

**A Phenomenological Study of High School Band Student Leadership Selection:
Interviews with Nationally Recognized Band Directors**

by

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Abstract

Band directors are expected to designate student leaders who can fulfill the requirements of their responsibilities effectively. While essential leadership characteristics may vary depending on the ensemble needs, students should be aware of the student leadership selection process in their program and the expectancies of leadership roles assigned. Directors can benefit from considering the leadership roles needed in their music programs and how to prepare students to achieve success in these leadership positions.

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to investigate nationally recognized high school band directors' experiences in determining the best student leadership qualifications and abilities for their programs, methods used to increase desired leadership abilities in high school band students, character traits observed in high school band student leaders, and experiences which may develop future student leaders for their respective band programs. Ten high school band directors were interviewed for this study based on their individual program's recognition in the nationally respected Bands of America (BOA) marching arts events. Participants led their marching band programs to finals performances at BOA Regional, Super Regional, and Grand National Championship events. All participants had similar lived experiences in utilizing student leadership in their respective high school band programs.

Four major themes evolved with an overarching concept encompassing all themes emerged. The major themes are *Past Experiences*, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, *Student Leadership Training*, and *Traits of Student Leaders*. The overarching concept encompassing these four themes was the development, evolution, and/or preservation of a band program *Culture*. The concept of *Culture* was noticed in all stages of the participants' experiences with student leadership. Research findings revealed these nationally recognized high

school band directors used experiences, past and present, to develop student leadership programs that will cycle each band's unique culture into the next generation of student leaders in their band program. This qualitative phenomenological research study fills a void in current literature on student leadership selection from a band director's experiences and can offer empirical data to support future research within student leadership selection procedures.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The parameters defining a leader may vary depending on the locations, situations, and expectations (Burns, 1978). The definition of a leader, or a person who leads, can be one who is in charge, directs, has commanding authority, or has influence over others (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Therefore, someone in a leadership role is one who has the position, capacity, or ability to develop actions to lead others. Spillane (2006) defined organizational leadership as necessary to move toward a common goal.

Leadership refers to activities tied to the core work of the organization that are designed by organizational members to influence the motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices of other organizational members or that are understood by organizational members as intended to influence their motivation, knowledge, affect, or practices. (pp. 11-12)

While the band director often represents this definition of leadership in a band program, “student leaders may have the ability to influence peer attitudes, model musical concepts, and affect the social climate of an organization” (Davison, 2007, p. 5). Directors should understand their students’ abilities if they plan to utilize them effectively in a leadership capacity.

A head band director at a new job begins with the teaching responsibility of curriculum development and significant administrative tasks of budgeting, inventory, event planning, and scheduling with administrators, staff, parent organizations, and coaches. In addition to the responsibilities as a head director, first-year teacher training is often expected to prepare all newly hired employees to work within their respective school. Directors in new jobs may also

face the decision to select students they may not know to become leaders. Student leaders can act as advocates between the director and other students to facilitate instructions and goals if they are chosen accurately (Brewer, 2009b). However, student leaders may have already been chosen when the teacher accepted the position. In this situation, the newly-hired teacher could be expected to work with students they do not know and did not select to help as advocates. Directors could be expected to continue the tradition of the previous director's leadership team. A first-year teacher may face even more challenges if developing student leadership is deficient from their program of study in music education. The first-year teaching experiences can determine the decision to return to the profession, change schools, or leave the teaching profession entirely (Vuilleumier, 2019). Regardless of the director's experience, the first year in a new job as a head band director can have a long-lasting impression on both the teacher and the students.

A band director should consider their individual strengths as a leader whether they are new to a program or a tenured teacher. Directors can use their influence to continue current progress in the overall program or develop a new direction if changes are necessary. Band directors operating a student leadership program should be prepared to engage student leaders who can fulfill the requirements of the desired leadership responsibilities effectively (Armstrong, 1996). While specific characteristics may be dependent on each ensemble's needs and their director's preferences (Goodstein, 1987), students should be aware of the available leadership opportunities and what may be expected in each role for them to effectively contribute to the program (Hine, 2014). Directors benefit from reflecting on previous experiences, learning from other tenured directors, and considering the most effective leadership roles needed for their music programs (Warfield, 2013).

Need for the Study

While numerous sources describe the overall desired traits of an effective music educator (Armstrong, 1996; Brewer, 2009a; Brewer, 2009b; Davison, 2007; Goodstein, 1987; Juchniewicz, 2010; Leschnower, 2008; Rudaitis, 1996; Warfield, 2013), empirical data on the lived experiences of how band directors select and develop student leaders was not found in my current literature review. A qualitative study using phenomenological methodology will fill a void in empirical research surrounding directors' experiences on how they choose student leaders. This phenomenological study provides examples of how nationally recognized band directors identify effective student leaders while considering successful methods which increase the desired leadership abilities in future student leaders. The need to consider leadership training can also have an outcome on how a director selects student leaders for the band programs. Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to research selected band directors' experiences in choosing high school band student leadership qualifications and abilities, methods used to increase desired leadership abilities in high school band students, character traits observed in high school band student leaders, and past experiences which may determine future student leaders.

Research Questions

A central question and corroborating sub-questions are essential elements guiding studies in phenomenology (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Creswell (2016) stated a necessary part of qualitative research is the central question. "This is the broadest question that can be asked about the topic you are studying in your qualitative project" (p. 97). The central question for this phenomenological study was:

How do nationally recognized high school band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs?

Findings from interviews support answering the central question to provide the *essence* of this qualitative phenomenological study (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 77). Sub-questions derived from the central question are necessary to direct interviews to retrieve data from participants (Creswell, 2016). Sub-questions provide *what* was experienced by participants and *how* the phenomenon was experienced (Moustakas, 1994). The sub-questions guiding the Interview Protocol Form (Appendix D) for this phenomenological research study were:

1. What is your experience (if any) as a student leader prior to becoming a band director?
2. What qualifications and/or abilities does a student need to attain to become a student leader in this high school band program?
3. What leadership training methods have been used for your high school band student training?
4. What are the most important characteristics or traits that you have observed in effective high school band student leaders?
5. How have past experiences selecting student leaders influenced current procedures on selecting student leaders?

Open-ended, follow-up questions to each of these sub-questions were asked to better understand each director's lived experiences in this study to obtain richer data. These questions support a foundation of qualitative research: searching for the meaning of a phenomenon through participants' perspectives (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

Limitations, Delimitations, and Assumptions

Limitations. A phenomenological study is the most effective research method to understand participants' perspectives with their lived experiences. This study identifies a phenomenon as an object of experience (van Manen, 1990). The object, or phenomenon, being researched is the band director's expertise working with and selecting student leaders. The participants in these studies described their personal background with the phenomenon through in-depth, semi-structured interviews. By limiting the research to interviews, only information provided in the interview was considered for the findings. Interviewing individuals through the phenomenological lens limits the research through the elements expected in this methodology but can provide an area that allows future work to expand on this topic. "Because qualitative research occurs in the natural setting, it is extremely difficult to replicate studies" (Wiersma, 2000, p. 211).

Delimitations. A purposeful sample of ten participants was selected. Since Bands of America (BOA) has regional and national competitions for competitive marching bands, a band receives national recognition from participation in a finals performance at a BOA competition. Based on the participant interviews and my experiences, student leadership is often utilized at its peak during the marching season. Therefore, involvement in a finals performance was a benchmark for selected participants. At least one of the following criteria was required for band directors to contribute to this research. All three criteria were met by each participant:

- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Grand National Championships within the past five years.
- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Grand Super Regional Championships within the past five years.

- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Regional Championships within the past five years.

This research did not focus on other aspects of the band outside of the marching program. While student leadership contributions may be utilized in other areas of the band, participants mentioned that most of the student leadership engagement occurs in the marching band and during the marching season. Even still, all participants have had success with other groups not specifically categorized as marching band (i.e. wind ensembles, jazz ensembles, chamber groups, orchestra, and/or other regional, state, and/or national individual concert activities). These activities could have contributed to the marching programs' success. However, researching student leadership in other non-marching performance areas is outside the scope of this study. When participants mentioned leadership utilized throughout the year in non-marching programs, these leadership roles were only included when the participant described how these activities also supported leadership in the marching program.

Assumptions. Basic assumptions are necessary to provide rationale to conduct research (Simon & Goes, 2013). All phenomenological work depends on the truthfulness of the participants and accurate reflections about their collective experience with the phenomenon (Crotty, 1996; Tufford & Newman, 2010). Each director was charged with selecting student leaders; however, each participant experienced the phenomenon differently due to their personal background, age, location, culture, and students involved in their previous and current programs (van Manen, 2007).

Participants had a wide array of experiences. Some directors may have left out information regarding other locations, whether it was a previous employer or a person who had not provided consent/assent. While each participant was allowed to correct and clarify their

individual interviews through member checking, participants may not have been able to describe all situations or experiences which could prove beneficial to the research. It is likely that changes in student populations, demographics, and cultures also occur in schools over time. The findings in phenomenological studies may not represent a larger generalization of a population. However, based on the interviews and continued successes in each participant's programs, all of these participants have shown the ability to work with a variety of students regardless of where they might be in their careers. The findings in this study can offer information on student leadership from a perspective which has not been found in current research.

Summary

This dissertation is in partial fulfillment of the expectations of the Doctor of Philosophy in Music Education from Auburn University. Five chapters in this dissertation include: 1. *Introduction*, 2. *Review of Related Literature*, 3. *Methods and Procedures*, 4. *Findings*, and 5. *Discussion, Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion*. Chapter 1 is divided into five sections: (a) background of the phenomenon, (b) need for the study, (c) research questions, (d) limitations, delimitations, and assumptions, and (e) a summary of the dissertation. Chapter 2 informs readers of (a) leadership styles, (b) leadership traits, and (c) leadership training. Chapter 3 provides the proposed methodology of (a) research design, (b) participant sampling and setting, (c) participant biographies, (d) data collection, (e) data analysis, (f) bracketing, and (g) trustworthiness of the research. Chapter 4 delivers coded findings with quotes from all participants based on their experiences within themes of (a) past experiences, (b) student leadership application methods, (c) student leadership training, (d) expected traits of student leaders, and (e) culture. Chapter 5 completes the research with (a) the discussion of the essence,

(b) implications for professional practice, (c) recommendations for continued research, (d) a conclusion of the research study.

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Essential leadership traits are often observed and valued as indicators for assigning a leadership position (Armstrong, 1996; Brewer, 2009a; Davison, 2007; Goodstein, 1987; Juchniewicz, 2010; Leschnower, 2008; Rudaitis, 1996; Warfield, 2013). Specific leadership traits may be perceived as more or less valuable in a band depending on the director's past experiences and the focus of the organization. High school directors utilizing student leaders in their band programs are expected to recognize effective student leaders and sometimes train them to complement the director's leadership style (Davison, 2007; Williams, 2014). The preferred leadership styles of the director and students are important considerations which may determine necessary leadership positions as well as students who may best fulfill the responsibilities related to each role. Understanding different leadership styles can also provide insight on related leadership traits. Once the leadership style and desired traits are understood, effective leadership training can be implemented to accommodate potential deficiencies.

Leadership Styles

Student leadership requirements often depend on the director's personality and their focus for the band (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). There were no studies found supporting a larger band needing a greater number of student leadership roles. Similarly, no research was found to support smaller bands needing a larger percentage of students with leadership responsibilities. However, two leadership styles have been identified which offer insight into

how band directors may utilize student leaders. Davison (2007) described two styles of leadership which often emerge in a band program: an autocratic style and a facilitative style.

In the autocratic style, the head of a musical organization will often view his or her leadership style as the authoritative head of a hierarchy, complete with subordinates to carry out the assigned tasks necessary to meet the goals and standards set by the leader... facilitative leaders as those who enhance the leadership qualities and opportunities of their subordinates... facilitative leadership is best used when the subordinates of a group function at a high level. (Davison, 2007, p. 2)

These two leadership styles are closely related to transactional leadership (autocratic) and transformational leadership (facilitative) (Burns, 1978). Directors should know their preferences for leadership styles when they select student leaders or if they wish to prepare leadership training courses for students. Band directors may choose to maintain an autocratic, transactional leadership style where the hierarchy and decision making is evident from the top while instilling facilitative, transactional leadership at the student leadership level to develop change and maintain influence at the peer level. Atasoy (2020) described how effective school administrators elect to use methods of transactional and transformation methods at different times to either maximize positive change in the school culture or minimize negative attitudes. In a similar way, directors may use a combination of transactional and transformational leadership.

Transactional Leadership. Transactional leadership is a leadership method in which the assigned leader facilitates the exchange, or transaction, of services or goods (Burns, 1978). In this method, a transactional leader determines what followers will receive as they complete tasks, but leaders can also enforce consequences if the tasks or outcomes are not completed (Nielsen et al., 2019). “Traditionally, power has been viewed as domination through formal authority,

flowing from the top down and vesting decisions in a small number of people” (Lashway, 1995, p. 2). This technique is often how business models utilize leadership (Burns, 1978).

Band directors may utilize a transactional type of leadership system within their band programs to ensure the regular operations of the program are completed by student leaders (Brewer, 2009; Davison, 2007). Some directors may select students to be called leaders but do not delegate any authority to the student leader (Brewer, 2009; Davison, 2007). These students are chosen to maintain the regular order of the band’s operations but may not hold much influence with their peers.

Students accepting a transactional style of leadership in a band should understand the director’s expectations and how their interactions with peers may change. Brewer (2009) reported qualitative research interviewing the experiences of three collegiate drum majors who worked under a transactional leadership model. He reported, “three themes regarding leadership responsibilities of the participants emerged from the analysis: (a) drum major as the director’s musical advocate; (b) drum major as director’s political advocate; and (c) bridging the gap between students and staff” (p. 4). The primary influence of the student leader often being a director’s representative (Davidson, 2007). In addition to advocating on the director’s behalf, these students also felt like they were socially obligated to attend some non-musical activities while they were left out of other activities due to their leadership position.

The participants in this study hold a leadership position within the band, yet they do not hold any substantial decision-making power; instead, decision making is left to the director and staff. Taking this dynamic into account, it may be of importance to select leaders who can demonstrate the ability to work independently of the director, but also consistently demonstrate an understanding of the decisions made by the director and staff

and possess the ability to communicate these decisions to band members. Additionally, the social and identity tensions associated with being a student leader, as expressed by the participants, demonstrate the need for leaders who have more than just strong musical skills. Because they may experience feelings of separation from the rest of the ensemble, student leaders may encounter unanticipated isolation, resulting in tensions with friends and other band members. In this regard, it is essential that directors select confident and stable leaders and prepare those leaders for the social challenges that student leadership positions can bring. (Brewer, 2009, p. 9)

Directors may find challenges and benefits to instilling an autocratic, transactional leadership style. A director should consider the community and culture of the program when instilling an autocratic leadership style. This style could create difficult situations in terms of support, recruiting, and retention for a new director. Other issues can arise if the director's long-term goals for the program is not aligned with the community's expectations or if the students and other stakeholders are not invested into the director's vision for the band. Conversely, if the director has long-term goals that align with the community's expectations and the stakeholders can see the director's vision is in the best interests for the band program, the autocratic, transactional leadership method can move forward more easily. Another benefit to this style is that the director will maintain the decision making and direction of the program throughout time (Atasoy, 2020). If a director has long-term goals for a band, it may not be accomplished in the short time students may be involved in their program; however, each year, the program can move closer to the goals under the transactional leadership method.

Transformational Leadership. Transformational leaders are often described as those who work with others and are facilitators enabling positive changes in an organization (Bass &

Avolio, 1997; Burns, 1978; Carson & King, 2005; Davis, 2003; Jackson, Meyer, & Wang, 2013; Palen & Palen, 1997; Rost, 1991; Siangchokyo, Klingler, Campion, 2020; Strodl, 1992; Williams, 2014). “The transformational leader seeks to inspire passion in followers, to elevate their values and acceptable standards of performance, and to obtain the followers’ agreement with long-term goals” (Williams, 2014, p. 18). The transformational leadership model described by Burns (1978) allows each member engaged in an activity to attain achievements within a group of leaders. Jackson, Meyer, and Wang (2013) stated,

Transformational leadership is typically described and operationalized in terms of five general dimensions: (a) Idealized influence (attributed) reflects followers’ perceptions of the leader’s power, confidence, and transcendent ideals; (b) Idealized influence (behaviors) includes charismatic behaviors expressing a leader’s values, beliefs, sense of mission and purpose, and ethical orientation; (c) Inspirational motivation involves encouraging followers to strive for difficult goals, while showing confidence that they can achieve those goals; (d) Intellectual stimulation involves urging followers to question customs and assumptions and to form creative solutions to problems; and (e) Individualized consideration refers to treating followers in unique ways based on their individual needs and supporting those specific needs. (p. 85)

Transformational leadership is a way for a director to facilitate leadership and, in turn, empower those involved in the decision-making process in the program. The characteristics of influence, the relationship between the authority and subordinate, and the role of an authority to inspire change can be found in historical perspectives on this leadership style (Rost, 1991). “In the twenty-first century with flatter hierarchies and less variance in knowledge, power and resources, perhaps ‘leadership’ should be defined by one’s ability to respond to empowered

situations with self-leadership” (Carson & King, 2005, p.1049). Directors utilizing this method allow students the ability to make certain decisions within the band program. Davis (2003) defined a practical leadership through considering qualities that develop change in a program or individuals by addressing issues, providing creative solutions, and improving the quality of the organization. Directors that are developing a change, whether it’s a large-scale program change or developing future student leaders each year, could benefit from the support of their current student leader’s ability to empower and involve their peers in the process to adjust the program culture.

Transformational leadership can further increase participation in instructional leadership through providing ownership of the program. Strodl (1992) found participation can provide a valuable avenue of instructional leadership through designing activities based on the transformational leadership model within the music setting. Delegating various responsibilities to the selected student leader provides opportunities to enhance the student’s sense of ownership of the program, thus implementing transformational leadership in their student leaders (Davison, 2007; Strodl, 1992).

Transformational leadership qualities promoted by a director can also encourage students to surpass normal expectations. Davison (2007) provided quantitative evidence that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between the student leadership strength and the director’s leadership styles. “...band directors who reported greater facilitative leadership tendencies also reported stronger student leadership tendencies within their programs” (Davison, 2007, p. 4). Williams (2014) later used qualitative methodology to research the leadership behaviors of a high school choral teacher through the perspectives of the teacher, students, and programs successes. Transformational leadership behaviors “promote followers to greater levels

of commitment and satisfaction in a leader than do simple transactional leadership behaviors. Followers are motivated to extend extra-effort and perform beyond anticipated levels” (Williams, 2014, p. 295).

Teachers who delegate leadership responsibilities must be aware of suitable methods and procedures to develop and encourage effective student leaders to motivate other students in this style (Atasoy, 2020; Davison, 2007; Goodstein, 1987; Siangchokyoo, Klingler, & Campion, 2020; Warfield, 2013). It is not necessary for every student leader to learn how to become a transformational leader nor does every band program need all those positions to lead in this style. However, if transformational leadership is a style expected of the students, the linchpin to success in this leadership style is the influence and followership of other students (Siangchokyoo, Klingler, & Campion, 2020). Directors and selected student leaders should understand the need and leadership traits necessary to fulfill their role whether a transactional or transformational leadership method is utilized.

Leadership Traits

Several authors have described core traits utilized by music directors (Armstrong, 1996; Brewer, 2009; Buyers, 2009; Davison, 2007; Goodstein, 1987; Juchniewicz, 2010; Leschnower, 2008; Rudaitis, 1996; Warfield, 2013). The director should be prepared to show all leadership characteristics desired from student leaders by demonstrating these traits to the students (Warfield, 2013). Armstrong (1996) considered the effective leader as an enabler as opposed to a dictator and identified four themes in his research: experience, servant leadership, ownership, and communication. These four traits have been corroborated by related literature as necessary skills for leaders.

Experience. Experience is often considered the most important leadership trait (Armstrong, 1996; Davies, 2003; DeRue & Wellman, 2009; Harrison, 2016; Hezlett, 2016; Janson, 2008; Preston, 2019; Rudaitis, 1996; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory was developed from experiences and how one interprets and interacts with the experiences that occur. Hezlett (2016) provided an extensive literature review on experience-driven leadership development. In her summary, "many types of cognitive, skill-based, and affective-based learning outcomes may be achieved through experience-driven development, including building complex skills, perspective taking, and enhanced motivation" (p. 385).

Practical experiences can provide long-lasting effects for continued leadership development. DeRue and Wellman (2009) provided an extensive mixed-methods research study which showed empirical evidence where leadership skill development is increased through practical experiences. A leadership model developed by Peck and Preston (2018) described three levels of participation: involvement, engagement, and leadership. Their model was derived from Bloom's (2001) revised taxonomy which focused on leadership experiences. Preston (2019) later considered how students should be experiencing practical leadership training. Having hands-on training allows students to implement learning outcomes, reflection, and evaluation (DeRue & Wellman, 2009; Pech & Preston, 2018; Preston, 2019).

The idea that some people have innate leadership abilities should be addressed if experiences are part of leadership development (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014). Janson (2008) provided a mixed methods approach to examine the *Leadership Formative Experiences* of sixty-six participants. Out of all participants, only 8% of the stories supported a 'born' leader idea. Over half of the experiences were attained through self-improvement and working through difficulties. Harrison (2016) also provided evidence that critiques assumptions of a person

having a specific innate ability to lead. Information and knowledge are developed through experience while creativity can further instill a person's wisdom on how to develop leaders (Harrison, 2016).

Directors should consider their past experiences and the opportunities they provide their students when considering student leaders. Directors could use their previous experiences to increase their leadership abilities and teaching styles. Their students may be developing their leadership and musical abilities under the guidance of their director. Providing practical leadership experiences could allow students and their directors opportunities to continue growing in knowledge of leadership methods, traits, and training.

Servant Leadership. A servant leader is one who places the interests and needs of others above their own (Armstrong, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977; Herndon, 2007; Hine, 2014; Jagela, 2019; Jones, 2014; Spears, 2004; Valeri, 2007). Those identified as servant leaders have an impact on the culture around them (Herndon, 2007; Valeri, 2007). Hine (2014) implemented a longitudinal, qualitative case study investigating student leadership from data collected over a three-year period. Five leadership models were examined from this research. Characteristics of transactional leadership, transformational leadership, charismatic leadership, servant leadership, and distributed leadership were examined against the findings of student leadership traits through the longitudinal data. The data revealed that the student leadership programs were perceived to progress through the years of study. Student comments which resembled transactional leadership traits were initially found while transformational and servant leadership traits emerged in following years. In the final year of research, "the students implicitly describe aspects of the operational program as exemplifying servant leadership" (Hine, 2014, p. 104). Servant leadership should be noted as a valuable model when discussing leadership programs in both

transactional and transformational leadership styles (Hine, 2014; Jagela, 2019; Spears, 2004; Valeri, 2007).

Servant leaders may be recognized based on their ability to demonstrate the perceived traits of what is desired by members of the organization (Armstrong, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977; Herndon, 2007). Servant leaders can also work as transformation leaders to change a program. Jones' (2014) findings supported the servant leadership as the best method to develop positive traits and deter negative situations in the marching program through the transformational leadership style. "Because of the long-term bonds that are built among and between band members, servant-leadership is the optimum approach to building effective leaders within a band program" (p.121).

Servant leadership in the band program can be a valuable trait for a director using transactional or transformational leadership (Jones, 2014). If the student has influence over their peers and a transformational leadership method is being utilized with the students, the actions of the influential servant leader will be recognized as the way others should contribute (Jagela, 2019; Spears, 2004). If a transactional leadership method is being used by the director, students could contribute to the band by carrying out operational tasks that are necessary and benefit the program even if the actions are not intended to bring about a change in the program (Hine, 2014; Valeri, 2007).

Ownership. A sense of ownership combined with clear expectations is an important factor when involving students in leadership programs (Armstrong, 1996; Burns & Martin, 2010; Hine, 2014; Rudaitis, 1996; Warfield, 2013). Hine (2014) described ownership as engaging students as stakeholders in the program. On a larger scale, Burns and Martin (2010) tested the core leadership traits of optimism, respect, trust, and intention to carry out designated tasks. The

results of their study provided data suggesting a strong positive correlation of all these characteristics to engage all potential stakeholders in a school system. “By having students take ownership in the band, the director is allowing students to have a voice in decisions” (Warfield, 2013, p.10-11).

The transfer of responsibility engages the potential leader into action. Warfield (2013) provided quantitative data showing the importance of having ownership in the program as a foundational trait of developing student leaders. Warfield’s survey was created using *The Student Leadership Challenge: Five Practices for Exemplary Leaders* (Kouzes & Posner, 2008). Kouzes and Posner’s “assessment tool indicated five leadership practices to determine exceptional student leaders: *Challenge the Process, Inspire a Shared Vision, Enable Others to Act, Model the Way, and Encourage the Heart*” (p. 107). Data from this study showed *Model the Way* was observed as the most effective leadership method by students. *Enabling Others to Act* was the least practiced leadership strategy, yet the most desired trait. “If band directors were to focus on one leadership practice, *Enable Others to Act* would be most important” (p. 108).

Band students are invested in the music program through the inherent participation required to be in band (Warfield, 2013). However, the students seeking leadership roles should expect to devote more to the program. By devoting more time and effort to the band program, student leaders often experience a greater sense of ownership (Hine, 2014; Warfield, 2013). Student leaders can be utilized to influence their peers through their responsibilities as section leaders, drum majors, or through mentorship programs (Kouzes & Posner, 2008). Mentoring also engages all those involved in the process (Carraway, 1990). However, some students may find more investment through being on a leadership team for uniforms, sound equipment, field lining, inventory, cleaning, bus loading, developing social activities, or another necessary activity

needed in the marching program. In these transactional roles, directors may find student ownership being developed through engaging more students in the daily operations in the band program (Warfield, 2013). Offering diverse opportunities to develop ownership in the program can inspire and influence others and cultivate a stronger sense of community in the band program.

Communication. Developing and encouraging communication traits can be an essential part of achieving new levels of success in a music program (Armstrong, 1996; Brewer, 2009; Goodstein, 1987; Hine, 2014; Juchniewicz, 2010; Rudaitis, 1996; Warfield, 2013). Juchniewicz (2010) showed research data that teachers are often considered exemplary because of effective communication. Juchniewicz also emphasized nonverbal communication with the ability to engage in effective social interaction as a key to communication success. Clear expectations of leadership roles are a critical factor when providing instructional leadership programs to students (Rudaitis, 1996). Student leaders aware of their director's expectations are more familiar with how to communicate the desired leadership traits to their peers (Hine, 2014).

The perceived success of a leader can also be related to communication. Goodstein (1987) investigated the relationship between leadership behavior and recognized success using a quantitative standardized instrument created by Blanchard and Hersey (1976). The *Leadership Effectiveness and Adaptability Description Self-Test* was administered to participants to yield scores in leadership style, range, flexibility, and adaptability. The leadership style of participants described the connection of perceived success and communication. "... two-way communication by which the director attempted to 'sell' students on appropriate activities" (Goodstein, 1987, p. 22) resulted in a perceived level of involvement by the students and reflected success to the community.

