despite these concerns, students are generally satisfied with their private teacher and private lessons, likely owing to their positive relationship with their teacher (Rife et al., 2001). In 2009, Dammers (2009), found that video-based private lessons were feasible but not ideal. Technology continues to revolutionize music education. YouTube is making poignant marks in music education as a place for teaching and learning, primarily informally but can also be used in formal classroom settings. YouTube allows for performance opportunities and the potential for collaboration (Cayari, 2011; Kellner & Kim, 2010). Unfortunately, YouTube does not reach its full educational potential because it is blocked in schools or students do not use the collaborative features; they only use YouTube to watch movies (Cayari, 2011; Kellner & Kim, 2010). Further,

watching these videos for educational purposes is concerning because of incorrect modeling and poor teaching techniques like an abundance of speaking rather than demonstrating (Kruse & Veblen, 2012).

Like general homeschool education curriculum, homeschool music education curriculum is studied very little. In a pilot study, Murphy (2020) discovered that a small sample of homeschool families primarily use online resources for music education. These online resources are geared for young audiences, include little or no feedback and assessment, and some of the online resources require the expertise of professional musicians (A. Murphy, 2020). To better understand homeschool music curriculum, this study surveys homeschool families in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States to determine what they use as music curriculum, how they feel about their chosen music curriculum, and their perceptions of NCAS associated with their music curriculum.

Chapter 3: Method

Research is a part of a myriad of expectations and career aspirations in higher education that includes research, service, and pedagogy. To me, and to many institutions, research is a way to serve the community. In preparation for this study, I looked for ways that I could serve and amplify voices in the community who may be in need of music education. I found this in the community of homeschool families who do not often receive services from public school music education.

This research is inspired by a pilot study that asked local Maryland homeschool families how they access music education and how music educators could best serve them. In the end, I determined that families in the study most needed a general high school music curriculum that could be completed online free of charge. However, this was a small sample and represented only a select group of homeschool families. Additionally, this survey specifically noted the ways in which this group was already receiving music education and ways they needed more resources. In this study, I expanded the sample to the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and narrowed the focus to homeschool music curriculum in hopes of gaining a broader understanding of the music curriculum that homeschool families use.

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). I used an exploratory survey design with descriptive analysis to gain a general understanding about homeschool music curriculum. I designed a survey to gain both a general understanding about homeschool

music curricula and insight into homeschool parents' values and beliefs about music as a part of their child(ren)'s education. Survey methodology is best for this study because of the little information that exists in this topic.

I used descriptive analysis techniques to answer the research questions. Descriptive analysis "uses data to describe the world for the purpose of identifying and improving our understanding of socially important phenomena" (Loeb et al., 2017, p. 18). In line with best practices of descriptive analysis, I conducted low-inference, low-assumption methods that used minimal statistical judgements, used frequency counts and measures of central tendency, displayed results in simple yet clear graphs and charts, and used more than one dataset to answer the research questions (Loeb et al., 2017). Although I clearly stated that I support all schooling choices, including homeschooling, I hoped to minimize bias by keeping the focus on the purpose of the study: to investigate homeschool music curriculum.

Survey Design

The survey in this study was adopted and adapted from the Parental-Family Involvement Survey (PFI) ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019), the NCAS, and my pilot study involving homeschool families and their experiences with music education. The PFI is distributed by mail from the U.S. Department of Education to a random sample of homeschool families nationwide every four years. The PFI "asks questions about various aspects of parent involvement in education" as well as "students' homeschooling experiences, the sources of the curriculum, and the reasons for homeschooling" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019, p. 1). Questions about homeschooling experiences and sources of curriculum were rephrased in this study to ask

only about music experiences and music curriculum. See annotations in Appendix B for details about adoption and adaption from the PFI. The NCAS are intentionally designed to be flexible and include creating, listening to, performing, responding to, and making connections between music and other subjects. This study is a broader, follow-up study from a pilot study. This pilot study informed survey design in the present study. More discussion about the survey instrument itself will be discussed with procedures.

Pilot Research: A Study of Homeschool Access to Music Education

In this study, which also served as a pilot to the present research, I surveyed 38 homeschool families. The survey was online with questions about how the families currently access music education and where they need more assistance in accessing music education. In this study, families mostly accessed music education through online resources or in-person lessons. However, many families noted that private lessons were too expensive, and money was something that impacted their family's access to music education. When I inquired about resources that these homeschool families needed to provide music education for their children, a variety of responses were common. Families expressed an interest in online resources that they could use with a flexible schedule. They also expressed interest in both instrumental and non-instrumental instruction as well as lessons that focused on the individual desires of their children including popular music, music theory, note reading, and music history (Murphy, 2020). These results were consistent with literature on reasons that families homeschool, for example, having a flexible schedule and being able to individualize instruction (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017; Ray, 2010, 2016).

I further inquired as to whether the parent would be interested in receiving some sort of teacher training to provide music education to their child(ren). Most responses were "yes" or "maybe." Considering the structure of homeschooling, it appears that parents would be involved in the delivery or assessment of music education in some fashion, even if they do not receive formal training on the concepts. This is also consistent with research and laws that remind parents that they do not need to have formal teacher training in order to deliver instruction in the home (*Homeschool Laws by State 2020*, 2020; Ray, 2010; Rivero, 2008).

After analyzing responses and looking at the resources that families already use, I noticed that most resources are only useful for beginners and elementary students and some resources are unreliable. For example, many general music curricula and websites are geared toward elementary-aged students. This leaves a gap in music education resources in the home or online for older students.

Also, some online resources are not meant for students without music experience. When using online resources, it is important to be able to determine a good resource from another that is not. YouTube is notorious for either being extremely helpful or misleading. This is certainly the case for music education on YouTube. Some families noted using YouTube for instrumental music lessons. While this might be helpful for a small amount of time or for a student with experience on the instrument, YouTube does not provide any feedback for students, stunting growth for instrumental music students. Further, anyone can upload lessons to YouTube. I have seen many videos that do not provide the best technique, including basic elements of instrumental technique like

positioning and posture. Therefore, YouTube may not be considered a reliable source for music education, especially if the learner is using it for instrumental study.

From this research, I found that one of the most useful music education resources for these homeschool families would be an online high school general music education curriculum. Interestingly, music education research in the public-school realm also suggests that there is a general music curriculum missing for high school students (Gary & Ernst, 1965). To emphasize Nichols' (2012) point as well as the National Association for Music Education (NAfME) moto "music for all," high school students should be included in a general music education curriculum. In combination with this Nichols' (2012) and this pilot study, homeschool families may need access to a general music curriculum that is appropriate for high school students. This would be beneficial for all high school students.

Need for the Study

The pilot study is a glimpse of the relationship between homeschooling and music education. There is a stark lack of research in the area of homeschooling (Murphy, 2014), especially in the specific field pertaining to music education. There is discussion among music teacher educators at the Society for Music Teacher Education (SMTE) about how to establish relationships with homeschool communities in the realm of music education, but there is little published research about how these families access music education and what their music curricula consists of. Unfortunately, much of this information about homeschool families and music education is assumed, which leaves miscommunication or no communication between music teachers and homeschool families. This study surveys homeschool families in order to gain an understanding of what homeschool

music curriculum looks like and how families feel about the homeschool curriculum they use. With the survey results I hope to gain a greater understanding of homeschool music education and further opportunities for new study and possible future education interventions for homeschool music education.

Purpose Statement and Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Specifically, I sought to understand parents' perceptions of homeschool students' music experiences, commonly used curricular resources, parent satisfaction and parent perception of student satisfaction with homeschool music curricula, and parent preference regarding the importance and type of music included in their child(ren)'s education. Research questions pertaining to the purpose of this study are as follows:

1. What music curricula do homeschool families use?
    a. *What teaching approach is valued?*
    b. *Where do homeschool families get their music curricula?*
2. What kinds of musical priorities do parents express?
3. How do parent(s)/guardian(s) feel about their chosen music curricula?
4. What are parents' perceptions of their children's impressions of their music curricula and/or experiences?

See Appendix B for an annotated copy of the survey instrument.

Theoretical Framework

Homeschool families believe that they are making a better academic and/or social choice for their child by educating from the home. The Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement (MPI) supports this notion, stating that parents choose to

be involved in their child's education because they believe it will lead to student success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Although this model is commonly used in public or private school settings, it is applicable in homeschool environments. I analyze survey and interview data through this lens that suggests that parents who are highly involved in a student's schooling also have highly successful students.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement

Homeschooling is typically decided by parent(s), sometimes with input from the child(ren), to create a specific learning environment for the child(ren). In order for homeschooling to truly be successful, a parent must commit to monitor the progress and general education of a child. This requires great involvement from this parent. Researchers often wonder what makes a parent (or parents) become so involved in a child's education (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995, 2005; McQuiggan & Megra, 2017; Walker et al., 2010; Whitaker & Hoover-Dempsey, 2013). This involvement may include reviewing a child's work, monitoring child progress, helping with homework, discussing school events or course work with a child, and providing enrichment activities pertinent to school success (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Parental involvement is supplemental for students enrolled in private or public schools, but parental involvement for homeschooled children is the main source responsible for student success.

The MPI (see Appendix A) suggests that parents' involvement decisions are based on constructs based on their own ideas and experiences as well as on the constructs from environmental demands and opportunities (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). Level one focuses on the parent's fundamental decision about involvement where

parent(s) establish a basic range of activities that are considered important and necessary for themselves and their child (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). These roles are established in three categories:

A. Parental role construction
B. Parents' sense of efficacy for helping children succeed in school, and
C. Parents' perceptions of the general invitations, demands, and opportunities for involvement presented by children and their school
(Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, p. 31)

For homeschool families, level one is where families initially choose to homeschool. They must decide what the role of the parent is within the context of the child's education in order to determine if homeschooling is the right fit or even possible for the parent and child. These roles, ideas, and beliefs in level one lead to level two, parental involvement. This includes encouragement, modeling, reinforcement, and instruction (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). For homeschool families, this is where the instruction takes place. Parents are a part of each of these characteristics as they instruct their child(ren) or find others to co-instruct. Students then perceive these actions from their parent(s) (level 3), develop attributes conducive to learning (level 4), and proceed to achievement (level 5) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 1995). In the case of homeschooling, children are much more innately connected in levels three through five because of the close relationship to the parent serving as the teacher. The MPI will serve as a way to perceive parental involvement in homeschool children's education as they monitor, implement, and make curriculum choices for their child(ren).

Methodology

In this study I used the NCES *Descriptive Analysis in Education* guide to make informed decisions about methodology including the role of the researcher, procedures,

and data analysis (Loeb et al., 2017). The study rationale, survey instrument, and analysis all align with best practices in this guide. The sample consisted of homeschool families from the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The survey is adopted and adapted from the Parental-Family Involvement Survey (PFI) as well as ideas about NCAS, and my pilot study regarding homeschool music education experiences. As with all survey research, there is opportunity for bias and also limitations. I hope to ameliorate these by clearly defining the scope of the study and developing a survey instrument and trustworthiness that yields valuable data.

Researcher Role

According to the NCES Descriptive Analysis in Education guide, my greatest role as a survey researcher is to define the audience and analyze and describe the data in a way that is useful to that audience (Loeb et al., 2017). This includes using simple statistics that describe central tendencies and variation as well as using graphics and charts that clearly define the results. It is also important to recognize assumptions, limitations, and generalizability (Loeb et al., 2017). With these best practices I hope to be able to easily share the data with music educators as well as homeschool families who were interested in the results of the study.

Participant Access, Reciprocity, Confidentiality, and Consent

Like many professionals in higher education, I feel that research and teaching can be a service to the community. Therefore, participants were given access to the final report about this survey if they chose to provide an email address for follow-up. Participants did not have to provide any contact information or identifiable information to participate in the study. Additionally, participants were given the opportunity to skip any

question they did not want to answer. Participants had the choice to keep their responses anonymous. Informed consent was used for the survey, as it would be difficult to conduct the survey online and also get written consent. This information is kept confidential and is also accessible by the researcher. All contact information from the survey will be deleted six months after the study is completed.

Procedures and Survey Instrument

I distributed the survey to known contacts at homeschool co-ops and Facebook groups. Surveys were delivered via email (through Qualtrics) and social media, Facebook. The survey contained demographic information about the family, adapted and adopted from the PFI that is distributed every four years by the NCES (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). The survey also contained questions specifically about music involvement and music curriculum that homeschool families use. These questions were also adapted and adopted from the PFI questionnaire. Participants were given the option to provide contact information for a follow-up interview about their unique experiences with music education and music curriculum.

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument itself was designed using the software Qualtrics and contained a variety of multiple choice, multiple option, Likert-type scale, and some short answer questions. Questions pertained to demographics, curriculum choice, and parent and student satisfaction with music curriculum. The survey instrument was designed with three sections. The first section contains demographic questions. An example of a demographic question from this survey was “How long have you been homeschooling?” The second section contained music curriculum and satisfaction questions. An example

of a music specific question in this study was "Which of the following best describes the music teaching style?" The final section was follow-up questions primarily used for contact information. Participants had the opportunity to provide additional information via interview or obtain a copy of the survey results. A single survey link was appropriate for this survey to keep all of the information together for analysis and make the responses easier for participants. Table 2 is an example of some of the questions from the survey and whether they were adopted or adapted from the PFI or NCAS. See Appendix B for a full list of questions and response options from this survey.

Table 2

Example Questions

Question	**Response Options**	**Adopted, Adapted, or Original**	**Source**
How long have you been homeschooling?	Less than 1 year 1 to 3 years 3 to 5 years More than 5 years	Adopted	PFI
Source of music curriculum–select all that apply. Please specify the title or company of music curriculum or books	Library Homeschool catalog Educational publisher Homeschooling organization Church Public school Private school Bookstore Websites Virtual school or curriculum Other source None	Adapted	PFI
Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements. Creating music is an important part of my child's education.	Strongly disagree Disagree Neither agree nor disagree Agree Strongly agree	Adapted	NCAS

All questions were optional for respondents, in line with Institutional Review Board protocols for conducting research with human subjects. Human subject research participants have the ability to refuse to answer any question in the survey, as noted in the assumed consent form as the "right to withdraw" at the beginning of this study.

The survey was piloted by six colleagues for clarity and time. The survey was changed multiple times to make it more comprehensive. For example, it was important to define "formal" and "informal" learning, particularly in the context of home education. Pilot tests indicated that participants took anywhere from ten to fifteen minutes to complete the survey.

The survey was distributed twice, both times on Monday. Survey Monkey suggests that Monday is the best time to send a survey for the most responses (*When Is the Best Time to Send a Survey?*, 2020). The first time the survey was sent in the morning, and the second time it was in the afternoon. Although the survey was distributed to some individuals, it was mostly sent to homeschool groups. Therefore, it was the responsibility of the person(s) who maintain the group's email or Facebook page to distribute the survey to its members. This also made Mondays advantageous, as it gave group leaders many weekdays to get the survey to their constituents.

Sample and Response Rate

Homeschool students represent only 3% of the population (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017). Therefore, I used self-selected sampling to obtain participants from this specific group. Self-selected samples are "by virtue of their inclusion, different from individuals not included in the study" (Rutherford, 2014, p. 1). Participants for this study were obtained in a unique way in order to gain access to this specific population, homeschool

families (Rutherford, 2014). I use self-selected sampling to obtain participants for this survey.

In order to get in touch with as many homeschool families in the Mid-Atlantic as possible, I used a search engine to find contact information for homeschool groups and co-ops. I found 348 email addresses for leaders homeschool groups in this area. However, 86 emails failed to send, and 107 emails bounced back. In the end, that left 155 emails to homeschool groups and co-ops. Then I requested that the homeschool group leaders send an email with information about the study to their group members. Thomas (2017) used a similar sample technique in their study of homeschool curriculum. In this study, they obtained homeschool director contacts from homeshcool.com (Thomas, 2017). Thomas (2017) then sent recruitment emails to directors of homeschool community groups and encouraged the directors to provide their group members with the link to the online questionnaire. Therefore, this sampling technique appears to be a valid way of collecting participants for homeschool survey research.

Self-selected sampling was also used when I recruited participants using Facebook groups. I joined 13 Facebook groups. Each group required me to identify myself, and I was sure to include my research intentions with each Facebook group that I joined. It took approximately two weeks to obtain permission to join all of the groups. After obtaining permission to join the groups, I posted information about the study on each Facebook page, along with an IRB-approved visual to attract attention to the study. The table below provides a description of the Facebook groups that I joined including their member numbers and location. Participants were given the option to opt into the

sample after I posted the advertisement on each Facebook page, thus enacting the self-selected sample technique.

