

INFORMAL MENTORING RELATIONSHIPS:  
A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY OF NOVICE MUSIC EDUCATORS  
AND THEIR MENTORS

by

TARYN K. RASCHDORF

B.M., Old Dominion University, 2000

M.M.E., Old Dominion University, 2009

A dissertation submitted to the  
Faculty of the Graduate School of the University of Colorado  
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
Department of Music Education

2015

This dissertation entitled:  
Informal Mentoring Relationships:  
A Multiple Case Study of Novice Music Educators and Their Mentors

written by Taryn K. Raschdorf  
has been approved for the Department of Music

---

Martina L. Miranda, DMA, Committee Chair

---

Margaret H. Berg, Ph.D.

---

Leila Heil, Ph.D.

---

Thomas Riis, Ph.D.

---

Daniel Liston, Ph.D.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The final copy of this dissertation has been examined by the signatories, and we find that both the content and the form meet acceptable presentation standards of scholarly work in the above mentioned discipline.

IRB protocol # 13-0517

Raschdorf, Taryn K. (Ph.D., Music Education)  
Informal Mentoring Relationships:  
A Multiple Case Study of Novice Music Educators and Their Mentors  
Dissertation directed by Dr. Martina L. Miranda

### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, to examine the outcomes and implications of being in an informal mentoring relationship at various junctures of the novice music educator's teaching career. Second, to investigate the usefulness of Social Exchange Theory (SET) as a lens to examine these relationships and mentoring practices. Research questions addressed the nature of informal mentoring relationships in a music education setting, factors prompting these relationships to continue, and the nature of mentoring interactions based on SET concepts.

Three novice general music teachers, varying from one to four years in teaching experience, with their informal music teacher mentors provided details about their mentoring experiences in this multiple case study. A total of 21 interviews took place over the course of one school year, ranging from individual interviews, paired mentor-mentee interviews, small novice teacher and mentor focus group interviews, and a large focus group interview. Using interviews and group discussions as data, the nature and value of informal mentoring relationships were analyzed in relation to main concepts found in SET. Deductive codes based on SET were used to identify patterns and subsequent themes. These themes and other findings were described qualitatively and illustrated by direct quotations from participant responses.

Findings indicate that effective mentoring was able to occur because of the following factors: (a) the element of choice in selecting a mentoring partner, (b) the establishment of connection based on similar backgrounds and teaching philosophies which facilitated value and trust, (c) the establishment of a reciprocating relationship, and (d) the quality of mentors and mentoring practices. The SET concepts of rewards, costs, and exchange rules were also found to be useful in the analysis of these mentoring relationships. In this study, there were not only implications for the novice music teacher participants but for their mentors as well. The novice teacher participants were able to "give back" to their mentors by means of new ideas, resources, friendship, and support. These prolonged mentorships cultivated support systems for the novice and the experienced music educator needed to thrive in the music education profession.

## Dedication

I dedicate this work first and foremost to the Giver of all knowledge and strength  
without whom I could not have completed this endeavor

ישוע

This dissertation is also dedicated to my husband, Buddy,  
and children, Marin, Avi, Asher, and Nate.

Thank you for loving me through this, encouraging me to finish,  
and picking up the pieces every time I wanted to fall apart.

I love you.

## **Acknowledgments**

I would like to offer special thanks to my dissertation advisor, Dr. Martina Miranda, and dissertation committee members, Dr. Margaret Berg, Dr. Leila Heil, Dr. Thomas Riis, and Dr. Daniel Liston for their assistance throughout this process. Dr. Miranda, you especially were instrumental in making sure that I made it to the finish line. Thank you for your advice, expertise, support, and encouragement.

I would like to extend my appreciation to my unofficial mentors, Dr. Peggy Bennett and Dr. Anna Langness. You not only listened and offered personal insight about this process, but provided so much inspiration. Thank you for believing in me.

Thank you Courtney and Bekah for all the time and effort put into helping me edit this dissertation. Numerous other family, friends, and colleagues encouraged me and were willing to endure this journey with me. I hope you know who you are and how indebted I am to you. Mom, Dad, Bekah, Lyna...thank you for helping me in those moments where I couldn't function as a wife or mother. This accomplishment is yours to share with me.

## Contents

Tables.....	xiii
Figures.....	xiv
<b>Chapter 1: Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
Induction.....	2
Mentorship .....	3
Induction vs. Mentoring .....	4
Support of Novice Music Educators .....	5
Theoretical Perspectives.....	6
Social Exchange Theory.....	8
History and progression of Social Exchange Theory. ....	9
Criticisms of SET. ....	11
Concepts in Social Exchange Theory.....	13
Nature of relationship in SET framework. ....	14
Exchange structures. ....	16
Resources of exchange. ....	17
Social Exchange Theory and the concept of worth. ....	18
Rules of exchange.....	19
Trust and commitment.....	20
Social Exchange Theory and informal mentoring relationships. ....	21

Study Rationale .....	22
Problem Statement .....	23
Purpose of the Study .....	23
Research Questions .....	24
Definition of Terms.....	24
Assumptions of the Study .....	26
Study Limitations .....	26
Summary .....	27
<b>Chapter 2: Literature Review .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Induction.....	29
Benefits.....	30
Induction and the novice music educator.....	31
Challenges.....	31
Retention.....	32
Professional development.....	33
Teacher development.....	35
Mentorship .....	36
Styles of mentorship.....	37
Approaches to mentoring.....	40
Roles in mentoring relationships.....	41

Effective mentorship programs. ....	43
Benefits specific to mentorship. ....	44
Challenges with mentorship models.....	45
Theoretical Framework .....	46
Social Exchange Theory in research literature. ....	46
<i>Business.</i> ....	47
<i>Medicine.</i> ....	49
<i>Psychology.</i> .....	50
<i>Education.</i> .....	51
<i>Social Exchange Theory and mentoring.</i> .....	54
Summary .....	57
<b>Chapter 3: Methodology</b> .....	59
Rationale for Case Study Methodology .....	60
Participants .....	61
Participant selection, consent and description. ....	62
Data Collection.....	66
Interview schedule.....	66
Interviews. ....	68
Individual and paired interviews. ....	69
Focus group interviews.....	70



Additional data. ....	72
Data Analysis and Synthesis .....	72
Conceptual framework. ....	72
Theoretical framework and propositions. ....	73
Data management. ....	74
Data processing.....	75
Data analysis.....	76
Trustworthiness .....	78
Triangulation of data sources. ....	78
Prolonged involvement.....	79
Member checks.....	80
Audit trail.....	81
Negative case analysis. ....	82
Transferability .....	82
Researcher Bias .....	83
Researcher position.....	84
Summary .....	86
<b>Chapter 4: Nature of Informal Mentoring Dyads .....</b>	<b>88</b>
Pair #1 - Suzanne and Stacia.....	88
Suzanne Meyers.....	88

Stacia Nelson .....	89
The relationship begins.....	91
From student teaching to an informal mentoring relationship. ....	94
Pair #2 – Kirsten and Rachel.....	98
Kirsten Shields.....	98
Rachel Wolfe .....	99
The relationship begins.....	101
Beyond student teaching.....	103
Pair #3 – Daphnie and Reyna.....	106
Reyna Lewis .....	106
Daphnie Gray.....	108
The relationship begins.....	111
After the induction program. ....	114
The evolution of an informal mentoring relationship .....	116
Need.....	116
Connection.....	123
Good fit.....	131
Trust, respect, and value.....	140
Reciprocation.....	153
Synthesis of Research Question #1 .....	169

Summary .....	175
<b>Chapter 5: SET Across the Mentoring Dyads.....</b>	<b>177</b>
SET Concepts as a Fluid Construct.....	177
Resources, rewards, and costs. ....	180
Comparison level and comparison level for alternatives.....	183
Rewards taking place outside of mentoring relationship.....	185
Rules of exchange in the mentoring dyad. ....	197
Summary .....	219
<b>Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions .....</b>	<b>220</b>
Summary of Findings .....	220
Interpretation of Findings.....	222
Approaches to mentoring.....	222
Obstructions to mentoring. ....	225
Effective mentorship practices. ....	228
Benefits for novice and mentor teachers. ....	230
Issues of sustainability.....	233
SET in research.....	235
Implications.....	238
Implications for music educators.....	238
Implications for the teacher education community. ....	243

Suggestions for Further Research .....	246
Final Thoughts.....	248
References.....	251
Appendices.....	268
Appendix A: IRB Exempt Certification.....	269
Appendix B: Participant Consent Form .....	270
Appendix C: Sample Interview Questions .....	273
Appendix D: Code Book.....	275
Appendix E: Representation of Memos .....	279
Appendix F: Sample Interview Transcript: Large Focus Group.....	280
Appendix G: Conceptual Framework .....	284

## Tables

Table 1 Researcher Interactions with Participants .....	83
Table 2 Forms of Resources.....	154

## Figures

Figure 1 Diagram of SET Progression of Exchange Relationship.....	15
---	----

## Chapter 1: Introduction

*Kirsten had just finished teaching her 1st grade students at Fairfield Elementary School. It was the day after Halloween and the children were exhibiting crazy behaviors, which Kirsten credited to exhaustion and sugar. She had experienced highs and lows in her first year of teaching, but after this particular class, Kirsten felt like a first year teacher. The lesson had not gone the way she pictured. Even though it was Halloween, Kirsten knew there must have been a more effective way to teach that particular lesson.*

*Unlike Kirsten, Reyna knew what to expect the day after Halloween. Having taught for over ten years, she could anticipate her students' behaviors. The week before, she received an email from her mentee Daphnie asking for Halloween activities for 2nd grade. This inexperienced teacher knew that Reyna would not only have the resources, but would quickly respond with some great ideas.*

*Suzanne was also confident about her day. After all, she had gone through the craziness of Halloween four different times. In her first couple of years of teaching, Suzanne had to depend on the games and music she learned from her mentor Stacia. However, with a lot of trial and error, and the constant guidance of Stacia, Suzanne was poised and ready for her "sugared up kiddos."*

The need to support new educators during their first few years of teaching has been garnering attention since the 1960s. In the 1960s and 1970s, novice teachers began voicing their "shock" that the education they were receiving was disconnected from what they actually experienced in the classroom (Serpell, 2000). In 1981, the secretary of education Terrel H. Bell and panelists on the National Commission on Excellence in Education produced a report entitled *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Education Reform* (Education Encyclopedia, 2013). This

document has been noted as the impetus for two decades of standards-based reform, specifically the recommendation that teaching be improved with enhanced preparation and professionalization. The school reform movement that ensued in the late 1980s brought about beginning teacher programs designed to assist and support novice teachers in their professional development (Strong, 2009). The construction and implementation of what is known today as induction began around this time as well (Serpell, 2000; Veeman, 1984). Many pilot programs were initiated and state mandates regarding induction were instituted so that by 1992, 46 states established some semblance of a beginning teacher evaluation program or induction process (Serpell, 2000). The percentage of beginning teachers reporting their participation in some kind of induction program in their first year of teaching has steadily increased over the past 2 decades from 40% in 1990 to almost 80% by 2008. In 2008, however, only 22 states were funding induction programs for new teachers (Smith et al., 2012).

## **Induction**

Induction, or the process of bringing a teacher into the teaching profession, occurs during the probationary years of a novice teacher's career. Although there are a variety of induction models and methods used throughout the United States, the ultimate purpose of any induction program is to provide "systemic support to new teachers over at least two years, including opportunities for collaboration with peers, regular formative and evaluative assessment of progress based on state teaching standards, and professional development that is tailored to the challenges a new teacher faces" (NASBE, 2013). The structure of induction support can range from single-event district orientation meetings, professional development workshops, formal mentoring, and observations or collaborations with more experienced teachers. With the large number of induction programs currently in operation, researchers continue to examine the



effectiveness of certain induction practices to determine which are the most effective and why. Strong (2009) writes, “It remains to be seen whether and to what extent induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers are effective and worth the time and money that governments, states, and schools invest in them” (p.19).

## **Mentorship**

At its best, mentoring can be a life-altering relationship that inspires mutual growth, learning and development. Its effects can be remarkable, profound, and enduring; mentoring relationships have the capacity to transform individuals, groups, organizations, and communities (Ragins & Kram, 2007, p. 3).

The objective of induction is to socialize novice teachers to their new roles, enhance their effectiveness, and increase the likelihood they will remain in the profession (Smith, Desimone, Porter, McGraner, & Taylor-Haynes, 2013). Mentorship is an aspect incorporated into many induction programs and the objectives are much the same. One main difference, however, is that mentorship is intended to support novice teachers on a more personal and relational level. The emotional and psychological support derived from a successful induction program inherently relates to the support perceived by the novice teacher. This psychological condition can enhance the confidence of beginner teachers, increasing their morale and job satisfaction, and predictions for retention (Warsame, 2011). It must be stressed that it is the *mentoring* aspect of an induction program that provides the relational support needed by novice teachers.

The assigning of a mentor is an important task, but many mentors are arbitrarily assigned to their mentees (e.g. a novice *music* teacher being placed under a mentoring *art* teacher), (Conway, 2006; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Krueger, 1999). These assignments can be based on a range of options: both teachers are in the same building, the mentor is employed at a nearby school, the district mentoring teacher is hired to work with multiple novice teachers, or the

mentor is an experienced resource teacher, but may not have experience with music. There are instances of novice teachers choosing their mentor, but more often the formal structure of the district has the mentor assigned, not chosen. These formal structures rarely meet the needs of novice music teachers. In other words, because the novice music educator is mismatched with a mentor in the formal structure, the multifaceted needs of these teachers cannot be met. With choice being a rare occurrence, novice music educators reach out for additional support to those who understand their discipline and their specific needs. These forms of support could come in the guise of other music teachers with whom the novice teacher feels comfortable with, peers from other districts, or former cooperating teachers. The list can also include the use of online support forums or organizational support, such as local Orff or Kodaly chapters, that offer options to sign up for a mentor.

### **Induction vs. Mentoring**

“Induction programs are sometimes confused with mentoring activities. Induction is a process—a comprehensive program. Mentoring is an action. It is what mentors do (Warsame, 2011, p. 36).” Researchers within the general education and music education community often nestle the term mentorship under the larger umbrella of induction (Ingersoll, 2009). Induction includes a variety of support and professional development initiatives and mentorship is often one of those initiatives. The role induction plays in the novice teacher’s career depends on the context of its purpose. Induction can be thought as the support procured through a network of experienced teachers, a form of professional development (e.g. attending workshops or in-service trainings), or even a two-year district requirement for new teachers. While these experiences are found to be beneficial and considered necessary during the first few years of teaching, evidence is still needed on why induction works, what types of induction are most effective, and under

what conditions an induction program is effective in meeting the specific needs of the novice music teacher (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Krueger, 1999; Smith et al.,2012).

Mentoring, as stated above, is often just a facet of the teacher induction program. Mentorship can take place in a formal setting, where experienced teachers are hired to support individual teachers, or an informal setting, where a novice teacher seeks out the help of a more experienced teacher. Most often the formal or informal mentorship happens in tandem with a district mandated induction program. What delineates mentorship from induction is that mentorship is a *developmental relationship* that focuses on career development and growth (Ragins & Kram, 2007).

### **Support of Novice Music Educators**

As stated earlier, the education community began its examination of novice teachers and their needs in the 1980s. A decade later, the music educator community began to investigate and explore solutions for their own novice teachers. Investigators first considered and defined what characterizes a novice music teacher. After all, many similarities exist between the general novice teacher and the novice music teacher. Most novice teachers, also labeled beginning teachers or neophytes, are generally characterized as having taught anywhere from one to five years (Krueger, 1999; Randall 2009). Novice teachers are frequently noted as feeling overwhelmed and isolated, and are therefore depicted in many studies as needing extra support and guidance to see them through their first years of teaching. This group is also found to have the highest percentages of teachers exiting the profession (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Findings from educational research served as a starting point for music education researchers. However, in order to fully inform the investigation on how to support novice *music* teachers, research conducted on the novice music teachers' self-esteem and confidence, music teacher

development, professional development for music educators, and the retention of new music teachers was needed.

New music teachers can suffer from lack of confidence in their new roles as teachers, much like other novice teachers. Difficult schedules, feelings of isolation, multiple instructional responsibilities outside their teaching area, lack of planning time, and difficulty maintaining classroom discipline are issues affecting all new teachers. As stated before, there are some unique demands that specifically impact music teachers. In these difficult situations, novice teachers often seek support from outside sources. Collaboration with peers and experienced teachers is found to nurture intellectual and reflective abilities in new teachers (Montegue, 2000; Smith, 1994; Stevanson, 2005). Further, as novice teachers gain confidence, build their own curriculum, and apply new approaches in their practice, positive effects on their self-esteem often result.

### **Theoretical Perspectives**

The support of novice music teachers begins with the understanding of their needs. The research on music teacher self-esteem, development, professional development, and retention has been conducted through a variety of theoretical perspectives; such as the Teacher Socialization Theory and the Situated Learning Theory. These theories help to ground the researcher's findings, but also to make ties with other education research.

Teacher Socialization Theory has been heavily influenced by Dan Lortie's (1975) seminal work with pre-service teachers. His premise is that the pre-service teacher predispositions stand at the core of becoming a teacher. There are three major components in pre-service teacher education programs which can potentially exert influence on the socialization of teachers: (a) general education and academic specialization, (b) methods and foundations

courses, and (c) field-based experiences (Zeichner & Gore, 1990). Crow (1987) writes that the teacher-role identity brought into pre-service education programs remains the driving force for a number of novice teachers even after three years of teaching. Pollard (1982) provides a conceptual model that describes three levels of social analysis. This model has been helpful to teachers and mentors in understanding socializing influences once novice teachers enter the profession. “Teachers' actions represent active and creative responses to the constraints, opportunities, and dilemmas posed by the immediate contexts of the classroom and the school, and it is through these immediate contexts that the wider structure of the community, society, and the state has their impact on teachers” (Zeichner & Gore, 1990, p.21). The first level of social analysis, called the *interactive* level, has two major influences within the classroom: the pupils and the teaching environment. The second level of social analysis is called the *institutional* level and it relates to the socializing influences within the school, such as the influence of teaching colleagues and the influence of evaluators. The third level of analysis is called the *cultural* level. Here the perspectives of the individual teacher are scrutinized in context with larger groups of teachers and scrutinized in context with the ideologies, practices, and material conditions of the local community or society at large. The ideas expressed in this theory have been used to explain how and why novice teachers establish the control they do over their education. An example of control in this sense is the choosing of a mentor, individual choice concerning professional development activities, and an awareness of the nature of one’s socialization into teaching (Massengill, Mahlios, & Barry, 2005).

Another theoretical perspective that has informed novice music educator research is the Situated Learning Theory. This theory has been defined as learning that occurs in the same context in which it is applied. It is implied that teachers learn best when they develop their own

knowledge and curriculum, share ideas with peers, and practice new learning in their classrooms (Moir and Stobbe; 2005). Stein (1998) provides an excellent summation of the sources of learning in a situated experience:

1. Learning is grounded in the actions of everyday situations.
2. Knowledge is acquired “situationally” and transfers only to similar situations.
3. Learning is the result of: (a) a social process, (b) comprising ways of thinking, (c) perceiving, (d) problem solving, (e) interacting
4. Learning is not separated from the world of action but exists in “robust, complex, social environments made up of actors, actions, and situations.”

Situated Learning Theory provides context in the area of novice music educators as these teachers will learn from being a part of the culture and “picking up knowledge as a product of their surroundings” not teaching alone (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). During their first years of teaching, novice music educators are much like the students they are teaching; they learn by being a part of their new culture and not necessarily from what was taught in lecture halls and practicum experiences. Brown et al. (1989) view this form of knowledge as learned understanding which is “a product of the activity and situations in which they are produced” (p. 33). These concepts can “only be fully understood through use, and using them entails both changing the user’s view of the world and adopting the belief system of the culture in which they are used” (p. 33). This theory supports the premise that novice music teachers can refine their skills and increase their knowledge by gleaning from their peers and mentors.

### **Social Exchange Theory**

Researchers have utilized both Teacher Socialization Theory and Situated Learning Theory to clarify how formal induction and mentoring has impacted novice music educators, their mentors (assigned or not), and districts in regards to novice teacher retention and attrition. Those investigations, however, have all been related to formal induction and mentoring models. As researchers continue to investigate how to support novice music educators, ideas and

theoretical perspectives outside of education could be used to further inform the teacher education community. It is through such an examination of mentoring approaches in the business and nursing research literature that Social Exchange Theory (SET) was discovered and utilized in this study.

In terms of time and era, the Social Exchange Theory was introduced in 1958 by the sociologist George Homans. While the general public might define social exchange as general interactions taking place between two people or groups (e.g., such as buying a new car), in his article “Social Behavior as Exchange,” Homans delineates this interaction as “the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons” (Homans, 1961, p. 13). The idea of “costs and rewards” up to this point in time was used in terms of economic exchanges. It was a novel approach for Homans to apply “cost and reward” definitions and uses in anthropological or cultural exchanges. “Essentially, he introduced the notion that exchanges are not limited to material goods but also include symbolic value (e.g., approval and prestige)” (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005, p. 18). Early theorists, namely Peter Blau, Richard Emerson, John Thibaut, and Harold Kelley, continued to develop Homans’ definition to further by pushing the functions of SET into areas such as sociology, psychology, and the utilitarian perspectives (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

### **History and progression of Social Exchange Theory.**

Social Exchange Theory is based on the conditions of social interactions and the characteristics of interpersonal relationships. In the 1950s, Homans was the first to emphasize the dyadic exchange relationship and framed social behavior in terms of rewards and punishments (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013). Blau (1964) distinguished himself from Homans by framing social exchanges in more economic terms. Blau however highlighted

the effects of reciprocal exchanges in social interactions writing, “Social exchange...refers to voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others” (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013, p. 63). Blau, however, infers that every individual is trying to maximize their advantage and that once this concept is understood, it is possible to observe social exchanges everywhere. The major difference between Homans and Blau then is drawn between social and economic exchange and the *nature of the exchange* between individual persons or larger parties. Blau however did emphasize that “Exchanges between humans, if they are deemed satisfactory, produce the desire to repeat the transaction with the same partner or partners. Thus repeated satisfactory exchanges are likely to increase the actors’ dependencies on one another, a process that eventuates in mutual commitments” (Leik, Owens, & Tallman, 1999, p. 241). Thibaut and Kelly (1959), like Homans, posited SET as “the characteristics of relationship between two persons”, focusing their examination on dyads and small groups of dyads. It was Emmerson in the early 1960s that contributed to this theory by introducing the concept of power in the exchange structure. He defined power as a “function of the dependence of one actor on another” and viewed the relationship between power and social structure as a central tenet of SET (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013, p. 64). Current SET theorists have drawn on these early forefathers of the Social Exchange Theory to further analyze social exchanges. Of importance to this study is the work of Molm who led a group of collaborators in adding to Homan’s work. These researchers derived a theory stemming from SET concerning commitment, emotions, and reciprocity (Molm, 1994). “Emotion is an outcome of the exchange process generated largely by commitments to exchange relations” (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013, p. 74). Their argument it that the



level of influence in the exchange relationship is determined by the form of exchange and by the degree of commitment.

Although SET is used to analyze anthropological exchanges, this theory is most often used in economic contexts (e.g. examining the relationship between an organization and a subordinate or that between co-workers). For the purpose of this study, and to further distinguish social exchange from economic exchanges, certain assumptions are established about human nature and the nature of their relationships. West and Turner (2010) write that (a) individuals pursue rewards and evade costs, meaning humans are guided by an inside motive. If a person senses an increase in costs, they will tend to reduce them. (b) Individuals are logical creatures. Each person, if provided with sufficient information, will assess a relationship and act according to its worth. A person will terminate a negative relationship, but will put forth effort in order to save a positive relationship. (c) The criteria on which individuals assess the worth of a relationship differ depending on the time spent and the specific individual. This denotes that there is no single criterion that defines what a reward is and what a cost is. Worth or value is specific to the individual. However, SET does not eliminate the supposition that people are driven to increase their rewards and reduce their costs as the basic logic of whether or not to maintain a relationship. There are two assumptions about the nature of relationships: (a) human relationships are symbiotic in nature and (b) relationships are developmental.

### **Criticisms of SET.**

While Social Exchange Theory has stimulated a number of additional theories, generated a great deal of research, and aligned with the research findings of many studies, there are those who argue that SET is weak when used as analytical tool. The first criticism is that Social Exchange Theory is not testable. An important criterion of a theory is that it is testable and

capable of being proven false. The difficulty with SET is that some of its central concepts, such as costs and rewards, are difficult to define. As Sabatelli and Shehan (1993) note, “It becomes impossible to make an operational distinction between what people value, what they perceive as rewarding, and how they behave. Rewards, values, and actions appear to be defined in terms of each other. Thus, it is impossible to find an instance when a person does not act in ways so as to obtain rewards” (p. 396). Critics argue that as long as SET uses these types of circular definitions, it will be untestable and, thus, unsatisfactory in terms of that criterion. There are researchers who are looking to address these issues, notably Foa & Foa (1974, 1976), Molm (1994), and Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005). Despite such issues there has been a great deal of empirical work using Social Exchange theories.

A second critique has to do with the portrayal of human interactions in Social Exchange Theory. In this theoretical framework, humans are seen as rational calculators, coming up with numerical equations to represent their relational life. Many people object to this understanding of humans, asking whether people actually calculate the costs and rewards to be realized when engaging in a behavior or pursuing a relationship. Others object that when the complexities about relationships are reduced to such one-dimensional connections, it over-simplifies the issue at hand and dismisses the uniqueness and richness of social interactions and choices. Researchers have not come to a definitive answer about the more behavioristic elements of relationships (e.g. how people calculate their relational life and the ebb and flow to this calculation). As researchers continue to work with this theory, there must be an account for these and other factors relative to the nature of humans and the complexities of relationships.

A third and final critique is that it has been hard to generalize SET to other contexts. Research studies that incorporate SET do so using more case study approaches and not more

generalizable methodologies. The current issue with using SET in experimental research is that “the nature of the experimental interactions are less like the real-world situations from which the origins of the theory emerged” (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013, p. 80). There is emerging research, however, to include “real-world interactions, including organizational studies, online field experiments, and other mixed-method studies of individuals who are engaged in different types of social exchange” (Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013, p. 80). In light of these critiques, the SET perspective can provide a framework that many researchers find useful.

### **Concepts in Social Exchange Theory.**

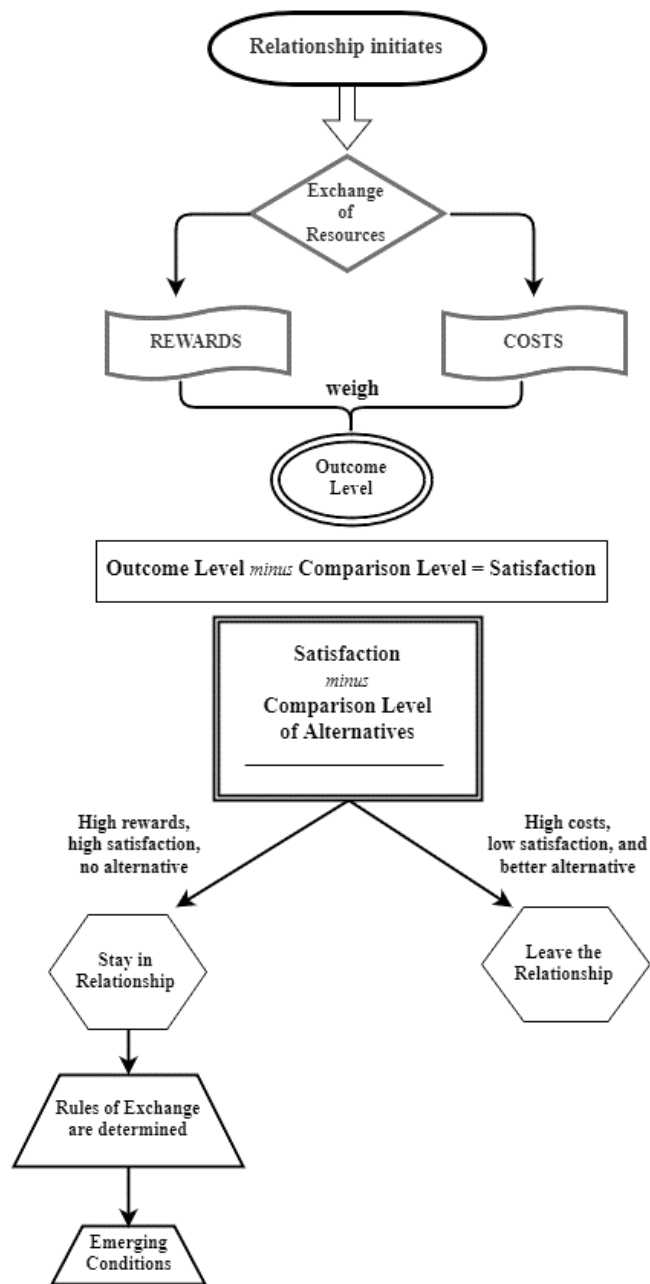
This study will incorporate the definitions of SET’s major concepts as described by Homans, Thibaut & Kelley, and Molm. As SET has identified exchange as a social behavior that may result in both economic and social outcomes, certain concepts will be defined from a variety of models. The concept of rewards, for instance is borrowed from behavioral psychology and the concept of resources is borrowed from economics but both provide the foundation of interpersonal exchange (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). Rewards are defined as the pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications a person enjoys from participating in a relationship (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959). Resources are any commodity, material or symbolic, that can be transmitted through interpersonal behavior (Foa & Foa, 1980) and which give one person the capacity to reward another (Emerson, 1976). Costs (also borrowed from behavioral psychology) are associated with an exchange interaction and can involve punishments experienced, energy invested, or rewards that are relinquished (Blau, 1964; Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). A concept known as the outcome level of a relationship is the difference between garnered rewards and costs conferred in a relationship. It is this level that determines the *overall* quality of a

relationship. This means that the relationship that has a larger percentage of rewards over costs is more likely to be characterized as having a positive outcome value.

### **Nature of relationship in SET framework.**

Figure 1 outlines the progression an individual or group will follow when initiating a relationship in the SET framework. According to SET, an individual decides to take part in a social relationship and resources begin to be exchanged. The resources exchanged can range from money, love, goods, status, services, and information (Foa & Foa, 1980). At this point an outcome level is determined by weighing rewards experienced, which are the pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications the individual enjoys, against the costs experienced, which can be perceived as a punishment, an investment of energy, or the rewards given up. Satisfaction is then ascertained by deducting this outcome level from the comparison level. The comparison level reflects what an individual feels they deserve, what is obtainable in their relationship, or what they believe is important to experience (Sabatelli, 1993). High satisfaction levels do not guarantee that an individual will stay in the relationship. Satisfaction takes into account a comparison level of alternatives. If a better alternative is presented or if the costs of remaining in the current relationship outweigh the satisfaction levels, the individual can terminate or abandon the relationship. However, if there are high satisfaction levels and a low comparison level of alternatives, the individual will stay and commitment is established.

Figure 1  
 Diagram of SET Progression of Exchange Relationship



Staying in the relationship necessitates that the rules of exchange should be determined between the members in the relationship. These rules are simply the guidelines of the exchange process and can evolve with the duration of the relationship (Cropanzo & Mitchell, 2005). Two

exchange rules are the rule of reciprocity and negotiated rules. The rule of reciprocity refers to the giving and the taking of rewards and can often set up the power structure in the relationship. Negotiated rules are unique to each relationship and refer to arrangements made about modes of conversation, how often the members talk or get together, the types and amounts of resources exchanged, where exchanges take place, and the determination of any goals. As the relationship progresses, there can be the emergence of certain conditions; trust and commitment. Degrees of these conditions are specific to the relationship and are not a guaranteed result even if satisfaction levels remain high and rewarding exchanges are occurring.

### **Exchange structures.**

There are three major types of exchange, or structures, outlined in SET: direct exchange, generalized exchange, and productive exchange (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993; West & Turner, 2010). Direct exchange refers to the sharing of costs and rewards that occur between two participants (e.g., one participant giving a favor to another participant, and the other responds in kind). Generalized exchange transpires when relational interactions occur between participants and “outside” people or organizations. In this structure, rewards and costs come indirectly and the exchange is delimited where the participant does not return a favor or gift to the specific community. An example being an individual who receives help from someone he or she does not know, or may never encounter again, and they will return this favor by helping another person or “giving back” to the whole community. A productive exchange happens when both parties experience costs and rewards at the same time. In this interchange, both individuals have to endure the costs to later gain the rewards. This type of exchange is seen a lot in economic structures where the reward can benefit either or both individuals.

### **Resources of exchange.**

The resources of exchange can be broken down into *types* of rewards that can be exchanged, *dimensions* of exchange, and *forms* of resources. There are six established categories or types of exchange that have already been mentioned: money, love, goods, status, services, and information (Foa & Foa, 1980). Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) write that these categories, or goods, are exchanged in different ways and at different times. However, more research is needed to determine if there are specific resources exchanged in different types of relationships or if rewards are specific to the individual relationship.

Resources of exchange can fall into two dimensions: particularism and concreteness. In the dimension of particularism, the value of a resource is based on its source (i.e., dependent on its origin or where it comes from). For example, the value of money is not esteemed as the value of love. The second dimension is known as concreteness, or the tangibility of the resource. Most goods or rewards are somewhat concrete, but in this viewpoint a product can also be intangible (i.e., services or social statuses). The less concrete something is, the more symbolic the benefit, and many times, the symbolic benefit goes beyond the objective worth. (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). These two dimensions are linked in a manner such that when the individual deems the source of the reward as valuable, the ensuing reward will be high even with an intangible or symbolic reward, such as love. However, when the esteemed value of the source is low, the ensuing reward will be low even if the concrete worth of the reward is high, such as money or goods. Emotional bonds can also develop from experiences stemming from the repetition of successful exchanges between the same partners (Molm, 1994).

Foa and Foa (1974, 1980) write about two forms of resources: economic and socio-emotional. Economic forms of resources are those that address financial needs and are more

tangible. Socio-emotional forms of resources refer to those that address social and esteem needs. Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) write that this form of reward sends the message that the individual is valued and is being treated with dignity. Satisfaction outcomes are likely to be influenced based on the various rules of exchange, which will be addressed below. It is not known at this point, however, which exchange rules apply to each resource.

### **Social Exchange Theory and the concept of worth.**

When applying SET in a relationship, researchers use the constructs of worth or the *value* one party places on the other to define exchange relationships. The decision to eliminate or sustain a relationship, however, does not entirely depend on the calculation of the worth of the relationship, but more on the evaluation of the outcomes (Thibault & Kelley, 1959). While the worth of the relationship can be determined by the evaluation of the outcome, one also has to account for the effect of both party's lived experiences and expectations (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). When examining the esteemed worth or value of a relationship, Thibaut & Kelly (1959) clarify that the individual's assessment of the relationship depends on two basic comparisons: comparison level and comparison level for alternatives.

Comparison level determines the satisfaction level of an individual in any relationship. Based on previous experiences or societal norms, individuals will establish certain criterion to gauge their levels of satisfaction. When relating satisfaction to rewards, the comparison level reflects what individuals feel they deserve, what is obtainable in their relationship, and what they feel is important to experience (Sabatelli, 1993). If satisfaction levels are higher than the comparison level, an individual will have a high assessment of the relationship. In conjunction with an individual's comparison level, the comparison level for alternatives is the lowest level of satisfaction an individual will accept in light of another possibility (e.g. a relationship with a



different individual or organization) to defend their decision to stay in the current relationship. This criterion proposes that many individuals remain in unsatisfactory relationships if the alternative is more negative or unavailable (West & Turner, 2010). If the satisfaction level in a feasible substitute is greater than the satisfaction level in the original relationship, there is a high possibility that the individual will leave or terminate the relationship.

### **Rules of exchange.**

As the relationship continues in the exchange of resources, there are certain rules that must be taken into consideration. Rules of exchange are the guidelines of the exchange process and are established as the relationship evolves (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). The two key facets of exchange are known as the rule of reciprocity and negotiated rules. The rule of reciprocity refers to the giving and taking of rewards within a relationship. There are three different types of reciprocity: reciprocity as a transactional pattern of interdependent exchanges, reciprocity as a folk belief, and reciprocity as a moral norm (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). In the first type of reciprocity, interdependent exchanges, relationship outcome is based on a combination of both parties' efforts. If an individual receives a benefit or reward, such as time, effort, money, or positive emotions, the receiving party should respond in kind. Interdependence is found to reduce risk in the relationship and foster cooperation (Molm, 1994). The second type of reciprocity is referred to as folk belief, and in this viewpoint reciprocity is a cultural expectation. As the expressions go, "people get what they deserve" and "everything will work out in the end." The last type of reciprocity is termed the moral norm. Here reciprocity is described as how one *should* behave and those who follow the norm are *obligated* to behave the same. The assumption that not all individuals value reciprocity to the same degree, however, is taken under consideration. In all three viewpoints cultural and individual differences will

determine the level of reciprocity. Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) also write that multiple rules can be employed simultaneously.

The second facet of the rules of exchange is known collectively as negotiated rules. Negotiated rules are more explicit and based on the principle of *quid pro quo* (Molm, 1994). The aim of both parties in a relationship, therefore, is to attempt to grasp a mutually advantageous arrangement. Negotiated arrangements tend to be clear and overt, the responsibilities shared by the parties involved are moderately specified, and agreements can be verbally or legally agreed upon (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Both facets of the rules of exchange facilitate the exchange of resources and can facilitate the conditions of trust and commitment.

### **Trust and commitment.**

The final concepts of SET to be discussed is that of trust and commitment. Both conditions are specific to the relationship itself and both conditions are not a guaranteed result. “It is important to construe trust not as a personal attribute that individuals possess to a greater or lesser degree but as a quality that is specific to a particular relationship with a particular partner” (Rusbult, Wieselquist, Foster, & Witcher, 1999, p. 442). Trust is seen as a precursor to what becomes a committed relationship, but in order to get to the place of commitment, trust goes through a series of stages: predictability, dependability, and faith. Rusbult et al. (1999) defines these stages as follows:

1. *Predictability* rests on the consistency of a partner’s behaviors. The partner must be observed to be behaviorally consistent before he or she can be regarded as trustworthy.
2. *Dependability* is the degree to which the partner is judged to be reliable and honest. The more reliable and honest the partner is perceived to be, the more he or she can be regarded as trustworthy.
3. *Faith* represents the conviction that the partner can be relied upon to be responsive to one’s needs and behave in a caring manner, now and in the future.

Each stage is a necessary step in the development of trust and establishment of commitment. It is an individual's trust that represents their perception of the exchange partner's commitment level and it is through trust that individuals expect fairness in the present and future (Rusbult, 1999; Sabatelli, 1999).

In order for commitment to be established in a relationship, three elements must be present: high personal rewards, high reciprocity rewards, and trust (Sabatelli & Shehan, 1993). After a series of rewarding interactions, dependencies are established and it is this increase in dependence that fosters commitment. Commitment involves willingness for individuals to work for the prolongation of a relationship (Leik & Leik, 1977). Commitment, used in context with SET, is a distinguishing factor of social exchange in its comparison to economic exchange (Cook & Emerson, Power, equity and commitment in exchange networks, 1978). In conclusion, it is with commitment that we see social exchange come full circle. In her discussion of commitment, Rusbult (1999) constructed a model she termed "mutual cyclical growth." The ideas in this paradigm are very similar to SET's rule of reciprocity.

1. The state of dependence (high satisfaction, poor alternatives, and high investments) yields strong individual commitment.
2. Strong individual commitment motivates a variety of accommodating behaviors made out of consideration for one's relationship.
3. A colleague's observation of the individual's accommodating behavior yields perceived accommodating behavior, perceived commitment, and increased trust.
4. Strong partner trust makes the colleague increasingly willing to become dependent.

### **Social Exchange Theory and informal mentoring relationships.**

In a surface examination of SET the concepts of rewards & costs, value, comparison levels, and trust & commitment seem to compliment the dynamics and workings of an informal mentoring relationship. There are other concepts found in Social Exchange Theory that will not

be examined in this study; notably the concepts of dependence, normative & cognitive exchange orientations, and issues of power in exchange dynamics. The concepts of SET and the precepts previously outlined will be used to analyze the conversations, interactions, and manners of the participants in this study. By using SET as a theoretical perspective, conversations about mentoring practices for early career music teachers could be broadened as well as the conversations about ensuing benefits for the mentee and their mentor.

### **Study Rationale**

While researchers understand the more formal structures of induction, they have yet to examine more informal sources of support; specifically the support that stems from informal relationships. Research findings support the idea that novice teachers who are matched with a mentor from the same subject area and grade level are more likely to remain in the profession (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2001; Krueger, 1999; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Findings also suggest that a good match enhances the mentor-mentee interaction (i.e. interactions are more content focused). There is considerable rationale for establishing prolonged mentoring relationships (Zey, 1991). “If, in contrast, novices regard mentors' help as temporary and mentors have few opportunities to profit from interactions with colleagues, there is little chance that novices will come to question traditional norms of noninterference and teacher autonomy (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 1992, p.15).”

This line of research has yet to make a distinction between the support and subsequent benefits that stem from formal versus informal mentoring relationships. Also missing from the mentorship research are the in-depth examinations of teachers and their mentors during and *after* the first year of teaching. Given the lack of information about the *informal* mentoring relationship in a music education setting, this study is needed to determine how informal

mentoring relationships evolve throughout the first few years of teaching. As case studies, examining these informal relationships could provide useful reflection on mentoring within the larger induction process, reflection for current and future mentoring relationships, the use of informal mentoring practices in a music education setting, and the functionality of using SET as a theoretical framework.

### **Problem Statement**

The difficulties found within any formal mentorship program inherently relate to the novice teacher's perception of value, early identification of a mentor, and the content of mentoring interaction (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006). Another pertinent issue is the limited ability and knowledge of mentors on how to support and guide novice music teachers (Conway, 2003; Krueger, 1999). While there have been numerous studies on *formal* mentoring relationships, research has yet to consider the *informal* relationships most often initiated by either the novice teacher, the cooperating teacher, or some other self-selected mentor. Information pertaining to the effectiveness of informal and self-selected mentoring relationships, the changing needs of novice music educators in their formative teaching years, and the varying levels of support a mentor can provide through the first few years of teaching are of vital importance. This information could aid policymakers and administrators who need to understand the power and limits of the mentorship model and design more effective programs. This information could also educate novice music educators wanting to receive the maximum benefit from their interactions with their mentors.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, to examine the outcomes and implications for novice music educators of being in an informal mentoring relationship at different stages of

their teaching career. Second, to investigate the usefulness of Social Exchange Theory as a lens to examine these relationships and mentoring practices.

### **Research Questions**

Two research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What is the nature of informal mentoring relationships between a novice music teacher and a self-selected mentor?

- a. How does the mentoring relationship begin and evolve over time?
- b. What factors prompt the mentorship to continue?

2. What factors constitute Social Exchange Theory as an appropriate lens to analyze informal mentoring relationships?

- a. How are the SET concepts of comparison levels, rewards, and costs represented in the informal mentoring relationship?
- b. What exchange rules and conditions are exhibited in the informal mentoring relationship?

The first research question focuses on describing and then analyzing the individual mentoring dyads. The second research question prompts a deeper examination of the informal mentoring relationship by utilizing a cross-case analysis of the mentoring dyads. Social Exchange Theory is applied in both research questions as a lens to view the mentoring exchanges and explain findings.

### **Definition of Terms**

*Mentoring*: (as defined by Anderson & Shannon, 1988) a nurturing process in which a more skilled or more experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages,

counsels, and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and personal development.

*Induction:* (as defined by Zeichner, 1979, p.6) a planned program which is intended to provide some systematic and sustained assistance specifically to novice teachers for at least one school year. These programs can include, but are not limited to, single-event district orientations, professional development workshops, formal mentoring, observations of more experienced teachers, and collaboration.

*Informal mentoring relationship* (also referenced in regards to self-selected mentor): mentoring that occurs between a novice educator and a more experienced educator. This relationship, however, is not initiated through any induction program (i.e. instituted through the district or building for novice teachers). Either the novice teacher or informal mentor prompts meeting times and forms of communication.

*Novice Teacher:* (also labeled as early career teacher, mentee, protégé) A teacher with less than five years of teaching experience.

*Mentee:* a novice teacher who is being guided or mentored by a more experienced teacher.

*Mentor:* a veteran music teacher (years of experience ranging from 10 – 30 years).

*PLC:* PLC is the acronym for professional learning community. This is a form of professional development for the participants in this study.

*Reciprocity* (as defined by Cropanzo & Mitchell, 2005): repayment in kind

*Trust* (as defined Sabatelli, 2014): the belief that one's "partner" in a relationship will not exploit or take advantage of them.

*Value* (as defined by Thibaut & Kelley, 1959): satisfaction level of an individual in any relationship

*Commitment* (as defined by Leik & Leik, 1977): willingness for individuals to work for the prolongation of a relationship in order to foster stability.

*Self-selected mentor*: in this study, a more experienced elementary music teacher that was chosen by the novice music teacher to act as a mentor. This person does not take the place of a designated mentor (e.g. building mentor, district mentor), rather is another source of support.

### **Assumptions of the Study**

The following assumptions were made at the onset of this study:

1. There will be some benefit derived by the prolonged presence of a mentor.
2. The self-reporting of teachers' information on number of hours spent with their mentor teacher is accurate.
3. The teachers involved in the study will have a variety of previous experiences that will influence their preparedness to teach.
4. All novice music teachers self-select their mentor in addition to being assigned a mentor by the site-based administration or district.

### **Study Limitations**

Limitations are distinctive features that may affect the outcome of a study. As defined, limitations are factors, usually beyond the researcher's control, that may affect the results of the study or how the results are interpreted (Warsame, 2011). The following are potential limitations:

1. Study was conducted in a western state and therefore only depicts that specific population.
2. Participants are all novice teachers and their responses are limited to that specific population.
3. Interviews are used to gauge the novice teachers' perceptions on mentor effectiveness.



## Summary

It is widely concluded that matching mentors and mentees by grade and subject taught, training and compensating the mentor, and having some similarities between the mentor and the mentee can help lead to successful teaching careers (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2001; Conway, 2003; Ingersoll, 2009; Krueger, 2000) There has been little research, however, as to whether (a) informal mentoring relationships taking place between beginning music teachers and a music mentor increases the quality of the mentorship experience and the success of new music teachers and (b) the self-selection of mentors is better than having an assigned mentor. This study evaluated the effectiveness of novice music teacher informal mentoring relationships at various stages in the early years of teaching through the lens of SET.

To address the research questions, this study examined the informal interactions of three novice general music educators, each at a different stage of her teaching career, during one school year, noting induction and mentoring practices for novice teachers in their specific district. The literature review in Chapter 2 consists of current and previous research on novice teacher induction and mentorship history and practices and a thorough discussion on the precepts and uses of SET. Chapter 3 identifies participants and the methodology used in the study. Chapter 4 and 5 will be a discussion on the findings as related to the research questions. Chapter 6 will interpret and summarize the findings by answering the research questions, relate these findings to existing research literature, and provide recommendations for future research.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

Music education researchers have uncovered many truths as to why novice music teachers struggle; some reasons being job related, some more specific to the individual teacher. More recently, researchers have sought out answers on how to support novice educators through their examination of various induction and mentoring programs; analyzing the pit-falls and successes found with each program. The perfect induction program, however, is non-existent (Bullough Jr., 2012). Research findings reveal the inconsistencies of induction programs, and how many state stipulated programs are ill fitted and even ineffective as it pertains to novice music educators, (Benson, 2008; Conway et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2012). Even with poor ratings regarding teacher satisfaction, retention, and teaching effectiveness (Conway et al., 2002), induction and mentoring research continues because the first three to four years of the novice music teacher's career, or the "induction period," is noted as being of upmost importance in the teacher preparation continuum. Mentorship, specifically, is still a relatively unexamined area of research found within the teacher education and support literature (Smith et al., 2012).

Within the induction literature, the use of a mentor is labeled as a critical component of an induction program and found to be highly effective in the support provided to novice teachers. There is often confusion, however, when one tries to interchange the words induction and mentorship. This review of literature will distinguish between the definitions and functions of these two terms situated within the perceived benefits and challenges of both. Attention will be specifically given to the research that addresses induction and mentoring the novice music teacher, as their needs are somewhat different from the average novice classroom educator.

Because the aim of this study is to investigate informal mentoring relationships between experienced and novice music educators, research that makes a distinction between formal and

informal mentoring practices will be examined. Much of this research occurs outside of the realm of education, but there are many conclusions from such studies that can be studied and applied to mentoring practices in music education. Informal mentoring will be viewed through the lens of SET as a basis for its framework. Social Exchange Theory has not been utilized as a means to explain the didactic relationship between music teacher mentors and their mentees. In the discussion of SET I will (a) describe different approaches to social exchange, (b) discuss the main tenets of SET, (c), compare and contrast the various contexts and uses of SET, specifically in mentoring contexts, and (d) review how SET is applied in research literature.

### **Induction**

The support of new teachers continues to be of utmost importance as research findings further explore the benefits of induction programs. Benefits of these programs include increased teacher retention rates, substantive professional development, improved self-reflection and problem solving abilities, and greater levels of confidence and self-esteem (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Findings from such studies also indicate that students who are taught by unprepared or under-supported novice teachers do not perform as well as students taught by prepared teachers (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009). An essential component for student achievement is the quality of the mentoring teachers, which can be improved through an effective induction program (Hanushek, 2005). Novice music educators are especially in need of some form of guidance and support, as these teachers face content specific teaching issues. Many of these teachers can feel isolated (more so than their non-music counterparts) and underprepared for their first music teaching job (Conway, Micheel-Mays, & Micheel-Mays, 2006; DeLorenzo, 1992). Music educators are often the only music teacher in the building, their classrooms are sometimes placed in parts of the building where they will not distract other classes, they are

teaching many more students than the classroom teacher, and the expectations placed on music educators are very different than their classroom counterparts (e.g. planning and conducting winter and spring concerts, taking students into the community to perform or compete, and ordering music, instruments, costumes or uniforms).

### **Benefits.**

Menchaca (2003) states that 95% of first-year teachers who are provided the opportunity to participate in a nurturing induction program experience success during their first three years in the teaching profession. Success has been defined through increased retention rates, substantial professional development, improved self-reflection and problem solving abilities, and greater levels of confidence and self-esteem (Fantilli and McDougall, 2009). Teachers who are part of a well-organized induction program are more likely to remain in teaching after three years, with 80% of teachers in a successful induction experience remaining in the teaching profession after five years (Menchaca, 2003).

When examining novice teachers' classroom practices, research findings suggest that beginning teachers who participate in some kind of induction program perform better at various aspects of teaching (e.g. keeping students on task, developing workable lessons plans, using effective student questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet students' interests, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating successful classroom management) (Feiman-Nemser et al., 1999; Hall Jr., 2009; Serpell, 2000). The strongest elements reported in a successful induction program are having a mentor from the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject, having regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and being part of an external network of teachers. The weakest elements of the induction process are reportedly reduced teaching schedules, a

reduced numbers of preparations, and extra classroom assistance (Anderson, 2011; Benson, 2008; Brophy, 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

### **Induction and the novice music educator.**

Novice music educators face many of the same difficulties that novice classroom teachers encounter. There are enough differences between these two groups, however, that make the success of induction contingent on certain factors. Krueger (1999) found that effective induction programs are those supported by the district. They include interactive workshops geared for new music teachers and address issues selected by those novice teachers. Most music teachers (whether general music, choral, orchestra, or band) are left to themselves in their buildings. Research findings suggest that novice music teachers often feel very isolated and left on their own. Many induction devices have been implemented to combat these feelings such as giving new teachers free time built to go and observe more experienced music teachers (Krueger, 1999). Mutual in-class observation is another device that could diminish feelings of isolation, but also allow more experienced music educators continue their development as they learn and grow from their peers (Conway, 2003; Jacobs, 2007; Krueger, 1999).

### **Challenges.**

The benefits credited to induction programs are not without limitations. One overarching challenge to the induction process is the lack of consistency across various school districts. An agreement has yet to be reached on whether one type of induction program has a better outcome than any other (Conway 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The implementation of induction programs continue suffers from set-backs because of factors relating to the financing of such programs in poorer districts, the provision of qualified mentor, the provision of release time from daily teaching, and offering adequate professional development activities to novice teachers

(Joftus & Maddox-Dolan, 2002). Another area of concern is the administrative support in managing induction programs in larger districts and schools. While these obstacles are not present in every district or in every state, these issues still plague the regulation of mandated and comprehensive induction for beginning teachers in the United States. Information pertaining to the effectiveness of certain models, the specific needs of novice music educators, the role of mentors and other mentor team members are of vital importance to policymakers and administrators who must decide among the many induction and mentorship models. Even with the large numbers of studies that have been conducted on this topic, there are still important questions that need to be answered.

