

A STUDY OF BAND PARENTS' AND BAND DIRECTORS'  
PERCEPTIONS OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN  
THREE CENTRAL BUSKERUD SCHOOL BANDS

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## ABSTRACT

Norway has a rich tradition of instrumental music teaching in the form of *skolekorps*, or school bands. Norwegian school bands provide extracurricular instrumental music education and consequently often have external management: BAND PARENTS. Because of this autonomy, the Norwegian school band is a fascinating and appropriate setting for studying the implications PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT has for their students' instrumental music education. The purpose of this study is to investigate band parents' and band directors' PERSPECTIVES of parental involvement and its possible effect on three band programs in order to determine areas of potential improvement. With the help of three school bands in central Buskerud, Norway, in a CASE STUDY this study reveals categories of parental involvement in which band parents' and band directors' perceptions coincide and are accurate. In addition, this study demonstrates the impact parents have on the DIDACTICS of Norwegian school band education.

## SAMMENDRAG

Norge har en rik tradisjon for musikkundervisning i form av skolekorps. Norske skolekorps gir musikkutdanning utenfor skolens regi og har dermed ofte støttet av eksternt forvaltning, nemlig KORPSFORELDRE. På grunn av denne autonomien er norske skolekorps en fascinerende og passende setting til å studere sammenhengen mellom foreldreinvolvering og elevenes instrumentalloppplæring. Hensikten med denne studien er å undersøke korpsforeldrenes og korpsdirigentenenes PERSPEKTIVER av foreldreinvolvering. Videre er også foreldreinvolveringens mulige effekter på skolekorps undersøkt for å finne frem til områder med potensiale for forbedring. Ved hjelp av tre skolekorps i midt-Buskerud som CASESTUDIE, avslører denne studien kategorier av FORELDREINVOLVERING der korpsforeldrenes og korpsdirigentenenes oppfatninger sammenfaller og blir gjennomført. I tillegg viser denne studien påvirkningen korpsforeldrene har på DIDAKTIKKEN i skolekorpsopplæringen.

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## **PROLOGUE: “Where is the principal?”**

The seeds for this topic were planted my first summer living in Norway as I interviewed for school band director positions. The first interview took place in a café with two band parents. It began with small talk, which abruptly ended when I asked when the principal was expected to arrive. My previous experience interviewing for school band director positions in the United States had always been with school administrators and faculty, never with parents present. I was surprised that no principal was invited to this interview; likewise the band parents were surprised that I expected a school administrator.

Although that first Norwegian interview was not a success, along with several others, one parent-only interview ultimately led to a job offer. That fall two members of the band parent administrative committee for the school band unexpectedly fired the other band director, without discussion with the director, other band parents, or the *kulturskole* (municipal arts school). My surprise at this action turned first to fear of losing my own job, then ultimately to curiosity. Having witnessed firsthand band parents’ sizeable administrative influence, I became curious about band parents’ influence on the educational process of the school band program.

Prior to current positions instructing Norwegian school bands and a youth orchestra, I instructed school bands in the state of Indiana in the United States. The school bands were a division of their public schools, rehearsed in designated classrooms for instrumental ensembles, were subject to school rules and state guidelines, and were overseen by a department head, a building principal, and a superintendent for an entire school system. I even had the luxury of an assistant principal in each building to whom I could send disruptive students. Band parents were never present at these daytime rehearsals, nor were they expected to be. At extracurricular rehearsals, for example after school or summer rehearsals for the marching band, band moms might be present for providing water or first-aid.

With experience as an American band director and as a student of American school band programs, it is only natural to view the Norwegian school band program as a cultural arena for music education, although with the predisposition as both a product and producer of American instrumental music education. My background in



instrumental music education, no matter the cultural context, has indeed instilled a bias for considering a school band as an appropriate setting for investigating the implications of parental involvement.

While there is potential for reflexivity, or self-awareness, in this study, I aim to maintain *epoché*, the ancient Greek term for suspension of judgment. (Creswell 1996: 52) “One meaning of *reflexivity* is that the scientific observer is part and parcel of the setting, context, and culture he or she is trying to understand and represent.” (Schwandt 1994: 486) Despite my foreign origin, more recent experiences as a conductor of Norwegian school bands and orchestras place me, as the researcher, into the very field that is being researched here. Consequently, *epoché* is essential for ensuring that it is the perspectives of the Norwegian band parents and band directors, not the writer–outsider, that are examined in this study.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. The educational setting**

Norway has a rich tradition of instrumental music teaching in the form of school bands, or *skolekorps*. However, the *skolekorps* does not function within Norway's compulsory educational system under the direction of the Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. Instead, the Norwegian school band provides extracurricular music education and consequently often has external management: parents of the students in the band. Because of this autonomy, the Norwegian school band is a fascinating and appropriate setting for studying the implications band parents' involvement has for their students' instrumental music education.

### **B. What is a *skolekorps*?**

In order to study band parents' influence on the educational process within a Norwegian school band program, the educational setting must first be defined. The target audience for this paper includes band directors and band parents who wish to have a greater understanding of parental involvement in Norwegian school bands. However, for readers unfamiliar with *skolekorps* a definition is required.

The Norwegian school band institution is typically called the *skolekorps*, literally the school band. The ensemble may be called the *skolemusikkorps*, which centers the content area for the ensemble, *musikk* (music), in its title. Some Norwegian school bands maintain *guttemusikkorps* as their title, emphasizing a former boys-only membership (*gutter*), as girls were not permitted to participate in the Norwegian school bands until the 1950s. (Pay 2004: 4)

If one were to observe a "typical" Norwegian school band rehearsal, what would one see? There would likely be a group of children seated according to their respective musical instruments. Their age level can vary; the youngest school bands typically assemble beginning students at the primary level of schooling, and other bands may have a span of perhaps ten years between the oldest and the youngest member of the band. There is an adult at the front of this group of children: a conductor who may or may not be trained as a music educator but is nonetheless

developing the students' musicality using musical vocabulary and concepts, and teaching skills for playing musical instruments.

At a glance, this scene is a teacher and a group of learners, with instrumental music as the content. However, there are other stimuli within the Norwegian school band setting: band parents. Students in the school band have parents or guardians as natural preconditions. Because of the Norwegian school band's autonomy as an educational setting, the band parents have over time developed an explicit social structure, which has an impact on their students' instrumental music education. The specific areas that are influenced, directly and indirectly, through band parents' involvement will be questioned in the research portion and examined in the discussion section of this paper.

The title "school band" can be a misnomer. Norwegian school bands typically rehearse of an evening at a school, yet the school band is not under the auspices of the school. A booklet from the Norwegian Band Foundation (1992) addresses the contradiction directly:

The rehearsals take place at the school. The conductor is perhaps the school's music teacher. The band is called the school band. This strong connection to the school leads to the band activity happening on school grounds. The conductor takes over the function of the classroom teacher, sheet music replaces textbooks, and after the rehearsal everyone receives homework. As if that isn't enough, it is the parents who sit on the administrative board and decide everything. [...] The only thing that separates the school band from the rest of the school day is that it is voluntary, which is of course essential, and takes place in the evening (at the moment). (Meløy, Mæhlum, Mogstad, and Rognes: 32, translated by Snyder)

In this description of the typical school band, the Norwegian Band Foundation booklet authors already recognize parental involvement as a defining feature of a Norwegian school band. Parents "decide everything" according to the contributors; this paper will explore to what degree this statement is accurate.

## **C. What is parental involvement?**

A literary search reveals that although school band programs have existed in Norway for several generations, much of the research in Norwegian music education, let alone on parental involvement, studies music in elementary schools or individual lessons. Because of its autonomy, the school band is a fascinating and appropriate setting for studying parental impact and involvement in music education.

Parental involvement has been a topic in education circles for centuries. Tveit (2012) analyzed Norwegian legislative texts as early as 1739 to explore the delegation of responsibilities between teachers and parents in general education arenas. Vroman (1994) provides the definition utilized in this paper:

‘Parental involvement’ is defined as any interaction between parent and child, parent and teacher, parent and administrator, parent and parent which is related directly to the band program and/or an individual student’s involvement and achievement in the school band program. (Vroman 1994: 17)

Furthermore, McPherson (2009) illustrates examples of parental involvement such as:

[...] providing resources (e.g., purchasing a music stand or new instrument), acting interested in what the child is learning (e.g., ‘Can you play that new piece for me?’) and being more generally interested in the child’s life [...]. Parental involvement also occurs when a parent participates in supportive activities (such as joining the school’s music committee), sits with the child when practicing an instrument, or more generally talks about musical learning (e.g., ‘How did you go in your music lesson today? [Sic] Did you learn anything new?’). (McPherson 2009: 97)

Despite parental involvement’s longstanding recognition in the educational field as critical for students’ academic success, only a fraction of studies has examined parental involvement’s implications for school bands’ *music* education.

## **D. Music education research on parental involvement**

### **1. Instrumental music education**

Emerging from postwar Japanese string education, the Talent Education movement of Shinichi Suzuki is known for its involvement of parents in private lessons, group instruction, and student practice. Adaptations of the Suzuki method to instructing wind instruments include Sperti (1970) for private clarinet instruction,

Blaine (1976) for group trumpet and trombone instruction, and the Norwegian Band Foundation's series for private instruction on band instruments, *Rett på musikken*. This latter publication and the Suzuki method will be explored in greater detail in the following chapter.

Specific to education at the middle school band level, Zdzinski (1992, 1996) found no correlation between parental involvement and student performance achievement, while Brokaw (1983) reported a positive relation. (Zdzinski 1996: 35) More recently, Creech and Hallam (2003) diagramed interactions between parent, teacher, and student, to demonstrate how communication and behaviors of the three groups influence the outcomes in instrumental music education. Odland (2013) has been the exclusive report found for expressing the interaction between Norwegian school bands and band parents. Therefore, research is needed to examine the relationship of band parents' involvement and the school band's music education process.

Zdzinski's study was of students' perceptions, whereas this study is of directors' and parents' perceptions. The studies' methods differ in subjects but have the following belief in common: "There are many ways in which parents can be an important source of support for instrumental music programs. Teachers and parents should be encouraged to work together to provide the best possible environment for student learning." (Zdzinski 1992: 123)

In his 1992 study of "relationships among parental involvement, music aptitude, and musical achievements of instrumental music students," Zdzinski conducted a questionnaire and case study of American middle school wind students. The results of this, however, indicated no significant relationship between parental involvement, performance achievement, musical achievement, or musical aptitude. In a similar study of "parental involvement, selected student attributes, and learning outcomes in instrumental music," Zdzinski (1996) found through comparable methods that although parental involvement is related to overall performance, affective, and cognitive musical outcomes, the relationship is of weak significance. Zdzinski recommends:

The relative contributions of parental and family influences, peer influences, cultural and social factors, and individual subject characteristics should be examined to ascertain their interactions with the construct of parental involvement. [...] Research has much to offer in identifying parental involvement activities that may prove valuable to increased student success. (Zdinski 1996: 44-45)

Despite less than positive results in these two studies measuring parental involvement in terms of musical outcomes, Zdinski shows optimism and challenges administrators and educators to develop parental involvement activities.

Vroman (1994) conducted a study of parental involvement and students' musical achievement in three bands in central Illinois. His research conclusions are relevant to this paper:

- Parental involvement activities in all categories are perceived by school administrators, band directors, students, and their parents as important to the success of individual success and total band program success.
- Band directors in this study had specific expectations for parental involvement that commonly were not being communicated to all the parents on a regular basis. Booster organizations [band parent organizations] served primarily fiscal needs and other non-academic purposes.
- Parents of students who dropped band were not as supportive of their child's participation in band; they were similar in the type and degree of involvement with their child to the parents of students who were judged as below average.
- Parents of band students, especially those who were judged to be below average by the band director, were desirous of more information concerning the musical strengths and weaknesses of their child and what they might do to help their child. (Vroman 1994: iv)

Zdinski's 1992 and 1996 studies revealed no significant relationship or weak relationship, respectively, between parental involvement and musical achievement, yet Vroman (1994) maintained that a student's musical achievement and participation is directly related to parental involvement and support. Zdinski and Vroman studied parental involvement in American middle and high school bands, and the latter took into consideration the perceptions of school administrators. Because Norwegian school bands are extracurricular, school administrators have no role in this study.

## 2. Norwegian school bands

For many Norwegian school bands, parents *are* the administrators. In a recent article for *Musikkultur*, Odland (2013) reported on contemporary complications when parents are the administrators for school bands and orchestras. She stated that of the 1600 school bands registered with the Norwegian Band Foundation, none are municipally driven. Norwegian school bands may hire conductors through the *kulturskole* (the municipal arts school) but the most common method for school bands is to hire the instructor as a self-employed freelancer on one-year contracts. (Odland, 2013)

In instances where the *kulturskole* hires the school band or orchestra director, “the *kulturskole* has employer responsibility while the orchestra has supervisor responsibility. In this level conflicts occur,” Terje Winther, manager for the Norwegian Youth Orchestra Foundation, tells Odland. (2013: 14, translated by Snyder) Per Einar Fon, “band builder” for the Norwegian Band Foundation, gave Odland another perspective on the challenge of band parents as administrators:

There is too much practical management and too little leadership in the bands. Musicians are probably not the occupation that likes to be led, but the band parent organizations that manage to lead and think strategically, they largely have the bands that succeed. Bands must have a good dream about the future, a clear objective and targets. (Odland 2013: 14, translated by Snyder)

Both of these perspectives are from representatives of Norwegian educational agencies overseeing a large number of school bands and orchestras. Odland also provided reactions from seasoned music educators. One Norwegian school band director shared an anecdote: “An extreme variant I have experienced, the chairman of the school band parents organization handed out sheet music to the band without me knowing about it. D-flat major for the alto sax in the beginning band!” (Odland 2013: 15, translated by Snyder) This example demonstrates that parental involvement in the school band is not limited to administrative duties.

### **3. Choral music education**

Because of a lack of studies investigating parental involvement specific to instrumental music education, it is of value to consider studies of parental involvement in choral music education. Sichivitsa (2003) conducted a survey of undergraduate choir students, which indicated that having musically competent parents influences a student's membership in school choir. In a similar study of high school choir students, Siebenaler (2006) "confirmed that more students continued to participate in school choral music whose parents were also involved in music and who came from homes where music was relatively important." (Siebenaler 2006: 10) In his survey of parental musicianship, supervision, and support in the middle school choral setting, Rapp (2009) documented that "directors overwhelmingly acknowledge the value of parental involvement and also demonstrated that directors do promote parental involvement, but in very limited ways." (Rapp 2009: 17)

Zdzinski (2002) also compared the correlations between parental involvement and music achievement among choral and instrumental students, at both middle school (junior high) and high school levels. He concluded that "parental involvement made more of a difference in the music achievement scores for junior high students, female students, and vocal music students than for senior high students, male students, or instrumental music students," (as cited in Rapp 2009: 7) However, in each of his three studies referenced in this paper, Zdzinski (1992, 1996, and 2002 as cited in Rapp 2009), paired each of his conclusions with a recognition that more research is needed on the relationship of parental involvement and music education.

#### **E. Problem statement**

Band parents' involvement has an undeniable impact on both the musical education and the management of the Norwegian school band. (Odland 2013) Yet there is an underrepresentation of research on the implications of parental involvement on music education, let alone specific to Norwegian school bands. The purpose of this study is to investigate band parents' and band directors' perspectives of parental involvement and its possible effect on three band programs in the central region of the Norwegian county of Buskerud.



This study focuses on three objectives. The first and primary objective of this study is to ascertain how parents and band directors perceive parental involvement in school bands in central Buskerud, Norway, to what extent their perceptions coincide and to what extent these perceptions are accurate. The secondary objective is to understand the role that parents play in certain aspects of their children's musical education. The third objective is to identify potential areas for improving the traditional social structure of band parents and the school band program.

Four questions are addressed by this study:

1. To what extent do band parents' and band directors' perceptions coincide regarding parental involvement in the instrumental music education in Norwegian school bands?
2. To what extent are these perceptions accurate?
3. To what extent does parental involvement impact music didactics in a Norwegian school band program?
4. How might the parental involvement structure of a Norwegian school band be improved?

The first and second questions establish the subjects (school band parents and directors) and the setting (school bands in central Buskerud, Norway) of the research questions, and address the primary objective of this study. The third and fourth questions address the third and fourth objectives, respectively.

## **F. Significance of this study**

As previously stated, there has been limited research on parental perceptions in instrumental music, and especially few regarding Norwegian band parents. Similar reports have collected students' perceptions (Zdzinski 1992, 1996, 2002; Brokaw 1983; Sichivitsa 2003; and Siebenaler 2006) or directors' perceptions (Rapp 2009; and Odland 2013). By researching both band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement and its implications, Norwegian school band conductors and band parents may confirm or confront their structure and behaviors for the betterment of their children's music education.

## **G. Thesis structure**

In the following chapter, the philosophical viewpoint is established and areas of music didactics are explored in order to address the second objective of this study. Next, areas of sociocultural didactics are considered for satisfying the third objective of this study, with additional focus on theories of social structure and social change. The third chapter will explain the research methodology. The final chapters will analyze research data and provide interpretation and discussion of the results. Finally, suggestions will be proposed for further research that could not be addressed in the present study.

## II. PHILOSOPHICAL AND THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

*If you can inspire the parents, much is already accomplished.  
(Halvorsen and Nøkleby 1998: 8, translated by Snyder)*

Viewed from a distance, band parents may appear to have little influence on their child's school band education beyond driving the child to and from the rehearsal. Therefore, it is important to establish what music education means in relation to parental involvement. In this chapter, the philosophical viewpoint of music education for this study is established, along with categories of music didactics, sociocultural didactics, and critical theories.

### A. Philosophy of music education: Fröbel

The first two questions asked by this study are:

1. To what extent do band parents' and band directors' perceptions coincide regarding parental involvement in the instrumental music education in Norwegian school bands?
2. To what extent are these perceptions accurate?

In order to examine the perceptions of parental involvement one must first examine in what ways parents affect the band members' music education. In this study, the *skolekorps* will be viewed as a venue for music education, behavioral development, and the growth of the whole child. Although the research questions are aimed at parents' and directors' perceptions, the Norwegian school band student remains at the center.