Table 1

Homeschool Facebook Group Description

Facebook Group Name	Number of Members	County	State
BaltHS	216	North Baltimore	MD
Charles County MD Homeschoolers	1,143	Charles County	MD
Delaware Christian Homeschool	707		DE
Delmarva Christian Homeschoolers	333		DE, MD, VA
Delmarva Homeschoolers	579		DE, MD, VA
Franklin & Cumberland County, PA Secular Homeschoolers	190	Franklin and Cumberland County	PA
Free Up Baltimore Homeschool Co-op for African-centered families	371	Baltimore	MD
Homeschoolers of Eastern Montgomery County PA	991	Montgomery County	PA
Montgomery County, MD Homeschoolers	2,062	Montgomery County	PA
Norristown-Collegeville Homeschoolers	179	Montgomery County	PA
NRV & SWVA Homeschoolers	568	New River Valley, Floyd, Carroll, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, Radford, Wythe	VA
PHLiC (Progressive Hagerstown Learning Circle)	153	Hagerstown	MD
Williamsburg Learn & Play Homeschool Group	179	Montgomery County	PA

Participants were homeschool families with at least one child who is educated in the home at least part time. Homeschool families in this study were also based in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Music education is required as a part of

homeschool curriculum in Washington D.C., Maryland, and Pennsylvania. Delaware and Virginia, also included in this study, do not specifically mark music education as a requirement for homeschooled students. Thus, this region represents homeschool families with both state requirements to include music as a part of curriculum (Washington D.C., Maryland, and Pennsylvania) and those that do not (Delaware and Virginia).

Unfortunately, due to the nature of the sample I could not produce a response rate. Response rates are important because they inform representativeness and generalizability (Fincham, 2008). Response rates are calculated by dividing the number of usable responses returned by the total number of eligible in the sample chose (Fincham, 2008). However, there is no way to know how many homeschool families were eligible because of the way the sample was recruited; therefore, there is no way to calculate response rate.

Because of the collaborative nature of homeschool co-ops and the broader homeschooling community, I sent emails to group leaders and also posted on Facebook homeschool groups that identified as part of the Mid-Atlantic region. A total of 155 emails were successfully distributed. Prior to survey distribution, I personally connected with 13 homeschool Facebook groups and posted the survey on their private page. Of these distribution techniques, 138 responses came from an "anonymous link," meaning that someone forwarded the survey using the link I provided in the email or someone responded to the survey link on Facebook. It appears that the sampling technique was successful, but I am unable to report response rate or sampling error because of the variety of ways participants were recruited. This means that the results from this survey will be most useful in informing the respondents from this survey (Nulty, 2008).

Because there is little to no survey research in this area and the homeschool population is so small, self-selected sampling was appropriate for this study. The aim was to maximize responses from a small population (homeschool families), potentially at the expense of representativeness. Thus, many responses may be from like-minded individuals or those that are part of the same homeschool group. However, with only a total of 3% of the nationwide population homeschooled, this is the best way to sample the population at hand.

Missing Data and Total N

Missing data was an issue in this survey, as it is in many surveys (Cheema, 2014; Rossi et al., 2013; Vaske, 2019). Because of the pattern of response and non-response, I performed a bias analysis to determine if the nonresponse impacted the total estimates (Burns & Wang, 2011). Item nonresponse bias, or in this study, the bias due to the failure of some persons in the sample to respond to questions in the survey, can be substantial if either the difference between respondents and nonrespondents or the item nonresponse rate is relatively large (Burns & Wang, 2011). In this study, all participants responded to the questions about "Homeschool status" and "How long have you been homeschooling." I compared the sample from these two questions to the total respondents in each question. Table 3 suggests that there is not a substantial difference between the full sample and the responses with missing data. The nonresponse does not appear to change the makeup of the respondent pool.

Table 3

Nonresponse Bias Analysis

	Homeschool status	How long have you been homeschooling?

	Full-time	Part-time	Less than 1 year	1 to 3 years	3 to 5 years	More than 5 years
All respondents	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q1 Days per week	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q2 Hours per week	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q3 Highest education	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q4 Total people	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q5 Income	97%	3%	21%	16%	11%	53%
Q6 Zip code	97%	3%	20%	15%	11%	54%
Q7 Number of children	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q8 Teaching style	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q9 Curriculum source	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q10 Parental/teacher satisfaction	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q11 Student satisfaction	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q12 Student engagement	97%	3%	20%	15%	11%	54%
Q13 Creating music	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q14 Listening to music	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q15 Responding to music	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q16 Listening to music	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%
Q18 Making connections	97%	3%	19%	15%	11%	55%

In total there were 155 respondents. After eliminating surveys that were incomplete to the point that they did not provide information about music education curriculum or opinion, there were a total of 114 complete or almost complete questionnaires (N=114). Although some of these setbacks in obtaining a total N greatly

reduced the number of participants in the study, this is still the largest survey study of homeschool music education research to date, and I will be able to use strong descriptive statistics to describe the sample at hand.

Data Analysis

Descriptive analysis was the best form of data analysis for this study because of its novel topic and because of the type of information that is gathered in the study. Descriptive analysis characterizes the world or a phenomenon and is particularly useful in identifying a socially important phenomenon that has not previously been recognized (Loeb et al., 2017). Descriptive analysis provides a general understanding of patterns across a population of interest (Loeb et al., 2017), in this case, homeschool families who use music curricula. Descriptive analysis provides further benefits in this study throughout the discussion section where I make recommendations for future intervention.

In line with best practices of descriptive analysis, I conducted low-inference, low-assumption methods that used minimal statistical judgements. Frequency counts and measures of central tendency were used the most to analyze survey results. In order to make the survey results clear, I used data visualization by displaying results in simple yet clear graphs and charts in order to best present the information to the audience (Descriptive analysis in education: A guide for researchers, 2017).

The NCES Descriptive Analysis in Education guide recommends defining the audience for the study in order to pare the results to meet the needs and comprehension for that audience (Loeb et al., 2017). In this study, I cater the data analysis to music educators. Analysis and discussion are centered around ways the homeschool population in this study currently uses music curricula and ways they feel about music. This will

inform music educators of the current status of home music education. However, as mentioned previously, my hope is to inform home educators as well in order to be fully transparent and create a positive relationship between music educators and home educators.

Limitations, Potential Bias, and Validity

As with any survey study, there are limitations, potential bias, and potential validity errors that I hope to overcome with strong research design. Limitations include the inability to generalize the results of this study. There is potential for nonresponse bias. By modeling the survey off of an NCES questionnaire, validity threats based on instrumentation should be ameliorated.

The largest limitation of this study is the limit of generalizability. Instead, this study focuses on homeschool families in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The advantage of this smaller sample is that the study will be extremely detailed. My hope is that this study will inspire more local studies, small-scale interventions, and repetitions in other regions. Results of this study are limited to the population at hand, homeschool families in the mid-Atlantic region who respond to this survey. Further, calculating response rate is a limitation because of the sampling technique. It was impossible to know how many homeschool families saw the advertisement on Facebook or received an email from a group leader.

Possible sources of non-sampling error include nonresponse bias, question wording, and ordering effects (*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys*, 2006). Efforts to minimize non-sampling error included pre-testing all instruments, review of the survey instrument by multiple experts, and use of instruments and questions tested

previously for other studies (the NCES PFI) (*Standards and Guidelines for Statistical Surveys*, 2006).

Positionality and Ethical Statement

I am an educator, a musician, and a researcher. I was a public-school music teacher for 5 years, and I believe that all students can learn. Each student has a unique learning style and environment. All forms of schooling have the potential to produce excellent children and students. I believe families have the right to choose the schooling style or combination of styles that best suit them and their child(ren). I recognize that the ability for a family to homeschool *can be* a privilege. It is a choice that many families make with the intention of providing their child(ren) with the best education possible. With the help of my dissertation advisor, I hope to keep my positive viewpoints about homeschool families in check in order to provide the truest interpretation of the data.

Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Results are reported starting with demographics and then followed by research questions:

1. What music curricula do homeschool families use?
    a. *What teaching approach is valued?*
    b. *Where do homeschool families get their music curricula?*
2. How do parent(s)/guardian(s) feel about their chosen music curricula?
3. What are parents' perceptions of their children's impressions of their music curricula and/or experiences?
4. What kinds of musical priorities do parents express?

Results from this study indicated that participants use a wide variety of teaching styles and sources for music education. Most families use online music curriculum or rely on private instruction for their music curriculum. Demographics consisted of homeschool families from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. Most families were experienced, with five or more years of experience homeschooling. This makes this dataset particularly attractive because the respondents are information-rich. However, item nonresponse was an issue throughout this survey. Many families wanted follow-up information or information regarding my personal, philosophical beliefs about homeschooling prior to answering the survey. The attitude I gathered from these pre-survey email exchanges as well as the debate-fueled literature regarding homeschooling mean that it is possible that homeschool families were wary to respond to some of the questions for fear of being judged in a negative light. That being said, this is still the

largest known sample in homeschool music education research, and this information is valuable for both the homeschool population and music educators.

Demographics

I distributed the survey using an anonymous link to an online survey through Qualtrics. The surveys were sent to 155 homeschool group leaders via email and 13 Facebook groups. I then asked group leaders to forward the survey to their constituents. As mentioned previously, after eliminating surveys that contained large amounts of no response, this study produced a total of 114 complete responses (N=114).

The survey was distributed to families in the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. The Mid-Atlantic refers to New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, and Washington D.C. However, survey respondents in this study were only from Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Washington D.C. This is, again, likely due to the survey strategy. Respondents were mostly from city-centers which is logical due to the high population in areas like Northern Virginia and Philadelphia. See Appendix C for a map of respondent zip codes.

Most families consisted of four or five people in the household at 38% and 32%, respectively. There was a minimum of two people in each family and a maximum of more than eight in other families. Most families, 48%, homeschool two students. Another 21% homeschool one student, and 18% homeschool three students. No respondents homeschool more than five students. However, this question only asked how many students the parent was currently homeschooling. It is possible that they homeschooled more children in the past who have now moved beyond the age for homeschooling.

Most respondents, 54%, had more than five years of homeschooling experience. Only 19% of respondents had less than one year of experience homeschooling, 15% had one to three years of experience, and 12% had three to five years of experience homeschooling. Almost all participants homeschool full time. In fact, I had to clarify the part-time option on the survey because some states like Maryland do not allow families to homeschool part time and also participate in public or private schools part time. In conclusion, 97% of respondents homeschool full time. Of the 3% who homeschool part time, one participant said they homeschool one to five hours per week and two others reported homeschooling eleven to fifteen hours per week.

Most families, 61%, homeschool five days per week. Homeschooling seven days per week was the next most common response at 17%, followed by four days per week at 12%, and three and six days per week at 5% and 4%, respectively. Full time homeschool families educate from the home an average of 11–24 hours per week. Further, 29% of them educate for 25–40 hours per week, and 16% educate for 1–10 hours per week. See Figure 1 and Figure 2 for a look at frequency bar graphs pertaining to the homeschooling experience about days per week and hours per week, respectively.

Figure 1

Days Per Week Families Homeschool

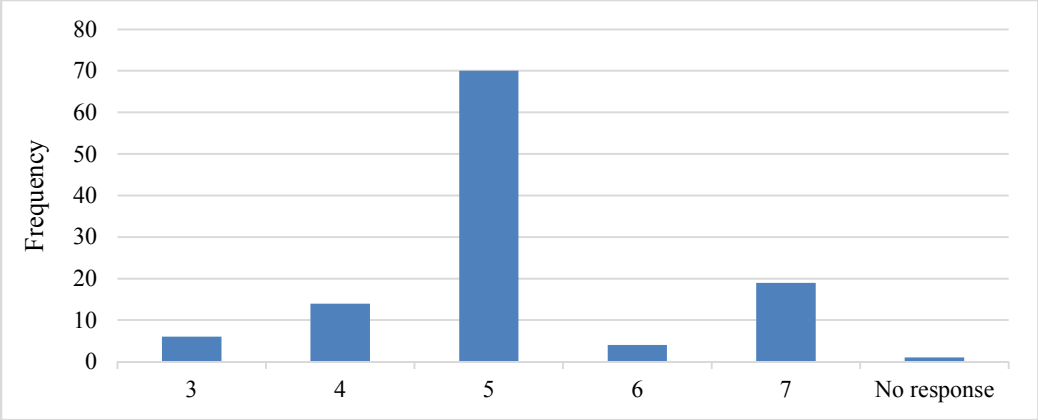
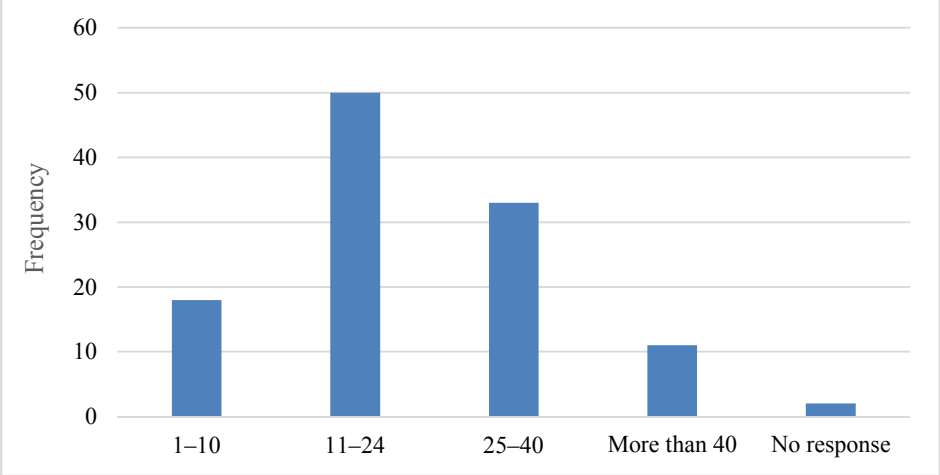


Figure 2

Hours Per Week Families Homeschool

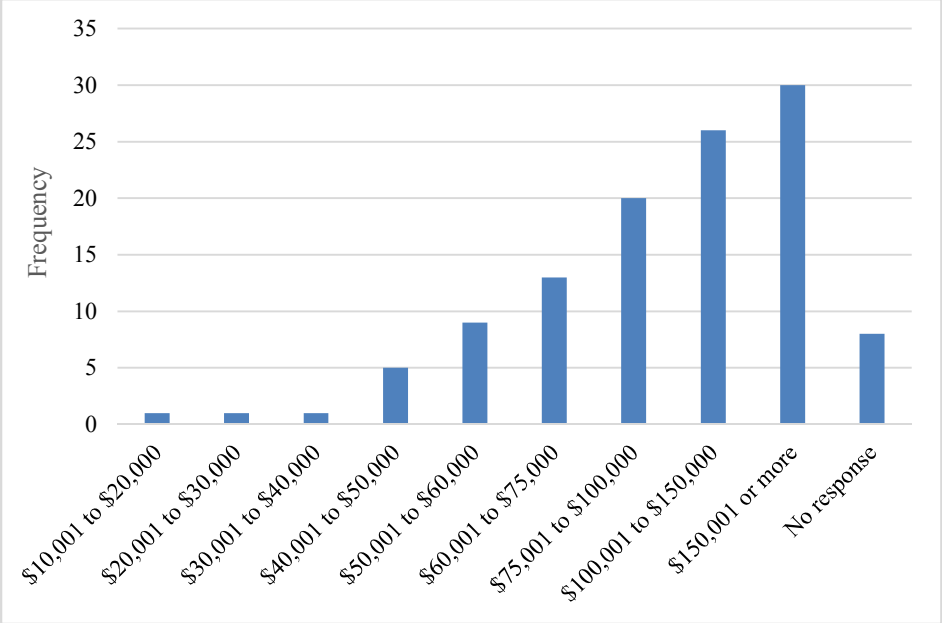


This sample is highly educated and also has high family income. All but one respondent had some college education, a bachelor's degree, or a graduate degree. Forty-nine percent of respondents have a graduate degree or professional schooling, 39% of respondents have bachelor's degrees, and 11% of respondents have vocational or technical schooling or some college.

Further, this sample also has high income. Twenty-six percent of respondents have an income of $150,001 or more, 23% have $100,001–$150,000, 18% have $75,001-$100,000, 11% have $60,001–$75,000, and 4% have $40,001–$50,000. Only one person noted having an income in each of the following ranges: $10,001–$20,000, $20,001–$30,000, and $30,001–$40,000. A total of eight survey participants did not respond to this question. Figure 3 details income from this study in a bar graph. See Appendix D for other bar charts related to demographics results in this study.

