Outsourcing Music Education: A Comparative Analysis of Public-School Music Education and Arts Organization Programs

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Abstract

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This paper traces key events that contributed to reduced music education instruction in public schools and the growth of teaching artist-led music instruction as a replacement. The author outlines the differences in training, instructional outcomes, and accountability measures between public school music programs and their teachers, with arts organization music programs and their teaching artists. The arts organization programs increasingly become the main source for music education in public schools, yet little data exists to determine if these programs truly provide an interchangeable instructional product. Thus, the research in this paper aims to determine whether the three participating arts organizations provide comparable music instruction to the three neighboring public-school music programs. Through a comparative analysis of the program curriculums using the state content standards as well as student assessment data and program evaluation data, the research will determine if the arts organization programs adequately meet the music content standards set by the school governing boards of education. The research will inform school decisions to outsource the music education for which schools are accountable to arts organizations.
Introduction

National policy on education and the economy indirectly, but substantially, impacted music education in public schools. Even though states, schools, and administrators often declare a commitment to arts education (Abril and Gault, 2006, 2008), when The “No Child Left Behind” legislation and the Great Recession tested this pledge, their allocation of instructional time and funds proved otherwise (Beveridge, 2009; McMurrer, 2008). School districts not only reduced instructional time for the arts, but they also divested from their own arts instruction and instead outsourced it to private or not-for-profit arts organizations (McMurrer, 2008; Heilig, Cole, & Aguilar, 2010). Even after the implementation of new federal education legislation and the economic recovery, school districts continue to put music education in the hands of arts organization programs. Some critics account for the continued decline as proof that school music education has become so removed from contemporary music making that these programs no longer attract support from its community and student body (Kratus, 2007). Oftentimes, this outsourcing replaces credentialed music teachers with teaching artists contracted by the partnering arts organizations (Rabkin, 2013). Although this growing trend comes with several perks including hands-on instruction and instrumental training from a practicing artist, (Mcdonald, 1981) a focus on positive youth development (Brown, 2016), and access to grants and private donors (Brown, 2016; Burnaford, 2007), many skeptics call for accountability by evaluating an arts organization’s intended outcomes (Sinsabaugh, Kasmara, and Weinberg, 2009), as well as evaluating programs with the educational state standards of the arts content area (Brown, 2016; Heilig et al., 2010; Burnaford, 2007).

Arts organizations, through these educational programs, bridge an important gap in arts education. Without them, many students would lose the opportunity to receive music instruction,
especially instrumental instruction from specialists. However, these organizations provide little information about their program outcomes, much less outcomes that intend to address the educational standards. Additionally, they lack transparent student and program data to prove that they meet their intended outcomes or adequately substitute a public-school music education and a credentialed music educator. In an age of accountability converging with the trend to partner with local organizations to outsource arts education, public school districts partnering with arts organizations -- specifically music organizations for the purpose of this paper -- must determine the equivalency of these two types of music education offerings through a comparative analysis of the curriculums and student assessment data. The research in this paper will use the music content standards to analyze and compare six programs. Three programs will be arts organization music programs, and each will be paired, for comparison, with a neighboring school. The researcher will select programs from three states, two that use the National Core Arts Standards as their music content standards and one state that uses standards designed by the state itself. The program curriculum and assessment data will be analyzed to determine if programs comply with the content standards, if arts organizations and their neighboring public schools address the same content or if they meet a similar level of compliance with the standards, and lastly, the study will determine if the schools have similar success rates in student learning based on the content standards. The programs will provide data for three student assessments during the curriculum period of a school semester. With this method, the researcher will offer findings on the comparability of standards-based instruction for the two types of music educations programs.
**Background**