Communication between the director and the student leader is a necessary leadership trait for the student to represent the director and the program appropriately (Brewer, 2009). Open communication was also a key factor for directors and students in Warfield's (2013) dissertation. "All of the band directors suggested that they keep a communication line open for student leaders to ask questions and discuss ideas for the season whether it be through email, weekly scheduled meetings, or meetings throughout the season" (Warfield, 2013, p. 107). Open communication not only allows directors to know what is happening, but it also allows the directors to continue to train and give students direction in their leadership roles.

Leadership Training

Many contributions to leadership training and instructional leadership practices are outside the music field (Barrett, 1950; Burns, 1976; Burns & Martin, 2010; Carraway, 1990; Carson & King, 2005; Ghasabeh, Soosay, & Reaiche, 2015; Hine, 2014; Leshnower, 2008; Mukerji & Shumsky, 1961; Onthank, 1936; Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014; Strodl, 1992). A student mentorship process can benefit leadership instruction by allowing peers to show appropriate models of leadership (Barrett, 1950; Carraway, 1990, Onthank, 1936). In addition to offering models and mentorship opportunities, applicable leadership activities can develop student leaders through experiences related to specific leadership roles (Leshnower, 2008).

Collaborative leadership training could be a more beneficial learning method to more recent generations of students (Phillips & Trainor, 2014; Woods, 2017). A flipped-classroom model of interactive and experimental learning may offer this type of group achievement (Phillips & Trainor, 2014). The student engagement within the interactive classroom described by Woods (2017) provided new ways to train music education students in instructional leadership for the next generation of music teachers. The focus of his literature review was to

provide ideas for a band leadership course so college music education students could utilize Kolb's learning theories and hands-on training to prepare graduates to begin their teaching careers with basic competencies (Woods, 2017). Since technology continues to pursue new avenues of learning, student leadership can benefit from utilizing technological tools to develop more types of instructional collaboration.

Workshops in leadership styles, methods, and traits often teach students what the music director expects of future student leaders (Warfield, 2013). "The same qualities of effective teachers are the qualities we look for in our student leaders" (Rush, 2006, p. 101). Knowledge of current learning trends and traits can be critical for a band director providing leadership training. A workshop designed to provide mock-experiences for students to evaluate and interact in different situations might work for one program while a lecture may work better for another band program (Warfield, 2013). In either situation, "band directors should employ some sort of structured line leader hierarchy that allows leaders to train and mentor up-and-coming leaders" (Jones, 2014, p. 122). Incorporating past and current student leaders in the workshop can provide younger students with a unique perspective of how to lead their peers in the current school culture climate.

Several scholars believe that all individuals are born with leadership potential (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Gialamas et al., 2020; Lambert, 1997; Markova & Powell, 1992). A leader who understands their strengths can benefit from training and developing a preferred leadership style to appropriately fit different situations (Janson, 2008; Harrison, 2016). A quantitative study by Sethuraman and Suresh (2014) examined various leadership theories to develop a conceptual model of the leadership style that may be necessary for various situations. Through their data, they offered evidence that leadership can be developed if the person understands their inborn

preferences. Their research provided evidence that a leader's readiness should also be considered in relationship to the leadership task. The natural leadership traits of the person should match the leadership style needed for the situation. "Knowing and understanding the different types of personality preferences of a leader can form the basis of a leadership style which will result in high probability of success" (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014, p. 171). Regardless of the position, leadership training can offer opportunities for student growth and knowledge on how to influence and engage peers in a leadership role.

Summary

The most common leadership styles found when researching leadership can be connected back to Burns (1978) descriptions of transactional and transformational leadership. Transactional leadership can maintain the order and procedures in the band, (Brewer, 2009; Davison, 2007). However, student leaders under this process should be prepared to navigate changes in their peer relationships as they tend to become advocates for the director (Brewer, 2009). Transformational leadership is a way for a director to facilitate leadership and, in turn, empower those involved in the decision-making process in the program. It is important to consider the effectiveness of whoever may be accepting a transformational leadership position because the key to its success is within the leader's influence over followers (Siangchokyoo, Klingler, & Campion, 2020; Williams, 2014). Directors should consider how they would incorporate leadership styles since it may determine what type of traits would be needed by students. Training may be necessary to develop or strengthen traits and skills.

Leadership traits should be considered to choose the most appropriate student leader. Certain leadership traits may be perceived as more or less valuable by directors depending on the director's past experiences and their goals for the program. The most valued leadership trait cited

was experience (Armstrong, 1996; Davies, 2003; DeRue & Wellman, 2009; Harrison, 2016; Hezlett, 2016; Janson, 2008; Preston, 2019; Rudaitis, 1996; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). Most of the other necessary leadership traits are often attributed to leaders based on experience. Servant leadership is one desirable leadership trait that can be perceived through experience (Armstrong, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977; Herndon, 2007; Hine, 2014; Jagela, 2019; Jones, 2014; Spears, 2004; Valeri, 2007). Servant leaders often model the perceived actions of what is desired, therefore, directors tend to model servant leadership actions for students to imitate for their peers and future students in the program. The transfer of responsibility engages ownership and affords the leader the opportunity to take action (Warfield, 2013; Kouzes & Posner, 2008). A sense of ownership merged with clear expectations and communication can support applicable instructional leadership programs (Armstrong, 1996; Brewer, 2009; Burns & Martin, 2010; Hine, 2014; Warfield, 2013).

Practical leadership training opportunities ensure potential student leaders understand the expectations and have experiences related to their desired roles (Jones, 2014; Rush, 2006; Warfield, 2013). Incorporating a variety of people in the training can provide students with unique perspectives of how to lead their peers in their band's culture. Training students affords them the opportunity to learn about the important aspects of the program and traits expected to attain available positions regardless of their strengths or deficiencies in leadership (Sethuraman & Suresh, 2014).

Leadership styles, expected traits, and training are important for both directors and student leaders to understand. While a vast amount of research has been dedicated to leadership methods, leadership traits, and the importance of leadership training, empirical data on the lived experiences of how band directors select and develop student leaders was not found in my

current literature review. This qualitative phenomenological study fills a void in research surrounding directors' experiences on how they choose student leaders. It also provides insight into selected band directors' past experiences as a student, application methods used in their programs, training opportunities they offer students, leadership characteristics they have witnessed in high school band students, and the culture participants are working to maintain or develop in their respective band programs.

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

Research Design

Phenomenological research was deemed the best methodology for gaining an in-depth understanding of each participant's lived experiences through interviews. Phenomenological studies identify a phenomenon as an object of lived experiences (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 1990). A philosophical expectation in phenomenology is the shared experiences among individuals (Patton, 2015). These experiences offer meaning to the participants (Creswell, 2013).

This does not necessarily mean that one must feel entertained by phenomenological text or that it has to be an "easy read." Sometimes reading a phenomenological study is a truly laborious effort. And yet, if we are willing to make the effort then we may be able to say that the text speaks to us not unlike the way in which a work of art may speak to us even when it requires attentive interpretive effort. (van Manen, 2007, p. 26)

With respect to Heidegger's (1962) philosophical approach, a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective was adopted for this study to collect, analyze, and interpret the meanings of participant's individual statements (van Manen, 1990). Phenomenological research is enriched by the uniqueness of the individual's experiences (Laverty, 2003). Therefore, it was vital that each participant described their own unique reflections on student leadership to better understand the phenomenon (Polkinghorne, 1989; van Manen, 1990). "Although the experiences of individuals carry a subjective meaning, phenomenological research seeks to find common

objective meanings among different subjective meanings and to provide a basic structure of the experience that may transfer to the experiences of others” (Kim, 2020, p. 47-8).

Semi-structured interviews with ten nationally recognized high school band directors were the primary method of answering the central question for this qualitative phenomenological study. The object, or phenomenon, being researched for this study is described in the central question:

How do nationally recognized high school band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs?

Participant Sampling and Setting

Upon Auburn University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, a purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were the methods used to invite participants for this research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). A purposeful sample of directors was initially selected based on a band’s nationally recognized success in the Bands of America (BOA) Grand National Championship Finals performance within the past five years of the onset of this study. A purposeful sample of participants ensures that each candidate should have similar lived experiences with the phenomena being studied (Cunningham, 2014). Snowball sampling occurred during informal conversations with some participating directors after their interviews. The directors who were part of the snowball sampling invitation were not only recommended based on their marching program’s national recognition in BOA performances, but they were also recommended by their peers based on their contributions to student leadership program development. All directors were invited with the expectation of having similar lived experiences with their student leaders through the national recognition of their marching programs.

All participants, regardless of how they were selected, were expected to meet nationally recognized status based on guidelines approved by the Auburn University IRB. Participants must meet at least one criteria of national recognition in BOA performances to be invited to participate in this study to participate in the research. Not only did each participant and their ensembles meet one of the required criteria, but each director and their marching bands attained national recognition in all the following criteria:

- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Grand National Championships within the past five years.
- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Super Regional Championships within the past five years.
- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Regional Championships within the past five years.

The participant selection process occurred in phases. Initially, a purposeful sample of directors meeting the criteria of being in a Grand Nationals Championship performance from the year prior to the onset of the research were sent an interest email (see Appendix A). The intention behind this was to ensure invited directors had experiences within a similar timeline and to allow time for a response since this research was in conjunction with the COVID-19 pandemic. The scope of the participant email invitation began with the BOA Grand National Championship Finalist performing ensembles within the past five years to interview participants with a similar shared experience (Patton, 2015). If there had not been sufficient participation from Grand National Championship Finalists, invitations would have then been sent to BOA Super Regional Finalist ensembles, and after that, BOA Regional Finalist ensembles. There were

enough participating directors from the BOA Grand National Championship Finalist list so the invitations did not proceed further.

Directors who responded with an interest in participating were sent a follow-up email containing the Informed Consent Form (see Appendix B), the Audio Release Form (see Appendix C), and a request for tentative meeting days/times. While several directors responded to participate from the initial emails, the expectancy to interview enough participants to meet phenomenological study expectations was not met in the initial response. Alase (2017) considered an appropriate sample of participants ranging from two to twenty-five, Polkinghorne (1989) suggested five to twenty-five candidates, and Creswell and Poth (2018) stated the heterogeneous group “may vary in size from 3 to 4 individuals to 10 to 15” (p. 76).

It is expected that qualitative research can arrive at a point of saturation regardless of the number of participants (Laverty, 2003). My initial IRB sought six to eight participants, but after discussions with my dissertation chair, reviewing changes in phenomenological participant expectancies, and reflections on developing data, an updated IRB was requested and approved to increase the participant involvement to a place where the data could arrive at a point of saturation (Laverty, 2003). My dissertation chair and I agreed that increasing the participant involvement from four to six up to a minimum of eight to twelve participants could allow the data to arrive at the point of saturation. To meet increased participant expectations, another set of emails was sent to directors based on their years of participation at BOA Grand National Finals. Through snowball sampling, the number of participants met the anticipated threshold and allowed data to arrive at a point of saturation. In all, ten nationally recognized band directors that met all the expected criteria accepted the invitation and participated in this research.

I used Alase's (2017) qualitative data collection procedures as a guideline to adhere to more recent qualitative study procedures:

- [The] research study should conduct semi-structured and unstructured interviews with as many as twenty five (25) participants, but as few as two (2).
- The interview duration should be approximately ninety minutes in duration per interview session. The study should keep the interview invitation to one interview per participant. However, only if there is a need for a follow-up interview shall the researcher contact the participants for additional interviews.
- The site (including the date, time and place) for the interviews should be left to the participants to decide. However, the researcher's natural first choice and preference should always be at the participants' place of comfort, for convenience purposes to the participants. But if need be, a safe and comfortable alternative place should be provided for the meetings by the researcher (i.e., at restaurants, coffee shops and/or any other convenient outlets).
- Finally, the research study should utilize different technological devices to collect necessary data (i.e., electronic voice recording devices and video recording devices, if need be). And naturally, the traditional 'note and pen' should be used for jotting down important observations as the interviews progress. (p. 15)

All four of Alase's (2017) above qualitative procedures were met to guide this research interview process. Ten participants were interviewed, guided by the Interview Protocol Form (See Appendix D). Each participant was interviewed individually with dialogues ranging from an hour to two hours each with the average interview taking ninety minutes. Due to the locations of the participants, in addition to the COVID-19 nation-wide quarantine still in place at the time of

the research, the most feasible and safest option was to conduct all interviews via Zoom or Google Meet. Each participant agreed that a virtual interview was the best choice under the circumstances with the dates and times determined based on the convenience of the participant. Finally, each interview was accomplished through video conference programs which allowed the ability to view facial expressions and non-verbal responses (van Manen, 1997). An H4 Zoom audio recorder was used to retrieve what was spoken by the participants for each individual transcription. Field notes were also taken during the interviews and later reviewed as the research progressed through future interviews. Reflective notes were made immediately after each interview to consider important topics addressed by the participant.

Participants

Participants in this study were all nationally recognized high school band directors who have experienced similar phenomenon of selecting student leaders at their respective schools. Each participant consented to have their name and their school's name as part of this research by agreeing to and signing the Informed Consent Form. Some school districts were contacted based on the band director's recommendation to ensure their respective districts were informed and that they would agree to have their school name involved in this research. Each of these districts were provided documentation ensuring protocols were followed according to the Auburn University IRB as well as their individual school district's guidelines. All schools requesting further inquiry into this study allowed their directors to participate with their school names after receiving the Auburn University IRB approval and its supporting documentation.

The order of participants' biographies will be listed alphabetically based on their last name with a brief description of relevant director information to this study and their program's national recognition in marching band. The following biographies were created based on

information provided from individual band websites, BOA webpages, or related searches on the internet. In addition, each director was contacted to ensure the accuracy of the following biographies and each of their program's achievements.

Brief director biographies were developed demonstrating each participant's past accolades in the field of music education. These biographies vary in size based on the information gleaned from the sources listed above. Several directors accomplished a great amount of success with schools prior to their current appointments. It should be noted that past experiences in other schools may have influenced the successes in their current positions. However, previous school districts and/or employers were not included in these profiles. The director biographies were focused on degrees earned at institutions of higher learning, previous educators and/or mentors, years of experience, and other recognitions in the field of music and/or teaching to indicate a participant's professional history.

Brief band profiles were developed to highlight the marching band's successes. It should also be noted that each of the band programs described have attained remarkable success in several other areas in the musical arts (i.e. wind ensembles, jazz ensembles, chamber groups, orchestra, individual performances, etc.). Each of the music programs involved in this research have had regular success at non-marching related regional events and, for several programs, national performance opportunities based on outstanding recording submissions and recommendations. While accomplishments in other areas in the band program support the marching program, other achievements outside of the marching band were not included in the following profiles because these accolades may not directly contribute to the organization's success in marching band.

The standard used to determine national recognition for this research focuses on participation in finals performances in BOA. This connects directors from different programs with the phenomenological expectation of similar lived experiences. Therefore, accomplishments of each marching band in BOA are the focal point for each band profile.

Dr. Tim Allshouse. Dr. Tim Allshouse is the Director of Bands at Blue Springs High School in Blue Springs, Missouri. Dr. Allshouse received his bachelor's degree from Indiana University in both instrumental and music education where he studied conducting with Ray Cramer and Stephen W. Pratt. He received his master's degree from the University of Missouri, and his doctorate from the University of Kansas (Fee, 2019).

The Blue Springs High School *Golden Regiment* Marching Band is the school's largest and most visible student group. The band has traveled throughout the United States, performing in a variety of national televised parades, field shows, and other major musical venues, in addition to receiving numerous awards and honors. The *Golden Regiment* has performed in The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade, The Tournament of Roses Parade, the Presidential Inaugural Parade, and the Waikiki Holiday Parade. *The Golden Regiment* is a recipient of the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Shield. Blue Springs has been a Super Regional Finalist over 30 times encompassing all four super regional locations and was a Grand National Finalist in 2015, 2017, 2018, and 2021 (Friends of the Golden Regiment, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Lafe Cook. Lafe Cook is the director of the Dobyys-Bennett Band in Kingsport, Tennessee. Mr. Cook has been a high school band director for 29 years and was in his 24th year as the director of the Dobyys-Bennett Band at the time of the interview. Mr. Cook is a graduate of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville where he earned his undergraduate and graduate degrees. Mr. Cook is a past president of the Tennessee Music Education Association, past state

chair for the Tennessee Music Education Association, past president of the Tennessee Bandmasters Association, and past president of East Tennessee Band and Orchestra Association. Cook served two terms on the Board of Directors of the National Band Association and currently serves on the Bands of America Advisory Board. Mr. Cook is a four-time recipient of the National Band Association's Citation of Excellence and was honored by the John Philip Sousa Foundation as a Sudler Flag of Honor Laureate. He was named Aide de Camp to the Governor of the State of Tennessee in 2005. Mr. Cook was elected into the prestigious American Bandmasters Association in 2008 and, at the time, was the organization's youngest member and one of only 35 high school band directors in the 380-member organization. Mr. Cook has been a clinician for state and regional honor bands as well as university honor ensembles in 18 states and has presented at the Midwest Clinic and multiple Tennessee Music Educators Association Conventions (Dobyns-Bennet High School Bands, 2022).

The Dobyns-Bennett Marching Band program is comprised of a football marching band and a competitive marching band. Everyone in the band program participates in the football marching band which performs a half-time show designed to entertain football fans at both home and away games. The football marching band also participates in local and national parades. The competitive marching band members are selected based on musical and marching abilities. Their show is performed in local, regional, and national competitive venues. Achievements of the Dobyns-Bennett band program are extensive and include awards and participation in the following: John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Shield in 2014, Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in 1984, 1990, 1994, 2004, and 2011, Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade in 2002, 2007, 2014, and 2020, Presidential Inaugural Parade in 2013, The Lord Mayor of London's Millennium Parade in 2000, Contest of Champions Tennessee Governor's Cup in 2006, 2007,

and 2014, BOA Regional Champions in 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, BOA Grand National Finalist in 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2021, and the BOA Class AAA National Champions in 2018 and 2021 (Dobyns-Bennet High School Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Darrin Davis. Darrin Davis, a graduate of Broken Arrow High School, serves as the Director of Bands for the Broken Arrow school district and has taught band in the Broken Arrow Public Schools in Oklahoma since 1993. Mr. Davis earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree at Missouri Western State University and a Master of Music Education degree with wind conducting emphasis from the University of Tulsa. The Oklahoma Bandmasters Association honored Davis as their 2012 Band Director of the Year. Mr. Davis is a national clinician and adjudicator for such organizations as Drum Corps International, Bands of America, the Fiesta Bowl National Band Championship, and numerous state band associations. Davis has served on the executive board for the Oklahoma Northeast Band Director's Association and is an active member in Northeast, Oklahoma Band Directors Association, Oklahoma Music Educators Association, Oklahoma Bandmasters Association, and Music for All organizations (Broken Arrow Bands, 2022).

Broken Arrow's marching band, *The Pride of Broken Arrow*, has an extensive pedigree of state and national awards including 27 Oklahoma State Marching Band Championships. The Broken Arrow marching band has appeared in regional and national parades and was a recipient of the John Phillip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Shield in 1998 and 2009. As a representative of the State of Oklahoma, they performed in Presidential Inaugural Parades for President William Jefferson Clinton in 1993 and President George Walker Bush in 2005. The band is also a consistent finalist and Grand Champion at numerous Bands of America Regional Championships. *The Pride of Broken Arrow* is honored to have been named the Bands of

America Fan Favorite at two Grand National Championships and the Esprit de Corps recipient in 1998 and 2010. *The Pride of Broken Arrow* is a 19-time BOA Regional Champion and they have won the BOA St. Louis Super Regional event at nine of the last ten meetings. They are a 15-time BOA Grand National Finalist and a 4-time BOA Grand National Champion in 2006, 2011, 2015, and 2021 (Broken Arrow Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Scott Hillock. Scott Hillock began his tenure in 2006 as the Head Band Director at Jenks High School in Jenks, Oklahoma. Current duties include overseeing the entire band program, directing the Wind Symphony and the *Trojan Pride* Marching Band, as well as assisting with the middle school bands. Mr. Hillock holds a Bachelor of Music Education Degree from Southwestern Oklahoma State University and a Master of Music Education from Southern Methodist University where he was selected as the Outstanding Graduate Student for the Meadows School of the Arts. Before his employment at Jenks, Mr. Hillock served as Head Director for fourteen years in another school district. In both locations, Hillock's bands consistently earned the highest marks in both concert and marching bands. In 1996, Mr. Hillock was chosen as the Southwestern Oklahoma Band Directors Association Director of the Year. In 1997, he was chosen the American School Band Directors Association's Young Band Director of the Year for the State of Oklahoma, and in 1999, he received the Citation of Excellence from the National Band Directors Association. In 2002, Mr. Hillock was selected as Runner-Up for the Veterans of Foreign War's Oklahoma Teacher of the Year, and in 2006, the Oklahoma Bandmasters Association Director of the Year. More recently, Mr. Hillock was named as an Exemplary Teacher by the Oklahoma Music Educators Association in 2015 and named a Jenks Public Schools Vision of Excellence Recipient in 2016. Mr. Hillock stays active as a clinician,

conductor, and adjudicator throughout the state. He is currently serving as Executive Secretary for the North Central Directors Association (Jenks Band, 2022).

The Jenks High School *Trojan Pride* Marching Band is a regular finalist in the Oklahoma Bandmasters Association State Marching Championships and consistently earn superior ratings at the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association Regional Marching Contests. Since Mr. Hillock began working at Jenks, the Jenks Marching Band has become a regular finalist at BOA Regional events and has performed as a Super Regional Finalist in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019. The band performed in the Grand National Championship Finals in 2018 (Jenks Band, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Bobby Lambert. Bobby Lambert is Director of Bands at Wando High School in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina. Originally from Cherokee, North Carolina, Mr. Lambert attended Western Carolina University to obtain his Bachelor of Music Education and then the University of Massachusetts to receive a graduate assistantship and a Master of Music Degree in saxophone performance. Since 1997, Mr. Lambert has directed student leadership camps around the country. In his previous role as assistant band director, Mr. Lambert designed the curriculum and coordinated its implementation to over 1200 students with over 50 faculty members. Drawn from the world of business, finance, and psychology, the Leadership Program curriculum gives every student practical experience with communication skills, group dynamics, and ethical leadership. In 2013, Mr. Lambert headed the inaugural BOA Drum Major Institute at Ball State University as part of the BOA Summer Symposium. In addition to serving as consultant with several programs across the country, Mr. Lambert has worked with the All-American Marching Band sponsored by the U.S. Army and the BOA Tournament of Roses Marching Band. He has also

served as guest conductor and leadership consultant for schools throughout the United States (Wando Bands, 2022).

The Wando High School Marching Band has been named the South Carolina State 5A Champions every year that they have competed for a total of 12 State Championships, the most for any 5A South Carolina high school band. With regular performances at BOA events, they have earned BOA Regional 1st place status and were awarded Class Champions at separate events three times in 2018 and 2021. They have been BOA Super Regional Finalists several times and Super Regional Class Champions six times in 2009, 2010, 2012, 2016, 2017, and 2021. The Wando Marching Band has performed as a BOA Grand National Finalist four times in 2011, 2014, 2016, and 2019 (Wando Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Jarrett Lipman. Jarrett Lipman is the Director of Bands at Claudia Taylor Johnson *Lady Bird* High School in San Antonio, Texas, where he has taught since the school opened in 2008. He graduated from the Mason Gross School of the Arts at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, New Jersey in 2007 with a dual bachelor's degree in Music Education and Euphonium Performance. In 2014, Mr. Lipman was selected as the Phi Beta Mu International Bandmasters Fraternity Texas Chapter's Outstanding Young Bandmaster of the year. In 2016, Lipman was named a Howard E. Butt Excellence in Education Finalist in the Rising Young Star Category. In 2020, he was recognized by Yamaha's 40 under 40, program designed to celebrate the impact of younger music educators on the profession. And in 2022, Mr. Lipman received the Music Educator of Excellence Award from the Country Music Association Foundation. He currently serves as the Brass Caption Manager at the Boston Crusaders and has been an instructor with Boston Crusaders since 2017. From 2010 to 2016, Mr. Lipman taught on the brass staff in the Cadets Drum Corps (Claudia Taylor Johnson Band, 2022).

The Claudia Taylor Johnson *Lady Bird* Marching Band has become a consistent finalist, caption winner, and championship contender in national, state, and regional competitions. They were named the 2020 University Interscholastic League (UIL) Class 6A State Marching Champion, the 2014 Bronze Medalist, and has been a consistent state finalist since 2012. The band earned the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Shield for excellence in 2014 and the Esprit de Corps Award in 2019; one of only three Texas bands in the past 30 years to receive Esprit de Corps award. In the five-year span comprised of the 2014 through 2018 marching seasons, Claudia Taylor Johnson won eight championships at different BOA events, ranking second in the nation for most BOA championships won during this time. They are a two-time BOA Super Regional Champion in 2014 and 2017, and a four-time Grand National Finalist in 2011, 2016, 2019, and 2021 (Claudia Taylor Johnson Band, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

David Mobley. David Mobley is the Head Band Director in the Round Rock High School Independent School District in Round Rock, Texas. An Austin native, David Mobley is a graduate of Leander High School where he was a student of Dennis Hopkins and studied trombone with Russell Brown. While attending the University of Texas, he was a member of the Longhorn Band, Symphony Orchestra, Wind Ensemble and the Trombone Choir. He was a student of Donald Knaub. He was a member of the Phantom Regiment Drum and Bugle Corps from Rockford, Illinois and was later a staff member of the same corps. After graduating from the University of Texas he taught in Houston, Texas and Indianapolis, Indiana, where he was a successful assistant band director and winter guard director (Round Rock Dragon Band, 2022).

The Round Rock *Dragon* Marching Band has performed in several local and national competitions in addition to parades around the country. The band is the 2014 John Philip Sousa Foundation Sudler Shield recipient. As a consistent BOA Regional Finalist, they have also

placed in the BOA Super Regional Finals in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2019. They performed in four BOA Grand Nationals marching competitions in 2013, 2015, 2017, and 2019 (Round Rock Dragon Band, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Charles Pisarra. Charles Pisarra is the Director of Bands and Associate Director of Fine Arts at Union High School in the Union Public Schools in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Mr. Pisarra holds a Bachelor of Music Education degree with distinction and a Master of Music Education degree, both from the University of Oklahoma. Appointed Director of Bands and Associate Director of Fine Arts in 2014, Mr. Pisarra is originally from Tulsa and has been a part of the Union Public Schools community for over thirty years. He has been part of the Union Public Schools for thirteen years as a student, three years as consultant/designer, three years through a part-time role, and seventeen years in a full-time role. From 2006-2014 he served as Assistant Director and Percussion Specialist. Among his current duties at Union are leading the Union High School Wind Ensemble, overseeing a full-time faculty of eight assistants and several part-time staff members, and facilitating a nationwide team of clinicians and designers for the pageantry arts programs at Union Public Schools. Administratively, Mr. Pisarra leads fine arts students involved in the district's Service Learning program, handles supervisory duties as a Teaching and Learning Department evaluator, and serves on the district's co-curricular committee. As Associate Fine Arts Department Director, he interacts daily with a wide array of district departments to strategically equip teachers to engage students in instrumental music and the arts. Mr. Pisarra was a performing member of the Blue Devils Drum and Bugle Corps and Colts Drum and Bugle Corps. He also served in a teaching role for the Colts Drum and Bugle Corps following his performing career (Union Bands, 2022).