Figure 3

Homeschool Family Income



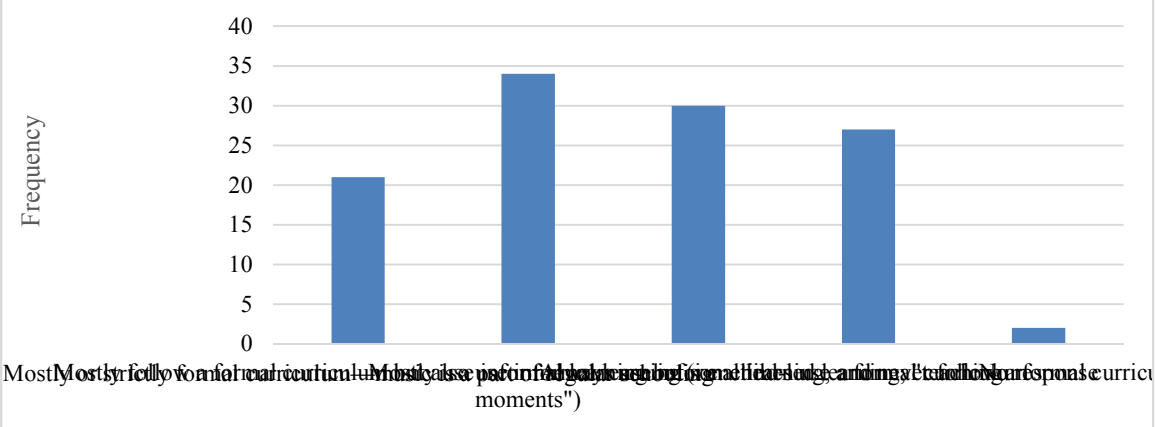
What Music Curricula Do Homeschool Families Use?

Questions pertaining to music teaching style and curriculum source were taken almost directly from the NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Parent and Family Involvement (PFI) Survey, but they were reworded to only refer to music curriculum. Music teaching style responses referred to the formal or informal nature of

learning. Informal learning was defined by the PFI as child-led learning or "teaching moments" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Responses to this question varied the most with 18% of respondents noting that they follow a strictly formal music curriculum. At the highest response, 30% of respondents said that they mostly follow a formal music curriculum. Further, 26% of respondents said that they mostly follow an informal curriculum, but sometimes use a formal curriculum. Finally, 24% of respondents stated that they always use informal music learning and never follow a formal curriculum. Figure 4 depicts *Music Teaching Style* frequency in a bar chart.

Figure 4

Music Teaching Style



Taken, again, from the PFI, participants were welcome to mark as many responses as applicable for music curriculum source. Options included: library, homeschool catalog, educational publisher, homeschooling organization, church, public school, private school, bookstore, websites, virtual school or curriculum, other source, or none. The most commonly used resources for music curriculum were websites, with 44%

of respondents noting that they used websites, and the library, which 32% of respondents said they used.

Another 20% of the respondents marked church as the curriculum source, followed by educational publishers with 15%, bookstore with 13%, virtual school or curriculum with 11%, homeschooling organizations with 10%, and homeschool catalog with 8%. Despite the fact that some homeschool families cannot take classes part-time at public schools, 2% of the respondents have the music curriculum from public schools, and 5% from private schools. Still another 8% of the respondents marked that they did not use any music curriculum.

Further, 50% of respondents marked "other source" for music curriculum. This varied from apps, websites, and concert attendance to personal experience and private instruction. I took fill-in text responses from this curriculum source section and divided them into categories including websites and apps, books, private lessons, parent expertise, concert attendance and listening activities, second-hand items, name brand music curriculum, and co-op or group classes. Most of these text responses were from websites like YouTube and private instruction. Various websites and apps were mentioned 29 times, and YouTube or channels on YouTube were mentioned 12 times. Additionally, 29 respondents reported private instruction as their music curriculum. Eight respondents mentioned getting their music curriculum from Amazon, but Amazon sells so many items, it is difficult to tell exactly what these music curriculum resources are.

Many families also used music books and co-op or group music classes as sources of music curriculum. Fourteen different books were mentioned as music curriculum. Twelve families use group classes or music classes offered through a co-op. Most of

these appear to be offered in person, but some of the classes are virtual. Eleven respondents used a name brand curriculum, which often offer both paper and book options and virtual learning. Interestingly, six respondents use personal expertise to educate their children in music with two mentioning that they are musicians and one mentioning that both parents have music degrees. Three families use concert attendance and listening activities for their music education experience. It is unclear whether this concert attendance is live or recorded, but one respondent mentioned the Berlin Philharmonic. Unless this family travels to another country often, this is likely recorded listening. Two families use second-hand or used items.

I also chose to label the curriculum materials that are explicitly religious in nature because it seemed to be a common theme. Music in our Homeschool (https://learn.musicinourhomeschool.com/) was the only website with clear religious instruction. Religious books and curriculum materials included Tapestry of Grace, Sonlight, My Father's World, and one person reported a generic response of "Christian book." Religious co-op or group classes included Classical Conversations, mentioned by three respondents, Claritas Classical Academy, and Making Music Praying Twice. In total, there were eight religious items specifically mentioned in text responses.

How Do Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Feel About Their Chosen Music Curricula?

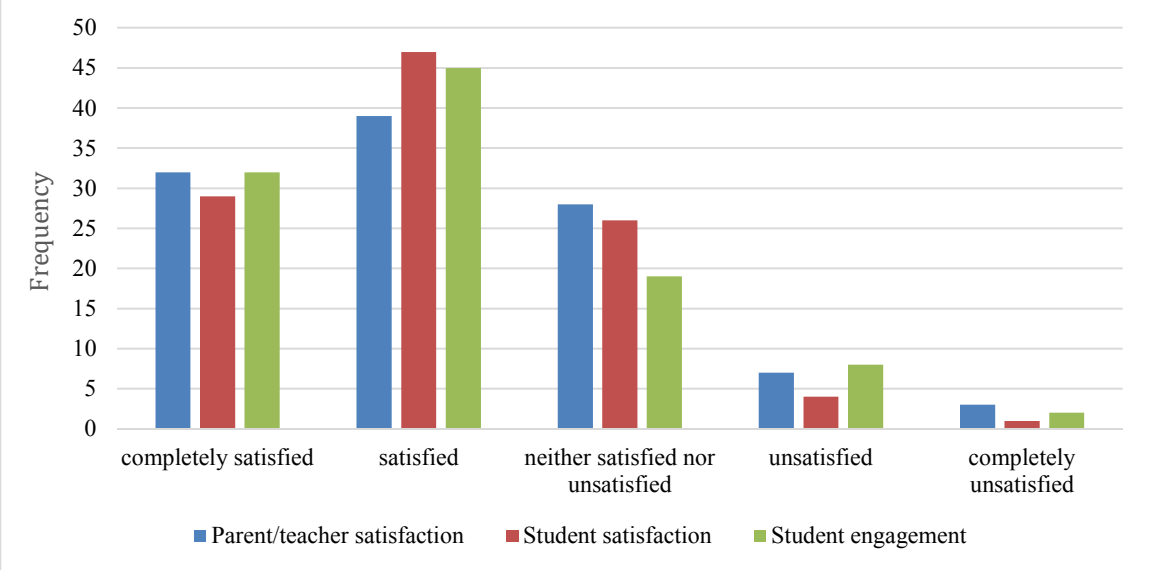
Overall, most families were satisfied with their music curriculum. The survey requested information about parent and teacher satisfaction, parent perception of student satisfaction, and parent perception of student engagement. Twenty-nine percent of respondents were *completely satisfied*, 36% were *satisfied*, 26% were *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied*, 6% were *unsatisfied*, and 3% were *completely unsatisfied*.

What Are Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Impressions of Their Music Curricula and/or Experiences?

Students, as reported by parents, were slightly more satisfied with 27% *completely satisfied*, 44% *satisfied*, 24% *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied*, 4% *unsatisfied*, and 1% *completely unsatisfied*. Finally, it seems that students, as reported by parents, were engaged in their music curriculum with 30% *completely satisfied*, 42% *satisfied*, 18% *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied*, 8% *unsatisfied*, and 2% *completely unsatisfied*. Figure 4 depicts parent and parent perception of student satisfaction and student engagement.

Figure 4

Homeschool Music Curriculum Satisfaction



What Kinds of Musical Priorities Do Parents Express?

Last, this survey asked participants to rate the importance of the five NCAS (National Core Arts Standards): creating music, listening to music, performing music, responding to music, and making connections between music and other content areas.

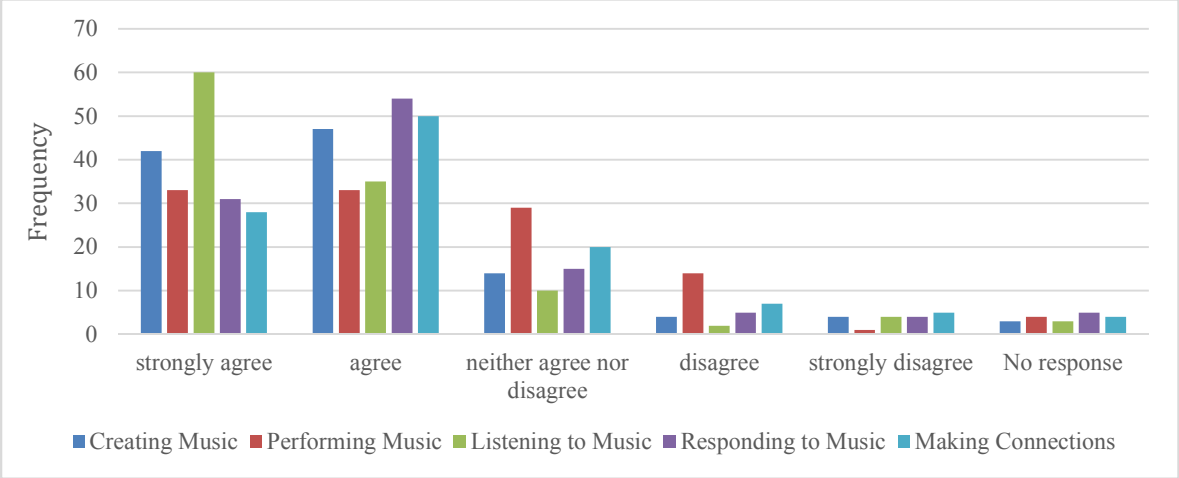
Although participants generally agreed that all of these NAfME (National Association for Music Education) statements were valuable, participants disagreed the most with the statement "performing music is an important part of my child's education" and agreed most strongly with the statement "listening to music is an important part of my child's education." Thirteen percent of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed that performing music was an important part of their child's education. Still, 29% *strongly agreed*, and another 29% *agreed* that performing music was an important part of their child's education. Participants most *strongly agreed* with the statement "listening to music is an important part of my child's education" with 52% *strongly agreeing* and 31% *agreeing*. Only 9% *neither agreed or disagreed*, 2% *disagreed*, and 4% *strongly disagreed* with this statement. Participants also felt strongly about their child creating music with 37% *strongly agreeing* and 41% *agreeing* with the statement "creating music is an important part of my child's education." Twelve percent of the participants *neither agreed nor disagreed*, and 3.5% each *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* with the creating music statement.

Further, participants generally believe that responding to music was an important part of their child's education with 27*% strongly agreeing* and 47% *agreeing*. Another 13% *neither agreed nor disagreed*, 4.5% *disagreed*, and 4% *strongly disagreed*. Many participants also agreed that making connections between music and other content areas is important. A total of 25% *strongly agreed*, and 44% *agreed with the statement* "making connections between music and other content areas is an important part of my child's education." Additionally, 18% *neither agreed nor disagreed*, 6% *disagreed*, and 3.5% *strongly disagreed* with this statement. Again, overall, there seems to be an

agreement that all of these NCAS are an important part of the child's education. Figure 5 depicts *Parent Opinion of NCAS* as reported in this study.

Figure 5

Parent Opinion of NCAS



Additional Comments

Participants were given the opportunity to provide additional information about their music education experiences as well as to explain their discontent with their music curriculum, if they marked that they were unsatisfied. I categorized the comments based on themes that appeared in both dissatisfaction comments and general comments about music curriculum. Themes that appeared were categorized by COVID-19 or online lesson or curriculum format, age range or level inappropriateness, students not engaged, confusion or general dissatisfaction, private lessons, no curriculum, and finally, positive comments. Within these themes, codes of online learning, listening to music, "more", and parent experience or expertise appeared.

Six participants noted that the online format, whether due to COVID-19 or choice, was not ideal for their music curriculum. One respondent stated: "One child is learning

the violin, but doesn't like the online lessons, so it's not been successful thus far." This was a consistent feeling from many respondents who noted discontent with the online lesson or curriculum format. Most respondents noted that they will seek in-person instruction again soon.

Three participants stated that the level of their music curriculum was either too high or too low. One comment was particularly helpful and seemed to summarize many of the comments pertaining to the issue of age appropriateness and level for music curriculum: "I have found it quite difficult to find a good, simple music curriculum that suits multiple ages and abilities including special needs." Many respondents who left comments reported that their child(ren) was not engaged. For some, it was because of the online format, and for others, they seem to be uninterested in music as it has been presented to them. One respondent was adamant about the lack of engagement: "He is bored!! No matter what we try he is not engaged." Related to engagement, some respondents wanted a "more in depth" or "more hands on" experience as a part of their dissatisfaction with music curriculum.

Another six respondents reported not having or using a music curriculum. Even some of the participants who reported not using a curriculum reported listening to music quite a bit. One example of a homeschool situation where parents do not use a formal music curriculum but listen to music was described as such:

> I cannot play an instrument and my partner works full time, so music is not a large enough part of our school. We do listen to movie soundtracks so the kids can understand music tells a story and watch YouTube videos with actual musicians teaching the kids.

Like in the multiple option survey response, many participants reported private lessons as their music program and curriculum. These same respondents either discussed not caring what the teachers used as curriculum or strong opinions about the music method books that their children use as a part of the private lessons. Interestingly, two of the five respondents that mentioned private lessons in their comment section specifically noted Suzuki books as their preferred method book, used as curriculum. Last, three participants mentioned participating in group lessons. All of these respondents reported that their child(ren) was young, and two participated in a group class or ensemble at a church.

Finally, some families felt strongly about music as a part of schooling and life experience. Respondents noted: "Music is vital to a person's identity" and "it (music) is as essential as math and language." These comments were enlightening to the multiple choice and multiple option responses as a part of the survey. Overall, they illuminated ideas about COVID-19 or online lesson or curriculum format, age range or level inappropriateness, students not engaged, confusion or general dissatisfaction, private lessons, no curriculum, and positive comments.

Summary

This sample was taken from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, specifically Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The sample is high income and high education with more than half of the sample having five or more years of homeschooling experience. Music teaching style varied the most in this sample with an almost even split between formal learning, informal learning, and some combination of formal and informal music learning. Homeschool families most often got their music curriculum from websites and private instruction. YouTube was a common response for the specific

website that they used, and sources that are religious in nature were also frequently mentioned. Most parents or teachers as well as students were satisfied with their music curriculum; however, about a quarter each of parents and students were *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied* with their music curriculum. Although parents generally agree that all NCAS are an important part of their child's education, the most important NCAS appears to be listening to music, followed by creating music, and closely followed by responding to music. Respondents disagreed the most with the statement that performing music was an important part of their child's education. All of these results lead to valuable discussion about music education access for homeschool families as well as their opinions about the value of music education, particularly the way they currently participate in music.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Research questions included:

1. What music curricula do homeschool families use?
    a. *What teaching approach is valued?*
    b. *Where do homeschool families get their music curricula?*
2. What kinds of musical priorities do parents express?
3. How do parent(s)/guardian(s) feel about their chosen music curricula?
4. What are parents' perceptions of their children's impressions of their music curricula and/or experiences?

To address these questions, I surveyed homeschool families from the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States. I distributed the online survey via Qualtrics email messaging and Facebook posts on homeschool group pages. In this chapter, I will briefly describe the demographic of the sample. Then I will discuss implications for the results of each research question and make suggestions for future research on the relationship between homeschooling and music education.

The composition of the sample suggests that there was some degree of homogeneity. For example, most of the respondents live near cities in Maryland, Virginia, and Pennsylvania like Baltimore, Philadelphia and Washington D.C. (see Appendix C). These cities require a high household income to live with a family. Jobs and careers with high income typically require higher education, also represented in this study. Most families in this study had five or more years of experience homeschooling. Families who are connected with co-ops, Facebook groups, and other homeschool groups that were used to recruit in this sample are likely to have more experience with

homeschooling. The experience-rich sample gives information about homeschool music curriculum.

The present sample is not nationally representative in comparison to the PFI, which is considered a representative sample of homeschool students. The PFI suggests that 45% of homeschool parents have a bachelor's degree or higher ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019) whereas this study represents 88% of parents with bachelor's degrees or higher. Additionally, this sample is highly representative of cities and suburbs, with almost all participants from cities and suburbs, whereas the PFI represents 68% of families in cities and suburbs and 32% of families in towns and rural locales ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Therefore, overall, this sample is not nationally representative of the homeschool population, with higher income, more families in cities and suburban locales, and parents with higher education than what is reported in the 2016 PFI ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). However, this sample may better describe the homeschool experience of this mid-Atlantic area in cities and suburbs with higher income and more education.