The philosophical viewpoint behind the research questions is taken from Friedrich Fröbel, creator of the *kindergarten* concept. Varkøy (1993) explains the foundation of Fröbel's philosophy from the latter author's major work, *Menschenerziehung* (1826):

[Fröbel] promotes the idea that children in certain periods have an urgent need to express their inner life through, among other methods, the joy of singing, of moving, and of rhythm. Moreover, it seems circle games and singing games, according to Fröbel, promote social development and the ability to be a part of a greater whole. (Varkøy 1993: 52, translated by Snyder)

The analysis and discussion chapters of this paper feature band parents' statements about their own perceptions and experiences regarding instrumental music education as a tool for expressing joy, promoting social development, and becoming a part of a larger group identity, as well as how their involvement impacts these areas.

## **B. Music didactics**

The third question asked by this study is:

3. To what extent does parental involvement impact music didactics in a Norwegian school band program?

Defining didactics is not only necessary to better understand the influence of band parents on the music education in a school band program, but also to explain what is literally a foreign concept to a native English-speaking reader. Johansen (2010) explains the concept of didactics from a starting point in the German *didaktik*:

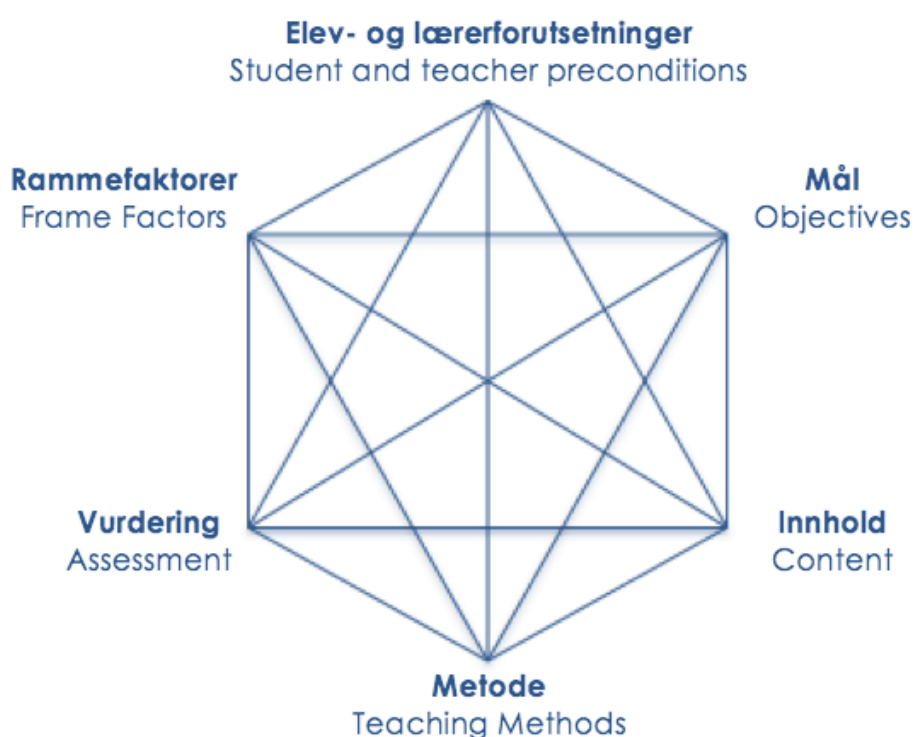
The word *didaktik* has its roots in the Greek word *didaskein* which refers to the art of teaching. In Germany, the concept and tradition of *didaktik* was established by Ratke (1613) who inspired Comenius (1657) to write his famous *Didactica Magna*. Comenius was occupied with the possibility of teaching everything to everyone and the consequences of this principle for the selection of educational content and teaching methods. (Johansen 2010: 2)

*Music didactics*, then, can be understood as the art of teaching music:

Why students should learn music, what music they should learn, and what they should learn about and via music. Furthermore, it attends to the social and cultural conditions for music teaching and learning. (Johansen 2010: 3)

The band parents are unquestionably a social and cultural condition affecting music didactics, which will be discussed deeper in upcoming sections of this paper.

In *Musikkundervisningens didaktikk (Didactics of teaching music)*, Hanken and Johansen (1998) recognize that all educational situations have in common six categories of didactics: frame factors, student and teacher preconditions, objectives, content, teaching methods, and assessment. “All these categories of didactics must be considered in relation to each other when the music educational activities should be planned, implemented, evaluated, and justified.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 31, translated by Snyder) The symbiotic benefit and mutual dependence between the six didactic categories can be visualized in the “didactics relations model” (Figure 1) developed by Bjørndal and Lieberg (1978). The six categories of didactics will first be explored individually, as according to Hanken and Johansen, and later relinking the categories to band parents’ behaviors and actions in a school band program.



*Figure 1. The “didactics relations model” of Bjørndal and Lieberg (1978) demonstrates the interrelations between all six categories of didactics, to be discussed clockwise from the ten o’clock position: frame factors, student and teacher preconditions, objectives, content, teaching methods, and assessment.*

## **1. Frame factors**

The first category of didactics for consideration in this paper is the concept of *frame factors*. “A music education program always exists within certain limits that provide opportunities and constraints it must deal with.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998:

31, translated by Snyder) These opportunities/constraints can be physical, time frames, access to equipment, financial, organizational, etc. Expectations are also considered frame factors, which can come from students, colleagues, or *parents*. Furthermore, Hanken and Johansen refer to local traditions and expectations as frame factors:

It is important that the music teacher by virtue of their professionalism can ask questions and challenge the practices and traditions that are perceived as less appropriate. It is also important that you listen to the ‘code’ and take it seriously, because it is often an important part of the identification basis for those involved in the program. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 41, translated by Snyder)

As this quote suggests, in this study the practices and traditions of band parent organizations will be questioned in the view of this and other categories of didactics.

In addition to the public school classroom or ensemble music education situation, Hanken and Johansen also find frame factors influential for students’ self-contained practicing at home: the student must consider his own individual factors (or *preconditions*, which will be discussed in the following section), the instrument and its unique requirements, and social factors. The student’s family situation and finances are included among social factors that influence home-practice. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 150, translated by Snyder)

Hanken and Johansen also discuss frame factors from the pessimistic outlook of Lundgren (1984) as socially specified limits outside the teacher and students’ control. “Frame factor theory is also criticized,” according to Hanken and Johansen, “because educators as practitioners are deprived of their professional autonomy in that they are considered controlled by external factors.” (1998: 40, translated by Snyder) However, frame factors can be viewed not only as limitations but also as opportunities.

## **2. Student and teacher preconditions**

Hanken and Johansen (1998) describe the second category of didactics as *student and teacher preconditions*. Students do not arrive as a blank slate, but with preexisting “characteristics, knowledge, skills and attitudes that they bring with them

to the learning situation, and which have an impact on their preconditions to learn and to function in a learning situation.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 42, translated by Snyder) “The music teacher also brings his expertise, his views on music, on what constitutes good teaching, their experience with various methods, etc.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 31, translated by Snyder)

In addition to development preconditions, such as biological, cognitive, and musical, Hanken and Johansen also consider students’ socio-cultural preconditions:

The student is not only characterized by her developmental and individual circumstances. The groups and cultures to which she belongs and identifies with will also affect her and provide experience she brings, and the values she wants to stand for. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 46, translated by Snyder)

The developmental preconditions could be argued as outcomes of genetic inheritance, and the socio-cultural preconditions are certainly consequences of the students’ family, which will be discussed in an upcoming section.

### **3. Objectives**

*Objectives* are the third category of didactics. Hanken and Johansen give the following description an objective as:

[...] what you want with the program as a whole, and it usually puts into words what task one believes, for example, the elementary school, the music school, or the school band should have, both in relation to the individual student’s development, and in relation to local environment and community. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 56, translated by Snyder)

These objectives can be cognitive, psychomotor, skills-based, behavioral, etc.

Hanken and Johansen look behind the objectives and consider who should determine them. In addition to government agencies and educational organizations determining objectives, the authors suggest *participant-governance* as another method. “Participant-governance means that those who are directly involved in the educational activity, that is, music teacher and student(s) also have the authority to set goals and have control over the teaching situation.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 64-65, translated by Snyder) Participant-governance is revisited at the end of this chapter.

#### **4. Content**

The fourth category of didactics is *content*. Hanken and Johansen emphasize that content is both what students will learn (repertoire, concepts, etc.) and how they will learn it (singing, composing, etc.). Looking beyond the content itself, the authors consider who should determine it:

Music education programs are not only significant for the individual involved; it also has repercussions for society outside the teaching situation. What kind of content is selected, in other words, is not just a matter between the music teacher and the pupil. In some cases it our parents or other entities that directly or indirectly affect content selection. [...] A band director has to deal with a band parent organization. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 76, translated by Snyder)

Further discussion of parental contribution to content selection may be found in the analysis of the band parent interview.

#### **5. Teaching methods**

*Teaching methods*, according to Hanken and Johansen (1998), “are ways to proceed in order to learn a specific content.” (30, translated by Snyder) The authors further discuss subject matter-specific methods, such as the music education concepts developed by Dalcroze, Orff, Kodaly, Suzuki, and Paynter. The “Suzuki Method” with its special emphasis on parental involvement, particularly the mother, will be examined in the seventh subdivision of this section. Adaptions for Norwegian school band will also be discussed.

#### **6. Assessment**

The final category of didactics according to Hanken and Johansen is assessment. “The term assessment describes a structured and systematic method to judge anything in relation to certain criteria.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 117, translated by Snyder) The authors pose the questions of what is to be assessed, who are to be assessed, who will be assessing, and how the assessment is to be conducted, among others. Hanken and Johansen close their discussion of assessment and the six categories of didactics:



The music teaching program will always be subject to conditions, which entails that it is not possible to achieve all desired changes. Therefore, one must have a certain realism in their claims about what an assessment of the program can lead to. At the same time an important aspect of assessing is precisely to reveal what changes are possible within the given framework. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 133, translated by Snyder)

Figure 1 also shows that assessment is affected by other categories of didactics (frame factors and preconditions, for example) and simultaneously affects others (methods and objectives, for example). Assessment will contribute to the analysis of the research conducted on areas in which band parents have influence on the music education process of the school band program. This study is also an opportunity for band parents and directors to assess aspects of their school band programs.

## **7. Teaching method: Shinichi Suzuki**

*Oh—why, Japanese children can all speak Japanese! The thought suddenly struck me with amazement. In fact, all children throughout the world speak their native tongues with the utmost fluency. Any and every Japanese child—all speak Japanese without difficulty. Does that not show a startling talent? How, by what means, does this come about? I had to control an impulse to shout my joy over this discovery. (Suzuki 1969: 1)*

Shinichi Suzuki (1898–1998) first observed this phenomenon while studying violin in Germany during the 1930s: while he was struggling to learn the local language, German toddlers were speaking it with relative ease. Suzuki concluded that music could be learned similar to one’s native language. With this foundation, he developed the Talent Education method, commonly known today as the Suzuki method, for string education at a very young age with the stipulation that parents (Suzuki tends to speak predominantly to the mothers only) play an active role as “instructors” for their children.

In their review of various music education methods, Hanken and Johansen (1998) examine the Suzuki method. They explain the concept in terms of several of the categories of didactics. The objective of the Suzuki method is to develop self-actualized people rather than to train virtuoso musicians. The content for Suzuki training is Western art music, and the repertoire is identical for all students at a given course level. Like Norwegian school bands, Suzuki training also employs group instruction. Moreover, “The Suzuki Method assumes that one parent is present at the

lessons in the beginning and works with the student at home,” Hanken and Johansen (1998) explain further:

The parents take an active part in the training by being a part of every lesson and must also learn to play, so that in the early days they can remain a step ahead of the child. The parent and teacher is the ‘model’, which the student imitates. (110, translated by Snyder)

Early proponent for the introduction of the Suzuki method in the United States, Elizabeth Mills (1973), listed teacher and parent duties according to the Suzuki method of instruction. The teacher’s job included giving the mother advice regarding how to read Suzuki manuals and analyzing students’ physical responses and occasionally giving recommendations for medical treatment. Examples of the parent’s job include “to work closely with the teacher” regarding methods for home practice, correcting the child’s playing position, and helping the child “with workbooks, flash cards, and other forms of drill, as well as on reading within a rhythmic framework.” (Mills and Murphy 1973: 198-199) Both sets of jobs include all three parties: teacher, parent, and student. Both also address teaching method, content, objectives, and assessment. In other music education approaches the “parent’s jobs” would either be assigned to the teacher or the self-contained student practicing.

To further illustrate the parent’s role in the Suzuki approach to teaching instrumental music, Mills (1973) composed the following list of twelve pieces of advice to a new mother and potential Suzuki parent:

- 1) **Attend lessons**, except on advice of the teacher after consultation. Keep in the background while there, remembering that the child cannot learn from two teachers at once. If you handle it well, after a few weeks he will not often look your way during lessons.
- 2) **Help him recall the lesson**. This begins in the car after leaving the studio. It should never wait 24 hours. [...]
- 3) **Handle the violin yourself at home**, learning to play the first book at least.
- 4) **Be responsible for playing the current record daily**, helping establish the basic patterns of record use. Positive comments from you which show interest can also help train him to listen effectively. [...]
- 5) **Become accustomed to repetition** of the recorded models and of continued use of the same repertoire over long periods. Remember that *children* do not tire of repetition unless others show boredom in their remarks, manner, or tone of voice. [...]

- 6) **See that the violin and bow are in good condition**, and that the teacher's recommendations for supplies or repairs are promptly taken care of. [...]
  - 7) **See that your child attends all recitals, classes and special events** since these are scheduled for motivation and musical education. [...] Show interest in other students but avoid making comparisons between your child and others. Such comparisons tend to be unfair to all concerned, especially since you know a great deal about your own child and very little about the backgrounds of others.
  - 8) **Keep growing**—musically, as well as in other ways. Children grow best in an atmosphere of adult growth. It is contagious.
  - 9) **Give serious attention to Suzuki's concepts.** They are the fruits of a long life of musical and spiritual search. The children of the world may well benefit from the extension of his ideas into many fields.
  - 10) **Avoid discouragement.** When in need of a lift, remember such statements of Suzuki's as the following: "How we teach is not as important as how we give." (You are your child's teacher, too, so take note.) "When love is deep, much can be accomplished."
  - 11) **Practice with your child until he can work effectively on his own.** Two or more practice periods a day are far better than one long period, throughout one's study. Dr. Suzuki advised one mother of a three year old, "Two minutes with joy, five times a day." [...]
  - 12) **Be responsible for getting practice started**, as well as for helping your child learn how to practice. Don't blame your child for not remembering to practice, or for not wanting to stop doing something else. Don't shout out the window, "Stop your play this minute and come in to practice." [...]
- Dr. Suzuki doesn't guarantee that the application of his concept will turn your child into a prodigy (for that is not his goal), although for some children it is doing so. He does say unreservedly that through it any child can learn to play beautifully, and in so doing will gain greater dignity and happiness. It is for us, as parents and humanitarians, to provide the environment in which this spiritual growth becomes possible. I wish you luck in this adventure and with all best wishes remain.

*Yours sincerely,*  
Elizabeth (Mills and Murphy 1973: 29-32)

Looking closer at Mills' list, she advises the parent to attend every rehearsal and performance (unless otherwise directed), to stay in the background at lessons and rehearsals, be encouraging, and to monitor the condition of the instrument. It should be noted that the mother is encouraged in recommendation number eleven to practice with the child "until he can work effectively on his own." Comparatively, Norwegian school bands typically consist of students from the ages eight to eighteen, and certainly the older students are expected to work effectively on their own concerning practice. This begs the question of what the Suzuki method can offer to older instrumental music students.

“If parent-child learning teams have not been developed to a high degree by age 8, is it too late?” asks Mills (1973) of the Suzuki method’s relevance for instrumental instruction at the teenage level:

*What about our older beginners and our students who have been working independently for a long time with only parental involvement being financial and a matter of transportation?*

I think we should improve in this area! Good patterns are worth striving for any time, even though easier to build from scratch. Since we are not talking about scratch, let’s take heart from the fact that one has to build new patterns anyway as a child grows older. [...] It is a great advantage for the older student if he can accept help in at least a few areas—no one can see or hear himself as others do (although our video camera is beginning to help). Parents need to make every effort to become involved with what their children are doing and achieving in their teen years. (Mills and Murphy 1973: 207)

As previously stated, the Suzuki method primarily addresses early childhood music education, whereas students typically enter the Norwegian school band program at the eight, although possibly as young as six years old. However, Mills affirms that older instrumental music students can benefit from parental involvement that is more extensive than financial and transportation.

### **i. Suzuki method for Norwegian school bands**

Whereas Mills wrote a list of advice to a new Suzuki mother, Halvorsen (1998) wrote guidelines for Norwegian teachers using *Rett på musikken*, a Suzuki method book adapted for school band instrument instruction. The teachers’ guide for this method book, written with support from the Norwegian Band Foundation, discusses such topics as listening, rote learning, and suggestions for positive involvement of the parents in school band students’ Suzuki education.

Halvorsen (1998) emphasizes that the student’s home life has a consequence on his or her Suzuki education. Not only do parents “serve as teaching assistants in the home,” but also as home peacemakers:

The parents’ duty and influence on the lesson happen already in the hour before the lesson even starts. It is their responsibility to ensure that the mood is good between parent and child as they arrive to the lesson. This means that they have allowed themselves enough time, and have avoided and reschedule

conflicts to a more appropriate time. It is our job as teachers to instill this in parents. (Halvorsen and Nøkleby 1998: 8, translated by Snyder)

Too much communication is better than too little, according to Halvorsen. (1998)  
Information to be communicated to parents includes Suzuki methodology, practicing psychology and importance of attendance. She adds to the teachers' communicative duties:

It is our responsibility to inform parents and assume a positive attitude toward teaching, towards the relationships of parent–child, parent–teacher and child–teacher. Without a close and good teamwork with the parents, one cannot create an optimal environment for the child, either in the home or at school. (Halvorsen and Nøkleby 1998: 8, translated by Snyder)

Parent–teacher teamwork and home-practice routines, not exclusive to the Suzuki method, are reviewed throughout the research analysis chapter, and featured in analysis of the band parent interview.