### **Retention.**

Participation in school-sponsored mentoring or a district induction program does not predict the likelihood of high attrition or migration risk, but mentoring has been found to positively affect teacher retention (Hancock, 2008). Five hundred new music teachers leave the profession each year (Ponick, Keating, Pontiff, and Wilcox 2003) and the attrition rates of first year teachers have increased by about one third in the past two decades. There are far more novice teachers in the profession, but these teachers are found less likely to stay teaching. Even with the research that has been conducted on teacher retention and attrition, the need remains to gain a greater understanding of the motivations of those who actually leave (Hancock, 2009).

Some factors have already been alluded to as to why beginning music teachers are leaving the music education profession (e.g. emotional status, isolation). Krueger (2000) suggests that new music teachers view the following factors as “essential to their well-being and success”: positive administrative support, sufficient resources to do one's job, and a support network including experienced *music* teachers. Unfortunately, novice music educators choosing

to leave the profession find these sources lacking or non-existent. It is critical to continue the mentoring and enculturation of new music teachers to ensure novice teachers remain teaching and have the skills necessary to succeed (Miksza et al 2010).

There has been a recent surge in the availability of early-career support programs designed for music educators (Hancock 2008), but it is imperative to monitor the impact of such programs on music teacher attrition to provide missing insights. This type of research is rare as district and state teacher survey data rarely make any distinctions between the novice classroom teacher and the novice music teacher (Conway, 2009). The circumstances that are noted in research data as factors for migration or attrition for music teachers are the following: challenging work conditions, lack of administrative or parental support, and dissatisfaction with salary (Hancock, 2008). In a study conducted on retention rates among elementary general music teachers, Tarnowski & Murphy (2003) find that experienced teachers remain in their field and are satisfied with their choice of career because of their love of both children and the subject area of music. Even with the numerous studies that examine mentoring and its positive correlation on music teacher retention, Strong (2009) writes, “most studies have limitations that are liable to compromise any conclusions one is able to draw from them” (p. 42).

### **Professional development.**

Professional development is a critical aspect of teacher growth and an important element to examine when discussing the support of new music teachers. After receiving an undergraduate degree, music teachers typically begin attending conferences or seminars in an attempt to fulfill state licensure or re-certification requirements (Barrett, 2006). On a personal level, these activities keep educators abreast of new teaching practices, strategies, and methods to use in their classrooms. While traditional induction programs provide opportunities for professional

development, music educators have been adopting their own manner of professional development opportunities, such as conference sessions, workshops, and networking with other music educators (Barrett, 2006; Conway, 2005; Conway, 2006). There are a variety of options for teachers to choose from such as long-term vs. short-term training, residential vs. online formats, year-long vs. summer or weekend coursework. As teachers' lives have evolved amidst technological, economical, and professional demands, their preferred delivery system and willingness to dedicate more time towards their professional development has changed (Conway, 2007).

In a number of studies, novice music educators express a desire for more opportunities to pursue their individual professional development needs. Many of the presented opportunities are uniform and do not meet the needs of educators by way of their different levels of expertise, various types of schools, or unique specializations within music (band, orchestra, choir, and general music) (Bush, 2007). The "one size fits all" method of professional development found in many districts is simply not meeting the needs of the novice music teacher (Hammel 2007). This type of support, however, does lead to cooperative interaction between music educators. Cooperative interactions are also established through the use of online forums. Access to online materials is important to novice and experienced teachers alike as a means of communication with colleagues, researching materials, connecting with professional organizations, and participating in continuing education (Bush, 2007).

To summarize, research findings indicate that the motivations and rationales for professional development remain steeped in certification renewal, salary incentives, and are tailored for the more experienced music teacher. Research findings present professional development as being an opportunity to heighten teaching skills and bring quality teaching into



the classrooms (Conway, 2006; Bush, 2007). In regards to the novice music educator, however, professional development is commonly viewed as an individualized endeavor, because wide-range professional development is incapable of meeting their specific needs (Bush, 2007; Hammel, 2007; Bauer, 2007). Mentors are a vital link in helping novice music teachers find the appropriate venues for their professional development and staying connected to other colleagues.

### **Teacher development.**

The development of the novice teacher is shaped by their environment and the situations experienced during their early teaching years. McCann and Johannessen (2009) highlight eight factors that are problematic for new teachers: work relationships, workload, time management, knowledge of subject matter, curriculum, evaluation, grading autonomy and control. Many new teachers are overwhelmed with the multitude of responsibilities (which may or may not have been addressed in their student teaching experience), such as classroom management, parent interactions, professional development activities, and administrative duties. The rate of development is determined by the level of support and guidance the novice teacher receives. The development of the novice music educator, however, can be slightly different as there are problems that seem to only affect new *music* teachers (Conway, 2006).

DeLorenzo (1992) writes that new music teachers feel isolated within their buildings, with other specialist teachers being their “life line.” Although these novice music teachers feel comfortable with most of the teaching aspects and responsibilities of their first job, they have a hard time with unfamiliar details like preparing a budget, continuing their professional development and musical growth, recruitment, and content or curriculum issues. To compound this issue, novice music teachers are more often plagued by their emotions: ranging from excitement to uncertainty, feeling stressed out to overly confident, or fear to extreme joy

(Warsame, 2011). Krueger (1999) confirms these findings, but writes that beginning music teachers who have strong mentoring relationships with one or more experienced music educators do not struggle as much as those without that support system in place.

Generally, the first year is thought of as the most difficult in a teacher's career because of a disproportionate amount of time and effort exerted to "survive." Novice teachers have to get beyond the challenges of their first year in order to develop in the areas of long-term planning, overall student goals, and individual student needs (Haack & Smith, 2000). While novice teachers may experience some success, it may be intermittent with highs and lows that undermine their personal and professional self-esteem (Wilson & Berne, 1999). In terms of mentoring a novice teacher, knowledge of novice music teacher development can help shape the mentors' expectations and guide mentoring approaches. For instance, knowing the emotional state of a first year music teacher, the mentor could act as a counselor to attend to more personal issues. After the second or third year of teaching, however, the mentoring practices could shift to address instructional refinement (Doloff, 1999).

## **Mentorship**

Through mentorship, a novice teacher is expected to "develop the relevant dispositions, knowledge, and skills necessary for 'this' kind of work, in addition to carrying out the everyday process of teaching" (Strong, 2009, p.17). Numerous studies highlight the effectiveness of incorporating a mentorship model into the induction process. More recent teacher mentorship literature cover topics such as mentorship roles (Carver and Feiman-Nemser, 2009; Montegue, 2000), mentorship as a form of professional development (Smith, 1994), mentorship approaches (Ingersoll and Strong, 2011; Smith et al., 2012; Stevanson, 2005), and mentorship practices

geared for music teachers (Benson, 2008; Conway, Krueger, Robinson, Haack, & Smith, 2000; Krueger, 1999).

Mentoring the developing capabilities of beginning teachers can have quite a constructive effect; most notably the higher level of the novice educator's emotional state, classroom management skills, and ability to manage their time and workloads (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2006a; Conway, 2006b; Duling, 2000; Haack, 2000; Parker, Ndoeye, & Imig, 2009). While induction support can help novice teachers with issues like classroom management, but this need eventually diminishes new issues arise in areas like instructional and professional growth (Stoot et al., 1999). These new needs are most aptly addressed by having a mentor.

Mentorship models, along with induction programs, began to develop and flourish during the school reform movement in the 1980s. Investigations within mentorship research, relating to both formal and informal mentor programs, have included but are not limited to (Haggard et al., 2011):

1. The construct of mentoring and key dimensions researched in the 1980s
2. Barriers to being a mentor and the costs and benefits of mentoring researched in the early 1990s
3. The phases of mentoring studied in the late 1990s
4. Mentor choice and selection of mentees researched in the early 2000s
5. Formal mentoring and successful program characteristics, peer mentoring, and e-mentoring in the late 2000s.

Unfortunately, many of the studies conducted on these topics received little or no follow-up and need to have additional research conducted to solidify findings.

### **Styles of mentorship.**

Within the mentorship literature, there are a variety of mentorship models that can be studied and utilized; some more traditional and some more unconventional. A more traditional style of mentoring is the master-novice approach or one-on-one mentoring. In this model the

master teacher is assigned to a novice teacher during the first few years of teaching (Blair, 2008). In the master-novice model, the master teacher is expected to provide guidance that enables the novice teacher to overcome difficult situations. While this model is effective when it comes to developing a close relationship, only one point of view is presented and may not meet the novice teacher's needs if the mentor is not well suited to advise all of the mentee's specific areas of interest (Conway, 2001a; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Krueger, 1999).

A new role for the master teacher is created within a team mentorship model (Lave and Wenger, 1991). In the team mentorship approach, the novice teacher works with a group of colleagues who are each at different experience and skill levels. Each master teacher helps the novice interact with his or her peers in a community of practice. "This type of community of practice focused specifically on the teaching of music is critical to the success of music teachers, because the particular demands and contexts of their jobs tend to promote professional isolation (Blair, 2008, p.101)." The collaborative nature of modern teaching often requires a team-based approach for success. Within this model, the novice teacher has access to different points of view as well as discussions with and among more experienced teachers. The issues regarding conflicting advice or demands can be negotiated without the novice teacher feeling pulled in different directions.

Although this third model is more unconventional than the prior two, a multiple mentor model may be easier for novice teachers to manage, given the busy schedules of this day and age. In this approach, novice teachers choose to have more than one mentor to meet with individually (Kram, 1985). While some of the benefits of team mentoring are lost, having ready access to multiple mentors provides options to the novice teacher in meeting their needs at specific times and contexts.

Much like a community of practice, as outlined by Lave and Wenger (1991), peer mentoring elicits the help of colleagues who are at a similar point in their career or maybe have one or two more years of experience. The peer mentoring model is less formal and less inhibiting than other mentoring models. Peer mentors are also found to provide important advice and guidance about negotiating oneself in the music teaching profession (Draves and Koops, 2011). The mentoring advice from peers can be effective, but this relationship is insufficient when compared to the other mentoring models (Mullen, 2005). Nothing can replace having an expert or more senior teacher work with the novice to help them move toward a successful career as music educator.

Mentoring via e-mail, supplemented by telephone calls and occasional visits, can be highly effective for novice teachers with mentors situated at different locations or institutions. While there is nothing disclosed in research that discourages novice teachers to look outside their particular school or even teaching context to find an external mentor, especially if a mentor is needed and not represented, effective communication can be an issue with virtual mentoring (Shrestha et al, 2008). Distance mentoring can be a convenient way to work with a mentor, but Skype or e-mail communication comes with an element of risk as messages can be misconstrued if not carefully written and mentees can react in a way that is not expected by the mentor.

The discussion of the benefits and challenges of informal mentoring relationships is missing in the examination of the various types of mentoring relationships. Those examinations are taking place in other fields such as business, nursing, and engineering. In the business field, the functions of mentoring are much the same as those in education: to teach the mentee about a specific issue, coach on a particular skill, facilitate growth, challenge the mentee to move beyond their comfort zone, create an safe environment to take risks, and focus of the mentee's total

development (Petrin, 2011). In the business model of mentorship, the distinction between informal and formal mentoring lies in the established goals and strategies employed to meet these goal. It is these distinctions that need to be examined in the existing models of mentorship in the field of music education.

### **Approaches to mentoring.**

Different approaches to mentoring can be applied to fit the needs of the mentee and, if needed, the mentor. Glickman (1985) outlined three approaches mentors could use when working with novice educators; directive, nondirective, and collaborative. Directive actions include directing the novice towards certain teaching behaviors or speech, standardizing an approach to teaching, or reinforcing teaching behaviors through specific instructions. Nondirective behaviors include the mentor listening to the novice, clarifying their thoughts or needs, and then using encouragement to facilitate certain actions or behaviors. Collaborative actions would include having the novice reflect on what has happened, having the novice present their goal for any given situation, problem solve with each other on how to attain that goal, and then negotiate other alternatives. It is Glickman's belief that mentors who use directive control behaviors imply "that the supervisor knows better than the teacher what needs to be done to improve instruction" (p.163). Novice teachers can be turned off by this assumption, therefore making a nondirective and collaborative approach more effective. Davis (2006) outlines a series of interactive approaches adapted from Glickman's mentoring behaviors; instructive, collaborative, and facilitative. The instructive approach is most like the directive approach in that choices are offered to the novice but they are limited and more focused. The collaborative approach is much the same as Glickman's as both the mentor and novice are contributing ideas and resources. In Davis's facilitative approach, "the power shifts to the new teacher, and the

mentor is the prober” (p.113). As a result, the new teacher has a sense of how they are moving towards their own professional independence. Like Glickman, Davis recognizes that all three approaches can be used effectively in the mentoring relationship to suit the novice’s needs. Collaboration, however, seems to be the most effective approach to use in new mentoring relationships.

### **Roles in mentoring relationships.**

Mentorship is a complex collegial relationship that can potentially provide active forms of sustained, professional growth, and enhance the novice teacher’s induction to teaching (Montague, 2000). During the establishment and evolution of a mentoring relationship, the mentor and the mentee may progress through a series of roles. Some of these roles can render the mentor as a parent figure, the mentor as a support system and trouble-shooter, and the mentor as a colleague (Abell et al., 1995). Each of the roles that are assumed by the expert mentor is important and powerful in determining the comfort level of beginning teachers. These roles also delineate the interaction patterns and what is learned. All this to say that the one-dimensional “master teacher” role is false, and both mentor and mentee should assume multiple and varied roles. The beginning stage of the mentoring relationship influences how the relationship functions, the role each participant undertakes, and what mentoring occurs within the relationship (Bouquillon et al., 2005). For example, a mentee who has just begun that “learning journey” will need more support than one who is near the end of that juncture (Le Maistre et al., 2006).

There are five attributes usually present in a successful and sustainable mentoring relationship (Anderson & Shannon, 1988, p. 39-40). In such a mentoring relationship one should expect to see: (a) the process of nurturing, (b) the act of serving as a role model, (c) the five

mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending), (d) the focus on professional or personal development, and (e) an ongoing caring relationship. These indicators are of particular interest as they can be used to compare the mentoring exchanges taking place in the informal mentoring of the novice teacher participants. Research literature also has many interpretations of the functions and responsibility of mentors. Ambrosetti & Dekkers (2010) write that mentors engage in mentoring by supporting, advising, empathizing and acting as a role model to their mentees. Schmidt and Wolfe (1980) promote three functions of the mentor: (a) role advisor, (b) consultant-advisor, and (c) sponsor. Schein (1978) proposes seven functions: (a) role model, (b) teacher, (c) sponsor, (d) developer of talent, (e) opener of doors, (f) protector, and (g) successful leader. Smith (Conway, Smith, & Hodgman, 2010) highlights only five functions, or levels, of the mentor: (a) mentor as teacher, (b) mentor as coach, (c) mentor as collaborator, (d) mentor as sponsor, and (e) mentor as counsel. These roles of the mentor outline the role a mentor can fill at any time of the novice teacher's growth and development. These roles are meant to direct mentors toward effective mentoring practices. Novice teachers, however, should not be held without responsibility for their own growth and development. Research findings support the idea that beginning teachers need to be active members of their induction program in order for their experience to be successful. Novice music educators specifically tend to come out of the mentoring experience more satisfied if they are active participants (Abell et al, 1995; Conway, 2001a; Conway, 2012; Katz, 2010; Menchaca, 2012). Menchaca (2012) writes "Planning support activities without the participation and need identification of the novice would run counter to the spirit of the induction and mentoring process" (p. 25). In formal mentoring relationships, it may be the case that the mentee has several mentors, each of whom takes on a different phase of the relationship. As written by



McCormack and West (2006), multiple mentors throughout the life of a mentoring program are the key to successful outcomes for the mentee. But again, the discussion on informal mentoring relationships and the practice of novice teachers self-selecting a mentor is missing from this line of investigation.

### **Effective mentorship programs.**

Researchers continue to assess effective variables found in various mentorship programs. Some of the variables being explored are release time for mentees and mentors to observe each other teach, informal as well as formal visitation with mentors, fostering the mentee's perception of value, and the self-selection of the mentor. Some of these ideas have already been discussed, but the ideas of informal visitations, fostering of value, and self-selection of mentors is of vital importance to this study. The time that mentors spend with their mentees should not be restricted to formal visitations (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This idea resonates with the ideals of informal mentoring, but research is still lacking on perceived benefits of novice music educators and how to facilitate such informal interactions.

The selection of mentors, specifically mentees choosing their own mentor, is found to be a crucial component of an effective mentoring relationship (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). More planning time with mentors and informal mentoring meetings are also another source of satisfaction and support for new teachers. Researchers, however, write that trust and respect are far more integral to the success of the mentorship relationship. Abell et al (1995) writes that this is the "tie that binds the intern to the mentor and allows the more productive mentor/intern relationship" (p.186). An easy way to ensure this trust and respect is in place from the start is allowing pre-service teachers to choose their mentor at the onset of their formative years of teaching. The mentee's perception of the mentor's experience and knowledge about students and

content contributes to the mentee's respect for the mentor. However, if the novice teacher lacks professional respect for their mentors, the relationship is perceived as less useful (Haack and Smith, 2000). "Without professional trust and respect, a relationship in which ideas are freely shared cannot be developed (Abell et al, 1995, p 180)."

### **Benefits specific to mentorship.**

Menchaca's (2003) research on mentoring emphasizes that mentoring programs are not only cost effective, but display possibilities of improving teacher retention, improving attitudes and instructional strategies for beginning teachers as well as providing professional growth opportunities for the mentor teacher. McIntyre and Hagger (1996) examine the benefits of mentoring for beginning teachers and find that beginning teachers' feelings of isolation, lack of confidence and self-esteem are reduced when teachers are a part of a mentorship program. Additionally, it has been found that teachers grow professionally, develop their self-reflection capabilities as well as their problem solving capacities (Abell et al., 1995; Blair, 2008; Smith et al., 2012). Mentors are also found to play an important role in the socialization of novice teachers, helping them to adapt to the norms, standards and expectations associated with teaching in general and within specific schools (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009). Conway (2006) writes that mentors have the capabilities of helping beginning teachers, specifically music teachers, find professional development activities to aid them specifically in the areas of classroom management, parent interactions, administrative duties, choosing literature and classroom activities, and standards-based planning and assessment. Mentoring is an important component to successful teaching for beginning music teachers. Conway writes, "If done well, both the mentor and the mentee will benefit from the relationship. We have much to learn from one another, and the time is now" (2006, p. 60). Mentoring can also lay the groundwork for

future mentors and effective mentoring practices. “So, though the term ‘mentor’ may be an ancient one, finding one and being one might be a tradition that can mean professional growth for both today and tomorrow” (Conway, Smith, & Hodgman, 2010, p. 308).

### **Challenges with mentorship models.**

Most mentoring programs are found to be beneficial for general classroom teachers but many times they can be perceived as ineffective by new music educators (Benson, 2008; Ingersoll and Smith, 2012; Stevanson, 2005). The mentorship program alone cannot combat feelings of isolation, lack of emotional support, and the suppression of inherent value experienced by new music teachers (Benson 2008). Recent research continues to reiterate that many induction programs are pairing new music teachers with mentors outside their area of expertise (Ingersoll and Smith, 2012; Conway et al., 2002). Kajs (2002) writes that beginning teachers are the ones who ultimately determine the quality of the mentoring process, creating a culture of responsiveness to individual and organizational needs. One way to create instill the value of a mentor is allowing beginning teachers to choose, or self-select their own music mentors. Conway (2001a) writes that beginning teachers who can find their own mentor usually value and benefit more from the relationship than a teacher who was assigned one.

Stevanson (2005) writes that elementary music teachers have unique needs that typically are not met in district-established mentoring programs. These programs most often focus on curriculum and management problems. Eckola (2007) finds that administrators are either unaware or do not do anything to ease the difficulties beginning music teachers face. Another issue that plagues mentorship programs is funding. Research reveals larger benefits for beginning teachers receiving help from full time mentors vs. part time mentors (Conway et al., 2002). The costs of funding full time mentors, however, can be out of reach for smaller or

underfunded districts. The opportunity for teachers to observe their mentors (or for mentors to come into their mentees classroom) is another benefit taken away because of funding issues. Resource allocation and understanding how local adaption either improves or denigrates policy is crucial to understanding how to achieve good implementation of mentorship programs (Smith et al 2012).

### **Theoretical Framework**

A theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory within a body of research (Camp, 2001; Merriam, 2009). Using a theoretical framework can provide the researcher a lens to view the world, make explanations about certain phenomenon, and ultimately challenge and extend existing knowledge. In order to achieve these goals in this particular research study, I examined a number of theories used by educational researchers to explain, predict, and understand phenomena concerning induction, mentorship, and beginning teachers. Theories already mentioned include Lortie's (1975) Teacher Socialization Theory and Lave and Wenger's (Lave & Wenger, 1991) Situated Learning Theory. However, the context of this study requires a social explanation. SET provides a framework that has been used by other researchers in studying social behavior and social relationships, but has not been applied to the mentorship and support of novice music educators. Using the concepts of SET (e.g. rewards, costs, comparison level, and rules of exchange) to provide a foundation for this study grounds the researcher's thinking in regards to mentorship practices (or social behaviors), and postulates certain variables that can impact the informal mentoring relationship (or social relationships).

#### **Social Exchange Theory in research literature.**

As outlined in the first chapter of this study, SET is conceptualized as a joint activity of two or more individuals or groups where each depends upon one another for rewards and pursues

those rewards through exchange of material and non-material goods (Ashcroft, 2001, p.47). Relationships that are formed through these exchanges can either be maintained or dissolved based on the individuals' perceptions of the exchange processes and the continuation of rewarding exchanges (Emerson, 1976; Homans, 1958). Examination of exchange relationships are of interest to this study in the ways in which they constrain or enable individuals or groups in such relationships to exercise power and influence in their daily lives. When reviewing the current literature, exchange theorists and researchers use SET as a framework for understanding social structures created in the exchange framework (Ashcroft, 2011; Cook & Rice, 2003). Molm (1994) writes that studies using SET can focus on individuals, groups, organizations, or states. Researchers have also used SET to explain social power, networks, board independence, organizational justice, psychological contracts, leadership, and citizenship behavior (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005; Swift 2007). Considering SET usefulness in research probing a variety of relationships (e.g. individuals, groups, and organizations), I was encouraged to examine the use of the theory in areas outside of education. I also explored how SET is used in any field of research that examines mentoring relationships (e.g. education, business, medicine).

### ***Business.***

There is a plethora of research committed to using SET as a theoretical perspective in business research literature, and this would seem to make sense. Two of the most influential social exchange theorists, George Homans and Peter Blau, sought to place social exchanges under the guise of economic interactions (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). Blau (1964) refers to social and economic exchanges as forms or varieties of transactions, rather than types of relationships. Blau does argue however that only social exchange “involves favors that create diffuse future obligations” and “tends to engender feelings of personal obligations, gratitude, and

trust; purely economic exchange as such does not” (p. 94). An overarching theme found in many of the business studies incorporating SET relates to trust; trust between employees and their employers, trust between buyers and sellers, and trust between businesses. Other research findings in business research literature relate to employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. I suggest that there is interest in understanding issues of trust and commitment, satisfaction, and the particulars of business relationships. The following studies are those that present findings relating to these topics.

Mo (2004) investigated factors that predicted trust in executives’ relationships, specifically businessmen in the UK and China. Expectations of honesty, reliability, and discretion were found to be fundamental expectations that influenced trust. Although there was no evidence that business partners held expectations of reciprocity, strong relationships were formed between those that actually shared less in common than those partnerships that claimed a friendship. While Mo (2004) examined trust issues in inter-personal business relationships, Ashnai (2013) delved into the role trust plays in inter-organizational relationships as well as inter-personal relationships in business. Two findings were that the sharing of information between co-workers heavily influenced non-economic performance behaviors and that relationship-specific investments positively impacted commitment levels. This is taken to mean that “information” is a commodity highly valued in social exchange relationships and investing one’s self in a relationship plays into the commitment one partner has for the other. Morgan (1991) tested a model that supported the use of SET in marketing relationships. This model supported the idea that communication, shared values, opportunist behavior, and conflict can all influence the development of trust and commitment in business relationships. In regards to buyer-seller relationships, trust was enhanced when a two-way interaction was established

between the seller and the buyer (Jarrell, 1992). In these exchanges, the partner who held power recognized that trust in the relationship was anchored by integrity and intention.

### *Medicine.*

While business research tended to focus on the themes of trust and commitment, job satisfaction and the dynamics between various parties (e.g. co-workers, patient-nurse, and employee-organization) were prevalent themes in the medical research literature incorporating SET. High job turnover and diminished patient care have been found to be among the consequences associated with decreased job satisfaction and organizational commitment for nurses (Simmons, 2014). Using SET as his theoretical perspective, Simmons (2014) examined whether or not job satisfaction and organizational commitment could be predicted by how nurses saw themselves “fitting in” with their place of employment. While findings could not be verified, it was suggested that nursing organizations can increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment by creating policies and work systems that are transparent to staff. Mallette (2005) also examined job satisfaction and commitment. In this study, the nurses with relational psychological contracts, or those contracts based on emotional involvement as well as financial agreement, reported higher job satisfaction and career commitment than those with only transactional, or performance related, contracts. As a result, committed and satisfied employees, nurses in this instance, are those that are in a position for more than the financial gain.

Stress seems to be common concern in the field of medicine. This is partly because medical service involves taking care of other peoples’ lives and mistakes or errors could be costly and sometimes irreversible (Familoni, 2008). Ihlenfeld (1996) examined the use of SET in how friendships were formed and the equity of exchange in regards to emotional support among students and faculty in a nursing school. Findings indicated that the choice of friends was not

based on socioeconomic status, but more on characteristics such as age, marital status, educational level, and occupation. Social support behaviors taking place between friends and faculty were found to increase feelings of psychological well-being. While Sutton (1999) also examined the use of SET in mutual support systems in stressful environments, this quantitative study sought to test the effect of an intervention between women newly diagnosed with breast cancer and survivors of breast cancer. Her findings supported the use of SET in describing the relationship between both sets of women with a positive relationship established between support-reciprocity and quality of life for both the survivor and the newly diagnosed patient.

### ***Psychology.***

Studies placed under the umbrella of *psychology* that incorporated SET as a theoretical framework had the most number of studies listed under the ProQuest search platform and also, what I believe, the most diverse topics. These research topics ranged from the dissolution of marital relationships to theater audiences to tourism. I chose to incorporate studies that examined some of the main concepts of SET such as rewards and costs, trust, and reciprocity.

Willis (2010) explores the impact of demographic, professional, and organizational factors on motivation to work, the intent to remain employed, and the intent to leave in a public child welfare agency. The use of SET supports findings regarding the impact of training, suggesting that employees of the child welfare system appraise levels of “good-fit” within many domains. These domains can include levels of costs and benefits between workers’ values and the attractiveness of other agencies in decisions being made about staying or leaving. Corrigan (2001) also examined costs and benefits, but sought to identify the motives behind an individual’s reasons for volunteering. Corrigan found that costs and rewards, as defined in SET, played more of a definitive role in determining whether or not a volunteer continued to donate



their time and energies. The examination of costs and rewards are important to the current study in that both parties in the mentoring relationship have the choice of whether to stay or leave. One of the factors playing into this decision and the level of commitment is the determination of costs versus rewards.

A study conducted by Gilles (1995) that analyzes participation in the workforce was found to be of particular interest to this study. Worker participation in this sense is when employees become involved in one or more aspects of organizational decision making within the enterprises in which they work. In Gilles' study, the definition of worker participation, under a social exchange perspective, was a series of exchange transactions taking place between management and their employees. Worker participation was found to be improved when trust was established with those in authority. Worker participation was also improved with good co-worker relationships and when employees had stronger influences during the decision making process. Of interest for this study were the items of exchange that were of most value to the participants in the study. Those items were information, the opportunity to improve job performance, the opportunity to help others, and the level of commitment to one's exchange partner.

### ***Education.***

Research findings regarding exchange processes have informed us about the following: (a) the nature of the resources being exchanged, (b) the social context the exchange appears in, and (c) the nature of the relationship between exchange participants (Swift, 2007). In education research studies incorporating a social exchange framework, the nature of the relationship seems to be researched more than any of the other observations. The studies that I chose to highlight address relationships found in the educational setting (e.g. teachers, parents, students, and

administrators). While there was some education research that investigated teachers' commitment levels to the profession and job satisfaction, many more studies focused on relationships themselves.

One important relationship in the educational setting is the parent-teacher relationship. Mahon (1998) set out to assess the usefulness of SET in respect to reciprocity norms between teachers and parents. She found that SET is indeed an effective tool when deciphering what exchange behaviors were reciprocated and those that were not. Mahon also found that these reciprocal relationships can be maintained for longer periods of time should parent-teacher dyads strive for positive interactions. Another important relationship in education settings is the principal-teacher relationship. Elstad, Christophersen, & Turmo (2011) examined social exchanges taking place between building administrators and their teachers. This study looked at the impact of social exchanges on organization citizenship behavior which are the discretionary behaviors, which are not part of the job description, performed by the employee as a result of personal choice. Findings supported the importance of trust when principals and teachers took place in social exchange behaviors. Trust in administration was also found to indirectly impact organization citizenship behaviors. Butterworth (1981) also examined the principal-teacher relationship, but made certain to define this relationship as collegial and professional, rather than hierarchical. Butterworth uses SET to describe informal processes which allow principals and teachers to obtain resources, but how social exchange behaviors can influence each partner's behavior. Research findings suggested that perceived support from administrators is associated with the receiving of specific, task-relevant resources. This is of particular relevance to this study as music education research has attested that novice music teachers are in need of relevant support during the induction process. Other findings from this study were that the perceived level

of support of teachers experienced was associated with three occurrences: (a) trust and positive expectations from the administration, (b) the principals' willingness to offer resources, and (c) the perceived frequency of information exchange taking place in the relationship. The frequency of information sharing is of extreme importance. Resources, whether tangible or not, are considered to be the "currency" of social exchange" (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) and for the purposes of this study, knowledge is the principal form of currency.

Three other studies are of interest to this review in that they use SET to help explain why various social exchanges come about in the first place. Gonzalez (2001) investigated teacher resistance to school-based consultation services delivered by school psychologists. Teachers were very hesitant to accept "help" from most district psychologists and therefore there was very little social exchange behaviors taking place. There was a very small finding, however, that a higher number of reported consultations could be positively correlated with the number of hours the school psychologist was in the building. I took this to mean that face-to-face time is a positive influence on accepting support and establishing a relationship. Keeping in line with the idea of accepting support and establishing relationships, Bruch (1988) investigated the networking patterns, or social exchanges, of adult students deciding to return to school part-time. Bruch found that social exchanges resulted from certain needs being unmet, such as the acquiring or refreshing of study skills, building of self-confidence, and managing time and resources. Bruch used SET concepts, such as costs and rewards, to explain why these returning students economized their networking. Findings indicated that time, effort, and resource commitment were factors contributing to these adult students reaching out to other students, university faculty, and outside agencies; as these were things they could not provide for themselves. Of particular interest to this study was that time was stated as the most prevalent

theme. With time being a factor that limited the contact the adult students had with the other students and faculty members, social exchanges were restricted and therefore needs were left unmet. It was the limited amount of time, however, that also compelled these adult students to initially reach out for help. The final study investigates the shortcomings of SET when applied to minorities, specifically the disabled. Mishler (1989) examined how SET holds an ideology that the disabled are different and in this case how different usually means inferior. Mishler postulates that the disabled should see social exchanges and relationships in a group-centered model instead of dyadic. Three advantages were found to come from this new way of viewing social exchanges: (a) disabled participants viewed their contributions as giving to a whole system, rather than a single entity; (b) the services and support of the disabled would not need to not fall on one person; and (c) communal reality became the strongest element in all of the relationships within the group. While participants in this specific study are not disabled, the above-mentioned advantages are all valuable concepts as the novice teacher and mentoring participants are each participants in an individual mentoring social exchange, but they are also part of a larger teaching and music education community.

### ***Social Exchange Theory and mentoring.***

Each of the following studies focus on different topics, yet each one highlights a mentoring relationship using SET as a framework. This first study is foundational as it explores SET usefulness as a theoretical model when investigating mentoring relationships. The primary premise of SET, as laid out in Pollock (1990), was that the receiving of high rewards at low costs would result in high satisfaction with a mentoring relationship. Pollock found that high rewards and low costs accounted for 70% of relationship satisfaction and that high rewards and poor alternatives accounted for 47% of relationship commitment (p. 202). Pollock also found that

mentoring relationships were rated as much more rewarding and equitable, less costly, and having poorer alternatives and greater investments than the non-mentoring relationships. “It is believed that the specific behaviors that mentors frequently display towards their protégés caused the favourable consequences of mentoring relationships” (Pollock, p. 205). Pollock concluded her study by stating “the dynamics of both mentoring and nonmentoring work relationships are indeed consistent with a social exchange theory interpretation” (Pollock, p. 219). This is useful evidence in using SET as a theoretical framework for the current study on mentoring relationships.

Similar to Pollock’s study is one conducted by Ensher (1997) that examines the relevance of using SET as a lens to examine four stages of mentoring (listed as initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition), the mentoring processes and activities within each stage, and the career outcomes of protégés in a diverse population. The exchange “currency” in this study mostly consisted of instrumental support (i.e., status, information, and services), psychosocial support (i.e., love or emotional) and role-modeling support supplied by mentors in the workforce. High quality mentoring was a significant predictor of the protégés’ job satisfaction and perceived career success. Of more relevance for the current study, Ensher reports the importance of perceived similarity between mentors and their protégés when determining the protégé’s attitude toward their mentor. Another interesting finding from this study is how the mentor-protégé evolved into a friendship. The friendship was an effect of social exchanges that played into the protégé’s attraction and satisfaction with their mentor. In relationships with higher levels of attraction and satisfaction, it is the protégé that redefined the mentoring relationship as a friendship.

These last two studies spoke directly into the mentoring process and the use of SET to define social exchanges. SET can be used in other respects as well, such as these last two studies that sought to understand mentors' negative experiences. In this first study, Vosloo (2010) used SET to determine if the perceived costs and benefits of coaching, mentoring, work-life balance, and coaching experiences could predict coaching career outcomes for women coaches. In other studies, mentoring has been a positive force in the development of career satisfaction and commitment. The role mentoring played in retaining mentors, coaches specifically, had yet to be explored. Vosloo found that the balance of mentoring and networking with colleagues was an important factor in maintaining interpersonal relationships. These factors also impacted the decision to stay or leave the coaching profession. In the second study, conducted by Lunsford, Baker, Griffin, and Johnson (2013), SET was applied to further understand mentors' negative experiences. Using SET as a framework, a typology of costs was created that generated testable research propositions. Focusing on faculty in higher education, it was found that the psychological costs of mentoring included burnout, anger, grief, and loss. It is interesting to compare these psychological costs to what novice music educators are experiencing during their early years of teaching. While grief and loss are not noted by researchers, novice music teachers have been documented as experiencing burnout and anger. Other costs to mentors included diminished reputation, a decrease in productivity, and the risk of ethical wrong doing. It was the researchers' conclusion that this typology could be extended to other professions such as law, medicine, and even the military. These ideas of the negative effect mentoring can have on the mentor can contribute to the expanding dialogue on mentoring and the use of SET.

## Summary

This review of literature provided an overview of the status of beginning teachers; including an examination on teacher identities, teacher development, professional development, and the retention of novice teachers. Although progress has been made in the support of novice teachers via induction programs, there are still specific variables affecting the success of novice music educators that induction alone cannot attend to. Mentoring seems to be a way to support novice music teachers as induction programs are meant to offer a wider support system and mentoring is a one-on-one, relational form of support. A positive mentor-mentee relationship can enhance self-esteem and can also increase the knowledge, skills, and abilities of both parties involved (Achinstein & Athanases, 2006; Bullough Jr., 2012; Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). The selection of mentors is found to be an especially crucial component of an effective mentoring relationship (Smith & Ingersoll, What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover?, 2004). Having a mentor from the same teaching field has been found to foster trust and respect, which is far more important to the success of the mentorship relationship (Abell, Dillon, Hopkins, McInerney, & O'Brien, 1995). From the discussion in the mentoring literature, I learned there might be a greater cultivation of trust and respect if novice educators were able to choose their own mentors. This is an important finding as the novice teachers in this study chose their own mentors. There are many difficulties that novice teachers share, but needs that are specific to novice music teachers could be met by having a self-selected music mentor.

After establishing the need for studying mentoring as a way to support the novice music educator (Conway, Krueger, Robinson, Haack, & Smith, 2002), this chapter reviewed the literature on SET and various professions that are influenced by social exchange processes.

Research studies incorporating SET as a theoretical perspective were found in various professions such as business, medicine, psychology, and education. While education researchers have used SET to examine mentoring relationships, music education researchers have yet to use this theory to explore mentoring relationships. Although this is only a sampling of the many studies about induction, mentoring, novice teachers, music educators, and SET, it demonstrates how much there is to be gained from combining research literature to find the gap. To fulfill this purpose and conduct this qualitative study, serious consideration was made regarding the research design and methodology.



### **Chapter 3: Methodology**

The benefits attributed to mentoring are extensive. These include increased teacher retention (Benson, 2008; Conway et al. 2011; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Ingersoll, 2012; Strong, 2005), improved instructional practice (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2001a; Conway 2002; Kruegg, 1999), and gains in teachers' sense of effectiveness (Blair, 2008; Healy and Welchert, 1990; Kajs, 2002; Randall 2009; Turley et al., 2006). Yet there is little information on the evolution of the novice music teacher and mentor relationship, the impact of self-initiated mentor selection, and the implications of informal mentoring for both the mentor and mentee.

This study examines informal mentoring experiences and aims to achieve a better understanding of the lived experiences of novice music educators and their self-selected mentors within their first five years of teaching. I am choosing to use a multiple case study approach to aid in this examination. Stake (1995) defines the case study as “the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances” (p. xi). This investigation is considered a multiple case study because of the three different pairs of mentor and mentee participants. The purpose of case studies is not to generalize findings, but to understand each participant's unique experience. However, ideas and principles from this study could lead to the improvement of the experiences and education of pre-service teachers, add to the understanding of how to better support novice music teachers, and educate and support mentoring music teachers.

This chapter will describe the methods and procedures used to examine informal mentoring exchanges between novice music educators and their self-selected mentors. For a clear understanding of each component of this research, this chapter is divided into several sections. The first section describes the research approach used for this study, including the

population from which the participants were drawn, how this study was designed, and the specific methods employed. In the next section I describe the data collection process, analysis, and synthesis. This chapter will end by addressing any ethical considerations and matters of trustworthiness.

### **Rationale for Case Study Methodology**

“Case studies in music education allow us to fill in more robust and integrated knowledge about areas of inquiry that need further explication and explanation, such as those aspects of music teaching and learning that are especially complex and intertwined” (Barrett, 2014, p. 130).

The selection of an appropriate methodology is critical to the success of a well-executed study. The nature of the research problem and research questions, in relation to the methodology, guide the researcher in the design of the study and suitable procedures (Krathwohl, 1998; Merriam, 1998). I have an avid interest in gaining an overall understanding of the informal interactions and practices of novice music teachers and their mentors within the context of the novice music teacher’s formative teaching years. Therefore, the case study design, as described by Barrett, was chosen to orient this study to effectively understand and interpret the findings.

Case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (or case) or multiple bounded systems (or cases) over time. Case studies are also meant to investigate a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 2003, p. 18). Through detailed and in-depth data collection methods that involve multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audiovisual material, and documents and reports), the investigator is able to report a case description and case-based themes (Creswell et al., 2007). The qualitative case study also allows the researcher to explore individuals or organizations, simple or complex relationships, communities, or programs and supports the

interpretation of data compiled about certain phenomena (Yin, 2003). As Yin (2003) writes, “You would use the case study method because you deliberately wanted to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (p. 13). A case study design should be considered when: (a) the focus of the study is to answer “how” and “why” questions, (b) you cannot manipulate the behavior of those involved in the study, (c) you want to cover contextual conditions because you believe they are relevant to the phenomenon under study, or (d) the boundaries are not clear between the phenomenon and context (Yin, 2003; Baxter and Jack, 2008).

The case that is to be analyzed, as defined by Miles and Huberman (1994) is “a phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context. The case is, “in effect, (the) unit of analysis” (p. 25). A case should be bound to prevent the researcher from answering a question that is too broad or a topic that has too many objectives for one study (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Cases can be bound by time and place, time and activity, or by definition and context (Creswell, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994). The boundaries, however, simply indicate what will and will not be studied in the scope of the research project. This study will be bound by several factors including place, time, definition, and context. Because of the alignment of these considerations and the conditions set forth in this study, the case study approach appeared to be the best choice for this line of research.

## **Participants**

A purposeful sampling procedure was used to select this study’s participants. Purposeful sampling is a method that is typical of qualitative research used to generate the most information about the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2007; Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014). As the researcher, I sought to locate novice music educators with less than five years of experience who

were currently in an informal mentoring relationship with a more experienced music teacher. To “strengthen the precision, validity, stability, and trustworthiness of the findings” (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014, p. 33), multiple-case sampling was employed. Three different novice music educators were located and asked to participate in this study. The criterion used for the selection of participants was crafted to create a range of similar, yet contrasting circumstances. The criterion are listed below:

1. Novice music teacher participants were selected based on their years of teaching experience and their current engagement with a self-selected music teacher mentor.
  - Novice music teacher #1 will have had less than a year of teaching experience at the onset of this study.
  - Novice music teacher #2 will have had one to two years of teaching experience at the onset of this study.
  - Novice music teacher #3 will have had three to five years of teaching experience at the onset of this study.
2. Two mentor teacher participants were selected by the novice music teacher participants; one mentor teacher was selected by the researcher who then selected the novice teacher participant. Mentor teachers’ years of experience, teaching level, or other classifying factors were not deciding factors in their participation in the study.

#### **Participant selection, consent and description.**

Once it was decided that multiple-case sampling was to be employed in this study, potential participants were contacted. The initial sampling included six novice general music educators (with less than 5 years of teaching experience) who I knew because of my role as their course instructor or university supervisor. Of these six individuals, five were still in a

relationship with a mentoring teacher (who happened to be their cooperating teacher from student teaching). From this group of five, I chose the three teachers that fit the teaching parameters to increase maximum variation for this study: a novice music teacher with less than one year of teaching experience, a novice music teacher with 1-2 years of teaching experience, and a novice music teacher with 3-5 years of teaching experience.

Each novice music teacher signed her consent to be a part of the study. The participants were provided the qualifications of an informal mentoring teacher and were then asked to provide the name of an informal mentor that met these specifications. The named mentoring teachers were contacted, asked to participate in this study, and then gave their consent to be a part of the study. Around this time, one of the initial participants dropped out; the novice music teacher with 1-2 years of experience. The replacement participant pool for this particular parameter was rather small. Several individuals were contacted, but for various reasons, none of these novice music teachers could commit to the study. Because of these limitations, I opted to go a different route to find a novice music teacher participant. I contacted a local mentoring teacher I had known through being a university supervisor and asked if she was an informal mentor to a novice music teacher with 1-2 years of experience. This mentor teacher also provided the name of the novice music teacher who ended up being the final novice music teacher participant in this study. After contacting this teacher, she and her mentoring teacher signed the consent to be a part of this study. By choosing this route, it allowed me to look at a different mentor-mentee structure that in turn provided a different perspective. Below you will find a concise description of each of the participants.

Novice teacher participant 1: *Kirsten Shields*

At the onset of this study, “Kirsten” was a first year general music teacher, but had previously been a part-time music teacher for five months. Kirsten graduated from a western university with a Masters of Music Education, Plus Licensure (MME+) degree. I was Kirsten’s course instructor in a general music methods course and her university supervisor while she was a student teacher. I had previously met her mentor, Rachel Wolfe, in my role as a university supervisor. Kirsten met the parameters of this study in that she was a first year music teacher and she had maintained an informal relationship with her cooperating teacher

Mentor teacher participant 1: *Rachel Wolfe*

I first met “Rachel” in my role as a university supervisor. She was the cooperating teacher for two of my student teachers. I also knew Rachel casually through social events at the university. I did not choose Rachel as a participant for this study. Rachel was chosen by her former student teacher and mentee Kirsten.

Novice teacher participant 2: *Daphnie Gray*

“Daphnie” had been a general music educator for two years at the onset of this study. I was introduced to Daphnie through her mentor, Reyna Lewis. Because of her connection to Reyna and her decision to stay in an informal mentoring relationship, I asked Daphnie to participate in this study. Daphnie is the only novice teacher participant not associated with the local university. The other novice and mentor teacher participants had either graduated from the local university or they had had student teachers or practicum students in their classrooms. Daphnie did, however, participate in a teaching program in her home state that allowed student teachers to choose their cooperating teachers.

Mentor participant 2: *Reyna Lewis*

I met “Reyna” in my role as a university supervisor. She was the cooperating teacher for two of my student teachers. I also worked with Reyna as a practicum facilitator and course instructor at the local university. It was because of these interactions that I turned to Reyna when I had difficulty finding a novice music teacher participant with 1-2 years of teaching experience. Reyna was able to refer me to her mentee Daphnie and this is how she and Reyna became participants in this study.

Novice teacher participant 3: *Suzanne Meyers*

“Suzanne” was in her fourth year as a general music educator at the beginning of this study. She graduated from the local western university with a MME+ degree. I met Suzanne when I was assigned to be her University Supervisor. I maintained my relationship with Suzanne once she had graduated by taking my undergraduate music methods class to observe her teach. At the onset of this study I was aware that she had maintained an informal relationship with her cooperating teacher and mentor Stacia. For this reason I asked Suzanne to participate in this study.

Mentor participant 3: *Stacia Nelson*

I know Stacia better than any of the other participants. I met Stacia in my first year as a graduate student when I conducted a qualitative study about the music program established at her school. The year we met happened to be her last year teaching. During that same school year I also met her student teacher Suzanne. I was able to witness the formation of that relationship and it is my belief that it was *this* informal mentoring relationship that prompted my first thoughts of conducting a study on the implications of an informal mentoring relationship. Stacia and I have

kept up a casual relationship through emails, phone conversations, informal get-togethers, and discussions over coffee.

### ***Ethical considerations.***

Before the collection of any data, permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the participants themselves was obtained (see Appendix A). Informed Consent Documents were sent to the participants that informed of their rights (see Appendix B). Participants were also verbally reassured that their participation was voluntary and that their identities would be kept confidential. To maximize anonymity, participants were given pseudonyms.

### **Data Collection**

Case study research typically employs multiple data sources, which is also a strategy that can enhance data trustworthiness (Patton, 1990; Yin, 2003). Potential data sources may include, but are not limited to, interviews, documentation, archival records, physical and electronic artifacts, direct observations, and participant-observations. Data from such sources are usually converged in the analysis process rather than handled individually. Each data source is one piece of the “puzzle,” with each piece contributing to the researcher’s understanding of the whole phenomenon. This merging adds strength to the findings as the various strands of data are “braided together” to promote a greater understanding of the case (Baxter and Jack, 2008). This study employed in-depth data collection over the course of one school year including multiple individual interviews, small focus group interviews, a large focus group interview, and artifacts from a blog site that included participant responses to researcher prompts.

### **Interview schedule.**

With the selection of the participants completed, the plans for collecting data began. Interviews were set up with individual participants (referred to as individual interviews), the



paired mentor and mentee groups (referred to as paired interviews), the novice teacher and mentor teacher groups (each referred to as a small focus group), and finally the entire group of participants (referred to as the large focus group). Krefting (1991) writes that researchers should plan for opportunities to have either a prolonged or intense exposure to the phenomenon under study within its context so that (a) rapport with participants can be established, (b) multiple perspectives can be collected and understood, and (c) the potential for social desirability responses in interviews is reduced. Recognizing that it takes time to establish a rapport with the individual participants and create an authentic connection between the novice teachers and mentoring teacher participants, I decided to take an entire school year to collect data. The 2013-2014 school year was divided into thirds (see table below).

Table 3  
*Interview schedule*

	<b>Individual interviews</b>	<b>Paired interviews</b>	<b>Novice Teacher Focus Group</b>	<b>Mentor Teacher Focus Group</b>	<b>Large Focus Group interviews</b>
<b>August - November</b>	6 interviews <i>average time: 45 minutes</i>	3 interviews <i>average time: 60 minutes</i>	1 interview <i>60 minutes</i>	1 interview <i>120 minutes</i>	
<b>December - February</b>					1 interview <i>120 minutes</i>
<b>March - June</b>	6 interviews <i>average time: 40 minutes</i>	3 interviews <i>average time: 45 minutes</i>			

The collection of data resulted in 21 interviews conducted over the course of the 2013-2014 school year.

## **Interviews.**

Primary sources for data collection for this study were individual interviews, paired interviews, and focus group interviews with the novice music teacher and mentoring teacher participants. The interview method was deemed appropriate because “it has the potential to elicit rich, thick descriptions” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 121). The purpose of these interviews was to not only gather the data needed in a short amount of time, but to also allow the researcher to “enter into the other person’s perspective” (Patton, 1990, p. 196). Interviews in qualitative research are necessary as one “cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them” (Merriam, 1998, p. 72). Individual and focus group interviews were chosen as an appropriate approach for examining the relationship between beginning music teachers and their mentors. I crafted the interview questions in consultation with my dissertation advisor to aid in answering the research questions.

Merriam (1988) outlines three types of interviews: structured, semi-structured, and unstructured. As with the other types of interviews, structured interviews are used to gain relevant information pertinent to the research study. Structured interview questions, however, are predetermined with no deviation from them during the interview; “an oral form of the written survey” (Merriam, 1988, p.73). Semi-structured interviews employ systematically planned deviations, when appropriate, in order to gather more information. It is assumed with this interview technique that individual respondents define the world in unique ways. Unstructured interviews are completely amorphous with no set wording or order to the questions. These interviews are particularly useful when the researcher does not know enough about a phenomenon to ask relevant questions (Merriam, 1988). This study utilized a semi-structured approach with all participants in each interview setting.

Spradley (1979) identifies three types of questions that should guide interviews as descriptive, structural, or contrast questions. Descriptive questions are utilized in most interviews and are the easiest questions to ask a participant. Structural questions allow the researcher to obtain cultural knowledge from a participant. Contrast questions help the researcher understand what the participant means by certain terms. Each of these types of questions were utilized when interviewing the novice music teacher participants, the mentor teacher participants, and during the focus group interviews.

I used the two research questions for this study as an outline to develop the initial interview questions. One colleague, a graduate student, and my dissertation advisor were then asked to review and provide feedback. These comments were incorporated into the revisions, and my dissertation advisor approved the revised list of interview questions. This round of interview questions elicited responses from the participants from which more open-ended questions were developed for subsequent interviews. This group of questions was approved by the dissertation advisor and then used in the large focus group interview. The final round of interview questions were developed to clarify prior responses from the participants and allow for any additional comments to be shared (see Appendix C).

### **Individual and paired interviews.**

Each participant was interviewed individually two different times; first in the fall (October and November 2013) and then at the end of the school year (June 2014). The three mentoring pairs were also interviewed two different times; first in the fall (November 2013) and then at the end of the school year (June 2014). Each interview was conducted in person or via videoconference software and recorded for the purposes of transcribing the interview afterwards. Interviews that took place in person were held in venues convenient for the participants (e.g. the

teacher's classroom, a classroom at the local university, or the home of the participant). Interviews that were conducted online were held in the home of the interviewee. Every interview conducted during this study was recorded and data were archived and saved. The researcher also noted observations about body language, facial expressions, and gestures as well as personal comments as the interview took place (see Appendix E and F). Once an interview was concluded, a transcription was completed using the program Express Scribe. Line numbers and interspersed researcher observations and comments were then added. Content summaries were written for each interview that addressed salient themes and summarized the information gleaned from the participants (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

### **Focus group interviews.**

In qualitative research, focus groups allow the researcher to study participants in a more natural conversation pattern than typically occurs in a one-to-one interview. Focus groups can also be used for learning about groups and their patterns of interaction (Merriam, 1988). "Hence the type and range of data generated through the social interaction of the group are often deeper and richer than those obtained from one-to-one interviews" (Rabiee, 2004, p. 656). Focus group interviews can provide information about a range of ideas and feelings that individuals have about certain issues, while clarifying any differences in perspective between groups of individuals.