What Music Curricula Do Homeschool Families Use?

There was not a strong consensus on the use of either formal or informal learning in homeschool music education. Homeschool families use formal, informal, and a combination of formal and informal teaching and learning styles for music education. Despite the fact that many participants stated that they used informal learning either mostly or always (51%), they still reported using a music curriculum. By far the most common sources of music curriculum was websites (44%). Some respondents who marked "other source" and "virtual school or curriculum" also included websites as part

of their music curriculum. Library was the next most common response (32%) followed by private lessons (24%) and church or religious materials (20%). Websites and private lessons pose various positive attributes for music education for homeschool families including convenience. Websites may be problematic because of the lack of feedback and assessment. Private lessons may present pedagogical issues because of poor teaching styles such as prioritizing talking over demonstration and negative feedback over positive feedback (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). However, both websites and private lessons are vetted sources of music education both in and outside of homeschooling and are used for positive music experiences that encourage lifelong learning. The local library and Library of Congress also have information-rich primary sources for homeschool families at low or no cost.

Participants indicated using formal, informal and a mixture of both formal and informal teaching and learning styles in music. There is no way to know with certainty whether parents implement an entire music curriculum in sequence, pick and choose topics, or allow their children to be in control of music learning. Furthermore, it is possible that some families go back and forth between more formal curricular sources, such as library books, websites with prescribed units, and more informal approaches like YouTube and music listening. This is supported in Thomas' (2017) study on homeschool academic curriculum that found that 68% of homeschool families use "eclectic" curriculum, a mix of traditional boxed curriculum, homemade curriculum, and/or individualized curriculum. In this previous study, interview participants also reported using a variety of different resources for homeschool curriculum (Thomas, 2017).

What Teaching Approach is Valued?

Participants reported valuing informal, formal, and combinations of both informal and formal music learning. Formal music learning is most often seen in the classroom, and informal music learning is most often outside the classroom (Jenkins, 2011). However, this is not the only way to differentiate between formal and informal music learning. Formal instruction is more of a uniform way of teaching with "rule-governed behaviors" (Jenkins, 2011, p. 183). Informal music learning is often employed by popular musicians (Green, 2002), and invites the concept of learning by play (Jenkins, 2011). Participants understood informal learning as teaching moments and child-led learning" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). The variety of informal and formal music learning is evident not only in their response to the question specifically pertaining to music teaching and learning style but also in the types of curriculum they use and where they get their curriculum. Websites like YouTube, an online curriculum source reported by many respondents, is considered an informal curriculum source; sources like private lessons, another curriculum source reported by many respondents (25%), may be considered a formal curriculum. Other sources like the library and church or religious materials might have a combination of formal and informal learning experiences for homeschool families.

Participant's reports of these combinations of curricular sources confirm that they value both informal and formal music learning. A mix of informal and formal learning styles may allow for maximum parental involvement, giving parents the opportunity to monitor student progress and success. This involves the parent and student at levels one through four of the MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). For example, YouTube

videos can be screened by parents in advance or monitored in browser history. Parents can also use YouTube music as motivation, potentially encouraging their child(ren) to listen and respond to music they enjoy. Even formal settings like private music lessons may offer more opportunity for parental involvement than a public-school music class because of the one-on-one teaching and learning.

In a previous study about homeschool curriculum, parents reported using some combination of structured and unstructured curriculum, defined in the previous study as eclectic and traditional (Thomas, 2017). This fact is likely not represented in the PFI because families are only given two choices, either "mostly or strictly informal learning" or "mostly or strictly formal curriculum." Therefore, the 2016 PFI reports that 81% of families use "mostly or strictly formal curriculum" ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Both formal and informal music teaching approaches are valued by homeschool families. This flexible approach allows parents to be involved in music education, a trend supported within the MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005), allowing their child(ren) to be potentially both motivated and successful.

Where Do Homeschool Families Get Their Music Curricula?

Homeschool respondents reported obtaining their music curricula from a wide variety of sources. The present survey was largely adapted from the PFI, categorizing the curriculum sources: library, homeschool catalog, educational publisher, homeschooling organization, church, public school, private school, bookstore, websites, virtual school or curriculum, other source, and none. After initial analysis, it became abundantly clear that future music education researchers should consider adding more categories that specifically pertain to music and are included in some of the "other source" responses.

Based on participants' responses, additional categories could include websites, apps, and other technology, private lessons, parent expertise, second-hand items, and co-op or group classes.

Although websites were an option in the initial response, apps and other technology-related resources might not be considered a website, so respondents felt the need to categorize these as "other source" with specification later. Private lessons were another commonly mentioned source of music curriculum. Based on comments, it appears that many parents are unaware of what, if any, curriculum the student's private teacher uses but trusts the private teacher to make the best curriculum decision. One parent specified their trust of the music teacher to make curriculum choices: "The curriculum is selected by my children's music teachers, and I really don't care what they use as long as my daughters still play for enjoyment."

Another response included in "other source" was co-op or group classes. This may differ from the response "homeschooling organization" because oftentimes co-ops are not considered formal organizations, as in the case of the informal nature of some Facebook groups presented in this study. Additionally, group classes are not always part of homeschooling organizations could be community music groups, such as church choirs or youth orchestras. Specific music books and name brand curriculum sources were also noted within the "other" category. Like the PFI results from 2016 pertaining to general education curriculum, this survey also suggested that many families obtain music curriculum at the library. These sources of music curriculum pose many interesting discussion points. Because so many families reported using websites, private lessons, the

library, and religious materials including church, these points will be discussed in detail in this section.

Websites, Apps, and Other Technology

Researchers have corroborated the finding that homeschool curriculum is now largely found online (Ray, 2010; Thomas, 2017). In Thomas' (2017) study of homeschool curriculum, 64% of respondents indicated that technology was a key resource for instruction. Further, the PFI reports that 66% of families use websites to access their general curriculum ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). Music is not an exception; over 50% of parents in this study reported using websites, apps, and other technology for music education curriculum. More specifically, homeschool families reported using YouTube and other websites like *Emedia* (emediamusic.com), *Home School Piano* (homeschoolpiano.com), and *Hoffman Academy* (hoffmanacademy.com) for instrumental music instruction. Advantages to using websites and other technology resources include low or no cost, convenience and parental involvement, and motivation for students. Disadvantages are that these sources are often primarily designed for young audiences, YouTube may not be used to its full potential, and there is a lack of personal assessment which potentially leaves parents without an idea of whether students are musically successful.

Websites, apps, and other technology have great advantages for homeschool families namely that they are low or no cost and convenient. The low or no cost feature is important because, as Brewer (2017) and Murphy (2020) note, many homeschool families forego one salary as a way to operate homeschooling with one parent staying in the home to teach.

Convenience is likely another advantage for homeschool families. Online curricula allow students to participate in academics in a variety of physical settings and engage socially with teachers and students outside of the home. This is certainly true for this study in 2020 and 2021 where it is safest to engage online rather than in large groups due to the potential spread of COVID-19. Online learning also provides student musicians the opportunity to work with expert teachers and musicians across the country, not only the teachers within a driving distance of the student (Dammers, 2009). This is assuming, however, that the student is engaging in collaboration as a part of the online video learning.

Online sources may also offer innovation and interest for the student, a motivating factor for students as noted in the MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). In any self-paced or multi-option online resource, students have some autonomy over what they learn and when they learn, and interpreting my findings through the lens of the MPI, parents may also believe they are helping their child(ren) by giving them autonomy (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). This is supported by the MPI where parents get involved in student learning to promote success and provide encouragement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

YouTube is a contemporary source of instruction in a variety of subjects, including music. Learning an instrument on YouTube may be advantageous because it provides easy access for students at no cost (if they already own an instrument). However, learning an instrument on YouTube may pose a problem because not all instrumental instructional videos demonstrate proper technique. As Kruse and Veblen (2012) point out in their study, online instrumental instructional videos demonstrated

both correct and incorrect ways of playing the instrument. Another issue noted by Kruse and Veblen (2012) was the piecemeal-type instructional videos that are available online. Unfortunately, these videos, even if a student watches quite a few, do not create a full curriculum on their own. Lessons may be incomplete, leaving out key aspects of curriculum such as standards, end-goals, or assessment.

Other online sources were geared more toward general music instruction including topics like music theory, music history, and singing. Various authors have corroborated the idea that online music lessons and YouTube music instruction is geared toward a young audience (Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Kruse & Veblen, 2012; Murphy, 2020).

YouTube was noted as a form of music curriculum 12 times in this study. Based on comments in this survey, students are primarily using YouTube to learn to play instruments and for the study of general, elementary music in the way of listening, movement, and sometimes sing-alongs. Although there are interactive features on YouTube, it appears that most students are using it to watch videos and listen to music, a point Kim and Kellner (2010) support. It cannot be ascertained from the results of this study, but if students are using the interactive features on YouTube, there may be significantly more learning opportunities. Students can post videos and respond to videos, thus participating in mutual education (Kellner & Kim, 2010). Progressive education ideals by Dewey and Freire can also be realized with interactive features on YouTube (Kellner & Kim, 2010). For Dewey, decentralized learning takes place by putting the student in charge of collaboration (Kellner & Kim, 2010). For Freire, YouTube can be

self-fulfilling and empowering, particularly when a student learns a recognizable song on their own with a YouTube instruction video (Kellner & Kim, 2010).

While it is likely that students are learning from online videos like those from YouTube, it is sometimes unclear what they are learning and how they are progressing. Assessment (feedback) is an important part of a well-rounded music curriculum (Conway, 2002; 2015). Again using the MPI as a lens, if certain homeschool music curricula do not include assessment, Level 5 "student achievement," remains unclear (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Although students are likely achieving in one sense—progressing through some series of content and activities—their level of proficiency in terms of performance technique or knowledge remains largely unknown in the absence of in-person or virtual feedback from an instructor. On a basic level, parents and students could determine learning outcomes from performance. For example, if a student is attempting to learn a song from a movie and they use an online demonstration video to do so, the parent and student can tell they have learned the song correctly if it sounds like what they know to be the movie song. In this way, students are engaging in self-assessment. As Scott (2012) points out, reflection and self-assessment are a part of assessment *as* learning. However, not including formal assessment as a part of music education might not provide a complete curriculum for students. In the music classroom, assessment can and should be used for making students aware of their progress and improvement and accountability (Payne et al., 2019). Music curriculum authors and teachers must include assessment as a part of a fully thought and planned music experience.

To be clear, students are learning from these online platforms, whether informally or formally, but it is unlikely that their learning or progress is being consistently measured. Without clear standards, we do not know how "student achievement" (level 5 of the MPI) is defined (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). It is unclear if homeschool teachers and families are concerned about assessment in music education as they may be more concerned with student interest as Levels 2 and 3 of the MPI suggest (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Private Lessons

Private lessons are a unique part of music education. While it is not uncommon to receive one-on-one tutoring outside of school for various school subjects, it is an integral part of musicianship and continuing education in music. Most students who continue into higher education or pursue Western European Classical music as a career take private lessons on an instrument or in voice to prepare for this profession. In the case of homeschool students, private lessons may be the primary source of music education and curriculum, as indicated by results from this study and Meyers (2010). Advantages to private learning settings are that the goals may be individualized for the student, creating more flexibility in curriculum (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). However, antiquated or negative teaching habits such as talking over demonstration or giving negative feedback more than positive feedback (Davidson & Jordan, 2007) may subsequently impact the teaching and distribution of music curriculum in private lesson settings. Further, online lesson formats have been difficult for participants in this study.

The one-to-one ratio of student and teacher in private lessons can be an advantage for both the student and the teacher because the student can have goals set specifically for

them, and the teacher can give individualized feedback and instruction (Davidson & Jordan, 2007). This is particularly advantageous for homeschool families who choose to homeschool in order to give the student personalized instruction (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017; Ray, 2016). In fact, some of the comments in this study about private lessons indicated that the parent fully trusted the private teacher to decide on and purchase music books and curriculum for their child(ren). So, although homeschool parents make definitive and informed choices in general curriculum and instruction for their child(ren) to help them succeed, they trust private music teachers to make this curriculum and instruction choice for them.

Role construction is important for parents in the MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005); private lessons may be an exception. It is possible that families who consider music to be extracurricular do not see the need to construct this specific learning environment for their child(ren). Parent(s) pass off the role of music teacher to the private teacher and engage in the parental role in the form that a parent would take in a public or private school setting. In this scenario, the parent can still engage in promoting student success by encouraging independent practice at home and being in touch directly with the teacher about other musical opportunities. While a private teacher may have many students in their studio, they are still likely to have significantly less students than a public or private school teacher would have, giving the parent substantial access to the teacher at all times.

This has considerable implications for the value of professional musicians and music teachers. Not only are these private music teachers entrusted with educating students from various backgrounds, including homeschool students, but they are also

entrusted with choosing music curriculum for each student. This is another area where research is needed. The only indication of the curriculum that private music teachers use are method books, as mentioned by respondents in this study and from personal experience. However, because instruction is geared toward students' personal interests and goals, it is possible that private music teachers are using pieces of curricula and music excerpts as curricula. Like watching videos online as means of instruction, private lessons may be piecemealing instruction to suit the needs of students. Unlike watching instructional videos, however, private teachers give regular feedback to students. Students likely gain many of the benefits of individualized attention like a positive relationship between student and teacher. This positive relationship may offset some of the negative teaching habits that Davidson and Jordan (2007) note in their literature. For example, disapproval in performance comes across much differently from a person who is trusted rather than someone who is unknown to the performer or student.

Private lesson teachers may be primarily relying on method books for instruction. Method books are longstanding, reliable music education resources for teachers in various settings, including private lessons. They are sequenced and include a student book as well as a teacher guide with pre-written objectives, tasks, and assessments (Conway, 2015). A private teacher may use these materials to meet the individual goals of each student in performance. Method books contain a few opportunities to create, respond, and make connections between music and other areas, method books primarily contain opportunities for performance. These method books may also perpetuate Western European music practices. Davidson and Jordan (2007) see this as a disadvantage for

private lessons, but it may be an advantage for those who wish to pursue degrees or professions in music, as many of these require mastery of Western European music.

Private lessons are primarily reserved for families with high income (Davidson & Jordan, 2007), potentially reinforcing social inequities (Apple, 2018) in music education. Homeschool families in this study were primarily high income, so those that reported taking private lessons likely did not encounter financial strain by using private music lessons as curriculum. Homeschool students may have better access to professions in music because of their access to private lessons. Further research is needed to determine how many homeschool students who take private music lessons go on to pursue degrees or professions in music.

Online private music lessons have been difficult for participants in this study. Private lesson students are generally satisfied with their lessons (Rife et al., 2001), but some respondents in this study (7%) noted that their child was usually satisfied and engaged in private music lessons but lost enthusiasm because of the online format. This may be because students and teachers have more difficulty connecting personally online, as suggested by Dammers (2009). Additionally, challenges of video and audio delay may persist (Dammers, 2009). Like in Dammers (2009) study, students can not engage in music making in sync with another person because of this video and audio delay. Technology has improved much since Dammers' (2009) study, but the expectations of technology have also increased. Therefore, discoveries from Dammers' (2009) study persist for online lessons today. Despite these disappointments, online music lessons are temporarily creating a much-needed learning environment for homeschool music students.

Homeschool families who use private lessons for music education have a variety of advantages in a steady music curriculum and potentially long-term music career options. Private lessons and method books used for curriculum in these lessons perpetuate an abundance of Western European music, but this is presently an advantage as music degrees and many careers require a mastery of this music. Although online lessons have been difficult for some participants in this study, these will likely return to in person learning soon and will continue to provide consistent music education for homeschool students.

Library

The PFI reported that in 2016, 58% of homeschool families obtained their general curriculum from the library ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019). The present study reported that 32% of respondents obtained their music curriculum from the library. It is possible that there are more general academic materials at the library than music curricula. This may account for the difference in reporting numbers between this study and the PFI. Libraries have a variety of book and CD curricula as well as web resources and primary resources to supplement music curricula. Libraries may potentially have other music education programs that bring in professional musicians and culture-bearers for an authentic music experience.

Drawbacks to using music curriculum from the library and any homeschool-specific music curriculum is that these sources are largely unstudied (Apple, 2018). However, these curriculum materials are vetted and sequenced carefully from publishers, making them long time reliable sources (Apple, 2018) as well as being low or no cost. Other advantages of obtaining music curriculum from the library is the variety of

resources available, including books, online activities, and in-person activities. Like online videos, however, it is unclear if these other resources are part enrichment activities or parts of a whole curriculum where students engage in creating, listening, performing, and responding to music as well as making connections with other subjects.