Having reviewed the origin, basic principles, division of instructional responsibilities between teachers and parents, and a comprehensive guideline for parental involvement in the Suzuki method of instrumental music instruction, it is natural to relate these divisions and guidelines to the typical method involvement of Norwegian band parents in the school band's instrumental music instruction. However, because the interaction of Norwegian band parents and directors and the cultural context of the school band influence the instrumental music instruction, not unlike Suzuki parents and Suzuki string classes, their impact shall be examined according to sociocultural theoretical perspectives, such as social constructionist theory and False Necessity theory.

### **C. Sociocultural perspectives**

#### **1. Why do parents get involved?**

The fourth question asked by this study is:

4. How might the parental involvement structure of a Norwegian school band be improved?

As stated during the introduction, research regarding parental involvement in a *music* educational setting, let alone an extracurricular instrumental music setting, is scarce. Therefore, research from the general elementary school setting is consulted. Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005) for example, raise three constructs for parental involvement in the elementary classroom:

These constructs focus on parents' motivations for involvement and include (a) an active role construction for involvement (i.e. parents believe that they should be involved) and a positive sense of efficacy for helping the child learn, (b) perception of invitations to involvement from the school, teacher, and student, and (c) important elements of parents' life context that allow or encourage involvement. (2005: 106)

These three hypotheses are each examples of sociocultural influences.

The first construct is divisible into two concepts: *parental role construction for involvement* and *parents' sense of efficacy*. Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005) define parental role construction as "parents' belief about what they are supposed to do in relation to their children's education and the patterns of parental behavior that follow those beliefs." (2005: 108) Furthermore, because parental role construction for involvement is formed by the expectations of social groups (i.e., the school band and the band parent organization), it is constructed socially. Parental self-efficacy, or belief in one's abilities to act in ways that will produce desired results, is also socially constructed. (Hoover-Dempsey 2005: 109)

The second construct describes influence in the form of invitations from three sources: the school, teachers, and the students. As explained under the definition of *skolekorps*, the majority of Norwegian school bands are not under the auspices of a school; for a faction of *skolekorps* "the *kulturskole* has employer responsibility while the orchestra has supervisor responsibility. In this level conflicts occur." (Odland 2013: 14, translated by Snyder) Therefore, it is the latter two, invitations from teachers and students, which are more relevant for Norwegian school bands.

Lastly, Hoover-Dempsey, et al. (2005) include as "elements of parents' life context that allow or encourage involvement" (2005: 106) the variables of socioeconomic status; parents' preconditions of knowledge, skills, time, and energy; and family culture. (2005: 114-116) Regarding preconditions, "parents' self-

perceived skills and knowledge appear to figure in heavily in parents' decisions about some kinds of involvement as their children progress from elementary through middle and high school." (2005: 116) One parent's preconditions can impact an entire group:

For example, overly involved parents may diminish students' opportunities to learn personal responsibility and may create debilitating pressures on schools' abilities to meet the educational needs of all students (i.e., parents may control not only their own children's educational choices and progress but the opportunities and choices available to all families served by the school). (Hoover-Dempsey, et al. 2005: 107)

Norwegian school band parents naturally have their own preconditions as well, previous experience playing in a school band in their youth, for example. The concepts of parental role construction for involvement and invitation for involvement are central discussion points. Sociocultural didactics is an appropriate perspective for analyzing these social constructs.

## **2. Sociocultural didactics**

*Sociocultural didactics* can be organized into two features: social interaction and the cultural context in which it takes place. The Norwegian school band and its corresponding band parents can be considered a cultural arena for social interaction. Säljö (2000) explains the concept of *culture* for this setting:

The ability to think and learn depends to an decisive extent on mastering such things that are beyond man's own body and brain. As a collective name for all these resources that are part of the individual, partly social interaction and partly in the material world, one can use the concept of *culture*. (Säljö 2000: 29, translated and emphasis added by Snyder)

Sociocultural didactics contains key implications for the view of music education in the interactions between the school band and the band parents. The cultural arena of this study extends beyond the students and teacher in a school band to the broader social context of the students' parents. It is in the interaction between individuals in a specific cultural arena in which knowledge and skills emerge; knowledge and skills are not considered outcomes but instead as processes that can only be understood in terms of the social context in which they are a part of (Säljö 2000: 130), in this case the social context of a school band program in central Buskerud.

By considering musical knowledge and skills as a social process rather than tangible outcome, music education is instead considered a social and cultural practice with an objective of socializing individuals in the decided sociocultural context. Learning here is defined as the ability to understand and master the knowledge and skills required for competent participation in a certain culture (Säljö 2000: 29). Knowledge is therefore never static, but lives and thrives in social situations (Nerland, 2004: 51), such as Norwegian school bands. Music education in the context of a Norwegian school band program takes place not only in the social interactions of the school band director and the students, but also director—parents and students—parents.

### **3. Opposing theories**

One way to better understand a theory is to compare it with competing theories. According to Säljö (2005), the sociocultural perspective maybe considered an alternative to two major theories that had previously dominated educational, namely the theories “empiricism” and “rationalism.” The rationalist views learning as something that comes from within, emphasizes biology, and the development of innate abilities. The empiricist however, sees learning as something that comes from outside and is acquired by the individual. (Säljö 2005: 18, translated by Snyder)

Despite empiricism and rationalism’s reign as the leading perspectives in educational research, Säljö claims that they have overlooked that “man is a historical and social being who has a unique ability to interact with its environment in sophisticated ways.” (2005: 19, translated by Snyder) Regarding Piaget’s cognitive development theory, representative of the empiricist perspective, Säljö agrees with Piaget that children acquire knowledge actively rather than passively, but disagrees at several points. Säljö is critical of Piaget’s theory that learning is an individual process and that it does not account for the social nature of education or how it differs among cultures:

Which ideals hid under Piaget's description of the development of the intellect? It is completely clear that there is a way of thinking that strongly prioritizes Western forms of knowledge with the logical-mathematical abstraction as the ideal and with the individual and their thinking as the hub. In a rationalistic worldview, it is easy to assume that there are ‘pure’ cognitive structures in an abstract form and that these represent the highest form of



knowledge. [...] To a large extent, this was also the implicit ideal in Piaget's developmental psychology, the idea of the child as the curious miniature scientist in search of truth about nature and its structure. (Säljö 2000: 70, translated by Snyder)

With explicit criticism of Western empirical perspectives, Säljö describes in the above quote that from a sociocultural perspective education can be understood through the social activities and that cultural considerations that affect learning. Even the "individual process" of home-practice becomes a social interaction with the parent's involvement, which will be featured in both the questionnaire and interview portion.

#### **4. Social constructionist theory**

Consistent with the idea that musical knowledge and skills are a social process rather than a tangible outcome, sociocultural didactics is closely linked to a social constructionist view of teaching and learning, which holds implications for research on music education in the social context of school bands and band parents. Burr (Pearce 2009) identified four "key assumptions" from which a social constructionist may approach such research:

- *A critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge.* It invites us to be critical of the idea that our observations of the world unproblematically [sic] yield its nature to us, to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world.
- *Historical and cultural specificity.* All ways of understanding are historically and culturally relative [...] products of that culture and are dependent upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that time.
- *Knowledge is sustained by social processes.* It is through daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated.
- *Knowledge and social action go together.* Descriptions or constructions of the world therefore sustain some patterns of social action and exclude others. Our constructions of the world are therefore bound up with power relationships because they have implications for what it is permissible for different people to do, and for how they may treat others. (as cited in Pearce 2009: 39)

These social constructionist assumptions are significant in the study of the social processes and power relationships occurring among the Norwegian school band and its band parents.

Burr further divides social constructionist theory and research into two groups: “micro” and “macro” social constructionists:

‘Micro’ social constructionists focus on the structures in which language is used in social interaction. They are interested in what particular people say in specific situations, and often look at the turn-by-turn sequence of communicative acts. [...] ‘Macro’ social constructionists pay attention to structures that frame our social and psychological life; they look at ‘discourses’ as wholes and cultural patterns of communication. (Pearce 2009: 12)

The interaction among Norwegian school band parents and conductors is a specific situation and central to the research in this paper. The research is therefore viewed through a “*micro*” social constructionist lens.

German philosopher Jürgen Habermas also speaks of *discourse*. The Habermasian viewpoint considers the relationship between language and reason:

Discourse is the use of language in conversation, where it reflected the language rules, the conversation socially determined language skills, as well as other conditions – dialogue roles, accounts receivable, the language situation – which links language and communicative action together. (Thurén 1993: 351)

Habermas has in fact devised his own universal language rules to define *discourse*:

- (1) All speech– and language–competent subjects may participate in discourses.
- (2a) Everyone should be able to question any claim.
- (2b) Everyone should be able to introduce any assertion into the discourse.
- (2c) Everyone should be able to express his or her preference, attitudes, and needs.
- (3) No participant may, through a force from within or from outside the discourse, be prevented to safeguard the rights as stipulated by the virtue of rules (1) and (2). (Nerheim 1996: 359, translated by Snyder)

Communication controls our “life–world,” *unsere Lebenswelt*, Habermas’ German expression for the world in which we live. (Imsen 1998: 342) In his theory of communicative competence, “*universal pragmatics*,” Habermas criticizes the modern world “because its life forms colonized by a system of rationality that alienates human interaction conditions and prevent it from ‘walking upright’ and preserve the undamaged communicative community.” (Nerheim 1996: 347, translated by Snyder)

Continuing with his critical theoretical viewpoint of knowledge and communication in modern society, Habermas postulates three “knowledge-interests,” which are technical, hermeneutic, and emancipatory:

[Habermas] speaks of a *technical, instrumental* knowledge-interest, an interest in controlling the outside world, to improve production, to combat diseases etc. This is the positivist natural science domain. He also operates a *hermeneutic* knowledge-interest, people interested in understanding other people and their terms. This is the humanist science domain. Finally, Habermas talks about the *emancipatory, liberating* knowledge-interest. It is about freeing people from the rituals of habit that keep them trapped. If social-Darwinists and socio-biologists persuade people that it is impossible to eliminate disparity in society, it is the duty of critical science to reveal that it's all about *rituals of habit*. (Thurén 1993: 170, translated and emphases added by Snyder)

The third interpersonal force, liberating knowledge-interest, “freeing people from the rituals of habit that keep them trapped,” will contribute to the analysis and discussion sections of this paper.

#### **E. Critical didactics and False Necessity theory**

*People think nothing but this troublesome reality of ours is possible.*  
(Nietzsche 1957: 67)

Habermas’ third knowledge-interest, emancipatory and liberating, advocates freeing people from the rituals of habit that keep them trapped. (Thurén 1993: 170) Unger (1987a) further suggests there are indeed other possibilities for forming society. According to his False Necessity theory, the idea that human society must be structured in a historically prescribed way is not a necessity. Unger advises the reader to confront the limitations of his cultural assumptions and become “architects [...] rather than puppets of the social worlds in which we live.” (Unger 1987b: 156) False Necessity theory proposes that no particular institutional scheme must be religiously adhered to. Instead, Unger recommends imaginative, democratic restructure of social structures that limit human freedom.

Application of Unger’s False Necessity theory to alter human society supports Hanken and Johansen’s (1998) definition of *critical didactics*. Teaching and education are societal functions and take place in an established cultural context,

therefore “(t)eaching and education is therefore set in a larger social and political context.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 221, translated by Snyder) The authors continue:

The existing society is perceived as far from perfect; it seems oppressive and alienating. The pedagogy’s goal will therefore be to contribute to freeing people from the oppression. It shall contribute to *social change* through spreading awareness about the basic social conditions and thereby develop a critical attitude. The critical spotlight is also directed towards the educational activity. (1998: 221, translated by Snyder)

In harmony with this definition of critical didactics, Unger’s False Necessity theory also has a critical attitude with its proposal to identify institutional arrangements that limit human freedom, to spread awareness of oppression, to creatively and democratically restructure the arrangement.

### **1. Formative context**

Central to Unger’s False Necessity theory is the term, “formative context.” *Formative context* defines institutional arrangements that form preconceptions of how people should interact and how power should be distributed, preconceptions “that delude us into thinking that society and history have a script.” (Unger 1987b: 207) He clarifies the concept of formative context:

Though the elements of a formative context, of a social framework, or of an institutional and imaginative ordering of social life do not make up an indivisible whole, they connect with one another. *We need a practice of social explanation that allows us to understand the connections.* Though social frameworks do not coalesce or succeed one another according to a master logic of transformation, they produce consequences, and they have causes. We lack a way to imagine how they get made and remade. [...]

History is surprising because these frameworks do not come from a closed list of possible frameworks or succeed one another according to a master plan. To imagine society truly is *to understand how these institutional and imaginative orders of routine social existence get historically made and how they are internally composed.* (Unger 1987a: 82, emphasis added by Snyder)

Viewing the social framework of Norwegian school band and band parents as a formative context has educational implications. Tveit (2012), through analysis of historical Norwegian legislative texts, concurs that:

[D]ifferent perspectives of teachers and parents have remained an unresolved challenge over the centuries. This certainly represents a challenge in a democratic body, especially with respect to the teacher's role. (Tveit 2012: 240)

If the Norwegian school band parent organization is to be interpreted as a democratic institutional arrangement according to Unger's definition, it must first be concluded which type of formative context it is.

Under the heading of *Routine without Reason*, Unger (1987a) distinguishes formative contexts in four complexes of institutional arrangements:

- The *work-organization complex* is an institutional arrangement that divides work among 'task definers' and 'task executors,' with material rewards principally for task definition.
- The *private-rights complex* is an institutional arrangement that defines the legal rights of the individual and emphasizes the capital distribution.
- The *government-organization complex* is an institutional arrangement that protects the individual from the state while simultaneously preventing those in power from altering the institutional arrangement. Partisan rivalries are a trademark of this complex.
- The *occupational-structure complex* is an institutional arrangement that divides labor through social status: artisans and craftsman; managers; skilled workers; and underclass with most unattractive and unstable work. (Unger 1987a: 68-79)

There is a link between Unger's first cluster of formative contexts, the *work-organization complex*, and Hanken and Johansen's answers to their question, "Who should determine the objectives?" (1998: 64), which is previously discussed in the chapter on music didactics under the category *objectives*. Hanken and Johansen first examine Norway's *central-governance* approach for determining objectives whereas the federal level determines a *national* curriculum for the public schools. Furthermore, "authorities want a much stronger central control over the goals of education in the public schools. Not only the more general goals, but also the objectives and performance measures determined now central." (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 64, translated by Snyder)

Hanken and Johansen (1998) describe the governance context for Norwegian school bands:

In Norway much of the music instruction takes places under the auspices of extracurricular music organizations, such as the Norwegian Band Foundation, Norwegian Choir Association, the Norwegian Live Music Association, etc. (1998: 64, translated by Snyder)

Because Norwegian school bands are extracurricular organizations, they may choose whether or not to register as a member the Norwegian Band Foundation.

The Norwegian Band Foundation, *Norges Musikkorps Forbund*, has the following statute regarding instrumental music educational objectives for member school bands: “The school band shall focus on developing musical skills and creating a good environment for the benefit of its members.” (Norwegian Band Foundation 2012: 1, translated by Snyder) While this statute implies a *work-organization complex* that distinguishes between a “task definer” (the Norwegian Band Foundation) and “task executers” (school band programs), there are other parties participating as “task definers,” namely a band parent organization, contributing to the determination of the educational objectives of Norwegian school bands.

## **2. Participant-governance**

In addition to government agencies and educational organizations like the Norwegian band Foundation establishing educational objectives, Hanken and Johansen (1998) mention the possibility for participant-governance. Continuing from the definition of participant-governance provided in the chapter on music didactics under the category *objectives*:

*Participant-governance* means that those who are directly involved in the educational activity, that is, music teacher and student(s) also have the authority to set goals and have control over the teaching situation. This is justified both according to democratic principles and on the basis that participant-governance is a condition that teaching should be able to be based on the students’ preconditions in the broadest sense. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 64-65, translated by Snyder)

Both directly and indirectly involved in the educational activity, Norwegian school band parents are also participants in determining objectives and exhibiting control over the instrumental music education situation, in addition to the music teacher and students. While the band parents as a whole can be viewed in terms of work-organization complex and participant-governance, it must not be overlooked that this

school band complex is made up of distinctive families. This study intends to view the overall perceptions of parental involvement in musical and organizational areas, but also to analyze the individual parents' responses in terms of family behavior in home-based and rehearsal-based school band education.

### **III. RESEARCH METHOD**

The objectives of this study are to understand the perspectives parents and directors have of parental involvement as well as their implications on the educational process of three central Buskerud school bands. While quantitative data alone could be used to measure specific parental involvement practices, the questions asked in this study are better answered with a descriptive approach. This chapter discusses the approach, design, population, reliability, and ethical considerations for the study.

#### **A. Qualitative research**

As established in the prologue, the research began with an interest in band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement in Norwegian school bands. Having determined that the intent is to investigate a group of people's perceptions and experiences, the next step was to find an appropriate framework for designing the research. The research questions invite descriptive data to depict participants' behaviors and experiences, but also in numerical data for presenting patterns in people's perceptions. Therefore, the study at hand includes primarily qualitative but also quantitative approaches.

Creswell (1998) provides a definition for the qualitative approach to research, which will aid in collecting and analyzing band parents' and directors' descriptions of their experiences:

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explore a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting. (1998: 15)

The social issue for this research is the partnership of band parents and band directors and its impact on students' musical and social development.

The nature of the research questions created basic requirements for the research methodology. In order to answer how parents and directors perceive parental involvement, multiple informants are necessary. In order to understand the musical and sociocultural implications of parental involvement in a Norwegian school band



program the researcher must conduct the study in the natural setting. From these criteria emerged the case study approach. When considering a case study approach, Creswell offers guidance:

Having enough information to present an in-depth picture of the case limits the value of some case studies. In planning a case study, I have individuals develop a data collection matrix in which they specify the amount of information they are likely to collect about the case. (1998: 64)

Creswell adds that case studies require multiple sources, such as observations, interviews, documents, audio-visual materials, physical artifacts, and archival records.