The *Renegade Regiment* Union High School Marching Band has a history of superior ratings and championship acclaim. The *Renegade Regiment* has twice performed in The Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade (2013 and 2021) and in the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Parade (2002), as well as other nationally-televised holiday parades. Regularly medaling in the Oklahoma Bandmasters Association Championships, they have also maintained superior ratings when participating in the Oklahoma Secondary Schools Activities Association Regional Marching Contests. They have been frequent BOA Regional Finalists in 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, and 2005. The *Renegade Regiment* has also performed in BOA Super Regional Finals in 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021, and 2022. Additionally, the Union High School Marching Band has performed five times as a BOA Grand Nationals semifinalist in 1994, 2002, 2008, 2012, and 2016, and as a finalist in twelve BOA Grand National Championships in 1981, 1986, 1989, 1990, 1995, 1998, 2000, 2010, 2011, 2014, 2017, and 2019 (Union Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Edward F. Protzman. Edward F. Protzman is the Director of Bands at Mason City Schools in Mason, Ohio. He joined the Mason Band music staff as Director of Bands in 2017. In this position, he coordinates the district's band program and directs multiple concert bands including the Mason High School Wind Symphony. Mr. Protzman's education includes a Bachelor of Music in Music Education from Moravian College in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, a Master of Music in Wind Conducting Degree from West Chester University, West Chester, Pennsylvania, and an Artist's Diploma in Wind Conducting from the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada. Bands and ensembles under his direction have been selected to perform and present clinics at state music educator conferences in Ohio, Kansas, and Pennsylvania. In 2014, he was selected as a quarter-finalist for the prestigious Grammy Foundation Music Teacher

Award, and in 2016 he was voted Teacher of the Year at a previous employment. As a clinician and adjudicator, Mr. Protzman has worked with groups across the United States and Canada, and has been involved in several commissioning projects and consortiums including works by John Mackey, James Mobberley, Cait Nishimura, and Alex Thode (Mason Bands, 2022).

The William Mason Marching Band has been named the Mid-States Band Association Open Class Champion numerous times, as well being BOA Regional Champions in 2010, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019. They have been finalists in BOA Super Regional events and have been a finalist in BOA Grand National Championships nine times in 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, 2019, and 2021. The William Mason band has been awarded the Sudler Flag of Honor and the Sudler Shield, one of only a few programs nationally to receive both honors from the John Philip Sousa Foundation (Mason Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Bryen Warfield. Bryen Warfield is the Director of Bands and Orchestra at Homestead High School in Fort Wayne, Indiana. All ensembles under Mr. Warfield's direction have received honors and distinctions from contests at national, state, and local events. He received his Bachelor of Music in Tuba Performance from the University of Louisville and received his Master of Music in Wind Conducting from the Ohio State University. He served as a graduate conducting associate with the band department, taught courses in conducting, and was a Graduate Assistant Director with the Ohio State University Marching Band. Mr. Warfield was a performing member of the Bluecoats Drum and Bugle Corps for three seasons and later served as a brass educator for the Columbus Saints, Santa Clara Vanguard, and the Bluecoats Drum and Bugle Corps (Homestead Bands, 2022).

The Homestead *Spartan Alliance* Marching Band has a history of success locally and nationally. The band was the recipient of the John Philip Sousa Foundation's Sudler Shield in

2011. They regularly perform in the Indiana State School Music Association (ISSMA) Marching Band Finals and were the ISSMA State Champions in 2011 and 2017. The *Spartan Alliance* was named Grand Champions in the BOA Northwest Ohio Regional event in 2017 and 2019. They have performed in the BOA Super Regional Finals in 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2021. Homestead has performed in the BOA Grand National Finals in 1994, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2018, and 2019 (Homestead Bands, 2022; Music for All, 2022).

Data Collection

In phenomenological research, data are primarily collected through interviews with individuals who have engaged in similar experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Laverly, 2003). A semi-structured interview with ten nationally recognized high school band directors was the primary method of answering the central research question for this qualitative phenomenological study. The object, or phenomenon, being researched is described in the central question:

How do nationally recognized high school band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs?

The central question is focused on seeking the *essence* expected of qualitative phenomenological studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Sub-questions were prepared to explore common themes that support the central question. Sub-questions provide *what* was experienced by participants and *how* the phenomenon was perceived (Moustakas, 1994). The sub-questions from the Interview Protocol Form for this phenomenological research study were:

1. What is your experience (if any) as a student leader prior to becoming a band director?
2. What qualifications and/or abilities does a student need to attain to become a student leader in this high school band program?

3. What leadership training methods have been used for your high school band student training?
4. What are the most important characteristics or traits that you have observed in effective high school band student leaders?
5. How have past experiences selecting student leaders influenced current procedures on selecting student leaders?

The sub-questions were developed to be general, open-ended questions which are common to phenomenological studies (Creswell, 2016; Koch, 1996). Continuing to engage the participants in each sub-question also provided more saturation in the data (Laverty, 2003).

While each sub-question was asked verbatim, follow-up dialogue was often led by the participant with occasional questions from me to gain more knowledge on the participant's responses. "The specific question asked is generally very open in nature, with follow-up discussion being led not so much by the researcher, but by the participant" (Laverty, 2003, p. 29). Bogdan and Bilken (2003) corroborated this interviewing method of probing into participants' responses with follow-up questions. Follow-up conversations in each interview allowed me opportunities to acquire more experiences from each participant (Creswell, 2016).

Different technological devices and programs were used in the data collection process. Once both the signed Informed Consent Form and Audio Release Form were attained, interviews were scheduled and held over the virtual platforms of Zoom or Google Meet with respect to each participant's preference. Recordings of each interview were made on a Zoom H4 recording device with a backup recording on my personal computer in case the Zoom H4 recording did not record properly. All recordings and documentation have been stored on my personal computer, which is password protected for security, and on an external hard drive that is in my personal

lockbox. Saving interviews in these locations ensures the safety of the dialogue in addition to conserving the interview data for the ability to review comments for accuracy throughout the research process. Transcriptions of each interview were saved in the same manner and for the same rationale.

Two outside software programs, Trint.com and Atlas.ti, were used to assist in the transcription and coding process. Both programs required subscriptions with password protection and were selected based on peer and faculty recommendations with a focus on ensuring the protection of data. The first program used was Trint.com, a web-based transcription application. While Trint.com offers audio transcription services, an important aspect of phenomenological inductive research is to arrive at themes through immersion of the audio recording as it is transcribed to text (Maher, Hadfield, & Hutchins, 2018; Suddaby, 2006). Trint.com was used primarily for the ability to slow down the interview conversations. Slowing down the dialogue offered the ability to type at the same speed as the conversations. After all interviews were transcribed, I checked transcription of our dialogue at the original speed to ensure each document's accuracy. During some interviews, participants named people and schools that had not provided consent/assent. In accordance with IRB policy, some sections of these transcripts were redacted to secure confidentiality of students or other individuals who have not provided consent/assent. The second program used was Atlas.ti, a qualitative coding program. I used this program to assist with in vivo coding, line-by-line coding, and code-recoding the transcribed interviews. This process is described in more detail through the Data Analysis section.

Data Analysis

A qualitative inductive research methodology was used for analyzing the interview data since this work was not searching to prove or disprove a hypothesis (Alase, 2017). "What makes

a study qualitative is that it usually relies on inductive reasoning processes to interpret and structure the meanings that can be derived from data” (Thorne, 2000, p. 68). While deductive research begins with hypothesis testing and seeks to prove or disprove the hypothesis, inductive research uses the data to develop the findings (Holloway, 1997). The inductive approach allowed the themes to be derived from the analyzed text (Thomas, 2006).

Since interviews are the primary source of data in phenomenological research, it was important that interviews were transcribed by the researcher and coded by using the resources common to phenomenological studies (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Manning, 2017; Thomas & Harden, 2008). One common phenomenological resource for data collection is the researcher’s use of field notes (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Field notes were taken during each interview and memos were made after each transcription and throughout the research process to consider other noteworthy statements and potential themes (Cutcliffe, 2003).

In vivo coding was initially used with Atlas.ti based on the participants’ own words. “In vivo coding is championed by many for its usefulness in highlighting the voices of participants and for its reliance on the participants themselves for giving meaning to the data” (Manning, 2017, p. 1). Line-by-line coding was then used for each statement in all ten transcriptions through the Atlas.ti program (Thomas & Harden, 2008). After all interviews were line-by-line coded, emerging themes were found that were not coded in the first interviews (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Therefore, the first coded interviews were line-by-line coded again with Atlas.ti to include emerging themes from the later coded transcriptions through the qualitative method of code-recoding (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). The code-recode strategy “helps the researcher understand deeply the patterns of the data; and [it] also improves the knowing of the participant’s narrations” (Anney, 2014, p. 14). The emerging themes from this work report the “common

experiences of the participants” and provide the *essence* expected from phenomenological research (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

Bracketing

Exposing personal experiences through bracketing and setting aside judgements or bias (epoche) is an important aspect of phenomenological research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Creswell & Poth, 2018; Husserl, 1999). Bracketing is also used to demonstrate how researchers “set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under investigation” (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 78). By bracketing, the researcher can provide in-depth, rich descriptions of themes common to all participants without an intentional influence in data (Creswell, 2013). Bogdan and Biklen (2003) found that qualitative researchers are continuously working to bracket themselves to remove bias from the data. However, their writing also asserted that qualitative researchers spend an extensive amount of time through empirical study reviewing various data collected. Emerging data from a well-implemented qualitative work provides “a much more detailed rendering of events than even the most creatively prejudiced mind might have imagined prior to the study” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 33).

I adopted the Heidegger philosophy of describing the lived experiences of the participants through the interpretive process where the researcher cannot be and is not completely removed from the work (Gearing, 2004; Heidegger, 1962; Laverly, 2003). Therefore, the methods of bracketing through hermeneutic phenomenology include each participant’s description as well as my interpretation of their descriptions as a knowledgeable source (Gadamar, 1960). “Each participant in the hermeneutical conversation will bring a history of experiences, presuppositions, pre-judgements, fore-meanings, and explicit and implicit expectations; they

form a background of ‘prejudice’ that frames their horizon of understanding” (Francourt, Foreman-Peck, & Oancea, 2022, p. 4). However, the process of implementing hermeneutical phenomenology should be descriptive enough to ensure the data is presented accurately through the subjective experiences of the participants (Kafle, 2011). By using the hermeneutic circle, “the researcher is called, on an ongoing basis, to give considerable thought to their own experience and to explicitly claim the ways in which their position or experience relates to the issues being researched” (Laverty, 2003, p. 28).

Several procedures were used to ensure the voices of the participants were interpreted properly (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Memoing prior to and during data collection and analysis were regularly used to reflect on my work within the data (Cutcliffe, 2003). Rolls and Relf (2006) recommended recording potential bias prior to the onset of the study. Therefore, I recorded notes of potential bias before the research began. These include my previous involvements in student leadership as a student (viewing student leadership from the student perspective), being a band director that selected student leaders (viewing student leadership selection from the director’s perspective), as well as assisting peer directors with the selection of student leaders for their band programs (viewing student leadership selection from the adjudicator/clinician perspective). These biases were suspended to allow the participants words and descriptions of experiences in the transcriptions to develop themes in the data.

The themes and statements were corroborated through three peer auditors (Rolls & Relf, 2006) and by all ten participants through member checks (Koch, 1995). Peer auditors were informed of my bias and were charged with ensuring the codes and themes were accurate and true to the transcriptions of the interviews. Member checks allowed each participant to confirm accuracy of statements and allowed participants the opportunity to review how their statements

were being represented within themes. Coded themes and statements were determined to represent the participants' perspectives and their experiences with student leadership.

Trustworthiness

Academic rigor in qualitative research should be demonstrated, but variations and clarifications are necessary when compared to quantitative descriptions (Ilgan, 2022; Maher, Hadfield, Hutchins, & de Eyto, 2018; Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). “The requirements of reliability, replication, and validity generally associated with demonstrating rigor in quantitative studies are less applicable to qualitative studies” (Maher, Hadfield, Hutchins, & de Eyto, 2018, p. 3). Therefore, trustworthiness is a more appropriate word to address academic rigor in qualitative studies (Ilgan, 2022; Maher, Hadfield, Hutchins, & de Eyto, 2018). Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggested qualitative studies should meet four criteria to accomplish trustworthiness in qualitative research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. This coincides with Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle’s (2001) writings about connecting quantitative validity with qualitative terminology. Their four primary standards for validity in qualitative research were credibility, authenticity, criticality, and integrity (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Since the meaning and descriptions behind both writing’s criteria are similar and support academic rigor, I combined the expectations of both subjects to attain trustworthiness through 1) Credibility, 2) Transferability and Authenticity, 3) Dependability and Criticality, and 4) Confirmability and Integrity.

Credibility. “Credibility ensures the study measures what is intended and is a true reflection of the social reality of the participants” (Maher, Hadfield, Hutchins, & de Eyto, 2018, p. 3). The Interview Protocol and interviewing techniques were developed to ensure the study is credible. Peer reviewers and faculty members assisted in accurately articulating the research

question, sub-questions, and how to interview with engaging follow-up questions. Four pilot interviews were completed to ensure the questions that were developed were credible for phenomenological research. These pilot interviews increased my awareness and the reflective processes needed in the phenomenological study. Furthermore, pilot interviews allowed improvements in the Interview Protocol questions to occur with peer support in addition to vital faculty revisions before this research was initiated. After the interviews and transcriptions took place, peer reviewers participated to ensure each participant's dialogue accurately supported the coded themes.

Focused descriptions of each participant's past accolades in the field of music and teaching offer evidence to support their expertise for this study. Each band program's past and current success in the marching arts provide further credibility of the participants and their marching programs. Since the BOA Grand National Championship is the most prominent national marching arts event for high school marching bands, each band and their respective director's accolades were listed to indicate their credibility as nationally recognized artists. Not only have these directors led their bands through the criteria of a BOA Grand National Championship, but each director has led their band through all other criteria for participating in this research which lends even more credibility to their collective responses.

Transferability and Authenticity. Transferability is achieved through considering the different directors' perspectives and their honest dialogue describing their unique experiences in this area of research. "Authenticity is closely linked to credibility in validity and involves the portrayal of research that reflects the meaning and experience that are lived and perceived by the participants" (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001, p. 530). Bracketing and peer auditing were necessary to allow the participants' voices to be heard, supporting both transferability and

authenticity (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). Concentrated descriptive data of the participant's dialogue as well as the setting will allow other researchers the ability to replicate the study in similar manners (Anney, 2014).

Dependability and Criticality. Evidence of critical judgment needs to be exhibited through a systematic research design in phenomenological research (Hammersly, 1992; Hinds, Scandrett-Hibden, & McAulay, 1990; Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Dependability and criticality in this research were ensured through a variety of audits (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 2013). Therefore, an audit trail was a necessary part of this qualitative methodology (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The audit trail for this phenomenological research included field notes, memoing, audio recordings, transcribed interviews, code-recoding methods, peer auditors, and member checks. Rodgers and Cowles (1993) provided a summary of the importance of field notes in qualitative work. "Notes serve as contextual data during the analysis phase of the research and add significantly to the thick description necessary in the reporting of qualitative research" (Rodgers & Cowles, 1993, p. 220). Field notes were used in each interview and memoing occurred in reflection of interviews. "Memoing serves to assist the researcher in making conceptual leaps from raw data to those abstractions that explain research phenomena in the context in which it is examined" (Birks, Chapman, & Francis, 2008, p. 68). Recordings of the interviews and transcriptions of each recording support the accuracy of the dialogues. The audit trail, memoing, and field notes developed the findings through the inductive process of hermeneutic phenomenology.

Dependability and criticality in the coding process was attained through in vivo coding, line-by-line coding, reflection on and immersion in multiple hearings of the interviews, reviewing field notes from the initial interviews, continual memoing, as well as peer auditors and

member checks. Peer auditors were used to analyze coded themes from the transcribed interviews (Creswell, 2013). Concentrated dialogues were held with peer auditors to ensure findings and themes presented were honest and trustworthy. Member checking ensured the accuracy of the dialogue and findings by sharing transcriptions and emerging themes (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1988). Participants were supplied with a transcription of their individual interview to confirm accuracy and review aspects of confidentiality. Each participant was also invited to review emerging themes and the analyzed data.

Confirmability and Integrity. Confirmability is “concerned with establishing that data and interpretation of the findings are not figments of the inquirer’s imagination, but are clearly derived from the data” (Tobin & Begley, 2004, p. 392). While integrity in the research corresponds to the data findings in confirmability, integrity is sought throughout the entire process to ensure confirmability is achieved in the data analysis (Whittemore, Chase, & Mandle, 2001). Confirmability and integrity were achieved through bracketing, my audit trail, peer reviews, and member checks.

Summary

Phenomenological research was selected as the best methodology for gaining an in-depth understanding of each participant’s lived experiences through interviews. Purposeful sampling and snowball sampling were used to invite participants for this research (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Semi-structured interviews with ten nationally recognized high school band directors were the primary method of answering the central research question for this qualitative phenomenological study. Participants in this research are all nationally recognized high school band directors who have experienced the similar phenomenon of how they have selected student leaders at their respective schools. Not only did each participant and their ensembles meet one of the criteria

expected, but each director and their respective marching band has attained national recognition in all the required criteria to contribute to this research.

A qualitative inductive research methodology was used for analyzing the interview data since this work was not searching to prove or disprove a hypothesis (Alase, 2017). In vivo coding was initially used (Manning, 2017) followed by line-by-line coding (Thomas & Harden, 2008). Code-recoding was then used to review previous themes and develop emerging themes (Anney, 2014; Chilisa & Preece, 2005). The emerging themes from this study report the “common experiences of the participants” and provide the *essence* expected from phenomenological research (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

I adopted the Heidegger philosophy of describing the lived experiences of the participants through the interpretive process where the researcher cannot be and is not completely removed from the research (Gearing, 2004; Heidegger, 1962). Through hermeneutic phenomenology, I included each participant’s description as well as my interpretation of their descriptions as a knowledgeable source (Gadamar, 1960). Themes and statements were corroborated by peer auditor reviews (Rolls & Relf, 2006) and by the participants through member checks (Koch, 1995). Memoing prior to and during data collection and analysis were regularly used to reflect on my thoughts (Cutcliffe, 2003).

Trustworthiness was attained through meeting the qualitative research criteria of Guba and Lincoln (1989) of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. In addition, I combined similar qualitative standards of Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle’s (2001) to include authenticity, criticality, and integrity with consideration to the similar meanings of Guba and Lincoln’s (1989) writing. Through combining these criteria, trustworthiness was attained through

1) Credibility, 2) Transferability and Authenticity, 3) Dependability and Criticality, and 4) Confirmability and Integrity.

Chapter 4: Findings

Overview

Ten nationally recognized band directors described experiences with their individual students' leadership qualifications and abilities, the methods used to increase desired leadership abilities in their band students, and the character traits they have observed in student leaders in this qualitative phenomenological study. Semi-structured interviews were recorded for transcribing the conversations accurately. In vivo coding, line-by-line coding, and code-recoding developed the meaning units and themes while peer auditors and member checks ensured the trustworthiness of the inductive process and findings (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Groenwald, 2004; Ilgan, 2022; Maher, Hadfield, Hutchins, & de Eyto, 2018; Peoples, 2021; Thomas, 2006; Thorne, 2000).

I initially used in vivo coding and line-by-line coding to develop meaning units and themes. A themes checklist was created (Peoples, 2021) to indicate meaning units and potential themes based on the initial transcription and reviewing memos. Upon code-recoding, new meaning units emerged while some initial meaning units developed into larger themes. Peer auditors were contacted to determine the trustworthiness of the initial codes and themes. As interviews were continually reviewed through code-recoding, broader themes were developed to encompass several meaning units. The themes checklist was adjusted to reflect major themes presented in the findings. Member checks confirmed the honest transcriptions of each participant's quotes within each meaning unit and theme.

Four themes presented in this study are 1) *Past Experiences*, 2) *Student Leadership Application Methods*, 3) *Student Leadership Training*, and 4) *Traits of Student Leaders*. Each participant was active as a leader when they were in school. The meaning units of Preparation for Teaching and New Directions were outlined through the first theme, *Past Experiences*. In the next theme, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, all participants listed various procedures and expectations students have attained to be considered for leadership roles in their respective band programs. These meaning units were outlined as Leadership tiers, Process Criteria, Pre-Existing Knowledge, and Process Evolution. Through the theme of Student Leadership Training, participants' experiences were listed through Catered Opportunities, Continued Training, and Intrinsic Training. Finally, all participants described common leadership traits and explained qualities they considered most beneficial to their program. The final theme, *Traits of Student Leaders*, was delineated into meaning units of Experience, Social Interactions, Service, Ownership, Influence, Performance Ability, and Moral Character.

Culture within each band program was an overarching idea encompassing all four themes. The development, evolution, or preservation of a program culture was noticed through the experiences participants brought from their previous involvement as a student leader, the focused methods in which leadership application and leadership training programs were implemented, and the student leadership abilities to continue or alter the course of the current culture in the band program. Participants' experiences corroborated the definition of culture as "the set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes an institution of organization" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.). Culture was further defined through the lens of transmitting knowledge, expected behaviors, and suitable actions influencing future students.

Culture is delineated into a separate section as it encompasses all four major themes and leads to the essence of this research.

Past Experiences

All participants described their involvement in student leadership programs in their high school band programs, higher education institutions, other student leadership programs in their schools, and/or activities in DCI (Drum Corps International). Since each participant were active in a high school band program as well as the minimum of one collegiate music degree, each participant was part of or experienced student leadership in some manner for at least seven years of their development as a youth. A diverse background in teaching band programs since graduating college and a marked amount of time from each participant has been devoted to observing student leadership programs in several different capacities. The previous experiences participants had as a youth has bearing on each of their current student leadership programs.

The director as a student leader is an important idea informing each participant's history with the phenomenon and how those roles as youth may or may not be utilized in their current bands. Each participant's involvement as a student leader was formative, whether positive or negative. Leadership responsibilities and experiences for each participant varied. These engagements were often described with connections to how appointments were made by their previous teachers. Past experiences also influenced their leadership styles and often contributed to their criteria and expectations for student leadership selection.

Meaning units of Preparation for Teaching and New Directions emerged from descriptions of each participant's history. Each leadership role as a student allowed participants to better understand some of their current students' situations and determine how their decisions could influence their students' involvement in existing student leadership activities. While the

meaning units overlap at times, they have been separated based on participants' descriptions of how their past experiences were incorporated into their band programs to either create a new leadership environment for the students or if the participants' prior involvement in student leadership offered an awareness on how to better prepare them to be a teacher.

Preparation for Teaching. Several participants connected their past experiences as student leaders as catalysts to help current students. The history of having served in a leadership role as a student shaped their perspective of what may be effective. It also provided first-hand experiences on ways to incorporate the best teaching strategies with their current students. Previous opportunities also helped participants navigate through situations that could be difficult without prior experiences.

In a broad perspective, Allshouse considered how all his lived experiences have helped him understand his student leadership program as well as determine the best students for those roles. He concluded while all experiences can provide different insights, teachers involved in student leadership programs in their youth will be influenced by those situations.

I think we're all a combination of our life experiences. [By having my own children in band], I can see band through their eyes a little bit. Just having your own kids helps shape a lot of it, too. I also did some things with church youth group some years back.

Watching drum corps [DCI] helps shape things in a different way. Obviously, being a student leader yourself when you're in high school and then when you see the other side as an instructor, I think it helps to direct you on what you might want to do with your own program. (Allshouse, 2021)

Hillock reflected on more specific benefits to his experiences as a student leader and how those opportunities helped him as he began teaching band after school. After he listed several of

his responsibilities as a high school student, he focused on the importance of his collegiate leadership roles and their benefits.

I was a drum major in college. I got lucky, because that position opened up the spring of my freshman year. [At my college], once you were a drum major, you got to keep it. So, I got to be a drum major for four years. That proved to be valuable, especially the first few years I was teaching. I already knew how to conduct and didn't have to worry about some things my friends had to when they first started teaching. (Hillock, 2021)

Cook also considered some of his student leadership experiences in band and how many young directors often try to imitate their previous directors. He described how formative his college experience was and how it was a more assertive type of leadership model. Because of this, he tried to imitate that situation in his first year. "I was the aggressive high school band director. You quickly learn that doesn't work" (Cook, 2021). While this did not prepare him to be a successful teacher initially, those experiences did prove to be valuable to help him teach future students. He related those experiences to how he expects his student leaders to act. He told his leadership team, "we never want to see kids yelling at kids. Ever. We don't ever want to see that. Their job is to support their section" (Cook, 2021).

Mobley described how his previous experiences as a student and how his roles also helped him better understand his band students. His explanation of working for the band and continuing to contribute regardless of a leadership title, earned him respect from his directors.

When I was in high school, we had several leadership positions in the marching band... I was a squad leader when I was younger and became a section leader my senior year. I did not try out for drum major in high school. I just wanted to play and march. That was more appealing to me... I did a couple of years of marching in college and then did drum corps

as well. I tried out for drum major but didn't make it. Again, I thought, 'If I get it, I get it. If I don't, that's okay. I still get to march.' But then, I was progressing, and I was not titled by any means, but (the directors) were like, 'Clearly you're a veteran, so you need to do some more things.' (Mobley, 2021)

All these opportunities were important for him because they allowed Mobley to have the ability to empathize with his students.

I think that has helped me now because I try to think of those experiences when my own students are in a position of leadership over others. I try to put myself in their shoes and remember what I thought at the time. That perspective helps me to work with the current student leaders because I can try to recall what it was like for me at the time. (Mobley, 2021)

Like Mobley, Protzman recalled how difficult it can be for some student leaders in his school and how understanding different student interactions has helped him recognize challenges facing student leaders.

I think the thing that's hard about high school that I saw, and I've watched this now for over 20 years with students I've taught, is when you're asking a 16 to 18 year-old to be in a situation where they're separating themselves from their friends as a leader. Yet, you know that their friends are still viewing them as their friend and the same person they've been goofing around with since middle school. I think that is really challenging. And I think sometimes we don't focus enough on the training that helps the student. They end up stepping in between the directors and their friends, and that could be a tricky place to navigate... So, if you look at a high school kid's day, they are in our school from at least 7:45 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and they're just a friend with those kids. Then, all of a sudden,

right after school, they have to become a leader of those friends... it can be really difficult for a young kid and it's a tough balance. (Protzman, 2020)

Lipman also connected similarities of his past experiences in leadership with current expectations for his students. The qualities that were deemed valuable in his high school are what he expects to see in his students. By experiencing leadership as a student, he is more prepared to instruct students on how to become influential student leaders in the band program.