There appear to be few disadvantages to using a music curriculum from the library because there is such a large variety of what families can obtain from the library. If they are using a full curriculum, it is likely in book, CD, some combination of the two formats, or potentially web resources only accessible through the library. Like most book resources, they are available for purchase or borrow (from the library) from for-profit organizations. However, there is little research on these for-profit materials (Apple, 2018). I will conduct a preliminary content analysis on local library materials later in this chapter. A future study should comprehensively review frequently used homeschool music education book resources in order to gain a greater understanding of the advantages and potential disadvantages, as with any curriculum, that there are with music curriculum materials available at the library and for homeschool families.

Advantages to using music curriculum from the library include the little cost of the curriculum because most homeschool families rely on one income (Brewer, 2017; Murphy, 2020). The ease of accessibility to the curriculum and the potential for authentic music experiences are other advantages to using materials from the library. Authentic and reliable music curricula have become more accessible since COVID-19 at the Library of Congress.

Library of Congress.

The Library of Congress has a variety of curricula including "responding" (NCAS) units for band, chorus, and orchestra as well as general music at the grade second, fifth, and eighth grade levels ("NAfME Teaching with Primary Sources Curriculum Units for the 2014 Music Standards," 2021). High school music theory and composition curricula are also available ("NAfME Teaching with Primary Sources Curriculum Units for the 2014 Music Standards," 2021). These primary resources are authentic and can be used for both online and in person instruction (Miller, 2020). These materials also appear to be updated frequently, as many articles and posts have been published in the last year in response to an increase in online learning. Library of Congress resources are primarily for creating, listening, or responding to music (NCAS), and they also attempt to make primary sources interesting for young audiences by including baseball music and songs, social contexts of jazz, country music and its origins, and folk music from a variety of states and regions in America and Europe (Jones, 2020). The availability of resources from the Library of Congress is extant, but it is difficult to know if homeschool families use these resources or more regionally based or book-based music curricula.

Local Libraries.

I could not access books at libraries from every zip code that was surveyed in this study, but I was able to search for music curricula in Fairfax County, VA, where many respondents live. This brought me to five music curricula designed and sold by established publishers, not including the general curriculum that has music as an

integrated part of subjects like math, history, and reading. The music curricula available in book format using the library's search function include:

- *Music of the American Colonies* by Anne Enslow, published in 2000
- *Guitar Together: Learn to Play the Guitar with Your Child* by Susan Mazer, published in 2008
- *The Ultimate Guide to Music: A Fascinating Introduction to Music and the Instruments of the Orchestra* by Joe Fullman, published in 2014
- *Help Your Kids with Music: A Unique Step-By-Step Visual Guide* by Carol Vorderman, published in 2015
- *Over in the Forest* by Marianna Berkes, published in 2012

All of these materials were published in the last 20 years. Additionally, many of them assume that the parent will be participating or assisting in teaching and learning, making them great resources for homeschool families. They are all also intended for elementary or beginner learners, in the case of *Guitar Together* and *Help Your Kids with Music*. *Music of the American Colonies* includes opportunities for listening to music and making connections between music and other subjects, in this case, history. *Guitar Together* is intended for beginners, both child and adult to learn together. It is essentially a method book designed as a curriculum and it mostly offers opportunities to perform music. *The Ultimate Guide to Music* offers opportunities for listening to and responding to music as students learn and reflect on the instruments of the orchestra. *Help Your Kids with Music* is a music theory curriculum intended for beginners but specifies that it is meant for students aged 10 through 16. Because it is a music theory curriculum, creating music is the most used NCAS. *Over in the Forest* is a musical story book that involves listening and responding to music and making connections between music and literature.

This is a small sample of the potential music education curricula available at libraries, but it is clear that families who use music curricula from the library are at an advantage in that there are resources for a variety of ages and grade levels with the

opportunity for a variety of experiences with music including the NCAS. Other advantages are the low or no cost, the potential for at-home, online learning as well as in-person learning at the physical library with special programs. Professional musicians and culture-bearers at these in-person programs as well as primary resources available from the Library of Congress make these experiences authentic and valuable to the homeschool and music community.

Parents are highly involved with library music curriculum, allowing for much engagement on behalf of the parent (level 1 of the MPI) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Additionally, parents and students can choose curriculum together, further engaging homeschool families and promoting efficacy (MPI levels 2 through 4) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Although not studied in this research, students may be making musical achievements (MPI level 5) because some of these music curricula options involve standards, objectives, and assessments, all parts of well-rounded music education (Conway, 2002, 2015; Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Religious Resources and Church Music Education

Although "religious" encompasses any number of world religions, the research sample within this study unanimously indicated Christian music education resources within the religious category. Christian and unspecified religious resources regularly appeared in literature related to homeschool music education (Apple, 2018; Nichols, 2005; Thomas, 2017) and were also specifically mentioned by name seven times in this study, with 20% of families reporting "church" as the source of music curriculum. These religious sources were primarily Christian. Nichols (2005) illuminated the experience of one family who chose to educate their children in the home to promote Christian values.

Thomas (2017) notes examples of Christian homeschool music education including *Sonlight Curriculum*, *A Beka Book*, *My Father's World*, *Heart of Dakota*, and Classical Conversations. *Sonlight Curriculum*, *My Father's World*, and Classical Conversations were also mentioned in this study in addition to church choir. Below is a preliminary content analysis of religious materials mentioned in both Thomas' (2017) work and the present study. These resources further illuminate the place of MPI as a part of homeschool music education, allowing parents to morally guide their child(ren) in all aspects of education, including music (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Sonlight Curriculum and *My Father's World* are similar in their music curriculum offerings and presentation. Both present music as a co-curricular subject that can assist students with memorization and make connections between music and other subjects. Sonlight has audio memory tools in the form of "Geography Songs" and "Lyrical Life Science," both products that emphasize listening and relating songs to other subject areas. "Sing the World" is a Bible memorization program that is a part of Bible, history, and literature, again, connecting music with other subjects. Sonlight also offers three music appreciation curriculum options: "A Child's Introduction to the Orchestra," (also found at the local library) "The Classical Kids Collection," and five other (Western European) classical music CD options. All of these emphasize listening, and "The Classical Kids Collection" contains historical and biographical reading material alongside the listening activity. Instrumental music products are also offered by *Sonlight* and direct buyers to piano and recorder books and CDs. Sponsored instrumental study products include *Piano Prodigy*, *Bastien Piano*, and *Recorder Methods*. These products focus on performance.

Sonlight also sheds light on the fact that parents value including music as a co-curricular subject to help their child(ren) with memorization. In this way, they believe they are contributing to student success by giving them fun and informative experiences with music. Listening to music is about more than just the music itself. When used with *Sonlight*, students can engage with other school subjects and also emphasize the Christian nature of the home learning environment.

My Father's World primarily offers music appreciate-type books and CDs. Some of these are "sing-along" with patriotic songs from the U.S.A. As well as Christian songs in "Hide 'em In Your Heart" and "Then Sings My Soul." Others focus on Western Classical music listening and reading the stories of Western Classical artists. Artists included in curriculum options from *My Father's World* include Tchaikovsky, Vivaldi, Corelli, Bach, Handel, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Schubert, Mendelssohn, Foster, Sousa, and Gershwin. Although not explicit, it is evident that American patriotic music, Christian music, and Western European classical music is valued by families who choose this curriculum. These resources focus on the history and music of the artists listed above and offer listening and connecting opportunities for homeschool families who use them.

While *Sonlight* and *My Father's World* offer music curriculum with little comment or judgement apart from a few personal testimonies to promote the products, Classical Conversations takes a clear stand on home education and music and their value to a Christian lifestyle. Classical Conversations advocates for home education, suggesting that "public education has never been so shameful" due to the "consistent decline" in American morality (*Yes, Music Education Is Important!*, 2016). They even go as far as to discuss musical taste in relation to music education noting that "we listeners have a moral

responsibility to the music we put in our ears and we should be more concerned about valuing music for the sake of others as opposed to liking music for our own pleasure" (*Yes, Music Education Is Important!*, 2016). Classical Conversations also notes the influences that parents have on musical taste for their child(ren) (*Yes, Music Education Is Important!*, 2016), emphasizing the MPI for parents who educate their child(ren) through Classical Conversations (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Classical Conversations is a nationwide, Christian program that has local units of tutors to train parents to be the best home educators for their child(ren) through observation in small group classes. Therefore, much of their curriculum is distributed to tutors, not available online for purchase. However, parents do have to pay for these additional materials used in music materials ("Why My Family Left Classical Conversations," 2020; *Why We Ditched Classical Conversations*, 2017). They also advertise for a music theory curriculum as well as some worksheets on Teachers Pay Teachers (*Classical Conversations Music Worksheets & Teaching Resources | TpT*, n.d.). The music theory program is called Math in Motion: First Steps in Music Theory(*Yes, Music Education Is Important!*, 2016). It introduces students to music as a subject beyond entertainment and for the value of "God's wonderful purpose" (*Yes, Music Education Is Important!*, 2016).

It is unclear if the experience with Classical Conversations is positive for respondents in this study and for participants in this group outside of the study. Unfortunately for some, the experience is not what they expect from a homeschool group. Homeschool parents online complain about the cost of the music curriculum and additional materials ("Why My Family Left Classical Conversations," 2020; *Why We*

Ditched Classical Conversations, 2017). Further, they also do not like the format of the lessons where a tutor is meant to demonstrate lessons for the parent teacher ("Why My Family Left Classical Conversations," 2020; *Why We Ditched Classical Conversations*, 2017). Parents online report feeling unsupported and overwhelmed by the amount of teaching they have to do despite purchasing curriculum, materials, and tutors for their child(ren) ("Why My Family Left Classical Conversations," 2020; *Why We Ditched Classical Conversations*, 2017). Respondents in the present study did not specifically indicate that they were unhappy with their experiences, however.

Homeschool families also participate in church music groups such as choir. This may be considered more of a community music group, combining children and adults and potentially combining informal and formal learning (Jenkins, 2011). Many churches have a professional conductor or leader for the music groups who give feedback about the musical performance of the group. This is intended to be a safe place for amateur musicians to perform and learn. Because members of the music group belong to the same church community, it is likely to be a positive and encouraging environment. However, like other aspects of homeschool music curriculum, personal homeschool experiences are largely unstudied in this environment. This is more of a musical experience, rather than a long-term curriculum with standards, objectives, or summative assessment. However, with a positive learning environment as well as a professional musician leading the group, these church music experiences are a valuable part of homeschool music education.

Sonlight, *My Father's World*, Classical Conversations, and church groups such as choirs all present Christian musical opportunities for homeschool families. For families

who wish to emphasize Christian values, these are valuable resources. They also reinforce the importance of patriotic, Christian, and Western European classical music. These curricula primarily offer listening and connecting opportunities, often connecting music with history and memorization.

Religious resources give parents ample opportunities to be involved in student learning. From level 1 of the MPI, parents choose specific religious curricula to support moral home education (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). At level 2, parents have a positive sense of efficacy for providing religiously principled curricula (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). At levels 3 and 4, the student also exudes efficacy, and presumably with a structured curriculum like those through *Sonlight*, *My Father's World*, and Classical Conversations, students achieve musical success, level 5 of the MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Implications of Homeschool Music Curricula

The main takeaway from homeschool music curriculum sources is that there is no one homeschool music curriculum that is commonly used, and for the most part, homeschool families are obtaining curricula from multiple sources and piecemealing musical experiences. It is possible that students are not getting a complete curriculum experience with goals and objectives, procedures, standards, and assessments, which Conway (2015) and NAfME suggest are parts of a well-rounded music education. On the other hand, students may be enjoying engaging in multiple facets of music experiences and so piecemealing is ideal for student engagement. Though students may not be engaging in all of the NCAS because these experiences are not intentionally connected to the NCAS.

Another key point about homeschool music curricula is that most resources are low or no cost, apart from private lessons. Despite the fact that most families within this study fall into a high income bracket, it is possible that parents either do not have the money to invest in music education, music education options are too expensive (both suggested in the pilot to this study), or free music curricular options are satisfactory enough that families do not feel the need to pay for music education. It is also possible that parents are willing to spend money on other academic curriculum, such as math and reading, but music is a not as much of a priority. Some respondents indicated that music is just as important as academic subjects like math and reading but not all respondents may feel this way. Respondents who do not spend money on music curriculum may feel like music should be available at no cost. Affordable access to music education is something that NAfME also stands by and should be addressed in regard to the homeschool population.

There are also substantial implications for the use of private lessons as a primary music learning experience for homeschool music students. Most homeschool music education places the teaching responsibility on a parent, but in the case of private lessons, a music professional takes the role of teacher. This is important because not only are parents passing off the role of teacher but also because private music teachers are the only indication of homeschool families reaching out to music professionals. Private music teachers may serve as a gateway to the homeschool community. These homeschool families trust private music teachers and have influence in the ways homeschool families interact with music. More about the role of private teachers as a gateway to the homeschool community will be discussed in final implications and recommendations.

There are substantial implications for publishers in homeschool music curriculum choice. Music curriculum that is marketed to homeschool families holds some value to homeschool parents. It is likely intended to address their reasons for homeschooling such as school environment and moral and religious instruction. Therefore, I hope that in the future, homeschool publishers and music educators (potentially those representing NAfME) can engage in meaningful discussion and potentially curriculum writing specifically for homeschool families.

Finally, music curricula may be reflective of reasons families homeschool. For example, families who participate in church music ensembles or engage with Christian music curricula may be homeschooling to provide moral or religious education. Families may also choose to homeschool because they disagree with the environment and curricula in public schools. Therefore, engaging in music education online and at the library, where content can be previewed and monitored, allows the family to regulate the learning environment and curricula. Further implications about homeschool music curricula choice for the music education community will be discussed later in this chapter.

What Kinds of Musical Priorities Do Parents Express?

This study is unique in its pursuit of parental opinion of musical priorities. Generally, the music education community does not seek out parent opinion of musical priorities. However, the best way to understand homeschool curriculum is to survey parents (Thomas, 2017). In order to gain a greater understanding of music specific curricular choices and values, the present study framed music questions related to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS), the most flexible music standards that exist for teachers and students. Results suggest that some musical priorities can be attributed to

reasons for homeschooling and parent musical expertise. Homeschool parents in this study prioritize listening to music more than any of the other NCAS whereas performing music was noted as the least important. In order of most important to least important, parents prioritized listening, creating, responding, making connections, and performing music. The NCES and Ray (2016) report the school environment and the need to individualize, improve upon, or offer religious curriculum ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019; Ray, 2016). Much of music education, especially that which is beyond elementary school is performance-based. Therefore, it makes sense that homeschool families do not prioritize performance.

Overall, parents were satisfied with their chosen music curricula and experiences; although, there were some comments that suggested that online learning posed some concern because of the age-level of material available and the virtual format of private lessons, supported by literature about music education materials and lessons (Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Kruse & Veblen, 2012; Murphy, 2020). Further, though families indicated that they value creating music, their music curricular choices do not provide ample opportunities for this.

Listening to music was important to parents in this study. This is in line with the variety of ways that students encounter music education, formally and informally. Listening to music is most likely to be experienced in both formal and informal learning environments (as opposed to performing which is most likely experienced in a formal music learning environment). Listening to music can also be taught with little musical expertise alongside responding to music, another important NCAS. Listening and responding to music also presents the most opportunities within the MPI in role

construction, a sense of self efficacy for helping students succeed, and opportunities for parental involvement (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Performing alongside a child would require musical expertise, something only six respondents admitted to having. Whereas listening to music can be done alongside multiple children and parents.

From preliminary content analysis, materials from the library, religious homeschool music curriculum, and even some websites reinforce that listening to music is a way to experience music while also reinforcing connections with other subject areas. This is an interesting point of discussion in that respondents did not indicate that making connections between music and other subjects was very important with only 25% *strongly agreeing*. Still, another 44% *agreed* that making connections between music and other subjects was important. It is possible that homeschool families who use music in this co-curricular way do not consider that they are making connections between music and other subjects. They may simply see it as a way to engage the student in learning, further enhancing their role in the MPI.

Respondents indicated that creating music was important. However, the majority of their music curricula does not present ample opportunities for creating music. YouTube and other online music education sources are opportunities for creating, but it is unlikely that students are using YouTube for this purpose. Only two music theory curricula appeared in content analysis in this study: *Help Your Kids With Music* (from a local library) and *Math in Motion* (from Classical Conversations). It is unlikely that a large majority of families are using these curricula and therefore their child(ren) is not getting the experience with creating music.