Prior to forming the research questions, this study was initially approached as a phenomenological study of three Norwegian school bands and their band parents, with the intention of conducting a number of interviews with participants on the parental involvement social phenomenon in instrumental music education. Although interviews alone would be valuable for gathering parents and directors' perspectives, they would only offer an external view for the implications on the children's music education. In the interest of understanding the musical and social implications and developing strategies, three central Buskerud school bands were contacted for participation in a multiple case study.

### **1. Case study**

Following Creswell's guidance, the data collection matrix resulted in three forms of data collection for answering the research questions: questionnaires, observation, and interview. Following the questionnaire phase of the data collection, it was determined that the collective case study was ambitious and would benefit from a reduction. The quantity of information gathered through multiple case observations and interviews might not benefit the study; the goal is not to describe every Norwegian school band, but to choose one case that can provide data that best illustrates the research questions. (Vedeler 2000: 74) Depth has been favored over breadth. Therefore, after analysis of the questionnaire responses from the three central Buskerud school bands, one was chosen for the remainder of the study.

## 2. Subjects

Three school band parent organizations and band directors agreed to participate as subjects. The three school bands are located in central Buskerud, a county of Norway. (Appendix A) In order to participate to this study, subjects must have a child enrolled as a wind or percussion musician in one of the three selected Norwegian school bands, or be employed as the conductor of one of the school bands. Two of the directors are employed as the band director through the *kulturskole* (municipal arts school) and the third by the band parent organization. Students from all three bands have access to private lessons via their local *kulturskole*.

Band parents' and band directors' descriptions of their experiences can provide valuable insight regarding their perceptions of parental involvement as a social phenomenon. However, analysis of these descriptions may reveal the researcher's own background and beliefs. (Denscombe 1998: 281) In the interest of researcher detachment and acknowledging the circumstances surrounding Norwegian band parent involvement, quantifiable information was added to the research. Although the information is numerical, the analysis of the quantitative data serves to provide a context for the qualitative descriptions given in the questionnaires, to be discussed in the following section. Denscombe (1998) explains, "Strictly speaking, the distinction between 'qualitative' and 'quantitative' relates to the treatment of data, rather than the research methods as such." (1998: 231)

## 3. Questionnaires

The independent variables of parental involvement were measured by two questionnaires. On their respective questionnaires, band parents and band directors of three central Buskerud school bands provided information on aspects of parental involvement. Items for the questionnaires were generated after reviewing literature concerning parental involvement, music didactics, and critical didactics. This measure examined parent perceptions of parental involvement activity, which may or may not indicate accurate parental behaviors.

A survey in itself is simply a systematic method of collecting information on one or more variables. Traditionally, data collection has been conducted using a questionnaire or interview. [...] For assessing many behaviors, the

questionnaire and interview are appropriate, since people are not always cognizant of their own behavior. (Phelps, Ferrara, Goolsby 1993: 223-224)

The survey study method of a questionnaire was chosen because of its ability to ask questions identically to a number of subjects, to give the subjects opportunities to express their opinions and personal experiences both in quantitative and qualitative formats, and to allow subjects time to reflect over their answers. Furthermore, responses automatically in written format on a questionnaire lends are easier for quality-controlled translation; a Norwegian colleague fluent in both languages inspected and approved both the researcher's Norwegian language of the written inquiries of the questionnaire and the English translations of the other Norwegian texts throughout this paper.

The questionnaires are similar to Zdzinski's (1992, 1996) "Parental Involvement Measure." The subjects responded to ten yes/no questions and six Likert-scale statements concerning parental involvement situations, and questions designed to obtain demographic information on the subject's school band membership, years of band parent experience, and his or her own musical experience. Additional questions invited extensive answers regarding the subjects' experiences and opinions.

The method was based on Borg and Gall's framework of seven phases of questionnaire construction:

1. *Determine objectives*
2. *Decide on a sample*
3. *Develop individual items for the objectives*
4. *Construct the complete questionnaire*
5. *Write the letter of transmittal*
6. *Pretest the questionnaire*
7. *Mail the questionnaire and complete any necessary follow-up steps.*  
(as cited in Phelps, Ferrara, Goolsby 1993: 235)

The objectives aimed to identify parents' musical background, investigate parents' and directors' perceptions of parental involvement, and to reveal educational and managerial areas influenced by their involvement. The total population of Norwegian band parents and band directors is expansive, therefore a representative sample of three Norwegian school bands were chosen; two are auspices of a local *kulturskole*, and all three have active band parent organizations.

The questionnaire was originally developed with twelve closed-ended questions, ten Likert-scale items or “attitude scale” statements, and ten open-ended questions. This list was reduced to ten, six, and six, respectively, following a pretest with one Norwegian school band director. The pretest subject indicated that certain questionnaire items were redundant and time-consuming, and recommended items for removal or rewording.

A cover letter was written and delivered by the researcher to the directors and parent leaders of the three school bands in central Buskerud. The format of the cover letter followed Phelps, Ferrara, and Goolsby’s guidance: (1993)

The cover letter need not be longer than three paragraphs. The first paragraph should include the purpose of the research and how the results will be used; the next paragraph should stress the importance of the recipient’s information; and the final paragraph should indicate the deadline by which responses are needed. (Phelps, Ferrara, and Goolsby 1993: 241)

However, the leader of one of the school band organizations requested a supplementary letter containing a more detailed biography of the researcher and curriculum vitae, which was promptly fulfilled and sent electronically to the other subjects as well. The cover letter included the return address for the questionnaires. (Appendixes B and C)

Parent questionnaires were sent electronically to band parent executive board members of the three school bands to disseminate via their band parent mailing list and distributed in person in paper format at school band rehearsals. Questionnaires were sent electronically in order to increase the likelihood of response from parents who attend school band rehearsals less frequently. The band directors’ questionnaires were also delivered electronically. The cover letter was attached to each questionnaire, both electronic and paper formats, and indicated the return address for completed questionnaires.

#### **4. Observation**

Analysis of the questionnaire results reveals parents and directors’ perceptions of parental involvement. Observation of the parents and a band director in the context of a school band rehearsal reveals the authentic parent–director partnership as it

occurs in the learning situation. Upon permission the ensemble, director, and parents for observation, the research took on a participant role:

*Participation as observer*, where the researcher's identity as a researcher is openly recognize – thus having the advantages of gaining informed consent from those involved – and takes the form of 'shadowing' a person or group through normal life, witnessing first hand and in intimate detail the culture/events of interest. (Denscombe 2003: 203)

The intention of the researcher was to remain a passive observer; however, simply listening to the school band's rehearsal becomes active participation:

To music is to take part in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composition), or by dancing. (Small 1998: 9)

The insights gathered as a participating observer in the case of parental involvement at a Norwegian band rehearsal will be discussed in the following chapter and were also used as a footing for the interview portion of the study.

## **5. Interview**

The questionnaire results and rehearsal observation resulted in fascinating conflicts where participants' questionnaire responses contrasted with the authentic rehearsal routine. The interview method was selected to triangulate and compliment information collected from the first two methods. As with the questionnaire, the prompts on the interview guide were structured after defining the research questions.

The interview participant was also a questionnaire participant, and a parent of a student at the observed school band rehearsal. A semi-structured, one-to-one interview was conducted in the subject's home. An interview guide contained questions and themes from the questionnaire results and observation notes for discussion. (Appendix D) The interview audio was recorded, transcribed, and translated by the author. The English translation of the interview transcript was sent to the interviewee for approval prior to analysis in order to ensure reliability of the data and ethical representation of the interviewee.

## **B. Reliability and validity**

High reliability and validity are often appraised as a guarantee of a well-executed research projects. Social constructionist theory requires that research must be reliable. (Østerud 1998: 121) In other words, the reader must not be exposed to the researcher's own interpretations of the empirical data, but to how these interpretations are related to the data and how it has been collected and analyzed. Validity from a social constructionist perspective is the measure of compliance with rules and values of a given research tradition. A transparent account of the research is required for the reader to assess the validity of the study. (Østerud 1998: 121)

## **C. Ethical considerations**

The Norwegian National Committees for Research Ethics in the Social Sciences and the Humanities has published “Guidelines for research ethics in the social sciences, law, and the humanities” (2006: 11-24). The list of obligations and requirements for ethical research used as parameters for this study:

*The obligation to respect human dignity*  
*The obligation to respect integrity, freedom and participation*  
*The obligation to avoid injury and severe burdens*  
*The obligation to inform research subjects*  
*The obligation to obtain free and informed consent*  
*Research license and the obligation to report*  
*Regard for third parties*  
*Children’s right to protection*  
*The obligation to respect individuals’ privacy and close relationships*  
*The obligation to respect confidentiality*  
*The obligation to restrict re-use*  
*The requirement regarding the storage of information that can identify individuals*  
*Respect for posthumous reputations*  
*Respect for the values and motives of others*  
*Researchers’ responsibility for defining roles clearly*  
(National Committees in Research Ethics 2006: 11-24)

Prior to participation in the study, subjects were informed of the purpose of the research, the background of the researcher, and the research method itself. Subjects were given the opportunity to decline participating in the research. There was no risk of personal injury in this study.

Children did not participate in this study directly; all participants were adults. The children in the school bands, however, could be considered a third party to this study therefore personal data was not obtained for the research. Subjects were informed that the questionnaire response would be collected for this project only and would be deleted following submission of the paper, even though the subjects were requested not to include personally identifiable data in the questionnaire.

Subjects were also informed that the rehearsal observation would focus on the parents and conductor's actions, although students' behavior would also play a role. The band parent interview agreed to the interview beforehand, and approved the translated interview transcript. The gender of persons in this study remain neutral, both to encourage anonymity and because the gender of participants is not considered as a variable for this research.

No personal information was necessary for this study, however subjects volunteered unsolicited data revealing their school band affiliation while responding to the "long answer" portion of the questionnaire. On behalf of the National Committees in Research Ethics in Norway, Langtvedt (2009) wrote an explanation of *personal information*:

Personal information is information that directly or indirectly can be traced back to individuals. Personal information is divided into three main types: personally identifiable, de-identified/pseudonymous, and anonymous, each with its rules for processing. The information can be identifiable (name and identification number) or descriptive (health information, financial information, etc.). (Langtvedt 2009: <https://www.etikkom.no>, translated by Snyder)

The researcher was initially concerned that inclusion of the name of the school band, for example, could be indirectly traced to an individual, which would require de-identification for inclusion in the dataset. However, the name of the school band alone in an answer is not sufficient to identify the individual as the respondent represents a much larger membership. Langtvedt (2009) explains:

A combination of information can cause the data to point back to such a small number of people that the practice appears to be identifiable. For example, 'school + class + gender' could provide a sufficiently low number. In that case the parameters must be changed so that the number becomes larger.

Normally, such a group cannot be less than five people. (Langtvedt 2009: <https://www.etikkom.no>, translated by Snyder)

A school band affiliation alone does not provide sufficient data to point back to an identifiable individual among dozens of the same affiliation, thus the parameters did not require alteration. The researcher nevertheless replaced the school band affiliation with a pseudonym in order to stay consistent with the anonymity of the other school band affiliations participating in the study.



## IV. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

*“Do you hear any progress?” one parent said to another as the conductor cut off the school band. The conductor kneeled down to calmly assist one student while other students began talking loudly to each other, playing each other’s instruments, and even climbing up the gym walls. “I don’t know much about music,” answered the second parent, “but I can see when kids are acting correctly.” Facing the students scaling the walls the parent continued dejected, “See that? There’s no focus here.” (from the observation at a school band rehearsal: Section C)*

This chapter presents the results and analysis of band parent questionnaires, band director questionnaires, a school band rehearsal observation, and a band parent interview. First, the results of items from the questionnaire will be reviewed individually. Second, notes will be examined from the rehearsal observation of the school band chosen for the case study. Lastly, the themes from the interview will be discussed and related to the data from the questionnaires and observation.

### A. Closed-ended question results

Two questionnaires were designed in order to resolve the research objectives. The questionnaires asked similar questions, based on the literature review and theoretical background from the previous chapters, and prepared specifically for the two subject groups: band parents and band directors. Similar to Zdzinski’s (1992, 1996) “Parental Involvement Measure,” the participants responded to ten yes/no questions, six Likert-scale statements on parental involvement situations, and questions designed to obtain demographic information on the subject’s school band membership, years of band parent experience, and his or her own childhood school band experience. Additional questions invited extensive answers regarding subjects’ experiences and opinions. The parents’ results will be reviewed first, according to three demographic sets revealed in the initial prompts of the questionnaire, along with examination of the band directors’ results.

## **1. Parent Questions 1–3, Director Questions 1–2**

### **i. Band affiliation**

The band parent questionnaire opened with three questions, chosen for simplicity and ability to organize results according to participants' school band affiliation, number of students represented, and participants' years of band parent experience. The band directors' questionnaire began with two similar questions concerning school band affiliation and total number of students in the respective bands.

Questionnaires were sent to band parents and band directors of three school bands in central Buskerud. In order to maintain anonymity, the names of the school bands have been renamed. Responses to Question 1, *"To which school band do you belong,"* reveal that six parents from School Band "A" participated in this study, nine parents from School Band "B," nine from School Band "C," and the directors of School Bands "A," "B," and "C." Response rate is revealed by responses to Question 2 for band parents, *"How many children do you have in the band?"* and Question 2 for band directors, *"How many students do you have in the band?"* together with a follow-up question to band parent executive board leaders, *"How many distinct families are represented in your band?"*

### **ii. Questionnaire reliability**

Twenty-five parents, representing thirty-one of the sixty-two children playing an instrument in the three school bands, responded to the questionnaire. All three conductors from these bands responded to the questionnaire. Seven band parents of seventeen total families from School Band "A" responded, on behalf of twenty band students; nine band parents of twenty-two families from School Band "B," represented twenty-three band students; nine band parents of twenty-three families from School Band "C," represented twenty-seven band students. Band parent participants and band directors' responses to Question 2 show that half of the sixty-two overall band students were represented in this study; nine of twenty students are represented from School Band "A," ten of twenty-three students from School Band "B," and nine of twenty-seven students in School Band "C."

### **iii. Years of experience as a band parent**

Question 3 reported the participants' years of experience as a band parent: "*How many years has your child/have your children been involved in the band?*" Based on their responses, parent participants are divided into three categories of band parent experience: "beginner band parents" with one to two years of experience as a band parent, "intermediate band parents" with three to five years of experience, and "veteran band parents" with children who have played in the school band for six or more years.

Of the twenty-five overall participants, eight band parents have one to two years of experience as a band parent, nine have three to five years of experience, and eight have six or more years of experience. Representing School Band "A," two parents have three to five years of experience and five have over six years. From School Band "B," three band parents have one to years of experience, five have three to five years, and one has six or more years. From School Band "C," five band parents have one to two years of experience, two have three to five years, and two have six or more years.

Most participants from School Band "A" have six or more years of experience as a band parent. Most participants from School Band "B" have three to five years of experience. Most participants from School Band "C" have one to two years of experience. Responses to other questions will be considered based on participants' years of experience as band parents, divided into these three demographic categories: one to two years, three to five years, and six or more years as a band parent. Analysis of responses according to years of band parent experience may reveal a difference in perception among "beginning" band parents and "veteran" band parents.

## **2. Parent Questions 4–5**

### **i. Participants' school band experience**

Band parent questions 4 and 5 are "yes/no" questions designed to shed light on participants' musical background: "*Did you play in a school band as a child?*" and "*Can you read music?*" Of the twenty-five participants, twelve played in a school band as a child and thirteen did not. Four participants from School Band "A" have

school band experience from childhood and one does not. Five participants from School Band “B” played in school band as a child and four did not. Three participants from School Band “C” were in school band as a child and six were not. Analysis of responses according to band parents’ childhood experience in a school band may reveal a difference in perception among parents who have prior school band experience and those who do not.

Seventeen of the twenty-five parent participants indicated that they could read music. All seven School Band “A” participants, including the three without school band experience from childhood, can read music. Responses from School Band “B” to Questions 4 and 5 were similar: five participants designated that they can read music and four designated that they cannot. However one School Band “B” participant with school band experience as a child indicated that he or she could no longer read music, and another “B” participant not in school band as a child indicated that he or she could read music. Responses from School Band “C” show that five participants can read music and four cannot, revealing that two participants who were not in school band as children can read music. Despite the fact that half of the participants were not in school band as children themselves (13/25), an even greater number of participants (17/25) indicate that they have had musical training.

### **3. Parent Question 6, Director Question 3:**

#### **Parent attendance at school band rehearsals**

Question 6 on the band parents’ questionnaire and Question 3 on the band directors’ questionnaire asked about parents’ attendance at school band rehearsals: *“How often are you present at school band rehearsals?”* and *“How often are parents present at school band rehearsals?”* Participants selected from four options: *Every week, once a month, rarely, or never.* Both band directors of School Bands “A” and “B” indicated that band parents were present weekly at rehearsals. School Band “C” director answered, “rarely.” Eight band parent participants indicated they are present at school band rehearsals every week, nine are present once a month, seven are rarely present, and one never attends.

Question 6 may also be interpreted according to the demographic item from Question 3 regarding years of band parent experience. Half of the “beginner band

parent” participants, those with one to two years of band parent experience, are rarely or never present. Half of the participants with three to five years experience indicated a monthly presence. Half of the “veteran band parent” participants, those with six or more years of band parent experience, are present at every rehearsal.

In addition, Question 6 can be viewed according to responses to the demographic item from Question 4 regarding participants’ own childhood experience in school band or lack thereof. Since five of the participants who indicated they played in band as a child also indicated they are rarely present at their child’s rehearsals, and that ten participants without school band experience themselves indicated they are present at least monthly, it seems that band parent participants without a school band background attend their children’s school band rehearsals more frequently.

#### **4. Parent Statements 7–11, Director Statements 4–8**

The next five inquiries, Statements 7 through 11 on the band parent questionnaire and Statements 4 through 8 on the band director questionnaire, are Likert–scale statements with four reactions: *Agree, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat, and disagree*. The statements are as follows on the band parent questionnaire:

7. *I understand how my child should practice at home.*
8. *I understand how my child should behave during band rehearsals*
9. *I have influence on my child’s social development in the band.*
10. *I have influence on my child’s musical development*
11. *I am involved in the decisions that are made in the band.*

Reactions to these straightforward statements will also be viewed according to demographic items in addition to general responses.