Two separate small focus group interviews took place in November 2013 between the novice music teacher participants and then the mentoring teacher participants. Having these small group conversations allowed candid exchanges to happen and a "revealing understanding of the issues" to be obtained (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 123). The novice music teacher focus group was held in a classroom at the local university and the mentor teacher focus group

took place in the home of one of the participants. Protocol remained the same regarding data management.

There was one combined focus group interview that took place between the novice music teacher participants and their mentors in January 2014. The purpose of the focus group was to explore shared understandings, points of agreement and disagreement, and points of consistency among the group of participants. All except one of the participants was able to attend the focus group. This interview was held at a music education conference, in the hotel room of one of the participants. The one novice music teacher participant who was unable to attend the conference was brought into the conversation using an online conferencing platform. An outside observer was asked to take notes on major themes, ideas, comments and observations regarding group dynamics during the interview. These notes were later reviewed with the observer in a debriefing discussion immediately following the focus group interview. New insights that emerged as a result of this discussion with the observer were written down and turned into a content summary.

With any focus group interview there is a danger that a consensus can be assumed if certain group members are silent on certain issues. It was for this reason the smaller focus group interviews took place beforehand; with teacher participants separated from their mentors. For some individuals, self-disclosure is natural and comfortable, while for others it requires more time, trust, and effort. Rich data can only be generated if individuals in the group are prepared to engage fully in the discussion (Krueger & Casey, 2000). During the analysis phase of this study, I needed to consider carefully whether the participants who were not able to express their view could be assumed to agree with the majority, or whether they were simply unwilling to voice their disagreement. Some clarification came through individual participant prompts, but also through the individual interviews. During the coding of this data, I made sure to differentiate the

responses of the participants made during focus group interviews and responses made during individual interviews.

### **Additional data.**

Artifacts comprised a secondary source of data collected throughout the 2013-2014 school year (e.g. emails, answers to researcher prompts, and a blog site created for the participants). Artifacts, in the form of documents and records, are valuable source of data collection in qualitative research. Artifacts can guide the researcher in new ways of thinking, and validate, or disprove, what has already uncovered in the interviews (Glesne, 1999; Lincoln and Guba 1985). The participants' emails were used whenever possible to validate findings or give further context to the study.

A blog site was created for the purposes of disclosing information to the participants, having a space to maintain data (e.g. researcher prompts), and secure participant information and reflections. This blog site was also a potential source of data. This forum was intended to be a place for participants to connect with each other before focus group interviews took place. Although the participants were given free access to this blog site, only three participants, one novice music teacher and two mentor teachers, used the site to post personal introductions, reflections to researcher prompts, or personal questions about the study. These sources of data have served as a "validity check" on some aspects of the data uncovered in the interviews.

## **Data Analysis and Synthesis**

### **Conceptual framework.**

A conceptual framework is a tool employed by qualitative researchers throughout their research study to make conceptual distinctions and organize ideas. Many times the conceptual framework is a visual representation that helps to direct the collection and analysis of data (Miles

& Huberman, *Qualitative data analysis*, 1994). The conceptual framework serves several purposes: (a) identifying who will and will not be included in the study, (b) describing what relationships may be present based on logic, theory or experience, and (c) providing the researcher with the opportunity to gather general constructs into intellectual “bins” (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 18). Yin (1994) suggests that the conceptual framework should continue to develop and be completed as the study progresses and the relationships between the proposed constructs emerge as data are analyzed. The initial conceptual framework for this study displayed key sources (e.g. novice teachers and mentors) that were to be interviewed and observed, influential variables (e.g. years of teaching, educational background, school setting), and propositions established by the researcher. After the first round of interviews the conceptual framework was revised to incorporate some of the emerging themes. A final version of the conceptual framework was created using all the themes that had emerged from data analysis. By using the conceptual framework at the data interpretation stage as a tool to observe and organize the data, the application of the theoretical perspective in final stages of data analysis was more straight-forward (see Appendix G).

### **Theoretical framework and propositions.**

Propositions serve to focus the data collection, determine direction and scope of the study, and form the foundation for a conceptual framework (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995). Returning to the propositions for the analysis phase of a case study can: (a) lead to a focused analysis when the researcher may want to stray outside the scope of the research questions, (b) provide an alternate explanation of the examined phenomenon, and (c) increase the confidence in the findings as the number of propositions and rival propositions are addressed and accepted or rejected. The following propositions are based on my theoretical perspective, the

Social Exchange Theory. While there are many broad applications and uses of SET, there are four foundational premises that are generalizable to studies using SET that are “free from contradiction and individually necessary” (Lambe, Wittmann, & Spekman, 2001, p. 6).

1. Exchange interactions result in social outcomes.
2. These outcomes are compared over time to other exchange alternatives to determine dependence on the exchange relationship.
3. Positive outcomes over time increases trust in the relationship.
4. Positive exchange interactions over time produce relational exchange norms (e.g. commitment) that govern the exchange relationship

### **Data management.**

Whether conducting a qualitative, quantitative, or historical study, researchers are required to manage and effectively analyze data to bring order and semblance to their findings. Utilization of a formal database enables the researcher to track and organize data sources, and then retrieve it at a later date. Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software (CAQDAS) is an organizational tool that provides unlimited “bins” into which data can be collected and organized. In addition to the creation of bins these programs facilitate the recording of source detail, the time and date of the data collection, storage, and search capabilities (Stake, 1995; Yin, 1994). With the varied and wide amount of data collected in the form of interviews and artifacts, I needed an efficient management system.

At the onset of this study, I used my own organization system to store and retrieve my notes and interview transcripts, house my audio and related media, and store edited hard copies and edits. The hardcopies of these materials were stored in my home office. I created one large file on my personal computer for the electronic copies of interview transcripts, notes, edits, and various research literature. These files were arranged and named by their function as in audio interview files, transcribed interviews, and content summaries. Copies of the original and



complete data sets were housed in a separate backup file. These files could only be accessed by the researcher on her personal computer (which is protected by a password).

### **Data processing.**

The researcher followed processes outlined by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014) for processing and analysis of the data. This approach began with First Cycle coding, then Second Cycle or Pattern codes, and concluded with the development of themes through jottings and analytic memos (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, p. 71). The following analytical methods were utilized in this study:

1. Collection of data.
2. Conducted search for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data. Recorded personal reflections and thinking process about data through jottings and analytic memos.
3. Generated individual codes that related to respective data chunks.
4. Utilized network displays to discover basic social and mentoring processes and interworkings of relationships.
5. Engaged in writing and re-coding as the analysis focused on the emerging patterns and themes.
6. This procedure was repeated until the analysis was complete.
7. Feedback from study participants was sought and incorporated along the way to verify and revise preliminary conclusions.

Field notes and interview transcripts were first coded using Bogdan & Biklen's (1982) general domain codes. Initially the coding of the data was done by hand, but then shifted to a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) program known as HyperRESEARCH to aid in organizing the coding and analyzing the data. A start-list of codes

was generated to identify patterns, but codes were created or being modified or as the data substantiated the need. After this process, a short-list of codes was created and further condensed until a code-book was formed (Lichtman, 2006) (see Appendix D). The HyperRESEARCH software facilitated the management of coding schemes and organization of the data according to source, date of interview, and type of interview. This software was also beneficial in the analysis of the data by locating codes to establish patterns, mapping code and pattern relations, and then organize emerging themes.

### **Data analysis.**

The analysis of the data involved the identification, examination, and interpretation of the patterns and themes that emerged from the interviews. Qualitative data analysis is noted as an ongoing, fluid, and cyclical process that happens throughout the data collection stage and carries over to the data entry and analysis stages (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, 2014). These were the phases of data analysis employed in this study.

1. As soon as data were collected, the information was processed and detailed notes were recorded.
  - a. Recorded notes included key words of thoughts from the interviews, time or date details, personal observations, and highlights from the interaction.
2. Analysis of data began as soon as it was collected.
  - a. As the first pieces of data were collected, I reviewed the data and mentally processed it for themes or patterns that were exhibited
3. After data had been collected, I began a data reduction process in order to identify and focus in on what was meaningful (also known as reducing and transforming raw data).

- a. In an effort to discern what data was meaningful, usable, and relevant, I would refer back to the research questions, conceptual and theoretical framework.
  - b. Data were also reduced by looking for themes at this stage. Reflections via jottings and analytical memos were completed throughout to standardize data collection stages.
4. Data was then grouped into meaningful patterns and themes through two different processes: content analysis and thematic analysis.
  - a. Content analysis was carried out by coding the data for certain words or content, identifying their patterns, and then interpreting their meanings.
  - b. Thematic analysis was carried out by grouping the data into themes that helped to answer the research questions. Once themes were identified it was useful to group the data into thematic groups so I could analyze their meaning and connect them back to the research questions.
5. After themes were identified, the data was assembled into a graphic display that facilitated in making final conclusions.
  - a. The display helped to arrange the data so I could think about it in new and different ways. The display also assisted me in identifying systematic patterns and interrelationships across themes and content, within and across groups (Miles and Huberman, 1994).
6. The final step was to draw and verify conclusions (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook*, 2014). After composing a list of initial themes and grouping them by categories based on my conceptual framework, a list of final themes was created.

- a. I examined how the findings helped to answer my research questions and then drew implications from the findings.
- b. I went back to the data multiple times to confirm the conclusions that were drawn.

### **Trustworthiness**

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that the trustworthiness of a research study is important when evaluating its worth. To establish trustworthiness, case study design principles should include numerous strategies that promote data credibility (confidence in the truth of the findings), transferability (showing that the findings have applicability in other settings), and dependability (showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated in other contexts) (Baxter and Jack, 2008; Merriam, 1998; Trochim & Donnelly, 2006). The issue of trustworthiness inherently lies with how research findings match reality (Merriam, 1998). In qualitative research it is difficult to confirm whether “what is observed” actually matches one’s reality. “And because human beings are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis in qualitative research, interpretations of reality are accessed directly through their observations and interviews” (Merriam, 1998, p.203). Merriam (1998) lists six strategies to enhance the trustworthiness of a case study: triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research, and researcher’s biases. This study applied triangulation, prolonged involvement, member checks, and audit trails to increase the trustworthiness of this study.

#### **Triangulation of data sources.**

Triangulation is the practice of using multiple investigators, multiple data sources, or multiple methods to confirm qualitative research findings (Denzin, 1970). This approach is used by researchers to support the principle that the phenomena under study should be viewed and

explored from multiple perspectives (Baxter and Jack, 2008). The use of multiple data sources increases trustworthiness by grounding the researcher's interpretation and validating the conclusions. In this study I used three different pairs of novice music teacher participants and mentors to compare varied perspectives regarding informal mentoring practices. A variety of data sources, such as individual interviews, focus group interviews, personal reflections, and data from a blog site were also utilized to compare and contrast findings. The assortment of interviews allowed the participants to voice their opinions and thoughts in a variety of contexts, settings, and times. Opportunities to reflect also gave the participants a "safe" platform to voice their thoughts, including time to craft their thoughts. These reflections served to further validate findings from the interviews. While I was transcribing interviews, non-verbal forms of data were collected (e.g. facial expressions and gestures). These forms of notes from the interviews helped to ground my thinking during coding of the data and give perspective to the development of themes and findings. By using multiple methods, the researcher was confident in the consistency of findings, while also accounting for data points where findings differed.

### **Prolonged involvement.**

Prolonged involvement refers to spending an extended amount of time with research participants in their "everyday world" to gain a better understanding of their behavior, values, and social relationships in a social context (Audet & d'Amboise, 2001). Engagement on a long-term basis aids in the development of amiable relationships between the researcher and the members of the respondent community. In this study, the collection of data took place over the course of one school year. Taking a year to glean information about the participants and placing myself in these mentoring communities allowed me to move beyond the "observer" role to more of a colleague and confidant. The use of prolonged involvement also allowed me to thoroughly

examine the lived experiences of these participants that could not have been adequately explored in a short-term study design (Creswell, Hanson, Clark-Plano, & Morales, 2007).

### **Member checks.**

Member checks occur as the researchers' interpretations of the data are shared with the participants and the participants have the opportunity to discuss and clarify the interpretation, and then contribute new or additional perspectives on the issue under study. Member checks are implemented to increase the trustworthiness of the study by allowing participants to react to what had been concluded by the researcher. This process can also enhance the accuracy of the data (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Sharing interview transcripts, analytical thoughts, or drafts of the final report with the participants will allow the participants to be certain that they and their ideas are portrayed accurately (Patton, 2002; Glesne, 1999).

Data was shared with the participants both formally and informally throughout the course of data collection. This was a crucial technique for establishing integrity as member checking provided me the opportunity to understand and assess the intent of the participants from their interviews (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Posting interviews to the blog site and emailing various writings from the study served several other purposes. It allowed the participants an opportunity to correct errors and challenge what they perceived as wrong interpretations, a chance to volunteer additional information, allowed them to assess the adequacy of data and preliminary results, and provided the means to either confirm or refute the data.

Similar to member checking is the use of peer examination and debriefing. Peer examination and debriefing occurs as the researchers shares their work with one or more colleagues who hold impartial views of the study (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). These professional colleagues can then comment on the findings as they emerge (Merriam, 1998). In

this study, I met with my dissertation advisor to discuss the analysis of data and the emerging findings. Findings were also presented to an outside music education researcher and a graduate student familiar with qualitative research. By allowing unbiased peers to examine my transcripts and my writings, these colleagues were able to detect overemphasized points, underemphasized points, unclear descriptions, general errors in the data, and biases or assumptions. Peer debriefing also helped me become more aware of my own views regarding the data. The debriefings included an examination of the following material: transcripts and writings taking place during the study.

### **Audit trail.**

An audit trail is a transparent description of the research steps taken from the start of a research project through the development and reporting of findings. These are the kept records that disclose what was done in an investigation. “In order for an audit to take place, the investigator must describe in detail how data were collected, how categories were derived, and how decisions were made through the inquiry” (Merriam, 1998, p.207). When developing an audit trail, there is a range of evidence researchers can use (e.g., raw data, process notes, materials relating to intentions and dispositions) and many ways to report the evidence (e.g., disclosure of data reduction and analysis products, data reconstruction and synthesis products) (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). A personal journal was kept that recorded the various steps taken and choices I made throughout the study. All edits and process notes were maintained in files for reference. For the purposes of disclosure, these items were made available to my dissertation advisor for review and shared with the participants as needed.

### **Negative case analysis.**

A negative case is where participants' experiences or viewpoints differ from the main body of evidence. When a negative instance can be explained, the general explanation for the typical case is strengthened (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). In an effort to add to the trustworthiness of this research, a search for differing opinions took place between the novice music educators and mentors, the mentoring pairs, and individual participants. These opposing viewpoints served to challenge my own expectations and emergent findings. Contradictions in the data also led to unexpected findings, which ultimately reinforced my interpretations based on my theoretical framework and furthered the understanding of the phenomenon under study.

### **Transferability**

“One of the greatest strengths of the qualitative approach is the richness and depth of explorations and descriptions” (Myers, 2000). Transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Qualitative research does not share the same level of concern for generalizability as quantitative research. One aim of qualitative research, however, is to extend knowledge based on the “richness and depth” of the phenomenon at hand. Researchers and practitioners can then look at the data and see if they find meaning that could inform their practice. Two ways for researchers to construct their study to enhance transferability is to include thick and rich descriptions of the data and provide large amounts of detailed information regarding the context, background, and shared experience of the participants.

Thick descriptions are utilized throughout the discussion of this study to give an account of the lived experiences of the participants. The context of this study and the experiential understandings of the participants' behaviors were taken under the researcher's consideration



when writing these descriptions (Mills, Durepos, & Wiebe, 2013). Using thick descriptions allowed me to describe the immediate behaviors of the participants and also tease out the complex layers of understanding that structured their reality. By providing this level of detailed information regarding the context of the study, the background of the participants, and shared experiences, outside researchers who desire to "transfer" the results to different contexts should be able to make sound judgments as to how sensible a transfer is (Trochim & Donnelly, 2006).

### **Researcher Bias**

While triangulation can guard against researcher bias (Taylor & Bogdan, 1984), the researcher must also explain their position in relation to the group being studied, the bias for selecting participants, a description of them, and the social contexts from which the data were collected (LeCompte and Presissle, 1993). The selection of the participants and their descriptions were presented earlier in this chapter. My relation to the participants is outlined below (see Table 2). As shown below, a relationship had already been established with the majority of the participants.

Table 2  
*Researcher Interactions with Participants*

<b>Teacher Participants</b>	<b>Course Instructor</b>	<b>Practicum Supervisor</b>	<b>University Supervisor</b>
1. Kirsten Shields	X		X
2. Daphnie Gray			
3. Suzanne Meyers			X

<b>Mentor Participants</b>			
1. Rachel Wolfe			X
2. Reyna Lewis			X
3. Stacia Nelson		X	X

Having been in a relationship with all but one of the participants did build in a sense of comfortability with five of the participants. I noticed, however, that this comfortability was not immediately established with Daphnie Gray. It was not until half way through the school year, and the large focus group interview had been conducted, that a level of trust was established between us. On the other hand I had to beware of being too comfortable with the other participants. Having engaged in multiple conversations and observations with the other five participants meant that I had to step back from making assumptions about the mentoring practices, exchanges taking place, and conversations between the mentoring pairs. In keeping a level of detachment, along with member checks from peers and advisors, I believe I was able to analyze the data without personal conjectures.

### **Researcher position.**

For this research study, I was responsible for the collection of data. I assumed the role of the interviewer and data interpreter. I transcribed nineteen of the twenty-one interviews, and an outside party transcribed two single participant interviews. I am currently a general music teacher and high school choral director in a private school in a Southern state and an adjunct professor at a local university. At the start of this study, I was a graduate student and instructor on record at a university in the western part of the United States. Prior to this, I held positions as a general music educator in both public and private elementary schools. I have been active in the field of education and employed as a music teacher for a total of 14 years. I hold a Bachelor of Music degree in Music Education, a Master's Degree of Music Education in Choral Conducting, and state teaching certification for the position of K-12 Music Specialist.

Before the onset of this study I was unaware of any concepts, ideas, or theories regarding mentorship for novice teachers. In my personal experiences as a novice teacher, I did not have an

established mentoring program in my teaching district. As a novice music teacher, there were monthly district-wide meetings mandated for all music teachers to attend. It is my assumption that these meetings were the district's attempt at providing some form of induction support for novice music teachers. As a first year teacher, I did keep in touch with my cooperating teacher, who taught in the same district. We saw each other at the monthly music meetings and at our state music educator's conference. Other than these face-to-face interactions, there was no outside, or informal, contact. After that first year of teaching, I moved into the private teaching sector that had no formal mentoring or induction program put in place.

During this study I received employment during the 2013-2014 school year in the same district where I had first started teaching. I experienced a mentoring system that has since been implemented in that district. I had two mentoring music teachers who came to observe me and kept in contact with me through emails and face-to-face encounters. They supported me by providing music for my lessons and giving me helpful suggestions for classroom management (being that my school was a Title I school with many challenges even for the more experienced music educator). The monthly meetings are now quarterly in-services that specifically serve the music educator in their professional development. The district also provides a building mentor and a district-wide mentor. Both of these mentors met with me at non-descript times. These assigned mentors were not music teachers and did not really help me other than to check in with me. I found it ironic that I was experiencing some of the mentoring issues discussed in research literature while conducting research on the comparison of mentoring practices encountered by novice music educators. These experiences did influence my perspective as I was able to observe and compare the mentoring support for music educators in two different states, and I was also

able to note the change in mentoring practices taking place in a district over a 12 year time period.

Researchers all have certain biases that can negatively or positively affect a study. Not having had a mentor as a novice music teacher, I had no real bias for any informal or formal mentoring program to be successful or not. Other bias, however, may have stemmed from my experiences as a graduate student. The practice of student teachers choosing their own cooperating teacher is relatively specific to the music education department at the institution where I was completing my doctoral studies; a practice that I find very beneficial. Although it is necessary to avoid personal judgments, I do believe that allowing student teachers to choose their cooperating teacher leads to a familiarity which in turn fosters an impetus for informal mentoring.

## **Summary**

This study compares the informal mentoring practices among three pairs of novice general music educators and their mentors using qualitative methods. This study used a case study design to sufficiently answer the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of informal mentoring relationships between a novice music teacher and a self-selected mentor?
  - a. How does the mentoring relationship begin and evolve over time?
  - b. What factors prompt the mentorship to continue?
2. What factors constitute Social Exchange Theory as an appropriate lens to analyze informal mentoring relationships?
  - a. How are the SET concepts of comparison levels, rewards, and costs represented in the informal mentoring relationship?

- b. What exchange rules and conditions are exhibited in the informal mentoring relationship?

This chapter outlines the data collection, analysis, and synthesis (including the data management, data processing, and coding) for this study. Trustworthiness was addressed as well as the ethical considerations taken by the researcher. The intent of this study is to make a contribution to the understanding and support of novice music educators by means of informal mentoring relationships. Additionally, data from this line of research has the capacity to inform music education researchers and those who oversee the induction of novice music teachers.

## **Chapter 4: Nature of Informal Mentoring Dyads**

Our experiences help define who we are as people and why we make the choices we do. In the first research question, the nature of the informal mentoring relationship is examined. The participants in this study made the intentional decision to continue their mentoring relationships in an informal capacity after the time the formal mentorship ended. By examining these *informal* mentoring exchanges, experiences specific to these participants, and the outcomes experienced by these participants, questions about informal mentoring practices can begin to be answered. This chapter is divided into three parts. The first part of the chapter will describe: (a) the manner in which three novice music educators and their mentors became music teachers, (b) how each teacher transitioned from a formal to informal mentorship, and (c) a glimpse of where the relationship stands at the end of one school year. The second part of the chapter is an investigation on a progression of junctures that each mentoring pair exhibited in their relationship. The final part of the chapter will synthesize findings related to the first research question; further analyzing how each mentoring relationship, or dyad, began and evolved.

### **Pair #1 - Suzanne and Stacia**

#### **Suzanne Meyers**

Suzanne's mother is a music teacher, a good one too if you asked Suzanne. Suzanne swore off becoming a music teacher herself however because she had other dreams for her future in music. Suzanne wanted to be an opera singer. A music teacher just didn't sound "cool enough...magical enough" and Suzanne identified herself as a singer. In 2000, the economy seemed great, so she knew she could be anything she wanted to be. All of the experiences that enhanced her musical ability, however, were teaching experiences. She could remember being a 14-year-old helping her mother out at summer music camps. She must have done a decent

enough job, because her mother turned the music camp over to her when she was 16. The dream of being an opera singer was more appealing, however, as Suzanne started college and studied vocal performance. Suzanne kept teaching music through college, giving private lessons in piano and voice, but finally achieved her goal of receiving a performance degree in voice.

The next step in actualizing Suzanne's dream was to continue her education in vocal performance. Suzanne moved from her home state so she could attend a university in the Southwest with a prestigious vocal program. The only problem was that she did not get accepted into the Master of Music degree vocal program. Suzanne did the only thing that seemed rational; she applied to the university's MME+ degree program. With her background in music and the experiences she had in the music camp, it seemed like this was where Suzanne was meant to be. She finally accepted that she was always fated to be a music teacher and yet something was still missing. There was still some part of Suzanne that could not fully accept that fact that she was a music teacher, not a performer. That missing "something" was soon to be observed in the classroom of her future mentor and friend, Stacia Nelson.

### **Stacia Nelson**

Stacia was born to be a music teacher. As a young child, she would sing with her brothers and sisters in church. At home she would sing with her sister, who was five years younger, playing the piano and harmonizing melodies. Needless to say, music thrived in the Nelson home. As a 7th grader, Stacia could play the piano well enough to accompany the high school choir. She was fortunate enough to have a mentor, a senior in her last year of accompanying the choir, to let her know what was important in accompanying, "Just keep going...don't worry about 6 flats just play." Looking back, Stacia was grateful for that little "student teaching" experience. In her six years of working as an accompanist, she was able to coach the choirs, ensembles, and

soloists that she accompanied whenever she practiced with them. “It was just a wonderful experience.” Stacia relates the story of reuniting with one of the members of a boys’ quartet. As a grown man he recounted to Stacia, “I remember that you just made us keep working until we got it right!” Stacia replied, “John, I didn’t know there was an option.”

While she was still in high school, Stacia would give piano lessons to children. She laughs, “One little guy was so nervous. He left little dirty puddles on the keys...and so I think that’s when I started knowing and learning how to nurture. Knowing how to have fun so they wouldn’t be nervous and then make them feel good with any little progress.” All of these experiences led Stacia to fulfill her destiny as a music teacher. She received her undergraduate degree, earning a dual certification in instrumental and choral K-12 music. Stacia went back to a small town setting and used her training to teach elementary music, lead a beginning band, a marching band, a Junior High choir, as well as a High School Men’s, Women’s and Mixed Choir. After two years of teaching high school band and chorus, however, Stacia came to the conclusion that in order to make an impact on students, you have to “get them” when they are young. “I realized by the time they get to 6th grade, and they wanted to be in band or they wanted to sing, they didn’t know how to read music. And then when I was teaching in elementary, they just learned everything so fast. So I think that’s what really drew me and gave me a dedication to children.”

Stacia moved to the Twin Cities for an elementary school music position. Either by fate, or luck, the director of elementary education alerted Stacia to a new music program called Mary Helen Richard’s *Threshold of Music*. After some investigation and receiving positive reviews from other teachers, Stacia went to California and took the course. This experience “totally turned around how I was teaching children.” From this point on, Stacia would take to being more



positive with her students; asking more questions and play more movement games with them. “It’s really a good thing to be friendly and fun with the kids and get rid of this business of not smiling until Christmas.” While teaching elementary music, Stacia became a teacher for sessions and clinics with Mary Helen Richards and Fluerette Sweeney of the Richards Institute of Education and Research. She spent weekends and summers researching and educating teachers about vocal production and also continued her own education by earning a PhD in Music Education.

After receiving her doctorate, Stacia had to make a decision about where she should teach. She came to the same conclusion as she did 18 years earlier; the best way to make an impact on students is to reach out to them when they are young. Stacia accepted a position at an elementary school, working with her own elementary students as well as college students from the local university as their cooperating teacher during their student teaching experience. After 40 years of teaching music, Stacia retired from the profession. “I retired from a demanding job, but I didn’t want to retire from teaching.” It was during this last year of her teaching career that Stacia connected with Suzanne as her cooperating teacher. During student teaching, Stacia remembers Suzanne commenting how Stacia did not seem like a teacher about to retire in three months. Stacia agreed saying, “I think it was because I was excited about things. I was trying out new stuff. I was still doing different things. It wasn’t the last time I had to do this.”

### **The relationship begins.**

But when I saw Stacia teach that class, it was done in such a way that...wow, I can be *that* and I can do *that*. It resonated with me so strongly I let go of my singer ego. She is doing it with such integrity and she is getting such amazing results, I was like, ‘I can do that.’ It just raised the bar. It made teaching seem exciting. I just hadn’t had that model of what it meant and what it could be; what teaching could be. I needed that to get over myself a little bit and when I saw that, I was like, ‘O.K., I accept.’ And then I made my resume. I was like, yes, I

have to be a music teacher because that is all I have ever done.  
- *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

In the beginning, Suzanne was just a name; another music education student from the university. University students came in and out of Stacia's school regularly to the extent that Stacia could not really keep track of the names or faces. Suzanne, however, remembered her first observation of Stacia's music class. After the first observation and from that point on, Suzanne just sort of "stalked her." Suzanne wanted to learn why Stacia's students were so engaged. Why did they seem so excited? As part of her course work, Suzanne needed to complete an independent study and in her mind there was no one better to complete a study with than Stacia. During the independent study Suzanne continued to observe exciting things. Suzanne remembers writing about the engagement of the boys in particular. "That was a big thing. I remember writing about 100% engagement from the boys. They were singing. The singing was a big part." Stacia recalls Suzanne coming in for that study and thinking, "Whoa, this person has something special." Her observations of the students were way beyond what other beginning students usually noticed. "Suzanne had great insight into what was going on" and that really impressed Stacia.

After the study, Suzanne was excited about the prospect of completing her practicum hours with Stacia. In the early part of the practicum experience, there was more observation and teaching "in snippets." There were many classrooms where Suzanne felt there were no expectations of her being independent. "You're observing a lot...the classroom, the teacher, the kids, and you're writing. And then when you actually teach as a practicum student, the expectations aren't super high." Suzanne was hoping this would change if she could work with Stacia. Suzanne not only got her wish to complete her practicum with Stacia, but was able to glean so much from her observations and interactions with the students. While there were only a

certain amount of hours required for Suzanne to stay with Stacia, Suzanne would stay and talk with her. “I was just fascinated by the joy in her classroom.”

The last step in completing the MME+ degree was the student teaching experience. Stacia remembers, “And then one day she asked if I would consider (*pause*)...she said that she really liked what she saw and could she (*pause*)...would it be possible for her to student teach? Would I consider that?” Suzanne simply remembers “groveling.” Knowing full well that this was Stacia’s final year in her music teaching career, both knew that were things that could be hard. Stacia and Suzanne went out for coffee to talk about how to make the student teaching experience work for both of them and “then that was it.” Below are some of Suzanne and Stacia’s reflections about their time together during the student teaching experience.

So she had been teaching and when we starting working I just really felt like it was working with a colleague, not a novice. This put our communication about what we're doing and why we're doing it at a higher level than you might expect, or that might be typical. Since she had been at the university and done conducting there and the voice work, all of that was compatible with what I did. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

And then as a student teacher, it was more taking in teaching principles (SongWorks Principles) and watching her and discussing those principles and looking at her kids and saying, “How did you get here? I noticed this about your boys and all them dance ballet and sing in their opera register in class with no reservations. How do we get there?” – *Suzanne* (final individual interview)

She really got turned on and excited about it. I would say that we really enjoy each other. She is totally reliable and she planned thoroughly. She took planning seriously and she taught well, and she was also reflective. She wanted to perfect things and so we found that we were on the same page. We were really compatible in every possible way. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

So it (student teaching) was more digging. It was digging into her brain and her environment and nitpicking it unto a point where I understood where all this magic was coming from and then when I got my job, it was more content based. – *Suzanne* (final individual interview)

### **From student teaching to an informal mentoring relationship.**

I didn't have a ton of classroom experience and so I didn't know what was going to flop and what was going to work. But I did know that what I did with Stacia...that was the only thing I was certain that was going to work.  
- *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Walking into her classroom as a first year music teacher was overwhelming. It is not as though Suzanne had never made contact with children or felt incompetent as a musician or a teacher; there were just so many concepts and skills within music education to cover that she did not know where to start. Suzanne knew, however, that it could be worse. She had seen many of her music teacher friends end up at schools that had a difficult administrator or children who were "difficult to manage," yet Suzanne experienced none of this. "I had a perfect principal, my staff was super supportive, and my parents were like, 'We love you!'" So what was it then? If so many things were wonderful, why was that first year a challenge? Suzanne would say it was the number of options available to her.

Up until this initial year of teaching music, Suzanne felt as though she had been collecting songs and resources throughout her whole education career. These resources felt useless, however, as there was not a set music curriculum at her school for her to follow. Suzanne did not know how to create a curriculum that could meet the specific needs of her students as well. There was a music curriculum given to Suzanne by school district that hired her, but it was so vast. Suzanne had a hard time knowing where to start and how to tie it all together. "You have so many things that you can teach within music and there are so many ways to teach it." Suzanne knew there was one person to help her get through this predicament, Stacia. Suzanne had been with Stacia for 8 weeks for her student teaching experience. She saw games

and songs put into action and was able to teach these songs and games under Stacia's guidance. Suzanne *knew* how playful and fun the music games and activities could be. She *knew* how to ask the questions to get the children engaged. Suzanne *knew* if she really needed to connect with the kids, she could. "And I knew how to do it through her (Stacia) approach and philosophy." Even though Suzanne knew how to do all of this, she still needed guidance in putting this knowledge into practice.

Suzanne called Stacia regularly her first year, so that it seemed to Suzanne that she was calling every 2 weeks. The phone calls would start either with, "I need help" or "How do you do this?" Suzanne would often call Stacia during a lunch break with a class about to walk in. During her break Suzanne would open the "file of gold." This drawer, or "treasure chest," was full of Stacia's music maps, favorite games, and core activities that had been given to Suzanne as a parting gift from the student teaching experience. From this drawer Suzanne would pull a file and *know* the activity would be amazing for her students. Suzanne would then call Stacia with "How did you introduce the game?" Stacia, always ready for Suzanne's call, would quickly explain it and then Suzanne would have to get off the phone as the students were walking through the door. Suzanne would also email Stacia, asking specifics about how to run certain games or just filling her in on funny things her students would do or say. Suzanne would not be the only one making the calls. Stacia would also call or email regularly to check in. Looking back on that first year, Suzanne realizes how much she valued those little "How are you?" and "Haven't heard from you in a while!" coming from her former cooperating teacher.

That first year, Suzanne had two mentors assigned to her through the district and she remembers, "We just didn't jive."

I had a mentor whose job was to be a mentor. He was not a music person. Then I also had a music mentor. I really felt they were like, 'Wow, you're

doing great! You don't need me.' I didn't really feel like they were mentors to me. I did run a few things past them just because they were like, 'What do you need help with?' But I never used them. Although they were wonderful and nice, I was so inspired by Stacia. – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Suzanne's two assigned mentors both did a good job in that they tended to their mentee by calling in to check on Suzanne, supplying ideas, and making themselves available in case Suzanne needed anything. What they *saw*, however, was different than what really going on. Suzanne had a perfect principal, super supportive staff, and parents who loved her. These mentors perceived a first year teacher who stepped into a perfect situation, where everything was "roses and happiness." Suzanne believes that her mentors were used to having more problems with first year teachers and so she was a refreshing change. Suzanne realized had something happened or if she needed them, Steve and Michelle would have been there for her. Suzanne also ponders whether things might have been different if Stacia had not have played such a supportive role. "So if I had not have had Stacia, maybe I would have been more, 'Michelle...what do I do?' Instead, I was like, "Yeah, I got it."

Stacia was not so easily fooled by the "roses and happiness" perception as Suzanne's assigned mentor. When Suzanne moved on from her student teaching experience, Stacia was excited to see how she would do, but also wanted to be there to help her if needed. "I think that when she was student teaching I saw her potential and was thrilled to see the excellence in all the skills she had." Stacia was impressed with the way that Suzanne put everything into practice during student teaching. Not only did Suzanne apply what she had learned, but dared to try her own things too. Stacia also realized how hard it was for her former student teacher that first year. "It was a difficult year and she was over-worked." They would talk when Suzanne needed fresh ideas or how to approach an activity, but Stacia remembers talking through the fears as well. Many of Suzanne's fears came across as "bad things that could happen." To combat these

anxieties, Suzanne and Stacia would come up with three different plans of action for how to approach the situation at hand and then Suzanne would just “go in and do what was right at the time.”

Stacia was often tempted to go above and beyond in her informal mentoring duties. A very vivid memory remains with Stacia as a reminder of this.

I had a little talk with her principal when she (Suzanne) was hired. I told him how smart he was to have hired her and to realize that he has a totally wonderful person. So I was saying all these good things and then he said, “Ok now, I am going to give you the same advice I gave our prior teacher here and that is, back away and let Suzanne become a teacher on her own. Let her get her feet wet and let her do her thing.” And I said, “Oh.” And I am thinking is he saying that to me or her predecessor? Oh...he is saying that to me. And then I said to him, “Oh, that’s a good thing for you to say. I am glad that you are saying this, but I will tell you that I don’t think that there is a need for me to be here a lot. Suzanne is totally prepared and capable. So she won’t need me. I might like to see what she is doing, but I don’t think that she will need me. – *Stacia*

While Suzanne might not have agreed with the “I don’t think she will need me” sentiment, Stacia held back from coming all the time. There were special music programs, like the “Martin Luther King Jr.” program where Stacia helped out with logistics, such as the planning and rehearsals. In such a planning time, Stacia was able to relay to the other teachers some of the areas that Suzanne would need help; monitoring the children or “pumping them up a bit.” In Stacia’s mind, she was there to help Suzanne feel more confident and calm. “I think I am a cheerleader.” After all, Suzanne had the resources and the ability to be a success, but she was lacking feedback from competent music sources.

## **Pair #2 – Kirsten and Rachel**

### **Kirsten Shields**

In high school Kirsten was already leaning towards a career in music education, but saw herself more as a band teacher. After all, it was in high school band “where the great musical moments happened, and I really wanted that.” Upon entering college, however, Kirsten dropped “education” from the music degree and pursued a performance degree instead. Kirsten partly believes this was because of the university she was attending, but she also feels it was because of the culture of music education in her state and district. At that time, all Kirsten wanted to do was play the flute. Halfway through her undergraduate degree though Kirsten started teaching private lessons. “And that was the highlight of my week; to be working with young kids. Building relationships with those beginning band kids...it was just great for me.” It seemed futile to start over with another degree, therefore Kirsten completed her undergraduate degree in music performance. She was inspired and encouraged to apply for the MME+ degree program at a western university, known for its strong music program. For Kirsten, “the performance degree was my primary trajectory, but I had always wanted to do something with kids *and* something with music.”

The trajectory that took Kirsten into music education was not a completely smooth ride. There were professors who frowned on Kirsten’s decision to pursue an education degree saying, “You’re too smart...too good to go into teaching.” Yet there was one professor, her private flute instructor, who supported Kirsten in this decision. Kirsten remembers him saying that her particular personality and approach to teaching would be a really good fit for education. This professor stressed too that Kirsten should complete what she started, which at that time was her undergraduate performance degree. “You just need to finish up what you’re doing here, and then



look for those types of music education programs, like a MME+ program.” Kirsten would later say that this individual was her first mentor. “He was really positive and really supportive because he loved teaching and that always came through on an individual level.” It would not be until Rachel Wolfe that Kirsten found another mentor that could be that “voice of reason.”

### **Rachel Wolfe**

Rachel became a music teacher simply because she loved playing the flute in high school. Rachel initially thought that she would be a veterinarian or an engineer because she was good with math and science. As a junior in high school, however, her life was turned around by one band teacher. Rachel was within two weeks of quitting the flute when the band teacher left and another stepped in as a replacement. Under this band instructor’s direction, Rachel fell in love with playing her flute and made the decision to be more proactive in her music making; “I needed to do more with it.” Upon high school graduation and entering college, Rachel continued her pursuit in flute performance, but “did not know about being a teacher.” It did not take long though before Rachel knew she wanted to become a teacher. There was a small problem however. A degree in music education was not offered at her college, only music performance degrees. Rachel was once again fortunate in finding a teacher to see her through this. Rachel’s private flute instructor was “one of the most brilliant teachers on the planet, and I mean truly brilliant. She was an amazing musician, but she was also a brilliant human being.” This teacher made sure that Rachel was not left out in the degree program just because she was the *only* music student planning on being a teacher. Everyone else in the flute studio was a performance major, but in order to become certified in education Rachel needed to tack on education classes to her performance degree. “In effect, it was almost like having a double major.” With this sort of guidance, Rachel not only learned a lot about playing the flute but also what it took to be a good

teacher. Such moments were often rendered through memorable statements (such as the following). “There are at least 500 ways to play Bach, and only 100 or so are right.” This simple statement has stayed with Rachel to this day to remind her that just because you are not doing something the best it has ever been done does not mean that you are doing it wrong. Rachel was able to keep up with being an honor student, a flute major, and taking the necessary education courses so that she graduated as a certified music teacher and band director. Even with the diploma and teaching certification, Rachel still did not know if she would actually like teaching. She looks back though and says that she was lucky. “Even if I didn’t think I was going to like teaching, once I got teaching...I loved it.”

Rachel’s first music job was teaching 5th – 12th grade band in a small town in Iowa. It is fascinating for Rachel to think back on her first years of teaching, as the entire district consisted of 319 students that were all housed in one building. Rachel taught there for three years before the school closed down, but Rachel remembers building quite a music program there. After the school shut down, Rachel moved with her husband to Indiana, but for some reason Rachel could not find a job teaching band. “So I ended up in the general music area” and it is in the general music classroom that Rachel has stayed. There was some new learning that had to transpire as Rachel ventured into elementary general music. Rachel felt competent in her teaching abilities, but the desire to teach elementary music was somewhat lacking. While teaching elementary music, Rachel had started her master’s degree and was a Teaching Assistant (TA) for the local university. It was during this time she was “switched over” from band to general music by two music teachers also getting their degrees. Both teachers introduced Rachel to the Orff and Kodaly methodologies and she recalls that they both “helped me in my first steps into general

music.” With their support, Rachel believes that she was able to make the transition from being an instrumental music teacher into a general music teacher.

As much as Rachel learned to love teaching, she equally loved having student teachers come into her classroom. It was only after five or so years of classroom teaching, Rachel started being asked to have college music majors come and observe her classroom. By her sixth year of teaching, she had her first official student teacher. Rachel relates why she likes having pre-service teachers as “when you have a student teacher in your classroom, you tend to think really hard about why you do things and I think it just makes you a better teacher. When you have to explain it to someone else, you have to understand it at a higher level.” Rachel continues to open her classroom door to many college students who are at various stages of completing their degree in music education ranging from practicum students, student teachers, to students completing a single observation. It was because of an observation experience that a connection was initially established between Rachel and a graduate student named Kirsten Shields.

### **The relationship begins.**

In my head I had this idea of what teaching general music would be like; like the pink and the sparkles. You know what I mean? And the unicorns coming everywhere. That was kind of my idea; that you had to be peppy and very bubbly. And I didn’t consider myself a very bubbly person all the time. So when I saw her teach and I saw her having a great rapport with the kids, I was like, “whoa...there’s another way this could be done.” So when I saw her, I could see myself doing it...if I could do it her way. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

The MME+ program was much what Kirsten expected: taking classes to learn about students of all ages and their needs, basic lessons on teaching music and musical skills, and completing multiple observations in various music classrooms. In one such methods course, Kirsten was assigned to observe Rachel Wolfe’s elementary classroom. Kirsten held certain assumptions about elementary music teachers, but those assumptions changed after that first

observation. Kirsten saw children having fun, but it was very clear that there was “actual learning” taking place. “You could see the active listening, the active learning.” Rachel Wolfe had obviously created a bond with her students, but she was not “sing-songy or overly animated,” she was just “Rachel.” After watching what was happening in Rachel’s classroom that first semester, Kirsten wanted to see more. She requested more observation time in Rachel’s classroom to complete her practicum requirements. Then when it came time for Kirsten to choose a cooperating teacher, “she was my first choice and I jumped on her, like really early to lock her in.”

Kirsten and Rachel had actually met prior to that first observation, which Rachel vaguely remembers. At the university, there were a number of social gatherings for the graduate students and faculty. Rachel would almost always attend such functions because of her connections to the university via her husband. It was at one such gathering that Rachel first saw Kirsten, but there were also twenty or so other graduate students and their spouses so a connection really was not established. Rachel then remembers Kirsten coming into her classroom for her initial observations, sitting and taking notes, but again, a connection was not truly established. During the first practicum observation, however, Rachel *did* finally take notice of Kirsten.

I say to the students (from the university) that they can join us or walk around the room, touch what you want beforehand and she (Kristen) just came and sat with us. She would show one kid or ask him what he was doing while we were doing it. She was so comfortable in the classroom and I *knew* it was going to work. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)

The practicum hours went by quickly enough and each time Kirsten was in her classroom, Rachel knew there was something special about their relationship. “We seemed to communicate in much the same way; it was very easy.” Rachel was thrilled when she received the email from

Kirsten asking about being her student teacher. The following are some of Kirsten and Rachel's recollections of their time together during the student teaching experience.

Kirsten was oddly strong. Honestly, student teaching was a formality for her. I think it did help her because it gave her a lot more ideas on how to build lessons. Had she not, she probably would have been just fine. She just would have figured it out eventually...it just might have taken her a little more work.  
- *Rachel* (first individual interview)

I wish I could have done all of my student teaching with Rachel because of the way that the two experiences (the other student teaching) contrasted so much. I really felt used and abused at my other school. Rachel was very nurturing and would listen to me and we would work through problems, whereas with the other one (cooperating teacher), she would rip through what I already knew and pick...pick...pick...- *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)

The thing that was really great about Kirsten is that she would come to me and (pause), I would say, "Okay, so how did you feel?" And she would say, "This didn't go so well." And then, you know, we would talk about it...like what else could you do? And she would come up with, "Well, this is what my teacher would have done when I was a kid. This is what I've read about that might work. And this is..." and I said, "Well, why don't you try several of those and see what works best for you." – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

I think we've always had a good deal of respect and I think that has always showed. There's no competition between us...nothing. Rachel didn't feel threatened by the new person coming into her room. There is nothing I could have done teaching or being with the kids that would have made her upset or kick me out. I think we think really similarly. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel first individual interview)

### **Beyond student teaching.**

Rachel has really helped me this first year. And honestly, she was really influential in getting me the job in the first place. She was one of my references, she had worked with the art teacher, who is now my mentor. So it was a great network for me to have Rachel on my side. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

Now that the school year was over, Kirsten had a moment to reflect on how her first year of teaching went. Being a perfectionist, this could be a difficult task. The school year had its high and low points; most of the low points coming from a place of not knowing what to do or how to

really help out her students. Even that first week of school Kirsten remembers feeling helpless. “It was apparent that some of things you could never read in a book. A first grader was completely mute with me the first class. We were sitting in a circle on the floor and he is cowering behind the drums. I asked him nicely to get in the circle... “There’s a spot right there.” And he literally pulled up his shirt over his head and I am like...I am going to get sued on my first day. Then the next class I had with him, he meowed at me.” This first year was indeed very different from what she had read about in her university courses and from what she had observed during her practicum. Kirsten was learning from her own experiences that there was so much “other stuff” that goes into teaching.

This is a conversation Kirsten often remembered having with Rachel while she was student teaching. When she thought back to what she learned from those 8 weeks “most of the stuff that I had to work on was everything other than what I knew about music.” In her first official year as a music teacher, Kirsten was now having to put into practice everything she learned from Rachel about pacing, being able to read students, knowing what students need based on their behavior. When things started going awry in her classroom, Kirsten had to remember, “It had nothing to do with how great of a musician I am. It was all the other stuff.” Of course Kirsten believes that she would not have gotten the job in the first place had it not been for Rachel. In fact, much of the communication that took place after student teaching with Rachel was directly related to finding that first job.

After graduation, Kirsten took on a full time substitute position teaching elementary band. Kirsten was happy to have a job right after the student teaching experience, but it was only part time. Kirsten’s desire, however, was to take that particular music program “someplace new” and really hoped that the school would hire her full time for the next school year. The school,

unfortunately, was not able to do this. Kirsten was upset about this because she did not want to leave that job feeling that was “turning her back on the kids.” She knew that Rachel would know what to say. Rachel was someone inside that “teacher circle,” someone who could comfort Rachel in the fact that she was not a bad person for having to leave. Evolving from her supporting role of cooperating teacher, Rachel comforted Kirsten as a colleague and told her to look for another job. After all, “she might find that dream job and would miss it if not actively seeking.” Rachel also took on the responsibility of actively helping Kirsten with the job search; forwarding any posting of a job opening. With Rachel’s connections with the local teachers, she found out about a full time elementary music position from her friend who happened to be an art teacher at that school. When Kirsten became one of the top applicants for this position, it was Rachel who relayed to the principal how extraordinary Kirsten was when she was called as a reference.

It sounded disrespectful, but I had to tell her that if she didn’t hire her, I would not have a high opinion of her (the principal). I said, “As a principal you couldn’t dream of a person who deals with things in a better way. She (Kirsten) will be picking everyone’s brain and it will only be the extreme issues that she’ll have to deal with.” And well, the principal obviously had faith in whatever I said was going to be legit. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel first individual interview)

After receiving a “dream job,” Kirsten’s communication with Rachel slowed down a bit; coming and going in waves. Most of the conversations took place through emails and dealt more with music teaching logistics (e.g. where to buy recorders and how many to order, borrowing music for the choir) rather than providing emotional support. Some emails were questions that Kirsten feels she could have figured out the answer herself, “but I asked anyway because I value her opinion.” Kirsten continues to email Rachel “because I know she would say, ‘Why didn’t you email me about that? I have this and this and it would take me 5 minutes to find it.’ So I do,

cause I know that she would want me to.” Rachel says that she and Kirsten were “lucky” in the way that their relationship has progressed since the student teaching experience. “Kirsten and I will eventually be equals. I mean she (Kirsten) will always be a younger teacher, but we’ll eventually get to the point where we will talk about different things. The conversation will be less about what recorders to buy and what songs to sing in the choir. That relationship will be there.”

### **Pair #3 – Daphnie and Reyna**

#### **Reyna Lewis**

From an early age, Reyna had always been involved in music. She started Suzuki piano lessons with her brother when she was 6 years old, but she was the one that showed an aptitude for music. Reyna stuck with her piano lessons until she was in 6th grade and credits these lessons as to why she always enjoyed music classes; “I kind of always knew the answers.” She remembers her elementary music teacher giving Reyna the “cool parts” on the big xylophone because she could keep the steady beat. Reyna moved into playing the clarinet in 5th grade and the flute in 6th grade. She became more involved in the music at her church and found that through middle school, music became a bigger part of her identity. It was in high school when Reyna developed her passion for music performance and for her new instrument, the bassoon. “And then in high school, I played everything: orchestras, bands, community groups.”

Reyna showed quite a propensity as a performer. While she remained involved with the local youth orchestra, jazz band and church, playing piano and bassoon, she auditioned for the Pre-College program at Julliard and got accepted. With Julliard being only an hour away by train, Reyna was able to have Saturday lessons on her bassoon and take classes in music theory and ear training. The school also offered the students electives “in areas such as composition,



music history, conducting, and other specialized topics. Students are given ample opportunities in solo, chamber, and orchestral concerts.” Reyna remembers this experience as being “eye opening.” “I loved music and I was like, ‘Oh this is great! I am with other musicians!’, but it was really intense. Really really intense.” Reyna experienced firsthand what it would take to be a full time performer and decided that she wanted to do other things besides “be in a practice room for 8 hours a day.”

Changing her outlook from that of a performer was not horrible because Reyna had other passions as well. She really liked to teach. Reyna had taught some piano lessons in high school, taught Sunday school with her father, and her mother was a teacher as well. “Teaching was definitely in my blood.” When it came time to look for a college to attend, Reyna looked and auditioned at schools with music education programs. She was accepted into the music education degree program at the University of Connecticut. What Reyna did not know at the time of her acceptance was that the music education degree program had a focus in elementary studies and Reyna did not want to teach elementary music. “It was all Kodaly and I was like, there’s no way...this is not me. Which is very ironic, especially to those people who knew me in college and see what I am doing now.” Reyna dropped out of the music education program and transitioned into the music performance program; ending up with a Bachelor’s degree in Music. Upon graduation, Reyna moved with her boyfriend (now husband) to Massachusetts. With her boyfriend working full time, Reyna started interviewing for jobs all over the Boston area. “And the more and more I went out and interviewed and got these positions, and started thinking about myself in the positions, I decided that’s not what I wanted to do. I kept thinking, ‘Well, if I take this job, can I get back home in time to teach lessons?’” This was a deciding factor for Reyna.

“And so when I really started thinking about it, I thought, I guess I kind of want to be a music teacher.”

The State of Massachusetts had a provision that allowed Reyna to teach for a year without a license because she held a degree in music. She found a part-time job in a school right outside Boston, teaching middle school band and 4th-5th grade general music. From there, Reyna was able to obtain her teaching license. For the next three years, Reyna taught band and then middle school general music in addition to band for another four years before moving west. She did not have any experience with students younger than 4th grade until she moved west and got a job teaching elementary music to K-5th grade students. This was a welcome happenstance and Reyna fully accepted her position and persona as an elementary music teacher. With this move to a new state also came another new opportunity; the chance to work with undergraduate music education students. “My first year at the school, I noticed my partner (the other music teacher in the building) had some university students coming in and I was like, ‘Oh, that’s really cool. I want to do that.’ I asked her colleague for the name of the contact at the university and it was the very next year a student came to observe me a couple of times.” This was just the beginning for Reyna as this first observation soon turned into several observations, followed by practicum students coming into her classroom, followed by Reyna having her first student teaching experience. Having this experience with these pre-service teachers lead Reyna to become involved with her district’s induction program. After three years in the district, Reyna was a mentor for the induction program specializing in mentoring novice music teachers.

### **Daphnie Gray**

In high school Daphnie initially wanted to become a music teacher, but in college that changed. As she recalls, “I think I got lured into the performance world and thought that it would

be great to be in an orchestra and do that whole thing.” Daphnie spent countless hours in the practice room all throughout her undergraduate program and then once she graduated realized that “It’s not so great to be in a practice room for all that much time and I really missed people.” With a job in the performance world taken off the table, Daphnie decided to pursue a master’s degree in musicology. Unbeknownst to her, however, all the art jobs one could get with a master’s degree in musicology were about to disappear with the crash of the economy in 2008. Daphnie was back where she started, except she held a plethora of music credentials. Throughout this stage in her life, Daphnie had been volunteering at elementary schools and found she was really happy when she worked with the children. When it finally came time to decide what the next step in her career would be, the only thing Daphnie could think of was to go back to where she had initially started. “I sort of back tracked with what I wanted to do way back, years and years ago; get a music education degree and a teaching license.”