[In high school], they were focused on the areas of musicianship and service. They were looking for a leader who was dedicated to excellence on their instrument and involved in the ensembles. For them, they didn't put an emphasis on being in the top ensembles because it was believed that you would show the work ethic and the dedication to get there. Then there was an emphasis on service. That was coming and volunteering at events, helping and working with other students, and trying to do things within the community. Whereas with our student leaders in the high school setting, we might be trying to train them more on how to build that bond of friendships and relationships in addition to musicianship, service, and instilling other leadership traits. (Lipman, 2020)

Lambert reflected on three different experiences he had as a student leader and how his experiences in high school, as an undergraduate, and as a graduate assistant have developed some of his current teaching philosophies. All of these opportunities have helped him understand how to work with various leadership groups.

I went to a pretty small rural country school in North Carolina, and I think I was pretty proactive. I don't know if I was necessarily popular, but I was pretty proactive and people liked that I guess. So, I ended up being the student body president my senior year, the band president, and the editor of the yearbook. I had a pretty eclectic collection of

leadership opportunities there. You had a certain group of people with the yearbook, a different group of people with the general school body, and then the band was another separate entity. When I went to college, I was fortunate to be a drum major for three years. I think what I would say is I had the opportunity to see really strong examples of student leadership, and I had some opportunity to see some pretty weak examples of student leadership. Generally, most student leaders, if left to their own devices, will do nothing or the bare minimum. I remember learning that early on, like being a junior in high school and saying, ‘Okay, if I just don’t wait for the teacher to tell me what to do, I can get a lot more done and be finished.’ (Lambert, 2020)

Lambert’s opportunities in high school and college helped determine the importance of a proactive student. They also afforded him opportunities to work with and learn from different types of people. However, Lambert’s experience as a graduate assistant was where he learned the significance of being a leader. This is when he learned one of the most meaningful aspects of preparing to teach.

When I was in grad school, I got to be a graduate assistant which was the first time that a leadership position had a little bit more teeth to it. You know, if I messed up before, I would get reprimanded by a teacher. [As a graduate assistant], I had students in my direct care. I don’t know if you would call that leadership, but I do. It was the first time that the leadership had more than just my ego on the line. It was somebody who is learning and their well-being placed there. That was a big change. I remember that distinctly. I had taught saxophone lessons before, but that was for like ten bucks. When it was the student’s college credit, it just got real all of a sudden... when I finally realized that people’s well-being or their learning was at stake, that was a big change. So, one of the

things that I do with my student leaders is try to help them see [leadership] is not about you, it's really about the people that you are helping. (Lambert, 2020)

New Directions. Some participants connected their current program's leadership process to aspects of what they remembered from their time as students and their previous leadership experiences. These participants reflected on valuable situations from previous years to incorporate meaningful practices into their current roles. Each participant described the need to adapt their current band program to incorporate themselves, their philosophy, and their perspectives for the organization after becoming the head director. This developed a new direction for the band program.

Davis provided a unique perspective in this meaning unit since he was the only participant who was a student leader in the same band program he now directs. Even though he was a graduate of Broken Arrow, he described how the Broken Arrow student leadership program adapted after he became the director.

It's evolved over the twenty-eight years that I've been here... when I first started at Broken Arrow, they were picked based on, 'I was interested in being a section leader.' We always picked the top auditioning students: the best players. Throughout time we realized that having musical proficiency is very important, but it's not the most important aspect. So, we wanted to follow that process to be able to evaluate and get more kids involved based on their characteristics, their leadership abilities, and not solely just based on their musicianship abilities. (Davis, 2021)

As Davis reflected on the leadership opportunities he experienced in high school and college, he commented that, "I know our kids. I know our culture. What works for us may not work for

everyone else because everyone has their unique needs, unique culture, unique heritage” (Davis, 2021).

The prior experiences as leaders in other locations influenced how directors were going to change their current band program culture. Hillock’s history as a leader in high school and college helped him reflect on the importance of student leadership and what was needed for a strong band program. In considering his previous job, he stated, “we didn’t really have defined student leaders, but we had a good group... upperclassmen that provided the type of example that we needed for the younger kids” (Hillock, 2021). He described that he needed to adapt the leadership team when he accepted the job at Jenks High School. This was necessary to integrate himself into a leadership program already in place and incorporate qualities necessary for continued success in their band program.

A lot of what I emulated, at least for a year or two, was what the previous director did just to make the transition smooth. So, it started with that and then it has developed over a period of time to what we wanted it to be. There are three things that we really want from our kids. One is character. They have got to be a person of quality character. The second thing is that they must be a good musician. We found that they might be a good kid and a quality kid, but if they can’t play their instrument, their peers see them as, ‘Are you sure you should be telling me what to do right here?’ [Third], they have to have loyalty to the band program. (Hillock, 2021)

Similarly, Pizarra described continuing with some traditions as he entered his current position to make the transition easier while focusing on specific areas to incorporate himself and his focus in his band program. He considered some of the abilities his teachers wanted to see in student leaders to encourage these traits in his student leaders. His teachers concentrated on

“...reliability, communication skills, musical independence and prowess, responsibility, and strong character” (Pisarra, 2020). As a student leader and teacher who found success with these skills, Pisarra focused on encouraging more of these qualities like his teachers to further develop the student leaders in the Union band program.

Warfield explained his history as a student leader and teacher in relationship to how he developed his student leadership team. While other participants listed prior student leadership roles, he listed his leadership responsibilities as a student and other procedures expected to attain a leadership role in order to redevelop his student leadership team. Warfield considered all his past experiences important to equip him to adapt the Homestead band program’s student leadership team.

In high school, we had something like a student leadership council. There was an application process, teacher recommendation forms to complete, our school counselors turned in grades to the director... If you just wanted to be part of the council itself, that was it. If you wanted to be a section leader, there was a small interview. If you wanted to be a drum major, there was a larger interview plus more parts to the actual process itself. I was selected to be a class representative my sophomore year in high school. My junior year, I was a section leader... My senior year, I was the head drum major and the band council president. After I graduated high school, I was a college drum major for my last two years of my undergraduate. When I think about those roles, especially in college, it was really about, ‘Could you do the job and did you have the respect of the students within the program?’ I think there was also a student election process as well, and that was factored into who ended up getting selected. So, if the students spoke well about you,

that usually matched with the audition process itself, and that audition process was pretty rigorous. (Warfield, 2020)

All the requirements Warfield experienced were important to what he was doing to renovate the Homestead band program's leadership process during the interview. Before he was the head director, Warfield was the assistant director for the Homestead band program. As the assistant, he noticed aspects in the leadership team that were working and others he felt needed to change in order to engage more students in the leadership process and develop students who had an interest in leading.

As the head director, I needed to make some changes to the leadership selection aspect of the program. Before it was, 'If you were senior, you were considered a leader.' And that was it... Sometimes we had the right seniors and sometimes we didn't, but they were considered a leader regardless of their abilities. Basically, there's more to leadership than what we have had in the past, so I'm revamping our program. (Warfield, 2020)

Redeveloping the Homestead band's student leadership program revolved around much of what Warfield described in his past experiences as a student as well as what he noticed as the assistant director. Many of the changes he described focused on putting the impetus back on the student leaders and encouraging students of any age in the band program to work in various leadership capacities that best suit their abilities. Warfield's past experiences in earning student leadership roles helped him determine a new direction for the Homestead band program's student leadership program.

Student Leadership Application Methods

All participants described various application methods they implemented to select student leaders. Participants described the various requirements which may be expected of the leadership

roles. Many participants described the importance of a written/digital application or resume and the additional requirements of interviews, service projects, teaching components, grade point averages, physical ability, and student interviews. Expectations for what was expected was often based on the position being sought by students. The leadership roles and their vitality for the program also determined what the participants should expect for the leadership procedures. Four meaning units were described based on the participants' descriptions of their student leadership selection methods. These meaning units are leadership tiers, the process criteria, pre-existing knowledge, and process evolution.

Leadership Tiers. A hierarchy of leadership assists students in understanding what student leadership positions may be best suited for them as well as the role's influence. Ranks also help directors determine the best applications and selection methods for each role whether it be based on age, experience, or ability to serve in another capacity. Lambert detailed a tiered leadership team in the marching season and how students are responsible for each other.

Our chain of command are directors and staff, then our drum majors are right underneath that. Our drum majors are pretty strong and communicative, and in front of the band much of the year. After that, we have our captains. We have a woodwind captain and a brass captain that continues throughout the year. They are the ones that control a lot of the playing. If a section is having trouble playing, that's the responsibility of captains. Then we have a visual captain for both [woodwind and brass sections] that is more about the marching and that content. Underneath captains are section leaders. Each section has a leader. Underneath section leaders, we have squad leaders. Most of our seniors and a few juniors take squads. [Squads] are four people that are grouped together, usually a

senior, freshman, sophomore, and junior. Those four people kind of take care of each other throughout the season. (Lambert, 2020)

Lambert continued to describe the hierarchy and positions available when marching band is not the focus. Maintaining leadership throughout the year is important for his program. As the year continues, younger students may be allowed the opportunity to serve in various ways. This allows younger students that may have influence with their peers to offer their abilities in some type of leadership capacity.

We start the beginning of the year and do three officers. We just say president and two other officers. The president is the one with highest votes. The next two highest voted students are officers. We add one more officer in December or January, because that's when they know each other. It's a chance for the younger kids like incoming freshmen to maybe join that team as well. On the other side of that, we also have what we call service leadership... The service leadership team is a little bit more designed for the kids whose content, i.e., playing or marching ability isn't going to be as strong as others, but they still have a heart for service. (Lambert, 2020)

Like Lambert, Lipman offers his students performance-based positions and non-performance service opportunities. While the band president is appointed by the directors with consideration to student votes, other non-performance student leaders are voted on by their peers. His detailed description offers an understanding of the student leadership hierarchy that transfers from the marching season throughout the year. Younger students are encouraged to participate in various groups as they gain experience in the band and learn of their leadership abilities.

The only role that we actually appoint is the band president, and they are also the drum major. That came from concerns that if we were going to call the person a band president,

sometimes the kids would vote someone in that was good at putting together parties and fun events. I believe that the band president needed to represent the highest level of excellence, just like the drum major does... Around the third year, we started to make the drum major the band president and as a part of the drum major process. We let the students vote on who their drum major choices are. When the kids think about picking drum major versus picking president, it's amazing how they tend to lean towards the same people that we do, which we always feel pretty good about. We also have a vice president of uniforms, those are the quartermasters, and we might have two or three of those. A vice president of music library, a music librarian. A vice president of logistics. We also have a team, we call it S.C.O.R.E., which stands for the Student Care of Resources and Equipment. That basically means they set up all of the chairs and stands for concerts, and tearing down for concerts. It's like a stage crew that you would have for theater... Then we have the vice president of special events. They do things like band banquet. We do a couple of food drives during the year and other volunteering activities. So, they do the volunteer component... Just for us, we went towards looking at the roles that we needed to run the program, and kind of make the vice presidents more about that. (Lipman, 2020)

The application hierarchy shows younger students how they can contribute and the best place for their individual skills within the larger organization. This creates a tiered system on the leadership team. "Our top person is going to be the section leader, and there might be two or three others that are student leaders in that section as well. We picked a number based on the size of the section and the need" (Hillock, 2021). Cook also said that their student leadership in each

section is based on a percentage of the section as well as a majority of student votes from that section.

In our program, we currently do something that's pretty quick and student focused. Any student, regardless of their chair in band or if they've got discipline referrals stacked up on the desk, can apply for a leadership position. They fill out a series of questions and they get three teacher recommendations. [Then] the students elect their leaders. Let's say in our biggest section, we typically have about sixty or seventy clarinets in the band. In that section of seventy clarinets, there might be fifteen students who fill out an application. We take those fifteen applications and earmark a period of time, usually during a class, where we do, 'Clarinet Election Day.' Each one of those kids reads one of the questions they filled in on the questionnaire. They present to their peers and then take questions from their peers about that topic we select. There is usually a mathematical aspect [to the number of student leaders]. It looks like we will have seventy clarinets in our marching band next year. So, we are going to elect seven clarinet leaders. Students circle seven names on the ballot and turn it in. We run the votes and those are the seven elected leaders the clarinets elected. (Cook, 2021)

Some leadership programs may include even more students based on the needs in the program and emphasis on veteran student contributions. Protzman described an even wider hierarchy where student groups as small as three to four students are being assisted by more experienced students in their section. Protzman listed the importance of older students having a responsibility to assist younger students.

Our leadership team is structured with five drum majors, section leaders, and the leadership team. In our larger sections, we have two section leaders and underneath them

there are students in what we call our leadership team. So, within the clarinet section, there could be eight or nine other students on the leadership team. The leadership team in each section breaks down the section into smaller groups of three or four students. Everybody's responsible for helping in guiding the younger ones. When we have a leadership meeting or when something needs to be disseminated or taught, those section leaders are the hierarchy of the internal leadership. (Protzman, 2020)

Process Criteria. Several participants focused on the application process and specific standards they deemed important for their program. They often described requirements of interviews, service projects, teaching components, grade point averages, and physical ability. Each participant considered every criterion for their student leadership selection program important. While these requirements could be dissected to focus on the commonalities, it is more important that participant's narratives remained intact as much as possible to show how each participant described when and how similar requirements occur in their organization's leadership selection process.

Procedures were often similar between participants' experiences, but they often began their selection programs in different ways. Lipman said that all students, regardless of their intended leadership position, go through the same process. He then proceeded to expand on the application process and how students can continue through the phases of the leadership audition process.

We usually have about one hundred of them apply for the first round. The first round is like a cut-round where we ask questions about their volunteering activities. When you start asking questions about whether they showed up to volunteer in band events, you are usually able to lop off about ten or fifteen of them. We also send a list out to the faculty

and say, ‘These are the ninety kids that we are looking at for student leadership. Are there any concerns in their classes?’ A couple of teachers might write back, ‘They don’t turn their work in on time’ or ‘They talk too much in the class.’ That helps us narrow it down more. Usually we have about seventy-five students, we call them semifinalists, that we do the resume and do the more advanced questions. From there, after reading their answers, we would invite to the final round, which would be interviews, and for drum major, conducting. We might do interviews with around twenty drum major candidates and fifty for section leader in the final round. We end up taking anywhere from forty to fifty a year, so that’s a pretty good group that we can pull from when we are making the final decisions. (Lipman, 2020)

Mobley listed three facets student leaders must complete to accept a student leadership position. The process for his student leadership team is based on an extensive application, interviews with the directors, and a teaching component where interested student leaders work with incoming freshmen.

First, students create a resume. It’s a very basic kind of a resume that would be like for a job. Next, is a one to two-page essay about what is leadership and what does leadership mean? Then there is a basic application with information for them to fill out. There is an agreement of commitment stating, ‘If I am selected as a student leader, I agree to commit to these dates and these times, this role, and these responsibilities.’ Students must have teacher recommendations. We give them a recommendation form for teachers in the school to complete. In terms of the official documentation, there’s that whole application with all of those things. We tell them, ‘If you don’t turn in all those things, then we’re not going to consider you for leadership.’ We let them know when they can pick up the

application and start filling it out, and then the date it is due. The other component is an interview with the other directors and myself. We have a set of questions that we are going to ask them. Generally, we would want two or three directors interviewing students that we are considering for drum major or section leader. The other part is a teaching experience: observation of the kids teaching... incoming students that are going to be marching next season. So, there's a vested interest on both parts to learn and do a good job... At the end of that process, we've got the applications, interviews, and teaching components. (Mobley, 2021)

Protzman described the importance of allowing the directors time to discuss applicants and determine the students that may be best qualified for each role. If there are several qualified candidates, students may be given the chance to demonstrate leadership abilities in an end of the year camp.

We start the process in March. We have a leadership Google form that we send out... Then we sit down as a group of five directors. We go through those submissions. The director in charge of the woodwinds obviously has the most say in who becomes the woodwind section leaders, but we all contribute. They might say, 'I would like to put this person in this position. What are your thoughts? Have you seen anything in the classroom?' Then it's almost like a draft... we [the directors] sit down and decide the best students for those positions. There are some years where we have a mini camp right after school and it's a week long. At that, there might be eight that are all be equal until the end of that week. We see what they demonstrate, and then we pick the two that are in charge. That's not always the case though. Sometimes we know these are the two kids we want to have in charge and sometimes we don't. (Protzman, 2020)

Hillock expects prospective student leaders to interview other adults to learn about leadership from the adults' perspective in addition to an age expectancy, application, and interview. Another requirement for leadership is the importance of the prospective leader developing a service project.

If a student wants to be a student leader, they have to be an incoming junior or senior. They have an application process that they fill out. It involves an essay with questions like, 'Why do you want to be a student leader? What are the things that you see that are good? What are things that you're interested in changing or making better?' We want them to think and have that innovative aspect. There is an interview process with the directors. They also do interviews on their own where they interview two or three adults. It can be someone they look up to, it can be a teacher, or it can be a reputable alumni. They have to interview them and ask them a set list of questions that they're required to ask those adults. They can add other questions to that list also. Those questions may be, 'What makes a good leader or what have you learned from being a leader?' Questions about their leadership experiences. That's all part of the application process, and they do a service project. (Hillock, 2021)

Lipman later focused on service as a key aspect for his students to show they have a commitment prior to the band before applying for a leadership position. Like other participants, he considered the importance of involving other directors in the interview and how students may lead in a teaching situation with their peers.

[Students] do a resume and we do an interview with them. [There are] some broad questions that target some areas about servant leadership and about what they think they've done to show that they understand service. They write a statement of intent. They

submit their volunteer logs where they keep the records for the year. We are on an honor system. We trust that they are going to submit that truthfully. Then they do an interview with us and a teaching component. They get about five minutes to teach taking a step forward, a step backward, and posture. That is really just to see if they can get up in front of a group and carry on a dialog if they have to teach. It is a little artificial because they are auditioning with their peers, but I feel like at least it gives us a perspective for it. Usually the interview is more talking to them about things that if they get it, we want them to think about improving. But sometimes in the interview, one of the directors might not know them as well. So, that director might have some concerns or questions and give the student an opportunity to be able to work through or address any of that. (Lipman, 2020)

Davis considered grade point averages and service projects to see a student's initiative. The applicant is also expected to interview adults outside of their program to learn more about leadership.

Drum majors have just a couple of extra requirements beyond the section leader applications, but the application looks the same. It's a three-part application. We want to know what their grade point average is and see their grades. We want them to create a win/win with these students by getting exposure for our program out in the community. So, we require them to go do an interview with someone else, either on campus or someone else out in the community... other teachers, educators, or leaders in the community get to see really good kids that care about something other than themselves. We also require them to do a leadership based project... We want them to take the initiative. We don't want to give our ideas of what they should or could do. This is a

chance for us to see the initiative they have. Where do they see the need in a program?
(Davis, 2021)

Allshouse also listed service as a key aspect within their student leadership. He requires students to develop and implement a service project as part of the application process. “It doesn’t even have to be for the band even, but they have to figure out how much it would cost, how many kids would be involved, almost like a Boy Scout project” (Allshouse, 2021). He uses the application to focus on dedicated students that will put forth the effort to follow through with the process. The procedures in his program allow him to develop student leaders and young people of good character over time.

[All applicants] have a three to four-page form and there are a lot of different questions. We have the traditional questions, ‘Why do you feel you would be a good student leader? What do you bring to the table? Who are student leaders in the past you’ve admired and why?’ Just general questions. The drum majors have a deeper application than the other student leaders do. With the drum majors, it is a three or four-day process. We usually meet one day a week for a month. Some of that is conducting training, but there are some non-traditional things we do... Like in many places, we do have a formal application process, but more importantly for me is are they a good human being and are they teachable. (Allshouse, 2021)

Lipman noted an additional criterion he expects from his student leaders that none of the other participants mentioned. While all students are expected to earn their school’s physical education (P.E.) credit through regular exercise in the band program, the student leaders need to represent and demonstrate the physical abilities demanded of their activity.

The one element that has always been important to me is that our drum majors are athletic. You don't have to be athletic like a baseball or a basketball player, but you need to be able to run three miles if you're going to be the drum major. You don't need to be the greatest marcher, but if you were somebody that sat out a lot as a marcher, you probably were not going to end up as drum major because the physical components of our drill... Every day in class, in a fifty-five minute class, fifteen minutes of that is a mile run. The kids are expected to be done within ten. If they've got asthma or other health conditions, they can do push-ups, sit ups, or something else. It's been made pretty clear to the students that they get P.E. credit for being in band, and they are earning their credit. So, the drum major really has to be able to keep up with that or they may not be the best fit for that role. They might be a great fit for a vice president of uniforms or a vice president of music library. If we say they are going to be in a leadership position for the marching arts, they need to be physical. (Lipman, 2020)

Pre-Existing Knowledge. Several participants described using pre-existing knowledge about their students' abilities. This often accompanies an application, audition processes, or both. "Although we have that formal process, the students are really applying to be a student leader from the moment that we meet them" (Allshouse, 2021). Protzman corroborates the idea of leading before being named a leader. While Protzman's students also have an application process, students are aware that they are being considered before they can apply.

Really, for the other directors and me in our program, the year prior is where [they] are auditioning to be a leader... and that is really important. Every once in a while, we are wowed by a younger student's conducting abilities [for drum major], but we are rarely

surprised when it comes to our section leaders and other leadership team because we are looking at them for at least a year before. (Protzman, 2020)

Cook said that while the elected leaders are based on a majority vote, the leadership team at the top of the hierarchy in his program are selected by the staff based primarily on prior experiences.

When we go to pick the section leader out of the elected leaders, that is almost completely our pre-existing knowledge of the kid. [The student is] almost always going to be a rising senior. We already know their work ethic, their character, musicianship, and all those things. Their preexisting operational activities in our program is the biggest indicator we use to pick the section leaders. (Cook, 2021)

Pisarra's comments related to pre-existing criteria merge with the final meaning unit of process evolution. While an application process is necessary for his student leaders, this expectation is more focused on allowing the students to reflect on what they have done. Pisarra and the directors working with him know the abilities of their students and who may be best suited for each student leadership position. The application process followed by individual interviews allowed the directors to confirm their decisions on which students should lead different areas in their marching band. Because the directors typically know the students that would apply and likely serve in each position, the selection process has changed over time.

We have an application process that asks them a lot of different things including 'Are you taking private lessons?' We have five concert ensembles and we want to know, 'were you in the top two of those five concert ensembles?' We already know the answers to these questions, but we want them to fill that in so they can see it. We used to ask for letters of recommendation from other adults, but have since phased that out. We've gone from a really, really involved application process to one that's a little bit slimmer. We found that

it was taking so much time for the staff to pour through all these applications, when in reality, we already knew which students were going to rise to the top to begin with. So, the application became a little bit more of a formality. Only in a few cases did the application, or the quality of application, make that big of a difference between who we would select. After the application, the process moves onto an interview. The application round is open to anybody, whereas the interview round is for those who advance. From [the interview], we usually scale back just a little bit more in order to set the student leaders... I might have a kid who is a really good player, but if they're timid, then they're not going to be outspoken enough to be able to serve in a role that requires those communication skills. (Pisarra, 2020)

Process Evolution. Some participants mentioned the importance of changes in their criteria over time. These participants described how they knew what they wanted from their leaders. However, the leadership process needed to evolve to represent leaders who could best represent their band program. Some changes within the process were necessary to align the program with expectations happening throughout the school and community. Allshouse reflected on this type of adjustment in their audition process.

For a short time, especially with the drum major auditions, we would bring in some outside people for the actual audition, just for the optics of it, but I think we all knew who we were going to choose. I talked to some of the athletic coaches and nobody else is really doing this in athletics. I feel the [audition] isn't really just about that one day. We spend three or four days in the [leadership selection] process, and the audition was just one portion of it. How they were being perceived and how they were acting all the way

through was more important. So, it is an in-house decision. We just got rid of the optics since most of them knew. (Allshouse, 2021)

Warfield was in the initial phases of developing a leadership selection process, so his evolution was not a change from what he created, but from what he inherited. “Before it was, ‘If you were senior, you were considered a leader’... ‘If you are a drum major, you conduct.’ That was it” (Warfield, 2020). An application and leadership selection process was a needed change for the program under his direction. He listed some of the qualifications he recently implemented since there was not a formal leadership application process before he became the head director. The new qualifications focused on grade point average (GPA), consistent enrollment in the program, regular participation in leadership training, and at least one year within the band program.

When I started developing our current student leadership process, the qualifications for those students were a GPA of at least a 2.75 out of a four-point scale. I think most schools that do something like this have a 3.0 or 3.5 or something like that. Part of my reason (for a 2.75) is that I was that student that wasn’t super dedicated academically in high school. I mean, I had good grades, but it’s nothing to shout about. I was very glad that my directors didn’t put a super high GPA on leadership requirements because I wasn’t very dedicated to my other classes, but I was a really good band student. I didn’t want to do that with our school. Our school is highly academic, so that wouldn’t be an issue for a lot of our students. But if there’s a student out there that’s like me, then I would want them to have a chance. Next, there’s a great emphasis on the level of participation within the program. They have to be enrolled in band or color guard, and there can’t be any dip in participation. I don’t want to set the precedence that an

inconsistent level of participation is acceptable [for student leaders]. Then, they have to be a part of all of our meetings. During these meetings we've talked about a variety of things, specifically the leadership material. Finally, they should have been in the program for a year. So, current freshmen that are going to be sophomores can join, but freshmen obviously can't because they haven't been a part of the program in the previous year. (Warfield, 2020)

Hillock explained one of the reasons he changed the leadership team was based on a similar scenario of inheriting another director's leadership program. Instead of developing a new program, Hillock initially focused on working with the older students to help them understand how they should act if they wanted to see greater success in the program.

When I first got here, there was an entitlement mentality, especially with the seniors. It was like, 'this is my last year, so I should be treated like a king. I can sit on the bus wherever I want. I don't have to wait in line. If you're in my seat, I can kick you out. I'm first in line to check out my uniform.' You know, all that junk. It took a while for them to understand that they can't act like that. I would explain it like this, 'How many seniors are in this band? 50. Okay. How many juniors are there? 60. Okay. How many sophomores are there? 70. Okay, how many freshmen are there? 100. Okay, let's look at the numbers here. You got a lot of young people that are going to make or break your band and you are treating them bad? Then you expect them to work with you and cooperate with you?' There must be that working relationship where all of them are in this together to make it work right. (Hillock, 2021)

The process evolution is not something that only occurs in the first few years of a new job. While participants mentioned they had to make necessary changes after inheriting another

director's leadership selection approach, the evolution of this process is something that could continue as the director sees the needs of the program changing. Lambert detailed some of the more recent changes in his program. In addition to a greater focus on peer reviews in the current leadership team, the leadership selection process also entails changes to ensure applicants are becoming more aware of themselves and their interactions with others. He then described why these components are necessary to his leadership selection criteria.