##### **i. “*I understand how my child should practice at home.*”**

In response to Statement 7, eighteen of the twenty-five band parent participants (72%) indicated that they agree and six somewhat agree that they understand how their children should practice at home. One participant disagreed somewhat with the statement. According to band affiliation, six participants from

School Band “A” indicated agreement and one somewhat agreed. Eight participants from School Band “B” selected “agree,” and one “somewhat agree.” From School Band “C,” four participants agreed, four somewhat agreed, and one somewhat disagreed.

According to years of band parent experience, seven of the eight participants with six or more years of band parent experience agreed with Statement 7. Eight of the nine participants with three to five years of experience selected “agree” and one selected “somewhat agree.” Beginning band parents were in less agreement: three agreed, four somewhat agreed, and one somewhat disagreed.

The band directors indicated disagreement to their corresponding prompt, Statement 4, “*The band parents understand how their children should practice at home.*” Most of the participants from the School Bands “A” and “B” express a form of agreement that they understand how their child should practice at home. On the contrary, all three directors express somewhat or complete disagreement with the assertion.

**ii. “*I understand how my child should behave during band rehearsals.*”**

Twenty-four of the twenty-five band parent participants (96%) indicated that they agree with Statement 8. The exception somewhat disagreed. This lone participant represents the following demographics: School Band “C,” has one to two years experience as a band parent, and did not play in school band as a child. Both School Band “A” and “B” band directors indicated agreement with the corresponding prompt, Statement 5, “*The band parents understand how their children should behave during band rehearsals.*” The director of School Band “C,” however, disagreed somewhat with the statement.

**iii. “*I have influence on my child’s social development in the band.*”**

All band parent participants indicated some degree of agreement with Statement 9. Thirteen selected “agree” (52%) and the other half selected “somewhat agree.” In response to their corresponding prompt, Statement 6, “*The band parents have influence on the children’s social development in the band,*” the band directors

gave contrasting reactions. The band directors from School Bands “A” and “C” agreed somewhat with the statement. The band director from School Band “B,” on the other hand, gave the only “disagree” response to the statement.

**iv. “*I have influence on my child’s musical education.*”**

In response to Statement 10 on the band parents’ questionnaire, most parent participants indicated a form of agreement. Fifteen of the twenty-five participants agree and nine somewhat agree, but one somewhat disagreed that they influence their children’s musical education. The outlying participant who disagreed somewhat with statement represents School Band “B,” has three to five years of band parents experience, and was in school band as a child.

In reaction to their corresponding prompt, Statement 7, “*The band parents have influence on the children’s musical education,*” the three band directors gave opposing answers. Like the majority of band parent participants, the band directors from School Bands “B” and “C” agreed with this statement. The band director from School Band “A,” on the other hand, selected the only “disagree” response to the statement.

**v. “*I am involved in the decisions that are made in the band.*”**

Ten of the twenty-five band parent participants (40%) agreed with Statement 11. Eight participants somewhat agreed, six somewhat disagreed, and one gave no response. All three band directors selected “somewhat agree” in response to their corresponding statement, number eight: “*The parents are involved in decisions that are made in the band.*”

Considering Statement 11 according to participants’ participation in school band as a child, more parents with a school band background disagreed somewhat that the parents are involved in decision-making. Of those participants who *agreed* that they are involved in decision-making for the school band, more were *not* in school band as a child. Of those participants who somewhat *disagreed* with the statement, most did play in school band as a child. Six participants who did not play in school band as a child selected “agree” in response to Statement 11, five selected “somewhat

agree,” one selected “somewhat disagree,” and one did not respond. Four participants who did play in school band as a child selected “agree,” three selected “somewhat agree,” and five selected “somewhat disagree.”

### **5. Parent Question 12, Director Question 9:**

#### **Parental influence on home–practice routines**

For Question 12 on the band parent questionnaire and Question 9, participants were asked which areas they believe parents have on the musicians’ practice routines. In English there is a linguistic difference between practice and rehearsal, whereas in Norwegian the word *øvelse* can be used for both. On the questionnaire, the word *øvelsesrutiner*, was used, which could be interpreted as “practice routines” or as “rehearsal routines” to a Norwegian reader. The semantics of the word was not acknowledged during the pretest of the questionnaire, and it was therefore assumed that participants would understand it as a question of parental influence on *home–practice* routines. Two band parent participants, however, mentioned uncertainty due to the semantics:

*Parent – School Band “B”/was in band/1–2 years experience:*

“Unclear question. If you are asking about routines at home: I have influence in all of these areas. If you are asking about routines at group rehearsals: I cannot see that I have influence in any of them.”

*Parent – School Band “B”/was in band/3–5 years experience:*

“No influence on the band’s routines, but if you mean my own child’s routines I can cross off on all the areas!”

Perhaps these were not the only participants who doubted the meaning, but the only two who wrote a comment to accompany their answers. Consequently, although the responses will nevertheless be analyzed as though the question asked about “*which areas do you have/do parents have influence on the musicians’ home practice routines,*” the question itself has become undependable.

In response to the question of in which areas participants believe parents have influence on their child’s home practice routines, participants were given seven options: *frequency, duration, intensity, content, motivation, perseverance, and other*, with a blank for explanation. Motivation, frequency, and duration were the top



choices overall. Fourteen of twenty-two parent participants indicated that they influence the frequency of their children's practice, and thirteen indicated influence on duration. The remaining categories each received seven marks.

Responses according to band affiliation are congruent with the overall totals, except that no participants from School Band "C" selected content as an area which parents have influence on their children's practice routines. For the most part, the other parent demographic categories have a similar proportion as the overall totals. Considering years of band parent experience yields an interesting tendency, however: half of the participants who selected *content* are "veteran band parents, and half of the participants who selected *perseverance* are "beginning band parents."

Surprising patterns also appear when considering the responses according to parents' childhood participation in school band. Although both groups agree on the top three selections for areas in which they influence their child's home-practice routines, which are the same as the overall results, there is disagreement on the remaining three. More parents who played in band as children selected *intensity*, *content*, and *perseverance*.

Considerable information was revealed by participants' "other" comments. The two parents who commented on the clarity of the question nevertheless indicated influence in all listed areas. Both participants represent School Band "B" and played in school band as children. The first has two years of band parent experience and the latter has three. The above-mentioned comment that indicated "no influence" on the child's home practice routine represented School Band "C," did not play in school band as a child, and is a "beginner band parent." Three participants listed additional areas in which they influence their children's practice routines:

*Parent – School Band "C"/was in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
"Positive attention, acceptance, and sense of achievement."

*Parent – School Band "C"/was in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
"Private rewards."

*Parent – School Band "C"/was not in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
"I am committed to the joy of playing."

All three additional comments are types of motivation, which compliments the high number of checkmarks received by that area of influence.

**6. Parent Questions 13–14, Director Questions 10–11:**

**i. “*In which areas should the parent group be able to make decisions for the band?*”**

For Questions 13/10 and 14/11, which asked in which areas participants believe parents should or should not be able to make decisions for the school band, twelve options were available: *repertoire*, *instructional choices*, *rehearsal times*, *rehearsal locations*, *recruiting*, *ensemble instrumentation*, *budget*, *concert planning*, *band trips*, *hiring/firing of conductors*, *hiring/firing of instructors*, and *other*, with a blank for explanation. Band trips, rehearsal times, and budget were the top three overall responses from the twenty-five band parent participants, receiving seventeen (68%), fifteen, and twelve marks respectively. Instrumentation received none.

School Band “A” participants also gave *rehearsals times* low marks, despite being in the top three for overall results. School Band “B” responses were similar to the overall results. In addition to ensemble instrumentation, School Band “C” participants also left *instructional choices* and *recruiting* blank. Parent participants who were not in school band as a child did not select *instrumentation* or *instructional choices*.

All three directors agreed on *budget* as an area in which the parent group should make decisions, which only half of the parent participants chose. The director for School Band “B” selected the top three areas from the overall parent participant responses (*band trips*, *rehearsal times*, and *budget*), as well as *recruiting*, which scored low among parent participants (4 marks). The director from School Band “A” also selected *band trips* and *budget*, but not *rehearsal times*. In addition, the School Band “A” director indicated that parents should make decisions regarding the *hiring and firing of conductors and instructors*. The director of School Band “C” was the only one of the three to select *rehearsal location* and *concert planning* for this question.

**ii. “In which areas *SHOULDN’T* the parent group be able to make decisions for the band?”**

*Instrumentation*, which received no marks under the previous question, was chosen by twenty of the twenty-five parent participants (80%) and all three directors as an area in which band parents should *not* make decisions. *Repertoire* and *instructional choices* also received high marks, thirteen and ten respectively. *Rehearsal locations* and *hiring/firing of conductors and instructors* saw remarkably little change in overall response rates between Question 13 and 14. *Rehearsal locations* received four marks on the former and six on the latter. *Hiring/firing* each received eight marks on the former and seven on the latter.

The six of the seven parent participants representing School Band “A” agree that band parents should not make decisions involving *repertoire* or *instrumentation*, yet none selected *rehearsal times*, *budget*, or *band trips*. None of the participants from School Band “B” selected *band trips*, yet six of the eight selected *instrumentation*. Seven of the eight participants from School Band “C” also chose *instrumentation*. However, whereas no if the School Band “A” participants selected *budget*, six from School Band “C” did.

More participants with six or more years of band parent experience selected *repertoire* as an area in which parents should not make decisions for the band. Participants with less experiences favored *instrumentation*. Half of the beginner band parent participants selected the band *budget*.

Another noteworthy difference can be observed between participants who played in school band as a child and participants who did not. The responses to each area of potential influence are similar except for *instructional choices*. Five of the twelve participants with childhood experience in school band indicated that band parents should not be able to make decisions regarding *instructional choices*. Seven of the thirteen participants who did not play in school band agree with this choice.

The band director participants indicated that band parents should not be able to make decisions regarding *repertoire*, *instructional decisions*, or *instrumentation*. The director of School Band “A,” however, also selected *recruiting* and *concert*

*planning*. On the contrary, under the previous question School Band “B” director indicated that recruiting is an area in which band parents should be able to make decisions. School Band “C” director added that band parents should not be to make decisions involving the hiring and firing of conductors or instructors. None of the directors selected *rehearsal locations, rehearsal times, budget, or band trips* in response to this question.

## **7. Parent Questions 16–23, Director Questions 12–19**

Questions 16 to 23 of the band parent questionnaire and 12 to 19 of the band director questionnaire are yes–or–no questions regarding parental involvement at school band rehearsals. Question 15 on the band parents’ questionnaire was omitted following the pretest due to redundant wording. These nine direct questions ask about perceptions of parental presence at rehearsals, parents’ musical involvement, parents’ practical influence, and parents’ behavioral influence.

### **i. Should parents be present? Are they?**

When asked if the parents should be in the same room with the band the entire time, fifteen of the twenty-five parent participants (60 %) answered, “no.” While participants from School Band “C” were evenly divided on Question 16, seven of the nine participants of School Band “B” and four of the seven participants of School Band “A” indicated that they do not feel a need to be in the same room with the band the entire rehearsal.

The question was asked to the band parents “*SHOULD you be present in the same room with the band the entire time?*” For the band directors, the question had a different angle: “*ARE the band parents in the same room with the band the entire time?*” School Band “A” director designated that parents are present the entire time the band rehearses. The directors of School Bands “B” and “C,” however, indicated that band parents are not present at their band rehearsals. This answer is consistent with the 7:2 majority of “no” responses from the parent participants from School Band “B.”

## **ii. Should parents wait outside? Do they?**

When asked if the parents should wait outside the band rehearsal room, sixteen of the twenty-five parent participants (64%) answered, “no.” While eleven of the thirteen participants who did not play in school band answered, “no,” the participants who do have childhood experience from school band were divided evenly on this issue. As were the band directors. Question 17 was asked to the band parents “*SHOULD you wait outside?*” For the band directors, the question was rotated: “*DO the band parents wait outside?*” School Band “A” director said that parents do not wait outside. The directors of School Bands “B” and “C,” however, indicated that band parents do wait outside during their rehearsals. This answer is inconsistent with the 7:1 majority of “no” responses from parent participants from School Band “B” and 6:2 majority from School Band “C.”

## **iii. Should parents help with discipline? Do they?**

In response to Question 18, eighteen of the twenty-five parent participants (72%) indicated that parents should indeed help with discipline among the school band members. Both School Band “A” and “B” conductors confirm that parents do indeed help with the discipline. The director of School Band “C” answered that parents do not help with discipline at ensemble rehearsals, yet all nine School Band “C” parent participants answered that they *should*.

## **iv. Should parents help musically? Do they?**

Question 19 addresses specifically the act of pointing along in the sheet music for students having difficulty. Fourteen of the twenty-five parent participants (56%) answered, “no.” The band parent demographic that is the most striking for this question is the split between those who played in band as a child and those who did not. Eight of the twelve with school band experience responded, “yes,” and ten of the thirteen without school band experience responded, “no.” Naturally, parents without a musical background themselves would not be predisposed to assisting musically in school band rehearsals. The band directors were also split: the conductors of School Bands “A” and “C” answered that parents do in fact help musically, and the School Band “B” director answered that parents do not.

**v. Should parents help with equipment? Do they?**

Twenty-two of the twenty-five parent participants (88%) indicated that parents should indeed help with carrying and setting up equipment for school band rehearsals or concerts. All three band directors confirm that parents do indeed help with the equipment. There is little variance between band parent demographics regarding responses to this question. However, all School Band “A” participants and all veteran band parents answered positively to Question 20.

**vi. Should parents help with sheet music? Do they?**

Twenty-three of the twenty-five parent participants (92%) indicated that parents should indeed help with copying and passing out sheet music for school band rehearsals. The two negative responses were both from School Band “B,” did not play in school band as children, and have three to five years of band parent experience. The directors of School Bands “A” and “C” confirm that parents do indeed help with the copying and passing out music for their rehearsals. Despite the overwhelming positive answers from band parent participants, the director of School Band “B” answered that the parents do *not* help with the sheet music.

**vii. Should parents help with the classroom order? Do they?**

In Norwegian, Question 22/18 asked if parents help, or if they should help, with the *arbeidsro*, which in English can be interpreted as the “classroom order” or the “peace to work.” (Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training 2011: 3) Despite subtle differences between *arbeidsro* and discipline, responses to this question were slightly more positive than to Question 18/14 on parents’ disciplinary involvement. This change is most noticeable through the two additional positive responses from the demographic of participants who did not play in school band as children; these two indicate that parents should help with the “classroom order” and “peace to work,” but should not help with discipline. The director of School Band “C,” on the other hand, indicated that parents do not help with the *arbeidsro* at their children’s rehearsals.

### **viii. Should parents wait for the director's invitation?**

Question 23/19 reveals a divide in perceptions regarding parents' initiative for helping during school band rehearsals. Fourteen of the twenty-five parent participants (56%) responded that parents should wait help until they receive instructions from the conductor. The majority of parent participants who did not play in school band as a child indicated that they should *not* wait for instructions from the conductor. On the contrary, a majority parents with a school band background agree that parents *should* wait on instructions from the conductor. Despite the overall majority of parents' belief that they should wait on the director's invitation, both conductors of School Bands "A" and "B" responded that band parents *should not wait* for their requests for assistance.

### **8. Parent Question 24, Director Question 20:**

#### **Whose responsibility is it to teach the new band parents?**

In response the question, "*Whose responsibility is it to teach new band parents their duties and responsibilities?*" four options were available: *the band parent executive board, the conductor, learn-by-doing, and other*, with a blank for explanation. All twenty-five parent participants (100%) indicated that the band parent executive board is responsible for teaching new band parents their duties and responsibilities, and five (20%) added that it is also the responsibility of the band director. All three of the band director participants agreed that it is the responsibility of the band parent executive board, plus School Band "B" director added that it is the director's responsibility as well. One parent who has a school band background indicated that new band parents, in addition to training from the executive board and the band director, must also "learn-by-doing."

### **B. Open-ended question results**

The final group of unstructured questions invited participants to give extensive answers regarding their experiences and opinions of parental influence and social engagement in certain situations. Analysis of the verbal responses to these questions followed the Stevick-Colaizzi-Keen method of phenomenological analysis described by Creswell (1998):

“The original protocols are divided into statements or *horizontalization*. Then, the units are transformed into *clusters of meanings* expressed in [...] phenomenological concepts. Finally, these transformations are tied together to make a general description of the experience, the *textural description* of what was experienced and the *structural description* of how it was experienced.” (Creswell 1998: 54–55)

Therefore, the individual responses to each question, or statements, were dissected and grouped into significant statements. These statements were then grouped according to themes they expressed. Afterward, an exhaustive description of the parental involvement phenomenon will be provided, constructed from the experience and opinions shared by band parent and band director participants.

### **1. Parent Prompt 25, Director Prompt 21:**

#### **Perception of parental influence on child’s music education**

Responses to the question, “*In what ways do you think band parents have influence on their children’s musical education?*” revealed three themes: parents can influence their child’s musical education by being on the band parent executive board, encouraging the child to practice, or that parents without a musical background have little influence the child’s musical education. One parent belongs to the first group:

*Parent – School Band “B”/was not in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“Parents can get involved in executive board work.”

Eight parents and “B” band director suggested that parents influence their child’s musical education through encouragement:

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
“Encourage the joy of music, show interest, encourage practice, motivate.”

Two parents and School Band “A” and “C” directors, however, feel that parents have little influence if they do not have a musical background:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“I think this is entirely dependent on the individual parent’s background. Those who have musical background have, of course, much greater opportunities to influence musically in terms of participation in connection with home practice, etc. Those with no musical background have limited influence, but can contribute through support, motivation, encouragement, etc., while the music must be left to others.”



*Conductor – School Band “C:”*

“The parents’ musical upbringing has a lot to say for the band students’ education, be it training (which is *alpha omega* if the musician is going to feel mastery in the band), the importance of participating as a community, learning that you have to work toward mastery, learning perseverance—and also to learn that it isn’t just fun and games all the time—motivation actually goes up and down periodically. I had never been educated in music if it were not for my parents who sent me to band rehearsal even on the days when I was not motivated. I am forever grateful for them.”