This decision was not an easy one. Daphnie did not want to go back to school, having already earned one master’s degree but she went ahead with her plan. She worked for a year and a half with no pay and no social life (that she can remember), to “basically just get it done.” With her coursework completed, it was time to complete the student teaching experience. The commuter school through which Daphnie was getting her teaching degree was just beginning to adapt music as a specialized degree program. Because of this, Daphnie was given the opportunity to choose her own cooperating teacher. The only qualifications she was looking for in a cooperating teacher was that they were a high school band director in a nearby district. Fortunately, another student who had just completed the program relayed the name of his cooperating teacher. With this positive review, Daphnie contacted the gentleman, met with him, and made a connection. On that first meeting, the band director showed her around and Daphnie

was blown away by the program. With the idea that she would never have this opportunity again, “the chance to see a world-class marching band program and work in that” was enough of an impetus to ask this teacher be her cooperating teacher. This experience would prove to be a very fortuitous for Daphnie in more ways than its location.

Her cooperating teacher not only had an excellent marching band program, but he was also an excellent teacher. At the beginning of the student teaching, Daphnie said that she did not have a lot of marching band experience because her high school marching program had been cut. Her cooperating teacher told her it was not a problem saying, “You can learn everything you need to know here and it will be good.” She did learn from him, and more than the music basics. She learned lessons about a life as a music teacher. Daphnie saw how hard he worked at his job. He would commute over an hour to get to work and his job was exhausting. “He basically had no life during marching season.” In spite of this, this band instructor was optimistic and a positive teacher. He also had a “hands off” approach when it came to working with Daphnie. She remembers him saying “You know Daphnie, just go out there and teach. If you make a mistake, then either just say my name and I will come out of my office or I will be sitting out there and we will talk about it afterwards.” For Daphnie, this was a great way to experience student teaching. She was in the midst of completing her second graduate degree and felt as though she “didn’t need my hand held through the whole process.” Her cooperating teacher would just say, “Make the mistakes. It won’t destroy my program if you make mistakes. Everyone is very forgiving.” As the end of the student teaching was drawing near, Daphnie remembers crying, “I am never going to have another experience like this again.” His reply was simply, “Yes you will. Yes you will. You are going to be in general music first, but then you can move up to marching band. I did general music for 10 years before I got to do marching band because you have to move

through the district.” Daphnie relates, “And of course, he was right. I ended up in general music.”

It was a little chaotic right after the student teaching experience, graduating, and receiving her teaching certification. Daphnie moved out to the western part of the United States and was hired three days into the school year. Being hired so late, Daphnie missed the entire orientation for new teachers. As everything up until this point had been done unconventionally, this was nothing new for Daphnie. She did have doubts, however, about working as an elementary music teacher. Daphnie had very little experience with younger children. She had taught some beginning band in an elementary school as a substitute, but missed out on teaching Kindergarten through 2nd grade. Daphnie remembers thinking “I can’t do it. I don’t relate to little kids.” To make matters worse, her first teaching position was no easy task. “I was going from 18-year-olds to 6-year-olds and it was just like somebody threw a bomb in my face.” Daphnie had so many questions and no one to turn to for answers. She needed a curriculum that worked with her style of teaching. She needed to know how to match her school’s standards and benchmarks with the new state standards. She needed to know how to assess these children and then how to tie everything together. To top it all off she was hired at a bilingual school. “I felt like I got sort of thrown in with these Spanish-speaking children, which I loved. I was totally up for that challenge, but it was really scary because I hadn’t ever really taught in Spanish.” Daphnie knew she needed help. Fortunately, her teaching district had set up an induction program for new teachers. Two weeks into her teaching year, Daphnie showed up at the first meeting on time and ready to find someone to answer these pressing questions.

### **The relationship begins.**

I first met her at one of those induction meetings. The leader of the mentoring induction program told me that she was from Connecticut and I was like “Oh

that's really cool. I'm from Connecticut." And at that time I had already kind of lined up three mentors and they typically don't want one person taking more than three. But when I met Daphnie at that meeting, I was like, "Oh my goodness. We get along really well and I've just met her. And she's from Connecticut and she's doing general music..." and one of the other girls I was supposed to mentor was doing orchestra. So I made the arrangements that the other girl got a different mentor, and then Daphnie and I created, you know, the mentoring relationship. – *Reyna* (first individual interview)

The induction program in Reyna's district is designed to help new teachers who are in the process of completing their professional license. Four full time mentors spend up to 15 hours throughout the course of the year observing, talking with, and supporting their assigned mentees in any way they can. In specialized areas such as music, art, and physical education, new teachers are paired up with a teacher from that discipline. Once a month meetings held with all of new teachers and the mentors. The four full time mentors deciding the topic of each meeting (e.g. specialized learners, gifted and talented programs, English language development program). Two or three times a year, there are meetings held specifically for the new music teachers. These meetings are geared to support these teachers in their specific content and teaching contexts. Once the year is over, these new hires have met the district requirements allowing them to apply for their professional license. Reyna enjoys the opportunity to meet these new teachers, but there was something special about Daphnie; something more than "the Connecticut connection." "I knew Daphnie was going to be a lot of fun and a good teacher; great background and all that stuff."

That first meeting was just the beginning of what became monthly or bimonthly "get-togethers" peppered with a stream of phone calls and emails. These meetings were a life line for Daphnie. The very first individual mentor meeting Reyna set up with Daphnie was supposed to last an hour, but ended up lasting for more than two hours. "She just had so many questions. She was feeling kind of lost and kind of drowning even in that first month." Besides being able to

give Daphnie advice on curriculum, assessment, and behavior management, Reyna was also able to help Daphnie make an important connection. “Kim was my student teacher and she was bilingual, Spanish-English, and so I connected them right away. So it just seemed like a lot of coincidences that actually help that mentoring relationship begin.” There were many phone calls, but most of the mentoring interactions happened at Reyna’s house or at a coffee shop. Reyna would worry about her mentee as “she was up till 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00 in the morning; working on lesson plans and getting all her stuff together.” So when they got together they would problem solve in the areas that Daphnie needed support. Reyna would either supply or help Daphnie find resources and strategies to use in her classroom. As Daphnie describes, “She was a rock for me.”

And we would meet. We met at her house, we met at a coffee shop. We got together and just problem solved what I needed support with. She would say, “What are you working on this week? What do you feel you need a sounding board for? What do you want to do? So we would end up sitting for an hour, sometimes two hours and...it was so helpful to me. I was really stressed out that first year. Just taking in the whole first year teacher thing. But without her, I feel I absolutely would have been so strung out and I wouldn’t have known where to turn. – *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

Daphnie really liked the fact that Reyna’s mentoring meetings were rather “alternative.” Besides meeting at her house or coffee shops, they would sometimes go for a hike. Daphnie would go as far to say that Reyna is “Wonder Woman.” “She is sort of everywhere. And I don’t know if she sleeps or how she exists.” Reyna indeed played the part of a super hero when Daphnie found out that she would be teaching a section of physical education at her school that first year. After the initial shock, Daphnie called Reyna first thing in the middle of the school day. “I said I need help! Can you help me? What should I do in this situation? What would you do?” The two of them thought about it and decided the best plan was to “rebrand” the class as a

music and movement class. Reyna was full of ideas, but instead of throwing them at Daphnie, she took the time to listen to what Daphnie's needs were first. "She's just such a good listener and she she's so good at just thinking through problems." These following quotes are reflections from Daphnie and Reyna about their year together during the formal mentorship.

Just knowing that she (Reyna) was there. And I never felt like she was being condescending or anything. She always was so open with everything and always saying, "What can I do to support you?" –*Daphnie* (first individual interview)

I was able to observe her last year; teaching entirely in Spanish. It was really neat because the kids were engaged. I could tell what she was teaching, obviously I couldn't understand every word, but she was modeling and using instruments. And the kids were singing, so it was really neat to see. – *Reyna* (first individual interview)

She's just so amazing because she answers the emails in like 50 seconds after I send them. And she always answers her phone. I don't understand how she answers her emails so quickly or how she's available that quickly, but I just know that whenever I'm in a situation, she'll be there. She's like...she's more reliable than my parents. - *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

So the elementary music teachers get together once a month and that first year, Daphnie wasn't really sharing anything. And now, she's adding in some tidbits; bringing in songs to share and some activities to share. So I definitely see her growing and her confidence is growing. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

### **After the induction program.**

Being mentored as a novice teacher was quite different than being mentored as a student teacher. While both of Daphnie's mentors during each experience were supportive, her needs at each stage were quite different. "I didn't know in general what I could do wrong as a student teacher and as a novice teacher I could ask for better feedback from Reyna." Daphnie's needs changed again once she entered her second year of teaching. There were a lot less crises now that she "knows the people and knows the school." Even though the induction program is over,



Reyna has stayed on as a mentor and transitioned into more of a friend. “She wants to hear how I am doing currently, what spots I am having trouble with, or issues that I am having. She wants to support me in any way possible to attack the problems and try on solutions, so that when I go away from our meeting, I am in a better place. I know what I am going to do to attack my problems or fix my teaching issues.” Although the two teachers do not see each other as often or text as often, Daphnie knows that it has nothing to do with “being ignored, it’s just a very different year than the last year.” “But I know that she is always in the back of my head and I can reach out to her if I need to.”

Reyna would say that Daphnie is a friend in whom she is invested. “What motivates me to continue to do that...I feel like I have a personal investment in her development as a teacher and as a person. And I definitely see her as a friend.” Although Daphnie has other forms of support, ranging from peers to other experienced music teachers in the district, Reyna knows that she holds a special place in Daphnie’s support system. “There are times when she needs to get things off her chest, she needs to talk through things. I feel very fortunate that she feels comfortable contacting me about those certain things.” There are still going to be challenges that Daphnie will face in these early years of teaching and Reyna, having been through similar trials, will be there to talk Daphnie through it. “Society tells us to keep it in, you want to be the good teacher, especially when you are on probation. Try to do your best and try not to shake the boat too much, you know really put on a happy face when it’s not completely happy.” These types of conversations are not easy for either teacher, but Reyna and Daphnie are at that place now where they can open up to each other to support each other.

## **The evolution of an informal mentoring relationship**

Social exchanges are a part of the human experience as we collectively or independently interact with other humans on a professional or casual level. Finding a way to analyze such exchanges however requires a categorization of such activities. To organize the conditions and progression of the mentoring exchanges taking place in the mentoring dyads, I developed the concept of relational junctures. These particular points in the mentoring relationships are based on major themes found in the data and SET concepts. Following is the list and order of relational junctures that will be explored: 1) need, 2) connection, 3) good fit, 4) trust, respect, & value, and 5) reciprocation. The first three junctures are derived solely from the data and are precursors to the establishment of the informal mentorship. After the informal mentoring commences, the last two junctures can be initiated. It is in these last two relational junctures where the main concepts of SET are exhibited. The discussion of the relational junctures (and resulting outcomes) will aid in analyzing the effectiveness of the mentoring taking place, but provide insight on how SET is exhibited in a mentoring setting. Each juncture will be discussed with examples from the interviews and theoretical literature to support the discussion.

### **Need.**

“Because you don't really know what you are going to need a year from then for the next three years of your experience. You can't possibly imagine what that is going to be like since it's your first time.” – *Kristen Shields (first year teacher)*

Need is what drives our very existence. Humans need food and water, therefore society is built around buying and selling food and beverages. Humans need shelter, therefore we build and buy houses or some other form of shelter. Humans need or crave companionship, therefore mankind searches out ways to make connections with other humans or animals. There are many other examples that could fit under the category of need. In this study, need prompts the novice

music educator to seek out help during their first few years of teaching. If there were not a need, the mentoring relationship would be baseless and superficial. As shown in this next section, need is the impetus that moved the participants into relational junctures consistent with the SET framework.

Discussions about the needs of novice music teachers were key ideas presented in the first chapters of this study. The novice teacher can struggle in areas where knowledge is lacking about teaching requirements or obligations, the content, teaching processes, and content delivery skills of their discipline. The extent of the novice teacher's needs is somewhat based on having positive district and administrative support, sufficient resources to do their job, and having a support network that includes experienced mentor teachers. The novice music teachers in this study struggled in many of the areas mentioned as problematic, but there were other needs that were expressed. These needs were often specific to a particular novice teacher.

*"It's just so overwhelming" – Suzanne Meyers (4th year teacher)*

All of the novice teachers spoke to the idea of being overwhelmed their first year of teaching. Each of these teachers were overwhelmed for different reasons however. Suzanne, the 4th year music teacher, was overwhelmed because of the options that were presented and the lack of an organized curriculum.

The challenge of being a first year music teacher is just the options. You have so many things that you can teach within music and there are so many different ways to teach it. And I had so many resources. Like I felt that I had been collecting songs and collecting tidbits throughout my whole education career, my whole licensure plus master's program that I felt just so overwhelmed. The biggest challenge is that I didn't have a curriculum. And didn't know how to really create a curriculum. So it was just like, it was overwhelming. The amount of material you could choose from and the number of ways that you could teach it. And then not really knowing how to choose because I didn't have a ton of classroom experience. – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Although Suzanne stepped into an excellent teaching with a supportive administrator, parents, and resources, she still felt as though she did not know enough. Suzanne did not know what songs, games, or activities would actually work with her students. Having only a short time with Stacia to see “what worked,” Suzanne also felt as though she did not have enough of those materials to get her through an entire year.

Kirsten (1st year teacher) also felt completely overwhelmed her first year. While Kirsten did not necessarily feel overwhelmed by the curriculum, or lack thereof, she felt as though her lessons might not be effective for her students.

And you’re (pause) completely overwhelmed. And ... it’s more...it’s a lot of experimentation. I don’t know... Just, everyday inundated with experiences and learning... the learning curve is just like *voop* (sound effect that goes up). -*Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Kirsten is one of the only full-time music teachers in her district. So knowing whether her lessons “contained the right stuff” was a source of stress for her. Kirsten also felt overwhelmed by the sheer size of her school. During her first year of teaching full time, she taught over 700 Kindergarten through 5th grade students. While this number is large in comparison to many other teaching situations, it is not the number of children that Kirsten finds overwhelming. Kirsten is overwhelmed by her fear that she will be unable to “reach everybody”; feeling the need to make a relationship with every child and make them feel successful in her classroom. “This year has been crazy and I have felt overwhelmed at most every turn.”

Daphnie (2nd year teacher) had every right to feel overwhelmed her first year of teaching music. First of all Daphnie was hired two days into the school year as a music teacher for Kindergarten through 2nd grade. While this might seem difficult starting this late in the school year, Daphnie struggled with idea of teaching this age group. The teaching program that Daphnie

went through did not include a student teaching placement in an elementary setting. The only teaching experience Daphnie had at that time then was with 9th-12th grade marching band.

It was a lot of trial by fire, and then finding curriculum that worked with them, and worked with my style. It took me a couple of months to do that. And then to sort of match what I wanted, what curriculum I wanted to use, and match it with the standards and the benchmarks with the new state standards, and sort of melting that all together. And then, figure out how to do assessments, and how that all fit in. –*Daphnie* (first individual interview)

This language resonates with the mental state of many first year teachers (Conway, 2001; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Daphnie, however, had even more reason to feel overwhelmed. She was hired to teach Kindergarten and 1st grade completely in Spanish and 2nd grade 75% in Spanish because her school was a dual immersion model. “So on top of it being my first year and not being entirely comfortable with the curriculum, district standards and everything, I just though, oh my gosh, I’ve never taught a class completely in Spanish.” Being a Spanish major as an undergraduate student was a major benefit for Daphnie, but she had some work to do as far as becoming fluent enough to teach in Spanish. Daphnie was equally challenged to find Spanish music repertoire, “good stuff,” to teach her students. Out of all of the novice teachers, Daphnie faced more challenges her first year of teaching, but feeling overwhelmed was a common emotion that each of these novice teachers faced their first year. How to battle these emotions, therefore, was common need these teachers shared.

*“I feel very lucky in my job, but it’s also a lot. It’s very isolating.” – Kirsten*

Research supports the notion that isolation is a factor for novice music teachers feeling anxious and under-supported their first few years of teaching. These emotions are so extreme in some cases that novice teachers will leave the workforce. Isolation can be caused by physical separation (as in the case of music teachers teaching in a modular classroom, separated from the

rest of the staff) or feeling cut off from a proper support system (physically or emotionally). The novice teacher's support system is usually made up of more experienced teachers, peers, district assigned mentors, and administration. The novice teachers allude to the fact that there is less support in the beginning of the job and as time goes by, they feel better supported. This might be the reason that Kirsten, the first year teacher, feels especially isolated; physically and emotionally.

Being the only music teacher in the building, being one of the only music teachers that are full time in the district, I feel like as a new teacher there's not a lot of support as far as, "Am I planning right? Am I doing the right things? Are my lessons even containing the correct stuff?" There's nobody to bounce off ideas that really knows the music content, you know? I can talk to my teammates as far as specials and we can talk about discipline, we can talk about classroom management, but nobody... I don't feel like anybody's around to just... just bounce ideas off of. Like... Is this the best way? Is this the most efficient way? Can I get there faster? Not that I feel like I'm clueless or not prepared, it's just sometimes it feels like a lot. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

Kirsten feels isolated from a music education community. She knows that with time and experience her lessons will become more effective and refined. What Kirsten finds frustrating is that she does not have a nearby music teacher community to help her through some of her smaller issues. "So you can talk to your teammates, but nobody really knows music procedures or the musical targets I was going for or if I am losing the kids in the actual process of the lesson."

The other two novice teachers, Suzanne and Daphnie, have the full support of not only their mentors, but also support from the local music teacher community. The music teachers in Suzanne, Daphnie, Reyna, and Rachel's district meet once a month to discuss their favorite lessons, problems in the classroom or school system, and upcoming events in their district. These meetings are known as PLCs (Professional Learning Community). Of all of the participants in

this study, only two are not able to participate in the PLCs; Stacia, Suzanne's mentor, and Kirsten. Stacia is a retired music teacher and no longer attends these meetings, and Kirsten is not a teacher in this district. Unfortunately, Kirsten's district does not offer this type of professional development. So while Suzanne and Daphnie are both physically near, and have the support of other music teachers and their mentors, each still experience a deficiency in their support and feel isolated.

Suzanne, on a much lesser scale than the other two novice teachers, experiences a lack of support from her administrator. "Well I am a first year non-probationary teacher, so my principal never comes in my room. The testing is not yet in place, so one looks. I have my assessment, but no one looks at them." To some, having a principal that stays out of the way is wonderful. To Suzanne however, this is stressful because she would like to have the feedback as to whether she is doing a good job or not. Like Suzanne, Daphnie also feels as though she is not fully supported by her principal. "I am continuing to create a rapport with my principal, but he's going in a million directions like all administrators." Daphnie especially felt under-supported when her principal asked her teach physical education her second year of teaching. After learning about this she remembers going to talk to her principal and begging him to get her out of teaching this class. "I said I can't do this...I don't feel comfortable. Then he was like, "Well you are going to lose your full time status." And I was like, well I need to pay my mortgage." As Daphnie is teaching in three different schools, she hopes that her principal will remember her willingness to teach physical education and that it will be rewarded when it comes time to seeking a full-time job at one school.

Supporting novice teachers can occur through conversations, but support is sometimes given through physical resources. Suzanne and Kirsten both felt supported by their mentors in

this way. Daphnie, however, felt very different about the resources made available to her. Mind you, Daphnie's teaching situation is very unique in that she is teaching at a bilingual school, she has three different teaching placements, and she teaches physical education two times a week. Novice music teachers who are in teaching placements like Daphnie, however, need a lot more in the way of resources for them to feel successful. While Reyna did the best she could to help Daphnie in helping her through her turbulent first year and working with her to rebrand the physical education class into a music and movement class her second year, she felt helpless when it came to teaching music classes in Spanish. One way Reyna was able to help Daphnie, as discussed earlier, was introducing her to Kim; a former student teacher who was fluent in Spanish. Even so, Daphnie felt under-supported and isolated in her teaching situation.

I needed resources now. I mean, she (Reyna) helped me as much as she could. She found me one of her student teachers who was from Puerto Rico. She (Kim) had limited time to help me last year though because she was finishing her degree. Also, being on the job market, she was stretched really thin. But last year, I needed all the resources possible. Where do I find them? And, she (Reyna) pointed me to some of them, but honestly there aren't a lot out there. I don't fault her for not being able to find them, but there's not a lot out there. That's the only thing from last year that I wish. I wish there was just one place I could have turned to sort of see the whole scheme of a Spanish music curriculum, but it turns out that it's hard to find that stuff. – *Daphne* (first individual interview)

*“So it's been a lot and I am exhausted.” –Kirsten*

*Primary Sources: America's Teachers on the Teaching Profession* reports that “prior to taking on any extracurricular activities, teachers work an average of 10 hours and 40 minutes a day, three hours and 20 minutes beyond the average required work day in public schools nationwide (Scholastic, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012, p. 13).” Some of the teachers, novice and experienced, in this study will testify that they are working up to 60-70 hours some weeks. The teacher's workday consists of instructional time, student supervision and discipline,



preparation for instruction and collaboration with peers, and documentation and analysis of the students' performance (Scholastic, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2012). Needless to say, novice teachers are not only physically exhausted, but mentally and emotionally exhausted as well. "This year has been crazy and I have felt overwhelmed most every turn. So it's been a lot and I am exhausted. So I am hoping for more stamina next year and extra time, but you never know (Kirsten, 1st year teacher)."

First year teachers, with the number of new problems they are facing, take more time adjusting to their new jobs. Daphnie's mentor, Reyna, remembers her mentee's struggles with time. "She was up until 11:00, 12:00, 1:00, 2:00 in the morning working on lesson plans and getting all of her stuff together." Daphnie is also traveling to three different schools, with three different groups of students and three different school climates. Stacia remembers how exhausted her mentee was her first year. "Suzanne didn't wait a year to get acquainted, but put forth all the grade level programs she saw at my school which lead to her exhausting first year." The amount of time spent on succeeding in the areas of lesson planning, classroom management, building relationships between the administration, other teachers and the students themselves, and professional development leaves novice teachers exhausted and drained. Emotional, mental, and physical support is needed separately by the novice teacher. This need is recognized by the education community, which is why induction and mentoring programs have been established. According to the novice teachers in this study, these forms of induction support are not always beneficial. There is an unmet need that drives the novice teacher to seek out help and guidance and they will search for help from those that they feel they have made a connection with.

### **Connection.**

It's just like a friendship. Some people pass you by and don't make an impression on you. Some people, you meet them, and you are like, "Whoa, that

is somebody I would like to be friends with” or “That's somebody I need to keep in touch with” or “That’s someone who I feel challenges me or makes me a better person.” It's the same thing like us (Daphnie and Reyna). I think that if somehow I hadn't have made an impression on Reyna and she didn't make an impression on me, I wouldn't have talked to her in the first place.  
–*Daphnie* (first individual interview)

A connection is usually a *feeling* that can occur instantaneously between two people, as in the case with the mentees and mentors in this study. In the above statement, Daphnie states that Reyna made an impression on her from their first conversation. This impression was a strong enough feeling for Daphnie to want to continue learning and interacting with Reyna by agreeing to be her mentee. The likewise was true for Reyna. When talking about the moment she and Daphnie met she says, “I knew that when I met you (Daphnie), that we were totally going to hit it off.” These two describe this event as the other person “making an impression” on them. What is important to understand, especially as it relates to this study, is what is it about this phenomenon of making a connection that prompts individuals to want to continue in a relationship?

*“Maybe that’s the thing. It’s a fit because you feel natural. You feel a connection.” – Stacia (Suzanne’s mentor)*

Before the question of *why* a connection prompts individuals to begin and continue a relationship can be answered, the concept of making a connection needs to be further defined. As seen above, Daphnie (2nd year teacher) likens this event to making new friends. People come in contact with individuals on a day to day basis many of whom they will never see or hear from again. There are also times you will come into contact with a person on numerous occasions, as in a workplace or classroom setting, but seeing them or being with them on a continual basis does not mean you desire to strike up a friendship or relationship. Daphnie feels that the

connections you make that turn into friendships are special and unique, as a connection does not happen with everyone. Reyna also realized this when she said, “I mean there are always a couple of people you know who you will connect with. It might be every two years or it might be two months.” It needs to be asked then if mentoring relationships are similar to friendships. I would say there are enough similarities for both types of relationships to be compared to each other.

While Daphnie and Reyna met by chance at a district-wide meeting, the remaining participants met more intentionally during a practicum observation. The music education department at Suzanne and Kirsten’s university has designed the practicum component of the degree program in such a way to allow students to observe as many teachers in the neighboring districts as possible. With the number of practicum hours required and the variety of teachers observed, it is hoped that these pre-service teachers will find a teacher they think might work as a future cooperating teacher. The placement of the student teachers is also a unique feature to this music education department, with student teachers being given a say into who will be their cooperating teacher. A majority of pre-service teachers around the United States are simply placed with a cooperating teacher and not given any input. In Suzanne and Kirsten’s university some pre-service teachers choose their cooperating teacher based on proximity or teaching context. However, it is more the case that the pre-service teacher will choose a teacher they feel a connection with. As Rachel says, “Even in their first semester the students are looking at “Who do I align with?” “Who do I want?” “Who is going to be my hero?” “Who am I going to look up to” “Who do I want to be like”?

Both Suzanne and Kirsten chose their cooperating teachers, and future informal mentors, based on the initial connection they made during their first practicum observation. Although Kirsten remembers the practicum hours as rather “strange” because “it doesn’t necessarily help

you become a better teacher,” she was paying attention to how she felt. Walking into Rachel’s room, Kirsten says “There was a feeling that I had in your (Rachel’s) room that I didn’t get when I was at any other school.” Speaking to the other novice teachers about this experience, Kirsten remembers, “You connect with them (the teacher), cause that's how you would want to be taught or that's how you would want to teach. I think it's more of a *feeling* more than anything else.” Rachel, Kirsten’s mentor, also remembers this first encounter. “When she came into my room, it was very comfortable. She was so comfortable in the classroom, I knew it was going to work.” From the practicum, through the student teaching experience, and into their informal mentoring, Rachel relates that her relationship with Kirsten “just felt right. It seemed the right person who was supposed to be in my life next.”

Suzanne and Stacia also made a connection that propelled their relationship, but with this pair, Suzanne felt the connection first. “The connection was made right away, in that first class I saw. I just knew.” While Suzanne might have felt that connection right away, Stacia says it was more of a thought process before an actual bond was made with Suzanne. “The first memory I have was just thinking, whoa, this person has something special.” It was not until their first conversation about the students that Stacia would say that she felt something more for Suzanne. “Her observation of the kids was way beyond the typical beginning university student. She had great insight into what was going on. That really impressed me.” That feeling, or impression, was a strong enough to warrant Stacia making a more concerted effort to get to know Suzanne and take her on as a student teacher in her final year of teaching.

*“Oddly enough I didn't find out what we had in common until she started student teaching and I read her documents.” - Stacia*

Many times, people do not know what causes a connection with another person. From the stories of these novice teachers and their mentees, I would say that having a common background, common music persona, and common teaching philosophy led to their connection. It is interesting, however, that these mentoring pairs did not know about their commonalities until after they had already made a connection and were in a mentoring relationship. I wish to clarify what I mean by commonalities. Common background can relate to where the participants are initially from or how they were raised. A common music persona relates to training on a certain instrument, the path that led them to become music teachers, or how music fits into their lives now. A common teaching philosophy simply relates to a shared view of the teacher's role in the classroom and their interactions with their students.

Two of the three mentoring pairs grew up in the same region of the United States, but did not know this fact when each first met the other. Suzanne and Stacia are both initially from Minnesota and Daphnie and Reyna are both from Connecticut. While being from the same state does not guarantee an instant connection, this fact did come up as a “weird,” but positive, happenstance in both sets of conversations. Stacia relates this commonality as making them both feel comfortable with each other. “Coming from Minnesota, there's common family values or...I think everything felt comfortable...with family...friends.” Reyna found out about the Connecticut connection with Daphnie from a colleague. While this might have prompted Reyna to initiate a conversation with Daphnie, she knew that there was more to Daphnie. “I knew Daphnie was just going to be a lot of fun. I knew she would be a good teacher, she had a great background and then there was the Connecticut connection. We actually grew up in towns next

door to one another.” There was obviously more than having a common birth state that spurred a connection.

Kirsten and Rachel did not come from the same state, but there were other circumstances in their upbringing that they did share. Both Kirsten and Rachel are flutists and before becoming teachers, considered a performance career. Kirsten and Rachel really thought about their decision to pursue a teaching career, but thankfully each teacher was able to reach their goal. Each had a very influential professor during their undergraduate studies that not only supported them in their decision to become music teachers, but were also great teaching models. This similar circumstance might have been a reason why Kirsten and Rachel connected at that first practicum observation, where Kirsten saw kids learning music without the “pink and sparkles and unicorns coming everywhere.” The other two pairs of mentor participants also shared a common music background. Daphnie and Reyna are both woodwind players. Suzanne and Stacia are both vocalists. Again, while these commonalities did not make the connection come about, it might be a reason why these pairs felt comfortable with each other. “I definitely saw some similar characteristics between us and I think that is one of the things that helped us to connect” (*Reyna*, first individual interview). “The reason why Stacia and I work is because we both, we agree on so many things” (*Suzanne*, first individual interview)

Creating a teaching philosophy is usually an assignment given to undergraduates sometime during the teacher education degree program. I remember having to write a teaching philosophy for a job application and thinking how difficult it was to describe my role as a teacher and how I feel children should be treated and instructed. There is always an extra element in a music educator’s teaching philosophy because the subject of music incorporates a performance and aesthetic element that other school subjects rarely deal with. One does not necessarily have

to write down these feelings to have a teaching philosophy. These beliefs and emotions about teaching students and how to incorporate and teach about music are a part of the music teacher's ideology. This ideology, or philosophy of teaching, should bear some commonality for a connection to occur.

One thing that Stacia and I have in common is our background. We are both from Minnesota, we both have choral backgrounds. Her philosophy behind the voice, which is a huge part of what I teach, correlates with mine. And so there is just common life experiences and core values. But I think your core experiences...there are certain things that you are just "YES, we agree."  
– *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

I think it also helps if basic principles are similar and you can build on that if your goal is to make kids passionate about music. I mean you can always speak to that. If intentions are desperately different, I think it's kind of hard sometimes to relate. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

I come at it knowing that I gelled with Rachel and I did not gel with my other assigned mentor. And there is nothing wrong with her, we just didn't approach it (student teaching) the same. And my approach to kids is not the same. So I know, when I boil it down, the fact that I gelled with Rachel on both of those, her philosophy of teaching and everything else, it's obvious to me that that is super important. It's the most important, because the other way didn't work at all. And she is just as good a teacher, she's just as good a musician, but when you don't meet somewhere else, relationship-wise and what you think is important, as far as what you teach and how you do it, nothing else is going to really work. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final individual interview)

Instantly, she seemed to feel comfortable which I assumed meant that we both felt very much like things were...they were just right. Philosophically, we almost lined up completely; the way she thinks about things, the fact that she feels deeply about things always. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

Interestingly enough, having a common philosophy was stated as being important for the mentoring pairs that started as a student teaching experience: Suzanne and Stacia, Kirsten and Rachel. This was not the case, however, for Daphnie and Reyna; the mentoring pair that met through a district induction program. Reyna remembers, at their first meeting, that Daphnie was

asking questions that she would ask. This led Reyna to believe that both she and Daphnie were very similar in their thinking, but not necessarily similar in their teaching philosophy. When asked about their teaching philosophies, Daphnie and Reyna admitted that this topic had not even come up in their conversation. In regards to their teaching philosophy Daphnie says, “I don't even know what my teaching philosophy is...mine changes every 10 minutes.” Reyna says, “I took a Level 1 Orff course, my best friend in college was a Kodaly nut, and I spent all of last year with a student teacher who was a Dalcroze person, but I have taken bits and pieces of all of that into the Reyna philosophy.” Instead of sharing a common teaching philosophy, this mentoring pair recognized that their connection comes more from having a similar background, both musically and regionally. “I think, that especially in those first meetings, we related well because we first had that instrumental background” (*Reyna*). “I don't know what is most important to our relationship. I think having that similar background certainly helped. Being from Connecticut, there are just some underlying things that we know. We are like next door neighbors practically. There is something to be said for like the culture of the Midwest, the culture of the west, the culture of the west coast, the culture of the east coast. We grew up in a similar culture area, which is unique” (*Daphnie*).

I do not want to imply that having a common teaching philosophy is mandatory for a connection to transpire. The evidence for this is seen in Daphnie and Reyna's mentoring relationship. These two music educators were able to establish a connection based on other similarities, such as music backgrounds and coming from the same region of the country. There is some attention, however, that should be given to this idea of sharing a common philosophy. The reasons for this are defended in the following statement from Rachel.

Your philosophy of teaching comes from who you are. And so if you don't share some philosophical ideals about children and respecting them in what's



important and music and what important, you probably don't gel as people, relationship-wise. Because I think your musical philosophy or your teaching philosophy comes right from your life. What's the word I want? What's important to you in your life? Your values...there it is. So I think what you find is that people who share philosophies also share value and because of that they might have each other as friends anyway regardless of having been put in this situation together. Because there are a lot of things that are easy to talk about and easy to live through because of that common value system. So that would be my answer to that. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

### **Good fit.**

In this section, the idea of “good fit” will be discussed in regards to the relational junctures. I argue that there is a difference between the junctures of connection and good fit. As stated in the above section, making a connection can happen instantaneously and it is usually a *feeling* that both parties experience before they progress in their relationship; be it a friendship or a mentoring relationship. Making a connection is important for reasons seen in the following statement made by Stacia, a teaching veteran of more than four decades. “Here’s a teacher that wants to guide and here’s a student teacher...they get assigned, but there’s no chemistry. You know that there are going to be some students who are going to flourish under that and others that aren’t going to connect. They’ll be intimidated and not thrive.” While this statement is made about the student teacher and cooperating teacher relationship, there are similar dynamics in the mentor-mentee relationship. In an induction program, many novice teachers are assigned to a mentor without any regard given to the idea of chemistry. I argue that if a connection is not made, the mentoring relationship, just like the student teaching relationships described by Stacia, may not flourish. Making a connection and having chemistry with another person is an important element in a mentoring relationship. Connection, however, is based on feelings. Good fit, as it pertains to this study, is not just a feeling that both parties experience, because good fit inherently deals with the ability of mentors *to mentor* and mentees *to receive* from their mentors.

If a connection is established, a bond will form which can lead to good fit. This section will speak to how the mentoring participants went from a connection juncture to a good fit juncture and how good fit begins to define and bolster the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship.

*The reason why Stacia and I work is because we both agree on so many things. We both feed off of each other. She gets excited that I am so excited and I get so excited that she gets so excited. I know she appreciates me and I appreciate her. – Suzanne (1st year teacher)*

While you can make a connection with someone, you have let some time go by and function with a person before it can be determined if the relationship is a good fit. At the onset of this study, Suzanne and Stacia had been in an informal mentorship for four years. The connection phase had taken place prior to Suzanne student teaching under Stacia. After this experience, these two decided to continue their professional relationship through an informal mentorship. What were the circumstances, however, that prompted each to stay in a relationship with each other? Was this simply a friendship that came from the student teaching experience? Stacia often jokes that she could be Suzanne's grandmother, so while these teachers call each other friends, theirs would be considered an unconventional friendship. This relationship is a friendship, but there is something more to this friendship. When examining the quote from above, there are some factors which I believe allowed this relationship to move from a point of connection to a more stable relationship based on a good fit.

In the opening quote, Suzanne states that she and Stacia agree on many things. This goes back to the idea of having a common philosophy of teaching and music. This statement also elaborates on motivating factors that allow the relationship to flourish and the rewards that have ensued from their professional relationship. Suzanne and Stacia are inspired by each other,

appreciate each other, and are excited by each other's company. These indicators go beyond a simple *connection* and the feeling that each of these teachers initially experienced when they first met. Inspiration, appreciation, and excitement are not mere emotions. The dictionary defines each as a condition that moves the intellect and can prompt action (Encyclopedia Britannica Company, 2015). These two were not merely compatible in their personalities, something I would deem appropriate in the "connection juncture." These educators inspired each other to grow in their abilities, valued each other's company, and to a certain extent, revitalized each other's careers. The question needs to be asked then, how did this happen? Stacia clarifies how it happened for her in the following account.

Now that I am thinking a little more clearly, this similarity just built such a comfort level that there was this immediate ability to communicate and for Suzanne to apply the ideas she saw. And then when I met with Suzanne other times when she was teaching, it was just little things to extend an idea, but I think that those two elements made us really comfortable so we could trust. I didn't worry that if I suggested something that Suzanne would feel offended or hurt by it or discouraged. I never felt that way. And if she asked for things, she never apologized for what she did or if she needed help. – *Stacia*  
(Suzanne and Stacia final paired interview)

Comfortability undergirds the stability of this relationship. The progression that led to this level of comfortability started with the formation of a connection encouraged from each other's regional and philosophical similarities. Once the connection had been established, both Suzanne and Stacia became more comfortable with each other. This in turn allowed them to communicate effectively with each other. Had Suzanne not been comfortable with Stacia, and vice versa, the relationship would have been stilted. As the levels of comfortability grew in the relationship, there were two consequences generated in the mentoring: (a) an *immediate ability* to communicate with Suzanne and (b) the ability for Suzanne to apply the ideas that they discussed. With direct communication, Suzanne was able to take ideas into her classroom to see it played

out. Suzanne recounts this type of mentoring and her level of comfortability in the following account.

I remember this one specific moment where one of my lessons with first graders went bad. I was having them play an accompaniment to a song and you (Stacia) were watching me and I felt it wasn't going well. And you were just sitting there watching and at the end I was like, "So how was that?" And you said, "Well I don't think I have ever seen first graders sit and wait so long." I was like, "You are absolutely right." I didn't feel like, "I am so sorry for doing that." I totally agreed and you just said it in *that* way. You told me what was wrong and I just learned from it. I didn't feel embarrassed. Just like...o.k. – *Suzanne* (Suzanne and Stacia final paired interview)

This particular incident took place during the student teaching experience. Already, Suzanne felt as though Suzanne was on her side and because of this, she was able to receive constructive criticism from Stacia. This comfortability in their communication and ease in utilizing Stacia's advice carried through Suzanne's first years of teaching.

I called Stacia at some lunch breaks. I would call that I have 3rd grade coming in 30 minutes. Then I would open my file of gold from Stacia, go to the 3rd grade file, and pull out a booklet and know that she had some great way to introduce this game. So I would say, "How did you introduce *Here comes a Leprechaun?*?" and she would quickly explain it, and then I would be like "O.K., they're walking through the door...bye!" Other times I would be like, "I have a story for you." So that was, I think it was established by both of us. I would call when I needed it, but Stacia would also email to check in, like "How are you? Haven't heard from you in a while." – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

It must be noted that Stacia had retired from teaching at this point in Suzanne's career and therefore had a little more time on her hands to help Suzanne whenever she needed it. Stacia, however, desired to be a part of Suzanne's life and continued to help in whatever capacity she was needed: talking to Suzanne's fellow teaching staff about how to help out during the Martin Luther King Jr. Program, listening to Suzanne's choirs and giving advice, and eventually working on material to co-present at conferences. Is this informal mentoring relationship a

special case or are there indicators that the informal mentoring taking place between the other mentoring pairs are on this same trajectory?

Taking the aforementioned indicators from Suzanne and Stacia's relationship, one would expect to see an established connection leading to comfortability in conversations, interactions which lead to immediate forms of guidance, and the ability to use advice without any misgivings. This scenario in turn would lead to even higher levels of comfortability. Kirsten and Rachel's relationship will be examined first to see if the mold fits this mentoring pair. I begin with this pair because they are the most alike to Suzanne and Stacia in how they met and began their informal mentoring relationship. It has been shown in the connection section how Kirsten and Rachel established a connection. From this connection phase, and in order to determine if there is a good fit, comfortability should have been instituted and growing. Their words will be used to show how this progression took place for both.

In the beginning, I needed the whole entire lesson planned out before I presented it or thought about it or talked to Rachel about it. I also needed that whole thing planned out before I even brought it up as an idea. And I think as the mentoring went on, I got more comfortable with half thoughts and not well planned out things because in the middle somewhere, a better idea would come along in the process. And now that I fast-forward and I am in my new job and I have colleagues to bounce off those ideas with, I feel like I am a better problem solver because I am not so concerned with having it right away. I figure it out as I go and then I take the ideas that Rachel and I can create through my muddled mess of an idea in the first place without being too worried that it wouldn't work out in the first place. So I think the process of lesson planning or project planning or anything...that kind of came through our mentoring. – *Kirsten* (final individual interview)

With her and me, I would have to say that it's one of the easiest relationships I've ever had. She and I hit it off very easily. We seemed to communicate in much the same way. You know, it was very easy. In fact when she asked me, I said, yeah, I felt really comfortable. And she said exactly the same thing, so I think it just... it just was... it was good for us. It was an easy kindred spirit kind of thing. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

More so from Kirsten than Rachel, Kirsten refers to the progression of comfortability leading to an uninhibited flow of conversation and the utilization of ideas and ways of doing things in the classroom. Kirsten does make mention of how this was not the case in the beginning of their mentoring relationship, which is different than Suzanne. Kirsten felt as though her ideas and presentations of lessons needed to be perfected before even discussing them with Rachel. As time went on however, this changed and Kirsten felt more comfortable in presenting half ideas and worried less about how her lessons would turn out. This proved to be beneficial in her first of teaching, as Rachel felt that she was able to get a handle on her perfectionism having dealt with these issues with Rachel. Rachel also feels like she had a very “easy” relationship with Kirsten; communicating effectively and feeling comfortable with her. She even calls Kirsten a “kindred spirit,” making reference to *Anne of Green Gables* by Lucy Maud Montgomery and the description Anne uses for her good friend and teaching mentor, Miss Stacy.

Even with this higher level of comfortability, both Kirsten and Rachel know that they aren't quite to the levels of friendship that Suzanne and Stacia experience. They are almost to that level of camaraderie that Suzanne and Stacia share though. Rachel states, “Two years we've been having a professional relationship that definitely has turned into a friendship. We haven't gotten to the next step, but I see us doing that in the next, like the next few times that we hang with each other.” When asked how each saw their relationship playing out in the next five to ten years, however, Kirsten responded, “More of the same. Hopefully there will be more contact as we both maybe calm down a little.” Rachel responded similarly. “The same, but maybe good friends that you don't have to see all the time, but where you can just pick up where you left off. And I don't think the number of times we see each other will ever make the difference, but as we grow older together, we will share more the opposite direction...you know what I mean? I will be

getting as many of her good ideas as she listens to my new thoughts.” So while this relationship will take a little more time to mature, I believe there are enough indicators that a good fit was established and this mentoring will move into the next junctures of the relational ladder.

What happens in an informal mentoring relationship that does not start at the student teaching experience? Do Daphnie and Reyna’s mentoring relationship exhibit any of the indicators that their relationship came through the connection and evolved into a good fit? I would say that there are a few markers that would point to this relationship being a good fit. The main examples being the formation of a strong connection made through their similarities and an increase in the comfortability levels that foster effective communication. Evidence for their connection was provided in the previous section. Daphnie and Reyna, similar to the other mentoring pairs, experienced a connection at their first meeting. In order for this relationship to demonstrate good fit, as in the case of the other mentoring pairs, both of these teachers would need to experience a level of comfortability that generates effective communication. Because this relationship began in a very structured setting (the district’s induction program), the communication was more structured. In spite of this, both Daphnie and Reyna were comfortable in talking through the issues Daphnie was having her first year in the district.

My first year we met every month of the school year, that’s 10 months. It was definitely once a month, sometimes maybe it was twice a month and we would meet at her house...we met at a coffee shop. We got together and just problem solved what I needed support with. I needed a lot of support with discipline and classroom management type things last year. So she would basically say, “Go...What are you working on this week? What do you feel like you really need? Another sounding board to bounce off? What do you want to do?” We would end up sitting for an hour, sometimes two hours and... and it was so helpful to me. I feel like I would have (*pause*)... I was really stressed out last year. Just taking in the whole first year teacher thing. But without her, I feel like I absolutely would have been so strung out, and I wouldn’t have known where to turn. So... she was a rock for me last year.  
– *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

While this description of the first year might simply be construed as good mentoring practices (e.g. Reyna met with Daphnie more than the prescribed times, met with her at informal locations, and allowed Daphnie to set the focus for each meeting), I would also say that such practices fostered comfortability. I might go as far to say that had Reyna not been comfortable mentoring Daphnie, she would not have allowed her to come into her home or meet more than the prescribed number of hours.

Daphnie and Reyna had a year in a more structured setting, but both decided to maintain a mentoring relationship after the year was over. The dynamics did change somewhat when the pair was not seeing each other on a more regular basis. Daphnie did not call or email as often and Reyna, although ready to help out her mentee, did not push herself on Daphnie, knowing that Daphnie would contact her if she needed something. At the conclusion of her second year of teaching, and the end of the first year of being informally mentored by Reyna, Daphnie stated the following.

I feel like every time I meet with Reyna, or I met with Reyna this last year, or even if I just ran some stuff by her about some things that are going on in my teaching position, she just meets me where I am at. She doesn't have an agenda of what she wants to impart to me as a mentor, she wants to hear where I am currently, what spots I am having trouble with, or issues that I am having. She wants to support me in any way possible to attack the problems and try on solutions so that when I leave her, I am in a better place and I know what I am going to do to attack my problems or fix my teaching issues.

– *Daphnie* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

This is very similar to what Stacia described in her discussion of the attributes that helped build the effective and stable relationship she has maintained with Suzanne. Daphnie values the fact that Reyna does not impose a mentoring agenda upon her, and the support and advice she does receive prompt her to “try on solutions” that will better her teaching. Is this where the relationship remains then or is there more?



Good fit goes beyond the formation of connection. Good fit describes the participants' enhanced comfortability levels, effective modes of communication, the utilization of advice by the mentee, and the evolution of the mentoring relationship; going from colleague to more of a friend.

And I definitely see her as a friend, I mean, I guess it's a little different than a friend my own age, she is...well how old is she? At least 10 years younger than I am, but yeah, there is a definite connection and I want to make sure that she is doing ok. She has a lot of support at her school and her principal is sometimes good but sometimes not the greatest, but he is there as a resource. She has another music teacher in the building that's a tremendous resource to her. But I feel like, there are times where she needs to get things off of her chest that she needs to talk through. I feel very fortunate that she feels comfortable contacting me about those certain things. We've discussed this over the year (*pause*)...that's not something easy to do for any of us; to really open up and say, "I am scared about this." or "This makes me really angry." Society tells us to keep it in, you want to be the good teacher, especially when you are on probation. "Try to do your best and try not to shake the boat too much." You know, "Put on a happy face"...when it's not completely happy. So to have that kind of trust I think is really special. And I think I said that the last time or two with Daphnie, it goes back to that trust. I feel very special that she trusts me in that way and that through these conversations, I have opened up too. – Reyna (final individual interview)

It is important to highlight the other forms of support Reyna mentions; namely Daphnie's principal and another music teacher in the building. In spite of having these other resources, Daphnie turns to Reyna for more personal needs. Reyna says this is because of a heightened level of comfortability. I believe Daphnie and Reyna have moved beyond the point of connection into that of good fit because of their demonstration of effective conversations and heightened levels of comfortability. It is also important to note that Reyna feels "very special" about their conversations and the subject of *trust* surfaces. Good fit fosters trust, along with respect and value, which will be discussed in the following section as this is the next phase of the participants' relational junctures

### **Trust, respect, and value.**

Trust, respect and value will be discussed in this section as the next juncture. One main difference between this point and the other relational junctures is that the feelings of trust, respect, and value cannot be viewed as individual junctures. Instead, feelings of trust, respect, and value can: a) happen apart from each other, b) can happen earlier, later, or coincide with other relational junctures, and c) they can happen at different times and for different reasons for each mentoring pair. The reason trust, respect, and value has been made into a relational juncture is because of the participants' attitude about these sentiments and the role each plays in the mentoring relationship. Trust, respect, and value are also features of SET. As seen through conversations with the participants, trust, respect, and value are not only by-products of an effective mentoring relationship, but these feelings promote the longevity of the relationship.

#### ***Trust.***

To introduce the concept of trust as it pertains to the participants in this study, two quotes will be employed that have already been used in the good-fit section. The first comes from Stacia.

Now that I am thinking a little more clearly, this similarity just built such a comfort level that there was this immediate ability to communicate and for Suzanne to apply the ideas she saw. And then when I met with Suzanne other times when she was teaching, it was just little things to extend an idea, but I think that those two elements made us really comfortable so we could trust. I didn't worry that if I suggested something that Suzanne would feel offended or hurt by it or discouraged. I never felt that way. And if she asked for things, she never apologized for what she did or if she needed help. – *Stacia*  
(Suzanne and Stacia final paired interview)

From this statement, I was able to judge that comfortability was a huge factor that defined Stacia and Suzanne's relationship as a good fit. Another important element of this account is that comfortability not only allowed effective communication to occur, but trust to develop between

this pair. As outlined by Rusbult et al. (1999), trust is felt by those in a relationship who exhibit behaviors such as predictability, dependability, and faith. Trust is important to a mentoring relationship because it is through trust that the mentor and mentee perceive each other's commitment to each other and expectations of fairness (Rusbult, 1999; Sabetelli, 1999). This is another statement that was used in the good-fit section.

So to have that kind of trust I think is really special. And I think I said that the last time or two with Daphnie, it goes back to that trust. I feel very special that she trusts me in that way and that through these conversations, I have opened up too. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

Two main ideas arise from these statements that are vitally important to this discussion of trust. One, trust dispels worry or doubt for both the mentor and the mentee and two, through trust, the mentor and the mentee is given the capacity to be more vulnerable and therefore be more open in the relationship. A smaller idea that arose from this conversation is that trust makes the mentors feel good, or “special” about the relationship they have their mentee. Unlike the feelings that are associated with making a connection, the feelings that are associated with trust go much deeper and take more time to establish. “They really get that sense that you trust them and that, I think that is empowering for teachers. It's priceless.” – *Stacia* (large focus group interview)

So many of our decisions are based on how we feel. In this statement Stacia recognizes the power that feelings of trust can generate. This conversation took place during the large focus group interview, where all six participants talked with each other.

*Stacia* - But when you make really close friends (referring to the novice teachers who are now a part of the larger body of music teachers), you can call on those people and trust that they have your best interest in mind. And they give to you and it's because you ask for help, it's not a...

*Reyna* – It's not a trait of weakness. That's right.

*Stacia* – They want to share in your successes, it's their successes too. That's the key... asking people ‘How are you doing?’ or if you give them something, ‘Did that work or not?’ So they (the experienced teachers) really get that

sense that you trust them and that, I think that is empowering for teachers. It's priceless. – (large focus group interview)

Without the context of Stacia's quote in the larger body of the conversation it could be misleading and appear as though novice teachers are empowered through trust. This is not the case however. Taken in context, Stacia actually is referring to the more experienced teachers, or mentors, being empowered through the trust given to them by the novice teachers. Trust is not something that is felt by one party in a relationship, it truly is a "two way street." Trust is a very empowering feeling. It trust that compels a child to leap into their parents' arms knowing they will be caught. It is this same trust that allows mentees to open up about their fears, give free access to their mentors about their ideas, and ask for help where it is needed. Stacia brings up that trust is also important for the mentors. Mentors trust that their advice will not be taken as criticism and trust that their mentees know that they have their best interests in mind. The lack of trust is a reason why so many formal mentoring experiences do not work (i.e. student teaching placements and district assigned mentors). The lack of trust is also why many professional development activities fall short of meeting the needs of novice music teachers.

In the prior example, the participants referred to the Professional Learning Community or PLC created by the music teacher community in their district as a support system and form of regular professional interaction. The mentor teacher mentioned by Stacia could be *any* experienced music teacher willing to share their expertise with *any* novice teacher. Stacia can speak about this support system knowledgably because she was a part of this music education community for almost 20 years. It is true that the relationship aspect of the PLCs or support system is key; "Asking people how they are doing"? It is also true that once trust is sensed, experienced teachers, as well as novice teachers, can be empowered and there is no price tag on

that. However, while there are needs for supporting relationships between novice and experienced teachers, the PLC does not guarantee the establishment of a connection or a good fit, let alone trust. Daphnie speaks to this perfectly when she describes her assessment of the PLCs.