Implications of Parent Musical Priorities

Though the research questions do not explicitly address what homeschool families *do not* value, the data reveals that performing is a NCAS that homeschool parents think is less important than the other NCAS. This is reflected in the music curricula that homeschool families use, aside from private lessons. This is an interesting point because the majority of music experiences for children outside of homeschooling (such as in public or private schools) is performance based. However, NCAS and NAfME do not prioritize any one standard over another. Creating, listening, performing, responding, and making connections between music and other subjects are equally needed in a music classroom. Further, some parents chose to homeschool because they prefer to choose curricula for individual needs or disagree with public school curricula. It is possible that these homeschool families do not value the performance-based music curricula in schools, among other public or private school curricular practices.

The notion that homeschool parents may value other musicianship roles above performance has implications for the entire music education community. While it is possible that public and private school parents' priorities differ from the homeschool sample within this study, it is possible that many parents would be in favor of an approach to public and private school music education that places less emphasis on performance alone and more emphasis on a well-rounded music education, with equal opportunities for creating, listening, responding, and making connections between music and other subjects as the NCAS suggest. Additionally, it may be valuable to ask public and private school parents what they prioritize in music curricula. To date, there is no research on the musical opinions of parents in relation to the NCAS. Information

regarding parent musical priorities may also give insight into parental involvement and student success, as the MPI suggests (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). With this information, music educators may be able to make curricular decisions informed and therefore supported by the community.

Another implication suggested by homeschool parent NCAS priorities is that parents teach what they have the most experience with when it concerns listening to and responding to music. Parents in this study likely have more experience listening to music and therefore teach it. It is possible that parents do not have experience performing music and therefore do not teach it to their child(ren). Those parents that do include performance as a part of their music curricula do so using private lessons, passing off the role of teacher to a musical expert in performance.

How Do Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Feel About Their Chosen Music Curricula?

Overall, parents were satisfied with their chosen music curricula. Homeschool families make definitive education choices. Their curricula choices, even for music, are purposefully made. Therefore, reasons for homeschooling are related to their satisfaction with curricula. Four *important* reasons for homeschooling in the 2016 PFI are curriculum-related:

> Desire to provide religious instruction (51%)
> Desire to provide moral instruction (67%)
> Dissatisfaction with academic instruction (61%)
> Desire to provide a nontraditional approach to child's education (39%)
> ("Homeschooling in the United States," 2019)

From this information, it appears that homeschool families are generally not satisfied with the public-school curriculum. It appears by making their own choices with music curriculum just as they do in other academic areas, they are more satisfied with the curriculum. A total of 65% of parents said that they were *satisfied* (36%) or *completely*

satisfied (29%) with their chosen music curricula. Another 26% were *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied*. While these numbers are relatively high in satisfaction, families could be more satisfied with their music curricula. These satisfaction values may come from issues related to online learning. Some comments suggested that the online learning format, particularly for private lessons, was not satisfactory for engaging their child. Because MPI places emphasis on the parent assisting in child success and engagement, if a parent finds that their child is not engaged, they may then be less satisfied with the curriculum (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Other issues related to less satisfaction or even neutral feelings about music curricula may be because families are piecemealing their curriculum or because the execution on behalf of the parent is difficult. Piecemealing curriculum requires parents to frequently seek out music experiences for their child(ren) because not one experience is enough to satisfy music curricular needs or state requirements. Additionally, parents may have a difficult time executing the music curriculum because they do not have musical expertise (Meyers, 2010). Another issue may be that parents desire opportunities for their child(ren) to create music, but few music curricula offer this opportunity. Overall, much of the music curricula in this study offer listening and responding opportunities.
While overall parent satisfaction is high, it is likely that parent satisfaction could be higher. There may be some barriers in execution and the curriculum itself, based on preliminary content analysis of homeschool music curriculum. Further, the curricula may primarily be offering opportunities for listening and responding, leaving parents and students unsatisfied with opportunities for creating music.

What Are Parents' Perceptions of Their Children's Impressions of Their Music Curricula and/or Experiences?

Students, as reported by parents, expressed slightly higher satisfaction than parents with a total of 71% *satisfied* (44%) or *completely satisfied* (27%) with their music curriculum. Parents indicated that their children were *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied* at approximately the same level of parents, at 24%. It is possible that students may be slightly more satisfied with their music curriculum because they enjoy the experience, as indicated by student satisfaction with private lessons (Dammers, 2009; Davidson & Jordan, 2007; Rife et al., 2001). While piecemealing curriculum may be difficult for parents and may not provide a whole curriculum with experience music, students may enjoy multiple music experiences. Students were also highly engaged in their music curricula, at 72% *completely satisfied* (30%) or *satisfied* (42%). A variety of music experiences engages young students without requiring significant dedication to one aspect of music, like performing. And when performing does require great engagement, students come to enjoy the experience.

There was a large drop to 10% dissatisfaction with student engagement from 5% overall student dissatisfaction. This may be a temporary result due to the current climate of online lessons, as indicated by some of the comments. Alternatively, having primarily listening experiences may not be engaging enough for students. In line with the MPI, it is possible that parents recognize that creating music is valuable for their child(ren), but students do not have opportunities to do so in their current music curriculum (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005).

Parents overall feel positively about their music curriculum and report that their children feel similarly. However, there could be more satisfied feelings as opposed to neutral feelings. Considering respondents' NCAS and satisfaction with their music curriculum could mean that families are not getting their desired music values from the curriculum that they use.

Implications of Parent Satisfaction and Parent Perception of Student Satisfaction and Engagement

In this study, parents were slightly less satisfied with music curriculum in comparison to parent perception of student satisfaction. Parents may be less satisfied with music instruction than they perceive students to be because there are some factors or stressors that students do not perceive. For example, it may be mentally taxing on a parent to teach a subject with which they have little experience. Also, being in charge of choosing music curricula or materials in addition to other curricular materials may be an added factor of dissatisfaction for parents. Private lessons may be financially burdensome on a family, a factor that students are less likely to consider, especially in financially stable homes.

It appears that there is a drop in parent perception of student engagement from *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied* to *unsatisfied* or *completely unsatisfied*. It is unclear if this drop is due to the current online format of lessons, as suggested by some comments in the study, or if this would persist in another survey after COVID-19 implications for online music learning. If unsatisfied feelings were to persist, these parents with students who are unsatisfied with engagement may be struggling to find music curriculum that is engaging for the child(ren). This is an opportunity for the music education community to

provide engaging music teaching and learning opportunities for parents with little or no music expertise. In line with the type of resources parents currently use, it may be useful for some of these materials to be low cost and online, in an attempt to provide as much access to the homeschool community as possible. More implications and recommendations for the music education community will be discussed at the end of this chapter.

Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler MPI in Homeschool Music Curricula

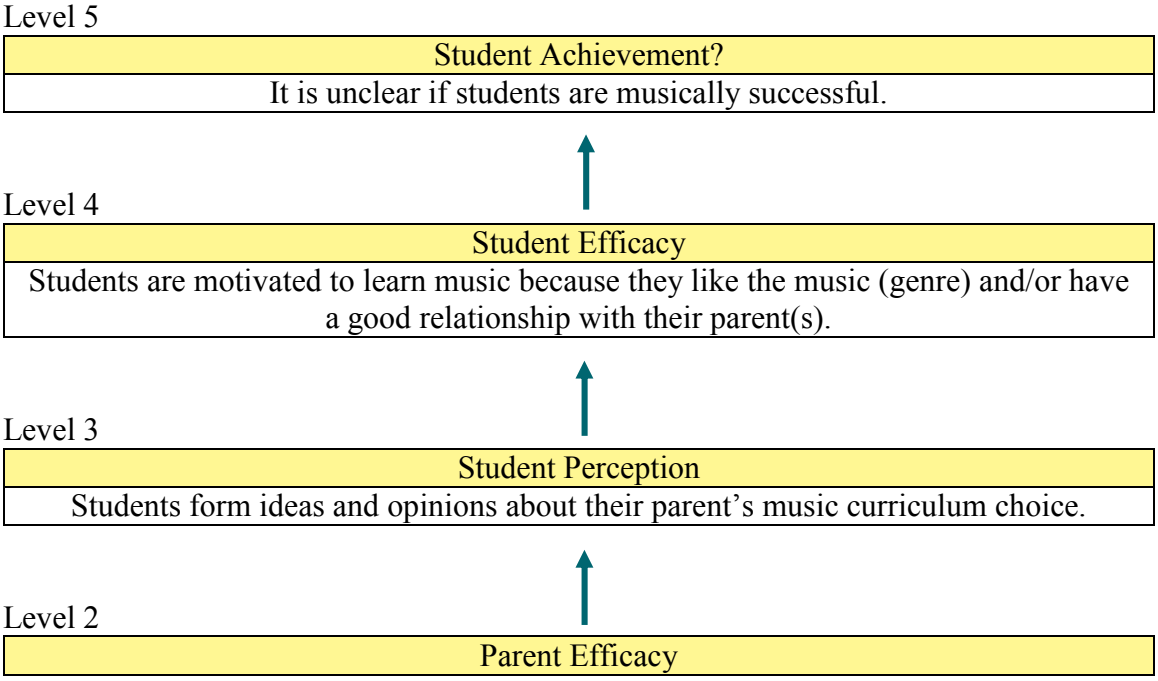
The way homeschool families engage in music education and choose music curricula in the home supports each level of the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler MPI (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). The combination of informal and formal learning styles allows for maximum parental involvement, giving parents the opportunity to monitor student progress and motivate their child(ren). However, unlike the MPI, it is unclear if this parent-student relationship contributes to musical achievement. Instead, it appears that parent teachers are more concerned about motivation and positive experiences with music.

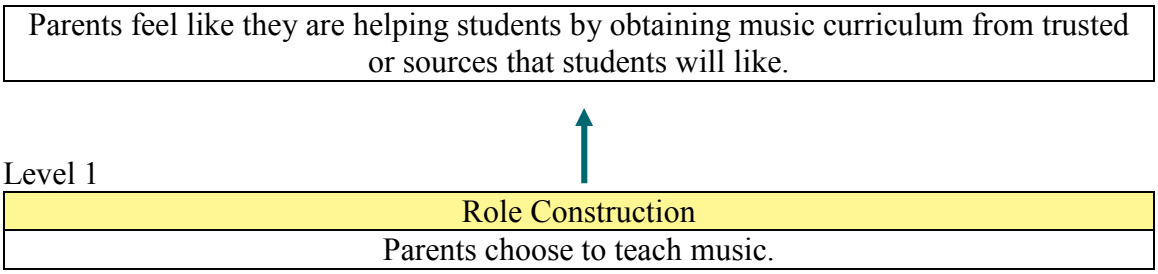
Parents indicated in this study that they primarily listened and responded to music as a part of their curriculum. By giving students some autonomy over what they listen to, parents believe they are helping students and giving them positive experiences with music. Further, they are promoting family musical values, especially in the case of Christian music sources. Classical Conversations understands this notion, suggesting that parents have a great deal of influence over their children in the type of music that they like (Yes, Music Education Is Important!, 2016).

Much of the MPI is supported in homeschool music education curricula. Even without musical expertise, parents choose to teach music as a part of role construction (level 1) (Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005). Then parents feel like they are helping students by obtaining music curriculum from trusted sources like the library, Christian sources, and even websites (level 2). At level 3, students are forming ideas and opinions about their parent's music curriculum choice. Students are then motivated to learn music if they like the music genre and/or have a good relationship with the parent as a teacher (level 4). It is unclear from the results of this study if students are musically successful (level 5), but many are receiving the education needed to be motivated to learn, even if there are not all of the components of a well-rounded music education like standards and assessments. See Figure 6 for a diagram of the MPI for homeschool families who obtain music curriculum primarily in the home.

Figure 6

Model of Parental Involvement for Homeschool Music Curriculum





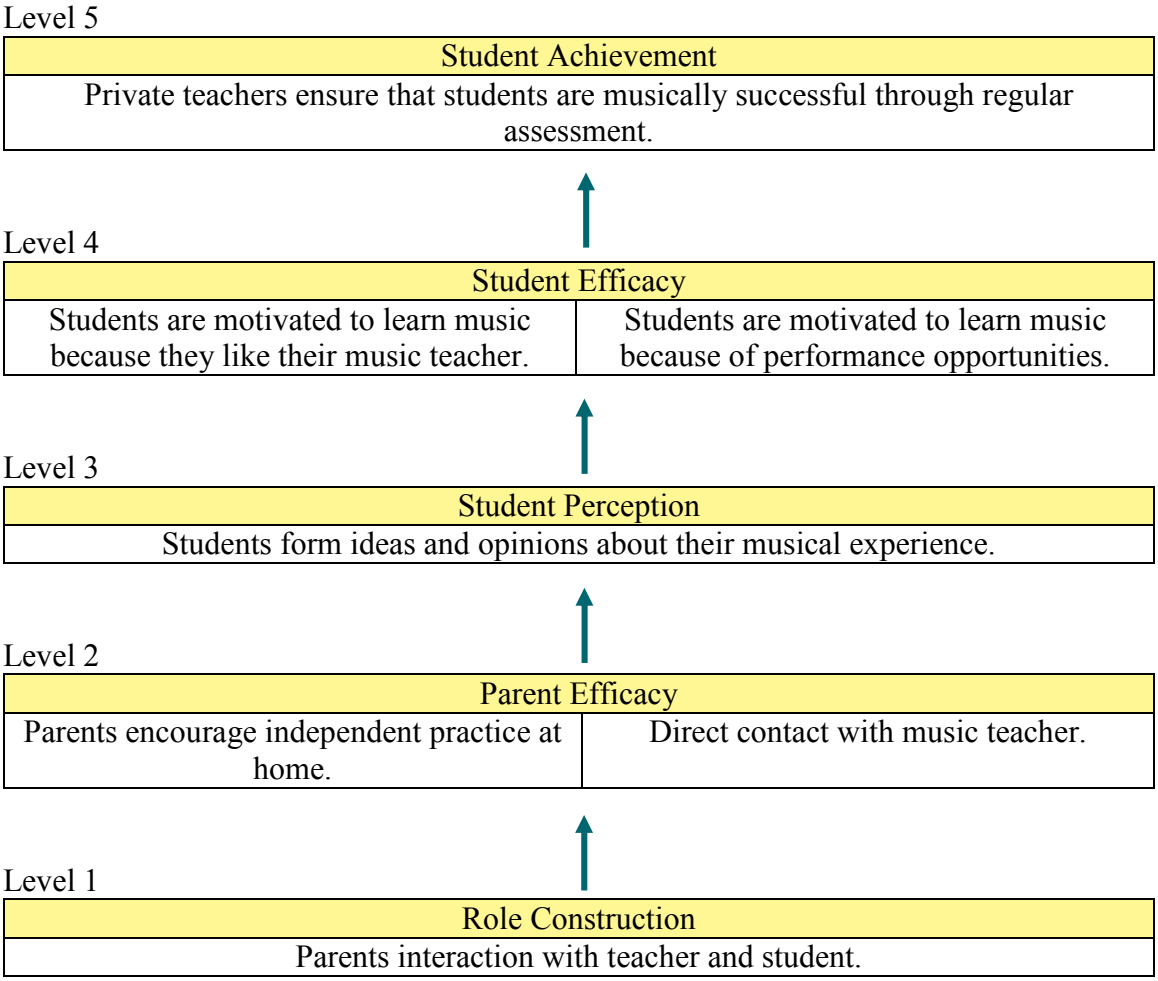
Note. Adapted from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement

One aspect of the MPI is not supported through the findings in this study. Online learning, especially online lessons, are not promoting student engagement and motivation. Comments suggest that parents are aware that these forms of music education are not engaging, but at the present, they cannot help, despite maximum parental involvement.

While many homeschool parents bring music curriculum to their home and therefore become the music teacher, families that seek private lessons outside of the home pass the role of music teacher off to a professional musician. In this intimate teaching and learning environment, parents may still be involved. Parent(s) can engage in promoting student success by encouraging independent practice at home and being in touch directly with the teacher about other musical opportunities. A private teacher may have many students in their studio, but parents have easier access to a private music teacher. By dropping the child off and picking them up from lessons or having the teacher come to their home, they are guaranteed to interact with the teacher. The parent can ask questions about student practice, reinforcement, and motivation. See Figure 7 for a model of the MPI in relation to private music lessons for homeschool families.

Figure 7

Model of Parental Involvement for Homeschool Private Music Lessons



Note. Adapted from the Hoover-Dempsey and Sandler Model of Parental Involvement

Implications and Recommendations

Implications of music education choices suggest that there may be room for growth in the area of homeschool music education curriculum. First, publishers may need to take responsibility for presenting music curriculum because they are trusted sources of curriculum for many homeschool families. Further, music educators should consider ways they can form relationships with homeschool families in order to assist in the creation of a wholesome, sequential music curriculum that would include goals,

objectives, standards, and assessments. Finally, universities should consider reaching out to homeschool families to conduct programs like the Instrumental Music Lesson Program (IMLP) at the University of Maryland (UMD), which is mutually beneficial to college music education program and homeschool families. By forming and maintaining these relationships, higher education professionals can potentially assist families in maintaining sequential music curriculum throughout the entirety of a school year.