The theme that band parents can influence their child’s musical education through motivation is congruent with the results of Question 12/9 which also gave motivation as the top response. However, the two parents (both of whom were in band as children and have three to five years of band parents experience) and two conductors’ assertion that non-musical parents have little influence on the child’s musical is congruent with the results of Question 19/15, but does not agree with the parents’ results from Question 10/7: “*I have influence on my child’s musical education.*”

## **2. Parent Prompt 26, Director Prompt 22:**

### **Parental reaction to pedagogical disagreement**

Prompt 26 on the band parent questionnaire asked, “*If you disagree with the conductor’s pedagogical choices, what do you do?*” The corresponding question, Prompt 22 on the band director questionnaire, asked similarly, “*If parents disagree with your pedagogical choices, what do you do?*” Parents’ responses were separated into three themes: speak to the band parent executive board, speak to the instructor, or do nothing. Several responses said simply, “I would speak up,” but did not designate to whom. Eleven parents would take their disagreement first to the band parent executive board:

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/six or more years:*

“Take it up with the band parents’ executive board, so they can take it further.”

Of the six parents who would take their disagreement directly to the director, two added the option of discussing the issue with the executive board:

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/six or more years:*  
“Take it up with the conductor first, and if that does not work, to the band parents’ executive board.”

Two parents stated that they would do nothing if they disagreed with the conductor’s educational choices. One played in band as child and the other did not. All three band directors indicated that they would explain their choices to the parents.

### **3. Parent Prompt 27:**

#### **Perception of home–practice routines**

Prompt 27 asked the parents to reflect on their actions when their child practices at home: “*What do you do when your child practices at home? (Listen along? Is the child alone? Do you give the child feed back? Do you watch the time?)*” One primary theme, and two minor, opposing themes emerge from the parents’ responses: listen and give feedback, practice together, and not much practicing occurs. Two parents gave noteworthy responses from the primary them, listen and give feedback:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/3–5yrs of experience:*  
“Listen and let the child be alone for the most part, but give advice if it’s needed, either because he asks questions or if I hear something that should be corrected. Watch the clock a bit, too, but believe that’s not as important; it’s more important that the child is practicing.”

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/1–2 years of experience:*

“She wants to sit in a private room so I cannot hear, so I let her do that—I can hear anyway for from the floor below, and I praise her a bunch. Make sure she practices every weekday after doing homework.”

Twenty of the twenty-five parents participants (80 %) presented the primary theme of listening and giving feedback during their child’s home-practice routines. Three parents with school band experience claim they practice together with their child, one said it happens “naturally,” one said “occasionally,” and one said, “If she wants to.” One beginner band parent who did not play in school band as a child answered only that there is a little practicing occurring at home.

#### **4. Parent Prompt 28, Director Prompt 23: Parental involvement musically at beginner level**

Although essentially a closed-ended question, this prompt's placement among open-ended questions and large response area invited participants to provide a more extensive answer. Prompt 28 on the band parent questionnaire asked hypothetically, "Would you have participated in all the rehearsals at the beginning band level? (i.e. play an instrument, learn basic music theory, instrument maintenance, etc.)." Prompt 23 on the band director questionnaire asked, "Would you let parents participant in beginning band rehearsals and also help during the rehearsal musically? (i.e. play an instrument, learn basic music theory, instrument maintenance, etc.)."

Two major themes emerged naturally, "yes" and "no," along with a minor third, "yes to an extent." Nine parent participants responded positively. Seven of the nine played in band as a child:

*Parent – School Band "B"/was in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
"There could gladly be more training for parents."

Eight band parents and School Band "A" and "C" conductors responded negatively. Five of these parents are from School Band "B:"

*Parent – School Band "B"/was in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
"It's not be done this way in this band. None of the parents are present during the rehearsal. Only as kitchen help/assistance."

The following negative comment is surprising in that the parent deems the tasks of reading music and playing in instrument to difficult for him/herself but not for the child:

*Parent – School Band "B"/was not in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
"No, since I can't read music, or play any instrument, that would be difficult."

School Band "B" director agreed to the first two to six month of parents' musical involvement, and one band parent agreed to involvement in certain areas only:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was not in band/6 or more years of experience:*  
“Not playing. But showing interest in maintenance and enough music theory to SUPPORT children’s development, but be aware that this is the child’s arena.”

Overall, twelve parents and one director are willing, at least to an extent, while eight parents and two directors are not willing to have band parents musically involved at the beginning band level.

### **5. Parent Prompt 29, Director Prompt 24: Other perceptions of parental involvement**

Prompt 29/24 invited participants to “*please share examples of how you/band parents have been involved in the band’s activities in the past.*” This statement was purposefully worded to avoid leading participants to mention certain areas, for example musical or organizational, in hope that participants would reveal their true methods involvement through their responses. Three themes emerged from the responses: serving on the band parent executive board, helping musically during band rehearsals, and helping with fundraisers and other activities

Of the eight band parents who answered that they are involved in the bands’ activities by being a member of the executive board, five did not play in band as a child. Six parents, all of whom played in band as children, responded that they are involved in their bands’ activities by participating musically and helping directly in the school band rehearsals:

*Parent – School Band “C”/was in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“I am along to play when necessary. Help by pointing along to notes in the sheet music. Copying and organizing music books. Have held a position on the executive board and have been able to determine what the band should do, when and how.”

Eleven parents indicated that they are involved in bands’ activities by helping with fundraisers, etc., six of whom were beginning band parents. The School Band “B” director listed ways in which band parents are involved non-musically:

*Conductor – School Band “B:”*

“Practical preparations for concerts, rigging of facilities, procurement of supplies, activities during the breaks at band camp seminars, and fruit and cake at rehearsals.”

Considering the response themes according to demographic categories, parent participants who are involved by being on the band parent executive more likely were not in band as children; parents who are involved musically and directly in band rehearsals were in band as children; parents who help with fundraisers are more likely beginning band parents.

## **6. Parent Prompt 30, Director Prompt 25:**

### **Additional comments**

Lastly, participants were asked, *“Is there anything else you want to say regarding your experience as a band parent/your experiences with band parents?”* Twelve of the twenty-five parent participants and two of the three band directors gave additional comments regarding their experiences. With the low response rate for this prompt, the emerging themes are shallow but wide-ranging. Five themes emerge: the importance of the child’s musical progress, the importance of communication, the importance of group identity, that bands don’t require as much parental involvement as other activities, and lastly a theme of critical thinking.

Two beginning band parents and one intermediate band parent commented that it is most important for them to see that their child is progressing, musically, mentally, and physically. Two parents and two conductors, from School Band “B” and “C,” stressed the importance of communication:

*Conductor – School Band “B:”*

“It is important to involve new parents early in the band’s activities so that they also feel a part of the group identity. It is also important that the conductor is visible and familiarizes himself with the parents (is welcoming and takes the time to chat with them now and then).

“It is very important to emphasize the importance of home practice, and that they help ensure that children practice a little at home.

“I have mostly good experiences with the parents in my band. They are positive and very attentive to my opinions. They often request the conductor’s advice and tips in the executive board issues.”

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
“Maybe not enough information about expectations for practice and playing in general. Otherwise satisfied.”

*Conductor – School Band “C:”*  
“[Band parents should] motivate their children to practice at home, get them to perform with music at home. [Band parents should also] trust the conductor’s educational decision—but should feel free to ask.”

Furthermore, School Band “B” conductor mentioned in the above opening sentence that being “a part of a group identity” is important. A veteran band parent agreed:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/6 or more years of experience:*  
“It is very social, and you become part of a team. Good contact with youth and children is an important driving force in the work.”

Two parents, both from School Band “C,” claimed that there is not as much effort and volunteer work associated with being a band parent as many supposedly believe:

*Parent – School Band “C”/was in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“Many people think that the band is a lot of fundraisers, but it isn’t. There are many other activities that expect much more parental involvement.”

Lastly, three parents exhibited critical thinking responses, in line with the theoretical frameworks discussed at the close of the second chapter of this paper:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was not in band/6 or more years of experience:*  
“I want to emphasize that parents’ attitude toward other parents is important. We must be aware that if we do not ‘click together’ then we exclude other new parents. We cannot leave everything to the director/board! Band is a social project too! It is more ‘commercial’ than daycare/school. However, it consists of the same kids and parents. ‘Customers’ = musicians/parents who can easily choose other arenas if they’re dissatisfied. Therefore, cooperation and leadership is essential. [...]

“If the director or the executive board makes especially specific demands of parents, more than other extracurricular activities, this may have consequences for what the parents choose for their children. One must be almost as educational with parents as with the band students.

“Therefore, cooperation between the administration, educators and parents is important for the band’s present and future. The children’s involvement is

also important. Let them have a voice in leadership! Listen to their concerns and needs. Conduct ‘performance reviews’ with members. [...]”

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
“Maybe not enough information about expectations for practice and playing in general. Otherwise good.”

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“[...] I think it is a shame that the school bands in the community for the most part sit separately each with far too few members. I think there is room for only one school band in [the county]. It would in my view give the children a much better experience of playing in a band, with a bigger instrumentation the band sounds better and fuller, at the same time all the municipal resources could be directed toward the one band instead of among several small ones which are almost not sustainable.

“The reason I mention this is that I perceive that among the school bands in [the county] there are conductors/instructors, parents, and other powers in the band milieu in general who against thinking bigger and possibly a merger to, for example, [County] *skolekorps*. If I could as a parent freely decide one thing, it would be to merge the school bands in [the county].”

These critical responses provide intriguing insight toward regarding perceptions of parental involvement in Norwegian school bands. These statements and the previously discussed data will be investigated further in the following chapter. Significant questionnaire results and themes will be considered in light of the philosophical and theoretical frameworks from chapter two. The discussion will strive to resolve the four research questions.

## **7. Questionnaire conclusions**

Based on the level of agreement in questionnaire responses, generalizations may be made regarding parents’ and directors’ perceptions of parental involvement. Table 1 generalizes the questionnaire items in which participants faced sharp disagreement:

In addition to those presented in Table 1, parent participants were also slightly divided on Question 26. This prompt asked parents what they would do if they disagree with the school band conductor’s educational choices. The majority of statements mentioning the top response, “speak to the band parent executive board,” were from parents who played in school band as a child, however, the remaining responses were spread uniformly throughout the other demographic areas.

<i>Table 1: STATEMENTS ON WHICH PARTICIPANTS ARE DIVIDED</i>		
<b>Item 6</b>	“How often are you present at school band rehearsals?”	<i>Beginner parents: “Rarely” Intermediate: “Monthly” Veteran parents: “Weekly”</i>
<b>Item 7/4</b>	“The band parents understand how their children should practice at home.”	<i>Parents: “Yes” Directors: “No”</i>
<b>Item 11/8</b>	“The band parents are involved in decisions that are made for the band.”	<i>Beginner parents: “No” Veteran parents: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 17/13</b>	Should the band parents wait outside? Do they?	<i>Parents: “No” Directors: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 19/15</b>	Should parents help musically? Do they?	<i>Band experience: “Yes” No band experience: “No” *Conductor “B”: “No”</i>
<b>Item 23/19</b>	Should parents wait for instructions from the director? Do they?	<i>Parents: “Yes” Directors: “No”</i>
<b>Item 26</b>	“If you disagree with the conductor’s educational choices, what do you do?”	<i>Band experience: “Speak to the executive board.” No band experience:</i>
<b>Item 28/23</b>	Should band parents participate at the beginning band level?	<i>Band experience: “Yes” No band experience: “No” *Conductor “B”: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 29</b>	“Please share examples of how you have been involved in the school band’s activities in the past.”	<i>Band experience: “Helping musically” No band experience: “Exec board/Fundraisers”</i>

Table 2, on the other hand, presents the questionnaire items in which band parent and band director participants were nearly unanimous. In the far right column of Table 2, exceptions to agreement are identified. Figure 2 combines the statements from the tables 1 and 2 in order to demonstrate the extent to which the perspectives band parents and band director of School Band “B” coincide. Despite near unanimous answers provided to the aforementioned questionnaire items, an observation of the band parent and band director partnership at a school band rehearsal revealed that the participants’ responses are not necessarily accurate according to their actions in the actual educational setting.



<i>Table 2: STATEMENTS ON WHICH PARTICIPANTS NEARLY AGREE</i>		
<b>Item 8/5</b>	“The band parents understand how their children should behave during band rehearsals.”	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 9/6</b>	“The band parents have influence on their children’s social development in the band.”	<i>*Conductor “B” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 10/7</b>	“The band parents have influence on their children’s musical education.”	<i>*Conductor “A” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 12/9</b>	“In which areas do band parents have influence on the musicians’ home practice?”	<i>Motivation, frequency, duration</i>
<b>Item 13/10</b>	“In which areas should the parent group be able to make decisions for the band?”	<i>Band trips, budget, rehearsal times</i>
<b>Item 14/11</b>	“In which areas SHOULDN’T the band parent group be able to make decisions for the band?”	<i>Instrumentation, repertoire, educational choices</i>
<b>Item 18/14</b>	Should parents help with discipline? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 20/16</b>	Should parents help with equipment? Do they?	<i>Yes</i>
<b>Item 21/17</b>	Should parents help with sheet music? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “B” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 22/18</b>	Should parents help with the classroom order? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 24/20</b>	“Whose responsibility is it to teach new band parents their responsibilities?”	<i>Executive board</i>
<b>Item 25/21</b>	“In what ways do you think band parents have influence on their children’s musical education?”	<i>Encouraging practice</i>
<b>Item 27</b>	“What do you do when your child practices at home?”	<i>Listen and give feedback</i>

### **C. Observation**

Band parents’ and directors’ questionnaire responses revealed information that helps answer the questions of parents’ and directors’ perceptions of parental involvement in school band. However, participants’ opinions and perceptions may not necessarily reflect the actuality of the educational implications. Therefore, the method of observation was chosen for viewing parental involvement in the natural setting of a central Buskerud school band rehearsal.

#### **1. Case selection**

Following the analysis of the questionnaire responses, the decision was made to reduce the multiple case study to one school band. The lower response rate disqualified School Band “A” as a representative organization for answering the

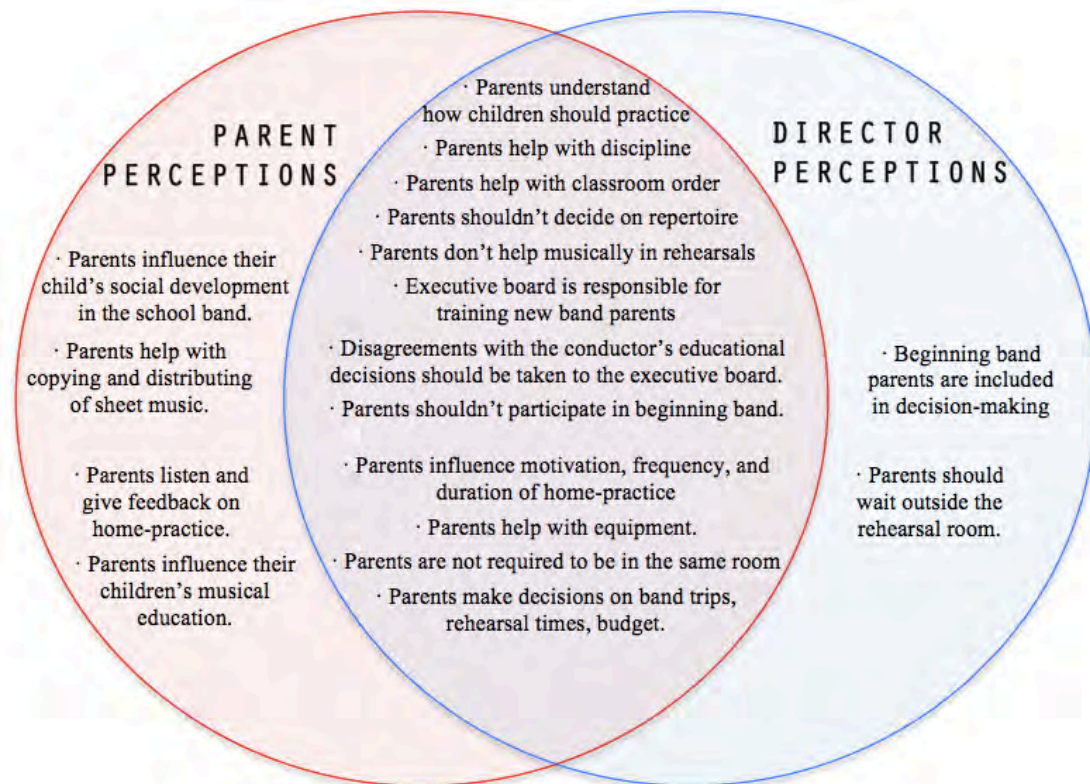


Figure 2. This Venn diagram illustrates questionnaire statements upon which School Band “B” participants’ perceptions are alike (center) and are different. (far left, far right)

research questions. School Bands “B” and “C” had similar response rates and demographic proportions among band parents. Because the conductor and parent participants of School Band “B” gave more frequent and more detailed responses to the open-ended questions, their organization was selected for observation.

## 2. Protocol

Tables 1 and 2 were brought to the observation as a reference of the areas in which parents and band directors had indicated near unanimous agreement or stark disagreement to questionnaire prompts. The objective of the interview was to compose descriptive notes of rehearsal participants’ behavior and simultaneously take reflective notes of reflection based on the themes that emerged from the questionnaire prompts. The “descriptive notes” and “reflective notes” were organized according to Creswell’s (1998) observational protocol model. (1998: 128-129)

### 3. Setting and participants

The observation consisted of a half hour rehearsal of the school band, followed by a twenty-minute break, a fifty-minute rehearsal with the local community band, and continued for fifteen minutes afterward as parents picked up their children. The participants in the half hour School Band “B” rehearsal include the band director, the thirteen students, five band parents, and one parent representing the drill team. Students in the ensemble range in age from elementary school students who have played an instrument for two years to high school students. Parents present at the rehearsal remarked, however, that “none of the older students are here, only the younger ones.” The consecutive fifty-minute rehearsal added multiple new participants to the setting. The amateur adult band consisted of approximately thirty members, several of whom are parents of School Band “B” students. In this analysis, the genders of participants will remain hidden, both in order to retain subjects’ anonymity and because gender was not considered a variable for this research.