I feel the PLC is very helpful for me, but I feel with a mentor I can be more vulnerable. I can open myself up and not feel like anything is stupid. Whereas in the PLCs, I really try to prepare myself if I am going to be teaching something and I usually feel like I failed at it, and everyone is looking at me like, "Well that was ok, but..." But when I talk to Reyna, I feel like I could just say anything and anything is valid and anything goes. I can ask her things that I think are totally ridiculous, things that I wouldn't ask other teachers in the district that I see as experienced, just because I might feel judged. I know I shouldn't feel judged, but I just don't have that relationship with them and I don't want to show them my vulnerabilities. I think it's because I am a new teacher. - *Daphnie* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

Making that connection and establishing good fit is of great importance when it comes to trust. Trust, in this instance, allowed Daphnie to feel vulnerable and valid in her thinking. Daphnie does not discredit the usefulness of the PLCs, but knows that there are limits to how these teachers and meetings can help her. Reyna confirms this in her opinion of the PLC meetings.

You know, we are just presenting to each other. It's collegial, but deep relationships aren't formed through the PLCs and I think that is really what first year teachers really need. They really need someone they can trust and go to about anything. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

While Reyna's experience in the PLCs may not have led to any deeper levels of support, others could have a different experience. In an individual interview, Stacia explains how she would reach out to a novice teacher with whom she had just met and the role trust plays.

Trust is a huge thing because that the person (novice teacher) really wants to learn and the advice that you are offering is not meant as criticism. It's meant to help or it's another option, another way of doing it. However you can establish that (trust) so that the person isn't just trying to impress or isn't devastated because you mentioned one little thing that they can think about. But that would be the first thing that I would clarify with this person that I didn't know. Like, "Here is my idea. I want to come and help you in any way that I can and I can offer you 5 different ways of doing whatever you are

doing.” But it's not a criticism. – *Stacia* (Small focus group interview with mentor teachers)

Stacia realizes that trust is a mitigating factor as to whether or not the novice teacher will take advice as “just advice,” and not a criticism of their teaching. So while Stacia tries to establish a trusting relationship through a simple conversation (the same kind of conversations she had with Suzanne and other novice teachers), it is not a guarantee that this will create trust. Rachel recognizes this. While she agrees with Stacia’s sentiment that trust is extremely important, trust does not just happen.

Rapport, I always come back to rapport. You have to have a relationship with the person so that they shouldn't feel defensive. I think that's when a situation really works... it's where there's a lot of trust and respect in the relationship. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

All three mentoring teachers recognize that novice teachers have tendencies to be sensitive to criticism. All three mentoring teachers also know that trust is key when it comes to deepening the mentoring relationship; taking it beyond the giving of lesson ideas and speaking to the real needs of the individual novice teacher. Trust, as stated above, can be established through predictable and dependable behaviors. These behaviors take time to be observed, but build faith in a relationship. If these behaviors are the evidences of a trusting relationship, I would dare say that it would be extremely difficult for formal mentoring programs, induction programs, or district professional development programs to establish trusting relationships on a larger scale.

Establishing trust is unique to each individual, because acts of trust are not recognized universally. For the participants in this study, acts of trust are specific to each person. Daphnie, as quoted above, views trust as validation. In her relationship with Reyna, she knows there is trust because she has the ability “say anything” and that her words are validated no matter how ridiculous they sound. Reyna views trust as an openness in the relationship; where her mentee

can ask any question in freedom and without fear. Reyna also knows she has to place trust in her mentees. “I would trust that person to come in and watch me and ask ‘Well why do you it that way? Why not this other way?’ Yeah, so definitely the trust and really that openness is important to a mentoring relationship.” For her part, Rachel realizes that she *has* to trust her mentee in order for the mentoring to be effective. “They have to be trusted in order for there to be mutual respect.” Her mentee Kirsten felt the effects of lack of trust in her second student teaching placement and from this learned that being committed is a sign of trust.

It was a really hard situation because we were traveling teachers and she had kids and she lived in a different city and so I felt like I was asking too much. And so for the cooperating teacher to be not as committed to the situation was really hard for me. I am not a selfish person, so when I have to sit back and say, “I NEED YOUR TIME,” “SIT DOWN WITH ME” Well I don’t do that easily. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)

This act of trust was obviously enacted in her relationship with Rachel. Rachel was a more committed cooperating teacher, but shows her further commitment to her mentees in this comment made in an individual interview, “There is a possessiveness of people I feel I have invested in; that they belong to me.” Stacia feels invested in her mentees as well but exhibits her trust in the following manner.

In the mentorship, the novice teacher and I, we really trust each other. I trust that if I suggest something, she can take it and say, ‘Well I don’t know if I would do that’; that she feels that she can say that and also is really happy to tell me the stuff that she has created that she is doing. So I always feel whatever we talk about... it’s colleagues getting together and brainstorming. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

While Suzanne knows she can trust Stacia, there can also be a point where trust is compromised because of fear and the passing of time. In two separate statements, Suzanne speaks to how her trust in her relationship with Stacia has slightly waned. “She (Stacia) is so

amazing at what she does that I am intimidated by her master teaching and I want to show her this great product and I don't always feel like I have that.” While Suzanne knows that Stacia thinks highly of her and wants to continue their relationship, she feels like she wants to live up to how Stacia speaks of her. In some respects, this is why Suzanne is also hesitant to ask for help. When speaking to Stacia in an interview Suzanne says, “I love watching you teach, so I want to get more comfortable with you watching what I do...or get comfortable with that again. I mean, I was comfortable when I was student teaching with you and now I am not just use to doing that as much.” As you can read, we are back to the idea of being comfortable with another person. Once comfortability is established, it does not mean those feelings of content will remain with the passing of time. Remaining in communication, whether through a phone call, email, or other means, is important to the perpetuation of trust.

Staying in contact is really easy at first (during the first year of teaching) and self-doubt about your teaching is expected, but after 4 years, I have higher expectations of myself. So reaching out is a little less natural, but it is so helpful. Staying in contact, just a minute here and there, is so beneficial.  
– *Suzanne* (final individual interview)

Through this dialogue about trust, one can perceive how the participants are able to give and take advice from their counterparts without fear or worry. These participants were also capable of certain levels of vulnerability with each other, trusting that their welfare and needs are and will remain a high priority. Without trust in the relationship, levels of comfortability will lessen and the effectiveness or even the longevity of the relationship can be compromised. Trust goes both ways in the relationship, and it may be for this reason that informal mentoring practices can foster trust more effectively than more formal methods of mentoring.



### ***Respect and Value.***

Trust and respect seem to work conjointly in the informal mentoring relationship as one is usually mentioned with the other in the same sentiment. Here are a few examples.

I think that's when a situation (mentorship) really works. It's where there's a lot of trust and respect in the relationship. – *Rachel* (mentor focus group interview)

*(In reference to what makes a good fit)* The person (the mentee) feels like that you (the mentor) sense that they are going to trust you or respect you. – *Stacia*  
When student teachers choose their own cooperating teacher, from the teachers' point of view, this immediate respect and trust is set up that...well 'They chose me...they want to be here...' versus 'You've been assigned this person'." – *Stacia* (Small focus group interview with mentor teachers)

*(In reference to what makes a mentoring relationship work)*  
*(Stacia)* You said trust and openness and flexibility.  
*(Rachel)* I think respect...mutual respect too.  
(Small focus group interview with mentor teachers)

Although it is not an absolute guarantee, it does seem as though there is some assurance of respect already being practiced in these mentoring when trust is present. The definition in this study used for respect is "a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities, or achievements (Encyclopedia Britannica Company, 2015)." Why is respect important in a mentoring relationship? Based on the previous discussion, if one had to choose between the importance of respect or trust, trust would seem to play a more crucial role in how the mentoring pairs work together. Respect is important, however, because advice and guidance can only be valued at the level to which the source is respected. This section will discuss the role respect and value play in an informal mentoring relationship. These two terms are not interchangeable, but from the conversations with participants, respect and value coexist and strengthen the mentoring bond.

Suzanne and Stacia have been in an informal mentorship for the longest amount of time, and based on longevity allow for a deeper look at the interworkings of respect and value. During an interview, Suzanne explained:

I feel informal mentorships are need based. It's like when I need something, I call Stacia or when I need advice or when I need to know how a song goes, I will call Stacia. And often when I go to a PLC or a huge conference, I just, whether I need it or not, I am bombarded with material that I may or may not implement into my program. So if you are getting information that you need, it is instantly inserted and benefits you right in that moment. So for me, going to a PLC, I am so busy that I have to choose a PLC over a yoga class. What do I need more? A yoga class will guarantee to calm me down, but a PLC may or may not provide what I need. After all I can just call Stacia. – *Suzanne* (Suzanne and Stacia final paired interview)

When asked how the mentoring relationship with Stacia had impacted her, Suzanne replied:

I would say, I will try to summarize it quickly, it's changed my whole life. I can't imagine...like I remember when I saw Stacia teach, I was like "Whoa, I want to be like that." It shifted my whole perspective of teaching and now as I am thinking about and analyzing how I am teaching, I realize how much this has impacted everything I've done from the very beginning. It's been so influential. I can't imagine not having had Stacia as a mentor. It's such a driving force in what I do that I don't know what kind of teacher I would be. I can't picture it. That's a little mushy, but it's the truth. How would I teach? I don't even know, I can't conceive of it. What sort of thoughts would be guiding how I talk to the kids and what I do? (*pause*) It's been huge for sure. – *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

Suzanne's "feeling of deep admiration for (Stacia) elicited by (her) abilities, qualities, or achievements" is clear. This sentiment also exposes the value Suzanne places on the role Stacia has played in mentoring her through her formative years of teaching music.

Suzanne trusts Stacia, even with her confidence issues as a novice teacher. Trust remains crucial to the effectiveness of this mentoring relationship. Respect is of equal importance, however, as any advice and material knowledge Suzanne is given as a novice teacher is only deemed valuable if the source is respected. In her analysis of her mentoring interactions with

Stacia, Suzanne says they are need based; contacting Stacia if she needs advice or needs to know how a particular songs goes. She goes on to say that she benefits from the support instantly, this support can be instantly inserted into her teaching, and Suzanne can call Stacia at a moment's notice. Can't the same be said for the support provided through PLC meetings or music education conferences? Theoretically Suzanne could meet with any experienced teacher from the PLC meetings for advice or materials, which could then be instantly inserted into her teaching. The reason why Suzanne cannot receive from these other sources comes down to value. From Suzanne's perspective, she does not value or respect the support received from PLC meetings or music education conferences at the same level she values and respects the support received from Stacia. She feels "bombarded with material" that she does not need and that may or may not fit into her program. She also feels as though these other forms of support are time consuming with uncertain benefits. Later in the conversation, Suzanne says that she feels bad about how she speaks about the PLCs, knowing that there are a lot of advantages that come with having a support system in the district. Judging however from her comment where she compares the benefits of a yoga class to the benefits of a PLC meeting, I would say that her respect and value for PLCs and music education conferences is lower than the regard she has for Stacia.

Stacia commented that feelings of trust and respect are immediately initiated when choice is involved. Choice is a mediating factor in each of the informal mentoring relationships in this study. Suzanne and Kirsten each chose their cooperating teacher and chose to stay in a professional relationship with them after the student teaching experience. While Daphnie did not choose Reyna as mentor (if anything Reyna chose Daphnie as a mentee), she did choose to remain in a mentoring relationship after the induction program ended. I believe, as other researchers, that choice engenders respect and value. Respect is acquired in other ways too; you

can earn respect. Is this necessary however for a mentoring relationship to work? Does the mentee need to earn the respect of their mentor? See this unfold in the following conversation that transpired between Suzanne and Stacia.

*Suzanne* - I just feel if you want a mentor, you have to earn that mutual respect. I remember practicing in front of the mirror before I taught my first lessons with Stacia; practicing my expressions, talking into the mirror and conducting.

*Stacia* - I didn't know you practiced in front of the mirror.

*Suzanne* - I did. I don't remember which lesson it was. It might have been "The Raccoon" lesson, but I remember staying up late in the bathroom; watching my face and my inflection.

*Me* - Did you put that on yourself or did Stacia give you that advice to practice?

*Suzanne* – I just so wanted to impress Stacia because I had so much respect for her that I didn't want to get up there and get nervous. – (Suzanne and Stacia first paired interview)

The idea that the mentee has to earn the respect of their mentor is an unspoken, and maybe deep rooted, feeling that many mentees hold going into a mentoring relationship. Suzanne wanted to student teach with Stacia because she highly respected Stacia and valued her opinion and advice. What Suzanne did not know is that in choosing Stacia, she had already done enough to earn Stacia's respect. Still, Suzanne still felt as though she had to earn Stacia's respect. Ironically, Stacia spoke about Suzanne's hard work in an individual interview. She praised Suzanne's diligence and kept emphasizing that she was a very hard worker. It was not this hard work that earned Stacia's respect and made their relationship work. "It wasn't her hard work, it was the fit."

The same opinion held by Suzanne was also expressed by Kirsten earlier in the discussion of good fit. Kirsten wanted to deliver a perfect product to Rachel and was hesitant to present half ideas. This may have been for the same reasons as Suzanne; she felt the need to earn mutual respect from her mentor. Kirsten and Suzanne are different though in how their respect

for their mentors affects seeking out advice. Suzanne is shy about sharing her shortcomings with Stacia, thinking that after four years of teaching there should be a more perfect “product.” Kirsten has other options in terms of mentors to whom she could consult and reflects that she “figures out a lot things by myself” but says that she continues to seek out Rachel’s opinion because of respect and value. “I could figure it out, but I am going to ask anyway because I value her (Rachel’s) opinion.” Daphnie, unlike the other two novice teachers, respected her mentor without feeling she had to earn Reyna’s respect. This may be one contrast between the mentoring pairs that comes down to how mentoring relationships begin. With Suzanne and Kirsten meeting their mentors as student teachers, and the power structure established, these novice teachers may have a tacit feeling of having to earn respect. Daphnie, on the other hand, was chosen as a mentee and therefore she felt respected and valued from the onset of the relationship. Whatever the case may be, Daphnie does value her mentor and appreciates all the guidance she has received.

I just can’t be thankful enough because my career...well for every first year teacher, it is very rocky, but I feel like my career was helped so much. I can't be thankful enough and I should be baking Reyna cookies every day. I just feel like I haven't done enough of that. – *Daphnie* (final individual interview)

It must be said that once again, this mentoring pair had less to say than the other two mentoring pairs about respect and value. While I do not doubt that these teachers respect and value each other (based on their conversations with each other and their decision to continue their friendship and mentoring after the conclusion of the induction program), I do not have as much evidence coming from these teachers on the subject of respect and value as I do from the other participants.

One of SET's major concepts is rewards while trust, respect, and value are rewarding features in a mentoring relationship. Here are a few examples from the participants.

I mean my relationship with Stacia has literally changed my life. I feel that there are so many teachers who don't have that fundamental relationship.  
– *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

She (Suzanne) wasn't always telling me, "You're so wonderful" We just didn't do that. We didn't talk like that to each other, although we both knew how highly we respected each other. It came across in other ways, but not the same way when someone asks you and you say it. So it is very rewarding. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

I think for me it's kind of like a motivation (to stay in a relationship with Rachel). It's emotional, motivational, personal...knowing that she will be there if (a) I fell apart, (b) really want to quit...all of that. Because I know that she has been there. I know that she has gotten through the same types of things and I know that the same types of struggles that are unique to teaching music, that are unique to teaching specials, all of those things...I know that she has been there. – *Kirsten* (final individual interview)

It (mentoring) makes you feel really good. It helps you go on the next day, because you do it for 28 years and it's kind of revitalizing to think of having a mentee that finds the pleasure and joy in the doing. – *Rachel* (final individual interview)

I think that myself and many many people would be lost without her (Reyna). She is a gift to us. She is a gift in my life. – *Daphnie* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

What motivates me to continue to stay in a mentoring relationship with Daphnie? I feel like I have a personal investment in her development as a teacher and as a person. And I definitely see her as a friend. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

Trust, respect, and value are important elements that should be factored into an ongoing, effective, and rewarding mentoring experience. From this discussion, it is hard to say whether or not the informal mentoring would be as successful if one of these components were missing from the relationship. It is also difficult to determine if there is any order as to when trust, respect, and

value are established or if there is a hierarchy in their levels of importance when determining the effectiveness of mentoring. I can say that each mentoring pair has a unique view on trust, respect, and value, and in particular how these elements impact their relationship. I can also say that once trust, respect, and value are established in a mentoring relationship, mentoring exchanges are deemed rewarding and the relationship takes a step into next (and last) relational juncture, reciprocation.

### **Reciprocation.**

The final relational juncture is termed reciprocation. In SET, reciprocity refers to the giving and taking of rewards within a relationship. Reciprocity also functions as the final level in the mentoring relationship.

### **Rewards.**

Rewards have been defined as the pleasures, satisfactions, and gratifications a person enjoys from participating in a relationship (Thibaut and Kelley, 1959). In this study, this particular definition does not quite represent the rewards a novice or mentoring teacher would either give or receive. Instead, the SET concept of resources may be better suited. Resources are any commodity, material or symbolic, that can be transmitted through interpersonal behavior (Foa & Foa, 1980). Emmerson (1976) states that resources give one person the capacity to reward another. To see how this works in the informal mentoring relationship, it is necessary to return to the first junctures: need. Novice teachers walk into their first job and find that there are a lot of areas where they *need* advice, guidance, and material resources. I pondered whether or not the advice, guidance, and material resources were a rewarding byproduct of a mentoring relationship. After all, advice, guidance, and material resources could be seen as a commodity, both material and symbolic, which has been transmitted through interpersonal behaviors via

informal mentoring practices. It would be a mistake to label these as such. It is also for this reason why it is so important for SET's interpretation of rewards to be linked to resources. While advice, guidance, and material resources meet the needs of the novice teachers, I feel as though novice teachers and their mentors are not experiencing a *reward* until there is a feeling of pleasure, satisfaction, or gratification from their participation in the informal relationship. It is not until novice teachers and their mentors have the time to reflect on the behaviors, or resources exchanged, that they can fully comprehend and appreciate the reward.

From the participants' descriptions, I discovered that mentoring partners could be rewarded through the other's words, but also through more tangible means. The focus now turns to three different forms of resources given to a mentoring partner: material, knowledge, and commendation. Each form of these resources has the same result or reward (feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, or gratification), but the difference between each form of resource lies in how the reward is generated. Table 2 describes the resources given and received in this study.

Table 2  
*Forms of Resources*

<b>Type of Resource</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Material	Physical items given to a mentoring partner.
Knowledge	Words spoken to the mentoring partner resulting in an increase of knowledge or self-reflection. Knowledge can also come through observation.
Commendation	Words spoken to the mentoring partner resulting in heightened sense of confidence, self-esteem, or validation of efforts.



These forms of resources are not placed in any specific order and are not specific to any one mentoring pair. Each resource can be given and received at different times in the relationship and the rewards can be different for each participant.

***Material resources.***

Of all the forms of resources, I feel material resources to be the most challenging to understand in SET. In other settings, when a person receives something tangible (i.e. a gift), there are a variety of feelings that can be experienced. A child finally gets a bicycle for their birthday after asking for it a whole year. Their efforts paid off and there is not only joy in the gift itself, but satisfaction that their begging paid off. Another child receives a pair of socks instead of the bicycle they had been asking for, so there is no joy or satisfaction in that physical gift. In my introduction of rewards, I stated that material resources are not a reward, but I then list material resources as a resource. To clarify this issue, it is important to differentiate between the reward and the resource. In other words, from a SET perspective there is a separation between the feelings novice teachers experience and the feelings mentoring teachers experience. For example, here are two contrasting views on the receiving of physical materials.

Well sometimes I panic. I get stressed out about something in particular and I panic, and I think "I've got to call Reyna." But then I just think, "What would Reyna say to me?" I have that (*pretend*) phone call, and I would say, "Okay here is my problem..." and I think of what she would say to me. She is always very calm and structured and then I just think, "These are the resources. I can go to some of her resources." So I feel like I'm always channeling something that she's done or something she told me. – *Daphnie* (final individual interview)

*Kirsten* – Some of it (the need for Rachel) has to do with the logistic side. Like, "Where do you get recorders? And how many do you buy?" So it's very logistical, very nuts and bolts of how you go through the process.

*Rachel* – Well a lot of that is because the teaching stuff, even though the music teaching is different than other things, you can get from colleagues. It's the specific music stuff that probably...

*Kirsten* – Yeah, I know already that I have to do choir. I am going to do

children's choir in the spring and so I know that I am going to be asking for resources for that because...

*Rachel* – You can come borrow music for that. – (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)

In these two accounts, the novice teachers both speak about material resources that were either given to them or made available from their mentoring teacher, but each novice is coming from a different place of need. Daphnie is very panicked and stressed when she goes to the material resources provided by Reyna. Kirsten, on the other hand, is able to foresee the resource she will be needing but does not hold the fear and panic Daphnie does. Even with the different emotional states these novice teachers were, the material resource was not a reward.

To judge whether or not a material resource is indeed a reward, the feelings associated with that reward have to be examined. Are feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, or gratification present in these two accounts from the novice teachers? No, they are not. Both novice teachers are experiencing feelings of relief, but not necessarily pleasure or gratification. Who in the relationship would be feeling this way then? It is the mentoring teacher who is experiencing the feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, and gratification.

I don't see Suzanne as a clone of me. I see things that she has; my materials and songs. I can see techniques and things that she has carried and the new stuff she does. Maybe it feels like a parent where you feel so pleased to see what has come from your connection. It's very gratifying to see her success; to see what she is developing, where she is taking it beyond what I know she got from me. And that's where I would say where I benefit. It's the pleasure that I get from seeing that live on and to see her becoming a professional that is going to take her place in the field. That is tremendously rewarding.  
– *Stacia* (first individual interview)

It is so rewarding at this point in my career to have enough experience to feel like I am qualified enough. That I can impart some advice or help someone out to find some resources or whatever it is that they need. That's been really cool; the whole mentoring officially and unofficially. To help people out, whether they need instruments or just someone to talk to about what they're doing. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

It is in the giving, whether it is a material resource that is needed right now or one that will be needed, where the reward is experienced. In my example of the children getting a bicycle for their birthday, the reward experienced by the gift giver is not even contemplated. With that person put into the equation, I believe it is easier to see that it is not the resource itself that is the reward, but the feelings experienced in the giving. In the mentoring relationship, the gift giver is the one who experiences the true reward *if* there is a proper balance of trust, value, and respect between the mentoring pair. As seen earlier, the novice teachers are all appreciative of the “gifts” their mentors have given because of the trust, respect, and value they hold for their mentors. If the appreciation for resources were not in place, I would dare say that the rewarding feelings experienced by the mentoring teachers would be greatly diminished. Are the novice teachers capable of experiencing a reward this form of resource? At this point, especially for Kirsten, I would say “no” based on their inexperience and collection of material resources. Reyna says, “It is so rewarding at this point in my career to have enough experience to feel like I am qualified enough.” It takes a number of years before novice teachers feel they are qualified to be the gift giver. This idea will be brought up in the discussion of reciprocation.

### ***Knowledge.***

How does one accumulate knowledge? Knowledge can come from something you read, something you observe, or something that is said to you. In this study knowledge as a resource refers to, “Words spoken to the mentoring partner or about the mentoring partner that result in an increase of knowledge or self-reflection. Knowledge could also come through observation.” Unlike material resources, knowledge is a resource that both the mentor and the novice teacher give and receive. In most instances, when a mentoring teacher spoke knowledgeably about a situation or the novice teacher observed the mentor and increased their knowledge, the novice

gained assurance. “So a lot of the things I saw firsthand or did with her or alongside of her, I have been relying on because I know that it works and I saw how she did it. I have confidence in that” (*Kirsten*). How does this resource differ from a material resource then and how is this truly considered a reward? The word confidence is key in this statement. Is there a connection that can be made between feeling confident and feeling pleasure, satisfaction, and gratification? In businesses, keeping customers confident and satisfied in the product is of utmost importance. The same could be true in this instance. With Kirsten feeling confident in her teaching abilities, because of the knowledge resource, she is now experiences satisfaction.

The other novice teachers experience similar rewards based on their observations and the words of their mentoring teachers. Daphnie stated, “I hope Reyna never moves out of the state because she is such an asset. Not only to myself...I mean I don't want to consider her a piece of property. But she is wonderful human being with a lot of insight and does so much to move our district forward; general music teachers, move us forward.” Daphnie grafts herself in with general music teachers as a collective when she verbalizes how she feels about the insight, or knowledge, Reyna provides. The feelings are very similar to those Kirsten experienced however. With the knowledge Reyna is offering, Daphnie feels confident and satisfied in her own teaching experiences to want to move forward. In a moment where Suzanne was not feeling confident, she describes her feelings that come from observed knowledge.

I see Stacia and I am like, "That is what I could be." And that takes away from my teacher burnout, my feelings of despair... when I am like "Ughhh! What am I doing?" Then I am like, "Well one day I will be maybe a master teacher like Stacia." – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Hope and inspiration are very powerful feelings; just as powerful as confidence. Notice these feelings help Suzanne combat her feelings of despair and burnout. These feelings are also

something that come as a byproduct of Suzanne's observation of Stacia, not something intentionally given by Stacia. Confidence, hope, and inspiration are all rewarding feelings experienced by the novice teachers that aid them in early careers. These feelings came about through the knowledge the mentoring teachers dispensed either through their words or actions. How were the words and actions of the novice teachers received by the mentoring teachers? Were there rewarding feelings that are reciprocated?

While novice teachers may not have much in the way of new information (e.g. teaching or classroom management practices) to provide their mentoring teachers, their words and actions provide an opportunity for the mentors to reflect. "She (Suzanne) just saw things and interpreted it well, so it was informative for me. Not a surprise, but really affirming, what she saw and how she analyzed it" (*Stacia*). Here Stacia talks about the opportunity to reflect by hearing another's viewpoint about her teaching practices. Stacia was not really surprised by what she read, but she was affirmed. Rachel cherishes these moments of reflection brought about when she is in a relationship with a novice teacher.

I love it because they also ask me the good questions so that I actually become a better teacher. Because if you ask me a question like "Why do you do that?" and I don't do it for a good reason, then I really need to rethink it. And that often happens. I will often say, "I don't know." because I have always done that. I mean that is sometimes the answer and it always has worked so I haven't really looked for something better, but maybe there is something better. Those questions will always make me think and I have a real need to continuously making myself a better teacher. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Reyna is also rewarded in her mentoring relationship seen in this account about reflecting.

Daphnie has helped me become more reflective and really trying to realize specifically what strategies and techniques I use. She has also helped me become a better problem solver. We used to have long talks about "What do I do?" and to really think discreetly about each strategy, each technique you use in a 45 minute period, you know just classroom management. I don't

know...we take it for granted. Those who have been teaching, it's automatic.  
– *Reyna* (final individual interview)

Is the ability to reflect the reward or the feelings that are experienced when these mentoring teachers are able to reflect the reward? The novice teachers are able to provide the knowledge, the resource, when they talk or are observed using certain teaching behaviors that cause the mentor to reflect. The reward is the satisfaction these teachers feel in their reflective practices.

Reflection is not the only reward the mentoring teachers experience when knowledge is the resource. Much like the novice teachers, the mentoring teachers glean new material from their novice counterparts. Unlike the novice teachers, however, there is more of a sense of gratification rather than being satisfied. Reyna has this sense of fulfillment when she gets this opportunity to collaborate. “I think there's learning that takes place there too. I look at how my room *was* laid out and now the piano is like that because of one person and the word wall is like that because of another person. It is because of that collaboration that we so infrequently get as music teachers.” Rachel receives gratification through the new perspectives novice teachers bring to the discussion.

I like having relationship with new teachers because of the new ideas they bring. They're young, so they aren't threatened by me talking to them about things or me asking pointed questions, but they have a new perspective because they are in school being taught by people who weren't professors when I would have been in college. So I think there is a whole different perspective. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

Stacia too enjoys the new perspective that Suzanne brings to their interactions. “And maybe that's one of the reasons I always want to know what Suzanne is doing, because I want to see where it is going. What is she finding? Whether it's a new application of a pop song or something like that. What is she doing with that?” The rewards that come through the actions and words of

the mentoring pairs are powerful enough to allow the mentoring relationship to continue.

Daphnie said she hopes Reyna never leaves the district. Stacia states that she always wants to know what Suzanne doing. These feelings are more permanent in nature, but allow the mentoring pairs to give and take when warranted.

### *Commendation.*

When someone receives a commendation or a compliment, it is assumed that feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, or gratification will follow. I did not find anything that contradicts this idea when speaking to the novice and mentoring teachers. What is interesting is that commendations were not a normal part of the mentoring conversations. Stacia explains this idea when she was asked how she felt when she heard Suzanne speaking about her.

Proud as can be. It was so pleasing and so rewarding. And I would say that in our relationship, we don't say those things. She wasn't always telling me, "You're so wonderful!" We just didn't do that. We didn't talk like that to each other, although we both knew how highly we respected each other. It came across in other ways, but not the same way when someone asks you and you say it. So it is very rewarding. Oh, I just thought of something. What if the person would describe you and it fell short of what you thought she should say? I am happy I didn't have to deal with that; that it was very warm. So maybe it felt so good because she just matched what I like to hear. Is that funny? Well it's probably true. So it made me feel very pleased. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Many times, the participants were hearing these commendations for the first time. In a conversation held with Kirsten and Rachel, Rachel says, "She (Kirsten) was never really ever a student. She was always a teacher." After Rachel said this, there was a brief silence when all of a sudden Kirsten says a very quiet, "Wow." That commendation meant so much to her. It is obvious to me that the actions taking place in the mentoring interactions are symbolic of how the novice and mentoring teacher feel about each other. Rachel actively searching for a job for

Kirsten, Reyna opening her home to Daphnie, Stacia co-presenting at a conference with Suzanne...these are all physical actions that are supposed to translate into how the mentor feels about their mentee. There is something to be said for the verbal commendation that is a reward all unto itself as it validates the actions of the mentor and novice teacher.

I felt really proud and not worthy at the same time. Like it is so amazing that she is saying these things and *if* she is saying these things, then there is some truth to it. But I always felt a little bit like, how I am not actually that good. (*laughs*) But it always felt good, it always feels really good, but it's like I am still wanting to live up to how she speaks of me. – *Suzanne* (final individual interview)

The rewarding feelings experienced by the mentors and the mentees in the course of their informal mentoring relationship came through different resources. In this examination of rewards, there is a difference made between resources that meet needs and those that elicit the rewarding feelings of pleasure, satisfaction, or gratification. Rewards are an important element when it comes to the continuation of a relationship.

### ***Mutual Reciprocity.***

I have always felt that Stacia is very vocal about saying what she gets out of our relationship. That it's very exciting...it's exciting to watch me. She's excited to see what's going to come out of it. And then I obviously get a lot out of it because it affects my teaching in such a positive way. So we both get, it's that mutual reciprocity. – *Suzanne* (Suzanne and Stacia first paired interview)

Reciprocity, or mutual reciprocity as Suzanne calls it, is a culminating point in the informal mentoring relationship. It is the relational juncture that should be the goal of any mentoring relationship, but in many formal mentoring programs is not even a talking point. Reciprocation appears when the giving and the taking is happening for both the mentee and their mentor; when rewards are experienced by both the novice and experienced teacher. In this section, an



examination of how mutual reciprocity is established and fostered, and how reciprocation affects the effectiveness of the mentoring relationship will be discussed.

### ***Relationship and Reciprocity.***

These relationships start because of a need, but need continues to drive the relationship as it progresses. In the general population, as long as people are satisfied in how their needs are being met, they will continue to go to the same source to have that need met (e.g. same family doctor, auto technician, and therapist). What makes a reciprocating relationship so powerful is that both partners in the relationship are benefitting from the association. In the beginning of the informal mentoring relationship, there was more focus placed the needs of the mentee. As the mentoring relationship progresses through the relational phases, there are benefits that the mentor comes to encounter along with their mentee. See this played out in a conversation with Stacia and Suzanne about how reciprocation in their relationship works.

*(Stacia)* We both receive.

*(Suzanne)* We're both energized by it. So we feed off of each other and that's a huge part of it.

*(Stacia)* Well it's a very satisfying thing. – (Suzanne and Stacia first paired interview)

Similar to the comment made by Suzanne about mutual reciprocity, the idea that being active in the relationship rewards both the mentee and the mentor is a finding of interest. How does mutual reciprocity start and how is it fostered? Reciprocity starts and is sustained when both partners in the relationship recognize they are giving to the other partner.

In contrast, Kirsten and Rachel's relationship illustrates a relationship where mutual reciprocity has not been established. In two similar statements made two different times, Rachel states, "We haven't gotten to the next step." The first quote comes from an interview that took

place with only Rachel. The second quote, which is very similar to the first, comes from an interview with both Rachel and Kirsten.

*(Speaking of a former student teacher)* How much he has grown and he gave me at least three great ideas that I am now taking back to my classroom. He took things that we did in my classroom and let them evolve in his classroom and now he is telling me about what they look like. And I am like, “Well that’s a really cool intermediate step. I think I could use that.” And I can definitely see that being the next step. We (Kirsten and Rachel) haven’t really gotten there because we have been trying for three months to have dinner and this is it. But I definitely think that that is our next step. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

We (Kirsten and Rachel) haven’t gotten to the next step, but I see us doing that in the next few times that we hang with each other. In fact, had you called in an hour and a half from now, we probably would have been there. Because she is now going to tell me all the new things that she did. You know what I mean? And I am going to be like, “Oh that’s really cool! Well I hope that I can use that in my classroom.” - *Rachel* (final individual interview)

Based on these two conversations, I believe that the next step in a mentoring relationship is reciprocation. First of all, Rachel says that the next step will happen “in the next few times that we hang with each other.” From this comment it appears that Rachel and Kirsten have not been interacting with each other on a consistent basis. Rachel confirms this in the first quote when she says, “we have been trying for three months to have dinner.” The other mentoring pairs live in the same town, teach (or did teach) in the same districts, see each other at PLCs, and have the option of seeing each other on a more regular basis. This is not the case for Kirsten and Rachel. Their informal mentoring has been taking place through emails and phone conversations, and even that has been stilted. Being in consistent communication with the mentoring partner plays a role in reciprocation.

When talking about her former student teacher, Rachel related that she connected with him at a state music conference and he shared three great ideas that she will take back to her classroom. What made this an even more powerful experience for Rachel is that this novice teacher took things they had worked on together, let them evolve in his classroom, and then he passed on this new information. The former student teacher was giving new information to his former cooperating teacher, therefore mutual reciprocity was established in this interaction. This novice teacher was not only able to interact with Rachel, but there was a growth or a transformation of shared knowledge that was shared that benefitted both teachers. This “intermediate step” is what appears to keep Suzanne and Rachel from moving fully into the reciprocation juncture. Stacia gives some advice that mentees could think about that might encourage mutual reciprocation.

So I think maybe that's what the mentees could be thinking about. It isn't a one way...they just aren't takers. They aren't just getting the help, they are giving tremendously back by when they ask, when they ask opinions when they want to know that, but that's really stimulating...and it's good for the mentor, but they shouldn't be shy about sharing their success and telling their success, because it's so gratifying to see a person that you helped achieve success and be recognized in the field. It's just a wonderful thing. It's the reward for doing all that I guess. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Rachel and Kirsten are well on their way to getting to this next phase, as seen from Rachel's comments, but also in this comment made by Suzanne. When she was asked what the major difference between student teaching and informal mentoring was, she replied,

I think there is more authenticity to what you have started and what you have tried that you kind of come back to your mentor teacher and say, "Remember that project? I did it a little differently, but I am still running into this or that." Or "Hey, I found out if you did it like that...." In mentoring is more of a two-way street approach. – *Kirsten* (final individual interview)

### *Creating a culture of reciprocity.*

As teachers, our careers are long term careers. We are in them for the long haul; 35-40 years. It's a culture of reciprocity where somebody has invested in you and you are invested in the next person who's invested in the next person and that's how we create, it's just how we do it. – *Daphnie* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

This statement was the very first time the term reciprocity was mentioned by any participant. Creating a culture of reciprocity is a very simple, yet inspiring idea. The notion that a person who invested in you establishes the premise that you will turn and do the same thing for the next generation of teachers who then will continue in this practice of giving back is motivating. It makes me wonder if this ideology is woven into the identity of teachers from the very start. This quote comes from Kirsten, the first year music teacher.

I think there is an element of me that's humanistic and spiritual enough that you pay it forward because you know that one person can make a huge difference. If I hadn't have had that person, and that person, and that person, I wouldn't be the same person that I am today. And I think that I can trace back those individuals, some in music and some not, that brought me here. There's an element of optimism and hope that you put out and you see what will become of it. I think that is also a motivating factor of my personality; why I teach kids and why in the future I would take on a young adult too. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

The culture of reciprocity which Kirsten speaks about is founded on the idea that one person can make a difference. This notion motivates her to not only teach music to children, but have a willingness to take on future mentees. This willingness to share or to “pay it forward” is one quality that impacts the effectiveness and the longevity of the informal mentoring relationship.

For the mentor teachers in this study, the example the mentoring teacher sets can become a standard for other teachers to follow. Each of these mentors were mentored themselves in some capacity. Stacia recollects her mentoring started in high school with an older student taking her

under her wing followed by a series of undergraduate professors who modeled certain behaviors.

In her final interview she recalled an undergraduate professor who stated,

You need to keep learning. You need to find out what's out there. You need to go to conferences. You need to find out what's out there and keep learning because there is no way that you can sit in your school and be a fabulous teacher growing in isolation.

Rachel and Reyna were also mentored and coached by a number of undergraduate professors and colleagues who were deemed influential in their lives. All three mentor participants were not only given guided by these figures in how to be a great classroom teacher, but these people also provided great examples of mentoring practices, how to foster teaching knowledge and skill development in novices, and a passion for working with novices. The mentor participants were not part of a formal mentoring experience as novice teachers, so their mentor figures also outlined how to conduct mentoring in an informal setting. The one mentor participant who did have a “formal” mentor was Rachel. When she transferred to a new district, a music mentor was assigned to her but this arrangement was uncomfortable for this “experienced teacher” as Rachel had already been teaching for 9 years. Here is how Rachel relayed this experience.

She (the mentor) kept telling that I didn't need a mentor and I kept telling her, 'Yes I do, but here's what we will do if they (the district) let us.' The mentoring program in the district at the time was set up for her to observe me and give me ideas how to keep improving. So I said, 'I'll make a deal with you. You come and see me and we have lunch together and talk about how it went and then I will come and see you and you share.' So we actually developed that kind of relationship that year. – *Rachel* (mentor focus group interview)

Notice that Rachel and this other experienced music teacher created a system, or negotiated rules that worked for the both of them and resulted in mutual benefits. Rachel maintained the notion that she did not know everything even though she had been teaching for more than five years.

These informal (and formal) mentoring experiences laid a strong foundation for the mentoring these participants would take part in later on in their careers.

A quality example is very important when it comes to establishing and maintaining reciprocity in the relationship. Reyna goes above and beyond for her mentees: returning phone calls and emails in moment's notice, making herself available for coffee or dinner at her house. Not every mentor, or mentee, will be able to make themselves available in this way, but one effect Reyna's example has had on Daphnie is how generous she hopes to be.

(Mentoring with Reyna) feeds into how generous I want to be in the future. I never thought about wanting to take on a student teacher or mentor anybody or have anybody in my classroom this early in my career, but somebody has already asked me to have college students come into my classroom. And I want to do that. I mean I don't know how great of an example I can be, but hopefully I can open my door and try to service the students best I can and be a mini-sounding board; maybe not a Reyna sounding board for other people.  
– *Daphnie* (final individual interview)

Stacia, like Kirsten and Daphnie, recognizes the power mentees have on the next generation of teachers, but knows that this came from the solid examples that shaped her as a teacher.

The techniques that I have learned that work so well and the different things that made me a success, I can see that living on. So that's giving back to the profession. It doesn't sound grand, but it's more personal. My work lives on and I know that Suzanne is already passing it on and the university is sending people to observe her. That makes me tremendously happy. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Two ideas are reinforced in this statement. One idea is that a culture of reciprocation can be established as mentors, who have had excellent examples to follow, see their work living on through their mentees who follow their generous practices. The second idea is that reciprocation, the final phase in effective informal mentoring relationships, is beneficial for the mentor, the mentee, but the music education community at large.

Giving back is my duty. I got so much from Stacia that I feel that if someone can see me teach and feel excited about being an elementary music teacher, it's really cool. – *Suzanne* (final individual interview)

Reciprocation is the final phase in the relational junctures, but also an unstated goal of the mentoring relationship. Need drives the relationship through the various phases, but the sustainability of the relationship is based on the rewards experienced through the taking and the *giving* of resources.

These five junctures in the mentoring relationships do seem to compliment the progression outlined by the SET framework. Need was the impetus for the initiation, but connection and good fit facilitated the exchange of resources. Each mentoring dyad came to the conclusion that the rewards experienced from these exchanges outweighed the costs of being in the relationship, thus establishing value for the mentoring partner and the exchanges. Rules of exchange were determined, but will be further explored in the next section. These rules did enable the conditions of trust and commitment to emerge from the mentoring exchanges. These conditions differ slightly in my model of relational junctures and the SET framework. Trust and commitment are not guaranteed in the SET framework, but in my model it is trust that led to commitment and the final juncture of reciprocation. These particular mentoring pairs exhibited these aspects in their relationships, but even so at varying degrees. So the SET framework and my model of relational junctures are similar in that these phases are fluid; lasting for any amount of time, going back and forth between junctures, and fluctuate in the degrees of intensity.

### **Synthesis of Research Question #1**

The first research question relates to each mentoring dyad and analyzes how the relationship evolves from its inception to current status. The progression of an exchange relationship, as laid out in SET, is initiated by an exchange of resources. The rewards and costs

experienced in the relationship are weighed to determine an outcome level and overall satisfaction with the exchange partner. Based on analysis of the data, I can identify how each of the mentoring pairs lined up with this progression during their formal mentoring experiences (e.g. Suzanne and Kirsten during their student teaching placement and Daphnie during the formal induction period). The novice participants received “resources” from their partner and experienced a series of rewards and possible costs. These were used to determine their satisfaction with the relationship. In the next phases of the SET progression of the exchange relationship, the partners are given the opportunity to stay in the relationship or leave. This decision, or comparison level, is based on the levels of satisfaction, rewards experienced, and availability of better alternatives. I believe this comparison level is also similar to what was observed in the mentoring dyads in this study. All three novice teachers weighed their satisfaction levels to the rewards they experienced during their formal mentoring and determined whether or not there were better alternatives to decide whether or not to continue their relationship with their mentor. When the novice participant made the decision to stay in a relationship with their mentor, it was at this moment where the informal mentoring relationship actually began.

Choice was instrumental in how these relationships shifted from the original formal mentoring structure to the newer informal mentoring structure. Choice was not enacted the same way in each relationship however. The first two mentoring dyads were similar in that the novice teachers self-selected, or chose, their future mentors as pre-service teachers. In the third mentoring dyad this was not the case. Daphnie, the second year music novice, first met Reyna in a formalized induction program as a first year teacher. Daphnie did not choose Reyna to be her mentor in this process, it was the other way around. Reyna chose Daphnie over another novice



music teacher because of the regional and personal connection they established at their first meeting. Suzanne and Kirsten, the other two novice participants, also chose their cooperating teachers because of a connection they felt upon their first meeting. This connection then facilitated the development and evolution of each mentoring relationship. There were a lot of other factors, however, that played into the effectiveness of the mentoring besides the element of choice.

Two of the three mentoring pairs met as a result of the practicum experience set up through the novice music teacher's education department. Suzanne and Kirsten had multiple observation opportunities, getting a glimpse of various teacher's classroom practices and teaching styles. Each of them walked into the classroom of their future mentors and something resonated with them. This was the beginning of what led to the student teaching experience and then the establishment of their mentoring relationship and eventual friendship. Daphnie met Reyna her first year of teaching as a result of her district's induction program. There was not an opportunity for Daphnie to make a connection to Reyna's philosophy of teaching or classroom practices until they had already begun their relationship. What similarities do these pairs all share? While each pair met in different ways and at different times, at the start of the *informal* aspect of the mentoring, each novice teacher came to their mentors out of need. Where was this need first exhibited? It would be easy to say that the need was present at the very start; either when Suzanne and Kirsten were graduate students in the practicum experience or Daphnie was a first year teacher in need of district mentor. This does not fit into the informal mentoring model however. I would like to propose that these relationships all exhibited the same need-based start after these more formal mentoring experiences. This would be the first year of teaching for Suzanne and Kirsten and the second year for Daphnie. The reason for this is because after the

formal structures were completed, Suzanne, Kirsten, and Daphnie were given the choice to continue or cease the relationship with their mentors. This desire to continue the relationship with their mentors is what all of these novice music teachers have in common. Each novice teacher still had a range of problems or worries in the early phases of their teaching careers, felt a connection and “good fit” with an established mentor, and progressed into an informal mentorship to have their needs met.

Where do the mentors fit into this structure of choice? I believe that the mentors are a major reason why the relationship continued past the point of the formalized mentor structure, through the initiation of the informal mentoring structure, and continued through the year this study was conducted. Choice has been discussed as a mitigating factor as Suzanne and Kirsten chose their mentors because they witnessed something special in their classrooms. Daphnie did not choose Reyna however. What each novice teacher did have in common is that they continued in the relationship with their mentor because of the quality of the mentoring they had received during their formal experiences. Each of the mentoring teachers did something, acted a certain way, or imparted something to their mentees that compelled the mentees to make a progression into an informal relationship. Each mentor participant, however, is very different than the other and have different ways of mentoring their mentees. This stands to reason that there does seem to be one overarching standard when it comes to quality. There are a lot of similarities nevertheless. When describing the characteristics of a good mentor Kirsten said the following:

A mentor should be a sounding board...a support system. Someone that has been there and is always tried and true that you can relate to personally and professionally. I think it's important that I know I can go to Rachel or my current assigned mentor in the district, but also I can go to Rachel when I am feeling burned out or ineffectual and I know that she has been there too. A mentor is someone that can put it into perspective with you and for you and is obviously a knowledgeable resource base for when you have questions about where to go to and how to think for yourself in how to apply general ideas and

principles of good teaching to your situation. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

In this statement, Kirsten emphasizes what she considers good mentoring practices and characteristics (e.g. being a support system and having knowledge about applying ideas and principles). There are some statements though that are more specific to what this particular novice needs (guidance on how to think for herself). Kirsten states that she can go to either Rachel or her assigned district mentor, but she specifically turns to Rachel when she experiences burn out or feels ineffectual. Kirsten says a mentor is someone you can relate to professionally and personally.

Novice music educators are able to speak to the characteristics they are looking for in a mentor, but mentoring teachers also can speak to this issue. Stacia says the following about the characteristics a good mentor should have.

Mentors should be open-minded and accepting. There are things you're achieving that you want them (the novice teacher) to achieve, but the mentee needs to keep their identity and their personality but also accommodate the style or the philosophy that you (the mentor teacher) want. – *Stacia* (Suzanne and Stacia final paired interview)

In this statement, much like Kirsten, Stacia speaks about good mentoring practices (i.e. being open minded and accepting). Stacia then becomes more specific to her own ideas of what an effective mentoring relationship looks like. “The mentee needs to keep their identity and their personality but also accommodate the style or the philosophy that you (the mentor teacher) want.” Here Stacia says that the philosophies and mentoring style of the mentoring teacher must be accommodated by the novice mentee. I would like to stress that like-mindedness is not the same thing as creating a clone. Stacia is very clear about mentors steering clear of this type of mentoring practice.

Mentors need to be open that they (novice teachers) are going to find their way and refine their skills. They are not going to be a clone of what you've done... and they shouldn't be. – *Stacia* (mentor focus interview)

Reyna and Rachel's opinions on good mentoring practices are similar to Stacia's sentiments. Both mentoring teachers agree that mentor teachers need to be knowledgeable about their craft, be open minded to the needs of the novice teacher, and give mentees space in their development. Most of all, mentors need to be passionate about mentoring and selfless.

Mentors should definitely possess a passion and willingness to step outside your own box, because what worked in my classroom wasn't going to work for all of Daphnie's kids; socio-economically, location wise, and just the difference in schools. Different needs, different kids. So I think if someone goes into it and says, 'Well I am going to make a mini-me' It's not going to work and if you don't have a passion about it and you just want a stipend for it, it's not going to work. – *Reyna* (Daphnie and Reyna first paired interview)

I think mentors have to be a person who can build rapport because there has to be a two way communication. Sometimes you have to deliver bad news and you have to be willing to do that. You can't just say, 'Everything is just fine' and not help them improve because you're really not doing what you (the mentor) need to do. I think that's sometimes hard, because with an adult it's difficult to say, 'Hey that didn't go so well'. I think it's also important to ask questions instead of telling them, 'This is what you should have done'. I think everybody has to find their own way. So, I think that is part of it too. Mentors should be more of a guide than an actual, you know, 'This is the way you do things'. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

Each of these mentors exhibited a passion for mentoring novice teachers but also exhibit selflessness in their mentoring practices. Still, because Kirsten works and lives outside of the teaching district of her informal mentoring teacher, she did express feelings of isolation. Kirsten and Rachel both state that they have had a very busy year and although they have had the intentions of getting together, this has not quite happened. There is, however, an established connection recognized by Kirsten. Because of this connection and relationship, Kirsten feels different about Rachel than her local district mentors.

So I know for me, aside from the resource, aside from the actual student teaching learning, it's that continual support whether physical or karma based. I know that she (Rachel) is around. It's not super tangible but it's personally tangible because I know I pick up the phone and she is there. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Knowing that her informal mentor is there seems to be enough for now. It will be noteworthy to see if distance keeps this informal mentoring relationship from progressing after Kirsten's first year of teaching.

In terms of challenges for informal mentorship, the only issue that could be argued as being problematic for the mentoring pairs had to do with the observation of each other's classrooms and funding. Classroom observations were not mentioned as being a problem per se, but the mentees were not given this level of support by their mentors in this study in the informal setting. One reason this was not problematic for Suzanne and Kirsten is because they had multiple opportunities to observe and be observed as student teachers. Daphnie was observed as well by her mentor as this was part of the formal mentoring she received through her teaching district, but she did not observe Reyna. The novice teachers did not view this as a lack in their mentoring however. As for financial compensation for the mentoring teachers, this never came up in conversation as an issue for the mentors. However, each of the mentors were in a formal mentoring experience with these novice teachers where they were paid for their services. As Reyna has already been quoted saying though, "...and if you don't have a passion about it and you just want a stipend for it, it's not going to work" (*Reyna*).

## **Summary**

The stories of three different mentoring dyads were presented from their inception to its current status. Getting to know these participants and how their informal relationships began is important to establish before a cross-case analysis can be conducted. It is also important to

explore why these particular pairings of novice and experienced music teachers were successful while so many formal mentoring relationships are not. The relational junctures were created as a way to organize the progression of the mentoring relationships. The novice teachers each came to their mentor from a place a need, but chose to receive help based on a connection that had been made with this person. From this connection, good fit was established where mentors had the freedom to dispense their knowledge and advice, but novice teachers were able to receive this advice without judgment. Through this process, trust, value, and respect was established between the mentoring partners. Each of these deep-rooted emotions encouraged the relationship to continue to the final point of reciprocation, where each member of the mentoring pair benefits from this rewarding and satisfying relationship. The progression outlined by SET is very similar to these junctures, but there are concepts from SET that are still missing from this first round of analysis. SET has contributed to this level of analysis in that an explanation could be derived as to “why” these pairs chose to stay in a relationship.

## **Chapter 5: SET Across the Mentoring Dyads**

“Exchanges between humans, if they are deemed satisfactory, produce the desire to repeat the transaction with the same partner or partners. Thus repeated satisfactory exchanges are likely to increase the actors’ dependencies on one another, a process that eventuates in mutual commitments” (Leik, Owens, & Tallman, 1999, p. 241).

Using SET language, Leik, Owens, & Tallman are, in essence, describing the informal relationships in this study. Up to this point, the discussion of the participants has been focused on each mentoring dyad as an individual unit, and the nature of their relationship. The second research question focuses on determining whether or not SET is an appropriate lens to analyze informal mentoring relationships. Using SET to further examine the mentoring exchanges in a cross-case analysis, both unique and common experiences can be discussed. Each participant is different in regards to how many years they have been teaching, how each teacher began their career, where they started teaching, and why they are teaching general music. Each mentoring pair is different in how long they have known each other, how they met, and how they conduct their mentoring relationship. Through an examination of comparison levels, rewards, and costs, followed by a closer look at exchange rules and conditions, I address how specific concepts from SET are enacted in each relationship.