Music educators, and the arts in general, document a decline in support for the field. Many music education scholars point to the George W. Bush Era policy called No Child Left Behind (NCLB) for the decrease in funding and instructional time (Beveridge, 2009; McMurrer, 2008). The NCLB policy used high-stakes testing in English language arts (ELA) and mathematics as a metric for school effectiveness and student learning. These test scores would then inform federal funding decisions (Boehner, 2002). School districts reshaped their instructional and budget allocations towards ELA and math in the hopes of raising test scores which would, in turn, help them maintain or increase their federal funding (Beveridge, 2009; McMurrer, 2008). One study by the Center on Education Policy found that 44% of its 349 school district participants increased instructional time in ELA and math through a decrease of arts instruction (McMurrer, 2008). For the schools that decreased instructional time for music, these programs lost 35% of their instructional time (McMurrer, 2008). Not only did the master schedules reflect a decrease in instructional time, but some schools would also pull students from elective arts classes and into intervention classes for ELA or math if the individual student’s scores were not meeting satisfactory benchmarks (Heilig, Cole, and Aguilar, 2010). This practice exacerbated the impact of NCLB on music education. In addition to NCLB, the 2008 Recession also greatly affected music education. Schools across the nation felt a budget impact during the Great Recession and as is common across the country, subsequently responded by reducing arts budget allocations. A reduced school budget impacts the arts first as they are not the content area that the government uses to hold schools accountable for student learning (Hedgecoth and Major, 2019; McMurrer, 2008). For many music programs, the Great Recession resulted in a reduction
of credentialed music teacher positions, less instructional time for music, and/or a complete elimination of music programs (Hedgecoth and Major, 2019).

NCLB and the Great Recession gave way to the re-envisioning of music education (Hedgecoth & Major, 2019; Kratus, 2007; Rabkin, 2012). Some school districts used these challenges as an opportunity to redesign their music program offerings, one strategy being to strengthen partnerships with arts organizations (Hedgecoth & Major, 2019; Heilig et al., 2010). Many arts organizations aided schools through outreach concerts, others sent visiting artists to lead workshops, and some even established their own music education programs (Rabkin, 2013). In Texas, state legislators took these partnerships a step further by allowing students to meet their fine arts requirements through arts organizations if their public schools did not offer arts courses (Heilig, Cole, and Aguilar, 2010). Texas’s House Bill 3 became a turning point in music education as legislators authorized the outsourcing of music education without guidelines to ensure a minimum level of quality or quantity of instruction.

Rise of Teaching Artists

To face these impactful moments in music education, the research suggests that the teaching artist model for music education is on the rise and encroaching on the in-school music instruction (Heilig et al., 2010). Rabkin makes the case that teaching artists have actually played a crucial role in community music education for over a century, but they are just now receiving more attention as they become more prevalent in public school education (2012). However, Macdonald’s article proves that there has been a demand for teaching artist accountability since the 1980s (1981). Her article also points to decades of teaching artists threatening the job security of credentialed music teacher (Macdonald, 1981). Kratus offers an alternative perspective by offering a different cause for the decline of public school music programs. Instead
of blaming NCLB or the recession, he asserts that music education has lost touch with popular music (Kratus, 2007), a point which arts organizations claim as a strength of using teaching artist in their program (Rabkin, 2012). Whichever the cause may be for the decline in public school music programs and the rise of arts organization programs, both sides agree on a need for more program evaluation and accountability for arts organization programs.
Review of the Literature

Post NCLB and the Great Recession, public school music education takes on a variety of forms with an equal amount of program providers. Arts organizations partner with school districts through funding, outreach concerts, but more importantly, by providing teaching artists to lead the music instruction (Heilig et al., 2010; Rabkin, 2012). In some contexts, arts organizations simply provide supplemental instruction to the music education that occurs during the school day with a credentialed music teacher (Simpson, 2017). One model could be the addition of an intensive after-school instrumental program (Baker et al., 2018; Simpson, 2017) which has gained popularity after the El Sistema model from Venezuela spread worldwide through a TED fellowship program (José Antonio Abreu plants youth orchestras, 2014). In a second model that pairs teaching artists with credentialed music teachers during the school day, one scenario could be a teaching artist placed with a credentialed music teacher to provide small-group pullout instruction for students that play the same instrument as the teaching artist. In the two examples, teaching artists extend or enhance the music instruction from a credentialed public-school music teacher.