The rehearsals and break took place in an elementary school gym. The students unpacked their belongings outside of the gym. Parents helped students to carry instruments, music folders, and stands to the gym. Chairs were located underneath the stage. One parent and thirteen students together assembled the rehearsal space. Two rows of five chairs each were placed parallel to the stage at one end of the gym. An awkward space of approximately ten feet (three meters) separated the ten chairs from the three stands for the percussion students, located to stage right of the ensemble. The director’s music stand was centered in front of the ten chairs.

While the band was positioned at one of the gym, two parents sat on a low bench at the opposite end. Low benches lined the gym and several more chairs were available on and underneath stage. The door to the gym is located at the midcourt line and the band and the stage are the left of this entrance, yet the parents chose to sit in the opposite corner. Two parents remained outside the gym for the majority of the rehearsal, entering only briefly to place coffee and fruit plates on the stage for during the break. A fifth parent arrived nearly the end of the school band rehearsal and listened from the doorway momentarily, as occurred later with two additional parents during the joint rehearsal with the community band.

#### **4. Observed behaviors corresponding to questionnaire items**

##### **i. Parents' attendance at rehearsals**

Parents' attendance at school band rehearsals was as a questionnaire item, Question 6, which divided the participants. At the observed rehearsal, at least four School Band "B" parents were present for the entirety of the rehearsal and a fifth parent briefly near the end of the rehearsal. It is possible that others arrived during the rehearsal and remained outside of the rehearsal space, unseen to the researcher. Four parents and a band director made a 5:13 ratio of adults to children present at the School Band "B" rehearsal.

Parents and directors were also divided on Question 17, which asked if parents should wait outside during while the band rehearses. The conductor of School Band "B" said that parents do not wait outside, yet seven of nine School Band "B" parent participants said they should. Two parents were present in the rehearsal room for most of the observed school band rehearsal, contrary to the conductor's questionnaire response. This deviation will be revisited during the upcoming interview.

##### **ii. Parental assistance with materials**

Parents and conductors agreed on the questionnaire that parents should and indeed do help with carrying and set up equipment. This was confirmed as one parent assisted students in carrying equipment to the gym and set up chairs and sets prior to the rehearsal. A second parent assisted a dawdling student with his/her instrument and music folder. A third parent helped set up and adjust a student's snare drum. Following the school band's rehearsal, the director instructed the second parent that more chairs were needed for the community band, which the parent further announced to the students. At the conclusion of the evening, parents helped disassemble the rehearsal space, carry equipment, and instruments.

##### **iii. Director's invitation to help**

The School Band "B" conductor and parents were divided on the questions, "*Should parents wait for instructions from the director?*" and "*Do they?*" The parent participants answered that they should wait for instructions, but the conductor

responded that parents don't wait. At the observed school band rehearsal, three instances were observed of parents waiting for invitations from the conductor.

The first instance occurred three minutes into the rehearsal. The director cut off the band and asked a drummer why he/she wasn't playing, to which the student replied that the snare drum was too low and didn't know how to fix it. The second parent mentioned above, who had assisted a student with their instrument and music folder, took two strides toward the drummer, hesitated, glanced at the conductor took another step, again hesitated, and looked again at the conductor. The conductor did not respond to the parent's body language, but verbally instructed the student on how to adjust the snare drum stand him/herself. The student followed the instructions. The parent gave a nod and smile of approval to the student and left the gym. The parent's body language suggested an interest in helping the student, yet the hesitation appeared to indicate waiting for permission from the conductor.

The second instance of a parent waiting for an invitation to assist at the school band rehearsal was initiated by the director. Seventeen minutes into the half hour rehearsal, the director called out to a parent sitting at the opposite end of the gym and assigned him/her to locate another parent, which he/she fulfilled.

The third instance of parents waiting for an invitation from the director will also be discussed in the upcoming paragraph on behavior intervention. Throughout the half hour rehearsal, the two parents present in the gym commented on the behavioral issues preventing rehearsal progress. Percussion students began climbing the wall five minutes into the rehearsal. "See that? There's no focus here," one parent said to the other. No attempt was made by the parents to intervene and correct students' behavior. This aspect of the rehearsal will also be deliberated during the interview analysis.

#### **iv. Parental influence on rehearsal behavior**

Although the parents and conductor of School Band "B" responded similarly to all three questionnaire items regarding rehearsal behavior, the observation exposed a different account. School Band "B" director indicated that parents do indeed help

with discipline and *arbeidsro* (“classroom order”) at the band rehearsals, yet discipline was an issue at the School Band “B” rehearsal.

For example, in the last eleven minutes of the rehearsal, no music was made as an ensemble; the director kneeled next to one student and quietly gave one-to-one instruction. During this time, drummers continued to climb the gym walls and flute players made train sounds with their head joints. Only when the trumpet students gave a collective blast did the conductor address the students’ misbehavior. The students were rewarded with snacks a minute later. The two band parents watched and talked intermittently as the students misbehaved yet did not intervene. This aspect of the rehearsal will also be discussed during the interview analysis.

#### **v. Parental involvement musically**

School Band “B” questionnaire participants were also divided on the issue of parents’ musical contribution during the rehearsal. Participants who played in a school band in their youth answered that they should help, whereas the other parents and School Band “B” conductor disagreed. A single example of a parent’s musical involvement was observed during the first half hour school band rehearsal, along with several insistences during the joint rehearsal with the community band.

A minute before the school band started to play, a band parent helped set up and tune a snare drum for one student. The parent modeled a rhythm for the student and, although inaudible to the observer, appeared to discuss playing technique. One of the parents who sat on the low bench at the opposite end of the gym asked the other, “Do you hear any progress?” to which the second parent replied that he/she doesn’t have musical training. Perhaps their lack of musical training inhibited them from contributing to the rehearsal musically.

Naturally, the joint rehearsal with the school band and adult community band invited more opportunities for parents to assist the children musically. The interaction among adult and student wind instrument players was curiously limited. Two adult percussionists, both band parents, assisted the percussion students throughout the joint rehearsal. They demonstrated rhythms and playing techniques, pointed at notes in their sheet music as they played, and discussed musical concepts between pieces.

Unfortunately, during the rehearsal of one particular piece, one of the percussion band parents consistently demonstrated *incorrect* rhythms for the students.

The limited interaction between adult and student wind may be attributed to the seating arrangement. The ten school band wind students were already seated prior to the joint rehearsal; the adults, many of whom are also School Band “B” parents, sat in the available seats around the students. Outside of the percussion section was only one other occurrence of adult–student interaction. Twenty minutes into the fifty–minute joint rehearsal, one band parent asked the community band director for permission to switch seats with another in order to give a struggling student better support.

Parent participants in the questionnaire indicated that they should help musically. The joint rehearsal was an opportunity for many band parents to help the school band students, yet only three accomplished this. However, considering that one of these three parents consistently demonstrated incorrect rhythms for the students, parental involvement musically in the school band may in fact be perceived by the conductor as a risk for students’ music education.

## **5. Emerging themes**

### **i. Assessment**

“Do you hear any progress?” one parent asked the other. Assessment of students’ musical progress, discussed in Chapter 2 under music didactics, was addressed in the questionnaire only through responses to the open-ended question of home-practice routines yet arose during the observed school band rehearsal. After the completion of the march a few minutes later, the second parent yelled out to the band students, “That was good!” The question of how band students are informally assessed during home-practice and school band rehearsals will also be discussed under the interview analysis.

### **ii. Communication**

The questionnaires asked participants in which area band parents should be able to make decisions for the band. The second most selected area was *rehearsal*

*times*. The conductor and seven of the nine parent participants from School Band “B” also selected *rehearsal times* as an area in which parents should make decisions. It was revealed during the observed school band rehearsal that the leader of the band parent executive board had determined the time at which the students would be finished that evening. The issue, however, was not who had made the decision, but the inadequate communication of the decision.

At the start of the twenty-minute break at the observed school band rehearsal, a parent of a drill team student approached the conductor in front of the ensemble about miscommunication of the evening’s rehearsal times. Their discussion started in the gym with all the students present, then moved to the hallway. The parent expressed to the conductor that the rehearsal time was not clearly communicated and therefore a number of drill team students had arrived earlier and were unsupervised. This parent gave the example that students who participate in both the drill team and in the school band would have played in the school band that evening had the rehearsal schedule been clearly communicated. It was not clear from their conversation which method of communication had been used to inform parents of the rehearsal time or when it was determined.

## **7. Observation conclusions**

The observation of parent behavior at a School Band “B” rehearsal both confirmed questionnaire results and raised new questions. Parents do indeed help with equipment and wait for the director’s invitation to help during the rehearsal. On the other hand, parents were present at the rehearsal despite School Band “B” conductor’s questionnaire response that they are not present. The parents did not intervene on disruptive behavioral issues despite questionnaire responses from parents and the conductor that parents should and do intervene. Lastly, new concerns emerged regarding the informal assessment of students’ musical achievement and the importance of clear communication between conductor, executive board, and other band parents.



## **D. Interview**

The observation of the school band rehearsal shed light on several issues upon which band parents and band directors disagreed and issues upon which they supposedly agreed but practice differently in the context of the school band rehearsal. Parents' involvement in their children's music education, however, is not limited to the activities once a week at the school band rehearsal. Therefore, the interview guide was designed to address home-based activities and band parent executive board behaviors not discernible from an observed rehearsal, as well as to invite reactions to incidents from the observed school band rehearsal.

### **1. Participant selection**

Following the analysis of the questionnaire responses and the school band rehearsal observation, an interview guide was devised to triangulate the information and themes from the first two methods. The criterion for participating in the interview was to be the parent of a child who plays an instrument in School Band "B." As the participant submitted the completed questionnaire in person, the researcher and interview subject privately scheduled the interview.

A semi-structured, one-to-one interview was conducted in the subject's home, with the time parameters and seating arrangement determined by the interviewee. The interview was conducted in Norwegian; the tape-recording was transcribed and translated into English by the researcher with assistance from a colleague. The interviewee approved the English transcript prior to analysis. As with the observation analysis, the genders of persons mentioned in the interview are treated neutrally.

### **2. Interview guide prompts corresponding to questionnaire items**

#### **i. Home-practice routine**

The interview, like the questionnaire, started with general questions about the interviewee and about the home-practice routine. Because the subject also plays an instrument, the conversation evolved to how the student behaves when the parent practices:

*Interviewee – School Band “B”/was in band/3–5 years experience:*

“[My child] doesn’t think about it too much, but will ask *if I’ve practiced*. [The child] will tell me that the conductor is going to tell me to practice! That’s what I say to [the child], that the conductor can hear if you’ve practiced or not and can tell you to practice more, so my [child] will say that to me, too.”

While on the topic of practicing at home, the responses to two of the questionnaire statements were discussed. First, the conductors stated that parents do not understand how their child should practice; the parents nearly unanimously asserted that they do. The interviewee stated that, “ I know how to practice because I know how to practice myself,” yet on the questionnaire parents who played in school band in their youth and those who did not both affirmed their understanding of how their children should practice. The interviewee explained:

“That might be because they have gotten information from the *kulturskole* teacher (private lessons teacher) on how to practice. [...] I have, in relation to this, experienced that the conductor and the executive board assume that the parents understand how things should be, and those of us who are ‘band people’ understand, but I think those who have not themselves been in band can be easily scared. If you can read music and can play an instrument, there are many things that are just obvious, a matter of course. For those who can’t, there’s not enough information given.”

Because the subject mentioned the band parent executive board’s assumptions, the interview transitioned naturally to this topic.

## **ii. Band parent executive board**

Questionnaire participants responded unanimously that it is the band parent executive board’s responsibility to teach new band parents their duties and responsibilities. This result begged the question, “How does this happen?” The interviewee recalled the first new parent meeting, led by the leader of the band parent executive board:

“I remember when we started there was a new parent meeting early on. There was a lot of information... about the band and a bit about rehearsal times and such, but it was that one time. [...] But at that time you’re a bit more focused on other things—you’re not thinking so much about rehearsing or the instrument because they hadn’t received their instruments yet. This was all the way at the start, so I think there should have been some follow-up, like when the students get their instruments and first start playing. There could be

a representative from the executive board who shows up and asks how things are going, if there is anything the family is wondering, if they would like to sit in and listen—try to pull the new parents in more.”

The questionnaire responses also suggested that beginner band parents feel less involved in decision-making for the band. When asked if the beginner band parents should be more included or if it is more beneficial that the more experience veteran band parents make decisions, the interviewee answered that it would be wise to include band parents at least in the brainstorming stage so that they at least feel included. In School Band “B,” the interviewee says that new band parents are “a bit on the outside. I don’t think they’re included.”

When asked for the reason why beginning band parents in School Band “B” are not included in the decision-making process, the interviewee indicated limitations with the executive board:

“Right now, I think it’s partly because the executive board is quite new also, so they are a bit... they don’t really know how they should approach it. That means the board is very dependent on the conductor and what he/she wants—that can be fine but not always—and for right now I think that the executive board should have more say regarding the conductor—about when they should stop rehearsal, when they should start, what sort of music they should play. They are at [the conductor’s] mercy.”

The interviewee has mentioned that the band parent executive board should have a say regarding repertoire played by the school band. The majority of responses to the questionnaire stated that band parents should not make decisions regarding repertoire. Furthermore, when asked what consequences are for students if the executive board is dependent on the conductor, the interviewee responded that students’ musical education suffers.

The conductor of School Band “B,” on the other hand, perceives that the band parents are satisfied and included in decisions:

*Conductor – School Band “B:”*

“I have mostly good experiences with the parents in my band. They are positive and very attentive to my opinions. They often request the conductor’s advice and tips in executive board issues.”

The interviewee, as previously stated, perceives that the executive board is “at the conductor’s mercy” and that parents are literally locked out of their children’s rehearsals. School Band “B” lacks a true discourse among parents and conductor in which “everyone should be able to express his or her preference, attitudes, and needs.” (Nerheim 1996: 359, translated by Snyder)

### **iii. Content**

Questionnaire participants were nearly unanimous that band parents should not make decisions regarding the school band’s repertoire. Fifteen of the twenty-five parent participants, five of the nine School Band “B” parent participants, and all three conductors agreed. The interviewee, however, claimed that the musical education and retention rate of School Band “B” suffers because band parents have not had a voice regarding repertoire decisions for the school band.

“For my child, the repertoire has been too challenging, a bit too ‘adult’ music. Some of the older students think that’s fine, the director thinks that’s fine, but the younger students don’t. For example, the band has worked for half a year on three difficult pieces, nothing more. That gets boring, you know. [...] So my child and I work on the music he/she gets from the *kulturskole* teacher, but not as much on the school band music because it is just too difficult. We prioritize the pieces that are more possible to strive for and that’s the music he/she gets from the private teacher. There are lots of dropouts from the band, and I think that has a lot to do with the repertoire choices by the conductor.”

When questioned about what actions a parent could take in reaction to such a situation, the interviewee expressed that one could take the issue to the executive board, but that in the case of School Band “B” the conductor is not open to parental involvement in this area. The interviewee also voiced sympathy that it would be difficult for a school band conductor if the parent of every child in the school band criticized repertoire decisions and gave opinions on other issues.

The interviewee suggested that a reorganization of the band parent executive board could benefit the school band’s musical education. In addition to positions such as the “material manager” who is a parent in charge of uniforms and the treasurer who has the economic responsibilities for the school band, the interviewee proposes a “music selection” committee or manager with school band experience:

“If the school band had that [a band parent “musical selection” committee] then there would be more who could share their opinions and could take into account the youngest players—when they come new into the band and only get to play difficult music, then they don’t understand anything and consequently quit.”

In summary, the interviewee claimed that the director’s is unwilling to allow parents’ input on content decisions, that this has negative consequences for the band students’ education, and that the solution includes restructuring the band parent organization.

#### **iv. Rehearsal behavior and director’s invitation to help**

In addition to an aversion of parental involvement on content decisions, the interviewee spoke of the conductor’s unwillingness to allow parents in the rehearsal space, let alone contribute musically or correct behavior.

“[The conductor] doesn’t want parents there. I sat there the first time and pointed along in the music for my [child] but the conductor said (sternly), ‘He/she can do it him/herself.’ Of course, it’s probably different with different conductors, but this one doesn’t want parents there. There are quite a few parents who could help—parents who can play an instrument, who are schoolteachers, who are used to children. I can understand that there can be chaos at a rehearsal. If you’ve got a bunch of kids and you try to help the clarinet students, for example, then the kids behind your back may try to act up. [The conductor] should accept the help, but has certainly not invited it. We as parents of course want our kids to pay attention and learn something.”

As mentioned in the prior section, at the observed rehearsal of School Band “B,” students’ misbehavior interfered with the musical education, but the two parents present at the rehearsal did not intervene to correct the disruptive behavior. The interviewee had stated that the conductor has requested that parents not be in the same room as the school band rehearsal, yet two parents were in fact present at the observed rehearsal.

*Interviewee:* “(confused)...They were allowed to sit there?”

*Researcher:* *No one said anything against it.*

*Interviewee:* “We’ve never been allowed to do that before.”

Perhaps the observer’s presence at the rehearsal altered the setting. It is possible that because the conductor gave the observer permission to enter the rehearsal space, parents tacitly took the opportunity to observe the rehearsal as well. The interviewee’s statement concurs with this questionnaire response:

*Parent – School Band “B”/was in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
“[...] None of the parents are present during the rehearsal. Only as kitchen help/assistance.”

Nearly all questionnaire participants agreed that band parents understand how children should behave at school band rehearsals. Only the conductor and a beginning band parent from School Band “C” disagreed. All School Band “B” parents conveyed their understanding of proper rehearsal behavior; the students of School Band “B” did not demonstrate correct rehearsal behavior. When asked whose responsibility it is ultimately to set the standards of behavior, the interviewee denoted the conductor:

“If the conductor were open to having us at the rehearsals and we were told how the students are expected to behave, we could take on that job. But now it is diffuse since we’re not allowed to be there.”