Implications for Publishers

Publishers have substantial power over what homeschool families learn in the way of music education. Christian and religious publishers have a particularly important duty because they are trusted with vetting materials for their moral and religious value on behalf of homeschool families. Because religious or moral instruction is an important reason for families to homeschool, it is necessary that these religious publishers maintain the trust of their customers. Based on preliminary analysis of religious or Christian published materials, it does not appear that anyone with musical expertise regularly updates their materials. The materials presented on *Sonlight Curriculum* and *My Father's World,* for example, are books that have been available for over 10 years. The resources from Christian publishers are full of information but they are books, not curriculum as music educators would define it, containing goals, objectives, standards, and assessments. This is the beginning of where discussion and study should open between music educators, homeschool families, and publishers. It is possible that all three parties—music educators, homeschool parents, and publishers—all define curriculum differently. However, publishers need to lead the charge in this definition, making clear to the homeschool customer what constitutes a music education material or book and what may

be considered a curriculum. Then homeschool families can make informed decisions about the materials they purchase and how they are used.

Implications for Music Educators

Parents primarily teach the aspects of music that they have experience with, including listening and responding. It appears that there are ample resources for parents to teach academic subjects like history, reading, math, and science, despite the fact that parents do not likely have substantial expertise in each subject. Homeschool published curriculum, co-ops, and online sources may be providing the training and expertise for parents to teach these curricular subjects to a high standard. After all, researchers agree that homeschool students are highly academically successful (Cogan, 2010; Martin-Chang et al., 2011; Ray, 2010). However, there is no published research to suggest that homeschool students are highly successful in music as they are in academic subjects.

Music educators may take the following actions as a result of this conclusion. First, publishers and online resources may need to provide better music curriculum. Music curriculum should contain goals, objectives, standards, and assessments (Conway, 2015). The music education community may need to be more involved with homeschool families than they currently are, providing curricular materials that are more accessible to parents who do not have experience in music. This may happen through publishers or, more likely, through free, online sources.

These free, online resources may also accommodate the NCAS, as they are prioritized by homeschool families. Therefore, the online curriculum should include these creating, listening, and responding opportunities in addition to performing and making connections between music and other subjects. Homeschool families already have access

to materials for making connections between music and other subjects, as evidenced in the analysis of materials in this study. These "connecting" materials can be added to new materials in a sequential homeschool music curriculum.

Recommendations for Homeschool Music Education Curriculum

With this present study and research from previous studies, I recommend that the music education and homeschool community work together to create a music curriculum specifically designed for homeschool families. Though it would be valuable for the homeschool music curriculum to be sponsored by a publisher for purposes of distribution, to keep the cost low, it may be necessary to first distribute it without a publishing label among homeschool groups and co-ops. This is also a chance for music teacher educators to collaborate with homeschool families to ensure that a variety of NCAS are involved with authentic music teaching and learning. Homeschool family participation in creating the curriculum will be vital. It is clear from the lack of research on homeschool music education and the NAfME web page on homeschooling that the music education community needs guidance from the homeschool community with these experiences.

Private teachers may be a gateway to some of these homeschool families and may be able to negotiate the relationship between music educators and the homeschool community. As experts in music themselves, private teachers may be able to pilot a homeschool music curriculum alongside homeschool families. In conclusion, I make the following recommendations based on the present study and other research about homeschooling (such as reasons for homeschooling). Again, before enacting any of this I would consult and collaborate with the homeschool community. Table 4 lists some

activities that may be included in this homeschool curriculum along with a corresponding NCAS.

Table 4

Homeschool Music Education Curriculum Ideas

Music Activity	New or Existing	NCAS	Parent/Student Choices	Grade Level/Age
Music composition	New	Creating	Five-line staff Electronic (tones, beats, lyrics, chord patterns)	All
20th and 21st century music listening	New (from existing)	Listening	Music genre (Western European, American patriotic, Christian or sacred, popular music, folk from various countries)	All
Library of Congress primary sources	Existing	Responding through creating	Music genre or historic period	Grades 2-8 and high school
Published books and/or CDs	Existing	Making connections	Library materials Christian or religious published materials	All
Group or private lessons	Existing	Performing	Paid private lessons Higher ed/public school outreach Church ensembles YouTube performance	All

These are a start to recommendations for a homeschool music education curriculum that encompasses all of the NCAS while also addressing the individual needs of homeschool families. The music composition would be a new activity based on the needs expressed by homeschool families in this study. This composition activity can be made available to all ages. Parents and students can choose between the established five-line staff or a more contemporary approach with the creation of electronic music. This may involve lessons in learning how to use software like GarageBand or audio editing software like Audacity.

For the listening activity pertaining to 20th and 21st century music, parents can use their experiences from listening activities that they currently use as a part of their music curriculum. This would not require any additional training but would add a larger variety of music to an activity that homeschool families already participate in as a part of music education.

Library of Congress lessons that correspond with primary sources already exist; however, homeschool families may or may not be using them as a part of their music curricula. These lessons are a part of responding through creating and can involve a variety of music genres or historic periods. NAfME advertises these lessons with Library of Congress primary sources for grades two through eight as well as high school-aged students.

Published books and CDs already exist as a part of many homeschool music curricular experiences. Based on preliminary analysis of these materials they are best used as resources as a part of long-term, sequential music curriculum. These materials appear to already be accessible to families through publishers and the library and primarily offer opportunities for making connections between music and other subjects. Further choices are available to homeschool families to accommodate religious or moral reasons for homeschooling. They are also available for a variety of ages.

Though not all families consider performing music important, it is still a NCAS and valued by the music community and some of the homeschool community. Even if brief, performing should be a part of a well-rounded music education. Programs like the Instrumental Music Lesson Program (IMLP) at the University of Maryland (UMD) which lasts approximately eight weeks may suffice for performance annually in homeschool

music curriculum. As opposed to the way beginners are currently learning through videos online, IMLP and other outreach programs like this would be closely monitored by music professionals and include goals, objectives, standards, and assessment. Alternatively, performance may take a more contemporary form, engaging the student in YouTube performance and collaborative aspects of YouTube.

Recommendations for Homeschool-University Partnerships

Results from this research suggest that a relationship between homeschool families and music educators would be mutually beneficial. Therefore, I recommend that universities who do not currently have a relationship with local homeschool families develop one. Ideally this will be through a mutually beneficial outreach program, such as the Instrumental Music Lesson Program (IMLP) at the University of Maryland (UMD). This way, professionals in higher education are inviting homeschool families in without forcing curricular materials upon them. The model of IMLP may be valuable to homeschool families for performance, specifically. From there, IMLP may extend to give student teachers experience in various facets of music education including general music, music theory, music history, or popular music genres. Alternatively, higher education professionals may develop relationships with families and provide them with individual curricula to continue the education they started at IMLP. In this way, universities place the role of teacher back with the parent, as originally intended for homeschool families, and support them in maintaining a sequential music curriculum.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine what music curricula homeschool families use and to explore parents' perceptions of their chosen music curricula. A

secondary purpose of this study was to identify homeschool parents' musical values in relation to the National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Homeschool families in this study use formal, informal, and combinations of formal and informal learning styles for their music education curricula. They primarily think it is important to create music, listen to music, and respond to music, as indicated by their responses to this survey. However, initial content analysis of specific curriculum mentioned in this study indicates that homeschool families also value making connections between music and other subject areas.

Homeschool families obtain curricula from various websites and technology, the library, and through private lessons. YouTube was noted as a main source of music education online. It is unclear how students are using this source. There is the potential for creating, listening, performing, responding, and making connections; however, based on comments in this study and work by Kruse and Veblen (2012) it is likely that students are primarily using YouTube for listening to music. The local library as well as the Library of Congress have a variety of curricular material available for homeschool families as well as primary sources for experiencing authentic music. It is unlikely that a local library could provide enough material for a student throughout their entire K-12 experience, but library resources in combination with other music experiences create a variety of learning opportunities for homeschool families. Both online learning and the library are low or no-cost options for homeschool families, and allow for ample parent involvement, especially when these sources are used for listening and responding. Though the resources at the library and online may together provide enough musical

experience for a student, it is unlikely to provide ample experiences with creating, listening, performing, responding, and making connections.

Private lessons were also mentioned often as the source of music education and curriculum. Based on demographic information from the PFI and this study, homeschool families are not poor, and may be able to afford the cost of private music lessons and associated materials for students. This gives students one-on-one attention as well as individualized goal setting opportunities. Many private music teachers use method books as curriculum, and parents fully trust the teachers to make this choice on their behalf. Homeschool parents often make choices that involve themselves in the educational process, but this seems to be an area in which parents give some educational choice to professional musicians. This is vital for music educators to understand; that they are valued and trusted by parents to make decisions about music curriculum and materials and they may be a gateway to the homeschool community.

Further these results indicate that parents and students are generally satisfied with their music education curricula. Although a quarter of parents (25%) and students (24%) were *neither satisfied nor unsatisfied* with their music curriculum. This may be due to temporary factors with online learning and may be alleviated once COVID-19 is no longer a high health risk, especially in large cities and their suburbs like where these respondents live. Alternatively, piecemealing music education curriculum may pose difficulties in execution for non-musicians and lack opportunities for creating music, something that is highly valued by parents in this study.

It appears that homeschool families are getting music curriculum to satisfy their immediate needs but may need resources and long-term options at low or no cost.

Homeschool families may also enjoy knowing that they are providing listening and responding opportunities for their child(ren). Although there are few opportunities to create music, there appear to be a variety of ways that music connects with other subject areas in the available homeschool music education curriculum. Music educators should take note that homeschool families need more opportunities for creating music and may need access to materials that are manageable for parents untrained in music to distribute to their child(ren).

In response to this need for opportunities to create music as well as the result of piecemeal music experiences, I recommend that the music education community works together with the homeschool community to establish a homeschool music curriculum. This homeschool music curriculum will engage all of the NCAS while also considering the unique choices and needs of homeschool families.

Conclusions and Future Research

The purpose of this study was exploratory in nature and therefore lends itself to a vast array of research that may follow. Quantitative methods including survey research may be appropriate for reaching a broad, representative sample of homeschooling families. Alternatively, qualitative inquiries could serve to clarify views or values specific to individual homeschool families or communities, and/or student preferences in homeschool music resources.

Ideally, questions about music education would be included in the future PFI, but this is highly unlikely. And because the homeschool population is so small and difficult to track because schooling is regulated by states, it is near impossible to obtain a nationally representative sample without all homeschool registration information across

the U.S.A. Instead, this study could be replicated in multiple areas across the country to gather a nationally representative homeschool sample. From this information, scholars can conduct research intervention, potentially providing resources and training for homeschool families. Further statistical analysis of a more representative sample of this study may be valuable. Research questions may include:

- Are there differences in values of music performance among families who do or do not participate in private lessons?
- What demographic differences (geographic location, income bracket, parental education, etc.) exist among families who do and do not participate in private lessons?
- What resources, if any, do homeschool families use for creating music?
- Are there differences in preferred homeschool music resources for families with varying degrees of experience (e.g., 1 year or less vs 5 years or more)?

Beyond replication of this study, many new research questions came out of this exploratory study including:

- What are the contents (and possibly NCAS) in published homeschool music curriculum and books?
- What public school or university outreach music programs exist for homeschool families?
- What are the circumstances surrounding homeschool students enrolling in "a la carte" public school music classes?
- Do homeschool families express differing curricular preferences on the basis of religion and/or religious motivation for homeschooling?
- Do homeschool students who take private lessons express a desire to pursue music professionally?
- What role, if any, does technology play in homeschool music curriculum?
- What are public and private school parents' perceptions of the NCAS?

These new research questions were derived from the discussion of the present research questions and deserve to be investigated more in depth.

Other studies should investigate parent opinion of music curriculum. This may be in the form of a multiple case study or a survey where families are questioned at different points in the school year. For example, there may be more music opportunities around the

holidays where listening, responding, and performing Christmas carols is common. This may lend itself to easier music teaching and learning experiences for homeschool families in the month of December but less opportunities in months like March, with few holidays. With this information, outreach programs from schools and universities may be able to assist homeschool families at specific times of the year.

In conclusion, I hope that the music education community will form more connections with the homeschool community. The Instrumental Music Lesson Program (IMLP) is a valuable program for Maryland homeschool families, and higher education institutions in other areas should engage in mutually beneficial programs like the IMLP. The music education community may be able to assist families in accessing sequenced curricula that meets a greater variety of National Core Arts Standards (NCAS). Homeschool students only represent 3% of the school population (McQuiggan & Megra, 2017), but all students deserve access to quality, affordable music education ("Homeschooled Students' Participation in Public School Music Education," 2021). By forming relationships with homeschool communities, music educators can stand by the phrase "music for all" and invest in providing all communities with quality music education.

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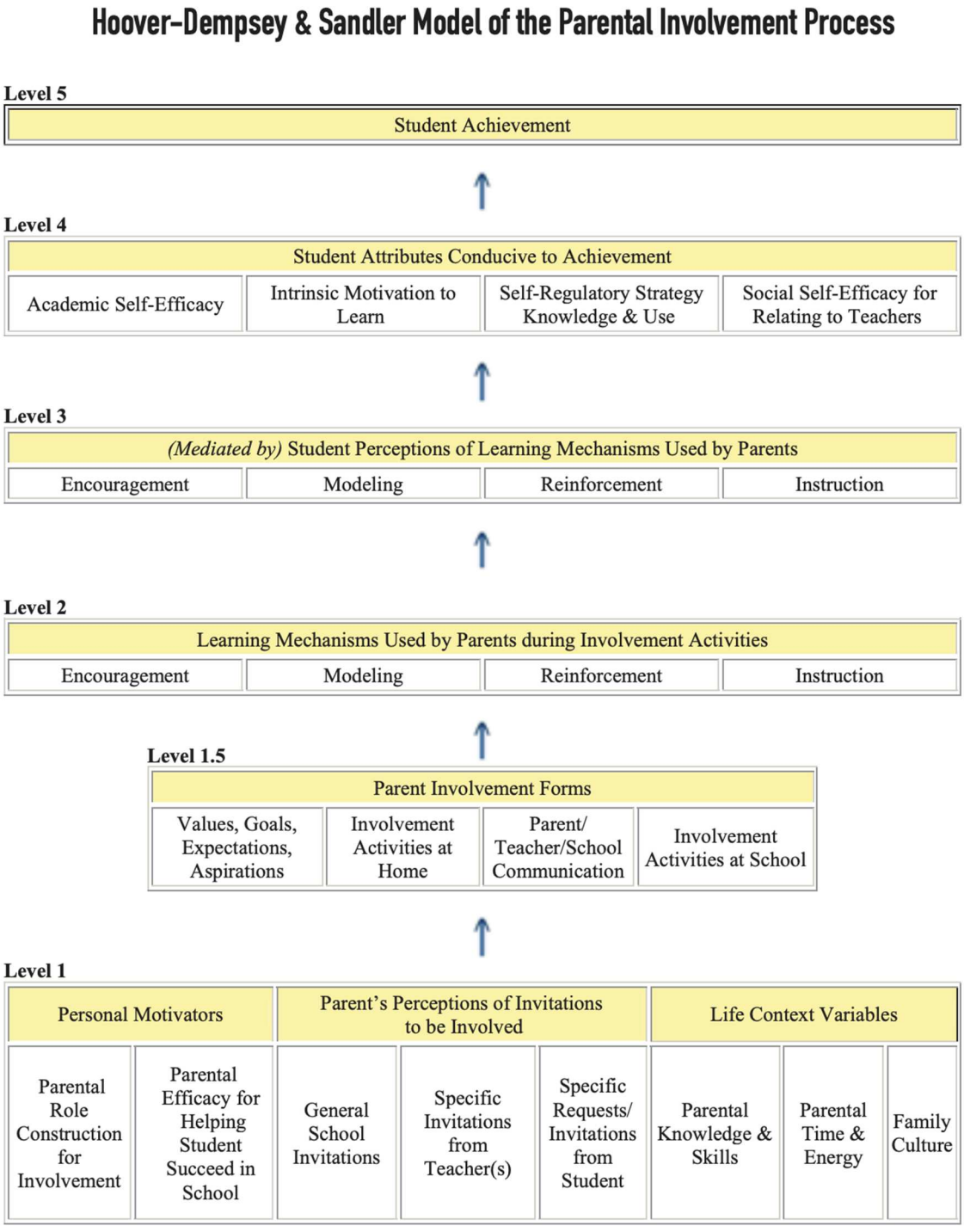
Appendix A



(Hoover-Dempsey & Sandler, 2005)

Appendix B

Homeschool Music Curriculum Investigation

Start of Block: Homeschool demographic questions

Q38 Thank you for participating in this study about homeschool music curriculum. Your responses are a valuable part of much-needed research in the homeschool and music education community. Responses to the survey are anonymous, and you may choose to skip any questions. Please contact me, Ashland Murphy (murphyam@umd.edu), if you have any further questions about this study.