This year, we added a component that is a lot more in-depth in asking about their character and their communication styles. For example, one of the questions was, 'Have you ever had an altercation with a peer and how did you resolve that?' That's tough! As soon as a kid says, 'No, I've never had that.' I'm like, 'Okay, next.' Because they're either unaware or they're lying. We also have questions like, 'Describe a positive or negative interaction with a director where you felt like you communicated well.' That stumped a number of students. If you just said, 'I just want great kids.' Well, I've got some really great kids! But maybe shouldn't be a vocal leader. They are just not quite there yet. They are great people and we can work on the other (leadership skills), but they are not quite ready to be a drum major or the section leader of a large section. They need to grow into [that leader]. (Lambert, 2020)

Davis's comments on process evolution are unique in that they connect the themes of *Past Experiences with Student Leadership Application Methods*. Many participants developed new directions for their leadership programs based on their previous experiences. However, a similar relationship could also be made on how the leadership processes have evolved. A larger narrative from Davis has been provided to fully develop his comments that tie into both themes.

For the Broken Arrow High School Band, students go through an application process. It has evolved over that twenty-eight years that I've been there. Recently, in probably the last five years, I also have the students from each section vote for their top candidates. I've been amazed that, even through a long application process, the students select the same kids that we do. It just helps us justify those same decisions. When I first started at Broken Arrow, section leaders were picked based on, 'I am interested in being a section leader.' We always picked the best players. Throughout time we realized that having musical proficiency is very important, but it's not the most important aspect. So, we wanted to follow that process to be able to evaluate and get more kids involved based on their characteristics, their leadership abilities, and not solely based on their musicianship abilities. (Davis, 2021)

Student Leadership Training

All directors described the importance of student leadership training. Each participant made comments of the leadership training they have provided to their students even though the leadership training methods utilized were different in each program. Three meaning units emerged as participants explained their leadership training. Meaning units are delineated through catered opportunities, continued instruction, and intrinsic training.

Each leadership training program was designed to offer students in their respective band what the director(s) thought was important for that specific group of students. By implementing leadership training, each participant recognized even the best students may need more experience in certain areas of leadership. Most participants cater their leadership training to the students interested in leadership. Some continue training students throughout the semester or year to keep them prepared and engaged. A few directors described their band program as innate training

since regular involvement in their program develops a greater knowledge of what is expected for their specific band culture. Participants often described how and why they use certain leadership training programs and procedures. Therefore, several statements needed to remain intact to ensure the participants' voices were accurately understood through the connections to other participants' statements within meaning units (Kim, 2020; van Manen, 2007).

Catered Opportunities. Most participants listed how they offered effective training opportunities by employing respected leadership consultants to inspire and instruct their students. Some participants also encouraged students to attend on and off-campus camps to develop specific skills for their positions. Others developed a truly catered approach where they created programs based on their expertise and knowledge of what they expect their student leaders to do in their band. Each director provided what they considered important for their current students while continually researching and studying new opportunities to be incorporated into future leadership training. In all cases, developing leadership opportunities was understood to be important for these participants. Cook commented on why having some leadership training is necessary for youth. When asked about his leadership training, Cook responded,

... what didn't work very well is not doing anything. We did that for years. You know, we selected these kids. They were smart kids. They wanted to do a good job. Of course, even smart kids don't always know what to do as a leader. In the years we did nothing, the kids would come to come to us and tell us, 'This isn't working. I don't have the skills to navigate. Tell me what to do.' So, we were just having isolated conversations about super specific situations. It was not efficient at all. (Cook, 2021)

Cook employed a variety of leadership specialists to help the students before they entered their leadership role. He continued to describe how different leadership instructors could offer diverse experiences to his students.

Years ago, we started bringing in leadership consultants and they would do a weekend workshop with all our student leaders, and sometimes with the whole band depending on who that person was. We have used people who are huge names in the band leadership world, and then we have used people who are local leadership folks who aren't attached to the band activity. Frankly, both have had their real strengths. Bring someone in who can just talk about certain leadership concepts and then you leave it to the students to figure out on their own how it applies to band has been really effective. Then having someone who can talk to the kids about the ultra specific situations they will encounter as marching band leaders, of course, is also really effective. We don't want them to hear the same leadership consultant all three of their years as a student leader. We kind of mix it up year to year, then return to a national name like Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser or Scott Lang. (Cook, 2021)

Leadership camps and guest speakers can inspire and motivate students to be prepared for the upcoming year. Hillock reflected, "We brought Scott Lang in a few times and did some things with him... We took some of his ideas and catered it to what fit our program and what we wanted our kids to do" (Hillock, 2021). As directors learned from leadership specialists, they could tailor their training to focus on the students' needs. Protzman and his team of directors work together to offer a training program they have catered for their program that focuses on traits they expect from student leaders.

... our team will meet with the interested kids and we basically start with the Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser approach... we start with the servant leader idea. That is our first block in things that we talk about. We work through scenarios and let students work through different situations in leadership. (Protzman, 2020)

Pisarra described how it is important to offer a variety of leadership opportunities, but the ability of a student could also determine what type of leadership training may be necessary.

We've had students attend the Music for All events. We've had kids go to the George Parks program. We've brought in other mentors. We had a former student who went on to be a DCI drum major and they came to work with our kids. Dan Potter of DCI and BOA lives here in Tulsa. He is a friend and has come over and worked with our students. I don't think we have done it the same way twice... I would like to find a pattern, but sometimes it is honestly really expensive. Some years I feel like if the leadership team or the drum majors maybe a little under experienced or just a little weaker, then I put more resources into going to a camp. Whereas, other years, it just either didn't work on the calendar, or I didn't think it was as necessary for that group of students. If we have a student that starts their sophomore year, they are most likely going to be in an assistant role. When they are a senior, they are probably a lead drum major and are going to be generally well-trained by virtue of experience. (Pisarra, 2020)

Other participants also worked to offer students varied experiences as well as unique opportunities each year. In addition to guest speakers and leadership camps, Allshouse used a variety of self-developed programs and ability-based camps to ensure students are developing skills and experiences they may use as a leader in their band.

... we do have quite a bit of training with the drum majors, but even with all the student leaders. It's a full year of responsibility. I send the drum majors off to the Bands of America or the Phantom Regiment drum major camp depending on the year. I arrange something by Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser or Scott Lang... In the spring, we will do four or five training days, but they are only about an hour and a half each. I use a variety of different videos like things from the military. There are also some things that I put together myself, and just general leadership activities. We have a ropes course nearby that they all go to [for team building]. (Allshouse, 2021)

Mobley also explained that he used a variety of methods to develop student leaders on-campus and off-campus. He hosted his own leadership training and encouraged the drum majors to go to a camp together over the summer. Having leadership events rotating to different locations and using different materials has kept the leadership team engaged.

We've done it several different ways. We've brought in people from outside groups to do a day or two with a couple of different sessions with all the leaders. We always ask our drum majors to find a camp that they can all go to over the summer. We typically host [full leadership training sessions] here. We usually do a full week ahead of summer band, where all the leaders come here. The other directors and I talk about things that we are looking for during the season, things that we're wanting them to be in charge of and to take care of, and some different ways to handle situations with students. Like, 'What do we do with a kid that has a bad attitude?' We go through some scenarios with them on our own. We've done [leadership camps] with just the directors leading it, and we've done it with outside folks doing it. We've stayed here on campus sometimes. Nearby, there's a tennis camp that has a leadership component, and we have gone to it a few

times... When we do [the same thing] two, three, four years in a row, students kind of get tired of it. But then it goes away for a while and then we go back and they're like, 'That was the most amazing thing ever.' It's a mix of sources and training. (Mobley, 2021)

While larger concepts are important to develop character traits or conducting skills, training students to complete daily tasks are often just as important for student leaders to learn in their training. Lipman considered his personal experiences with student leadership training and why he chose to have a more catered approach for his band program.

In my own experiences as a student leader, I felt like I was ready to be a great role model and I was going to be an ethical person. I felt like I developed really good conducting skills, but [in my student leadership training] I didn't necessarily get what leaders normally do like, 'Take out the trash. Set up the yard line markers. Get the speakers charged.' So often, those are the things that student leaders really need to know to be successful for their program. (Lipman, 2020)

Lipman continued to describe how the unique culture in each band is what makes the decision to incorporate or utilize a leadership program important.

I think the hardest part for me, and this is band leadership training in general, is that band programs are so different. You can go into a place to teach one system, one structure, or one set of values, but it doesn't work everywhere. There are things that I think are one-size-fits-all, but I think it's so deeply personal for the director. If I am going to do leadership training for another director's band, I want to do what they are doing right now. I want to sit with the director and hear the rundown of the program. I want to know about your situation. I want to know what your parents are like. I want to know about you. Then, when I go in [to work with the students], I can pick four or five topics and

maybe build a curriculum for that program rather than going, ‘Okay, this is what I do. Here’s my service. Here’s my dog and pony show. Here’s my spiel.’ I guess that would be my only complaint about leadership training in general. I think some of it is because we are trying to come up with a package that’s effective, but it doesn’t always give the students what they need to be successful on the first day in their leadership role. (Lipman, 2020)

Lambert made a similar point to note that every program is different and not every leadership training method is going to be effective or work in another band program.

I would tell you that almost every band that I have worked with... every one of their leadership programs is different. I have never had two that were identical. I have even worked with band directors who moved schools and that changes [the leadership program]. I think the leadership team is built partially on the director’s personality and the personality of the students or the community. (Lambert, 2020)

Centering on the needs of the students is the most important part of developing a catered approach to student leadership training. Protzman developed a unique approach using John Wooden’s Pyramid of Success that is focused on communication.

What we like about that is competitiveness is at the top of the pyramid, but the building blocks to get to it are about being good people, having loyalty, friendship. We really like that leadership approach. A big part of our training is teaching students how to process critique and feedback, and how to give critique and feedback. We find that that’s where the biggest issues arise... We try to train the kids how to speak, how to receive [accurate, good intended feedback], and how to filter out the useless parts like inaccurate with bad intention. We have really high-end performing kids in the program. They are very

difficult on themselves and some will shut down to instruction. You have to work them through that. (Protzman, 2020)

Like Protzman, Lambert focused his catered approach on the specific needs of his students. He described some of the aspects he focuses on in his leadership training and adjusts the teaching based on what he sees as needed characteristics of his group of potential leaders.

We will often do a leadership workshop that's open to anybody, and anyone considering leadership in our program needs to come to some sort of training. I will tell you, on a normal year at Wando, we will have anywhere from seventy to ninety kids that will come to that training. It goes through some form of improving character, improving content, or improving communication. One of those aspects. It depends on where I feel like their personality is and where our program is at the time. When I first got to Wando, we had great kids who could play their tails off, but were very unaware of one another. I feel like we've turned a corner with that to where now they are very aware of each other... every year you have to slide the needle left or right with where you want to focus your training. We don't necessarily do the same training every year. We really look at their personalities. (Lambert, 2020)

Warfield's situation is somewhat unique as it connects the theme of *Past Experiences* to *Student Leadership Training* since he was primarily using his personal experiences to develop the program. He considered what was done before him and how he can include more training opportunities for his future students. He listed several books and leadership materials that are helping him build on the programs his student leaders attended.

When I got here, I worked out a scholarship for two or three students to go to the BOA camp, and they get to choose whatever track they wanted there. It could be a marching

band track, jazz band, color guard, or whatever, but with that, they went to the leadership clinic. Prior to me getting here, it was just the drum majors going to the BOA summer symposium and that was it. Drum majors went every year and were part of the drum major institute. Now, I'm going through the Scott Lang *Essential Leadership* book. I'm using the *Pathways to Success* by Scott Rush and Tim Lautzenheiser. All of the classic leadership things: the Dr. Tim, teacher-student workbook. I've looked at Simon Senik stuff. I bought a lot of his leadership books. (Warfield, 2020)

Warfield also wanted to develop a leadership program that can modify based on the future needs or expectations of his program. He is researching these materials to keep the leadership training relevant, but understands he is starting from the beginning and each year may change the focus or how he incorporates various training methods.

Part of my reason for buying a lot of those other books is just to see what else is out there. So, the further that I'm in this role, I can adapt the student leadership training for whatever that group looks like. I don't want it to turn into 'Every year we are going to go through this exact same literature' because the sophomores are going to end up having the exact same thing for three years. So, I want to update that every year. That's what we are starting now, and I'm trying to create training for the students every year. (Warfield, 2020)

Continued Instruction. Providing sustained student leadership instruction allows student leaders to work with trained leaders as they follow through with their positions. Davis described how he worked with his staff to maintain leadership training throughout the semester.

We have a great relationship with Scott Lang. We will bring in Scott Lang, Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, and other leadership clinicians. We bring different people in throughout

the year for the entire band and then others for designated leaders. We also have weekly meetings with the main leaders with one of our staff members who is in charge of the leadership team. That director is excellent about how to make that a round table. Any time we have those open discussions, you can't identify a problem without a solution, otherwise it would turn into a gripe fest. (Davis, 2021)

He continued to explain how these meetings were necessary to prepare student leaders on how to maintain focus during difficult times.

Having the experience that I've had through the years, you see the same waves of progress and the highs and lows of the band throughout the season. We all know that when we first start, there is going to be this high, then after about three or four weeks, there is going to be this lull with the band. It's typically in September and there is going to be a crisis. There's going to be drama. I call September the second third of the season. At that point it's all work and there is very little gratification for what they are doing. There are only a few performances, and that is where they will start bickering with each other. Then as soon as you get into October, the last third of the season, competitions begin and they start to feel that sense of accomplishment. So, we try to help those named leaders, and just the entire group, navigate what that typical roller coaster is going to look like in season. [The leadership team has] weekly meetings throughout the season, and that's mostly to keep the leadership team focused on the mission at hand... The goal is to have people on that team to make others feel empowered and keep their motivation high so that can spread that to their sections. (Davis, 2021)

In a similar way, Hillock described regular meetings throughout the year to clarify leadership roles, develop a sense of comradery, and maintain communication. This helps to

continue leadership training while dealing with current events. "... once marching season is going, then they usually meet once a week. Sometimes [those meetings are] to address something specific. Sometimes it's to look ahead. Sometimes it's just to see how they are doing" (Hillock, 2021). Allshouse also continues his leadership training throughout the fall year to ensure students have opportunities to keep learning.

During the marching season, every week or every other week, we'll do a meeting for about 30 minutes or so early on... we try to keep this going all year long so we can work with things in real life. As we all know, we all hit September, and everybody wants to quit everything. So, we talk about, 'This is what it's going to feel like, so how are you going deal with this?' I have found more longevity to get them through it that way.

(Allshouse, 2021)

Intrinsic Training. Intrinsic training in the band program was described by two participants. Cook considered how the band program functions as its own training program for students. Student leaders are chosen by peer votes, and the band staff picks the head section leaders out of the elected leaders. However, the program has developed a cycle of success where students typically recognize student leaders by their contributions to the overall band program.

We've got a huge band program and we typically march about three hundred seventy-five in the halftime band. Now, the halftime show is simple: it's six minutes long, twenty-five drill moves with pop music... Then we invite students to be in the group that competes. Almost without exception, the kids who are eager to be in leadership positions are in the competitive band. The time commitment and the national expectations of our competitive band have their own innate training associated with it... I would say that's informal, but that's the real training those kids get before they apply. (Cook, 2021)

Davis described the culture in the band program as an innate training aspect for his program's student leaders. By delegating some responsibility through having upper class students help the younger, incoming band students, the upperclassmen become empowered to continue developing the program's culture while showing younger band members the expectations they will be charged with in the band program.

[One] thing that we do to help spread that culture from the upper level students, or the upper classes to the younger, is we have every upperclassman assigned a little brother or little sister. Someone that they are responsible for. If a freshman or first year member forgets to bring their items to rehearsal, we don't go to that younger kid and say, 'What are you thinking?' We go to their big brother or big sister and say, 'You are supposed to look out for them. How could you let your little brother or little sister not follow through on what they're supposed to do?' It kind of flips the script a little bit and it empowers the leaders. (Davis, 2021)

Traits of Student Leaders

All participants expected various leadership traits, abilities, or characteristics for students to have displayed to attain leadership roles in their bands. Overall, participants focused a large portion of time in each interview describing important traits expected of their student leaders. Meaning units of *Traits of Student Leaders* are experience, social interactions, service, ownership, influence, performance ability, and moral character. Moral character further included comments of grit, integrity, and empathy. Meaning units were occasionally connected to each other as well as other larger themes. When this happened, participants' comments were fully included to link the context of statements and support the full descriptive data of the participants' dialogue (Anney, 2014; Rodgers & Cowles, 1993).

Experience. The largest meaning unit is the participant's selection of student leaders based on a student's experience. Experiences underlie much of the leadership program and connect aspects of the participants' history, process development, training, and potential changes to the leadership program. In vivo initially set experience as the most prominent theme with meaning units of respect and performance ability. However, after line-by-line coding and code-recoding, experience was deemed a meaning unit of *Traits of Student Leaders* as it often contributed as a part of other themes and meaning units. Even still, experience in various situations was deemed necessary for student leadership positions. Several directors spoke directly to the experience of time in band as a factor to attaining leadership in the program while others described essential experiences required to become a student leader in their respective programs.

Participants in this study rarely allowed first-year students to be on leadership teams. This does not exclude first-year students from leadership teams since some may enter from another school system with marked leadership abilities, but time in a program develops experience. Time allowed students the ability to earn respect needed to be effective in leadership roles. Mobley considered why experience is necessary and, as skilled as a young student may be, they need time to develop the respect of all their peers and the directors over time.

We have an outstanding freshman that is clearly going to be a leader one of these days. We can see what they could be in the future. They are going to apply, do all the paperwork, have the interview, and all of those things expected of our leaders... We see that kid has a lot of potential because they're a good musician, they show up to everything, they're on time, and always prepared. They've got their stuff together... We don't necessarily move them, as a freshman, into something like a drum major spot just

because there are so many other students that we feel like are probably better qualified because they have more years of experience. So, for me, it has to do with where they're coming from in terms of experience, and that kind of equates to what grade they're in. (Mobley, 2021)

Protzman spoke directly to the importance of student leaders developing prior experience through their time in the program.

We're looking for as much experience as possible with those top leaders. It is almost always juniors or seniors since they have been in the program for a while. I like the idea, especially in marching band, where you're earning your leadership spot in all the rehearsals prior to when you become a leader. (Protzman, 2020)

Cook considered time in conjunction with a previous meaning unit, pre-existing knowledge, from *Student Leadership Application Methods*. "When we go to pick the section leader out of the elected leaders, that is almost completely our pre-existing knowledge... that's almost always going to be a rising senior" (Cook, 2021). Time in the program does not necessarily develop leadership experience, but it does allow the directors and students' peers to see who may be best suited for leading different areas in the band.

Pisarra viewed experience from a standpoint of prerequisites to continue in a leadership position. "From a qualification standpoint, if a student has served as an assistant student leader, then they're probably going to be able to either continue that role or to move up into the lead role" (Pisarra, 2020). Mobley also described the importance of experience as a prerequisite to becoming a student leader in comparison to how students and their families may look at their future after high school. He described that students pursuing these goals often work backwards to ensure they have experience that prepares them up to attain the goals they have set.

They start to see, ‘Okay, if I want to get into college, I probably need to have some good things happening in high school. If I want to go to college, I’ve got to work backwards from that.’ So, the students, and/or their parents, have kind of figured out, ‘I need to have some things that I can go to as experience’ (Mobley, 2021).

Allshouse reflected that the motivation to seek leadership is different, but students “need to have experience, whether it’s performing in a large venue or just understanding what it’s like to go through the (leadership training) process” (Allshouse, 2021). Similarly, Hillock considered one of the reasons students may seek leadership in the band is partially based on a love for the program. When expanding on this description, he said it is difficult to define. “... just like kids are in band for different reasons, kids choose to be a student leader for different reasons as well...the older kids realize they are getting stuff out of (band), and they want to put back into it” (Hillock, 2021).

Warfield considered the consistency in participation an important factor in experience. Students who leave the band program for a time would have missed experiences. This could prohibit their effectiveness as a leader to the peers who continued through the program in their absence.

There can’t be any dip in participation or enrollment, because I don’t want to set the precedent that a student can be ‘kind-of’ in band as a freshman, not be in as a sophomore, join back in the latter part of the junior year, and then their senior year, they say they are all in. There must be a consistent level of participation there. (Warfield, 2020)

Lipman also reviewed a student’s “long-term commitment, experience, and maturity” for leadership (Lipman, 2020). He mentioned outliers to ensure students with effective experience outside of his program could have similar opportunities on his student leadership team if needed.

I'm not going to ever box myself in where we wouldn't put somebody in that was young or new or good. For example, if I were a senior having to move in from a program that I was going to be drum major in and I'm coming here, I might feel a little insecure at first where I didn't know everybody being a leader, but it's not rocket science. If it was a kid that was good enough to be a drum major in another program. I mean, we're going to give them that consideration and respect because it's a huge win for us to have them moving in. (Lipman, 2020)

Lambert developed a larger leadership team based on his past experiences. He described several new opportunities to become involved and serve in the band program. He considered it part of his responsibility as the director to cultivate more leadership traits in students and listed one reason he made the change to include more students on the leadership team.

The worst thing that I've ever done is told someone, no, they can't be a leader. I've learned it a couple of times, but whenever I have kids show even a remote interest in leadership, I try to find a place for them. If I go back over my career, some of the kids that I regret losing the most are the ones who were trying to find a path, and I closed the door. (Lambert, 2020)

Davis allows opportunities for more student leadership through a different method. Veteran students can be assigned to a mentorship program for younger band members. These students are chosen based on their experiences in the band to help younger students. He considered these veteran students as "few with titles, but we see that everyone has a leadership role to offer" (Davis, 2021). Davis also changed the way some of the leadership team is selected based on past experiences. While drum major auditions and selections continued to occur in the Spring of the previous year, he moved the leadership selection of section leaders back into the

fall band camp. This allowed all students, including incoming freshman, to select some of the student leaders who will represent their section. Waiting until all students were part of the program in the fall semester also ensured there was a greater investment into the program.

Once you get kids into band camp, about week two, they're all in. There's enough of the process for them to see it through. So, it was easy to have that sense of disappointment for those who didn't get selected tempered a little bit more, because by that time, they knew who their little brother or little sister was. It wasn't done on paper before the band even met for the first time like we did back in the spring. It just seemed to be a more seamless example of, 'It's not about the title, it's about the action.' (Davis, 2021)

Participants all experienced student leadership themselves and some developed programs reflecting their past experiences. In developing a new structure in the Homestead leadership team, Warfield considered his past experiences as driving his current decisions, "almost everything this year is driven by what I've been through before, because that's what I'm used to and the most comfortable with" (Warfield, 2020). While past student experiences may shape current structures in a band program, this does not indicate the only reason a program may change or remain the same. "I think we're all a combination of our life experiences" (Allshouse, 2021). Experience is considered a descriptive term exhibited through participants' statements in all the meaning units of *Traits of Student Leaders*.

Social Interactions. Interactions with various social groups was the second largest meaning unit coded for valuable student leadership characteristics. Participants described the importance of communication, peer to peer interactions, student to director interactions, and community engagement. Communication was considered a key component to leadership by several directors.

Protzman stated, “communication is key, and the more you can communicate and have dialog open, the better things go” (Protzman, 2020). He concluded the relationships and social interactions are some of the most important factors in leadership. “I think for me, my approach to leadership has changed as I’ve changed. As I’ve become older and done more study of people who have run great programs and things of that nature, it’s funny, though, because it always comes back to relationships” (Protzman, 2020). Protzman connected the need to develop relationships and communication to the beginning of developing student leaders in their training.

... for some of our older students, the skills related to marching band have become second nature. We have to make sure we are delivering correction to other students the right way. Even with our section leaders, sometimes they don’t want to be wrong. So, when a director corrects them and offers them feedback, we need them to realize when a director is giving you feedback, they’re doing it with good intention to make you a better performer or person... Students can be very difficult on themselves and some of our kids will shut down if they feel like they’re not performing up to your expectation. You have to work them through that. (Protzman, 2020)

Communication is also one of the three traits Lambert considers from the onset of the training and selection process. “We look at content, character, communication. What kind of person are you, how much information do you have to offer, and how can you present that?” (Lambert, 2020). He further connected the importance of developing communication skills in the leadership training process.

During a regular year’s student leadership training, anywhere from seventy to ninety students will attend Wando’s band leadership training camp. That’s when developing communication skills may become a focus for the camp. It goes through some form of

these: improving character, improving content, improving communication. One of those aspects. It's dependent on where I feel like their personality is and where our program is at the time... every year you kind of have to slide the needle left or right with where you want to focus your training. (Lambert, 2020)

Pisarra considered the social interactions students have with their peers as a valuable trait which can be complimented by students with other strengths. "Sometimes I have a really good communicator that's not as good of a player, and then on the opposite side, we may have a really good player who's not a good communicator. If I can get both of these students into the leadership mix, they can balance each other out" (Pisarra, 2020). Positive peer relationships also allow student leaders to maintain respect in addition to a sense of forgiveness. "... if the relationships, the friendships, are strong to begin with, then there's probably a lot of grace given by those younger members to their section leaders, at least temporarily" (Pisarra, 2020).

"... their interaction with their peers, is very, very important" (Allshouse, 2021). Peer interactions and developing positive relationships are an important factor because it can determine a student leader's ability to help and influence other students. Lipman considered social interactions as the first indicator of potential student leaders and it must be noticeable from the top of the leadership hierarchy.

... probably the first thing that we look at is the way that they interact with their peers and just the relationship that they have with their peers. So, are they approachable? You know, they don't have to necessarily be liked, but do we see them making an effort to reach out and to get along with the students that are maybe in the highest band and the lowest bands. There's an accessibility component to it. We want our drum majors to be really accessible. We want them to be people that our students feel comfortable going to

if they have a problem or question. And so, that gives the drum majors a lot of ability to be able to help the band. (Lipman, 2020)

It is important for positive social interactions to develop early in the program. Inclusion into the program is one way some directors increase positive social interactions. Mobley described a training experience during the audition process for potential student leaders. This is where social interaction became a key component to observing the potential student leader's abilities in communication.

A teaching experience [expected of student leaders] is observation of the kids' teaching. We typically have some marching band training in the spring for incoming students and, for a portion of that time, we have all the leadership candidates take a group of students. We, as directors, split up and watch each student teach while we have a checklist of things that we are looking for. We'll look at the kid's teaching tone of voice. Are they moving around? Do they explain things clearly? Do they interact? Are they positive? Are they energetic? Just some kind of, is this student going to be good in front of other students? (Mobley, 2021)

Hillock also explained the importance of peer relationships and communication from the time they enter the training process and accept leadership responsibilities. It is also necessary for the director to set clear expectations from the beginning to ensure student leaders can reflect these experiences to their peers. He portrayed this through how he described leadership to his students.

... For some of you, there's going to be a honeymoon period and then you're going to get in the trenches at some point. You're going to realize that this is not all glamor. This is hard and it's not always fun, but it's necessary and it's beneficial.' Now that's more in

relation with working with their peers when you're in rehearsal and sometimes the stuff that happens after rehearsal or before rehearsal. Dealing with that stuff and working through it. (Hillock, 2021)

He expected student leaders to communicate with each member in their section as students were preparing for the upcoming marching semester. "... it's their responsibility to make contact with [their peers], especially the new ones, incoming freshmen. They need to check with them... so that the new students don't get totally shocked and overwhelmed that first day of summer band" (Hillock, 2021). Allshouse also mentioned communication between students as a necessary social interaction to ensure students are aware of all the events throughout the semester.