### **SET Concepts as a Fluid Construct**

This study examined the social exchanges taking place in an informal mentoring setting. When inspecting the data for the SET concepts of comparison level, rewards and costs, and rules of exchange, I found that each mentoring pair followed a progression similar to that outlined in SET. This progression is not how every SET relationship plays out however. In fact, there can be a fluidity in the progression of these steps. The majority of interactions between the dyads were one-on-one, with no other person or groups interacting with the participants. Some conversations

took place in person, but other conversations took place over the phone or over email. As for the types of interactions that were preferred, this varied according to the mentoring pair. In the following conversation, Suzanne and Stacia were asked, “Do you prefer the meeting face-to-face, the phone, or through email?” Here is their response.

*Stacia* - Face to face.

*Suzanne* – Yes! It doesn't really matter where, whether it's here or if it's at a dinner at Stacia's house or conferences, whatever.

*My question* - Why? Why the face to face? Why is that working better?

*Stacia* - Well I never call. I am not a good phone calling person because I just think Suzanne is busy. I don't know what her schedule so I just don't call to chat.

*Suzanne* - And I am a bad emailer.

*Stacia* - So we don't communicate unless we need to.

*Suzanne* - I get really wrapped up and overwhelmed with my life, so if I am sitting in front of Stacia, I am there and in the moment. Otherwise I am elsewhere. (Suzanne and Stacia first paired interview)

This relationship started primarily as a face-to-face relationship. Suzanne would come to Stacia's classroom to either observe or teach as a student teacher. This form of social exchange, therefore, seems to remain the most beneficial for this particular relationship. This is not to say that Suzanne and Stacia never use other forms social exchanges. “I call when I need it, but Stacia also emails to check in, like, ‘How are you? Haven't heard from you in a while!’” – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Kirsten and Rachel also started out in a student teaching experience with face-to-face interactions being their main mode of social exchange. With their busy schedules and the long distance they live and work from each other, social exchanges have been taking place on a limited scale.

*Kirsten* – Yeah, we are busy people.

*Rachel* – But every once in a while I will get an email from her like, ‘What do you think about that kind of thing?’ (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)



Just because one form of social exchange was established as the standard in a mentoring relationship does not mean that the same type or frequency of social exchange stays the standard. This is especially true as each of these mentoring relationships transitioned from formal mentorships to informal mentorships. The face-to-face interactions, therefore, were not always necessary or even needed. This is exemplified a few different ways in the novice participants' modes of communication with their mentors.

I would call Stacia regularly. My first year I probably called her like every 2 weeks...I was like "I need help. How did you do this? What did you do here?" I would email her all the time. – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

We have kind of emailed back and forth. She's (Rachel) checked in...I've checked in. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

She's just so amazing because she answers her emails in like 50 seconds after I send them. And, she always answers her phone. She's so accessible and if I need anything, she would have it in the district mail within days, or she would go and photocopy it and I'd go pick it up at school, like three hours after I would ask for something. – *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

There were other conditions that affected the number of social exchanges taking place and the quality of the exchanges between the participants. The most detrimental factors affecting social exchange were time and distance. Time was a precious commodity to each of the participants and they were selective about how they spent their time. Except for Stacia, each of the participants were full time teachers. All of the participants are married and two of the participants have children. The fact that mentors continued to stay in the mentoring relationship after their formal responsibilities were completed speaks to the high regard they hold for their mentees. In this study, both novice and experienced teachers saw each other as friends and each treated their counterpart accordingly. These mentoring pairs, as they had the time, made time for each other. Not everyone could email a response in less than minute like Reyna, but the

participants did their best to return phone calls and emails. If there was a need for a face-to-face visit, participants would have coffee or a meal together. There was not a mandate that these exchanges happened, but more of a desire for social interaction. As much as the desire is there however, nothing can change the reality of busy schedules. In the case of Kirsten and Rachel, distance played a greater role in hindering social exchanges. Both teachers acknowledged they would meet more often if they lived closer together and that this particular teaching year had made it extremely difficult for them to meet. Even with the fewer number of social exchanges occurring, Rachel says they will remain good friends. “We will stay good friends, the type you don't have to see all the time. Friends that can just pick up where you left off. And I don't think the number of times we see each other will ever make the difference.” So of the two conditions, distance hindered the number of social exchanges taking place in this study. Time, however, seemed to hinder the quality of social exchanges.

### **Resources, rewards, and costs.**

The SET concept known as resources are any commodity, material or symbolic, that can be transmitted through interpersonal behavior (Foa & Foa, 1980) and give one person the capacity to reward another (Emerson, 1976). Two other concepts of SET linked to resources are rewards and costs. Rewards are pleasurable or satisfying and costs are not. It has been established by exchange theorists that there is no single criterion that defines what a reward is or what a cost should be as the worth and value of each are specific to individuals and their social interactions (West and Turner, 2010). The resources exchanged by the participants in this study were examined first because SET's interpretation of rewards and costs can only be understood when it is linked to each participants' individual perspective of resources. Foa and Foa (1974, 1980) write about two forms of resources: economic and socio-emotional. Economic forms of

resources are those that address financial needs and are more tangible. Socio-emotional forms of resources refer to those that address social and esteem needs. Cropanzano & Mitchell (2005) write that this form of reward sends the message that the individual is valued and is being treated with dignity. Three types of resources were exhibited by the participants: material, knowledge, and commendation. According to Foa and Foa, these resources would be regarded as socio-emotional even though material resources are tangible in nature. After the exchanged resources were defined, the concept of rewards and costs could then be put in perspective. I found that the resources exchanged between the participants generated *feelings* of either satisfaction (reward) or loss (cost). What I was unable to fully ascertain were the costs, or negative feelings, experienced by the participants. The closest instance of cost I could find in the data was observed in Suzanne and Stacia's exchange interactions.

If the definition of cost is feelings of loss or punishment generated by a resource, I need to expound on the negative feelings experienced by one participant, Suzanne. The following statement was previously used in the discussion about trust in the mentoring relationship.

She is so amazing at what she does that I am intimidated by her master teaching and I want to show her this great product and I don't always feel like I have that. – *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

Intimidation is not a rewarding feeling, rather one of cost. While Stacia is not trying to provoke feelings of intimidation, or any negative feeling for that matter, something about Stacia intimidates Suzanne. Suzanne desires to showcase excellence in her classroom practices because of the high regard she holds for Stacia, but there have been some negative side effects stemming from this desire. Throughout the study I noticed that this relationship, more so than the other mentoring relationships, had more support provided to the novice by the mentoring teacher. Suzanne stated more often than the other novice teachers how she would call or email her mentor

asking for advice or teaching material during her first year of teaching. Stacia was also quicker than the other mentoring teachers to offer guidance to her mentee, even when she was not asked for it.

In a lot of ways, I think now that she's been teaching, since she's been teaching, I think I am a cheerleader. When I come and see what she is doing, I can see 'oh it would be nice if they had a better sound system' or whatever, but what she (Suzanne) needs is reflection and feedback on all the things that you can tell that she worked on...all the things that went well. I think music teachers... well at least I was always like this, that every little thing that went wrong was so big in my mind. Then other people would tell me how they perceived what went wrong and it helped me know what I didn't even notice. That's really helpful. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

From this statement, Stacia explains how she, personally, was able to reflect on her job performance based on the feedback of “other people”; weighing their perceptions with her own. Stacia flourished from this sort of feedback and makes the assumption that most music teachers are capable of reflecting and improving their skills based on the same sort of feedback. This assumption may be why Stacia is quick to offer suggestions to her mentees before they ask for them. Another reason may be related to time. Stacia is the only mentor that was retired at the onset of this study and had the time to be of assistance to Suzanne, whether physically or mentally, at a moment's notice. These factors may be related to the feelings of intimidation experienced by Suzanne, but it could also be that Suzanne's personality is prone to perfectionism. As it stands, Suzanne was the only participant to mention any hint of a negative cost associated with her mentoring experiences. This is not to say that the other participants did not experience undesirable costs, it is just that these negative feelings, or costs, did not surface in the interview data. Even with this example of cost in Suzanne and Stacia's mentoring relationship, it did not stop them from keeping up with their mentoring exchanges. This fits the pattern outlined in SET known as comparison level and comparison level for alternatives.

### **Comparison level and comparison level for alternatives.**

It is understood that (a) most individuals will pursue rewards and evade costs, (b) most individuals are logical creatures and will assess a relationship and act according to its worth; terminating negative relationships and will try to save positive relationships, and (c) the criterion individuals use to assess the worth and value of a relationship is specific to that individual and time spent in the relationship (West and Turner, 2010). The SET concept known as the outcome level of a relationship is the calculated difference between acquired rewards and costs given or taken in a relationship. It is this outcome level that determines the overall quality, or worth, of a relationship. This means that a relationship with a larger percentage of rewards over costs is more likely to be perceived as having a positive outcome value. In the above example, Suzanne experienced a cost: intimidation. This negative feeling was counterbalanced by the other positive elements, or rewards, coming from her relationship with Stacia. This corresponds with SET's view on positive social exchanges (Sabatelli, 2014; Thibault & Kelley, 1959; West & Turner, 2010). The comparison level determines an individual's satisfaction level in any relationship. Based on previous experiences, individuals will establish certain criterion to gauge their levels of satisfaction. In the case of the novice teacher participants, making the initial connection with their mentors was the first step in establishing the criterion of satisfaction. In the discussion of need, this criterion also included possessing higher levels of comfortability with the mentors and discovering common teaching philosophies and practices. The criterion for satisfaction was further defined when good fit was established between the mentoring pairs. Satisfaction criterion is now based on the flow of conversation, utilization of ideas in the classroom, and levels of trust, respect and value. As indicated in the data, the participants stated that conversations were "uninhibited" and ideas were utilized freely and without self-reproach. Participants also spoke

about high levels of trust, respect, and value they held for their counterpart. Connecting this back to the theoretical framework, the comparison level reflects what individuals feel they deserve, what is obtainable in their relationship, and what they feel is important to experience when comparing satisfaction levels to rewards (Sabatelli, 1993). With the high levels of satisfaction, participants' are choosing to stay in the relationship because there are more positive exchanges (and rewarding feelings) than negative exchanges. This then leads to the high assessment mentoring pairs have of the relationship because the participants' satisfaction levels are higher than their comparison levels.

In conjunction with an individual's comparison level, the comparison level for alternatives is the lowest level of satisfaction an individual will accept in light of another possibility (e.g. a mentoring relationship with a different individual or organization) to defend their decision to stay in the current relationship. This SET concept proposes that many individuals remain in unsatisfactory relationships if the alternative is more negative or unavailable (West & Turner, 2010). When considering this concept as it applied to the data, I compared the participants' informal mentoring relationships to the more formal mentoring structures made available to the novice teacher participants. Two of the three novice teacher participants were afforded other mentoring options their first year of teaching. Kirsten and Suzanne were both provided more experienced building mentors to see them through the hardships they might experience. A district music mentor also was made available to Suzanne during her first year of teaching (this option was not provided to Kirsten). Here the comparison level for alternatives can be identified. Suzanne and Kirsten made the decision to stay in a mentoring relationship with their cooperating teachers even though other options were available. Although this concept is more intended for comparisons between negative situations (e.g. staying

in a bad marriage vs. getting divorced), there are some situations where people may be committed, but not have a satisfying relationship or they may be satisfied in their relationship, but not committed to it. As exemplified with these participants, when novice teachers have good alternatives, they will tend to be less committed to other mentoring relationships. In contrast, when novice teachers have poor alternatives, they will tend to be highly committed to pre-established mentoring relationships (Leik, Owens, & Tallman, 1999). Daphnie was not put into this equation as the formal mentor provided through the district, Reyna, later turned into her informal mentor. Like the other novice teacher participants, Daphnie was also provided more experienced building mentors at her various schools during her first year of teaching. Daphnie relayed that “it’s nice to have a person in the building” and that the experienced teachers were supportive, but Daphnie continued to depend on Reyna for her more pressing needs. Thus Daphnie’s comparison level for alternatives is much like the other novice teachers, even though there are different circumstances in how the informal mentoring relationship started.

#### **Rewards taking place outside of mentoring relationship.**

The discussion of the rewards the participants described up to this point has been about personal rewards experienced in the mentoring relationship. In particular, analysis of data in this study sought to establish whether or not informal mentoring has a different effect on these outcomes. This was possible because all of the novice participants were involved in both a formal and informal mentoring relationship, facilitating a comparison between both experiences. There are also rewards that have broader impacts on both the novice teacher participants and their mentors.

The first area of impact to be considered is that of feelings. Novice teachers have a variety of emotions that can hinder their teaching abilities. Having a mentor to speak to about

difficult situations and get advice and support can make all the difference. If there is no relationship or connection established with a mentor, as seen in many formal mentorships, the support or advice will not seem as beneficial. In this matter of emotions then, informal mentorships are more advantageous and beneficial than formal mentorships. Because these participants chose their own mentors, there was an established connection, mentees could be vulnerable, and advice or support was inherently valued. The negative connotations that come from being in an informal relationship have also been identified. Suzanne stated that she did not want to disappoint her mentor and felt sometimes that she had to live up to higher expectations. So while there appear to be more beneficial outcomes associated with informal mentoring, sometimes the partners in the relationship can experience suppressed negative emotions as well.

The next area of impact relates to professional growth. While the induction model established in Suzanne and Daphnie's teaching district (the monthly PLC meetings) technically accomplished the overall objective of professional growth for novice music teachers, is simply meeting the goal enough? The issue of novice teacher socialization and development should not be about meeting the goal, but the degree of effectiveness. Socializing novice music teachers to their new roles under a formal mentorship would be the job of either the building mentor, who usually is not a music teacher, or the district mentor, who may or may not be a music teacher. It is in this formal structure that Daphnie connected with Reyna. So in this instance, the formal structure was a very beneficial and effective arrangement. Reyna connected Daphnie to resources, other music teachers, and helped her come up with ideas to be more successful in her classroom. This support continued into Daphnie's second year of teaching, after the formal mentoring ended. The way that it worked out for Reyna and Daphnie, however, is not always the case for formal mentorships. First of all, Reyna has been shown to go above and beyond what is



expected of her. The formal mentors that were assigned to Suzanne and Kirsten were not able to meet the same sort of needs to the same degree as Reyna. Second, Suzanne alluded to the fact that her assigned mentors were very nice, she “didn’t really feel like they were mentors” or meet her specific needs. Conversely, Kirsten had a more positive reception to her assigned building mentor than Suzanne. Instead of going to Rachel for all of her uncertainties, she asked her building mentor a lot of questions about classroom management because this mentor knew the students better. It was helpful for Kirsten to have a more experienced teacher to run school specific questions by. When it came to music specific questions however, she needed a music mentor which was not made available in her district. For both Suzanne and Kirsten, there were areas of need that could not be met by their formal mentors. Those needs were met by Suzanne and Kirsten’s self-selected mentors. These are three very different perspectives to this issue. Suzanne did not value her formal mentors, Kirsten did not have her music-specific needs met by her formal mentor, and Daphnie’s formal mentor transitioned into her informal mentor. What is important to note is that all three novice teacher’s needs were met more effectively, or more specifically, by their informal mentors. Had those informal relationships not been in place, all three novice teachers might have been less effective in their setting and more frustrated about their circumstances. It is hard to say whether or not each novice would be more prone to leave the teaching profession had these needs not been met, but the informal mentoring relationship did bolster the novice’s feelings of effectiveness and socialization in the teaching realm. According to the interview data from the participants, it was the combination of both the formal and the informal mentoring structures that addressed the professional growth needs of novice teachers in a holistic and meaningful way.

The last area of impact is the novice teacher's development of self-reflection and problem solving capabilities. Self-reflection and problem solving are important skills for any teacher to develop as teachers have to make choices based on student behaviors, how to protect learning time, and implementing best practice procedures. Self-reflection enables teachers to identify what works well, how to refine oneself, and how to avoid bad teaching situations. Problem solving allows teachers to gather information, study the problem, gain new knowledge, and then come to a sound decision (Danielson, 2009). These types of skills are not easily taught over the course of a year, if they can be "taught" at all. What will be difficult to determine, in regards to this study, is whether or not: (a) the novice music teachers participants gained self-reflective and problem solving skills based on their mentoring exchanges with their informal mentors, (b) these skills were already present, or (c) they developed on their own naturally. Suzanne and Kirsten's informal mentors stated that as student teachers both possessed a maturity that was not demonstrated by some of their other student teachers. This maturity was exhibited through conversations, lesson planning, interactions with students, and reflective comments made to the mentors. As they moved from student teaching into their first years of teaching elementary music, either a lack in confidence or feelings of being overwhelmed began to surface.

I didn't know what was going to work and what was going to flop.  
– *Suzanne* (first individual interview)

You know, not that I feel like I'm clueless or not prepared, it's just sometimes it feels like a lot. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

In these moments, having the support of their informal mentor was important. With the help of Stacia and Rachel, these novice teachers were able to reflect on what was going well and be reminded of their problem solving abilities to overcome the issue at hand. These mentoring exchanges were beneficial, but not the sole reason Suzanne and Kirsten are able to reflect and

problem solve in their current settings. These skills were practiced in the student teaching setting, refined as novice teachers, and now they are applied to achieve success in the classroom.

Daphnie was left out of this novice teacher grouping because of the difference in her and Reyna's relationship from the other mentoring pairs. Daphnie was not as confident in her reflective and problem solving skills as a first year teacher. Not only was Daphnie nervous because she was a first year teacher, but she started the school year late, she was teaching in a bilingual setting, and she did not have much experience working with elementary aged students. There were many issues that she and Reyna had to work through during their formal mentoring experience. During these mentoring exchanges, Reyna was able to foster Daphnie's reflection and problem solving skills.

Reyna never tells me that *this* is the best thing to do in *this* situation. She would always offer...like here are five ways to deal with these students. Here are five ways to deal with this curriculum and teach this. Pick what works for you and if something doesn't work, go to the next thing. And then we'll talk about it. You know, 'Try a couple of things let's talk about them and see what worked, what didn't work and why'. – *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

Given a variety of options and opinions encouraged Daphnie to find what worked well for her in her setting. This style of mentoring also nurtured Daphnie's confidence in her own reflective and problem solving capabilities. These mentoring exchanges were so effective that in her second year of teaching, Reyna would step back from a coaching role into more of a resource role.

Reflecting on this role switch, Reyna states

I want to make sure she has what she needs to be a good teacher. Whether that's a resource or a pep talk or a shoulder to cry on. It's more of a relationship thing. – *Reyna* (second individual interview)

The informal relationships formed between the novice music teacher participants and the mentor teacher participants were all advantageous. The novice teachers were validated about

their fragile emotional states, but encouraged by their mentors to persevere through their struggles. Each novice teacher grew professionally because of the mentoring exchanges; albeit at different levels and amounts of their mentors' support. The novice teachers also benefitted from their informal mentoring relationships in regards to the development and improving of reflective and problem solving skills. To answer the question of whether or not informal mentoring relationships are rewarding for novice music teachers, the evidence points to a positive conclusion.

In this study, there were not only broad impacts from the mentoring exchanges for the novice teacher participants but for their mentors as well. The first area of impact for the mentors was on their emotional state. Novice teachers, as stated many times, have needs that prompt them to reach out to their mentoring teachers. Some of the needs are physical needs (e.g. resources such as lesson plans), but some needs are more emotionally based. This is not the case for the mentoring teachers. The mentoring teachers in this study began their relationships with the mentees as formal mentors; either as a cooperating teacher or formal district mentor. Without any prompting, the mentors each talked about the connection they felt almost instantaneously with their mentees. Connection was the beginning of what eventually elicited trust, respect, and value between the mentee and mentor. The mentors also developed feelings and had emotional reactions to the mentoring exchanges. Below are some of the mentors' reflections on their emotional reactions.

I feel like there are times where she (Daphnie) needs to get things off of her chest; she needs to talk through and I feel very fortunate that she feels comfortable contacting me about those certain things. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

I really respected her (Suzanne). I really enjoyed her and because we had some connections. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

With her (Kirsten) and me, I would have to say that it's one of the easiest relationships I've ever had. She and I hit it off very easily. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

All of these musings have positive overtones; meaning the emotions expressed by the mentors (e.g. comfortability, respect, enjoyment, and gratitude) reflect the positivity stimulated by the mentoring exchanges. As seen from the above quotes, the mentoring teachers all expressed a positive opinion of their mentees in the beginning. This sentiment did not change, but it did deepen with time and with the increased number of mentoring exchanges. Stacia expressed the deepening of emotions as a closeness she felt with Suzanne.

I feel really close to her (Suzanne), but it isn't mother-daughter, more like grandmother-granddaughter relationship because of our age. But it's like we are these really good teacher friends. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Rachel views her deepening of emotions as refreshing and rewarding.

Mentoring makes you feel really good. It helps you go on the next day, because you do it 28 years...I am kind of at that place where there are things that I am kind of getting sick of. So it's revitalizing to think of having a mentee that finds the pleasure and joy in the doing and it reminds you what it would be like if you weren't doing what you are doing. – *Rachel* (final individual interview)

Reyna expresses how she feels invested, but also how she views Daphnie as a friend.

I feel like I have a personal investment in her development as a teacher and as a person. And I definitely see her as a friend, I mean, I guess it's a little different than a friend my own age. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

One goal of induction programs and mentorships is for novice teachers, in terms of their emotional state, to have a reduction of negative feelings. This is not really applicable, however, to mentoring teachers. Therefore a deepening of positive emotions or feelings that lead the mentor, and mentee, to want to prolong the relationship would be a positive advantage for

mentors. These mentors are obviously deriving gratification from these relationships; otherwise they would want to end the relationship. These negative feelings and outcomes were never witnessed by the mentees or expressed by the mentor participants. Therefore, the evidence defends the belief that the emotional state of the mentoring teachers was positively impacted because of their informal mentoring relationships.

In this study, novice teachers exhibited growth in reflective and problem solving skills as a result of their informal mentoring exchanges. Is the same true for the mentoring teachers then if they come to this study with more experience in reflective practices and problem solving abilities? For these particular mentors, there was a positive impact in the area of reflection and problem solving abilities. The reason I say *these* particular mentors is because each of these teachers expressed their desire to keep learning about their profession.

You need to find out what's out there. You need to go to conferences, you need to find out and keep learning because there is no way that you can sit in your school, be a fabulous teacher, and just grow in isolation. So you get to every workshop you can and you take courses and graduate studies. You just keep going and growing. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Prior to engaging in mentoring exchanges with their mentees, these more experienced teachers made the realization that there is still room to grow in their own teaching practices.

It (mentoring) makes me think about what I do and why I do it. – *Rachel*

*Reyna* – Daphnie has helped me become more reflective and really trying to realize specifically what strategies and techniques I use. She has also helped me become a better problem solver. We used to have long talks about ‘What do I do?’ and to really think discreetly about each strategy, each technique you use in a 45 minute period. You know just classroom management...we take it for granted, those who have been teaching...

*Stacia* – It's automatic.

*Reyna* – It's automatic. You don't even know what you are doing. I don't know...a couple of weeks ago when I was thinking about all these looks I give these kids (laughter), I mean, what look is this (makes a face)? What look is

this (makes a face)? But you know Daphnie working at bilingual schools and Title I schools, it's something very different from me. So we would have conversations and I would be like, 'Well what about this and what about this?' And I would walk away from it too and be like, 'Huh, well what would I do?' And think a little deeper about this because those weren't necessarily things I had come across, but it really helped me extend my thinking.  
(Small focus group interview with mentor teachers)

The mentor participants have used the exchanges with their mentees as a way to reflect on their own mentor practices, teaching practices, and even how their context colors their decisions. There is evidence then that informal mentoring does positively contribute to a deepening of reflective practices and problem solving capabilities. The one stipulation to this statement being valid, however, is that the mentor continues their ongoing, voluntary, and self-motivated pursuit of knowledge.

Professional development will be the last area of impact discussed. How novice teachers perceive professional development activities is not always the same way experienced teachers perceive these sorts of activities. How does professional development for mentoring teachers, then, fit into this study? Did these participants view their informal mentoring exchanges as ways to advance their learning or overcome challenges in their own classrooms? Was there an increase in skill or knowledge level and what kind of recognition or credit do these experienced teachers earn by being a part of an informal mentoring relationship? In answering these questions, the implications regarding professional development will be discovered for not only the mentoring participants in this study, but the mentoring community at large.

The mentoring participants from this study did not begin their informal mentoring exchanges deliberating about any of these issues. They had formed a bond with their mentee and had the desire to see them succeed in their perspective settings. As Reyna stated above, she was personally invested. Any positive implication in regards to professional development would

therefore be an unintended by-product of the informal mentoring. The overall viewpoint of the mentors was to help their mentees in any way they could: whether it was finding a job as was the case with Kirsten, how to teach a physical education class as was the case with Daphnie, or how to get a team of teachers together to help with a huge production as was the case with Suzanne. These mentors were not expecting any kind of payback at the time or in the future. The feelings of satisfaction and value were enough to sustain the mentors. They did not expect these informal exchanges to advance their own learning or overcome challenges in their classrooms, but in some respects, this is exactly what happened. Stacia spoke of how she expected her mentees to take things that she had done beyond their original intention. In doing this, the mentee is educating the mentor about a new way of doing something.

Their thing, their own creations...I expect that it will go beyond what I did. And maybe that's one of the things why I always want to know what Suzanne is doing, because I want to see that. Where is it going? What is she finding? Whether it's a new application of a pop song or something like that. What is she doing with that? - *Stacia* (first individual interview)

Reyna, looking back on the mentoring experience with Daphnie, relates that she learned so much from her mentees. This particular statement also supports the notion that what she is learning from her mentee will have some impact on her classroom.

I definitely see us continuing a mentoring relationship, but as she (Daphnie) gets more experience...I mean I know that I am learning from her already. It just becomes part of that collective knowledge and resource that we have in this district which is just fabulous. And she is working on this great resource for Spanish language songs and I am hoping to look at some of the stuff she is doing so I can share that with my kids. - *Reyna* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

Rachel was the only mentor who alluded to a more intentional learning on her part. She intentionally seeks out her student teachers at conference to learn about new activities or ways of



doing something to bring back to her classroom. When referring to Kirsten, Rachel specifically says she wanted to learn as much as she could from her.

And of course I am learning as much from her (Kirsten) as I can. It's easy to learn from her because I know she is already...we already philosophically gel. So I know that she is not going to be so far away from what I do that I wouldn't find value in what she does. – *Rachel* (final individual interview)

The indication that mentoring novice music teachers is a source for the mentor's professional development is a rather important finding with larger implications for the profession.

Another surprising finding of this study was learning about the support and growth the mentoring teachers felt they needed to be successful. Rachel spoke about the needs of more experienced teachers in her following reflection.

I mean I have someone else who teaches music in my building and some of you have someone else who teaches music, but a lot of us are very isolated. If we didn't get together, or email, or have PLCs, you invent the same thing that 30 other people or 5000 other people invent every year. And if only we had more connection, we would probably save ourselves a lot more time. Not that we don't have to put our own twist on it, but it is a very lonesome life.  
– *Rachel* (large focus group interview)

Connection with other colleagues continues to be important to music teachers throughout their career. Rachel spoke about all music teachers experiencing some form of isolation; calling the music education profession “a very lonesome life.” The only difference between this type of isolation and the type of isolation that novice music teachers experience is that the experienced teacher does not need to learn *how* to do something, they want to learn how to do something better. Rachel referred to three different ways experienced music teachers stay connected: getting together, emailing each other, and PLCs (or professional learning community meetings). Reyna speaks about how beneficial the PLC meetings for her professional development and emotional well-being.

And I was thinking, we have PLCs with expert teachers that I learn so much. I think I have learned more from the PLCs than what I got from the music conference today and yesterday. We have such expert teachers and you know... I do a lot of reflecting at these conferences because my mind is not going a million miles an hour. I was thinking, not only do we have expert teachers, but we have fabulous colleagues. I mean especially my first year in the district. I was like... 'Sue I need stuff. Karen I need stuff. Michelle help' and everyone is so willing to help and so supportive. It's not just an academic support, it's a moral support in our teaching district. – *Reyna* (large focus group interview)

In terms of learning how to mentor, however, the PLCs are limited; as are other forms of professional development activities.

Another unexpected outcome of this study related to the mentors was how they ended up supporting and educating each other during through course of this study. Reyna relays this point in the following reflection.

Well this has been a fun process and I have to say that one afternoon we were at Stacia's that one afternoon, just the 4 of us, what a great conversation we had. I mean the powerhouses that were in that room; I mean Rachel, Stacia...it was just like WOW. We need to do this more often and learn from one another as mentors too. That was a real awesome experience. We've said it time and time again, this (mentoring) isn't something that you are trained to do. Our district, they give you a folder and say, 'Call us if you have any questions', but it's such an important role. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

The interview that Reyna refers to is the small focus group held between the mentor participants that lasted over two hours. These teachers knew each other prior to the onset of this study and so the interview atmosphere was comfortable and the conversation seemed effortless. While I am not surprised that the discussion between these mentor participants stimulated valuable information pertaining to novice teachers, I am surprised by the secondary outcomes for the mentors. Reyna states that her district passes out folders to their mentors and expects this to be enough support and education to ensure competent mentoring. According to Reyna, however,

meeting with other mentors was not only informative, but “awesome.” Reyna is correct in saying that mentors play a very important role, so supporting these teachers in their roles should be a top priority to school districts.

I cannot end this this discussion of the implications for mentoring teachers any better than with Reyna’s final words in our last interview together.

Working with these young teachers...I mean I am learning from them. They have great ideas and I am like, ‘Oh yeah...I can do something like that’ or ‘Oh...brilliant.’ Often we are so isolated, especially as music teachers, unless you really make an effort to attend these PLCs or try to connect with another teacher, when are you really talking about your craft as a music teacher.

Having these mentoring conversations is professionally beneficial to me too as a mentor. You get to a point where you ask yourself, ‘What else can I do?’ You need to keep it fresh. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

These larger implications are really rewards that affect the novice and mentor teacher’s professional career. Research findings verify that mentoring relationships are beneficial for novice educators, but this study’s findings relay that there are benefits for mentoring teachers as well.

### **Rules of exchange in the mentoring dyad.**

The SET concepts that have been examined in the mentoring relationship thus far, comparison level, rewards, and costs, are important to investigate because these ideas clarify why the mentoring partners stay in the relationship. Equally important is a deeper inspection of the mentoring relationships as viewed through the SET rules of exchange. The rules of exchange are guidelines of the exchange process established by the relationship partners as the relationship evolves (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). One exchange rule is known as the rule of reciprocity, which refers to the giving and taking of rewards as previously discussed. Negotiated rules are more specific to the exchange relationship and established by the pair. The remainder of this

chapter will expound on the negotiated rules, established patterns, and emerging conditions represented in each mentoring dyad.

The aim of both partners in an exchange relationship, in this case an informal mentoring relationship, is to attempt to grasp a mutually advantageous arrangement. In this study the mentor teachers continued their relationship with their mentees because of the feelings, specifically those of commitment or friendship, they had established for their mentees. The mentees initially based the continuation of their relationship on need initially, but eventually shifted to a focus on reciprocated feelings of trust and commitment. How the mentoring exchanges were enacted or able to be enacted is what allowed these mentoring partners to get to this point. Although arrangements about the exchanges and what responsibilities were to be held by each member were not always clear and overt (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005), negotiated rules still played a significant role in how effective the exchanges were.

Patterns of exchange are representations of the negotiated rules that have been developed between the exchange partners. The definition of a pattern is a discernible regularity or something that is repeated in a predictable manner. When examining the patterns of social exchange that were established between the mentoring pairs, it is important to distinguish the social exchanges that repeated themselves in this predictable manner and those exchanges that randomly took place. What patterns of exchange were established between the mentoring pairs in this study? Were these patterns specific to each mentoring relationship? Did the norms established by each mentoring pair provide guidelines for mentoring practices, clarify boundaries, resolve conflicts, or otherwise further mentoring goals? Did the norms established by the mentoring pair increase (or decrease) the effectiveness of the exchanges taking place? To address these questions, I will note patterns of power and decision, patterns of interaction

(including levels of involvement, dependence, and exchange of resources), and patterns of belief and expectation for each mentoring pair.

### **Suzanne and Stacia**

Suzanne and Stacia have been in their informal mentoring relationship the longest. Therefore, this pair has had the most opportunity to establish a set of patterns related to how often they talk or meet, their preferred modes of conversation, the ebb and flow between listening and talking, and other various mentor-type exchanges. With this relationship still going after four years, one would expect to see changes being made to the social exchanges as the needs and circumstances of both mentoring partners' changes. Their particular progression of social exchanges will be compared to the other mentoring pairs to note similarities and differences.

In reflecting on their early interactions, Suzanne remembers sitting down with Stacia before their student teaching even began.

I think it's important for mentors to meet, like have dinner together. Or like have coffee or something. That was one thing that I thought today... what defines you as like authentic? Before we were totally solid in our relationship, we met. She (Stacia) was like, 'Before you student teach with me, let's have coffee.' And we sat for like an hour and a half and just talked. And I think it's important to have that like personal... connection. – *Suzanne* (Small focus group interview with novice teachers)

Suzanne's memory of their first meeting laid the foundation for making a personal connection, which later led to trust and commitment. This meeting also laid the foundation of having "authentic" social exchanges as the relationship progressed. To Suzanne, this was an important element, and one on which she judged her future social exchanges with Stacia. Stacia also believes in having authentic interactions with her mentees; as stated before she does not want to create clones of herself.

I make sure I let them know what they are doing right and to pick up on what is it that their students like about them or what has an effect on their students? Because I know from my own experience that I learn so much from people observing my teaching and telling me what they say happening and kids' responses because it was maybe intuitive to me and maybe I didn't realize the effect it had on me. So I think that is what I see as a main mission; helping them see what's there and then providing the guidance they need to grow in any particular area. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

Stacia does not go into any mentoring exchanges with pre-conceived notions of what her mentees need. This would, in the pure sense of the word, be an example of authentic mentoring as the genuine needs of the mentee are what Stacia is attending to. How were these mentoring exchanges enacted then? When the student teaching was taking place, there were a series of conversations face-to-face that set up the framework for future exchanges. According to Stacia and Suzanne, the mentoring conversations went something like the following.

When you (Suzanne) needed to talk through some things or get some ideas or how to approach a problem, you talked through all the bad things that could happen or what your fears were and then you had 3 plans of action of how it could be approached. And then you just went in and did what was right at the time. – *Stacia* (Suzanna and Stacia first paired interview)

The perceptions Stacia and Suzanne held about this form of exchange were somewhat different.

Stacia recounts,

A couple of times when she (Suzanne) had some issues that were difficult or that she was worried about, she called me and talked through an approach. And it was usually, think, teamwork, give information, and then ask for what you need, ask for what you expect. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

Suzanne is not so calm in her memories of the times she was going through a difficult time and called on Stacia.

Well, as a novice teacher, I call her up when there is a, especially in the beginning, the first year and then partly into the 2nd year, I would call her up

in somewhat of a crisis mode or a huge fill in the blank mode. – *Suzanne*  
(final individual interview)

The exchange pattern that Suzanne and Stacia established up to this point seems appropriate at this stage of Suzanne's development. Suzanne took the lead in calling Stacia when she was in "crisis mode." As Suzanne's experience level changed, however, so did the mentoring exchanges and each participants' perceptions of the exchanges.

When Suzanne had a need (e.g. lesson guidance, problems with a program, frazzled with classroom management), she would place a phone call or send an email. This dynamic changed after the first year.

I feel that in the beginning I was like, 'Oh it makes sense that I call Stacia every 20 minutes because it's my first year teaching.' But now it's my fourth year and I feel like I am supposed to be a little more "the expert." So I call you (Stacia) less, but I am realizing that every time I see her, I am like 'Oh, I need to call you more.' So that's where I am at. I need to rely on my mentor more. – *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

Suzanne struggles with the notion that as a more experienced teacher she should not have to call on her mentor. However, whenever she speaks with Stacia, whether through phone, email or face-to-face, Suzanne recognizes the benefits that come from those social exchanges. Stacia does not necessarily wait for her mentee to make contact. One big shift in the social exchange dynamic is Stacia now takes more initiative to stay in contact.

She (Stacia) is reaching out to me all the time and sometimes (*makes a guilty face*) I don't respond. She is like always...ALWAYS trying to get me engaged. She's there for anything I need. – *Suzanne* (Suzanne first individual interview)

There are two things to take note of in this particular statement. One, Suzanne verifies that there has been a change in the social exchange system, as noted before; Stacia is now reaching to Suzanne. The other thing to notice is Suzanne's perception of this change. She feels guilty that she does not always reciprocate these exchanges, but makes sure to point out that Stacia is still

looking out for her mentee; “she is always trying to get me engaged” and “she is there for anything I need.” Again Stacia’s perception is somewhat different than Suzanne of this change in social exchange dynamics.

I didn't check in, I was just like ‘Give me a call if you need anything’ and of course she really didn't. She was really busy and exhausted, so I didn't check in or check up on how things were going. And obviously I didn't need to, but that just made me shape a little separation and we were not as close as we might have been. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

In a lot of ways, I think now that she's been teaching...since she's been teaching, I think I am a cheerleader. – *Stacia* (first individual interview)

Stacia feels that she and Suzanne have talked about everything necessary for Suzanne to be a success, but if there is a question that Suzanne would feel comfortable calling Stacia. Stacia also recognizes that Suzanne is busy and tired, she therefore limits the amount of contact she has with Suzanne. Stacia feels this has put a separation in their relationship, but she is still an ardent supporter of Suzanne; “I am a cheerleader.” This is an interesting contrast to Suzanne’s statement about Stacia calling all the time. Suzanne’s perspective is that Stacia is always reaching out to Suzanne and is there any time she needs her. Stacia’s perspective is that she and Suzanne are not as close as they used to be, but Suzanne would call if she needed something. While this might seem like a negative turn in the relationship, neither Suzanne nor Stacia feel this way.

I just need to be reminded all the time about why I teach and how to be a better teacher. I know that I will always go to Stacia and go our conferences that we go to. If I am in a little rut, I will call or email Stacia. – *Suzanne* (Suzanne and Stacia 1st paired interview)

So I think that's another piece that contact, just a brief contact, can call up all the stuff that you have going that you had going. It isn't like the hours you spend together. It keeps you tuned, tuned in. – *Stacia* (Large Focus interview)



These statements mark the progression of mentoring exchanges from Suzanne's first year of teaching to fourth year when this study was conducted. At this point, it cannot be concluded whether these patterns were specific to this mentoring relationship or not. Once the exchanges taking place with the other participants have been explored, this question can be answered. The question as to whether or not the established patterns provide guidelines for this relationship can be answered however. To clarify, the patterns established so far by this pair are: (a) Suzanne contacting Stacia when there is a need (whether content based or emotionally based), (b) Stacia contacting Suzanne to see how she is doing and keep Suzanne engaged, and (c) connecting at music education conferences. These patterns did provide some guidelines for this relationship; more so for guidelines concerning furthering mentoring goals. There is not too much to say about the established norms providing guidelines for mentoring practices, clarifying boundaries, and resolving conflicts. Suzanne and Stacia would contact the other partner when a need presented itself, therefore the mentoring was need based. Suzanne did feel guilty for not responding to Stacia's calls or emails, but this boundary did not stop Stacia from continuing to make calls or influence Suzanne to change her mind about taking Stacia's calls. The established patterns did not resolve any mentoring conflicts, but there were not any mentoring conflicts mentioned by either participant. The one area where guidelines were determined or reinforced by established patterns were the furthering of mentoring goals.

As this mentoring relationship was an informal arrangement, formal goals were not established. The mentoring goals were unstated or more understood. An example of this is found in the following statement.

I think the critical thing for me to help Suzanne as a novice teacher was being to let her know that 'It's your first year of teaching. This is really going well for your first year of teaching.' And then the 2nd year, 'Oooh, does this make a difference?' And then the 3rd year, I see she is just so thrilled with what

she's doing and me saying, 'Oh, you are reaping the benefits of your teachings; the rewards for the work from the first two years.' I know from experience that you need someone to kind of help you see that or to appreciate it. Or maybe we know it, but we don't give ourselves permission to talk about it; enjoy it or identify it. – *Stacia* (final individual interview)

This is an unstated mentoring goal of Stacia; to encourage Suzanne each teaching year, but also give an outsider's perspective to the growth she has made. This unstated goal may be why Stacia is so dedicated to staying in touch with Suzanne. Suzanne's perspective, as noted before, is different than Stacia's. Her unstated mentoring goal is also different than Stacia; she wishes to not be so dependent on her mentor.

First it's really easy (to reach out to a mentor) because the self-doubt is expected but then after 4 years, I have higher expectations of myself. So reaching out is a little less natural, but it is so helpful. To stay in contact, just a minute here, it is so beneficial. – *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

Suzanne again expresses a conflict in her emotions. Suzanne holds the expectation that she does not need Stacia as much as she did as a first year teacher, but realizes that there is benefit that comes from staying in a relationship with her mentor. The pattern that has been established where Suzanne contacts Stacia when there is a need and where Stacia contacts Suzanne to check up on Suzanne has really promoted this particular guideline. There is another unstated goal that has been achieved because of the patterns established between this pair.

Sometimes after I have talked with her (Stacia), like after the conferences and or when she comes to my classroom, I just will find myself totally channeling what she would say. For instance, the questions I asked my kids this morning were like, 'What sort of things do you think people might say about us when we leave after the choir festival?' I was like... that's something Stacia would say. Like getting them thinking... or how do I want to present myself? I do that all the time, but more so after I've had contact with her. – *Suzanne* (novice teacher focus group)

This idea of “channeling” is rather contrary to the initial goal Stacia had for her mentees. Stacia did not want to create a clone, but here we have Suzanne saying she finds herself saying things and doing things that Stacia would do. This quote was used before, but it ties in with this sentiment.

I can't imagine not having had Stacia as a mentor. It's such a driving force in what I do, I don't know what kind of teacher I would be. I can't picture it. That's a little mushy, but it's the truth. How would I teach? I don't even know, I can't conceive of it. What sort of thoughts would be guiding how I talk to the kids and what I do? It's been huge for sure. – *Suzanne* (large focus group interview)

The norms or patterns established between Stacia and Suzanne provided a structure or guidelines for Suzanne to become the teacher that she is today (please forgive the cliché). Suzanne states, “What sort of thoughts would be guiding how I talk to the kids and what I do?” Channeling Stacia is another development stemming from the established pattern of mentoring exchanges. This particular unstated mentoring goal is how, I believe, Suzanne is able to exercise current mentoring advice without having to call Stacia daily. Stacia’s perception is that she does not need to contact Suzanne daily because she knows Suzanne will call if there is a problem. Stacia is proud of Suzanne’s accomplishments and another unstated goal is a desire that she move beyond a novice status.

To see what she is developing, where she is taking it beyond what I know she got from me...that's where I would say I benefit. It's the pleasure that I get from seeing that live on and to see her becoming a professional that is going to take her place in the field. – *Stacia* (large focus group interview)

The norms established by this pair have allowed this unstated goal, and the other aforementioned goals, to transpire. This answers the question as to whether or not the established patterns provide guidelines for this relationship. There is one question left to answer. Did the norms

established by the mentoring pair increase or decrease the effectiveness of the mentoring exchanges?

In Stacia and Suzanne's relationship, the patterns, or norms, of social exchange established and set in motion were: (a) Suzanne contacting Stacia when there is a need (whether content based or emotionally based), (b) Stacia contacting Suzanne to see how she is doing and keep Suzanne engaged, and (c) connecting at music education conferences. These patterns provided guidelines for this relationship to attain goals that were left unsaid between these two participants. Suzanne's unstated goals that either have been met or currently being met include her desire to be less needful of Stacia. She was able to do this by "channeling" how she felt Stacia would react in various teaching situations and act accordingly. Suzanne's other unstated goal is to let go of some of her opinions about staying in contact with Stacia because she sees good come from those exchanges. Some of Stacia's unstated goals include reaching out to Suzanne and reassuring her of the great job she is doing as she develops as a teacher. Stacia feels she is able to encourage Suzanne's success through these types of exchanges as Suzanne takes what she has learned with Stacia to greater levels of achievement. In summarizing these events, it is apparent that the norms established by this mentoring pair increased the effectiveness of the exchanges. This increase of effectiveness took place over time, as the needs and unstated goals of the mentoring pair changed over the period of four years. This flexibility, then, is another pattern that was established by this pair and it is the flexibility of the relationship that promoted increased effectiveness; not the contact each participant had with the other, the channeling of the mentor, or the reassurances made and given. Had flexibility not been a pattern established in this relationship, a decrease in the effectiveness of mentoring exchanges would have been noted as both Suzanne and Stacia's actions might have been perceived as negative in nature. Flexibility

therefore seems to be a very important pattern to establish some guarantee of effective mentoring exchanges. Observations of this pattern, as well as the other established patterns noted in this mentoring pair, will now be looked for in the mentoring exchanges of Kirsten and Rachel.

### **Kirsten and Rachel**

Suzanne and Stacia established a pattern of mentoring exchanges based on contacting each other when there was a need (Suzanne) or to keep the lines of communication open to make sure everything was going well (Stacia). Both of these teachers were flexible in either making contact or responding contact. These established patterns did produce effective results, although there were some mixed feelings associated how often contact was made. Kirsten and Rachel exhibit some of the same patterns of mentoring exchange. Although this mentoring pair has been in an informal relationship less than half the time of Suzanne and Stacia, the patterns that have been established have either increased or maintained effective mentoring exchanges.

The established modes of conversation are very similar to Suzanne and Stacia, except for the fact that Kirsten and Rachel live and work in two different teaching districts.

*My question – What is your main mode of communication?*

*Rachel - For fun and friendly relationship stuff, face-to-face is good, but for information, we do really well with email. We usually don't get the phone call.*

*Kirsten - We did once last year, when I was panicking on the job. We did that on the phone and that was fine for me, it was really helpful and it was good to hear her voice. I just needed to hear somebody. But phone was fine then and we have been doing fine with email. But like logistic things, like what do you do for an accompanist for choir, I emailed her and that was fine.*

*(Kirsten and Rachel's final paired interview)*

This is a very clear response that answers how these two teachers conduct their mentoring exchanges. Rachel states that for more relational exchanges, or “fun and friendly stuff,” they get together for face-to-face exchanges. Otherwise, these two use email to communicate with one

another. Kirsten states, however, that if there is a more dire need or more emotional need, she would call Rachel. In a separate statement, Kirsten speaks about these current mentoring exchanges as being organic in nature.

I would say it's just kind of organic. It's when I need help. She's checked in a couple of times, just a "How are you doing?" So it hasn't always been an emergency, like I'm getting fired sort of thing. So it's just kind of as you go and as she has time. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

Two things stand out in this statement. First is this idea of “organic” exchanges. Mentoring conversations only occur when they are needed. This resonates with Suzanne’s statements about authenticity in her mentoring exchanges with Stacia.

According to Suzanne, authentic exchanges were experienced in having coffee over conversations and getting to know each other. When Kirsten was getting to know Rachel, she said the following about authentic exchanges.

I don't think Rachel ever imposed anything on me. I mean when we are teaching children, we have our objectives. We have what they want to get out of the lesson. Whereas with us (Rachel and Kirsten), what did I need in that moment? It was more organic. There was less of her trying to, "Well today we are going to talk about this..." We have never done that. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

She (Rachel) was very nurturing and she would listen and we would work through it. Whereas with the other one (the other cooperating teacher), she would rip through what I already knew and pick pick pick. And so it was a different power relationship I guess. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel first paired interview)

The feelings engendered by these early exchanges instituted guidelines for authentic exchanges.

Returning to Kirsten’s statement about organic exchanges, the second thing that stands out highlights a contrast in the frequency of contact with the mentor. Here Kirsten states that Rachel has checked in “a couple of times” and only when there is time or there is a need. Suzanne reported that Stacia would try to reach out all the time regardless of the circumstances. The

mentoring patterns established by both pairs provided guidelines about the frequency of contact in their prospective relationships. A noteworthy observation is that Kirsten does not feel one way or the other about this apparent difference in how often she converses with Rachel (in juxtaposition to Suzanne's feelings about this same matter), but she knows Rachel is there when she needs her.

I really feel like she (Kirsten) and I have talked about everything we possibly could have. I think she knows now anything she has a question about, she'll throw it my way. I don't think there's any doubt about our feeling comfortable with that. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

Up to this point, the established mentoring patterns that have been uncovered is an unspoken agreement that Rachel and Kirsten would stay in contact with each other to keep track of one another or call or email if there is a need that arises. This established pattern is different from that established in Suzanne and Stacia's relationship in that Rachel does not contact Kirsten as often as Stacia contacts Suzanne. There are also no feelings of self-reproach associated with the number of times Kirsten contacts Rachel (as with Suzanne). A similarity both of these mentoring pairs share is that both pairs make it a point to connect at music education conferences. Maybe this is a moot point, because the question could be asked, "Why wouldn't you connect with your mentoring partner at a music conference if the relationship is on good terms?" The mentoring patterns then established by this pair have set up a guideline that both teachers will contact each other when there is a need, but the relationship does not really go beyond this point. This may be because of distance and busy schedules, but these are both teachers' reality. This established pattern did have some influence on the effectiveness of the exchanges taking place. There was a positive, more long-term outcome for both Kirstin and

Rachel. Kirsten gained self-confidence and learned not to judge herself so harshly, and Rachel gained a colleague to learn from.

It is safe to say that Kirsten is a perfectionist. She not only wants to do things well, but to them at a high degree of proficiency. With this attitude of perfectionism came a lot of self-judgment, especially in the beginning of her teaching career.

In fact, often I had to make her stop judging herself so harshly, because she is her own worst enemy. She is just so hard on herself especially if she perceived them as being imperfect. And so probably with her, I help her talk things through and get them out. And I think I would probably still be in that role if we were by each other more often because I think Kirsten Shields is too hard on herself. – *Rachel* (final individual interview)

Through the pattern of mentoring exchanges established in the student teaching setting and lasting through her first year of teaching, Rachel gained a confidence about her teaching that allowed her to function more confidently. These feelings of confidence were based on what Rachel said and did in their mentoring exchanges.

She (Rachel) has nothing but good things to say about me and I feel sometimes that she oversells, but then at the core of it, it's also the gratitude... that is what she sees. Because that's what I hope people would see, like when you take off everything else...like when you take off my nerves, take off my youth or inexperience, I would hope that you would see what Rachel sees. She sees my good intentions and my perseverance, my work ethic and my competence, so I guess I am grateful that she sees those things because that is what I work hard at. – *Kirsten* (final individual interview)

Having Rachel see beyond the perfectionism, or “work ethic,” built a trust in how Kirsten functioned as a teacher. In the beginning she depended a lot on what they did together in the student teaching experience. Much like Suzanne’s feelings about “channeling” Stacia, Kirsten stated, “I kinda feel like I am wearing the ‘*What would Rachel do?*’ bracelet all day.”

I think my entire first month I banked on those lessons, I banked on those procedures. I still sing all the entry songs that we did when I was a student



teacher. Entering the room, it's the same...structuring targets on the wall. But what she does with her kids is not the same, can't be the same with me. My kids aren't her kids. They won't ever be. But, I think a lot of stuff that was uncomfortable in the first month, especially when I felt completely overwhelmed and really terrified, it was a lot of 'What would Rachel do?' 'How did we do it last year when I served the year with her?' That's gotten me through. – *Kirsten* (first individual interview)

One comparison to make with Suzanne's experiences is how Kirsten recognized that their student population was different. She understood that the things she did in the student teaching experience could not be replicated exactly in her new environment. She had the confidence, however, to do her own thing or to try things a little differently.

I think there is more authenticity to what you have started and what you have tried that you kind of come back to your mentor teacher and say, "Remember that project? I did it a little differently, but I am still running into this or that." Or "Hey, I found out if you did it like that...." There is more of a two-way street that you get, you can approach. – *Kirsten* (final individual interview)

The mentoring pattern established and the positive trust generated between this mentoring pair has opened up a "two-way street" or reciprocation. In the above statement, Kirsten related to mentoring exchanges that are based on prior co-projects. She has tried something new and yet some things are still not working out. This new exchange takes place out of a need, which is an established norm, but opens the door for the mentor to gain new information as well. This is a positive, more long-term, outcome that has consequences for Rachel. At music education conferences Rachel projects,

And then we'll just meet at conferences, chat both ways, you know? I will pick her brain for what she's been doing that's new stuff, just as much as the other way around. We still hang when I see her. – *Rachel* (first individual interview)

There is a confidence that is built into this sentiment however, much like the confidence Kirsten projected.