In other cases, these arts organizations and their teaching artists provide the complete offerings of music education at schools (Burnaford, 2007; Heilig, 2010; Hedgecoth and Major, 2019; Rabkin, 2012;). This instruction might take the form of co-teaching with a non-music credentialed teacher. For example, a teaching artist might come into an elementary school and provide music lessons while the classroom teacher is in the room. The classroom teacher is the teacher-of-record in those lessons, and perhaps this classroom teacher will later assign a grade to students, but the actual content is delivered by the teaching artist through a curriculum that the arts organization prescribes (Education Through Music, 2016). In secondary education, schools
may not offer music as an elective, but they partner with an arts organization to provide music lessons after-school (Harmony Project, 2019; Inner City Arts, 2020; Loud, 2017). The after-school program is not part of the school day, but schools may claim it as a unique offering that addresses the need for arts education programming.

The teaching artist model has served as a tool to create equity in schools and communities that lack the resources and funds for a robust school music program. Unfortunately, teaching artists and arts organizations are increasingly making public school music programs and credentialed music teachers obsolete. For decades arts organizations have entered classrooms to disseminate musical artforms, but they have reached the point of inspiring legislation that lets them take over music instruction (Heilig et al., 2010). Their role in public schools sparks debate around the appropriateness of this substitution between proponents of teaching artist-led programs and proponents of in-school programs led by credentialed teachers.

**Training and Preparation**

*Credentialed Music Teacher Training and Preparation*

Proponents of credentialed music teachers stress the importance of the teacher preparation and training that comes from a credentialing program. The teacher preparation separating a credentialed music teacher from a teaching artist includes a whole course load that covers methods courses for instrumental and vocal music, courses that provide strategies to accommodate English Language Learners (ELL) and special needs populations, and teacher credentialing programs include interning with mentor teachers that advise and coach teacher interns (Music Credential Program, 2020). The credentialing program also requires teachers to pass basic skills tests and single subject tests in the content area. In California, for example, a majority of teachers obtain their credential by passing the California Basic Educational Skills
Test (CBEST, 2020) and for music teachers, they must also pass the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET: Music, 2020). Finally, once a school district hires a new music teacher they must also go through an induction process to move from a provisional credential to a fully-cleared credential (Teacher Induction in California, 2020) Even after this process, teachers receive periodic evaluations from their principals as well as professional development through their school districts. The certified music teacher goes through an extensive process that covers a range of topics in education and in music pedagogy. This level of accountability is unmatched by the current teaching artist preparation.

**Unique Qualities of Teaching Artists**

For advocates of the teaching artists model, they argue the benefits of TA’s by referencing a few unique areas of expertise. Teaching artists are active practitioners in their field which allows them to offer specialized knowledge of a particular form of music-making and with that, they bring specialized approaches to teaching the music topic or the instrument (Brown, 2016; Hedgecoth and Major, 2019; Macdonald, 1981; Rabkin, 2013; Sinsabaugh, Kasmara, and Weinberg, 2009). In addition to this unique insight, the teaching artists are also tasked with teaching the prescribed content of the arts organization program. These teaching artists instruct students in a narrowly focused content area provided by the arts organization curriculum. It is often the case that arts organizations choose a music style or topic that promotes the art forms with which the arts organization associates itself e.g. an orchestra implementing a youth orchestra program or a pop music program focusing on popular music genres and ensembles (Harmony Project, 2019; Little Kids Rock, 2020; Loud, 2017; YOLA, 2020). This structure allows arts organization music programs to deliver a detailed and thorough education on their musical topic.
Teaching Artist Training and Preparation