They all have group chats and communication lines open with their sections. I have a general one for the band, but then I basically tell the section leaders if somebody doesn't show up in your section, it's their fault. So, they need to make sure they get the information and make sure everyone knows. (Allshouse, 2021)

Davis also found that communication in several forms will ensure the information is distributed to everyone.

We use this philosophy with my staff that anything we do or anything we communicate that our goal is to have ten different forms of notification. Ten different forms of communication. As you know, the more ways we can diversify and give more students information from different sources, they are going to get it and they're going to respond. (Davis, 2021)

Cook further corroborates the communication students have with each other as one of the best means to convey information. He described the importance of being an effective

communicator for the drum majors during their regular operations and interactions with the band. While there are several methods of communication, Cook emphasized they limit individual teacher-to-student communication. He provided direction on how to only communicate with a student appropriately if needed and in accordance with the correct permissions and approvals.

When it comes to disseminating information, like all high school bands, we have found that almost without exception, the most efficient way to do that is at the kid level. Also, we're smart enough not to be texting students. I'm not afraid to text drum majors and say here's the message, the drum majors text the section leaders, the section leaders text the squad leaders, and the squad leaders text the masses. We do that all the time, but I am sure to get permission from the drum major. The only point of contact from adult to kid is (director communication with the) drum majors. And it's an important piece of that to get parental permission. Get in the right to be texting those students. (Cook, 2021)

Cook related the social interactions from student leaders to peers and incoming students as being a positive leadership cycle for his program. This focus helps develop future leaders by allowing them to see how their peers are selected for leadership roles.

There's almost a political nature to [leadership selection] being political in the most positive sense. The kids who want to be student leaders, like they campaigned for it. The way they campaign for it is by being nice and trying to be an effective teacher, trying to be motivating, and be focused on their peer's success. So, you get this overall positive cycle because the kids who are leaders are doing it right, and the kids who want to be leaders are also doing it. (Cook, 2021)

Protzman considered the importance of including younger students on the overall leadership team to continue developing a similar cycle of leadership. This helps train younger,

potential future leaders by allowing them the opportunity to contribute without having as much responsibility as the section leaders or upper leadership team.

I think if you always have a leadership team that's mostly seniors, every year you're starting over. On our larger leadership team, we could have sophomores and they won't become one of the top two section leaders until they are juniors or seniors. They have been through the program and they have learned to develop. (Protzman, 2020)

Some directors have made changes in their program's student leadership team to consider social interactions. Warfield reflected on one reason for changing the Homestead band program's student leadership team from a senior-only group. He described peer interactions as a key factor in his student leadership team. There were students who held a title of leader, but the peer relationships were not working effectively in the leadership positions. "... we had gotten to the point where the seniors that were leaving, at least a majority of them, were never the ones that were ever in a position where they could lead their peers" (Warfield, 2020). When considering the future student leaders, peer relationships and self-determination were what Warfield noticed in students interested in being leaders.

Out of their sections, [the upcoming leaders were] the ones that have risen to the top.

There were a couple of kids that surprised me, but I think that they just weren't given an opportunity to be given the chance to rise up to the top or to explore with that leadership part of the program would be. (Warfield, 2020)

Lambert also reviewed one of the reasons he adjusted the Wando band program's leadership team to see how student interactions were important to developing the band culture. He described how students are viewed by their peers as one reason the Wando band program

leadership team may be larger than other bands. Lambert made a change to the program to open the leadership team to better represent students throughout the band.

I probably would have been a proponent of keeping a very small leadership team and making it special until I saw that it was just very exclusionary and it didn't represent all of the faces and the people in our program. That's why that changed. I wanted each kid to feel like they were represented by somebody relatively directly. (Lambert, 2020)

Hillock considered more than just the relationships students have at the time but how those interactions will change over time. He wants students who are more introverted to become more comfortable in front of their peers while he expects extroverted students to be willing to step back to do work that does not always get attention. This benefits the student's growth in different leadership methods. It also allows the rest of the band to see how he expects student leaders at Jenks band program to become more aware of their strengths and how to grow as leaders.

There is that working relationship where they're in this together: they're working towards this goal together. Here are some people that are experienced that know what to do.

We're going to help you. At the same time, we're going to do more than we did last year.

We're going to up the ante and everybody's going to get to grow. Those two things are happening at the same time: there's both that pure relationship and the opportunity to lead. But it is also that humility and being willing to do the dirty work. If they're not going to show up to help move props but they'll do something where everybody's going to see them working. That's hypocritical. So, both of those earlier aspects are in there.

Some kids are wired that way naturally and other kids wired a different way... We want

both and, like I said earlier, they can be wired in different ways, but we try to push them out of their comfort zone and make them as well rounded as we can. (Hillock, 2021)

Social interactions are difficult to justify for a director to use as a means for determining student leaders, but they are important for students to be effective in their responsibilities. Mobley mentioned that while peer relationships may be subjective, they do play a role in determining student leaders.

How their peers view them... that's more anecdotal than anything else. Do we see the student socializing with others? I mean, it can be as simple as just our observation at the end of the day. When the students come in and put their things away, are they in a corner all on their lonesome or are they talking with the other students and just kind of hanging out? (Mobley, 2021)

While there may be subjectivity in how social interactions are perceived, Allshouse said he is looking for how students interact with each other and how the student's actions are being perceived by the directors. "... I try to look at the whole package and see what's going on in their lives. I'm trying to see how they interact with things" (Allshouse, 2021). Mobley uses social interactions as a catalyst to better understand students in the leadership interview process. This may be in regard to why a student did not try out for a leadership role or it may be to get an idea on the student's perceptions of how their peers see them.

If there's a student that I noticed that has done a great job, it's kind of like, 'You didn't try out for leadership, I think you ought to give it a shot.' But that also comes into the interview as well. We can talk to that student about what their experiences are like with others. We can say, 'Okay, how do you think your peers view you? Who do they think you are? Do they see you positively or negatively? Can you give us any examples of any

interactions you had with your peers that would help us to know that they think that you're cut out for this.' So, that's a chance for us to kind of sit down and just ask them directly. (Mobley, 2021)

Students may struggle with their regular social peer interactions if they enter a student leadership program. Protzman empathized with students willing to become student leaders because it separated them from their regular peer interactions. He considered the challenges students face when becoming a student leader and how helping students make this leadership transition should be part of leadership training.

I think when you're in high school, you're around those people so much. If you look at a high school kid's day, they are in our school there from around 7:45 to 2:30. During that time, they're just a friend with those kids. Then, all of a sudden, right after school for two hours, they have to become a leader of those kids. So, that's a tough balance. When you're asking a 16 to 18-year-old to be in a situation where they're separating themselves from their friends as a leader, yet, you know, their friends are still viewing them as their friend in the same person they've been goofing around with since middle school. I think that's really challenging. And I think sometimes we don't focus enough on in the training that helps the student. I kind of view it in my head like they end up stepping in between the directors and their friends and that could be a tricky place to navigate. (Protzman, 2020)

Social interactions were not just part of some participant's audition/application process for student leadership roles; developing social interactions were a way for participants to engage students in a larger skill needed for life. Prior to audition interviews, Davis explained the significance of social interactions as a life skill they work to develop in the band program. He

reinforced the importance of how the student leadership team can demonstrate how students should deal with conflict and resolution not just for the band's success, but for working with others throughout life.

I think it's important to give a baseline meeting for all the applicants before you have ever selected anyone so that they understand the job that they're applying for and to discuss, 'What do you see as important leadership traits?' So, they can start seeing that about themselves. We have weekly meetings throughout the season, and that's mostly to keep the leadership team focused on the mission at hand: to keep them in a positive reinforcement role rather than being in an authoritative, competitive role. That and to teach life skills along the way. You're going to have conflict. How you deal with conflict resolution as a young adult? Rather than using your thumbs to type something on social media, go talk to somebody. Probably in the last five years, I've seen more of that and we've talked and tried to teach our leaders, and the entire band, that your one big family. But you're going to get on each other's nerves, and here's how we don't destroy each other from inside. Instead of using social media, just go talk to somebody. They need to learn how to have conflict resolution. (Davis, 2021)

Lipman mentioned he talks about leadership traits with his father who had extensive experience in leadership programs. Their discussions about leadership traits are often "about character, honesty, and good communication" (Lipman, 2020). Lipman described experiences he had early in his life and emphasized the importance of non-verbal communication skills and respectful attitudes that are valuable throughout life.

My family are cranberry farmers and they retired from the business seven or eight years ago. We sold off our farms and we don't grow any more, but I grew up working a lot of

the summer and the fall on the farm. A lot of the workers that I interacted with on the farm were very fatherly to me because I was this little kid that was there. It's a formative experience that I remember. There was a man that was a Vietnam vet and worked on the farm. He used to sit with me on his lunch break and talked a lot about values that he had picked up. You know, the values were simple: when someone speaks to you, you look at them in the eye. When someone speaks to you, you look at them to listen. He talked about the importance of being on time for things, not because it was about you, but it was about someone else. I feel like, probably for us (as teachers), some of our most basic leadership traits go back to when a student is in your class, do they have good eye contact? So, eye contact has been an obsession for me my whole life. I'm not perfect at it, but I'm cognizant, and we expect the kids to be. Then their listening skills, and that was something that I didn't realize when I was little how much that was going to affect it. There is a military influence [at Claudia Taylor Johnson] and there is a southern influence as well and I think that's just wonderful. I'm not into brainwashing kids and I'm not into turning them into robots, but I do like that there are those Southern values. I like when I watch our parents teach their students the importance of manners because it gets respect going in such an early age. Although I didn't have 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' I did have some of those guys that were down on the farm that taught me things that I think were in the same vein as that, and I'm pretty grateful for it. (Lipman, 2020)

Service. "Servant leadership is a form of moral-based leadership where leaders tend to prioritize the fulfillment of the needs of followers, namely employees, customers and other stakeholders, rather than satisfying their personal needs" (Canavesi & Minelli, 2021, p. 1). Acts of servitude, followership, mindfulness, and/or a willingness to help others were coded under the

meaning code of service. Most participants mentioned Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser and/or Scott Lang as influential to their band program's leadership program through their focus on a servant leader's attitude. Other individual's ideas were also utilized based on the servitude or the followership traits in their leadership programs. Traits of service were often connected to the themes of *Student Leadership Application Methods* and *Student Leadership Training*. Service was a trait participants focused on developing in potential student leaders and continued to cultivate as students engaged in leadership responsibilities.

“For me, servitude is one of the most important characteristics. I want to see someone that's willing to give of themselves for something bigger than the individual” (Davis, 2021). Davis made a point to give all the credit to Scott Lang for helping him develop aspects of their leadership program. Pisarra also incorporated aspects of Lang's focus on service as an influential component in their selection process and training procedures. Lang considered one way students show selfless acts of servitude is by completing service projects. Service projects allow the directors to see each student's initiative.

We also require them to do a leadership-based project... a service project is primarily what it is. The caveat is that it must fit inside the school rules. They find something that needs to be done or served... We want you to take the initiative. We don't want to give our ideas of what should or could be done. This is a chance for us to see your initiative. Where do you see the need in a program, even if it's six through twelve or something in the community. Something [where] you can make a difference. (Davis, 2021)

Several participants described the connection of service to their application process. Hillock described his rationale for a service project lets students get “in that frame of mind where they're contributing a little bit of a selfless attitude and have humility” (Hillock, 2021). A service

project requires students to develop other leadership skills needed to plan and organize an event while instilling a service mentality.

I asked them to plan out a service project. I let them know early. It needs to be selected over the summer and the next year they look in the area that they feel like they could do a service project. It doesn't even have to be for the band even, but they should figure out how much it would cost, how many kids would be involved, along with anything else necessary. (Allshouse, 2021)

Hillock's overall rationale for their application process developed other traits of experience, social interactions, and aspects of moral character. The service project can offer an opportunity for students to cultivate these traits.

First of all, the whole application process is a pain, and it's intentional. If you're not willing to do all that stuff in the application process, you're not going to be a good student leader because it's just as much work. But then, the project is how creative can you be or are you just going to go the same route as before. We've had lots of kids come up with a lot of creative ideas that are good and then we've had some really lousy ones... they can learn from both. (Hillock, 2021)

Mobley listed how a service mentality was part of the interview questions in the application process. This allowed students to reflect on their service experiences. He further emphasized how students serve and interact with each other could influence their peers' perspectives before the leadership title is earned.

At the core of things is understanding how to help others: how to serve others. We always ask the students in the interview, 'Okay, why would you like to be a student leader?' And they say they want to help others or because my section leader last year was amazing and

I just want to be like that. I think those are all good things. We can use that. As we've all said, we want to help others. Let's apply that. If we're going to help others, let's figure out how we help others. How we treat others is a big part of helping them. I mean, you just treat them right. You treat them with respect and kindness. Bring them into our program and make them feel included. You're doing a lot, and you haven't taught anything. But you've interacted in a way that makes others feel important and special. And that's really, really important in a successful program of any kind: that everyone can feel included. (Mobley, 2021)

Davis described the students as unknowingly auditioning for leadership roles since they first entered the band. "[Students who give] some of themselves to offer and serve the rest of the group is something that we look for, even before they get to the high school" (Davis, 2021).

Allshouse also valued the service of younger students as an indicating factor that could lead to a future leadership position. "We actually only allow kids to be student leaders their junior and senior year. Sophomores can volunteer to help out on things, and if they volunteer... they're getting on the radar" (Allshouse, 2021). Hillock connected the pre-existing knowledge of peer social interactions as another reason students should be mindful of serving. He separated them as a "pure relationship and the opportunity to lead" (Hillock, 2021). He portrayed servant leadership as "humility and being willing to do the dirty work" (Hillock, 2021).

Students should understand the importance of selflessness as it can offer a life-long skill beyond their years in band. Cook emphasized the importance of students being willing to help each other and the student leaders should be the models for this behavior. Older students should provide the best example for younger students to follow. These qualities are expected by his leadership team to show service to future leaders.

We tell them, never just put a kid on their dot. Don't just grab a coordinate sheet and put them in their spot. Teach them how to read the coordinate sheet. You know, it's the 'give a man a fish' idea. So, I think we preach that to our student leaders in every scenario. Help the kids succeed long term. Don't just take the shortcut that gets the immediate result. (Cook, 2021)

Lipman listed more specific ways service is an important aspect in the band program. He restated how the leadership roles are not only for the highest performer. Students best contributions to the band are often based on the methods of servant leadership. Lipman said students have approached him saying,

'I don't know that I'm section leader material, but I'm really good with uniforms,' or 'I'm really good with making copies and organizing the music library.' I think in our tradition, it's maybe been the kids that are not at the top of their class, but looking to be, that weren't necessarily the best players that felt like they could do a lot to serve in those roles. You know, 'I know that I can't be an [all-state performer]' ... but I'm really passionate about events' or 'I love doing volunteer stuff.' And so, that's provided anywhere from eight to ten additional students a really cool role where they can serve. (Lipman, 2020)

Lipman also described how his fall leadership team would continue to stay involved year-round in different capacities. This helped prepare students in all their concert ensembles to better understand the importance of service leadership and their influence throughout the entire band.

I remember the first four or five years we used to talk about 'What did the student leaders do after marching season?' We would sit around and feel like their roles died out. [Since then], we've been able to do a lot better with keeping them engaged year-round. We've

seen a big improvement in the lower bands and what the lower bands do because the higher bands are serving more and they're more active with that. And the upper bands get excited because they feel like there's more ownership in the program. That's been a really good thing. (Lipman, 2020)

Lambert considered his role in student development and the importance of including multiple students in service opportunities. "First is a desire to help people" (Lambert, 2020). He detailed a service leadership team intended to supplement the performance leadership team. The performance team was described as more of a traditional student leadership tier made up of squad leaders, section leaders, drum majors, band president, and other students who have been voted into a student leadership position.

The service leadership team is a little bit more designed for maybe the kids whose content, i.e., playing or marching ability aren't going to be as strong as others, but they still have a heart for service. They can be part of our logistics team. They're the ones that handle water at rehearsals. Any time we have to set up or tear down. They handle it. Like when we do indoor concerts, they handle the programs. They handle just set up tear down the chairs. We've got a group called the music mentors. They go to the middle schools and work directly with middle school kids. We actually just started one now called community outreach where they're going to nursing homes with chamber groups. What's cool is with the service leadership each year I opened it up, I say, 'If you've got a team, you want to start, let's do it,' and we've started one each year for the past four years. We've got social media. One is an electronics crew and all that they do is they take care of all the speakers and all the sound equipment for both marching band and jazz band. Those are the kids that maybe they're not going to be in the top bands and maybe they're

not going to be a section leader, but they're still great kids who want to serve. So, if you want to lead, I want you to have an outlet to do that in our program. (Lambert, 2020)

Some participants mentioned the idea of service in the student leadership team developed a change in the way their processes and training was implemented. One of the reasons Cook decided to incorporate voting into his student leadership selection was to put the impetus back on the students and their decisions. When the students are given the chance to have a say in the decision making, he found most students, whether they were elected leaders or not, had more of a servant leadership focus when they were around their peers.

Years ago, we just picked. They applied so that we knew who was interested, and then we picked. That did not work at all because it built resentment in students and towards the teachers, which isn't positive. But with the election process with students... [voting] doesn't lead to that same kind of resentment... in fact, it leads to kids working to be kinder to each other and to be servant leaders, even in those cases, where they are not elected leaders. So, if I'm a freshman in the band and someday I want to be section leader, well, then I'm trying to be kind to my peers and trying to show that I'm dedicated and have all those skills that will make me a good leader. (Cook, 2021)

Mobley reflected on his past experiences in service which provided opportunities for him to instruct students on how to be better leaders.

I was an assistant band director for eleven years before I was ever a head director. I'm more weighted towards being an assistant. By that, I mean I haven't been a head director as long as I've been an assistant. So, being a good assistant, being a good helper, I think has allowed me to be a much better leader in this position. I wish that's something that more students could understand. If they're not going to be the drum major, they're not

even going to be a section leader, they're going to be a squad leader, then be a good squad leader. Learn what you can from that section leader. Learn what you can from the drum major. We talk to the students about that. Nobody is just instantly in charge overnight. It's a growth process. (Mobley, 2021)

Protzman described a training program through William Mason to develop some leadership-type qualities in all students.

Our school district, our high school in particular, is a really highly diverse ethnic community. And I guess before I got there four or five years ago, they were trying to figure out, well, how do we represent everybody? The building has what's called a culture team and I'm on that currently. The students as a whole, two or three times a month, get exposed to some leadership skills. So, everybody in the band actually has a little bit of leadership training just through the school. (Protzman, 2020)

Even though the school may offer some leadership training, Protzman considered the specific needs in a band program and how these skills should be taught. He focused on service as one of the first traits emphasized in the band leadership training. "We basically start with the Dr. Tim approach... [through] the servant leader idea" (Protzman, 2020). Protzman explained how the service leadership method provided scenarios for the students to work through that engaged them in serving. "I think when they enter the leadership team, a lot of times they haven't had direct experience with the concept of being a servant leader. But then, they rarely come in and become right and completely in charge; they have to spend a year experiencing that" (Protzman, 2020).

Warfield reflected on what he considered effective student leaders prior to the changes he made in to include more students in the leadership application and training process. He

considered the effective leaders in the previous senior classes to maintain the service traits deemed necessary for future student leaders.

The leaders, for me, were the seniors who were driven to see success happen within the program. By that, I mean students making sure the younger kids knew their music, or the students who were willing to go help out other students who were struggling with drill, choreography, or whatever it may be. The students who were more about the community, for me, those were the biggest. Even thinking about the students that I have in the roles for this upcoming year, all of them have those traits. (Warfield, 2020)

Warfield researched books and materials of Dr. Tim Lautzenheiser, Scott Rush, Scott Lang, and motivational speakers like Simon Senik as he described a new approach to leadership training and selection. Most of the ideas Warfield was incorporating into developing his new leadership team curricula was servant leadership based. He described the focus of the upcoming leadership team as a group of students “all about future success, all about community, all about helping their friends” (Warfield, 2020).

Ownership. A sense of student ownership in the band program was a necessary student trait mentioned by all participants. Some participants described a natural sense of ownership in a band program due to the time, resources, and effort spent by students. The idea of student ownership is distinguished in this section as it does not always focus on student leaders specifically, but may involve all students in the program. Student leaders would typically participate in a program for a period of time, and they would have seen previous student leader’s contributions and the ways ownership may be exhibited in their band.

Ownership and influence were occasionally intertwined. Therefore, it is important to make a distinction. While first year students could be stakeholders and have a sense of ownership

in the program, they may not necessarily have the same influence as veteran students. All students may attain a sense of ownership in a band program, but not all students may have yet achieved influence depending on their age or experience in the program. Ownership can be developed through student contributions to the program even if they do not hold leadership responsibilities. Ownership also includes the tiers of leadership to show younger students the array of ways they can contribute to the program. The meaning unit of ownership included other codes of empowerment, student engagement/involvement, and leadership roles through in-vivo coding, line-by-line coding, and code-recoding.

Several participants considered the different ways students can contribute in their positions. "... there are kids who dedicate themselves to the program, but they maybe just don't have the skills to be that head leader. We can at least give them a place that they can contribute" (Protzman, 2020). As Pisarra described his leadership tier and the number of student leaders who were typically accepted based on the size of the section, he also stated, "if we have a lot of high quality people that we know will do well in a leadership role and that their section would benefit from them, we might include more" (Pisarra, 2020). If more leaders are utilized, it is important for students to know their expectations and responsibilities if there are other student leaders in the same section.

I'm deliberate about defining who the lead is in the sections. What we found over the years is when that's defined, those kids know where they stand, what they're responsible for, and who they need to report to rather than just saying we have three section leaders. I have simply found if they know up front, then they're going to perform better from the very beginning in their leadership role. (Pisarra, 2020)

Ownership in a band program can also be achieved through experiences in the selection process. Through a rigorous application and audition process, Hillock and his staff select the student leaders. “Early on, when we were defining student leadership, we told the band, [leadership] is not a popularity contest” (Hillock, 2021). He and his staff decided all the students needed to understand the expectations from all leaders. “We’re not going to grow if we’re just doing a popularity contest. So, we need people that are willing to do the work, the hard work, and help us gain the benefit that’s going to come from it down the road” (Hillock, 2021). He recalled a time a student completed a service project to describe how service can develop a selfless attitude, responsibility, and ownership.

For a while, I just gave them a free bound, like, ‘Think of something, something that you think would benefit the band.’ We use the word project. So, you get you get a variety of stuff. There was one kid that bought pencils, sharpened the pencils, and gave every kid a pencil. They put it on everyone’s stand so they’d have them for rehearsal. When that was all done, I said, what did you learn from that? They said, ‘I was picking up a lot of pencils after rehearsal.’ We laughed, but they eventually understood that they took responsibility for something that the other students should be responsible for, and that’s not what the leader does. You’re trying to get them to take ownership for what they’re supposed to be doing and inspire [others] to do more. (Hillock, 2021)

Some directors increase ownership in their overall program by incorporating student votes into their student leadership selections. Cook considered this a way for all his students to have more decision-making in the program. He connected ownership to the previous meaning unit, service.

One of the reasons we went to voting is to preempt that. ‘So, you’ve got an objection with this kid. Well, you voted for them. So, if you don’t feel like you made the right vote, think about it for the next year.’ We definitely wanted to put the impetus back on the kids so that they would consider who they wanted giving them direction and who can help them be successful. Years ago, we just picked. They applied so that we knew who was interested, and then we picked. That did not work at all because it builds resentment in students towards the teachers, which isn’t positive. But with the election process with students, [it] doesn’t lead to that same kind of resentment. In fact, it leads to kids working to be kinder to each other and to be servant leaders, even in the students that are not elected to be leaders. (Cook, 2021)

Lipman and Davis also provided student voting for some leadership positions to gain the input of the student’s peers. They mentioned the students often arrive at the same conclusion as the directors. “... it’s amazing how [the students] tend to lean towards the same people that we do. We always feel pretty good about that” (Lipman, 2020). “I’ve been amazed that, even through a long application process, the students select the same kids that we do. It just helps us justify those same decisions” (Davis, 2021).

Drum majors and section leaders were often the focus of participant conversations when discussing student leaders. Since these students have invested more into the program, the work of a student leader can create a deeper sense of ownership. Cook emphasized the importance of setting the top of the student leadership pyramid with exceptional students. The daily operations and work of a drum major and section leaders in his program allowed these student leaders the opportunity to work in a unique way.

Our drum majors are selected on how well they conduct, which seems so odd when you then put them at the top of the leadership pyramid, but then, being a drum major here is ... like being a graduate assistant at a huge college marching band because that's what we are. We are the size of a huge college marching band... [Unlike larger cities], we are in small town America. So, at a marching band practice at our school of three hundred seventy-five, there's three band directors, a couple of percussion instructors, a couple of guard instructors, and nobody else. There is no trumpet tech, flute tech, clarinet tech, or any of those specialists. So, these student leaders are getting real boots on the ground by having them to help us. (Cook, 2021)

Lambert used student peer reviews to assist in the leadership training process as well as developing ownership throughout the band. Peer reviews allow all students in the band to have a sense of ownership. It allows students who may not normally voice their opinions to have an opportunity to share their individual perspectives.

We just started that two years ago. We usually do peer reviews at the end of September and then again around March when people are looking to do leadership the next year. [Peer reviews] can be tough. I set it up as a Google doc and the kids do have to give their name, but I tell them that the students reading it will never know who they are. We try to give very directed questions, not 'Is this person a good leader?' We ask questions like, 'On a scale of one to five, how well does this student control their temper? Give an example. On a scale of one to five, how helpful has the student been? Can you give an example?' [The questions are derived from] some of the original ideas of content, character, and communication... I'll tell them if you have one student that has a really negative review, you can kind of gloss over that. If you have three, you need to think

about it. You might say, ‘Well, those three friends really hate me because of some reason.’ That could be true, but that doesn’t make their impression false. You need to look at the example that they gave. That has been powerful for us. It’s also been powerful for the followers in that they have a say in the program. (Lambert, 2020)

Several directors increased involvement in their programs to engage and empower more students in the overall band program. Mobley increased the student leadership team to involve more students like the system he experienced as a student leader. Warfield also mentioned developing a leadership team similar to the his past experiences. In reflecting on his history as an educator and leader for larger music organizations in Tennessee, Cook described the importance of a person’s willingness to do what others aren’t doing. By creating a program or helping in a way others aren’t, ownership becomes the default mindset for those active individuals.

I always try to look at ways where we can fill gaps, like one thing is not being talked about or done in the band profession that isn’t already being covered by some other group. I think that’s a good lesson for student leaders and all of us as humans. ‘How can you step in and help where no one else is,’ or ‘How can you address the problem no one else is addressing?’ (Cook, 2021)

Lambert increased his leadership team to incorporate the service leadership team to cultivate ownership throughout the band. “... we felt like we were going through this whole time and there were strong freshmen that wanted to be a part of it, but they didn’t really have an opportunity” (Lambert, 2020). Davis developed the big brother/big sister program to empower more students and foster ownership regardless of titles.