And of course I am like, 'Oh what did you do to solve that problem' and you know learning as much from her (Kirsten) as I can. And again, it's easy to learn from her because I know she is already...we already philosophically gel. I know that she is not going to be so far away from what I do that I wouldn't find value in what she does. I think that will always be true. – *Rachel* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Rachel's receptive attitude is a different outcome of the mentoring exchanges in Suzanne and Stacia's relationship. There is more of a willingness to share new ideas. Even though time and distance are hindering the frequency of exchanges, the pattern established has created more of a confident respect and reliance between the mentoring partners.

The patterns of exchange created by this mentoring pair are different from Suzanne and Stacia in respect to the frequency of exchanges and who makes the contact. The established norm, at this point in the relationship, is to call out of need, but also to "see how things are going." This pattern may be this way because of distance and busy schedules, or it may be that this relationship is not one that needs to stay in contact to remain intact. More time will have to go by to see if this changes or not. More time will have to pass to see whether or not the effectiveness of the mentoring exchanges continue to increase (or stay at this level) because of the established pattern. At this point in time, both the novice teacher and the mentor teacher are positively impacted by their mentoring exchanges. Kirsten is more confident in her teaching, so much that she can share new ideas and ideas she has expounded on. She knows that she can go to Rachel whenever there is a logistical or emotional need. As she was quoted before,

It's that continual support, whether physical or karma based; that I know that she is around. It's not super tangible but I mean, it's personally tangible because I know I pick up the phone and she is there. – *Kirsten* (Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Rachel too benefits from the mentoring exchanges. The patterns established by this pair have created a faith that either mentoring partner can talk to the other for advice, get new ideas, or to catch up and have a good time. Kirsten encapsulates the idea of this achieved goal of reciprocity when she stated that these reciprocal exchanges bring “more authenticity to what you have started.”

### **Daphnie and Reyna**

Both Suzanne and Rachel started their mentoring relationships as student teachers. They made the decision to continue their relationship with these self-selected mentors during their first year of teaching and beyond. Reyna and Daphnie are different in that Daphnie was Reyna’s formal district mentor her first year of teaching. Together they decided to continue their informal mentoring into Reyna’s second year of teaching. Special attention needs to be given to this last mentoring pair, however, to see if there is any difference based on how this relationship started.

The other mentoring pairs spoke to the concept of authentic or organic mentoring exchanges. This theme also appears in the mentoring exchanges taking place between Daphnie and Reyna.

Daphnie, as a mentor, never had an agenda like, ‘We need to talk to you and talk about this and this and this and this... and these are all the things we need to fix.’ She would come at it sort of, ‘Ok, I am an open book for you. What do you think you did well...what do you think you could do better? And let's come at it from you speaking from what you felt comfortable doing and didn't feel comfortable doing.’ And tackling it that way. – *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

So I felt it was easier not to just, "Well you should do it this way" because I would never say that to my other colleagues. It's a different level of a relationship. The mentoring itself ultimately, I approached in a similar manner, but it just wasn't as intensive as in student teaching. In student teaching, you are sharing that space...your professional life with that person and helping them grow through that process. And of course there is still growth that first year; a huge amount of growth. But it's different, because they're more independent. I don't know if I want to say a different level of

respect, maybe more that level of a colleague instead of an apprentice.  
– *Reyna* (final individual interview)

All three mentoring groups are engaged in defined authentic mentoring exchanges as distinguished by the mentors not having a pre-existing agenda. These mentors listened to their mentees to ascertain what the real needs of the novice were, and they determined not to “make clones” of themselves. As for the mode of conversation, there were the phone calls, texts, and emails sent back and forth, but this mentoring pair has also used more unconventional modes for their mentoring exchanges.

*Daphnie* - I don't think I have ever called you (*Reyna*) other than to ask where your house is. I think all of the important work that we've done is face to face. If I need you, it's in an email. If it's a little question and not something that needs to be talked over.

*Reyna* - Like, hey do you have a song for this?

*Daphnie* - Or like, I don't understand what's here in the curriculum. I need to know a song that's in Chinese.

*Reyna* - Yeah, so we email a lot. We should get together more. We will hike this summer and we will tell you (the interviewer) all about it.

*Daphnie* - *Reyna* will walk and I will hike.

(*Daphnie* and *Reyna* final paired interview)

So I really knew that when *Reyna* was into alternative mentor meetings when we would go hiking for our mentor meetings. – *Daphnie* (*Daphnie* and *Reyna* first paired interview)

I am there to support the mentee and if that means that we are going to have some coffee and hang out and talk about some stuff, then I am meeting their needs. If it means we are looking through materials and resources and everything else, I feel I am being flexible in meeting their needs. – *Reyna*  
(*Daphnie* and *Reyna* final paired interview)

The conventional, and unconventional, modes of mentoring exchanges laid the groundwork for the establishment of patterns, as seen with the other mentoring pairs. All three of the mentoring pairs also expressed how their exchanges were authentic, or organic. All three mentoring pairs

have mentoring exchanges based on need. How often did Reyna and Daphnie contact one another though?

Daphnie is in her second year. I get a lot of emails like, ‘Hey what would you do for this?’ or, ‘Do you have any Halloween things for 2nd grade?’ So, it’s real quick for me to see the email in the morning, scan some stuff, and email it off for that. Especially with resources, that... that’s super simple now. But we’ve already built that relationship. – *Reyna* (first individual interview)

*Reyna* - It’s been a very busy year for both of us. So honestly it’s been really nice to have these times to check in and catch up and see what’s going on with Daphnie. I mean we have emailed each other a couple of times through the year and I have seen her a couple of times at a music meeting.

*Daphnie* - And I so grateful that you run those and...

*Reyna* - But you know, that when you are in the classroom, you are so focused on what you are doing day to day. You are just so sucked into whatever is going on. I find it hard to make that point to connect with people. So this study has been really nice to continue that connection with meaningful time.

*Daphnie* - Absolutely. And I don’t feel like I am getting ignored or anything at all, but same thing. It’s been a very different year than last year. And just trying to deal with it all and still sleep the appropriate amount every night and brush my teeth (laughter) But I know that she (*Reyna*) is always in the back of my head and I know I can reach out to her if I need to.

(*Daphnie* and *Reyna* final paired interview)

There’s no reason why I would want to cut her out of my life. Like the other day she just checked in with me on g-chat. I wasn’t even on my computer and it must have just come on. But, she just sent me a quick note, ‘Hey how are you? Just wanted to make sure everything’s going okay.’ So, that was really...that was really nice of her. – *Daphnie* (first individual interview)

Similar to Kirsten and Rachel’s account of their exchanges, Daphne and Reyna indicated that this year was very busy for each of them as well. Daphnie, in her second year of teaching, had more need for resources instead of teaching advice. Reyna has made it a point to help Daphnie out in whatever need she had, but did not push herself on Daphnie. Much like Stacia, Daphnie has made it a point to check in on her mentee, which elicited positive feelings from Reyna. With this pattern of exchange being found in all three mentoring pairs, it can be concluded that

mentoring exchanges establish patterns that are need based, but the frequency of the exchanges are specific to each relationship. These needs usually originate with the novice teacher, but as seen with each of the mentoring teachers, there could be a need to stay in contact with the novice or that prompts an exchange.

The question as to whether or not the patterns established by the mentoring pairs provided guidelines does not really apply in this mentoring relationship. There was no indication that Daphnie and Reyna's mentoring exchanges had issues with boundaries or that there were any conflicts to resolve. Much like Suzanne and Stacia's mentoring relationship, there did seem to be an unstated mentoring goal that Reyna envisaged; that Daphnie would become more involved in the music district meetings, known as PLCs.

And it's neat too, because she (Daphnie) tries to come to our monthly PLCs. So the elementary music teacher get together once a month and that first year Daphnie wasn't sharing really anything. And now she's adding in some tidbits. – *Reyna* (final individual interview)

This statement suggests that this was an unspoken goal Reyna had for her mentee. That first year, Daphnie would come every so often to the PLC meetings, but during her second year she not only tried to attend more, but she was starting to contribute.

I feel like the PLC is very helpful, but I feel with a mentor I can be more vulnerable. I can open myself up and not feel like anything is stupid. When I talk to Reyna, I feel like I could just say anything and anything is valid and anything goes and I can ask her things that I think are totally ridiculous. I wouldn't ask other teachers in the district that I see as experienced because I might feel judged. I know I shouldn't feel judged, but I just don't have that relationship with them and I don't want to show them my vulnerabilities.  
- *Daphnie* (Daphnie and Reyna final paired interview)

While the obvious belief that stands out in this statement is that Daphnie is able to be vulnerable in her mentoring exchanges, but not in the PLC setting, there is another matter that needs to be

highlighted. If Daphnie is starting to contribute more at the PLCs, then that may mean that she is feeling less judged, less vulnerable, and is starting to develop relationships in that community. This again was not a spoken goal of this mentoring pair, rather a consequence of guidelines applied through the mentoring pattern. To clarify, patterns could theoretically set up guidelines that help mentors mentor and mentees grow in their abilities. One such guideline might be how to set up and meet long-term goals. Because each of these relationships were informal arrangements, however, the establishment of formal goals would come across as inauthentic. Instead, each of these relationships let their relationships progress without a structured approach to goal setting. With the formation of unstated goals, mentors and mentees can overcome this obstacle and remained authentic in their mentoring exchanges and established patterns.

The pattern was established that either Daphnie or Reyna would contact the other if there was a need or to check in on the other person. This pattern did have an impact on the effectiveness of the mentoring exchanges, as with the other mentoring pairs. Daphnie, similar to Kirsten's account, gained self-assurance about her teaching ability.

Sometimes I panic... well I get stressed out about something in particular and I panic, and I think 'I've got to call Reyna.' And now I'm just like, 'What would Reyna say to me?' It's like I have that phone call and I would say, 'Okay here is my problem' and then what do I think she would say to me. She always very calm and structured. And I just think, 'Okay maybe you know... these are the resources, I can go to some of her resources.' Or I use one of ...she has a Google drive, one of her basic year-long lesson plans. I basically use those and modify to the way I teach. So I feel like I'm always channeling something that she's done or something she told me. – *Daphnie* (final individual interview)

This reflection addresses how Daphnie works through her times of panic because of Reyna's mentorship. She first thinks about calling Reyna, but instead goes through a process where she imagines what Reyna would say to her and the resources she would suggest. If this does not

solve the problem, she goes to one of the lesson plans written by Reyna and modifies it. She calls this process “channeling” just like Suzanne did. While this process may seem like she is still heavily depends on Reyna, she actually is learning how to do things on her own. She does not automatically call Reyna, instead she reflects on what might be said in an imaginary conversation. Daphnie may still use the lessons written by Reyna, but she modifies it because she knows what will work best in her setting and with her own students. The pattern was established that either Daphnie or Reyna would call if there was a need. This pattern was effective in that it fostered Daphnie’s independent thinking, reflection, and achievement.

The patterns or norms exhibited by the participants in this study were investigated by answering the following questions: What patterns of exchange were established between the mentoring pairs in this study? Were these patterns specific to each mentoring relationship? Did the norms established by each mentoring pair provide guidelines for mentoring practices, clarify boundaries, resolve conflicts, or otherwise further mentoring goals? Did the norms established by the mentoring pair increase (or decrease) the effectiveness of the exchanges? There were patterns that were shared among the mentoring pairs (e.g. contacting a mentoring partner when there was need, making contact at music conferences or meetings), but there were also patterns that were specific to the mentoring pairs as well (e.g. the frequency of contact, reciprocal attitude). One specific guideline was set up with the establishment of exchange patterns; the formation of unstated mentoring goals. With the mentoring goals being unstated, the mentoring pairs could still function as an informal mentoring relationship, but mentors could work under guidelines that set their mentees up for meeting tacit goals. Some of the negotiated rules were more formal in nature because that was what the mentoring pair established. This is depicted in Suzanne and Stacia’s relationship. Stacia would come to Suzanne’s school to observe her teach or to conduct a



portion of the chorus rehearsal. This type of mentoring behavior is very different than the hikes Daphnie and Reyna would go on to problem solve on how to meet the needs of students in the bilingual school. There is no right or wrong to either of these negotiated rules. The norms established by each of the mentoring pairs increased the effectiveness of the mentoring exchanges taking place in *that* particular relationship. With the negotiated rules that were established, the novice teachers became more independent, the mentoring relationship became more reciprocal or collegial, and mentors gained satisfaction in how their mentees were developing. By studying these patterns and how they functioned in each relationship, the negotiated rules established by the participants have now been discovered.

### **Summary**

In closing, findings presented in this chapter relate information about informal mentoring practices through a SET perspective. A brief overview of SET, some of its major concepts, and exchange rules were presented in order to support findings of the second research question. With this more comprehensive examination of SET, the concepts that are highlighted do seem to compliment the dynamics and workings of an informal mentoring relationship. The rules of exchange and its precepts were used to analyze the conversations, interactions, and manners of the participants in this study. There were some similarities found in each mentoring pair, but there were also differences. These similarities and differences make sense as the mentoring practices, mentoring exchanges, and needs of each mentor and novice participant are different, but share common attributes as well. In using SET as a theoretical perspective, mentoring practices (specifically informal practices) for novice music teachers has been broadened as the benefits ensuing for the mentee and their mentor has had an opportunity to be evaluated.

## **Chapter 6: Summary and Conclusions**

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, to examine the outcomes and implications for novice music educators of being in an informal mentoring relationship at different stages of their teaching career. Second, to investigate the usefulness of Social Exchange Theory as a lens to examine these relationships and mentoring practices. Two research questions guided this examination. The first research question specifically focused on the nature and development of the novice teacher and mentoring teacher relationship. The second research question moved from the examination of the participant dyad to a cross case analysis of the mentoring pairs. SET was applied as an interpretive tool to discover how the concepts of rewards & costs, comparison levels, rules of exchange, and trust & commitment were represented in each mentoring pair.

### **Summary of Findings**

Each mentoring dyad was first established in a formal setting (e.g. either in a student teaching placement or formal induction program). However, once the mentoring pair transitioned into an informal relationship, I found that each of these relationships managed themselves without pre-determined rules or regulations. The element of choice exhibited in this study is a significant characteristic of these informal mentoring pairs. In either choosing their mentor, in the case of Suzanne and Kirsten, or the mentor choosing the novice, the case with Daphnie, each mentoring dyad laid a strong foundation for their relationship to not only continue, but remain effective. Effective mentoring was also fostered because the modes of communication, how often each pair met, and what was discussed was unique and specific to each dyad. The topics of conversation were based on the needs of the mentee at that specific time and place in their career. The concept of relational junctures was developed to organize the conditions and progression of each mentoring relationship. These points in the mentorship, based on major themes found the

data and SET concepts, were need, connection, good fit, trust, respect, value, and reciprocation. While each mentoring pair was similar in that choice was a factor in the continuation of the informal relationship, the levels and demonstration of need, value, trust, and respect all varied in degrees of intensity. This variation between the mentoring pairs could be based on distance or busy schedules (e.g. Kirsten and Rachel), increase of confidence levels (e.g. Daphnie and Reyna), and loyalty (e.g. Suzanne and Stacia). This variation also accounts for the fact that these mentoring relationships are different. While Daphnie at first needed help with classroom management in a bilingual setting her first year, Kirsten needed help acquiring recorders and choral music. While Suzanne preferred to email her questions to her mentor, Daphnie enjoyed going over for dinner or hiking with her mentor. As needs of the mentee changed, so did the level of engagement with the mentor, which was also specific to each pair. Although all three novice teachers relied less on their mentors at the end of this study, they each desired to remain in a relationship. It was also found that both the novice teacher and their mentor were benefiting from the relationship because both were giving and receiving from the other; as seen in the final juncture termed reciprocation.

The second research question related to the appropriateness of SET as an analytical lens to examine informal mentoring relationships. The concepts of comparison level, rewards and costs, and exchange rules were explored in each mentoring dyad and compared in relation to each other. The SET concept of comparison level validated the notion that each pair had a different set of values for which the relationship was judged. This was also the case for the occurrence of other SET concepts represented in the mentoring relationships; specifically rewards and costs. The rewards experienced by the participants included a heightened sense of confidence, feelings of validation, a growth in reflective and problem solving skills, and

refinement in teaching skills. Rules of exchange were established to guide the mentoring exchanges; including rules of reciprocation (e.g. what was given and taken in mentoring exchanges) and negotiated rules (when, how, what took place in mentoring exchanges). The negotiated rules, which determined the levels of informality and modes of mentoring (e.g. non-directive or collaborative), were specialized to meet the needs of each novice at various stages in their teaching career. Resources, such as knowledge, commendations, and other physical resources, were given and taken by both mentoring partners, thus meeting the terms of the rule of reciprocity. The conditions of trust and commitment were also fostered in dyad. Although these facets are not a guaranteed outcome of social exchange relationships, trust and commitment were established relatively early on in each relationship because of the high rewards experienced, high reciprocity taking place, and faith in the mentoring partner. Based on these results, it can be determined that Social Exchange Theory is indeed an appropriate lens to analyze informal mentoring relationships.

### **Interpretation of Findings**

In this discussion, the findings from this study will be interpreted in light of findings in the research literature concerning mentoring the novice teacher and SET. By considering the findings from established research, it will be apparent how this current study contributes to the field of music education and mentoring research.

#### **Approaches to mentoring.**

In the literature review, a variety of mentorship models examined. The more traditional models explored were the master-novice model (also known as one-on-one mentoring) and team mentorship model. The untraditional models examined included peer mentoring, the multiple mentorship model, and a mentorship model that meets solely by phone and rarely in person.

When examining the mentoring pairs in this study, it is easy to conclude that each are fashioned after the master-novice approach to mentoring. Blair (2008) wrote that the master teacher provides guidance and enables the novice teacher to overcome difficult situations, but Conway (2001a), Ingersoll (2011) and Krueger (1999) all advise that it is important that mentor is compatible and able to meet the novice's needs as this model represents a hierarchy of power (with the mentor holding more expertise than the novice).

A different element present in this master teacher model, however, is the power of choice given to the novice teacher. Choice is noted as a characteristic of informal mentoring. In choosing their mentors and choosing to remain in a mentoring relationship, the questions of compatibility or meeting the needs of the novice can be put to rest. This is a great argument for investigating how to give novice music educators the ability to choose their mentors into more formalized induction programs. Although the master-novice model was utilized by each dyad, a variety of mentoring approaches was employed by each mentor participant. Glickman (1985) categorized three approaches to mentoring novice educators; directive, collaborative, and non-directive. While directive approaches may have been used in the formal setting for these novice teachers (e.g. during the student teaching experience), the mentors took more of a collaborative and non-directive approach in the informal setting. The collaborative and non-directive approaches were used at different times when the need arose. For instance, in her first year of teaching when Suzanne needed a lesson for her third grade class about to walk in the door, Stacia utilized a more collaborative approach in their conversation. She would *present* an idea to Suzanne and then they would both *reflect* and *problem solve* on how the activity would fit in that particular context. Later on in their relationship, this type of mentoring was not as needed. Therefore, Stacia would utilize non-directive mentoring behaviors; *listening* to Suzanne and

*encouraging* her when she was struggling. It was found that each mentor was on a continuum of these mentoring approaches as the needs of each novice changed with time, circumstances and experience as seen with Daphnie. In her first year there was a lot of collaborative mentoring taking place as she struggled with classroom management strategies. As the year progressed, Reyna utilized more non-directive behavior. In her second year, however, Daphnie once again needed more collaborative guidance when she was asked to teach a section of PE at one of her schools. Reyna used more problem solving language in her mentoring exchanges so Daphnie would be confident and able to meet this challenge. Each mentor participant exhibited the ability to incorporate these different mentoring approaches as the need arose with their mentee, thus facilitating effective mentoring practices.

Not only were mentoring approaches exhibited on a continuum, there was a continuum of mentor roles displayed in the mentoring relationships. The mentor roles that have been outlined vary from the mentor acting as a role model (Dekkers, 2010), protector and leader (Schein, 1978), to that of a coach and collaborator (Conway, Smith, & Hodgman, 2010). Much like the mentoring behaviors outlined above, the mentor participants exhibited a variety of roles to fit the needs of their mentees. The mentor as teacher and mentor as coach roles outlined by Smith (2010) were found in the early junctures of the mentoring relationship. Based on the complexity of the need and the desperate nature of the novice, the mentor would step into a more “teacher-like” role using more directive mentoring behaviors. However as the novice grew into a more reflective and confident awareness of their skills, the mentor participants would act more as mentor collaborator or sponsor. Similar again to the mentoring approaches is that these roles would fluctuate if the mentor perceived the need for a role change. I believe that mentors were perceptive about their roles and behaviors for the following reasons: (a) a connection, good fit,

and trust had been established in the mentoring relationship where novices could be truthful about their needs and integrate their mentors' advice and counsel, (b) mentors did not assume what their mentees needed, how much support they would require, or how much time it would take to tackle an issue, and (c) the mentor participants had no desire to create clones of themselves. The findings from this study that address the mentor participants' roles and behaviors align with other researchers' findings that have investigated the characteristics of good mentoring and quality mentors.

### **Obstructions to mentoring.**

When conducting research on formal mentoring, researchers consider what hinders effective mentoring and the prolongation of formal mentoring programs. Findings include: mentorship programs being unable to reduce feelings of isolation, lack of emotional support, and the suppression of inherent value experienced by new music teachers (Benson 2008), pairing new music teachers with mentors outside their area of expertise (Ingersoll and Smith, 2012; Conway et al., 2002), formal mentoring programs that tend to focus on curriculum and management problems instead of the specific needs of novice music teachers (Stevanson, 2005), beginning teachers receiving help from full time mentors vs. part time mentors (Conway et al., 2002), and the costs of funding programs that allow novices to observe their mentors or for mentors to come into their mentees classrooms (Conway et al., 2002; Smith et al., 2012). When examining the findings from this study, these issues did not present a problem however.

Benson (2008) wrote about many mentorship programs that unable to help novice teachers battle their feelings of isolation, lack of emotional support, and value for the mentoring support they do receive. In this study, however, each of the novice educators expressed how supported they felt by their informal mentors in the way their mentors reached out to them and

coached them. The only novice to express feelings of isolation was Kirsten. Kirsten is also the only novice teacher to work and live outside of the teaching district of her informal mentoring teacher. Kirsten and Rachel both state that they have had a very busy year and although they have had the intentions of getting together, this has not quite happened. There is, however, an established connection recognized by Kirsten. Because of this connection and relationship, Kirsten feels different about Rachel than her local district mentors.

So I know for me, aside from the resource, aside from the actual student teaching learning, it's that continual support whether physical or karma based. I know that she (Rachel) is around. It's not super tangible but it's personally tangible because I know I pick up the phone and she is there. – *Kirsten*  
(Kirsten and Rachel final paired interview)

Knowing that her informal mentor is there seems to be enough for now. It will be noteworthy to see if distance keeps this informal mentoring relationship from progressing after Kirsten's first year of teaching. The other issues mentioned by Benson affecting the viability of formal mentoring relationships is the lack of emotional support and a lack of value novice teachers hold for their mentors. These issues again did not affect the mentoring pairs in this study as each pair expressed their feelings towards each other as those of friendship. Along this same line, the mentoring pairs value each other on a personal and professional level. These characteristics seem more common for a friendship rather than a mentoring relationship, but this may be why an informal mentoring relationship is more sustainable and viable than formal mentoring structures. These feelings of friendship are supported by research using SET. Ensher (1997) found that the mentor-protégé could evolve into a friendship. The friendship was an effect of social exchanges that played into the protégé's attraction and satisfaction with their mentor. In relationships with higher levels of attraction and satisfaction, the protégé would redefine the mentoring relationship as a friendship. Although this is not clearly seen in Suzanne and Stacia's relationship or Kirsten



and Rachel's relationship, Daphnie and Reyna both speak about the other as being a friend. Like trust and commitment, as defined in SET literature, I would say friendship is conditional and not a guarantee.

There were other issues mentioned by researchers as problematic for mentoring relationships (e.g. pairing novice music teachers with non-music mentors, focusing on curriculum and classroom management instead of specific needs, having a full-time mentor, and ability for mentoring pairs to observe each other). These findings were not congruent with the findings in this. Each of these novice music educators paired themselves with a music mentor based on a pre-established relationship. Each of the mentors, as stated before, were very careful to meet the needs of their mentees and not have an agenda of their own. The mentors also made themselves available whenever their mentee needed them; whether it was through an email, phone call, or face-to-face visit. The only issue that could be argued from research findings as being problematic in this study has to do with the observation of each other's classrooms and funding. Classroom observations were not mentioned as being a problem per se, but the mentees were not given this level of support by their mentors in the informal setting. One reason this was not problematic for Suzanne and Kirsten is because they had multiple opportunities to observe and be observed as student teachers. Daphnie was observed as well by her mentor as this was part of the formal mentoring she received through her teaching district, but she did not observe Reyna. The novice teachers did not view this as a lack in their mentoring however. As for financial compensation for the mentoring teachers, this never came up in conversation as an issue for the mentors. However, each of the mentors were in a formal mentoring experience with these novice teachers where they were paid for their services. As Reyna has already been quoted

saying though, "...and if you don't have a passion about it and you just want a stipend for it, it's not going to work" (*Reyna*).

### **Effective mentorship practices.**

Effective mentoring was able to occur for a number of reasons. One of those reasons was outlined above; flexibility in mentoring approaches and roles. Anderson & Shannon (1988) write about specific actions taking place in in a successful and sustainable mentoring relationship. Those actions are: (a) the process of nurturing, (b) the act of serving as a role model, (c) the five mentoring functions (teaching, sponsoring, encouraging, counseling, and befriending), (d) the focus on professional and personal development, and (e) the ongoing caring relationship. In my examination of the data, I find that the mentors each demonstrated the above actions and therefore satisfy the conditions, at least on the mentor's part, for successful and sustainable relationships. Mentees have certain conditions to meet as well for the relationship to be determined successful, viable, and in the end, effective. Multiple researchers that have concluded that novice music are more satisfied if they are active participants in the mentoring relationship (Abrell et al, 1995; Conway, 2001a; Conway, 2012; Katz, 2011; Menchaca, 2012). In this context, I realize the researchers are referring to active involvement in the mentoring relationship via discussions, observations, and reflecting. To deepen this understanding of active participant and provide context to this particular study, I would like to substitute the term active participant with reciprocating partner. In doing this, the novice music educator is not only receiving from their mentor, which would indeed lead to high satisfaction levels, but they would equally be giving back to their mentors, which would lead to a more long-term relationship.

There are conditions and factors that can affect the effectiveness of the mentoring relationships. Some conditions include the level of mentoring expertise and the establishment of

trust and value. Based on the findings from the data, these issues were not present in the mentoring relationships of these participants. Each novice participant felt their mentor was qualified in their role of mentor and continued to stay in the relationship because of their knowledge and expertise in the classroom. Each mentor's knowledge played a factor in the establishment of value on behalf of the novice participants. Trust was incurred because of the stability of the mentor and reliability of their advice. The passing of time and the development of the transition from novice to experienced teacher each novice participant will make may affect the value on the mentoring relationship, but only time will tell. Time and distance were the only factors found to have negative consequences on the mentoring exchange relationship during the school year this study was conducted.

Rusbult et al. (1999) found two conditions that can emerge from any exchange relationship: trust and commitment. These authors wrote that both conditions are specific to the relationship itself and not necessarily a guaranteed result. This idea challenges Leik, Owens, & Tallman's (1999) thoughts on commitment when they wrote repeated satisfactory exchanges "eventuates in mutual commitments." This group of researchers, however, did not use trust as a factor in the establishment of committed relationships. Instead, they applied the idea of repeated satisfactory exchanges generating commitment. The idea of trust has already been examined in each of the mentoring pairs' social exchanges. Trust created an environment for the mentoring pairs to give and take advice from their counterparts without fear or worry. Because of trust, mentoring pairs became capable of reaching certain levels of vulnerability with each other. I wrote that without trust in the relationship, the levels of comfortability would lessen and the effectiveness and longevity of the relationship could be compromised. The fact that trust plays such a big role in the participants' informal mentoring relationships, in contrast to their other

mentoring relationships, I agree with Rusbult et al. (1999) assessment of trust. It is the mentoring partner's trust that characterizes their perception of their exchange partner's commitment level (Rusbult, 1999; Sabetelli, 1999). Thus the findings from this line of research concur with other findings that trust and value for one's mentor is very important to the viability and prolongation of a mentoring relationship (Conway, Krueger, Robinson, Haack, & Smith, 2002; Conway C. , 2006; Conway, Micheel-Mays, & Micheel-Mays, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

### **Benefits for novice and mentor teachers.**

The objective of induction is to socialize novice teachers to their new roles, enhance their effectiveness in the classroom, and increase the likelihood they will remain in the profession (Smith, Desimone, Porter, McGraner, & Taylor-Haynes, 2013). Although induction and mentorship have the same objective for novice teachers, mentorship is an individual relationship established with the novice (Kram & Ragins, 2007). When mentoring relationships are effective, beginning teachers can experience benefits including higher levels of positive emotions, better degree of classroom management skills, and the ability to manage their own time and workloads (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2006a; Conway, 2006b; Duling, 2000; Haack, 2000; Parker, Ndoye, & Imig, 2009).

For novice educators, research findings also establish the benefits of being in a formal mentoring relationship including the reduction of negative feelings (e.g. isolation, lack of confidence and self-esteem) (McIntyre and Hagger, 1996). It was also found that novice teachers grow professionally, and develop their self-reflection capabilities as well as their problem solving capacities (Abell et al., 1995; Blair, 2008; Smith et al., 2012). Mentors specifically play an important role in the socialization of novice teachers; helping them to adapt to the norms,

standards and expectations associated with teaching (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009). These and other types of outcomes need to be examined in the data collected in this study to see whether or not informal mentoring has a greater or lesser effect on novice music teachers, or to see if informal mentoring makes no difference at all. Researchers also have yet to examine the implications for mentoring teachers and this will be an important part of this discussion.

To answer the question of whether or not informal mentoring relationships are beneficial for novice music teachers, the evidence points to a positive conclusion. The informal mentorships examined in this study are beneficial for novice music educators because the relationship (a) is developmental in nature (Kram and Ragins, 2007) and able to meet the specific needs of novice music educators (Conway, 2001; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Krueger, 1999), (b) is a nurturing and caring relationship (Anderson & Shannon, 1988), (c) is based on the self-selection of a mentor that stems from connection, trust, and value (Abell et al., 1995; Ensher, 1997; Kajs, 2002; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), and (d) is not limited by time, finances, or a governing agency (Ashnai, 2013; Bruch, 1988; Conway et al., 2002; Mo, 2004). In Chapter 1, a call was placed by researchers for evidence on why induction works, what types of induction are most effective, and under what conditions an induction is effective in meeting the specific needs of the music teacher (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Krueger, 1999; Smith et al., 2012). I believe that more than enough evidence is provided on how mentoring, specifically informal mentoring, is an effective method for specifically supporting novice music educators. The evidence provided in this study outline the conditions in which and through which informal mentoring is effective. While no perfect induction or mentoring system has been identified as working better than any other (Conway, 2003; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004), the evidences provided in this study do support the rationale for either the formation of informal mentoring partnerships for novice music

educators or the facilitating of informal mentoring practices in the more formal structures (e.g. a novice being able to choose their mentor).

Mutual benefits for novice music teachers *and* their mentoring teachers are not discussed in the induction or mentoring research literature. This creates a gap in the literature, as there are two parties in a mentoring relationship that are being shaped by mentoring exchanges. It can be concluded from the findings of this study that there were benefits experienced by the mentor teachers. As with their counterparts, the mentoring teachers grew professionally, had a heightened sense of validation, developed their self-reflection capabilities as well as their problem solving capacities, and found a support system among the other mentor participants that is currently missing in their district. Researchers have focused on benefits for the novice teacher stemming from mentoring to address issues of attrition and retention (Abell et al., 1995; Blair, 2008; Smith et al., 2012). Mentors play an important role, however, in tackling this issue. Research supports reflective practices in which music teachers conduct mentoring exchanges in a nonhierarchical setting (Draves, 2010) or where mentoring exchanges place an emphasis on openness and collaboration (Glenn, 2006). In this study, each of the participants were able to be open when it came to reflecting because each of the mentoring teachers maintained the mindset of being a “life-long learner.”

Researchers have identified a variety of rationales for participating in professional development and how these teachers execute professional development activities. Barrett (2006) found that music educators participate in professional development activities in order to advance their learning: including conference sessions, workshops, serving as a cooperating teacher or mentor, and networking with other music educators. Conway (2003) found that professional development is a universal requirement to overcome challenges in the classroom and that

continuing education programs offered by universities during the summer, along with state and national music conferences, were the preferred venues for professional development. Bauer (2007) suggested that music teachers' primary motivation for professional development is to increase their skill and knowledge, but a majority of educators would like university graduate credit for their participation. Bauer (2007) also writes that music educators that rely on their districts for their professional development experiences begin to realize they need to take a larger role in regards to their own professional growth by actively looking for suitable opportunities. Based on the findings in this study, mentoring novice music educators just might be one of those suitable activities that not only has positive outcomes for the novice teachers in their district, but positive outcomes for the more experienced teachers as well.

Most mentors learn how to mentor from their own experiences. These mentor participants started with having students observe their classroom, which led to having student teachers, which then led to either informal or mentoring exchanges with novice music teachers. The need to support and educate music mentors is a real need. This topic is not researched and is another gap in the literature. It is important then to address how to educate and support mentors, highlight the benefits that stem from effective mentoring relationships, and research how to encourage experienced teachers to explore mentoring novice teachers. This could happen by introducing choice to more formal induction and mentoring structures, as found in this study, or by simply relaying the benefits that mentors can experience by being part of an informal mentoring relationships.

### **Issues of sustainability.**

Effective mentoring relationships are sometimes defined in research literature in terms of durability, longevity, or likelihood of continuing. Although this was not formally examined in

this study, I believe that these mentoring relationships all exhibited characteristics that could facilitate sustainability. These characteristics include the quality of each mentor, the fact that choice was given to the mentees to continue in their mentoring relationships, and the absence of the issues stated to stifle formal mentoring relationships. There are other factors, however, that would support claims of sustainability.

Commitment was a condition that was explored as it is a concept found in SET. While commitment was established, it is hard to judge whether or not all three mentoring pairs will *stay* in a committed, long-term informal mentoring relationship. Of all the participants, Suzanne and Stacia would be labeled the most committed because they have been in a relationship for four years (at the time the study was conducted). The other participants made statements, however, attesting to the fact they would either stay in an informal mentoring relationship or at the very least stay friends. This again is hard to judge as it cannot be proved based on the data. It can be concluded that commitment was fostered in each mentoring relationship, but that does not necessarily mean the relationship is expected to endure. Sabatelli (1993) writes that commitment is established in a relationship when three elements are present: high rewards, high reciprocity rewards, and trust (Sabatelli, 1993). These three elements are key to understanding the nature of commitment and longevity in the informal mentoring relationship. As indicated from the data, trust has been established by each set of participants and there are rewards each has experienced. Therefore the only key element left to be discussed is reciprocation. Reciprocity is described as a powerful force because *both* exchange partners are benefitting from the association. The biggest discrepancies between the participant pairs, however, are found in their reciprocal exchanges.

Reciprocity starts and is sustained when both partners in the relationship *recognize* they are giving to the other partner. Kirsten and Reyna are unable to see what they give to their



mentoring partner at this time; even though their counterparts feel otherwise. Suzanne, on the other hand, recognizes that Stacia is a receiving partner in their relationship. Suzanne is also at a place in her career where she has started mentoring pre-service teachers in practicum settings and is able to now use what she has learned to help others. I make the argument that with time, each mentoring pair will be able to realize when they give and take in their relationship. This recognition of reciprocation taking place and the ensuing feelings experienced by both Suzanne and Stacia, however, is what I would term high reciprocity rewards. Rachel stated that she and Kirsten are “not quite there”; neither are Reyna and Daphnie. These two mentoring pairs have not had enough time go by to determine: (a) new needs that may have presented themselves, (b) any changes to satisfaction levels, (c) if better alternatives have been presented to the novice teachers, (d) new levels of commitment, and (e) if reciprocal opportunities have presented themselves and have been recognized. As these factors are unknown at this stage of the mentoring relationships, it is also unknown whether or not the informal mentorship will continue. Commitment does involve a willingness for individuals to work for the prolongation of a relationship (Leik & Leik, 1977), so if the mentoring partners are willing to work (e.g. stay in contact with each other, communicate needs, retain high levels of trust) there is a high possibility that these relationship will endure. This, of course, will need to be reexamined after this study comes to an end. Therefore, while the issue of sustainability is a projection at this point, there are markers that point to informal mentoring being a better vehicle to prolong mentoring exchanges.

### **SET in research.**

In the research outlining the use of SET, the following fields were highlighted in the literature review: business, medicine, psychology, education, and mentorship. The findings from this study seem to compliment most of this research, but there are some variations as well. A

rational as to why the novice teachers sought out these particular mentors might be explained by Bruch (1988). It was found that social exchanges were initiated because certain needs were currently unmet. This correlates with the novice teachers' perception that the formal mentoring and information they were receiving did not meet their needs. Ashnai (2013) also found that "information" was a resource commodity highly valued in social exchange relationships. Ensher (1997) used a SET lens to examine four stages of mentoring; initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. These stages did not seem to fit the junctures outlined in this study, but there were similarities. Ensher's "initiation" could be seen as the juncture of "need" outlined in this study. Likewise, "connection" and "good-fit" with Ensher's "cultivation". The other two stages are harder to relate with this study. Ensher's findings on the currency of exchange (e.g. information and psychosocial support) however, do resonate with the findings of this study. From the business research literature, Mo (2004) found that business partners held high expectations of reciprocity and that stronger relationships were formed when partners shared less in common than those who claimed a friendship. This is completely opposite of the findings in this study. The mentoring partners held no pre-conceived notions of reciprocal behavior. The mentors had a desire to help the novice teachers and did not expect anything in return. It was found, however, that reciprocation did take place and this is a factor that fostered longevity in the relationship. In regards to sharing something in common, this is what prompted the initiation of the mentoring relationships in this study.

In the research conducted in the field of psychology and medicine, studies investigated job satisfaction in relation to costs vs. rewards and trust with authority figures. Mallette (2005) reported higher career satisfaction when nurses felt an emotional commitment than those who worked because of contractual obligation. This seems to fit the paradigm modeled by the mentor

participants in this study. While each mentor teacher started with a contractual obligation to mentor these novice participants, they continued to mentor these novice teachers after the contract was up. This by no means impacted their satisfaction and concurs with the findings in education and mentoring research literature that high rewards and low costs result in a satisfactory and committed relationship (Corrigan, 2001; Pollock, 1990). Lunsford, Baker, Griffin, and Johnson (2013) applied SET to further understand mentors' negative experiences in the education field. These researchers found that the psychological costs of mentoring included burnout, anger, grief, and loss, but this does not comply with the findings from this study. In fact, it is quite the opposite. The mentor participants did not mention any of these costs in mentoring the novice teachers. Rachel, in fact, stated that mentoring made it all worth it. Reyna reiterated that if teachers are mentoring for the money, then it is not worth it. All of the mentoring teacher participants were invested in these novices, so the idea of cost was never expressed. These experienced teachers, as well as the novice participants, experienced mutual emotional benefits and satisfaction which may be why each of the dyads were still intact at the end of this study.

Findings related to prolongation of the mentoring dyads in this study correspond to the findings from other SET research. Gilles (1995) found that participation was improved when employees had influence during the decision making process, a parallel to Glickman's (1985) model of collaborative mentoring and the mentoring practices exhibited in this study. Returning to Ensher (1997), these findings report the importance of perceived similarity between mentors and their protégés when determining the protégé's attitude toward their mentor, another parallel to this study's findings and that of other researchers in music education (Conway C., 2001; Krueger, 1999). One weakness of SET, however, is the reductionist qualities of the theory when analyzing and portraying exchange relationships. An application of SET was limited in this

regard in how certain mentoring qualities, such as the altruistic nature of the mentors, were analyzed or how the mentoring exchanges were examined. An application of SET was useful, however, in finding and illuminating the patterns that were similar or different between the mentoring pair; highlighted in the relational junctures and the rules of exchanged that were exhibited. It is my belief, therefore, that there are certain strengths and weaknesses found in using SET as a framework to analyze mentoring relationships. This means is there may be other frameworks that could better explain and analyze certain aspects of informal mentoring relationships, but SET remains a strong analysis tool.

### **Implications**

This collective case study set out to explore the mentoring interactions, or social exchanges, of three novice music teachers who self-selected their mentor and maintained their relationship after the more formal mentoring structures ended. In the course of examining the inner workings of these informal relationships, there was insight obtained that can stimulates: (a) useful reflection for novice and more experienced music educators, (b) deliberation about mentoring practices in a music education setting within the larger induction process and teacher preparation programs, and (c) consideration of the functionality of using SET as a theoretical framework for future mentoring research studies.

#### **Implications for music educators.**

Key ideas related to the benefits of informal mentoring for novice music teachers and the more experienced mentoring teachers included a positive effect on the novice teacher and mentor's emotional state, a deeper and more profound awareness of professional development, and growth in reflective and problem solving skills have been presented. These positive implications seemed to have more of an impact on the novice teacher participants than the

mentoring participants. The fact that there were positive implications for mentors recorded in this study, however, can help fill the gap in literature regarding perceived benefits and detriments of mentoring music educators.

Some of the implications of this study directly validate research about how to support novice music educators (Benson, 2008; Conway, 2006a; Conway, 2006b; Duling, 2000; Haack, 2000; Parker, Ndoye, & Imig, 2009). Much of this research speaks to how effective mentoring can have quite a constructive effect on beginning teachers: especially in the areas of the novice educator's emotional state, classroom management skills, and ability to manage their time and workloads. The mentors in this study were able to meet the needs of their novice teachers, but it is important to specifically look at the *informal* mentoring structure in order to compare research findings. Effective mentoring in this study was able to occur because of the following factors: element of choice in mentoring partner, establishment of connection which fostered value and trust, establishment of reciprocating relationship which fostered longevity of informal mentorship, quality mentors and mentoring practices. Research supports the idea that choice, trust, and value are important factors in effective mentoring relationships (Conway, 2006; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Krueger, 1999). Choosing one's mentor is not a normal practice in most school districts. This leaves novice music educators to reach out for additional support to those who hopefully understand their discipline and their specific needs. It is understood that every school district may not be in a place where they can guarantee novice music educators the ability to choose their mentor. It is also understood that the self-selection of a mentor does not guarantee that mentoring practices will be more effective than mentoring relationships that are not self-selected. However, the findings from this study support that informal mentoring relationships in which choice is a factor have deeper implications in the areas of mutual benefits

for mentees and mentors and the sustainability and length of the mentoring relationship. Choice is also a part of *how* and *what* can be discussed in the mentoring exchanges in addition to the choice of mentoring partner. With mentors actively and willingly allowing their mentees to choose topics for discussion, how and where mentoring exchanges take place, and goals established in the relationship, choice becomes more integral to the relationship. Promoting choice might also be a way to explore how connection, value, and trust can be established in other music teaching contexts as well. The relationships that were examined in this study were all general music educators. It is unknown how informal mentoring practices look in an ensemble setting or with teachers of older students. While research findings address the importance of mentors being matched with a novice in the same field, there are vast differences in teaching elementary music and high school band. Informal mentoring could be a way to match mentors and novices at a more approximate level.

Having three different mentoring relationships to compare in this study was important for a variety of reasons. The first, and most obvious, reason is that there is not one definitive way to conduct an informal mentoring relationship. Each novice teacher was shown as having different needs at the onset and conclusion of this study. These differences came from the fact that they were at different stages of their career, they were teaching in different settings, and their educational and personal backgrounds were very different from each other. Each mentoring teacher participant was also very different than the other and each had different ways of mentoring their mentees. This stands to reason that there does seem to be one overarching standard when it comes to meeting the needs of novice music educators. There is no recipe when it comes to informal mentoring. The important finding from this study is that a personal connection, based on similar backgrounds, teaching philosophies, and personality, was

established. The concept of connection is rarely examined in the mentoring research because connection is rarely perceived as being important when matching novice teachers with a mentor in the more formal mentoring structures. Connecting with another person, as one would in a friendship, is more esoteric in nature. Connection is hard to measure in a research context. In an informal mentoring setting and the findings of this study, however, connection is very important. It is the intangible component of these relationships that undergirds the mentoring exchanges and subsequent benefits. In order for a connection to happen for novice music teachers, the opportunities for connections and continued mentoring experiences would need to be established. While connection, value, and trust seem to be characteristics more common in a friendship rather than a mentoring relationship, it may be these characteristics that explain why an informal mentoring relationship is more sustainable and viable than formal mentoring structures. It is again the connection, facilitated through choice, which fostered a sense of safety and vulnerability. An example of this was depicted when Daphnie related that she could be vulnerable in her exchanges with Reyna, but was impossible for her at the PLCs meetings. Reyna also picked up on Daphnie's vulnerability and related this in her individual interview. The idea of having a "public face" versus a "private face" is something that is over-looked in the current mentoring research. The ability to have a safe place could equally be true for experienced teachers; where they would need someone to turn to where there was no worry of judgement or condemnation. Informal mentoring made vulnerability and safety an option for Daphnie where this could not even be contemplated in other formal mentoring structures.

The implications for novice music teachers and mentoring teachers who engage in more long-term relationships is another area where research is scarce. In formal mentoring structures, the length of the induction or mentoring period can last anywhere from 1 to 3 years. Most formal

enterprises limit the induction period based on available finances and task force. Therefore, with few districts offering informal mentoring services the benefits derived from prolonged mentoring experiences, the costs associated with prolonged experiences, and the number of experienced teachers it would take to support this endeavor is basically unknown. The findings from this study suggest that prolonged mentoring exchanges can foster vulnerability in novice teachers; where no subject is off limits and no need is too small. Prolonged exchanges support novice teachers in their ever-changing needs, but also leave the door open for novices to grow and become self-sufficient. Prolonged mentoring also benefits the mentoring teacher, as examined in the discussion of reciprocation. Not only are novice teachers more capable in their classrooms, but they give back to their mentors by means of new ideas, resources, friendship, and support. Findings from current research literature and this study agree that isolation is indeed an issue still plaguing novice *and* experience music educators. These prolonged mentorships, however, can cultivate support systems needed by these educators to not only survive, but thrive in the music education profession.

Cultivating these opportunities for connection can be difficult as there is not one single method or procedure that can be guaranteed. In this study, connection was able to occur for two novice teachers because they had multiple observation opportunities. For one novice teacher, a connection took place happenstance at a formal induction meeting. The similarities in these two scenarios is that opportunity was given for connections to be had. Formal mentoring structures rarely make choice an option when it comes to assigning a mentoring teacher. There must be some way to facilitate connections for novice and mentor teachers however. Instead of only having formal induction gatherings, maybe there could be a way to initiate informal gatherings (e.g. by means of a social hour or a meet and greet). For those for whom distance is a factor,



could there be some way to facilitate an online forum for mentors and novice teachers to get to know about each other and somehow make a connection? Although you cannot force a connection, providing avenues for a connections to be made might be a way to instill the value and trust in the mentoring process currently lacking in many of these relationships.

### **Implications for the teacher education community.**

The education community is comprised of many people and organizations. The focus in this study was the relationship between novice general music teachers and their mentoring general music teachers. While there are many implications from this study that can be directed to similar teacher groups, there are other implications that could prove beneficial for other members of the education community. To begin, the following question needs to be answered. Where does the process for the establishment of informal mentoring start? In this study, two different scenarios were presented relating to the inception of an informal mentoring relationship. One scenario starts at the practicum stage of the pre-service teacher training. After multiple classroom observations, two of the novice teacher participants found experienced music teachers they connected with. Having established this connection, these pre-service teachers desired to conduct their student teaching experience with these same teachers. With the connection further established, trust and value were fostered. Now as novice music educators, the next logical step for these participants was to continue the mentoring with these trusted guides. The second scenario is quite different. The third novice teacher participant was “discovered” by her mentor in a formal induction setting. In spite of this being a formal mentoring structure, a connection was established. Much like the first scenario, trust and value were fostered. When the formal mentoring period ended, this novice teacher also desired to remain in a mentoring relationship with this trusted guide. From these scenarios, it is again demonstrated that there is not a single

way for informal mentorships to begin. It is important to note, however, for a connection to be established between the novice teacher and the mentor teacher.

Facilitating a connection between novice teachers and experienced teachers is not an easy task. In the first scenario, Suzanne and Kirsten were a part of music education department that recognized the importance and ensuing benefits of choice (when it came to choosing a cooperating teacher). Even though this is recognized, there is still a lot of time, hassle, and stress involved when it comes to allowing over 30 music education students in a single semester to explore their student teaching options, choose a cooperating teacher, and then contact and negotiate with various teaching districts to make sure all licensing requirements are met. In the second scenario, one has to wonder whether or not it was plain luck that allowed Reyna and Daphnie to meet, make a connection, and decide to continue their mentoring relationship. With luck not being possible or even plausible, how can districts foster more of these connections to be made between novice teachers and mentors? After all, there is no guarantee that a connection will be established just because you pair an experienced music teacher with a novice music teacher. There is the issue with finding quality mentors. In most districts convenience plays more of a role in the choosing of a mentor than the quality or good-fit of a mentor. Each of the novice music teacher participants were extremely fortunate to not only have made a connection with an experienced music teacher, but to connect with a qualified and accomplished mentor that did not have a pre-set agenda.

The findings from this study present benefits experienced by novice music teachers and mentors involved in an informal mentorship. Are these types of relationships happening enough in other school districts for this information to be useful however? The particular music education department highlighted in this study is a rare case. Other music education departments

around the country may not feel the need or have the power to allow their pre-service teachers the opportunity to experience a variety of teaching settings, contexts, or teaching styles. School districts may be in financial or political situation where exploring other induction and mentoring options is not available. What are the implications that can be taken from this study then? One implication to consider is how the education community can connect and collaborate with one another to strengthen induction and mentoring programs. The way we currently work with cooperating teachers does not really encourage follow up discussions that should be taking place after the student teaching experience. With districts empowering these relationships, connections that have been established could be further strengthened and maybe lead to informal mentoring. Not only should cooperating teachers be encouraged to reach out, but these new teachers should also be encouraged to maintain these relationships and to reach out for help when they need it. Collaboration and choice could also be facilitated in the university setting by using the university model presented in this study as model (e.g. allowing a variety of observations to take place, onus placed on student teacher to facilitate connection). As for the practicum observations that take place in most university education programs, the education professors need to do their homework in making sure their undergraduates witness the good teaching examples that are in the teaching workforce. If multiple options are not available, how could use of an online conferencing platform, or working with other professors or teachers who could provide recorded examples be utilized as a window into other classroom settings?

There are implications surrounding the characteristics of quality mentors. The mentors in this study exhibited altruistic qualities that are not found in every mentor. This begs the question who should be a mentoring teacher or a cooperating teacher? There were many mentoring traits and practices outlined in this study, but how to find these experienced teachers could be tricky.

This on top of facilitating connection between novice teachers and a mentor makes this task difficult. Establishing a set of characteristics a mentor should possess is important, but it is equally important to find ways to effectively educate and then support mentors so they continue their work with novice teachers.

The findings from this study can: (a) promote collaboration between music teachers and university professors and music education departments toward implementing practices that use student choice as an option when deciding student teaching placements, (b) encourage experienced music teachers to explore informal mentorship as a form of in-depth professional development, (c) promote awareness among education leaders and policy makers, arts educators, future teachers, and the general public about alternative mentoring approaches, specifically informal mentoring practices, (d) provide research findings to the music education community that promote an understanding and practice of informal mentoring exchanges and how to support mentor teachers, and (e) encourage, support, and disseminate research regarding informal mentorship and the use of SET in music education research.

### **Suggestions for Further Research**

Further research is needed in the area of informal mentoring as there were many questions that I could not answer based on the limitations of this study. In regards to this specific study, a follow up examination is needed to examine how these novice teachers and mentor teachers react to longevity. Will Kirsten stay in an informal relationship with Rachel based on the distance they work and live from each other? Will Suzanne continue to reach out to Stacia after she moves out of the novice stage of her career and into her more experienced years? Will Daphnie continue to utilize Reyna in the same capacity or will that relationship dwindle into a relationship where these two see each other at the PLCs? These questions can only be answered

after more time has lapsed, but the examination of these findings would be beneficial to the research dealing with the implications of an elongated mentoring relationship.