For training and preparation, teaching artist proponents highlight the high levels of education that teaching artists have in their artform and their hands-on experience in the music field. Teaching artists often have graduate degrees in their art specialty (Rabkin, 2012). In Rabkin’s research, he finds that over half of the teaching artists that participated in his survey have a master’s degree and two-thirds of his participants have a degree in their artform (2012). However, this research surveyed teaching artists across all art forms, so the data does not specify the general education level of the music teaching artists. This data also points out that a third of teaching artists did not receive higher education in their art form while also revealing that only one in eight teaching artists has a degree in education (Rabkin, 2012). A large majority of teaching artists do not have pedagogical training in their art form and a third of them do not have advanced training in their art. In actuality, Rabkin reveals a concerning amount of under-trained artists in the classroom when applying higher-education as the metric for teaching artist preparation. This is not to say that musical expertise cannot be acquired outside of an institution. Many musicians learn through on-the-job training, especially for non-Western musical styles that are rarely offered in higher education institutions. Oftentimes, these artists continue to perform professionally in their area of music (Rabkin, 2012; Sinsabaugh et al., 2009) which allows them to give students current insight into the music industry. Moreover, advocates assert that teaching artists bring innovative teaching techniques stemming from their expertise in their field (Macdonoald, 1981; Rabkin, 2012). Although these qualities make for a more in-depth musical student experience, the average teaching artist lacks foundational pedagogical and instructional knowledge (Rabkin, 2012) that makes student learning more likely.
In comparing the training of credentialed teachers and teaching artists, the two positions take sides between depth and breadth. The advocates for credentialed music teachers feel the threat of their job security from both the lack of support in their own school system and the encroaching teaching artist model (Macdonald, 1981, Heilig et al., 2010). This group defends the value of well-trained teachers and the versatility of their content knowledge that comes as a result of their training (Heilig et al., 2010). Correspondingly, teaching artists receive critique for the narrow scope of their pedagogical training and understanding of music education. In many cases, the arts organizations heighten this critique as they often use their education programs as a tool to promote themselves or to disseminate the artform they practice.

**Program and Teacher Evaluation**

Putting these differences aside, the important objective distinction comes in the assessments and evaluations of these two program models. Public school districts abide by education codes and policies to hold teachers and programs accountable. Public school districts require credentialed teachers in the classroom which ensures a certain level of pedagogical training. Districts also adhere to educational standards for each of their content areas (California Arts Standards, 2020; National Core Arts Standards, 2014). Lastly, districts evaluate their teachers on their lesson planning and the delivery of their instruction (Educator Evaluation System, 2019; The Framework for Teaching, 2020). These measures of governance create accountability and quality control for public school music education programs. Furthermore, these practices ensure that the school districts can identify inexperienced teachers and take steps towards either training them or to seek more qualified teachers for the positions.

In the arts organization programs, the teacher training, program evaluation, and music curriculum lack an aligned standard for evaluation or curriculum design. Neither the arts
organizations nor the partner districts require a minimum level of teacher training from the teaching artists. As stated in the previous section, teaching artists have a wide range of training and sometimes it does not fall in the field they cover as teaching artists (Rabkin, 2012). When arts organizations hire their teaching artists, the organizations and the districts do not have an agreement for baseline teacher training, content training, nor do they agree on providing professional development in those areas before or after they place teaching artists in schools. Moreover, there is no standardized requirement for teaching artist evaluations or instructional outcomes to which the districts or the arts organizations can hold teaching artists accountable.

Similarly, if arts organizations evaluate their program, they use evaluation tools that outline goals and metrics, but they have little in common with the traditional state standards and assessments of a public school (Brown, 2016). In parallel with the NCLB movement in public schools, arts organization programs faced a demand for evidence of success from program evaluators, donors, and from skeptics of the teaching artist model (Baker et al; 2018; Burnaford, 2007; Brown, 2016; Heillig et al, 2010; Simpson, 2017). For the past decade, the literature on arts organization-led music education programs acknowledges a trend towards accountability (Brown, 2016; Burnaford, 2007) but little evidence shows a trend of increased program evaluation or assessments. The suggested program metrics for arts organizations outline goals but do not connect them with content standards. Instead, program evaluators ask teaching artists and programs to do assessments of student performance progress using various rubrics (Brown, 2016). Conversely, the suggested metrics in public schools call for much more than just musical performances. The schools evaluate teachers on instruction in performing but also creating works, critically responding to and evaluating musical works, and connecting the music content to cultures, history, and society (National Core Arts Standards, 2014). However, a unique quality
of arts organization programs comes in the emphasis on positive youth development programming (Baker et al, 2018; Brown, 2016; Simpson, 2017). Arts organization programs often teach with the intent to use music as a tool to develop positive youth outcomes (Brown, 2016), create social change (Rabkin, 2013, Cuesta, 2011), and positive socio-emotional and socio-economic effects (Eerola and Eerola, 2014; Brown, 2016; Cuesta 2011).