Q64 By clicking "I agree" below, you indicate that you are at least 18 years of age; you have read this consent form or have had it read to you; your questions have been answered to your satisfaction and you voluntarily agree to participate in this research study. You may print a copy of this consent form for your records.

Informed consent

If you agree to participate, please click "I agree" below.

- ○ I agree (4)

Page Break

Q39 The following are demographic questions as they pertain to your homeschool family. No identifiable information will be collected in this section.

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q56 How long have you been homeschooling?

- ○ Less than 1 year (1)
- ○ 1 to 3 years (2)

○ 3 to 5 years (3)

○ More than 5 years (4)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q1 Homeschool status

○ Full-time (1)

○ Part-time (2)

Display This Question:

If Homeschool status = Part-time

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q1.1 Hours spent in public school, private school, or college per week

○ 1–5 (1)

○ 6–10 (2)

○ 11–15 (3)

○ 16–20 (4)

○ 21–25 (5)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q28 Number of days per week you homeschool

- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (5)
- 6 (6)
- 7 (7)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q29 Hours per week you homeschool

- 1–10 (1)
- 11–24 (2)
- 25–40 (3)
- More than 40 (4)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q2 Highest education level of parents/guardians

- ○ Less than high school (1)
- ○ High school diploma or equivalent (2)
- ○ Vocational//technical or some college (3)
- ○ Bachelor's or higher degree (4)
- ○ Graduate or professional school (5)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q65 Number of total people – adults and children – currently living in household (including yourself)

- ○ 2 (2)
- ○ 3 (3)
- ○ 4 (4)
- ○ 5 (5)
- ○ 6 (6)
- ○ 7 (7)
- ○ 8 or more (8)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q4 Total household income

- ○ $0 to $10,000 (1)

- ○ $10,001 to $20,000 (2)
- ○ $20,001 to $30,000 (3)
- ○ $30,001 to $40,000 (4)
- ○ $40,001 to $50,000 (5)
- ○ $50,001 to $60,000 (6)
- ○ $60,001 to $75,000 (7)
- ○ $75,001 to $100,000 (8)
- ○ $100,001 to $150,000 (9)
- ○ $150,001 or more (10)

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q5 5 digit zip code of household

_____

Q40 The following questions pertain to each child that is homeschooled in your family.

Question and response options adopted from the PFI.

Q6 Number of children who are homeschooled

- ○ 1 (8)
- ○ 2 (9)

- ○ 3 (10)
- ○ 4 (11)
- ○ 5 (12)
- ○ 6 or more (13)

End of Block: Homeschool demographic questions

Start of Block: Music curriculum questions

Q41 These questions are about the music curriculum and music education choices in your household.

Question and response options adapted from the PFI. I added the word "music." Otherwise, all wording and response options are the

Q30 Which of the following best describes the music teaching style?

- ○ Mostly or strictly formal curriculum—music is a part of regular schooling (1)
- ○ Mostly follow a formal curriculum but also use informal learning (i.e. child-led learning, "teaching moments") (2)
- ○ Mostly use informal learning but sometimes use a formal curriculum (3)
- ○ Always use informal learning, and never follow a formal curriculum (4)

Question and response options adapted from the PFI. I added the word "music." Otherwise, all wording and response options are the

Q31 Source of music curriculum and music books — select all that apply
Please specify the title or company of music curriculum and books

- ☐ Library (1)
- ☐ Homeschool catalog (2) _____
- ☐ Educational publisher (3) _____
- ☐ Homeschooling organization (4) _____
- ☐ Church (5)
- ☐ Public school (6)
- ☐ Private school (7)
- ☐ Bookstore (8) _____
- ☐ Websites (9) _____
- ☐ Virtual school or curriculum (10) _____
- ☐ Other source (11) _____
- ☐ None (12)

Question is designed with consideration of the NCAS.

Q34 Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use.

	completely unsatisfied (1)	unsatisfied (2)	neither satisfied nor unsatisfied (4)	satisfied (5)	completely satisfied (6)
Overall parental/teacher satisfaction (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Overall student satisfaction (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Student engagement (3)	○	○	○	○	○

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Overall parental/teacher satisfaction [completely unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q52 You marked that you are unsatisfied, overall, with one or more aspects of your music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why you are unsatisfied.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Overall parental/teacher satisfaction [unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q61 You marked that you are unsatisfied, overall, with one or more aspects of your music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why you are unsatisfied.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Overall student satisfaction [completely unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q53 You marked that your student(s) are unsatisfied, overall, with one or more aspects of the music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why the student(s) are unsatisfied.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Overall student satisfaction [unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q62 You marked that your student(s) are unsatisfied, overall, with one or more aspects of the music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why the student(s) are unsatisfied.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Overall student satisfaction [completely unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q54 You marked that your student(s) are not engaged in the music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why the student(s) are not engaged.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Display This Question:

If Rate your satisfaction with the music curriculum you currently use. = Student engagement [unsatisfied]

Question requests more details about any "unsatisfied" responses.

Q63 You marked that your student(s) are not engaged in the music curriculum. Please elaborate as to why the student(s) are not engaged.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Question is designed with consideration of the NCAS.

Q51 Rate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

	strongly disagree (1)	disagree (2)	neither agree nor disagree (3)	agree (4)	strongly agree (5)
Creating music is an important part of my child's education. (1)	○	○	○	○	○
Performing music is an important part of my child's education. (2)	○	○	○	○	○
Listening to music is an important part of my child's education. (3)	○	○	○	○	○
Responding to music is an important part of my child's education. (4)	○	○	○	○	○
Making connections between music and other content areas is an important part of my child's education. (5)	○	○	○	○	○

Q50 Is there anything else you would like to share about the music education curriculum that you use? If so, please elaborate below.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

End of Block: Music curriculum questions

Start of Block: Follow-up interview questions

Q36 May I contact you for more information about your responses to this survey?

- Yes (1)
- No (4)

Display This Question:

If May I contact you for more information about your responses to this survey? = Yes

Q37 Please specify your contact information and preferred method of contact

- Cell phone (text) (1) _____
- Cell phone (call) (2) _____
- Home phone (call) (3) _____

☐ Email (4) _____

Display This Question:

If Please specify your contact information and preferred method of contact = Cell phone (call)

Q57 When is the best time of day for you to take a call on your cell phone?

- ○ Morning (1)
- ○ Mid-day (2)
- ○ Afternoon (3)
- ○ Evening (4)

Display This Question:

If Please specify your contact information and preferred method of contact = Home phone (call)

Q58 When is the best time of day for you to take a call at your home phone?

- ○ Morning (1)
- ○ Mid-day (2)
- ○ Afternoon (3)
- ○ Evening (4)

Q59 Would you like to be contacted about the final results of this study?

- ○ Yes (1)
- ○ No (3)

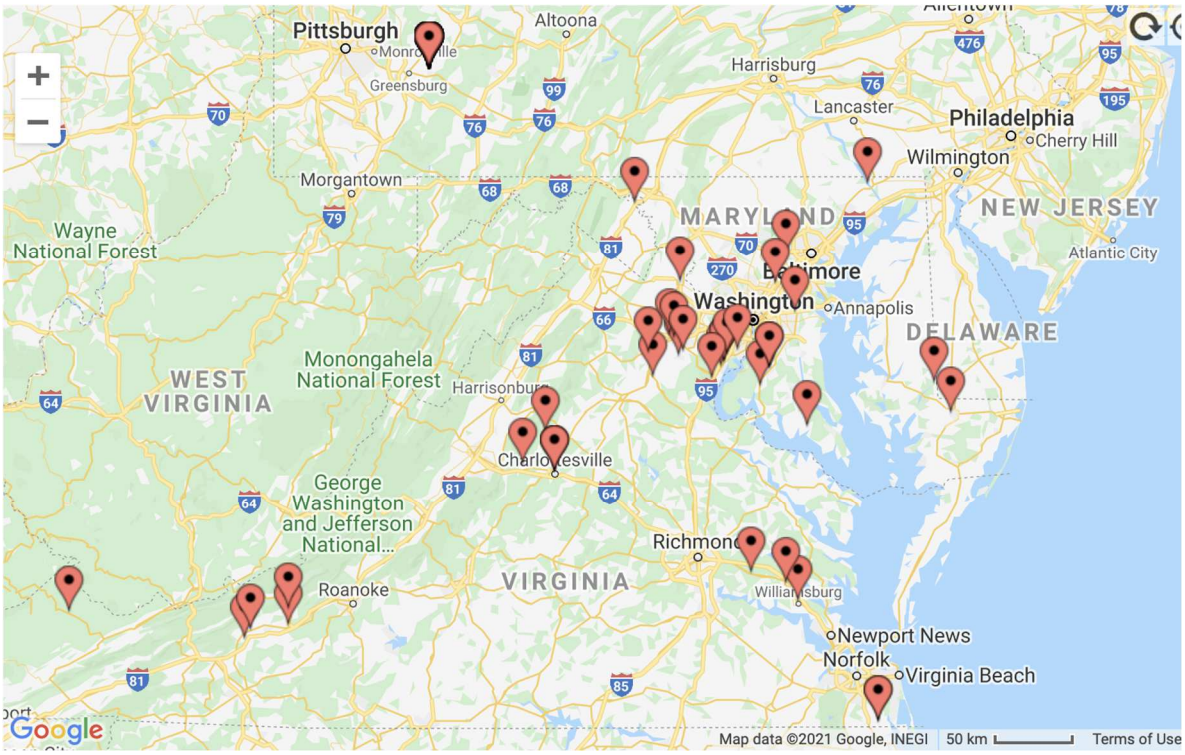
Display This Question:

If If Please specify your contact information and preferred method of contact Email Does Not Contain @

Q60 Please type your email address below to receive the final report on this study. Your email address will not be used for any other purpose.

_____

Appendix C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Altoona
Harrisburg
Lancaster
Philadelphia
Cherry Hill
Wilmington
Morgantown
Wayne
National Forest
MARYLAND
NEW JERSEY
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Baltimore
Washington
Annapolis
DELAWARE
Monongahela
National Forest
WEST
VIRGINIA
Harrisonburg
Charlottesville
George
Washington
and Jefferson
National...
Richmond
Roanoke
VIRGINIA
Williamsburg
Newport News
Norfolk
Virginia Beach
Google
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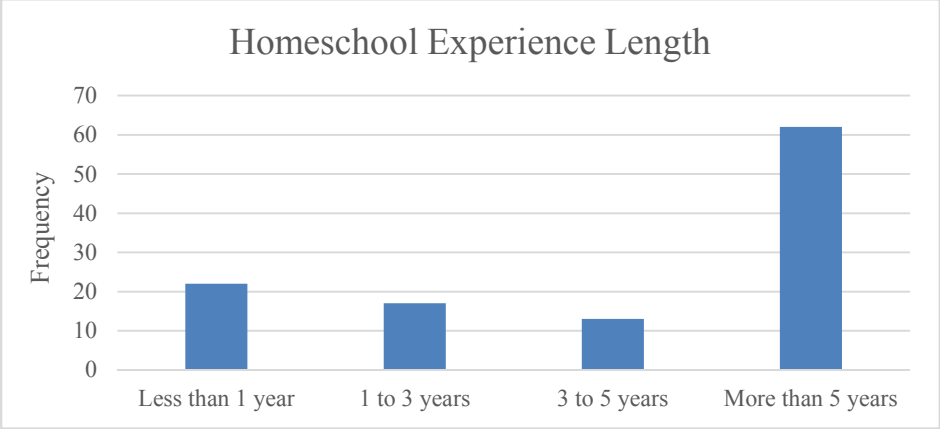
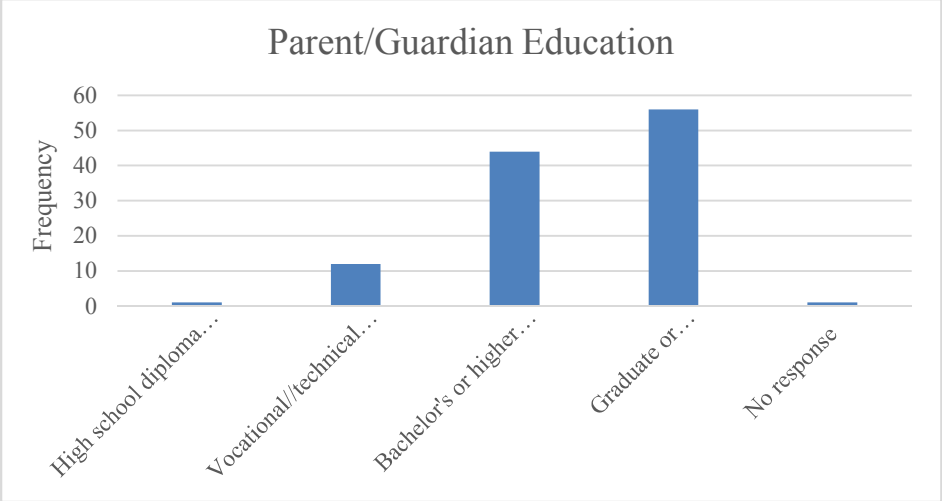
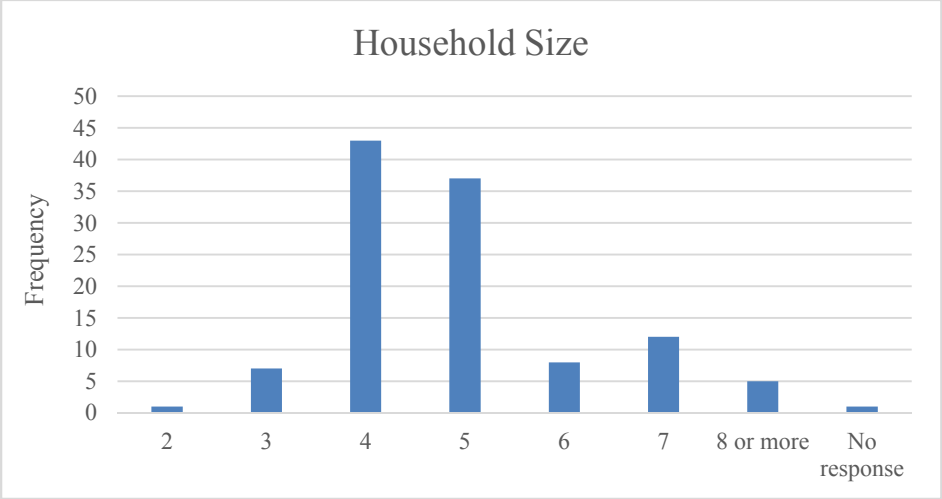
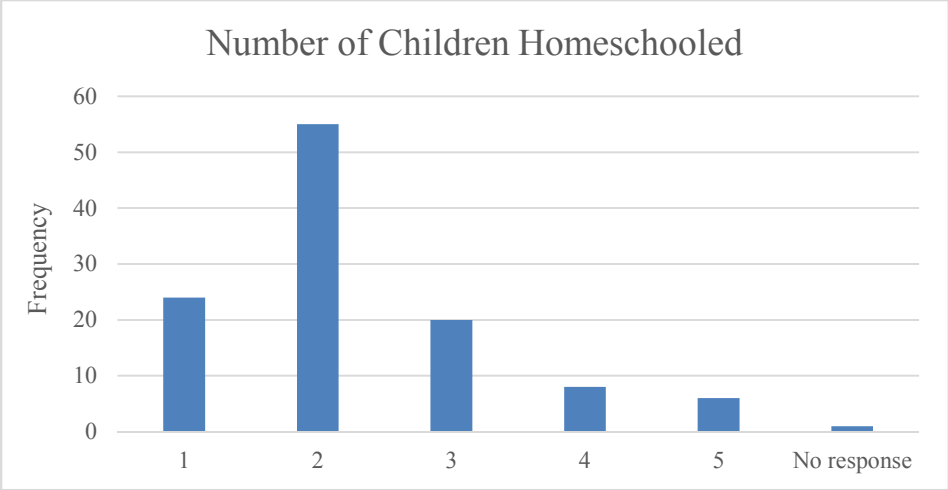
Appendix D


Homeschool Experience Length
Frequency
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
Less than 1 year
1 to 3 years
3 to 5 years
More than 5 years


Parent/Guardian Education
Frequency
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
High school diploma…
Vocational//technical…
Bachelor's or higher…
Graduate or…
No response


Household Size
Frequency
50
45
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
2
3
4
5
6
7
8 or more
No response


Number of Children Homeschooled
Frequency
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
1
2
3
4
5
No response