We would have really good candidates and say, we were going to take three trumpet section leaders, but there were maybe eight kids that were all really good quality

candidates. We felt rather than just designating a title after their name for those first three, that we need to empower those other students because they have so much to learn and so much to give. And it will help them grow as a young adult to do this big brother/big sister component. Without a doubt, it certainly gives kids more sense of ownership, even without a title and a sense of ‘Here’s my role and my job inside the big structure’... We try to empower as many kids as possible, whether they have the title or not, to be engaged... Where they can make a difference in a large band without having the title of being a section leader... Having that older student paired with a younger student, they become more responsible and gives them a sense of ownership... Because there’s a longevity of excellence that the program, the younger kids don’t want to let down the older kids. So, they feel this sense of ownership, even at a younger age, to produce and to honor the heritage and the tradition of what’s been there before them. (Davis, 2021)

Lipman considered an often-overlooked area in young students and how older students can empower younger students to set a more accurate trajectory to achieve their goals. Young students often consider the goal, but have difficulty understanding how to attain the goals. With direction, he expects student leaders to model how to achieve goals and be the ones that are responsible for passing along this idea to younger students in the program. He named books by John Maxwell and Stephen Covey that have influenced the students’ decision making.

Jim Collins’s book, *Good to Great*, was the other one that I felt like as we were trying to get stronger as a program. How do you make finals for the first time? How do you put together a concert that puts people in tears versus getting applause that families give out of, you know, because that’s their kids? What is it going to take to get to that level where

people are adoring what you do and they're falling in love with it. We've always approached it from that standpoint with the leaders. You've got to get the right people on the bus. You've got to have a plan. What does your plan look like? ... You say you want to go win. You say you want to go make finals. You want to go make all-state. Well, what does that take?... [Students] have a hard time articulating exactly what it is, and that's where our leadership focus starts. It's filling in the gaps for them so they have the tools. You want to win a regional? What does that look like for your fourteen-year-old kid in the flute section. What does it look like for a kid in trumpet? What are you doing to try to get it so that you're going to be able to win a music trophy or win a marching trophy. That's the hardest piece. Kids will say all the time, 'We want to win, we want to place, or we want to do this or that,' but then they don't know what it takes to get there. So, we hope that the student leaders are not only able to model that, but they are the individuals responsible for that. (Lipman, 2020)

Increasing ownership in the leadership program changed some of the participants' application and selection processes. Davis recalled a beneficial change which has empowered all his students. The entire band, including incoming students, have ownership through selecting some of the leadership team.

In the past, we typically set the band leadership team in the previous year right at the end of the spring semester. That's when our auditions and results of who are section leaders were sent out. Then about five years ago, about the time we started doing the voting with the students, we held that over to band camp. That way, no one was designated as a section leader through band camp. We want to see how students interact and who those natural leaders are that rise to the top on their own. There are those that will kind of rise

to the top because they think that they get to take charge of things, be assertive, and be aggressive. You know, that never works. So, it ends up working out about that middle of second week of band camp, that's where we'll do the vote with students. By then, we pretty much already know the students that have proven themselves, and there's the slate that we would pick. They are almost always identical from what the students pick to what the staff does, in addition to the applications and their experience. (Davis, 2021)

Several participants spoke of the importance of experience and how their leadership positions are often held by upperclassmen based on their ownership. However, some participants experienced a negative side to having the oldest students in leadership roles. Allshouse stated, "When I first came here, if you were a senior, you automatically got to be a student leader. That was a pretty big change that I made in the program" (Allshouse, 2021). Warfield experienced a similar situation. "Before it was, 'if you were senior, you were considered a leader,' and that was it" (Warfield, 2020). Neither participant spoke harshly toward previous director's decisions. Warfield was even part of the previous director's staff. However, they noticed deficiencies in the senior-only leadership model when they entered as head directors. Warfield reflected on why he made the change in his program.

I remember during the third week of band camp one year, so our final week of camp, we were working on putting music with the drill. And that's the point in time in the year, like with most band directors, when it starts to fall a part because for younger students, they are just not getting it. They are having a tough time marching and playing. The upper classmen, they get it. They're used to it. But it's a struggle for the younger ones, which is natural. But there was no push at all. And I felt like it was myself and my colleague doing a lot of that. Almost all of the, 'Come on, kids, let's go, let's do this.' We were the ones

keeping the energy and the drive up. I remember then that I said to myself, 'If for some reason I'm in the position that I'm in now, there's got to be something different. We have to do something different'. That was probably the biggest motivation for revamping.

(Warfield, 2020)

Allshouse and Warfield both described how more student ownership was necessary for the plans they had for their programs. They adjusted their respective student leadership teams to represent the student leaders who were best for the future they had planned. Both participants expected a greater amount of ownership from their student leaders. "Now, I can pull [the student leaders] aside or meet with them before or after rehearsal and just put the ownership on them to get the work done" (Warfield, 2020).

Ownership in the band often increases the longer a student participates. However, not all programs offered leadership opportunities throughout the year. Lipman and the staff realized there was a lacking in leadership during the spring semester, so he extended student leadership engagement throughout the entire year to help younger students see older students as models in the non-marching activities. While the older students have an opportunity to help younger students, they have also invested more in the program. Younger students could experience the increasing sense of ownership, investment, and dedication by extending leadership opportunities.

The marching band, although it's the most visible, owes what it does entirely to what the what the five concert bands do during the year. So, those section leaders really manage their sections for the spring and through solo and ensemble contact. I remember the first four or five years at the school we used to talk about, what the student leaders do after marching season. We would sit around and feel like their roles died out. I think over the second five, six years since the school has been open, we've been able to do a lot better

with keeping [the student leaders] engaged year-round. I feel like that makes a big difference when we get into the marching season because they've got great models during the whole school year. We've seen a big improvement in the lower bands and what the lower bands do because the higher bands are serving more and they're more active with that. Also, the upper bands get excited because they feel like there's more ownership in the program. (Lipman, 2020)

Influence. All participants described influence as a necessary characteristic for effective student leaders in their programs. Influence was often noticed through experiences in other areas of social interactions, service, and ownership. The previous meaning unit, ownership, was distinguished from influence through involving all students in the program. However, students that have a sense of ownership do not always have the influence to inspire and engage other students to action. Influence is focused on leaders who have been given a title and the effect they may have on others.

My college band director was very thoughtful and inviting. He felt like everybody should be on the student leadership team if they had some years of experience. His whole thought was, 'Everybody can lead somebody' ... all they need is some direction and some influence. He was the first person that made me realize that leadership was just simply influence. It's not directorship. It's just influencing people. I remember his leadership team was always very unique. He could find great leadership skills in some people who didn't even know they had it! (Lambert, 2020)

Past experiences and teachers have influenced each participant. Some teachers provide quality role models while others may serve as warnings of negative actions. Influential people in both situations offer valuable learning experiences.

We all learn by positive example and we all learn by negative example. You know, we've all had teachers or peer leaders who were not the best at their jobs, and there's lots to gain from that too. While I've learned a lot by the positive examples, I can also think of multiple people who I think, I don't want to do it that way. (Cook, 2021)

Directors should be patient and understand how other factors interact with influence.

Lambert considered several characteristics of effective leaders. He moved the focus back to how influence is often connected to social interactions in peer groups.

You know, the maxim is nobody cares how much you know unless they know how much you care. And that's a clichéd speech because it's true. It's very true. When I think back, I've had some great teachers and I've had some terrible teachers. Now, what do you classify as terrible? Were they not smart? No. They were very smart. They just didn't care whether I came or left. I've had other teachers that maybe didn't know their content as well or whatever, but they cared a lot about me. So, there it is: that relationship piece. You know, this is tough. I said the kids who have talent get thrust in those leadership positions fast, but they sometimes don't last because they're not able to understand why others can't play something that way. You just do this. They sometimes struggle. So, there's no one characteristic that really even outweighs the other. You have to have a pretty good mixture of all of those to make it go; creating those relationships and building trust. (Lambert, 2020)

Student leaders are expected to be a positive influence to inspire younger students. "We talk to the leaders and explain that you're supposed to be a good example and you're supposed to have a positive influence on them. So, if these younger kids are wanting to take part in doing that, then you're doing the right thing" (Hillock, 2021). Directors don't necessarily need to

directly tell students the exact characteristics they are looking for in their leadership team, but students can observe this from other leaders exemplifying these traits. “It’s not something that we say out loud and intentionally, like, ‘Okay, you need to think about being a student leader when you’re a junior.’ It doesn’t happen that way. Really, it’s being a good example: a positive influence” (Hillock, 2021).

One of the most influential times for student leaders can be during the marching season. “The marching band is where we need their influence the most” (Pisarra, 2020). However, influence may be a trait directors may have difficulty teaching when developing young students into student leaders. “Influence is the one thing that’s usually lacking most with younger leaders. They know the right things, they do the right things, but they can’t quite yet influence others in how to do that. We work on that probably most of all” (Lambert, 2020).

Influence was often described as closely connected to peer interactions for student leaders. The difficulty with teaching influence could be in how peers view the student leader. Protzman considered a student’s social interactions and how service could develop influence with peers. “. . . we want to see what their interactions are like with other students. We talk a lot in our student leadership training about servant leadership” (Protzman, 2020). Warfield’s newly formed leadership team had a focus on influence through service. The impetus for his program change was from not seeing enough positive student influences in the band.

One thing I often ask in an interview is, ‘Why do you want to be in a leadership role? Why do you want this job?’ Many times, I think I heard it three to five times this year alone, was they hearken back to when they were younger and they would name their section leader and say, they were awesome and they wanted to be just like them. So, if we can have student leaders who are in a more visible in a very positive, influential way to

where their younger peers want to be like them in the future, I think I naturally look for that. (Pisarra, 2020)

It is important to consider the changes of students as they mature. While Allshouse recommended directors consider students who have a positive influence, he cautioned it should not be the only reason a student is placed in a leadership role. Sometimes, students need time and direction to develop into the leaders a director wants to influence their program.

I do think you have to be careful selecting student leaders because kids change a lot. We could have a kid be [really difficult] their freshman year...and then they end up being your drum major when they are older! You know, sometimes they end up being your best ones because they know how to relate to the kids. So, we do look at potential, but we would never put a kid in a leadership position just because of that. (Allshouse, 2021)

Allshouse also encouraged directors to consider why students act a certain way. "I used to shy away from the overaggressive kid. I would immediately write that person off. Whereas, now I try to look at the whole package and see what's going on in their lives. I'm trying to see how they interact with things" (Allshouse, 2021). This allowed him time to consider the most influential leaders for his students. "The best student leaders aren't always the oldest kids; they are the most mature kids, and that isn't always the same. Sometimes there are freshmen that are the most mature, but I think it's hard for the freshmen to be giving instruction to older kids" (Allshouse, 2021).

The idea of followership could help students gain a better understanding of how to develop influence. "The better job you do following, the better job you're going to do as a leader because you understand what good following looks like, and you can help others to do that. That

perspective helps” (Mobley, 2021). Lipman also reflected on the importance followership has on a student’s ability to influence.

You know, a leader is only a leader because they have followers. We are looking at the students that have the respect and the following of their peers. You can see it... The other kids really look up to them. They go to them for advice. They want to be like them. Sometimes they even dress like them if it’s a trend. They have others following them.

(Lipman, 2020)

Students also recognize influential peers who can offer the best qualities of leadership. The pre-existing knowledge of a student’s abilities is not only influential for the director’s decision. Peer reviews and voting for leaders can offer insight into students who have influence in their peer groups.

There’s an assumption that if the kids are elected, they are probably pretty dedicated, and they usually are! As our band has got more nationally competitive, we have found that the kids take these elections more seriously. It’s like a straight up continuum. (Cook, 2021)

Hillock often tells his students a story about when their program was in the initial phases of developing their student leadership team. He reminded his band as well as alumni of how bad decisions can have positive outcomes. The influence of past leaders, whether it is positive or negative influence, has the potential to shape the future of a program.

There was a certain class around when we were starting up this new leadership program. I had some pretty bad examples and there were some poor choices that were happening. A situation happened and some leaders didn’t show up for rehearsal for a major event, and the [other] leaders that were at the rehearsal were livid. They came up to me and we

talked about replacing them for that event because they just didn't want to be at the rehearsal. When [the missing student leaders] showed up to load up, I was with some of the directors, and we told them they needed to go on home and this was an unexcused absence. Of course, I contacted the parents and told them what happened. That was really a turning point with our attitude and our work ethic. After that, things started getting better... As bad as their decision was, and as tough as it was at the time, if they hadn't made that poor decision, some of future successes would have never happened for us. So, it gives them ownership, even to the kids who made the mistake. When they contact us or show up to something, and it's been years since they were in the program, I remind them that their poor decisions have made our program better. That has a positive influence on a regular kid, but it's even more special when a kid is a student leader. They have that additional responsibility where they're investing more. They are also lucky enough to get the return personally, but then they can see it down the road as well. (Hillock, 2021)

Performance Ability. All participants described performance ability as a necessary leadership trait. Dedication to improving or maintaining a high musical aptitude is expected of all student leaders. Participants considered the importance of a student's abilities allowed them to earn respect through performing as a reliable example for peers. Performance ability was often connected to other traits. It was an observed trait and could establish positive experiences with respect, peer relationships, communication, dedication, and influence.

Performance ability is a way for students to earn respect and show the ability to lead by example. The first leadership trait Pisarra described was exceptional musical aptitude.

We are looking for a lot of different things, but we are looking for musical skill. We prefer that the students who are going to be in leadership positions have attained a high

level on their instrument, mainly because we want them to be one of the best players for their peers to respect them. Sometimes you can have a student who is a little bit weaker on their instrument but is still a really strong leader and could serve in a leadership role. However, sometimes you need to set the bar pretty high so that that student can really lead by example from an excellence standpoint. (Pisarra, 2020)

Mobley also identified the same rationale. "... musical ability is up at the top of the list" (Mobley, 2021). Student leaders are often expected to perform and lead through their abilities. "You want that kid to be a pretty good player... there will be times where they have to lead the section musically" (Cook, 2021).

Pisarra connected his focus of a student's performing abilities to the traits of communication and peer interactions. Once students have established positive peer interaction, "they need to be skilled on their instrument so they can model and coach" (Pisarra, 2020). Hillock also viewed the ability to set a high standard of musicianship as necessary to support positive peer interactions. Respect from peers may be weakened without the student leader's ability to provide quality examples as one of the better performers in their section. "They have to be a good musician. We found that they might be a good, quality kid, but if they can't play their instrument, their peers see them as, 'Are you sure you should be telling me what to do right here?'" (Hillock, 2021).

Musical ability is an important part of being effective at leading peers in marching band. However, dedication to exhibiting a high level of skill was often what participants wanted students to experience. "They don't necessarily have to be the best, but the ones who were really dedicated, making themselves the best that they can possibly be" (Warfield, 2020). Student leaders should show a trajectory of continual improvement in their performing abilities.

[A trait] that's really important is their level of musicality and their musicianship. A kid that has worked really hard to move up the ranks, but they never made all-state, they are certainly going to be given the same consideration as somebody that is in all-state... they don't necessarily have to be the best player, but they need to have shown that they're putting in the time to master the craft. (Lipman, 2020)

Performance ability can be an indicator for student leaders, but individual students bring different skills into the leadership team. Allshouse expected student leaders to have strong performance abilities to gain respect through modeling skills. However, he made a distinction where musical abilities are not the only skills necessary to be effective at leading. "We talk with the kids a lot to say that the best player isn't necessarily the best section leader. Those are two different skills. Sometimes they overlap and sometimes they don't" (Allshouse, 2021).

Protzman also values performance ability, but made a similar distinction. "Our student leaders are not always our best musicians. However, when we're building a leadership team, we do like to have some really stellar musicians in it, but that's never our first indicator" (Protzman, 2020). Davis further noted how there is more to being a student leader than just musical aptitude. "Throughout time we realized that having musical proficiency is very important, but it's not the most important aspect" (Davis, 2021).

Lambert considered the ability to perform at a high level is necessary if students are going to be part of a performance-focused leadership team. When asked about traits of student leaders, he commented, "I would tell you the easiest is performance ability. The kids who perform very well get noticed early" (Lambert, 2020). However, some students have great influence but may not have the strongest performance ability. Lambert described how it can be problematic to put influential leaders who do not have the strongest performing abilities in front

of their sections to feature performance skills. Their influence could diminish if they are unable to provide leadership through performance in a performing ensemble.

I've had times where the kid is just a wonderful human being and loving and empathetic but just not a very good player. I want them to be a leader in a certain area, but they can't be the section leader. I've made that mistake before where I've said, 'This is just the best person.' However, when you put a kid up in front of others and they have to teach and talk [to their peers] about playing and they're not in the top two or three, it can be devastating to them... There are kids who I want to be leaders: some of the best human beings I've ever met, and I can't find the right fit for them. They can do a lot, but just not the best at any one of those things. They're just a good all-around kid. I feel like it's my job at the end of the day to find the right opportunity, because all it takes is that one time. (Lambert, 2020)

Moral character. Several participants listed moral character as a trait needed to attain leadership roles in their band leadership teams. Exceptional student character was described by some participants as one of the most important traits. Other moral character traits coded were grit, integrity, and empathy.

A student with exceptional character was deemed as the most important attribute a student can offer. Hillock stated character directly as the most important quality. "There are three things that we really want from our kids. Number one is character. They have got to be a person of quality character" (Hillock, 2021). Davis considered the roles and responsibilities of his student leaders. For his student leaders, character-based skills are some of the most important traits to support their program's culture.

The most important characteristics for our section leaders once they are selected is not to be the teachers, though they will run their own sub-sectionals and such with director approval. The most important things they do are strengthen culture, morale, believing in the mission, philosophy, and just being great kids when they're on tasks or when they're not. Most of those characteristics that you hear me describe, very few of those are actually musically-based. They are character-based. (Davis, 2021)

Pisarra did not anticipate students without strong character to make it past the initial steps of auditioning for leadership roles in his program. He later proceeded to list related traits which accompany strong character in leaders. "Our application process lays out the expectation is for high-caliber character all year-round... Beyond that, reliability, dependability, punctuality, and consistency are extremely important" (Pisarra, 2020).

Several participants described individual aspects of moral character. Allshouse listed aspects of students with quality character. He looked for "... somebody that has a teachable spirit, truthful, humble, that truly wants to be helpful to others" (Allshouse, 2021). Lipman recalled times he spent discussing leadership with his father. Moral character traits were often part of their conversation. He stated that they "... always talked about character, honesty, and good communication" (Lipman, 2020). Protzman reflected on the importance of a student's moral character through a different description. While organization and communication are necessary traits to Protzman, students seeking leadership roles are expected to have "... a lot of humanity. We want really good human beings in those positions" (Protzman, 2020). Cook mentioned a specific moral character in his student leaders as it pertains to peer interactions. "They need to be nice kids and they need to be the kind of kid who is drawn to help their peers. We certainly watch that in marching rehearsals all the time. Are they nurturing in their help with

one another?” (Cook, 2021) Lambert provided a much more detailed description of how character is a quality necessary for leadership teams.

First is a desire to help people, [second is] valuable information, and [third is] the ability to present that information in a respectful, effective way. It just starts with, ‘Hey, I’d like to try this.’ Number two it’s, ‘I am good at this aspect of music or band or humanity.’ Then number three, ‘I can express that in an effective, thoughtful manner.’ So, that’s the three aspects of it. The other side that is we look at character, content, and communication. What kind of person are you, how much information do you have to offer, and how can you present that? For the kids, when I say, I’m looking at your character, they don’t quite understand what that means. They think, ‘Okay, if I’m a good kid, then I can do it.’ That’s not it. Honestly, some of my best leaders were not great kids in the traditional sense. Sometimes my best leaders were the ones who were kind of troublemakers, who knew exactly what to watch for, and they were perfect at it. They knew that balance of goofing off and getting work done. There’s desire, ability, and communication, but the real answer is their character, their content, and their ability to communicate. (Lambert, 2020)

Grit. Grit was described by a few participants as a leadership trait in different ways.

Participants described grit as an attitude or behavior of resilience, perseverance, or dedication through or after challenging situations. Some directors made short comments related to the theme of grit while others explicitly stated grit was a necessary trait of student leaders.

“We’re not looking for a kid that’s never messed up. When a kid makes a mistake, how do they move on from that” (Allshouse, 2021). Protzman explained to his potential student leaders that their “ability to roll with changes is really important” (Protzman, 2020). Cook

described how a student's grit through dedication is noticed by the directors as well as their peers.

I think the kids that we notice are earmarked for a higher level of leadership are usually kids who show dedication through challenging circumstances. If I'm a kid who's got a lot of AP classes or I get a job at a supermarket and I've never missed a band practice and I'm still making all district band. I'm doing all these things at a high level and making band one of my top priorities. I think that mindset is the thing that rises to the top for us. (Cook, 2021)

Lipman focused on the importance of grit specifically as a key aspect as students need and can work to develop.

After we go past [peer interactions], I would say probably the kid's determination: their grit is important. Their ability to bounce back from setbacks. If they set a goal and you watched. Maybe they don't get a chair placement they want, or maybe they don't make region band. They may make it one year, and then they don't make it the next year. We're looking at the resilience factor... It's determination. One of our other band directors would use the phrase 'hold the point.' It is the idea of a hound dog that would hold the point through gun fire and [remain] locked on to a target. It could hold the point. That has never left me that when things get difficult: that student leaders hold the point, stay calm, and maintain respectfulness. (Lipman, 2020)

Davis related grit to a life skill students learn in band.

We want to help them with their life skills along the way. We use band and music as an opportunity to help them grow in those life skills and, more than not, I think we're doing the right things. That we're helping these kids along the way and getting them to learn

more about themselves on their own. If they can identify what some of their own personality flaws are, we can grow in that and learn from that. We're all going to make mistakes, but how they learn from them along the way. It says a lot about their character and what they can offer each other even beyond their high school years. (Davis, 2021)

Lambert told a story about a student with grit and perseverance and how this mindset created a trajectory for the student's life. He considered his role as a band director as someone to encourage students to develop grit and follow-through so students can achieve more than they thought was possible.

I'll tell one story about a person I know who was a wonderful player and a human being, but they always ended up last chair when we did auditions. You know, the first year I was like, 'Okay, that's kind of strange, but whatever.' Then the second year, they did the same thing. And I pulled them aside and I said, 'Are you throwing this? What are you doing?' They said, 'I cannot play in front of other people and can't speak in front of other people either.' I'm telling you that story in about 30 seconds, it took us about 15 minutes to get them to say those words. And so, we started this process of where they would come into our office every day after school. It was in the last period of the day, and they played one note and then walked away. I won't say anything. You don't say anything. Just come and play. Leave when you feel like you can play two or three notes, do that. When you feel like you can play a scale, do that. It took us a year! It took us a full year from September until March, really closer to May, where they could come in and say, 'Hey, do you mind if I play this section for you?' The next year, they ended up in our top bands. Went from last chair to our top band. But the reason I bring them up is because now they are the marketing director for a university. Their job, every day, is to go out and talk to

people. And if we hadn't taken the time to get them to find their voice, I just wonder where they would be. I know there are other influences in their life besides that; don't get me wrong. But I also know, and they've said it couple of times, that it was a turning point. They never thought they would be able to do it, and then when they found that they could, it was pretty powerful. So, I think whenever kids show interest, I think it's up to us as the directors to try to do our best to find that. (Lambert, 2020)

Integrity. Integrity was coded through in vivo coding in two participant interviews. Davis described the integrity of student as an innate part of their personal character. He expects band to be part of developing any student's integrity regardless of their leadership status in the program.

We often tell our students when we have a meeting with anyone that's interested in applying for that next year's leadership team... 'Your integrity of who you are is something that we very much notice. Life is an audition, and you've been auditioning for this role since you first picked up your instrument in sixth grade band.' You can't just flip on a switch and become a different leader than who you are as a person. Now you are going to grow and you're going to mature. Hopefully we are going to have some influence on teaching you some leadership qualities and skills. But those innate characteristics, you know, that 'it' factor. Those kids that really stand out. (Davis, 2021)

Lipman also expected his students to incorporate integrity throughout their daily lives. He listed other traits related to integrity he wanted all his students to attain.

We want our student to have integrity on and off the campus. Being in a more affluent community, the students are exposed to any number of opportunities and temptations to have access to things that maybe they shouldn't. Are they making good choices on and off the campus? Are they making good choices in their math class and in their English

class? Does the English teacher think that they are as great for them as they are for us? I don't want our leaders to just be great in band. We want them to be ethical, responsible, moral, and respectful people all the time. (Lipman, 2020)

Empathy. Two participants described empathy as a person's ability to view how another individual may interpret actions or interactions. Allshouse did not list empathy directly, but he did explain how he expects empathy to be displayed by his leaders through peer interactions.

The best player isn't necessarily the best section leader. Those are two different skills. Sometimes they overlap and sometimes they don't. They need to appreciate each other and what the other brings to the table. (Allshouse, 2021)

Out of all the attributes students may need to become effective leaders, Lambert considered empathy and how people show empathy as a necessary trait for any leader. "I think some of my non-negotiables are empathy, relationship, and trust. On the other side of that, some of my very negotiables are performance ability, even some of the other character traits or the communication skills" (Lambert, 2020). Later in his interview, Lambert described empathy in conjunction to how it fits into the social interactions that develop and sustain influence. Empathy in leadership is necessary to maintain positive relationships and trust.

You know, the maxim is nobody cares how much you know unless they know how much you care. And that's a clichéd speech because it's true. It's very true. When I think back, I've had some great teachers and I've had some terrible teachers. Now, what do you classify as terrible? Were they not smart? No, they were very smart. They just didn't care whether I came or left. I've had other teachers that maybe didn't know their content as well or whatever, but they cared a lot about me. So, there it is: that relationship piece. You know, this is tough. I said the kids who have talent get thrust in those leadership

positions fast, but they sometimes don't last because they're not able to understand why can't you play it that way. You just do this. They sometimes struggle. So, there's no one characteristic that really even outweighs the other. You have to have a pretty good mixture of all of those to make it go; creating those relationships and building trust.

(Lambert, 2020)

Culture

The development or continuation of a program culture was a theme encompassing all prior themes. Each participant experienced a band culture as a student, and various leadership strategies were used by their directors to determine student leaders for their respective programs while participants were in their early formative leadership years. Most participants had different experiences as student leaders and may have seen the benefits and deficiencies of differing leadership styles. All participants also spoke to the development, continuation, or evolution of their band's student leadership program and the selection criteria. This includes the application process, leadership training procedures, and desired student leadership traits. All major themes were determined and directed by each participant's effort to instill and maintain a culture to sustain success for the program's future goals. The underlying theme of culture will be discussed further in the final chapter as it pertains to the essence of this qualitative research.