The contrast in evaluations between public school districts and arts organizations clearly arises from the different purposes for the programs. Public school programs and teacher evaluations aim to comply with effective instruction guidelines set by departments of education and their content standards while arts organizations often use their evaluation data to appease donors and grant foundations (Baker et al, 2018; Brown, 2016; Burnaford, 2007). As a result, the data from these evaluations portrays biased interpretations or misleading conclusions (Baker et al, 2018; Rabin, 2012). Moreover, arts organization programs aim to address more abstract goals such as equity and socio-emotional impact (YOLA, 2020). These goals do not directly relate to music learning but rather to the corollary effects of participating in music programs. This is not to say that public school music programs do not advocate for themselves through skewed framing of data. One example of this practice is revealed in Elpus’s 2013 research. In this article, he makes the case for self-selection bias as the true reason for music students scoring higher on tests and not due to their musical training (Elpus 2013). Still, public schools ground their programs on governance that promotes student music learning, critical thinking, and a diverse understanding of music (National Core Arts Standards, 2014). If arts organizations aim to take on the role of a public school music programs, it stands to reason that they should also hold the same guiding objectives for their programs.

**Literature Review Summary**
Legislative policy on education forced school districts to prioritize math and English classes over all other topics (Beveridge, 2009). The high stakes testing not only placed music education in a category of inferior importance (Abril and Gault, 2006, 2008), school districts also allocated less instructional time to music and other non-tested subjects (McMurrer, 2008). The Great Recession continued the impact on music education by reducing school budgets (Hedgecoth et al., 2019). Because music education does not make the list of high priority content areas, music programs and teachers (as well as other elective subjects) felt the budget impact harder. These circumstances in education reshaped music programs in public schools. Arts organizations began to fill the gap in communities and schools that lost their programs (Hedgecoth et al., 2019; Rabkin, 2012). They offered teaching artists to take the place of credentialed music teachers in their new programs.

The growing number of arts organizations and teaching artists offering music education at public schools raises the question of whether the programs offered by arts organizations compare to the instruction from public school programs. As proven by the literature, the oversight for public school programs vastly differs from that of an arts organization program. Teachers in public schools must meet a more rigorous process for their pedagogical training and credential. Once in the classroom, teachers must also ensure they meet the instructional guidelines of their content by adhering to content standards. Public schools evaluate teachers on these guidelines as well as their instructional practices (Educator Evaluation Systems, 2019). Arts organizations, on the other hand, do not have a comparable level of governance for their programs and teaching artists and is, therefore, free to design music education as it sees fit.
Limitation in Existing Research

The two models of music education operate in distinct ways but are often used interchangeably to meet the demand for public school music instruction. Public schools and arts organizations evidently do not run their programs in comparable ways. Arts organizations have the freedom to implement a music program in whichever process they like, from the teaching artists they choose to hire to their program model. Public schools, on the other hand, abide by prescribed guidelines from the school boards and departments of education. From the instructors to the curriculum to the program evaluation for effectiveness, these two models approach music education in very different ways. Despite this evidence, school districts allow these arts organizations into their schools and offer them instructional time to provide music education to their students. However, little evaluation data exists for arts organizations programs, much less with the intention of addressing public-school education standards. Furthermore, the existing impact data for some arts organization programs proves to be misleading (Baker et al., 2018). Public schools are using these arts organization programs without proof that they are effective or proof that they adequately addressing the content area standards for which the school is accountable.
The literature identifies two distinct approaches to music education from a structural standpoint. Despite this, some school districts partner with arts organizations to deliver music education in lieu of a public school-operated music program. The lack of data raises the question: are arts organization music programs meeting public school instructional commitments when they take over a school’s music instruction? In this research, instructional commitments refers to the adherence to the music content standards and to providing proof of program effectiveness through curriculum analysis and student learning through assessment data.
Methodology