An area that was not investigated in this particular study was how the informal mentorship impacted the novice teacher's teaching skills and consequentially their music students. The data that was collected focused on the perceived effect of mentoring on behalf of the novice teacher. I did not go into the classrooms of the novice teachers to make observations on the changes in their teaching skills or abilities. I also did not collect any data on how students perceived their musical instruction and assessment of their music ability. Research that takes into account these forms of data could corroborate findings from studies that indicate that students who are taught by unprepared or under-supported novice teachers do not perform as well as students taught by prepared teachers (Hobson, Ashby, Malderez, & Tomlinson, 2009).

Another area that needs to be researched is the further use of SET. SET is not being used in music education research. Using SET as a theoretical lens proved to be very beneficial to this study as the concept of costs, rewards, trust, and reciprocal benefits all supported and grounded the thinking about informal mentoring practices and exchanges. It would be interesting to find out if there are other uses for SET in music education research. Of particular interest would be to examine Robert Zey's Mutual Benefits Model (Zey, 1991) and the usefulness of Mishler's (1989) study of relationships in a group-centered model rather than a dyadic model. In both of these models, the mentoring relationship could resemble a triad (mentor, mentee, and organization) rather than a dyad (mentor and mentee). In using this type of model, one could investigate the implications for an organization overseeing the mentoring (e.g. school district, individual schools, or music education organizations such as NAFME) in addition to implications for the mentor and novice educator.

Finally there should be more research on the status of mentoring structures around the nation. At this time, the number of informal mentoring programs in the United States is relatively unknown. It would be important to know how these mentoring structures are established, how they function, and what implications there are for novice teachers and their mentors. Such research could be conducted using a different population group than this study. Would the same findings hold true for instrumental or choral middle or high school novice music educators? Using other research methodologies, such as a quantitative or a mixed methods study, would also benefit the further examination of informal mentoring relationships. Specifically, it would be advantageous to examine programs where choosing your own mentor is an option given to novice teachers. The exploration of online mentoring and how to facilitate connection would be a way to reach out to music educators who are isolated from the larger community of music teachers. In regards to mentor teachers, more research should be conducted on how to educate and support the mentoring teacher. A lot of attention has been given to novice teachers; and rightfully so. However, if mentoring structures, informal or formal, are intending to be as beneficial to novice teachers as possible, mentoring teachers have to be supported and educated in how to make the most impact in their mentoring exchanges. Using the model presented in this study, with mentors meeting with each other and exchanging ideas and support, could be one avenue of investigation.

### **Final Thoughts**

Bright eyed and bushy tailed, I pushed my music cart into the kindergarten room where I was about to teach an amazing lesson on rhythm and melody to this group of eager 5-year-olds. It was my first year of teaching. By October, my confidence was waning and I felt I was surviving day to day, class to class. I found most of my troubles came with teaching the older 4th

and 5th grade students. I did not know how to handle their smirks, obstinate behavior, and non-stop talking. Compared to the older group, however, the younger ones seemed pretty easy. They gave their hugs generously, sang their songs the loudest, and played their instruments with the most gusto. By the time I had the children seated on the rug in front of me ready to sing their opening song, the classroom teacher had left the room, but this was normal. We just finished singing our opening song, when Danny stands up and demands to use the restroom. Now their teacher had assured me that all of the students has just used the restroom. I therefore felt justified in telling him that “We don’t use the bathroom during our music time. I only get to see for you 30 minutes.” Now I may have been a novice teacher, but I know the difference in child’s look of worry and their look of defiance and Danny’s face read, “Oh yeah? Who are you to tell me no?” Sure enough Danny stands up and says, “You’re not my momma!” and proceeds to urinate all over himself and the floor. Of course the children start yelling, “Ewww” “He peed on me.” All the while I am thinking, “What do I do wrong? This wasn’t covered in my student teaching.”

I end this study with my own reflection on this issue. This vignette is a true story that took place my first year of teaching. I can laugh about it now, but the tears that were shed that first year of teaching were ones of disappointment, frustration, disillusionment, and helplessness. I wrote in Chapter 3 that I was not given a mentor or any type of induction support during my novice years of teaching. I used what I learned during my student teaching experience and those skills I learned on the job to make it through a very difficult first year. I often wonder if it would have been better my first year if I had had the support, even the minimal support, offered to novice teachers now. I could restate this sentiment with, would the students have had a better year if I had had the support. I know that the music education community has come a long way in how they are supporting new teachers. However, when have musicians ever been satisfied

with doing something one time and knowing that was the best they could do? To satisfy that inner musician, I do believe that we who are a part of the larger teacher education community, from education leaders, policy makers, university educators, to pre-service and present teachers, we should take pride in how we support our novice teachers and our mentoring teachers. This requires a partnership to be established between researchers and practitioners. We should practice and find new ways of doing until we get it right. With the ever-changing landscape of our communities, I have a feeling that we will be going through this process for quite some time. For the sake of the students who step into our music classrooms, it is worth every moment we have to spare.



## References

- Abell, S., Dillon, D., Hopkins, C., McInerney, W., & O'Brien, D. (1995). Somebody to count on: Mentor/intern relationships in a beginning teacher internship program. *Teaching & Teacher Education, 11*(2), 173-188.
- Achinstein, B., & Athanases, S. (2006). *Mentors in the making: developing new leaders for new teachers*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ambrosetti, A., & Dekkers, J. (2010). The interconnectedness of the roles of mentors and mentees in pre-service teacher education mentoring relationships. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education, 35*(6), 42-55.
- Anderson, E., & Shannon, A. (1988). Toward a conceptualization of mentoring. *Journal of Teacher Education, 39*, 38-42.
- Anderson, L. D. (2011). *A descriptive study of the relationship between teacher mentoring programs and retention rates*. PhD Dissertation, Lindenwood University.
- Ashcroft, C. (2011). *Utah public school and LDS released-time program relations: Perspectives and practices of principals from both institutions*. PhD Dissertation, Utah State University.
- Ashnai, B. (2013). *The role of trust at the inter-personal and inter-organizational levels in business relationships*. dissertation, University of Manchester.
- Audet, J., & d'Amboise, G. (2001, June). The multi-site study: An innovative research methodology. *The Qualitative Report, 6*(2).
- Barrett, J. (2006, July-August). Recasting professional development for music teachers in an era of reform. *Arts Education Policy Review, 107*(6), 19-28.

- Barrett, J. (2014). Case study in music education. In C. Conway (Ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Qualitative Research in American Music Education* (pp. 113-132). Oxford University Press.
- Bauer, W. (2007, Fall). Research on professional development for experienced music teachers. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 17(1), 12-21.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, 13(4), 544-559.
- Benson, M. (2008, Spring/Summer). Effective mentoring for new music teachers: An analysis of the mentoring programs for new music teachers as described in the literature. *UPDATE: Application of Research in Music Education*, 26(2), 42-49.
- Blair, D. (2008). Mentoring novice teachers: Developing a community of practice. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 30(2), 97-115.
- Blau, P. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. Piscataway: Transaction Publishers.
- Blau, P. (1968). Social exchange. In D. Sills (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (Vol. 7, pp. 452-457). New York: Macmillan & Free Press.
- Bloomberg, L., & Volpe, M. (2012). *Completing your qualitative dissertation: A road map from beginning to end* (2nd ed.). Washington DC: SAGE.
- Bogdan, R., & Biklen, S. (1982). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and practice*. New York: Allyn & Bacon, Inc.
- Bouquillon, E., Sosik, J., & Lee, D. (2005). It's only a phase: Examining trust, identification, and mentoring functions received across the mentoring phases. *Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnerships in Learning*, 13(2), 239-258.

- Brophy, T. (2011). School-university partnerships in music education: A status report. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 112(3), 149-153.
- Brown, J., Collins, P., & Duguid, P. (1989). Situated cognition and the culture of learning. *Educational Researcher*, 18(1), 37-42.
- Bruch, E. (1988). *Networking patterns of part-time returning adult students*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Bullough Jr., R. (2012). Mentoring and new teacher induction in the United States: A review and analysis of current practices. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 20(1), 57-74.
- Bush, J. E. (2007, Spring). Importance of various professional development opportunities and workshop topics as determined by in-service music teachers. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 16(2), 10-18.
- Butterworth, B. (1981). *Support in the principle-teacher relationship: A social exchange theory*. Doctoral dissertation, Stanford University.
- Camp, W. (2001). Formulating and evaluating theoretical frameworks for career and technical education research. *Journal of Vocational Education Research*, 26(1), 4-25.
- Carver, C., & Feiman-Nemser, S. (2009, January 7). Using policy to improve teacher induction: Critical elements and missing pieces. *Educational Policy*.
- Conway, C. (2001). What has research told us about the beginning music teacher? *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 10(2), 14-22.
- Conway, C. (2003). An examination of district-sponsored beginning music teacher mentor practices. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 51(1), 6-23.

- Conway, C. (2005, September-October). Professional development for arts teachers. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 107(1), 3-9.
- Conway, C. (2006). Professional development and the beginning music teacher. *Contributions to Music Education*, 33(1), 9-25.
- Conway, C. (2006, May). Special mentoring series: Navigating through induction: how a mentor can help. *Music Educators Journal*, 92(5), 56-60.
- Conway, C. (2007, Fall). Setting an agenda for professional development policy, practice, and research in music education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 17(1), 56-61.
- Conway, C. (2009). Book review of Michael Strong's effective teacher induction and mentoring. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 19(1), pp. 93-104.
- Conway, C. (2012). Ten years later : Teachers reflect on "Perceptions of beginning teachers, their mentors, and administrator regarding preservice music teacher preparation". *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 60(3), 324-338.
- Conway, C., Krueger, P., Robinson, M., Haack, P., & Smith, M. (2002). Beginning music teacher induction and mentoring: A cross-state perspective. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 104(2), 9-17.
- Conway, C., Micheel-Mays, C., & Micheel-Mays, L. (2005, Summer). A narrative study of student teaching and the first year of teaching: Common issues and struggles. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 165, 65-77.
- Conway, C., Smith, M., & Hodgman, T. (2010). *Handbook for the music mentor*. Chicago: GIA Publications, Inc.
- Cook, K., & Emerson, R. (1978). Power, equity and commitment in exchange networks. *American Sociological Review*, 721-739.

- Cook, K., & Rice, E. (2003). Social exchange theory. In J. Delamater (Ed.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 53-76). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.
- Cook, K., Cheshire, C., Rice, E., & Nakagawa, S. (2013). Social exchange theory. In J. DeLamater, & A. Ward (Eds.), *Handbook of Social Psychology* (pp. 61-88). New York City: Springer.
- Corrigan, M. (2001). *Social exchange theory, interpersonal communication motives, and volunteerism: Identifying motivation to volunteer and the rewards and costs associated*. Master's thesis, West Virginia University.
- Creswell, J. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Creswell, J., Hanson, W., Clark-Plano, V., & Morales, A. (2007). Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation. *The Counseling Psychologist, 35*(2), 236-264.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. (2005). Social exchange theory: An interdisciplinary review. *Journal of Management, 31*, 874-900.
- Cropanzano, R., & Mitchell, M. (2005). Social Exchange Theory: An Interdisciplinary Review. *Journal of Management, 31*, 874-900.
- Crow, N. (1987). Preservice teacher's biography: A case study. *Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association*. Washington D.C.
- Danielson, L. M. (2009, February). How teachers learn. *Fostering Reflection, 66*. Alexandria, Virginia, United States of America: ASCD. Retrieved September 2015, from <http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational-leadership/feb09/vol66/num05/Fostering-Reflection.aspx>

- DeLorenzo, L. (1992). The perceived problems of beginning music teachers. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 9-25.
- Denzin, N. (1970). *Sociological methods: A sourcebook*. Chicago: Aldine Pub. Co.
- Dolloff, L. (1999). Imagining ourselves as teachers: The development of teacher identity in music teacher education. *Music Education Research*, 1(2), 191-207.
- Draves, T., & Koops, L. H. (2010). Peer mentoring: Key to new music teacher educator success. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*.
- Duling, E. (2000). Student teachers' descriptions and perceptions of their mentors. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 19(17), 17-21.
- Eckola, J. (2007). *A case study: The benefits and challenges of first year teacher induction as perceived by two first year teachers*. PhD Dissertation, Cardinal Stritch University.
- Education Encyclopedia. (2013 йил 27-June). *School reform - A Nation at Risk, reform in action, greater goals, better teachers and more accountability*. From StateUniversity.com: <http://education.stateuniversity.com/pages/2400/School-Reform.html>>School Reform - A Nation at Risk, Reform in Action, Greater Goals Better Teachers and More Accountability</a>
- Elstad, E., Christophersen, K., & Turmo, A. (2011). Social exchange theory as an explanation of organizational citizenship behavior among teachers. *International Journal of Leadership in Education: Theory and Practice*, 41(4), 405-421.
- Emerson, R. (1976). Social exchange theory. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 2, 335-362.
- Encyclopedia Britannica Company. (2015, July). Retrieved from Merriam-Webster: <http://www.merriam-webster.com>

- Ensher, E. (1997). *The effect of social exchanges on diverse mentoring relationships and career outcomes*. Doctoral dissertation, Claremont Graduate School.
- Familoni, O. (2008). An overview of stress in medical practice. *African Health Sciences*, 8(1), 6-7.
- Fantilli, R., & McDougall, D. (2009). A study of novice teachers: Challenges and supports in the first years. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 814-825.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Parker, M. (1992). *Mentoring in context: A comparison of two U.S. programs for beginning teachers*. National Center for Research on Teacher Learning. Michigan State University.
- Foa, E., & Foa, U. (1980). *Resource theory: Inter-personal behavior as social exchange*. (K. Gergen, M. Greenberg, & R. Willis, Eds.) New York: Plenum Press.
- Foa, U., & Foa, E. (1974). *Societal structures of the mind*. Springfield: Charles C Thomas Publisher Ltd.
- Gilles, A. (1995). *A social exchange approach to worker participation*. Doctoral dissertation, Michigan State University.
- Glenn, W. (2006). Model versus mentor: Defining the necessary qualities of the effective cooperating teacher. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 33(1), 85-95.
- Glesne, C. (1999). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. White Plains: Longman.
- Glickman, C. (1985). *Supervision of instruction: A developmental approach*. Newton: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gonzalez, J. (2001). *Teacher "resistance" to school-based consultation: A social exchange theory perspective*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

- Haack, P., & Smith, M. (2000). Mentoring new music teachers. *Music Educators Journal*, 87(3), 23-27.
- Haggard, D., Dougherty, D., & Wibanks, J. (2011). Who is a mentor? A review of evolving definitions and implications for research. *Journal of Management*, 37(1), 280-304.
- Hall Jr., W. (2009). *Perceptions of the Virginia elementary principal's role in supporting new teacher induction*. Richmond: Virginia Commonwealth University.
- Hammel, A. M. (2007, Fall). Professional development research in general education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 17(1), 22-32.
- Hancock, C. B. (2008, July). Music teachers at risk for attrition and migration: An analysis of the 1999-2000 schools and staffing survey. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 56(2), 130-144.
- Hanuskek, E. (2005). The economics of school quality. *German Economic Review*, 6(3), 269-286.
- Healy, C., & Welchert, A. (1990). Mentoring relations: A definition to advance research and practice. *Educational Researcher*, 19(9), 17-21.
- Hobson, A., Ashby, P., Malderez, A., & Tomlinson, P. (2009). Mentoring beginning teachers: What we know and what we don't. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25, 207-216.
- Homans, G. (1958). Social behavior as exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, 63, 597-606.
- Homans, G. (1961). *Social behavior: Its elementary forms*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.
- Ihlenfeld, J. (1996). Nurses' perceptions of administrative social support. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing*, 17(5), 469-477.



- Ingersoll, R., & Smith, T. M. (2004, March). Do teacher induction and mentoring matter? *NASSP Bulletin*, 88(638), 28-40.
- Ingersoll, R., & Strong, M. (2011, June). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 81(2), 201-233.
- Inzer, L. (2005). A review of formal and informal mentoring: processes, problems, and design. *Journal of Leadership Education*, 4(1), 31-50.
- Jacobs, J. N. (2007). *A qualitative study of first-year high school band directors and their mentors*. PhD Dissertation, University of Florida.
- Jarrell, J. (1992). *Modeling the determinants of satisfaction and commitment in buyer-seller relationships in the less-than-truckload segment of the motor carrier industry*. dissertation, University of Maryland.
- Joftus, S., & Maddox-Dolan, B. (2002, December). *New teacher excellence: Retaining our best*. Washington D.C.: Alliance for Excellent Educaiton.
- Kajs, L. (2002). Framework for designing a mentoring program for novice teachers. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnerships in Learning*, 10(1), 57-69.
- Katz, R. (2010). *Novice teacher induction: Are teachers receiving the support they need and want?* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Kram, K. (1985). *Mentoring at work: Developmental relationships in organizational life*. Glenview, IL: Foresman and Company.
- Krathwohl, D. (1993). *Methods of education and social science research: An integrated approach*. New York: Longman/Addison Wesley Longman.

- Krefting, L. (1991). Rigor in qualitative R]research: The assessment of trustworthiness. *The American Journal of Occupational Therapy*, 45(3), 214-222.
- Krueger, P. (1999). New music teachers speak out on mentoring. *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, 8(7), 7-13.
- Krueger, P. (2000). Beginning music teachers: Will they leave the profession? *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, 19(1), 22-26.
- Krueger, R., & Casey, M. A. (2000). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Lambe, J., Wittmann, M., & Spekman, R. (2001). Social exchange theory and research on business-to-business relational exchange. *Journal of Business-to-Business Marketing*, 8(3), 1-36.
- Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.
- Le Maistre, C., Boudreau, S., & Pare, A. (2006). Mentor or evaluator? Assisting and assessing newcomers to the profession. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 18(6), 344-354.
- LeCompte, M., & Preissle, J. (1993). *Ethnography and qualitative design in education research* (2nd ed.). New York: Academic Press, Inc.
- Leik, R., & Leik, S. (1977). Transition to interpersonal commitment. In *Behavioral theory in sociology* (pp. 299-322).
- Leik, R., Owens, T., & Tallman, I. (1999). Interpersonal commitments: The interplay of social networks and individual identities. In *Handbook of Interpersonal Commitment and Relationship Stability* (pp. 239-258). New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum.

- Lichtman, M. (2006). *Qualitative research: A user's guide*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications Inc.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Beverly Hills: Sage Publications.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lunsford, L. G., Baker, V., Griffin, K., & Johnson, W. B. (2013). Mentoring: A typology of costs for higher education faculty. *Mentoring & Tutoring*, 21(2), 126-149.
- Mahon, M. (1998). *Parents and teachers in education: Can social exchange theory explain the nature of the relationship?* Master's thesis, University of Manitoba.
- Malette, C. (2005). *Theoretical and nursing implications of employment patterns and social exchange theory: Impact on the individual, organization, and the profession*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto.
- Massengill, D., Mahlios, M., & Barry, A. (2005). Metaphors and sense of teaching: How these constructs influence novice teachers. *Teaching Education*, 16(3), 213-229.
- McCann, T., & Johannessen, L. (2004). Why do new teachers cry? *Clearing House*, 77(4), 138-145.
- McCormack, C., & West, D. (2006). Facilitated group mentoring develops key career competencies for university women. *Mentoring & Tutoring*, 14(4), 409-431.
- McIntyre, D., & Hagger, H. (1996). Mentoring: Challenges for the future. In D. McIntyre, & H. Hagger (Eds.), *Mentors in Schools* (pp. 144-165). London: David Fulton Publishers.
- Menchaca, V. (2003, Fall). A wake-up call for principals: Are your novice teachers leaving? *Catalyst for Change*, 33(1), pp. 25-28.
- Merriam, S. (1988). *Case study research in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study application in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to desing and implementation* (2nd ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Miksza, P., Prichard, S., & Sorbo, D. (2012). An observational study of intermediate band students' self-regulated practice behaviors. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 60(3), 254-266.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis* (2nd Edition ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Miles, M., Huberman, M., & Saldaña, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Washington DC: SAGE.
- Mills, A., Durepos, G., & Wiebe, E. (2013). Encyclopedia of case study research. Retrieved from <http://srmo.sagepub.com/view/encyc-of-case-study-research/n347.xml>
- Mishler, B. (1989). Handicapping social exchange theory. *Annual Meeting of the Western Speech Communication Association*. Spokane.
- Mo, Y. (2006). *Interpersonal trust and buisness relationships*. Dissertation, University of Oxford.
- Moir, E., & Stobbe, C. (2005). Professional growth for new teachers: Support and assessment through collegial relationships. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 22(4), 83-91.
- Molm, L. (1994). Dependence and risk: Transforming the structure of social exchange. *Social Psychology Quarterly*, 57(3), 163-176.
- Montague, M. (2000). *Processes and situatedness: A collective case study of selected mentored music teachers*. University of Oregon.

- Morgan, R. (1991). *Relationship commitment and trust in marketing*. Texas Tech University.
- Mullen, C. (2005). *The mentorship primer*. New York: Peter Lang Publishing, Inc.
- Myers, M. (2000). Qualitative research and the generalizability question: Standing firm with Proteus. *The Qualitative Report*, 4(3/4). Retrieved from <http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR4-3/myers.html>
- NASBE. (2013, July 24). *Teacher Induction*. Retrieved from NASBE: National Association of State Boards of Education: <http://www.nasbe.org/project/teacher-induction/>
- National Foundation for the Improvement of Education. (1999). *Creating a Teacher Mentoring Program*. The National Education Association, Washington D.C.
- Parker, M., Ndoye, A., & Imig, S. (2009). Keeping our teachers! Investigating mentoring practices to support and retain novice educators. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, 17(4), 329-341.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Petrin, R. (2011, October). Mentoring: A business strategy that works. Management Mentors, Inc.
- Pollard, A. (1982). A model of classroom coping strategies. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 3, 19-37.
- Pollock, M. (1990). *An in depth analysis of mentoring and nonmentoring work relationships*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Manitoba, Winnipeg.

- Ponick, F., Keating, A., Pontiff, E., & Wilcox, E. (2003). Help wanted! *Teaching Music*, 11(1), 24-29.
- Rabiee, F. (2004). Focus-group interview and data analysis. *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society*, 63, 655-660.
- Ragins, B., & Kram, K. (2007). The roots and meaning of mentoring. In *The Handbook of Mentoring at Work: Theory, research, and practice* (pp. 3-15). Washington D.C.: Sage Publications.
- Randall, A. (2009). *Teaching novice teachers: Evaluating the effect of mentoring on the retention of first-year teachers*. School of Education. Capella University.
- Rhodes, J. (2006). *From intention to action: Strategies for recruiting and retaining today's volunteers*. University of Massachusetts. Boston: Mentor: National Mentoring Partnership.
- Rusbult, C., Wieselquist, J., Foster, C., & Witcher, B. (1999). Commitment and trust in close relationships. In *Handbook of interpersonal commitment and relationship stability* (pp. 427-449). Springer US.
- Sabatelli, R. (1999). Marital commitment and family life transitions. In J. Adams, & W. Jones (Eds.), *Handbook of Interpersonal Commitment and Relationship Stability* (pp. 181-192). Springer.
- Sabatelli, R., & Shehan, C. (1993). Exchange and resource theories. In P. Boss, W. Doherty, R. LaRossa, W. Schumm, & S. Steinmetz (Eds.), *Sourcebook of Family Theories and Methods* (pp. 385-417). Springer: Plenum Press.
- Schmidt, J., & Wolfe, J. (1980). The mentor partnership: Discovery of professionalism. *NASPA Journal*, 17(3), 45-51.

- Scholastic, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. (2012). *Primary sources: America's teachers on the teaching profession*. New York: Scholastic, Inc.
- Serpell, Z. (2000). *Beginning teacher induction: A review of the literature*. Pleasantville: DeWitt Wallace/Reader's Digest Fund.
- Shrestha, C., May, S., Edirisingha, P., Burke, L., & Linsey, T. (2009). From face-to-face to e-mentoring: Does the "e" add any value for mentors? *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 20(2), 116-124.
- Simmons, J. (2014). *Person-organizational fit and perceived organizational support effects on job outcomes*. Doctoral dissertation, Walden University.
- Smith, M. (1994). *The mentoring and professional development of new music educators: A descriptive study of a pilot program*. University of Minnesota.
- Smith, T., & Ingersoll, R. (2004 йил Fall). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, 41(3), 681-714.
- Smith, T., Desimone, L., Porter, A., McGraner, K., & Taylor-Haynes, K. (2012). Learning to teach: An agenda for research on the induction and mentoring of beginning teachers. *National Society for the Study of Education*, 111(2), 219-247.
- Social Exchange Theory. (2005). In T. R. Chibucos, R. Leite, & D. Weis, *Readings in family theory* (pp. 137-139). Sage.
- Spradley, J. (1979). *The ethnographic interview*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication.
- Stein, D. (1998). Situated learning in adult education. *ERIC Digest*. Columbus, Ohio.
- Stevanson, B. (2005). *A study of a pilot support program for first-year elementary music teachers*. Texas State University.

- Strong, M. (2009). *Effective teacher induction and mentoring*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Stroot, S., Flwlkes, J., Langholz, J., Paxton, S., Stedman, P., Steffes, L., & Valtman, A. (1999). Impact of a collaborative peer assistance and review model on entry-year teachers in a large urban school setting. *Journal of Teacher Education, 50*(1), 27-41.
- Sutton, L. (1999). *Effects of mutual support dyads on quality of life in women with breast cancer*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Pittsburgh.
- Swift, M. (2007). *The social exchange of knowledge: The role of knowledge goal orientation in shaping knowledge source sharing behaviors*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Colorado, Department of Management.
- Tarnowski, S., & Murphy, V. (2003). Recruitment, retention, retraining, and revitalization among elementary music teachers in Wisconsin and Minnesota. *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education, 22*(Fall/Winter), 15-27.
- Taylor, S., & Bogdan, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (3rd ed.). New York: Wiley.
- Thibault, J., & Kelley, H. (1959). *The social psychology of groups*. New York: John Wiley.
- Trochim, W., & Donnelly, J. (2006). *The research methods knowledge base* (3rd ed.). Mason: Atomic Dog Publishing.
- Turley, S., & Powers, K. N. (2006). Beginning teachers' confidence before and after induction. *Action in Teacher Education, 28*(1), 27-39.
- Veeman, S. (1984). Perceived problems of beginning teachers. *Review of Educational Education, 54*(2).



- Vosloo, J. (2010). *Exploring factors contributing to current or former coaching status of women coaches: A social exchange theory perspective*. Doctoral dissertation, West Virginia University.
- Warsame, K. (2011). *Evaluating the effectiveness of novice teacher support systems*. College of Education. Walden University.
- West, R., & Turner, L. (2010). *Introducing Communication Theory* (4th ed.). New York: McGraw Hill Publishing.
- Willis, N. (2010). *Using systems theory and social exchange theory to understand factors that impact retention, turnover, and motivation to work in a public child welfare agency*. Doctoral dissertation, University of Houston.
- Wilson, S., & Berne, J. (1999). Teacher learning and the acquisition of professional knowledge: An examination of research on contemporary professional development. *Review of Research in Education*, 24, 173-209.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Yin, R. (Ed.). (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Vol. 5). Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Zeichner, K., & Gore, J. (1990). Teacher socialization. In W. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: A project of the association of teacher educators*. New York: Macmillan.
- Zey, M. (1991). *The mentor connection: Strategic alliances in corporate life*. Piscataway: Transaction Publishers.

## Appendices

Appendix A: IRB Exempt Certification

Appendix B: Participant Consent Form

Appendix C: Sample Interview Questions

Appendix D: Start Code List

Appendix E: Representation of Memos

Appendix F: Sample Interview Transcript: Large Focus Group

Appendix G: Conceptual Framework

Appendix A:  
IRB Exempt Certification



Institutional Review Board  
563 UCB  
Boulder, CO 80309  
Phone: 303.735.3702  
Fax: 303.735.5185  
FWA: 00003492

04-Oct-2013

### Exempt Certification

Raschdorf, Taryn  
Protocol #: 13-0517  
Title: Relationships in Mentorship: a comparative case study of novice music educators and their mentors

Dear Taryn Raschdorf,

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed this protocol and determined it to be of exempt status in accordance with Federal Regulations 45 CFR 46.101(b). Principal Investigators are responsible for informing the IRB of any changes or unexpected events regarding the project that could impact the exemption status. Upon completion of the study, you must submit a Final Review via eRA. It is your responsibility to notify the IRB prior to implementing any changes.

Certification Date: 04-Oct-2013  
Exempt Category: 2

Click here to find the IRB reviewed documents for this protocol: [Study Documents](#)

The IRB has reviewed this protocol in accordance with federal regulations, university policies and ethical standards for the protection of human subjects. In accordance with federal regulation at 45 CFR 46.112, research that has been approved by the IRB may be subject to further appropriate review and approval or disapproval by officials of the institution. The investigator is responsible for knowing and complying with all applicable research regulations and policies including, but not limited to, Environmental Health and Safety, Scientific Advisory and Review Committee, Clinical and Translational Research Center, and Wardenburg Health Center and Pharmacy policies.

Please contact the IRB office at 303-735-3702 if you have any questions about this letter or about IRB procedures.

Douglas Grafel  
IRB Admin Review Coordinator  
Institutional Review Board

Appendix B:  
Participant Consent Form

**Relationships in Mentorship:  
a comparative case study of novice music educators and their mentors**

**Taryn Raschdorf, Principal Investigator**

**PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

**September 2013**

*Please read the following material that explains this research study. Signing this form will indicate that you have been informed about the study and that you want to participate. I want you to understand what you are being asked to do and what risks and benefits – if any- are associated with the study. This should help you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study.*

You are being asked to take part in a research project conducted by Taryn Raschdorf, a PhD candidate in the University of Colorado at Boulder's Department of Music Education 301 UCB Boulder, CO 80309-0301. Taryn Raschdorf can be reached at (757)717-6517.

**Project Description:**

This research study is an examination of the relationships of novice elementary music teachers and their mentors. Of particular interest is the sustained growth and smooth transitions from novice to experienced educator that a strong mentor may provide. You are being asked to be in this study because you are a member in such a relationship (e.g. novice elementary music educator or music educator mentor). Participation in this study is entirely your choice.

**Procedures:**

If you agree to take part in this study, you will complete up to three individual interviews and three focus group interviews with the other participants about your mentoring relationship, any challenges or benefits associated with this process, and mentorship and your classroom practices. You may be observed during a mentorship meeting or be asked to provide examples of communication. You may be asked about your teaching, planning your lessons and activities, and meeting with other teachers and parents. You may be asked to supply personal thoughts or

opinions, by means of journal entries, on a blog site concerning your experiences throughout the teaching year.

A blog site formed through a program called WordPress will be created for this study for the purposes of disclosing pertinent information to you and the other participants. This space will also be used to post reflections and secure your private messages to me or other participants. This forum will not be accessible to the public, being password protected, and will be kept private from other participants within the study if and when needed.

**Risks and Discomforts:**

There are no potential risks if you take part in this study.

**Benefits:**

The benefits of being in this study are providing an example of a prolonged mentoring relationship that could be implemented and encouraged with other novice music educators. This model could reinforce the positive benefits of a mentoring relationship such as increased retention rates, substantial professional development, improved self-reflection and problem solving abilities, and greater levels of confidence and self-esteem among novice music educators.

**Subject Payment:**

You will not be paid for participation for this study.

**Study Withdrawal:**

You have the right to withdraw your consent or stop participation at any time. You have the right to refuse to answer any question(s) or participate in any procedure for any reason.

**Confidentiality:**

I will make every effort to maintain the privacy of your data. Consent will be sought for use of videotape excerpts to be shown during presentation(s) of the results.

Other than the faculty members on this dissertation committee at the University of Colorado, other participants in this study (for the purposes of auditing data), regulatory agencies such as the Office of Human Research Protections, and the University of Colorado Human Research Committee may see your individual data as part of routine audits.

**Invitation for Questions:**

If you have questions about this study, you should ask the researcher before you sign this consent form.

**Authorization:**

I have read this paper about the study or it was read to me. I know the possible risks and benefits. I know that being in this study is voluntary. I choose to be in this study. I know that I can withdraw at any time. I have received, on the date signed, a copy of this document containing 2 pages.

Name of Participant (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Participant \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

(Also initial all previous pages of the consent form.)

Appendix C:  
Sample Interview Questions

*Semi-structured Novice Music Educator Interview Questions*

1. Tell me about yourself...how did you get into teaching music?
2. What are some of the greatest challenges you faced as a first-year teacher?
3. How did you meet your mentor?
4. How has your relationship progressed?
5. How did your mentor help you with the challenges you discussed before?
6. What do you see as the strengths of having a mentor?
7. Describe how much support and communication your mentor provided to you.
8. How could your mentor have better assisted you?
9. What aspects of the mentoring program have given you the most concern?
10. What could your school administrator have done to better assist you?
11. How did your mentor provide help with any problems you encountered when teaching children with disabilities or who did not speak English?
12. How did your mentor provide help with any discipline or classroom management problems?
13. Why have you chosen to maintain a relationship with your mentor?

*Semi-structured Mentor Interview Questions*

1. Tell me about yourself...how did you get into teaching music?
2. Describe what assisted your development as a mentor (people or experiences)?
3. Describe the professional development you received. How well prepared were you for the mentor role? Were there strengths and weaknesses of the preparation?
4. Based on your experiences with your mentees, what do mentors need to know and do to be effective in supporting new teachers?
5. How did it come to be that are \_\_\_\_\_'s mentor?
6. How has your relationship progressed?
7. What kinds of communication are used between you and your mentee?
8. What are some of the greatest challenges faced by your mentee teacher?
9. How did you help your mentee with these challenges?
10. What do you see as the strengths of new teachers having a mentor?
11. Describe the support and the communication you gave your mentee teacher.
12. How might you have assisted the mentee better?
13. How did you provide help to your mentee with any discipline or classroom management problems?

### *Semi-structured Mentor and Mentee Paired Interview Questions*

1. Describe your schedule of interaction with each other. How did you determine this setup?
2. Describe the type of relationship you tried to establish with each other.
3. Describe how your relationship has developed from first meeting each other up until now.

### *Semi-structured Mentor Focus Group and Teacher Focus Group Interview Questions*

1. How would you describe a mentoring relationship?
2. Think back over all the years how you've participated in mentoring relationships and tell us your fondest memory. (The most enjoyable memory.)
3. Think back over the past year(s) of the interactions that you have had with your particular mentor or mentee.
  - a. What went particularly well?
  - b. What needs improvement?
4. Suppose that you were in charge and could make one change that would make a mentoring program better. What would you do?
5. What makes a mentoring relationship stand the test of time?
6. What benefits have come out of your relationship with your mentor or mentee? Are there any detriments?
7. Of all the things we discussed, what to you is the most important?

### **Final question**

Review the purpose of the study and ask the participants: "Have we missed anything?"



Appendix D:  
Code Book

CODE NAME	ABBREVIATION	DEFINITION
Authentic Interactions	AI	Exchanges defined this way by the mentors
Background Story	BS	Any story relating to the participants' past
Boundaries	BOUND	Guidelines or restrictions established by mentoring pair
Channeling the mentor	CM	A mention of the mentee acting as their mentor would
Connection	CONN	Anytime a participant reflects about a connection established with mentoring partner
Definition of Mentor – by mentor	DMBM	A definition of mentor qualities provided by mentor participant
Definition of Mentor – by novice	DMBN	A definition of mentor qualities provided by novice participant
Definition of Teacher – by mentor	DTBM	A definition of a teacher or qualities provided by mentor participant
Definition of Teacher – by novice	DTBN	A definition of a teacher or such qualities provided by novice participant
Education of becoming a mentor	EduMen	Any mention by mentors about their own mentoring or training they received in becoming a mentor
Evolution of Novice	EvoNov	A reflection made by mentor or novice regarding to growth during early teaching career
Feelings – self_mentor	FSM	Feelings expressed about the mentor about herself
Feelings – self_novice	FSN	Feelings expressed about the novice about herself
Feelings – twd mentor	FTM	Feelings expressed about the mentor by novice
Feelings – twd novice	FTN	Feelings expressed about the novice by the mentor
Flexibility - mentor	FlexMen	A reflection from mentors about flexible mentoring practices or exchanges
Flexibility - novice	FlexNov	A reflection from novices about flexible mentoring practices or exchanges
Great quote	Great	A statement made by a participant that stood out to me for some reason
Identity – dissimilarities between mentors	ID-dis_ment	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one mentor was different from other mentors
Identity – dissimilarities between novices	ID-dis_nov	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one novice was different from other novices
Identity – dissimilarities between pairs	ID-dis_pair	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one set of pairs was different from other pairs

Identity – similarities between mentors	ID-sim_ment	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one mentor was the same as other mentors
Identity – similarities between novices	ID-sim_nov	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one novice was the same as the other novices
Identity – similarities between pairs	ID-sim_pair	A reflection by participants or observation of researcher when personality/philosophy of one set of pairs was the same as the other pairs
Identity	ID	A reflection or observation made about the participants' personality/philosophy regarding teaching mentoring
Induction Support	Induc Sup	Any support a novice teacher received from the district in a formal induction program
Inspiration	Inspir	Any mention made by novice or mentor as being inspired by their mentoring partner
Levels of Friendship	Friend	Any mention made by the novice or mentor in regards to their mentoring partner being a friend
Levels of Mentoring	Mentor	Any mention of form/style of mentoring used by the mentors
Maintaining Relationship-commitment	MR-commit	Any mention of maintaining relationship because of commitment to partner
Maintaining Relationship-communication	MR-commun	Any mention of maintaining (or lapse) relationship through communication
Maintaining Relationship-fun	MR-fun	Any mention of maintaining relationship because of social activities
Maintaining Relationship-inspiration	MR-inspir	Any mention of maintaining relationship because of inspiration
Maintaining Relationship-nostalgia	MR-nost	Any mention of maintaining relationship because of nostalgia
Mentor Expectations of Novice	MenExp	Mention of expectations mentors had of their mentees
Mentor Motivation - misc	MM-misc	Motivation to mentor based on various reason
Mentor Motivation – natural transition	MM-nat	Motivation to mentor based on it being a natural transition from teaching
Mentor Motivation - personality	MM-pers	Motivation to mentor based on personality fit
Mentor Motivation – self-serving	MM-ss	Motivation to mentor based on a more selfish reason/ self-serving
Mentor Motivation – draw to mentoring	MM-draw	Motivation to mentor based on a draw to mentor beginning teachers
Mentor Motivation – right time and place	MM-right	Motivation to mentor based on being in the right place at the right time
Mentor Quality	MenQual	Any mention of the qualities a mentor should have
Mentoring practices	MenPra	Any mention or observation of mentoring practices
Mentoring Student Teachers	MenStuT	Any differentiation given to the mentoring of student teachers vs. a novice teacher

Needs Met – by mentor	NeedMen	Any type of Novice’s need that was mentioned or observed as being met by the mentor
Needs Met – by novice	NeedNov	Any type of Mentor’s need that was mentioned or observed as being met by the novice
Novice Expectations of Mentor	NovExpec	Mention of expectations novice had of their mentor
Pay it forward	Pay	Any reference made to an act taking place because of a “pay it forward” attitude
Perceptions of mentor by novice	PercepByNov	A mention of any perceptions a novice held of their mentor
Perceptions of novice by mentor	PercepByMen	A mention of any perceptions a mentor held of their mentee
PLCs	PLC	Any mention or reference given to PLC meetings
Professional Development	PD	Any mention or reference given to any form of professional development for the music educator
Role of Mentor – academic support	RM-academic	Any reference by mentee how their mentor supported them academically
Role of Mentor – logistic	RM-log	Any reference by mentee how their mentor supported them logistically
Role of Mentor – moral support	RM-moral	Any reference by mentee how their mentor supported them by boosting moral
Role of Mentor – networking support	RM-network	Any reference by mentee how their mentor supported them through networking
Role of Mentor – refinement	RM-refine	Any reference by mentee how their mentor refining their teaching skills
Role of Novice – depository	RN-depos	Any reference by mentor how their mentee was a depository of their teaching materials/methods
Role of Novice – fill emotional need	RN-emotion	Any reference by mentor how their mentee filled an emotional need
Role of Novice – refinement	RN-refine	Any reference by mentor how their mentee refined their teaching/mentoring skills
Similarities - background	Sim-back	Any background similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities – music persona	Sim-music	Any music similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities - perceptions	Sim-percep	Any perception (of life) similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities - personality	Sim-person	Any personality similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities - philosophy	Sim-phil	Any philosophical similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities - regional	Sim-reg	Any regional similarities between the mentoring pairs
Similarities - values	Sim-val	Any similarities in values held between the mentoring pairs
Trials of teaching - mentor	Trial-men	Hardships mentor faced in teaching
Trials of teaching - novice	Trial-nov	Hardships novice faced in teaching

SET – Good fit	SET-GF	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were a good fit (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – reciprocity	SET-rec	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners viewed or exhibited reciprocity (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – rewards/emotional	SET-REW/emo	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were rewarded emotionally (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – rewards/knowledge	SET-RE/know	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were rewarded with knowledge (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – rewards/material	SET-RE/mat	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were rewarded through material resources (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – rewards/reflection	SET-RE/ref	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were rewarded through reflective practices (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – rewards/verbal	SET-RE/ver	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners were rewarded through praise (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – trust	SET-GF	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners exhibited or perceived trust (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
SET – value	SET-GF	Mention or observation of how mentoring partners valued each other or relationship (as seen in Social Exchange Theory)
Weird Factor	Weird	Mention of things that happened outside the realm of expectation (i.e. how they happened to meet each other)

Appendix E:  
Representation of Memos

Definitions of a good mentor – (Suzanne #1 individual/pg3,ln 51)

I am adding this as one of my questions to the participants because I wanted to see if there was any difference between the following: what the teacher and mentor participants say, the level of experience says, and participants and what the literature says. I think I will go ahead and code this, I just don't know where I will put this in my write up or how it will affect the analysis.

Common philosophies – (Suzanne #1 individual/p4, ln63)

As I was transcribing the various interviews, I noticed that several groups described common philosophical ideas. This is the first interview I am coding, but I think Peggy Austin mentioned right off the bat as well. I will have to go and check this out.

Good fit/Attraction – (Suzanne #1/ p3, ln49;p5, ln89)

All of my participants have talked about this idea of a good fit; well those are the terms I am using. I may change this term to one used by one of the participants. There are probably a few different categories under this label, but I will start with this one. I am calling this attraction because there is something that “draws” the participants to each other. This is going to be a big theme that I know will have to have to be teased out. But I am basing this idea on Suzanne's statement “I was fascinated by the joy in her classroom and so I just stalked her.”

- Might need to filter out statements relating to “connection”

Challenges of Novice Teacher MUSIC SPECIFIC (Kirsten #1/p3 ln48 and ln 54)

Kirsten really speaks to the challenges that are specific to the novice MUSIC teacher. This is going to have to be its own code. This is something that Riis said needs to come through loud and clear in the write up.

Kirsten and her Middle School cooperating teacher (Kirsten#1/p8 ln149)

I think that it's interesting that Kirsten didn't bring up her big bad ordeal with her 2nd CT at this interview. The story did come up in the combined interview with Rachel. I am glad that the story came up because it is indicative of what can happen when there isn't a good fit between mentors (which is what a CT is supposed to be) and their mentees. I think this story will add a good ??? (need to find the right qualitative word...outlier).

Common philosophies not there (Kirsten #1/p17 ln318)

I noticed that everything that Suzanne did in her classroom was based on something Stacia did. This really isn't the case for Kirsten. This is worth looking into. Kirsten does a lot of the same things (see ln 74 in this interview), but there are a lot of things that Kirsten also doesn't do (i.e. the choir and the big show). This might be a personality thing or just a difference in the relationship. It makes me wonder whether or not this mentoring relationship will stand the test of time or no. Maybe Suzanne and Stacia are just a really special pair.

## Appendix F:

### Sample Interview Transcript: Large Focus Group

1. Combined Focus Group Jan 23, 2014
2. SM – Suzanne Meyers
3. SN – Stacia Nelson
4. DG – Daphnie Gray
5. RL – Reyna Lewis
6. KS – Kirsten Shields
7. RW – Rachel Wolfe
8. OO – outside observer
9. M - Me
10. M - Can you hear me ok Kirsten? Ok excellent. Before we get started...sorry about the microphone.
11. situation Some logistics. I am using the website as a data control place. I just want to have a place
12. where I post things to you and you can post things to me. I haven't been too great on keeping that
13. updated. I am trying to be better, but as a source of information for you...is that working for
14. everyone. Or is that kind of, eh, one more thing. I was just wondering.
15. SN - Were we supposed to look at it?
16. SM - I haven't visited it yet, but I would like to. I think it's good.
17. SN - You should tell me what to do and what to read because then I would go there and do it.
18. M - Ok...I could that. Cause we could do it via email too, if that's easier too. Like if I have a question
19. that I would like you to answer, I could just email and you could email me back.
20. SN - So are there questions on our personal website?
21. M - yes...I put a reflection up there and it's again, it is just there. I will be putting, our transcripts
22. there because it is a site that can hold a lot of information. I don't think emails would be able to hold
23. 2 hour interviews. So I will be putting our interviews there just in case there is anything you want to
24. check on.
25. SM - if you would put "I put this up there...I would like a response by the end of the week." I respond
26. to those things.(laughter)
27. M - So I will keep it there for now and I will email you if I put something up or if there is something
28. that needs attention. Fair enough. Excellent. Getting back. What would be a good question to start
29. with? Some of these are kind of deep, I think I would like to start a little more light hearted. Oh,
30. ok...what is everyone learning from each other right now. Like if you could look at your relationship
31. right now, not. We have done of lot of "in the past...so and so has influenced me." more like, if you

32. were going to take a snapshot of what is going on right now, what are you learning from each other?  
33. (pause) if you are learning anything from each other.  
34. SN - Well I am learning, well I am not learning I am just becoming aware that what I hear Suzanne  
35. saying about how she feels about what she is doing and all that, it's like de'javu. I remember being at  
36. that point in my career. I thought, oh this can't be good enough. If I am doing this, I wonder what I  
37. should be doing. A lot of self-doubt and just checking. And things that don't go well are bigger than  
38. they need to be. So I think that's where whether you have a mentor or whether you have a colleague  
39. or a friend that can help you keep perspective. Because then, it's the perspective.  
40. SM - yeah, and I feel that in the beginning I was like, "oh it makes sense that I call Stacia every 20  
41. minutes because it's my first year teaching." But now it's my fourth year and I feel like I am supposed  
42. to be a little more "the expert". So I call you (Stacia) less, but I am realizing that every time I see her,  
43. I am like "oh, I need to call you more." So that's where I am at. I need to rely on my mentor more.  
44. DG - Can I talk?  
45. M - yeah, go for it.  
46. DG - Reyna is my technology guru and also backward design which is a big deal in our district now.  
47. And she puts together these letters too...Noteworthy? Is that what they're called?  
48. RL - Treble clefs  
49. DG - Treble Clef...sorry!  
50. (laughter about mistake...some inaudible conversation)  
51. DG - It's not the title that matters to me. Well all this to say, I go in there and I get so much, I get a  
52. lot of really good stuff.  
53. RL - Well I am glad.  
54. SN - Another thing that happened with Suzanne, I stopped in and she said, "Oh I felt myself  
55. channeling you the rest of the day. Like it was like you were right there with me." And I thought, oh,  
56. that is just like with my voice person that just turned around, or taught me so much. That if I would  
57. just think of him or look at his picture, it would be like bringing all that he taught me right back fresh.  
58. And at one point I said, could I just call you and have a one minute conversation, cause then  
59. everything you taught comes back. So I think that's another piece that a contact, just a brief contact,  
60. can call up all the stuff that you have going that you had going. It isn't like the hours you spend  
61. together. It keeps you tuned, tuned in...  
62. (Rachel Wolfe walks in...conversation stops for a bit and lost Skype with Kirsten, so stopped to  
63. reconnect)  
64. M - So Rachel we had just started with the first question, if you could take a snapshot of how things  
65. are now, like what are you learning from each other right at this point? If you are learning anything.

66. Stacia had spoken to... well could you (Stacia) recap what you so I am not speaking for you.

67. SM - Just making a point to stay in contact because at first it's just really easy. I am recapping my

68. thoughts, not necessarily your thoughts (Stacia). First it's really easy and the self-doubt is expected

69. but then after 4 years, I have higher expectations of myself. So reaching out is a little less natural,

70. but it is so helpful. Stay in contact, just a minute here and there is so beneficial.

71. M - And then we were talking about Reyna's awesome newsletter called the Treble Clef.

72. RL - I probably have it on my phone and we can share. Yeah, as I am hearing Suzanne and Stacia, you

73. guys talk about your relationship and how close it is, you know how you were calling her your first

74. year, that you're both still in constant contact, I feel like our relationship is different in that you

75. weren't my student teacher and I was just assigned as a mentor last year. You know where we met

76. once a month or twice or whatever it was. So I feel like I should be checking up more on you now

77. that it's year two; making sure that everything is ok. But at the same time I know that Daphnie will 78.

78. reach out if she has a question or...

79. RW - But she's here pretty regularly at the PLCs too.

80. (inaudible with everyone talking at once)

81. RW - I saw her a bit because she was meeting with Jenn on Fridays on our curriculum...

82. DG - but Reyna you don't even know that I learn from you because Reyna created this fabulous

83. curriculum map. I have been using it and I haven't told you.

84. RL - Oh good!! I haven't seen you on it. Like sometimes I see other people poke up on it

85. this year cause you can see.

86. DG - Yeah, but I have been using it and working for how it fits in my classroom and it's like having

87. you there without having you there, without having to bother you.

88. RL - Oh good...cause I thought no one...

89. (inaudible with everyone laughing and talking at once)

90. RW - When I read the Treble Clef I can hear your voice through.

91. SN - And you wouldn't know that I use it too because I like an old timer, I have mine in hard copy

92. so you don't see me when I am using it.

93. RW - Yeah, I have mine in hard copy too.

94. RL - Oh, ok.

95. RW - but I am using it

96. RL - I am glad. It does get updated, so you might want to look again.

97. RW - She and I (Kirsten) have tried several times to get together and we're kind of busy people.

98. Like she finds a day that's free and then I have a kids' thing and then we finally found a date but

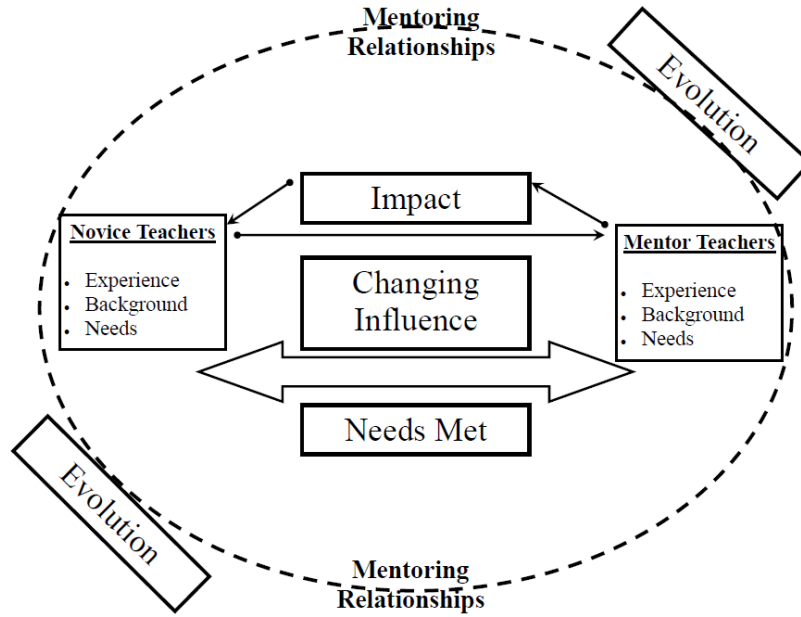
99. then, her husband's had then, the evening free and since he doesn't get evenings off very often, so I



100. don't know. We haven't really haven't gotten together for a while.
101. KS - Yeah, we are busy people.
102. RW - Every once in a while I will get an email from her. What do you think about...that kind of
103. thing?
104. M - How are things going for everybody in teaching right now? School year and everything...oh man
105. (Skype goes out)
106. (pause for reconnect)
107. SM - But I am having a good year. 4th year is a good year.
108. RW - 4th year is a good year. You are past all the other stuff. They are your kids and they've grown
109. to you and I always say that, but if you can make it through the first three years, you're good.
110. SM - Yeah, I'm loving it.
111. M - Good...what about everyone else?
112. DG - Well they are definitely better than last year. I am like walking on sunshine. I wasn't sleeping
113. last year. I am so perfectionistic.
114. SM - It was your first year here last year.
115. DG - First year first year.
116. RW - So that is always the hardest.

Appendix G:  
Conceptual Framework

December 2013



June 2015