Summary

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to research ten selected band directors' rationales in determining their high school band student leadership qualifications and abilities, the methods used to increase desired leadership abilities in high school band students, and the character traits observed in high school band student leaders. Findings presented four

themes common to all participants supported by individual meaning units. The initial theme, *Past Experiences*, provided each participant's involvement in a leadership programs prior to their current position and how these experiences prepared them to work with students in different capacities. The second theme, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, provided information on how participants cater their application for their respective band program. A pre-existing knowledge of students' abilities supported several participants' decisions in the outcome as well as potential changes to the application methods utilized. The third theme, *Leadership Training Programs*, focused on catered opportunities, continued instruction, and intrinsic training. In the fourth major theme, *Traits of Student Leaders*, each participant considered qualities expected of leaders. This theme was delineated into meaning units of experience, social interactions, service, ownership, influence, performance ability, and descriptions of moral character. The fundamental aspect connecting all four major themes and related meaning units was each participant's intentionality to instill a culture in their band program. Culture describes the essence of how nationally recognized high school band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs, and will be discussed in the final chapter.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications, Recommendations, and Conclusion

Essence: Culture

The overarching concept encompassing all four major themes was the development, evolution, and/or preservation of a marching band program culture. Culture is the essence of how participants in this study determined student leaders based on the findings in my research. Upon reviewing memos from Cook's and Davis's interviews, the idea of culture development reframed my perspective on the themes. This led to additional code-recoding of all interviews to determine the influence culture may have on each participant's experiences. The following note from these interviews became foundational to re-examining the essence of culture within each participant's interviews and understanding the convergence of major themes.

Part of their culture is trying to instill a culture of leaders throughout the band program... work to develop young adults knowing, as an adult, they will likely be a leader of something. That seems like one of the greatest things that you can do for students... they are creating an entire culture of leaders. (Posey)

An understanding, awareness, and perception of culture was noticed in all stages of the participants' experiences with student leadership from their youth throughout their current positions as head directors. Culture in a program may be derived from numerous facets. However, this study focused on participants' experiences with student leadership. Within this scope, culture connects all participants' histories through their own unique experiences. Participants' cultural schema in each of their respective programs influenced their personal

philosophies on leadership styles, how the student leadership program functions, and influential qualities of leaders.

Culture in leadership styles. The coexisting association of transformational and transactional leadership styles was identified as common practice for each participant. Participants maintained the long-term focus, decision making, and hierarchy within the program to assign daily operations which connects to Atasoy's (2020) research on the administrator's role in the school system. Transactional leadership exists between the leadership hierarchy from the director to students as well as from student leaders to peers within a tiered program structure. Directors also engaged student leaders to work alongside them as transformational leaders to maintain influence at the peer level. Directors worked as transformational leaders to inspire, instruct, and engage student leaders to become transformational leaders who influence their peers. Protzman confirmed this through the importance of social interactions. "As I've become older and done more study of people who have run great programs... it always comes back to relationships" (Protzman, 2020). The interaction of maintaining the structure of the program with transactional student leaders as well as having younger students influenced by transformational student leaders provides evidence to show a continuous progression of culture development.

Participants implemented similar structures and available leadership positions within their current programs that they experienced as a student. Lashway's (1995) description of transactional leadership as "flowing from the top down" (p. 2) can be seen through several participants' accounts as a necessary part of the student leadership programs' function. Pisarra confirmed this stating when hierarchies and accountabilities are defined in the student leadership team, "...those kids know where they stand, what they're responsible for, and who they need to report to... if they know up front, then they're going to perform better from the very beginning in

their leadership role” (Pisarra, 2020). Several student leadership positions were not necessarily intended to make major decisions but to maintain the efficiency of the program culture. Similar to the findings of Brewer (2009) and Davison (2007), participants assigned and dispersed various leadership positions to sustain the regular operations of the band program. Lipman established part of his leadership team to focus on “the roles that we needed to run the program” (Lipman, 2020). While a core group of designated student leadership titles were described as drum majors, section leaders, band presidents, and vice-presidents, participants often expanded or reduced the student leadership team based on the size or needs in the band. “It’s nice to have the multiple tiered leadership because there are kids who dedicate themselves to the program, but they maybe just don’t have the skills to be that head leader. We can at least give them a place that they can contribute” (Protzman, 2020).

All participants relied upon their past experiences to prepare them for navigating their first years of teaching and changes that occurred throughout their careers. Having applicable formative training connects to Woods’ (2017) research encouraging interactive collegiate courses to prepare music education students to enter the teaching field with practical competencies. The perception of how participants engaged in leadership as students influenced several participants’ understandings of how band culture can be developed. Lambert reflected on what one of his previous directors said, “... everybody can lead somebody... all they need is some direction and some influence” (Lambert, 2020). This corroborates Jackson, Meyer, and Wang’s (2013) description on how to engage, inspire, and motivate through leadership. While Lambert involved more students to complete the operational activities in the band, the same students also had influence within their respective peer groups and contributed to growing a culture of inclusion within his program. In reflecting on his previous leadership teams, he explained, “...it was just

very exclusionary, and it didn't represent all of the faces and the people in our program... I wanted each kid to feel like they were represented by somebody relatively directly" (Lambert, 2020). Warfield also considered his past directors' application expectations and shared similar opportunities for his students to contribute through the leadership team. "... if there's a student out there that's like me, then I would want them to have a chance" (Warfield, 2020). Each participant's history in student leadership has developed a schema for which leadership styles best fit their program, the positions available, and the students who may best serve in those roles.

Culture through program functions. Essential elements are necessary to ensure the unique culture in each band continues. One of the most important elements is developing a cycle of leadership and training to represent the culture. Descriptions of methods for developing leadership align with previous research (Barrett, 1950; Carraway, 1990; Jones, 2014; Gialamas et al., 2020). Training was a catalyst to develop specific leadership roles within each band's unique culture. As Warfield (2013) recommended, implementing practical training procedures ensured leaders were prepared for their position. All participants provided their students with relevant instruction within their bands' culture through experience. This aligns with selecting relevant training as described by Jones (2014) and Rush (2006). Cook explained that one of the most applicable methods to prepare students for leadership is their experiences in the program. "The time commitment and the national expectations of our competitive band have their own innate training associated with it... I would say that's informal, but that's the real training those kids get" (Cook, 2021).

Even with experience-based training, additional training was often created to ensure students understood what was expected from their program's culture so students were prepared to undertake the responsibilities. This concept aligns with DeRue and Wellman's (2009)

evidence of experiences developing skills and Leshnower's (2008) research on leadership training. Similar to Goodstein's (1987) study, one of the reasons several participants created or changed their leadership training is because "every program has its own unique personalities" (Davis, 2021). Each band program is as unique as its director. The leadership training should represent aspects of both. "There are things that I think are one-size-fits-all, but I think it's so deeply personal for the director" (Lipman, 2020).

The cyclical pattern of students training their peers parallels mentorship models described in previous research (Barrett, 1950; Carraway, 1990; Jones, 2014). Hillock informed his student leaders, "You're supposed to be a good example, and you're supposed to have a positive influence on them. So, if these younger kids are wanting to take part... then you're doing the right thing" (Hillock, 2021). Participants' experiences with mentorship and followership often align with Williams' (2014) portrayal of a leader who "... seeks to inspire passion in followers, to elevate their values and acceptable standards of performance, and to obtain the followers' agreement with long-term goals" (p. 18). Lipman corroborated this portrayal and delineated the evidence of leadership within the student. "A leader is only a leader because they have followers. We are looking at the students that have the respect and the following of their peers" (Lipman, 2020). Similar statements from other participants support the student leader's ability to have influence and maintain positive social interactions as described through the research of Siangchokyoo, Klingler, and Campion (2020) and Canavesi and Minelli (2021). When the director determines the methods for training students and the procedural functions, the cycle of leadership within the student program ensures the current band culture will remain until a change is necessary.

Culture establishing influential qualities. Participants spent a large portion of their interviews focused on leadership traits and how specific traits were necessary for their program. Participants corroborated Armstrong's (1996) leadership traits of experience, servant leadership, ownership, and communication. It is important to note that while Armstrong's (1996) research was focused on finding effective traits in music teachers, "the same qualities of effective teachers are the qualities we look for in our student leaders" (Rush, 2006, p. 101). Participants statements confirmed the importance of servant leadership, ownership, and communication with experience being deemed the most important leadership trait (Armstrong, 1996; Davies, 2003; DeRue & Wellman, 2009; Harrison, 2016; Hezlett, 2016; Janson, 2008; Preston, 2019; Rudaitis, 1996; Sutherland & Jelinek, 2015). Based on the findings in this study, experience within other traits is fundamental for the influential traits to continue the program culture.

"For me, servitude is one of the most important characteristics. I want to see someone that's willing to give of themselves for something bigger than the individual" (Davis, 2021). This idea was echoed by several participants and confirmed the importance of servant leadership found in other literature (Armstrong, 1996; Greenleaf, 1977; Herndon, 2007; Hine, 2014; Jagela, 2019; Jones, 2014; Spears, 2004; Valeri, 2007). Herndon (2007) and Valeri (2007) acknowledged the servant leaders as those who have an impact on the culture(s) surrounding them. This confirms the importance of the servant leader's role within the band culture. The servant leaders' influence is within their ability to demonstrate and model exemplary actions (Jones, 2014). Mobley described the importance of serving in any capacity to appreciate the significance of leadership. "I wish that's something that more students could understand... Nobody is just instantly in charge overnight. It's a growth process" (Mobley, 2021). Another illustration supporting research in servant leadership in culture is Warfield's description of his

future leaders as being “all about future success, all about community, all about helping their friends” (Warfield, 2020). The service leaders demonstrate the attitude to continue developing a culture that will survive beyond their time in the program.

Attributes of servant leaders often move parallel to ownership, social interactions, and influence within the organization. These themes and traits can often intertwine as they all support different areas of culture development and correspond to Kouzes and Posner’s (2008) study on exemplary leaders. With respect to ownership, student leaders described by participants have a vested interest in the band program and its future. While part of this corresponds to Hine’s (2014) narrative of engaging students as stakeholders, not all students within a band program often have the same sense of ownership as the student leaders. Student leaders “have that additional responsibility where they’re investing more... but then they can see it down the road as well” (Hillock, 2021). With respect to social interactions, it is important to consider peer relations to ensure students are prepared to perform successfully within their leadership role. As Brewer’s (2009) research indicated, some participants mentioned balancing the social tensions that may accompany student leadership. In some situations, students “end up stepping in between the directors and their friends and that could be a tricky place to navigate” (Protzman, 2020). Positive peer interactions allow students to navigate changes within a hierarchical system. “It is essential that directors select confident and stable leaders and prepare those leaders for the social challenges that student leadership positions can bring” (Brewer, 2009, p. 9). Davis also addressed the difficulties of students leading their peers. He focused on using these opportunities to develop communication and teach student leaders life skills. “You’re going to have conflict... They need to learn how to have conflict resolution” (Davis, 2021). This corresponds to Burns’ (1978) description of groups of leaders and their ability to instill a positive working relationship.

The students' ability to work as transformational leaders to inspire change within their peers aligns with Rost's (1991) characteristics of influence. Siangchokyoo, Klingler, and Campion (2020) also ascribed to influence as an observable indicator to a leader's success. Service, ownership, social interactions, and influence all intersect in the student leadership team in a marching band. While participants valued some traits over another, this was what made their programs' culture unique and distinguished from other bands.

Implications for Professional Practice

Though ten nationally recognized band directors with similar expectations for their programs were studied, the findings should not be generalized to the population. The unique histories of participants and their programs' cultures distinguish them even though they have common lived experiences with the phenomenon. Participants often had their student leaders assist in developing a program identity and maintaining future success. This can offer various methods and procedures to increase the desired student leadership abilities. While the ideas and experiences described by participants can help a wide-range of readers, "every program has its own unique personalities" (Davis, 2021). Burns' (1978) description of how leadership may change with locations, situations, and expectations was evident in participants' descriptions of how their programs have developed and evolved into unique cultures throughout time.

Directors should observe their students' influence, abilities, and contributions to the overall program. Participants focused on getting the right student in the right leadership position, whether it was determined by vote or through numerous procedures to attain leadership roles. Directors should also consider engaging students interested in helping the program in other ways, especially if there are needs beyond the set leadership roles. "I think that's a good lesson for student leaders and all of us as humans. 'How can you step in and help where no one else is,' or

‘How can you address the problem no one else is addressing?’” (Cook, 2021). Students may see a need in the band program that the director may not notice. Lambert concluded his interview with this perspective. “Whenever I have kids show even remote interest in leadership, I try to find a place for them... I think it’s up to us as the directors to try to do our best to find that” (Lambert, 2020). “At the end of the day, we just want to develop better young adults” (Davis, 2021).

Each participant in this research experienced student leadership in different ways. This experience is critical for directors to consider if they are teaching students interested in pursuing a similar profession. Students pursuing music education should have opportunities to work alongside a director, observe other successful teachers in the profession, and experience leadership in some manner to see a more realistic perspective of what may be expected as a leader. “Being a student leader yourself... I think it helps to direct you on what you might want to do with your own program” (Allshouse, 2021). With respect to teacher preparation in the music education degree, supervising teachers and faculty should consider prospective teachers’ strengths and weaknesses. Woods’ (2017) perspectives on increasing program competencies could offer insight to ensure teaching deficiencies are minimalized or corrected. “The same qualities of effective teachers are the qualities we look for in our student leaders” (Rush, 2006, p. 101). Supervising teachers and faculty should ensure music education students are provided every opportunity to be fully prepared by offering a variety of teaching experiences, numerous high quality teacher observation opportunities, and positive mentorship programs with peers they can contact when they enter the teaching field. A goal of music education preparation should be incorporating young teachers in the band directing culture with supportive mentors and peers who can assist them throughout their career.

Recommendations for Continued Research

While there is considerable research in leadership as a general topic, my review of literature did not find any empirical studies on how band directors select student leaders. Several areas of research could be built upon the results of this study. Future phenomenological studies could interview directors that were not part of this study but have taken marching bands to Bands of America finals performance for Grand National Championship, Super Regional Championships, or Regional Championships. Including different participants with similar lived experiences could include additional experiences into the themes found in this research. More regional phenomenological studies could be carried out to interview winners of individual state marching levels. Related to this idea, a phenomenological study on band programs that win in a smaller sized band classification may offer a different director focus on student leadership selection.

Other types of qualitative research could also be developed and build upon these findings. An ethnography could allow the researchers to imbed themselves into the lives of some directors and their programs to observe the culture of the band program and how the student leadership program supports that culture throughout the year. A narrative study may investigate an individual or small number of directors over a longer time period to see how the student leadership program may evolve or cycle. A grounded theory study could collect data from student leadership programs, code similar concepts, develop a theory considering why directors select specific student leadership events, then test the theory to collect more data in order to support new theories. A case study could gather in-depth, detailed information about a specific instance in a band's student leadership program that may or may not be transferable outside of that band program's culture.

Quantitative methods could also continue research from the director's perspective of student leadership by gathering data from a larger group of participants with the intention of nullifying or proving an alternative hypothesis. Quantitative methods may provide several directors' responses to explain or describe parts of the student leadership program in multiple schools, investigate relationships related to directors and directors' selection of student leadership opportunities, or examine possible impacts or outcomes of directors selecting certain student leadership methods that develop or cycle the culture for band programs. Quantitative research may be able to offer more general data related to the population of band directors incorporating student leadership programs.

The mixed-methods approach of using both qualitative and quantitative methods may offer further depth to research. An exploratory mixed-method design may build upon the research from this paper. A survey could be developed using the findings in my research to search for correlations in quantitative data to support a more generalized conclusion within a larger population. Conversely, by utilizing a survey to initially gather information from band directors about their student leadership programs before incorporating qualitative research methods like interviews, an explanatory mixed-methods approach could provide data on the specific area of student leadership selection a researcher may be interested in learning from directors. A convergent mixed-methods design could allow researchers to gather both quantitative and qualitative data at the same time and triangulate findings from the combined data.

Since there is a lack of research on band directors' perspectives in student leadership selection, there are multiple possibilities to continue research. In addition to the various qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method opportunities listed to attain information from the

director, many assistant band directors and faculty leadership teams may work together to determine student leaders in their respective high school band programs. Some participants in this study made note of other directors that not only help in the selection process, but these directors may have a greater say in who is selected in specific sections than the head high school director that was interviewed in this research. All the previously mentioned methods could be expanded to gather data from the rest of the band faculty that work as a team in the student leader decision making, procedures to develop student leaders, and the culture that is being instilled in each band program.

Conclusion

This qualitative phenomenological study fills a void in current literature on student leadership selection from a band director's perspective. Participants' individual experiences were researched to consider the best student leadership qualifications and abilities for their programs, methods used to increase desired leadership abilities in high school band students, character traits observed in high school band student leaders, and experiences which may develop future student leaders for their respective band programs. A qualitative inductive research methodology was used for analyzing the interview (Alase, 2017). In vivo coding (Manning, 2017), line-by-line coding (Thomas & Harden, 2008), and code-recoding were used to interpret emerging themes (Anney, 2014; Chilisa & Preece, 2005). I adopted the Heidegger philosophy of describing the lived experiences of the participants through the interpretive process (Gearing, 2004; Heidegger, 1962; Laverty, 2003). Member checks (Koch, 1995), peer auditors (Rolls & Relf, 2006), and meeting the criteria of Guba and Lincoln (1989) as well as Whittemore, Chase, and Mandle (2001) ensured a trustworthy representation of the findings. Emerging themes report the

“common experiences of the participants” and provide the “essence” expected from phenomenological research (Creswell & Poth, 2018, p. 80).

Four major themes evolved while an overarching concept encompassing all themes emerged. The major themes presented in this research are the *Past Experiences*, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, *Student Leadership Training*, and *Traits of Student Leaders*. Meaning units of the *Past Experiences* described participants’ understanding of how prior experiences prepared them to teach and ways to develop new directions within their program. In the second theme, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, participants explained their procedures and expectations through leadership tiers, process criteria, pre-existing knowledge, and evolution to the processes. *Leadership Training*, the third theme, was narrated through catered opportunities, continued training, and intrinsic instruction. In the final theme, *Traits of Student Leaders*, participants described common leadership qualities of Experience, Social Interactions, Service, Ownership, Influence, Performance Ability, and Moral Character.

The overarching concept encompassing all major themes was the development, evolution, and/or preservation of a band program culture. Culture was discussed with respect to prior literature through preferred leadership styles, the programs’ functions through training, and influential qualities commonly found in leadership. The individual cultures within each program helped determine the necessary leadership styles, procedures, and traits expected for influential leaders. The participants’ experiences as a youth up to their current teaching assignments developed their schemata in culture that also influenced the program culture.

Band directors should understand their program’s unique culture and how their students’ individual abilities could contribute to developing their band culture if they plan to utilize student leaders effectively. This qualitative phenomenological study provides the perspectives of ten

nationally recognized band directors with student leadership to assist other band directors understand aspects of their student leadership experiences. Findings from interviews supported answering the central question,

How do nationally recognized high school band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs?

The major themes of *Past Experiences*, *Student Leadership Application Methods*, *Student Leadership Training*, and *Traits of Student Leaders* develop, evolve, and/or sustain the culture in a marching band. Based on the findings in this research, participants used experiences to develop student leadership programs that will cycle each band's unique culture into the next generation of student leaders in their program. Band directors can learn from the participants' methods of determining the best student leadership qualifications and abilities for marching band programs. Furthermore, participants provided valuable traits and several experiences for other directors to consider when developing culture within their own bands.

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Appendix A

Participant Invitation Email

Good afternoon,

My name is Ben Posey and I am a graduate student at Auburn University working on a Ph.D. in Music Education through the Department of Curriculum and Teaching. I am currently working on a dissertation which investigates how nationally recognized band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band programs.

Based on your past successes as a band director leading your bands in Grand National Finals performances in Bands of America, I would like to invite you to participate in my research study. Your experience selecting student leaders for your band programs could provide an important perspective for other band directors interested in developing or enhancing their student leadership programs.

If you decide to participate, I am planning on conducting an individual interview based on a mutually agreed upon time over a video conference program like Google Meet, Zoom, or a similar video conferencing program.

Because the focus of this study is to gather perspectives of exemplary professional educators with an established reputation in the field, I am requesting permission to share your identity through the data collected in this dissertation and for possible later publications/presentations. However, if you would prefer to remain confidential, I will make every effort to protect your privacy through de-identification of data. All data will be stored in a secure location. Please know that your decision to participate (or not to participate) will not jeopardize your relationship with your school or Auburn University. If you decide to participate in this research project, I believe music educators will be provided with valuable insight on best practices for student leadership selection from a highly respected director's perspective.

If you have any questions about any of this process, please contact me, Ben Posey, at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]. For more information regarding your rights as a participant you may also contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone at (334) 844-5966 or by email at hsubject@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

I look forward to speaking with you, and I would like to thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Ben Posey

Appendix B



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM & TEACHING

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

“A Phenomenological Study of High School Student Leadership Selection: Interviews with Nationally Recognized Band Directors”

You have been invited to participate in a research study investigating the lived experiences of high school band directors who select student leaders for their band programs. The study is being conducted by Benjamin C. Posey under the direction of Dr. Nancy Barry in the Auburn University Department of Curriculum and Teaching. You were selected as a possible participant because you meet one or more of the following participant criteria:

- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Grand National Championships within the past five years.
- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Grand Super Regional Championships within the past five years.
- Participants led their ensemble to a finals performance in the Bands of America Regional Championships within the past five years.

Participation. If you decide to participate in this research study, you will be asked to participate in an interview lasting approximately one hour to ninety minutes. The interview can take place at a mutually agreed upon time and location either in person or over a video conference program. The interview will be audio recorded. (Please see attached Audio Release Form.)

Confidentiality. By choosing to participate, you can participate by having your name and band organization’s name in the research or you can remain anonymous with no identifiers. You can select your preference at the end of this document. Your name and your band program will be used to reflect your national recognition. However, all participants are asked to refrain from naming any student, parent, or other individual that has not provided consent/assent to participate in this study. In the event where an individual that has not provided consent/assent to participate in this investigation is named, pseudonyms will be provided for these individuals so they may remain anonymous and unidentifiable in the research findings. Sections of the transcribed interview may also be removed to further secure confidentiality. The interview will be transcribed and information obtained through your participation will be published in the investigator’s dissertation. Participants will be provided with a transcription of their interview and emerging themes prior to publication. If you do not choose to participate, you should not initial or sign this form.

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AUBURN, AL 36849-5212

TELEPHONE:
334-844-4434

FAX:
334-844-6789

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Benefits. If you participate in this study, you will be contributing to research investigating the student leadership selection process from nationally recognized band directors: a topic which is not found in current research. However, I cannot promise that you will receive any or all benefits described.

Will you receive compensation for participating? There will be no compensation for participating in this research.

Are there any costs? If you decide to participate, there is no cost to you.

Participant’s initials _____

Page 1 of 2

Are there any risks or discomforts? There are no known risks associated with participating in this study.

If you change your mind about participating, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can also be withdrawn. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with Auburn University, the Department of Curriculum and Teaching, or the investigator.

If you have questions about this study, please contact Benjamin C. Posey in person, by phone at [REDACTED], or by email at [REDACTED]. A copy of this document will be given to you to keep.

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Auburn University Office of Research Compliance or the Institutional Review Board by phone (334)-844-5966 or e-mail at IRBadmin@auburn.edu or IRBChair@auburn.edu.

HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.

Participant's signature

Date

Investigator obtaining consent

Date

Participant's Printed Name

Investigator's Printed Name

Appendix C



COLLEGE OF EDUCATION CURRICULUM & TEACHING

AUDIO RELEASE FORM

During your participation in this research study, “A Phenomenological Study of High School Student Leadership Selection: Interviews with Nationally Recognized Band Directors”, you will be audio recorded. Your signature on the Informed Consent gives permission to do so.

Your signature on this document gives permission to use an audio recorder so the researcher can accurately transcribe the conversation for research analysis and gives permission to use additional purposes beyond the immediate needs of this study. These audio files will not be destroyed at the end of this research, but will be retained indefinitely for any additional data analysis or follow up research. Any future research will retain and respect your choice to be named with your organization or remaining anonymous based on your selection in the Informed Consent Form. In any transcriptions of recordings, confidentiality pertaining to the director, school, students, parents, or any other individual that has not provided consent/assent will be provided with pseudonyms as it is described in the Informed Consent Form.

Your permission:

I give my permission for audio recordings produced in the study, “A Phenomenological Study of High School Student Leadership Selection: Interviews with Nationally Recognized Band Directors” to be used for the purposes listed above, and to also be retained indefinitely.

Participant's signature

Date

Investigator obtaining consent

Date

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Appendix D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FORM

1

Interview Protocol Form

A Phenomenological Study of High School Student Leadership Selection:

Interviews with Nationally Recognized Band Directors

Benjamin C. Posey

Introduction:

Thank you for meeting with me in this conversation today. First, I would like to remind you that this interview is for my dissertation at Auburn University. The information we discuss will be published. The Institutional Review Board at Auburn University has approved this study and based on your signature agreement on the Informed Consent Form and the Audio Release Form, I will be using your name in the research. I would ask that you refrain from naming any students or other persons. However, in the event that you do describe any identifying features relating to a school, parents, or students which have not provided consent/assent for this study, these locations and people will either be provided with a pseudonym or their identity will be removed from the transcription. If you prefer to remain confidential, I will provide a pseudonym for you as well.

Please know that all recordings and transcriptions from our interview and anything else you provide will remain protected on my personal computer which is password protected and an external hard drive that I keep in a lockbox at my house. Once I have transcribed this interview, I will provide you with a copy to ensure the accuracy of your statements.

This dissertation examines how nationally recognized band directors determine which student leaders are selected for their band program. Today I would like to gather experiences from the student leadership selection process you have overseen in your time as a high school band director. If you have any questions throughout the interview, feel free to ask me at any point during the conversation. If you do not want to answer some questions, you do not have to respond to questions that may place you in an uncomfortable situation. I anticipate this interview will last about approximately an hour to ninety minutes. If you need to leave at any time, you are welcome to leave. I can wait or we can reschedule if something occurs. Do you have any questions about the procedures of this interview and its documentation before we begin?

(Answer any questions from participant.)

(Make sure you have a signed Informed Consent Form and Audio Release Form.)

Interview Questions:

1. What is your experience (if any) as a student leader prior to becoming a band director, and what have you retained from previous student leadership experiences?
2. What qualifications and/or abilities does a student need to attain to become a student leader in this high school band program?

3. What leadership training methods have been used for your high school band student training?
4. What are the most important characteristics or traits that you have observed in effective high school band student leaders?
5. How have past experiences selecting student leaders influenced current procedures on selecting student leaders?
6. Finally, are there any other past experiences that have not been brought up that may determine the way you select student leaders for your band program?

These are all the questions I have for you relating to your student leadership selection process experiences. As I stated earlier, I will provide you with a transcription of our conversation today to make sure you have every opportunity to clarify a statement or make necessary edits to ensure accuracy. This will also be an opportunity for you to review aspects related to confidentiality. I will provide the transcription to you as soon as possible. I would like to end this interview by saying thank you for your time and contributing to this research. Do you have any final questions?

(Answer any questions from participant.)