To address the question of comparability, the researcher will analyze and assess six music programs in two areas: program intended outcomes, and student learning data. Using a mixed methods approach, this research design will measure and compare the instruction of teaching artists using the same standards that schools use to evaluate credentialed music teachers. The researcher will apply the state content standards as the tool of measurement for all programs. This research design breaks down the question of interchangeability by determining three aspects: do arts organization programs address music content standards in their curriculums, do these organizations provide music instruction in a comparable way to public school music programs, and can both programs provide proof of effectiveness through student assessments that connect the student learning with the program’s intended outcomes? The secondary sources of curriculum and student assessments will compose the data that the researcher will analyze using the music content standards. For four of the programs, the researcher will use the National Core Arts Standards because their state boards of education adopted these for the states. The researcher will analyze the remaining two programs using the Michigan music standards (Michigan Academic Standards, 2020) because this state chooses to use their own content standards instead of implementing the National Core Arts Standards.

Variables

The independent variables will be the music programs that participate in the study. There will be six music programs in this study. Three of these programs will be arts organization music programs while the remaining three will be public school music programs in the same neighborhood or metropolitan area as the arts organization programs. The dependent variables
will be the curriculum, program outcomes, and student assessments. Each program will submit their curriculum for a period of one school semester along with intended outcomes. The intended outcomes may come in the form of content standards they intend to address along with any other intended program outcomes such as specific musical goals that connect to positive youth development. The programs will also submit student assessment data for three points in the semester of study. Ideally these assessments will connect to the intended outcomes of the program.

**Program Outcomes**

The researcher will apply the state content standards to the arts organizations in order to find connections to the four anchors: creating, presenting, responding, and connection (National Core Arts Standards, 2014). Beyond these general areas, there are several layers to the state content standards depending on the grade level, musical experiences, and for the type of ensemble or topic of the music class. The standards will allow the researcher to differentiate the analysis to fit the expectation of the class topic. For example, it would allow the researcher to apply music technology standards rather than trying to make instrumental ensemble standards apply. Similarly, the standards would outline different expectation for an elementary orchestra than for a high school orchestra. The variety and specificity of the standards add reliability and validity to the metric and the study.

**Student Learning Data**

Both teaching artists and teachers will administer three assessments for the beginning of the program semester, the middle, and the end of the semester that address the intended program outcomes. The teachers will be free to design their own assessments so long as they address the content in the curriculum submitted to the study. To ensure that no one has modified the student
assessment data, the researcher will either be present during the assessment if possible or will seek a non-bias proxy to assist in proctoring the assessments when the program is out of the researcher’s area. The teacher will provide the graded results and, if applicable, a rubric that corresponds to the assessment data.

Subject

The researcher will conduct the study on three arts organization music programs operating in public schools during the instructional day. These programs will be in three different parts of the country: Los Angeles, Boston, and Detroit. The researcher will then find three comparable public schools in those three areas to serve as public school control programs. By analyzing these three areas, the study adds external validity. The researcher applies the Core Arts Standards to two programs in states that use these standards, those states being California and Massachusetts, and to one state that uses music content standards of its own design, that state being Michigan (Map: National Core Arts Standards, 2014)

The Los Angeles subject will be the Education Through Music, Los Angeles program (ETMLA; Education Through Music, 2016). This program aims to provide music education to its school partners by placing music teaching artist instructors at each site. The program only partners with schools that do not have a music program or a music teacher through the school or the school district. Similarly, the Handel and Haydn Society in Boston provides music instruction, also through teaching artists, to schools that would otherwise not have a school music program (Education for Schools, 2019). The Haydn and Handel society also provides instruction during the school day. Lastly, Living Arts Detroit offers a variety of programs including school day music education through teaching artists (K-12 Arts Education, n.d.) All
three of these programs strive for the same general goal with their programs which is to provide a music program at schools that cannot sustain one on their own.

**Definitions**

The researcher will define public school as an institution governed by the state board of education, receiving government funding, belonging to a network of schools in a unified school district, and managed by a school board. A credentialed music teacher would be contracted by this public school and the teacher would also hold a teaching license from the state in which he or she teaches. An arts organization, on the other hand, would be a private institution that is not directly accountable to a school district or department of education and it is not funded by these entities. Finally, the teaching artist will be defined as an employee of the arts organization that is hired to teach kindergarten through 12th-grade students for the arts organization music program partnered with a school or school district. By examining the job description and requirements, the teaching artists are not required to hold a credential from the state board of education nor are the teaching artists required to have a degree in the content area they will teach. Lastly, the teaching artist is not required to have any pedagogical training in the content area they will be teaching.

**Analysis**

To determine compliance with the music standards, the researcher will thoroughly dissect the curriculum and code it based on various points of analysis. First, the analysis will determine if there is intentional forethought for addressing the content standards by identifying references to them in the curriculum and in lesson plan objectives. Then the analysis will determine if the grade level of the students and the curriculum match according to the Core Arts Standards or the Michigan music standards. In other words, are the programs teaching the appropriate content for
the student grade level, as dictated by the content standards. Next, the analysis will code for the anchor standards addressed in the curriculum, to identify diversity in the instruction. This part of the analysis ensures that the study considers when a program for example, provides thorough performance instruction but it does not address the anchor standards of creating their own music or developing critical listening skills. Next, the analysis will look for content standards outside of those assigned to the grade level. This portion accounts for programs that are more advanced than the assigned content standards or programs that require remedial instruction. Lastly, the analysis will use assessment data to determine the average rate of student learning and the successful accomplishment of the program outcomes. The instructors may design the assessments, but the researcher will be present during the assessment to ensure that no one has tampered with the student assessment data. The student assessments themselves will be analyzed to determine if they test the knowledge of the content standards in the curriculum. These analyses will then be compared with the neighboring public school and with the programs in other states. The analysis will also consider other program outcomes and data to determine if an arts organization successfully addressed other outcomes outside of the music content standards.

Through comparative analysis, the methodology for this study will synthesis the curriculum, program outcomes, and student assessments to determine if the arts organizations provide a comparable music program to a self-sufficient public-school music program. By analyzing and comparing the adherence to state music standards, the study will provide data that can make or break the case for allowing arts organizations to take the place of credentialed music teachers and their programs. The arts organization programs in this study are especially interesting because they operate during the school day which means that schools are intentionally providing these arts organization programs with valuable instructional time in exchange for
music education. Because they operate during the school day, these programs are reasonably more accountable to the content standards than after-school music programs and the public schools are more accountable to ensure standards-based instruction.
Discussion

This study will likely find shortcomings in the arts organization curriculum and instruction in addressing music content standards. Arts organizations tend to focus narrowly on one aspect of music, whether it be a particular genre, style, ensemble, or musical culture. The narrow focus typically does not allow for the well-rounded approach to music that the National Core Arts Standards, or other music content standards promote. However, I also anticipate that the public-school music programs will also fall short of addressing the content standards. Because schools do not assess music as rigorously as other subjects, music programs and teachers often take detours in their curriculum. This result will either make school districts think more carefully about outsourcing the music program to an arts organization or they will rebrand the programs, as many arts organizations have already done. Arts organization programs are beginning to shift their intended outcomes to focus on positive youth development through music rather than to fill the need for music education (Miami Music Project, 2020).

Research Limitations

This paper makes the generalization that public-school music education standards promote higher quality instruction than that of a teaching artist implementing an arts organization music education program. In fact, public school music programs receive criticism for disproportionately uplifting Western Music practices and creating a disconnect between music used in the classroom and the music students encounter outside of school, such as popular and folk music (Kratus, 2007; Nethsinghe, 2012). Arts organization programs potentially resolve this critique in their own instructional practices as is evident in the contemporary music offerings of the Little Kids Rock program or the LOUD program (Little Kids Rock; 2020, LOUD, 2017).
Furthermore, these organizations may provide high-quality instruction if evaluated through the lens of positive youth development, specialized instrumental instruction, or as a means of approaching equity among the various socioeconomic groups. However, when school districts delegate their responsibility to provide music education to an arts organization, these districts have a duty to their stakeholders to ensure a comparable education to the one promised by the school board. With this reasoning, the proposed comparative analysis in this paper holds arts organizations to the same standards that the departments of education hold public school music programs and its teachers.

In addition, the author uses evaluation tools familiar to her experience in the field of education and music education. Many states use their own individual state content standards rather than the Core Arts Standards. The author chose the core arts standards because they are still widely used throughout the United States and they are frequently referenced to design state music standards. However, the self-designed state standards may offer better guidance for the various contexts of each state. For this reason, the researcher chose Michigan as one of its locations for analysis. Michigan uses its own music content standards and not the National Core Arts Standards. By including Michigan, the study accounts for the possibility that the Core Arts Standards are not the ideal metric for music education. Finally, the researcher analyzes all the intended outcomes for the programs in this study to also account for the possibility that state standards, in general, are not a realistic metric for a subject as vast and varied as music education.

**Ethical Considerations**

This research study is, in some ways, a performance evaluation of the teachers. To protect the teachers from supervisor scrutiny that might risk their employment, all teachers will
remain anonymous in the study as well as the specific site or school. In the final publication of the research, the program names will also be anonymous to prevent any loss of funding or loss of partnerships due to the analysis in this study. They will instead be referred to as their city and program type e.g. Los Angeles public school program and Los Angeles arts organization program. Similarly, all student data will remain anonymous to protect the identities of minors and to reassure students and families that this data will not be documented in the students’ school records. The researcher will have students opt into the study through a consent form for parents or guardians that grants permission to use the student data. In the analysis, the researcher will also omit all student names and replace them with student identification numbers to further protect the identity and information of the minors but also to reduce the risk of implicit bias. This will allow the researcher to interpret the work objectively.
Conclusion

Many arts organizations attempt to fill a gap in public school education with their music programs. As outlined in this paper, several unforeseen circumstances impact the arts which makes it difficult to ensure a well-rounded education that includes the arts and music. The impact is especially prominent in underserved communities of color (Rabkin, 2012). For this reason, it becomes increasingly important to ensure that the schools guarantee quality instruction when they outsource their music programming to outside arts organizations. It would be unjust to further harm an under-resourced community by providing inadequate public school music instruction simply because it does not cost schools to provide this outsourced instruction.

Secondly, the assurance of music education in public schools directly impacts a student’s opportunity to enter this job market. A career in the arts is often open to those whose families and schools can afford the instruction, equipment, and lessons (Cuesta, 2011). These arts organizations not only contribute to a well-rounded education by providing music instruction, but they also alleviate equity issues and expose students to a job market that would otherwise be inaccessible to them. For this reason, the arts organizations and public school must understand if their instruction is a well-rounded music education and not just the specific genre the arts organization associates with and outcomes that do not address the standards to which public schools have committed. Music exists in a plethora of forms that require a variety of skills. Students deserve access to all of them, especially if it connects to the students’ identity (Nethsinghe, 2012).

Lastly, this year has brought a variety of challenges including a pandemic that has caused an economic downfall. There is no telling what the long-term effects will be, how it will impact school budgets, and how those budgets will impact music education. If the nation is about to
enter another recession that will cut back funding to arts education, the need becomes greater for a more thorough investigation of arts organization music offerings. It will give public schools a better understanding of the doors they are opening, or closing, for students when they partner with arts organizations.
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Appendix A

A graphic representation of the National Core Arts Standards that arts organizations would address in their curriculums. When arts organizations reference the standards, they will point to the specific anchor standards of the overarching categories.