The parents present at the observed rehearsal observed the students’ misbehavior—*“See that? There’s no focus here”*—but did not intervene, perhaps due to the assumption that the conductor has sole responsibility for rectifying students’ behavior during rehearsals.

#### **v. Assessment**

During the rehearsal of School Band “B,” several informal assessments were observed. The conductor responded verbally to students’ performances, both praise and constructive criticism. One parent yelled, “That was good!” following the performance of one piece. These instances of informal assessment were to the whole ensemble.

In response to an open-ended questionnaire item asking parents what they do when their child practices, twenty of twenty-five parents participants revealed that they listen and give feedback. These instances are individualized assessments. The interviewee explained that, because there is no formal assessment system in the school band, assessment of school band students’ musical performance occurs informally at rehearsals when the conductor gives the ensemble feedback, after home-practice when parents (particularly those with musical backgrounds) give feedback to their children, and at students’ lessons with *kulturskole* private lesson instructors.

### **3. Emerging themes**

#### **i. Historical comparison**

Because the interviewee played in school band as a child, a historical comparison could be made. When asked in what ways being a band parent today is different from when the interviewee was in school band as a child, the subject supposed there were no noticeable differences:

*Interviewee:* “Rehearsals are about the same anyway. We got driven to the school and dropped off at the rehearsal, and I do pretty much the same thing now! I don’t know that there was more involvement of parents then than there is now.”

*Researcher:* *The executive board was set up the same?*

*Interviewee:* “Yeah...Well, it was a much bigger school band and a much bigger executive board. And I seem to remember much better cooperation between the board and the director than I experience now. But I don’t think the parents had any more influence than they have now.”

According to the interviewee’s response, the organization and incorporation of band parents appears to have remained consistent despite a new generation of band parents and instructors. This persistent structure will be further discussed in the following chapter.

#### **ii. Critical thinking: *Skolekorps–kulturskole* relationship**

The interviewee described under the first interview heading, “*i. Home-practice routine,*” that their home-practice prioritizes the music assigned by the *kulturskole* private lesson teacher because it is more suitable to the child’s ability level. The interviewee later explained that the school band students are offered private lessons via the *kulturskole* for their first year and it is optional to continue. Instruction is not available for all school band instruments at the *kulturskole*, however. Therefore, for some students the school band rehearsals once a week and family response to their home-practice are their only sources for instrumental music education. These students do not have a *kulturskole* private lesson instructor who can provide repertoire more suitable for their ability levels, assuming these students are experiencing the same concern as the interviewee described.

The interviewee also mentioned that the executive board has not responded in the past when students have decided to quit their *kulturskole* lessons. The subject suggested that there be a reaction from the parent group to encourage students to continue with private instrumental music instruction. Such a social reaction may not only support the individual student's musical achievement but also enhance that of the school band as a whole.

The final question of the interview asked the subject to hypothetically change one thing about how the school band, *kulturskole*, and parents work together. The interviewee provided a radical response. Rather than the extracurricular position Norwegian school bands have currently as a subdivision of the municipal *kulturskole*, the interviewee proposed the school band instead be part of the students' school day, with concentration on school band in the elementary school.

Placing the school band under the auspices of the public school would alter several educational and sociocultural aspects for the school band. Assessment, objectives, methods, and content would be subject to national standards. Frame factors would be different, including rehearsal and storage spaces, rehearsal times and frequency, and funding, for example. Furthermore, if the public school employed the school band conductor, there may be different requirements and expectations for the instructor than the *kulturskole* or band parent executive board currently has.

#### **4. Interview conclusions**

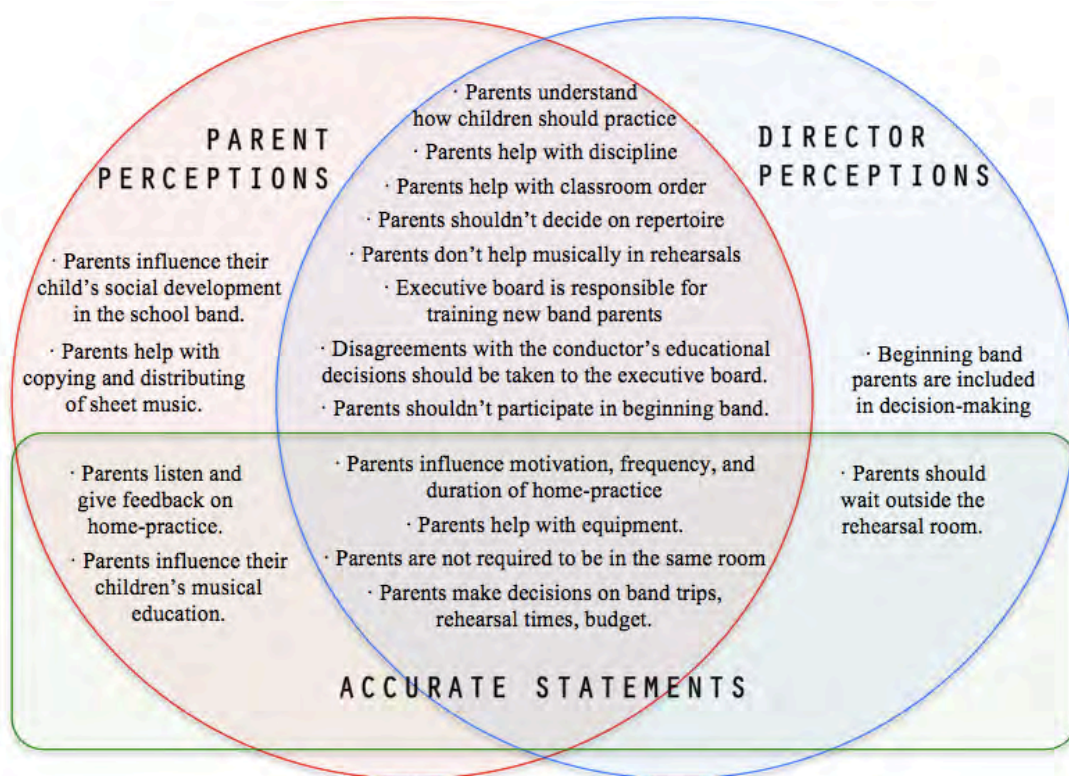
The band parent interview clarified concerns from the questionnaire responses and the observation of the parents at a School Band "B" rehearsal. For example, the interviewee confirmed that beginner band parents are less involved in make decisions for the band, but expressed that their opinions should be invited. The subject also verified that assessment for school bands is largely informal feedback during or after home-practice, and adds that *kulturskole* private instructors are another source.

The interviewee challenged several questionnaire results and several parental and conductor behaviors observed at the rehearsal. The band parent contended that the School Band "B" conductor has enforced limitations on the band parents' influence at school band rehearsals. According to the interviewee, the conductor



forbids parental presence at rehearsals; therefore the two parents' presence in the observed rehearsal room was unusual.

Figure 2 from *B.7. Questionnaire conclusions* illustrates the items on which parent and band director questionnaire participants were divided and nearly in agreement, respectively. The treatment of School Band "B" as a case for this study revealed both accuracies and inaccuracies in questionnaire responses through triangulation of the questionnaire results with findings from the observation of a school band rehearsal and the band parent interview. In addition to the correlation of the School Band "B" parents and band director's perspectives, Figure 3 further divides these standpoints according to their accuracy with the addition of an "Accurate Statements" box to the lower portion of the diagram.



*Figure 3. This Venn diagram illustrates questionnaire statements upon which School Band "B" participants perceive similarly (center) and differently (far left, far right), as well as their accuracy. Those in the lower frame were deemed accurate and those outside the frame were refuted by the observation and*

Statements on which the parent participants and conductor of School Band “B” are in agreement are found in the overlap of the Venn diagram, Figure 3. The lower box outlines statements that were confirmed either through observation or by the interviewee. Statements deemed inaccurate during the observation or the interview are consequently located outside the accurate box.

In addition to confirming and contesting questionnaire and observation conclusions, the interviewee expressed interest in forming a band parent executive board position or committee dedicated to music selection. This is due in part to the interviewee’s belief that the current repertoire of the school band is not ability appropriate and has contributed to a high dropout rate from School Band “B.” Lastly, the interviewee radically recommended for the conversion of School Band “B” from the auspices of the local *kulturskole* to the students’ elementary schools. This will be further discussed in the following chapter, alongside other parents’ proposals for restructuring the band parents’ and school band’s relationship for the betterment of the children’s musical education.

## V. DISCUSSION

*PARENT — SCHOOL BAND “A”/WAS NOT IN BAND/SIX OR MORE YEARS OF EXPERIENCE:  
“How does a conductor/instructor view the parents? Working with or  
against? Can he/she see the parent’s perspective?”*

The research presented here has examined the perceptions of band parents and band directors of three school bands in central Buskerud, Norway, and further studied the case of one of these school bands through observation and a parent interview in order to resolve the four research questions:

1. To what extent do band parents’ and band directors’ perceptions coincide regarding parental involvement in the instrumental music education in Norwegian school bands?
2. To what extent are these perceptions accurate?
3. To what extent does parental involvement impact music didactics in a Norwegian school band program?
4. How might the parental involvement structure of a Norwegian school band be improved?

The analyses of the questionnaires, observation, and interview, combined with the theoretical frameworks presented in Chapter II, will aid in the discussion of each research questions.

### **A. Research question 1:**

*To what extent do the band parents’ and band directors’ perceptions coincide regarding parental involvement in the instrumental music education in Norwegian school bands?*

Band parent and band director questionnaires served to provide data to resolve the first research question. The questionnaires were designed to extract participants’ perceptions of certain aspects of parental involvement in their corresponding school band program. Dimensions such as the categories of music didactics and formative context were constructed into the questionnaires in order to chart the extent to which the band parent and band director participants agree or disagree on those areas.

<i>Table 1: STATEMENTS ON WHICH PARTICIPANTS ARE DIVIDED</i>		
<b>Item 6</b>	“How often are you present at school band rehearsals?”	<i>Beginner parents: “Rarely” Intermediate: “Monthly” Veteran parents: “Weekly”</i>
<b>Item 7/4</b>	“The band parents understand how their children should practice at home.”	<i>Parents: “Yes” Directors: “No”</i>
<b>Item 11/8</b>	“The band parents are involved in decisions that are made for the band.”	<i>Beginner parents: “No” Veteran parents: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 17/13</b>	Should the band parents wait outside? Do they?	<i>Parents: “No” Directors: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 19/15</b>	Should parents help musically? Do they?	<i>Band experience: “Yes” No band experience: “No” *Conductor “B”: “No”</i>
<b>Item 23/19</b>	Should parents wait for instructions from the director? Do they?	<i>Parents: “Yes” Directors: “No”</i>
<b>Item 26</b>	“If you disagree with the conductor’s educational choices, what do you do?”	<i>Band experience: “Speak to the executive board.” No band experience:</i>
<b>Item 28/23</b>	Should band parents participate at the beginning band level?	<i>Band experience: “Yes” No band experience: “No” *Conductor “B”: “Yes”</i>
<b>Item 29</b>	“Please share examples of how you have been involved in the school band’s activities in the past.”	<i>Band experience: “Helping musically” No band experience: “Exec board/Fundraisers”</i>

Table 1 from *IV.B.7 Questionnaire conclusions* displays nine questionnaire items that divided participants. The table shows that on six of these items, the division occurred among the band parent demographic groups established in the first questions of the questionnaire. As reported by responses from band parents of three central Norwegian school bands, parental preconditions that influence perceptions of parental involvement include a parent’s childhood experience (or lack of) as a school band musician or a parent’s accumulative experience as a band parent. Table 2, also from *IV.B.7 Questionnaire conclusions*, shows thirteen statements on which band parent and band director participants were nearly unanimous.

Both tables refer to the statements of all participants from the questionnaire. Slight differences occur when isolating responses from the case study band, School Band “B.” Noting the exceptions listed on the far right of Table 2, the conductor of School Band “B” had disagreed with the otherwise like-minded questionnaire participants on Items 9/6 and 21/17. These exceptions suggest that generalizations based on analysis from participants from the case study or the other two central

Buskerud school bands may not apply to other school bands in Buskerud, Norway, or elsewhere.

Statements are arranged according to perspectives that are shared by School Band “B” parent participants and the conductor, perspectives shared by the parent participants but not the conductor, and perspectives that were favored by the conductor. Figure 2 illustrates the extent to which the band parents’ and band directors’ perceptions regarding parental involvement coincide.

The School Band “B” participants agreed that parents should help with discipline but not with musical instruction, that parents should help with setting up equipment, and on the areas that band parents should and should not make decisions for the school band. The conductor believed that parents should be not be in the same

**Table 2: STATEMENTS IN WHICH PARTICIPANTS NEARLY AGREE**

<b>Item 8/5</b>	“The band parents understand how their children should behave during band rehearsals.”	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 9/6</b>	“The band parents have influence on their children’s social development in the band.”	<i>*Conductor “B” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 10/7</b>	“The band parents have influence on their children’s musical education.”	<i>*Conductor “A” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 12/9</b>	“In which areas do band parents have influence on the musicians’ home practice?”	<i>Motivation, frequency, duration</i>
<b>Item 13/10</b>	“In which areas should the parent group be able to make decisions for the band?”	<i>Band trips, budget, rehearsal times</i>
<b>Item 14/11</b>	“In which areas SHOULDN’T the band parent group be able to make decisions for the band?”	<i>Instrumentation, repertoire, educational choices</i>
<b>Item 18/14</b>	Should parents help with discipline? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 20/16</b>	Should parents help with equipment? Do they?	<i>Yes</i>
<b>Item 21/17</b>	Should parents help with sheet music? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “B” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 22/18</b>	Should parents help with the classroom order? Do they?	<i>*Conductor “C” disagrees</i>
<b>Item 24/20</b>	“Whose responsibility is it to teach new band parents their responsibilities?”	<i>Executive board</i>
<b>Item 25/21</b>	“In what ways do you think band parents have influence on their children’s musical education?”	<i>Encouraging practice</i>
<b>Item 27</b>	“What do you do when your child practices at home?”	<i>Listen and give feedback</i>

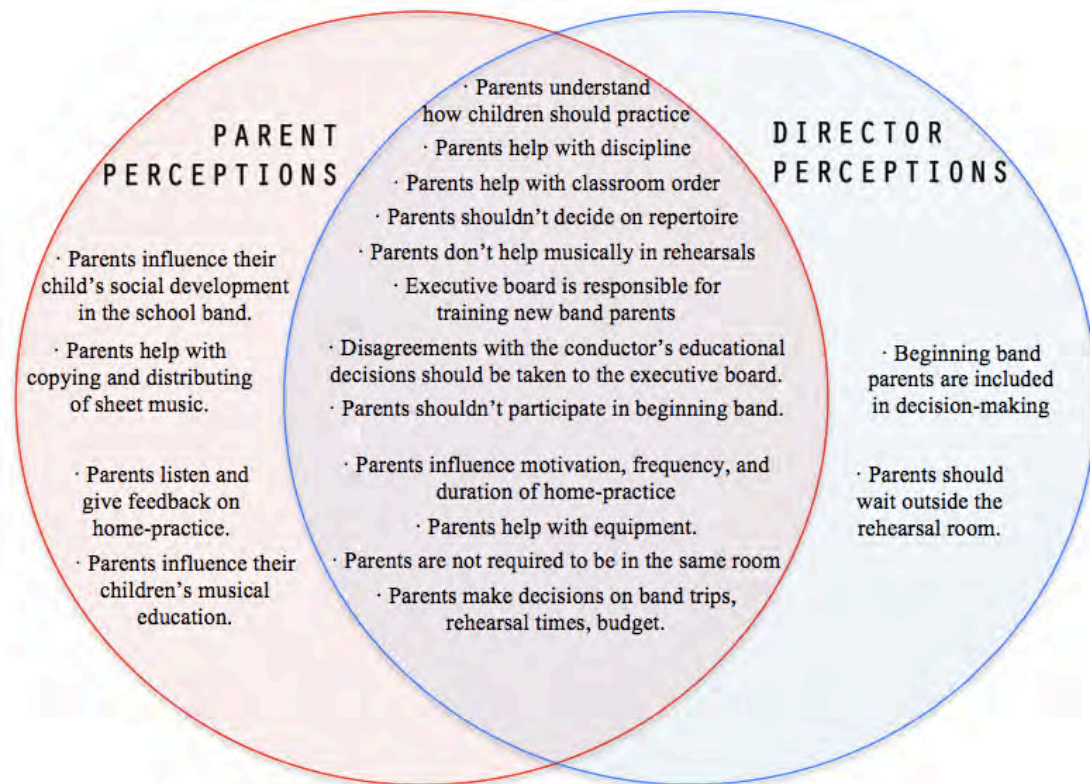


Figure 2. This Venn diagram illustrates questionnaire statements upon which School Band “B” participants’ perceptions are alike (center) and are different. (far left, far right)

room while the students rehearse and that band parents, including those with one to two years of band parent experience, are included in decision-making for the band. The far left of the “Parent Perceptions” circle shows that the conductor, however, disagreed with the parents’ assertion that they influence their children’s social development and musical education.

**B. Research question 2:**

*To what extent are these perceptions accurate?*

The first research question was resolved using questionnaire responses from the conductors and parents from the school bands in central Buskerud, Norway. However, because participants’ perceptions do not necessarily reflect the actuality of their educational setting, the second research question addresses this concern. The second research question can be answered by combining the perceptions discussed for the research question with the results of the observation and interview from School Band “B.”

The observation of a School Band “B” rehearsal revealed discrepancies between participants’ perceptions and actuality of the educational setting. For example, parents were present at the rehearsal despite School Band “B” conductor’s questionnaire response stating that they are not present. Furthermore, the parents did not intervene on disruptive behavioral issues despite questionnaire responses from parents and the conductor that parents should and do intervene. Parents do indeed help with equipment and wait for the director’s invitation to help during the rehearsal. In addition, new concerns emerged regarding the informal assessment of students’ musical achievement and the importance of clear communication between the conductor, the band parent executive board, and the other band parents.

Concerns remaining from the questionnaire responses and the observation of the parents and conductor at a School Band “B” rehearsal were resolved by an interview with one band parent. For example, the interviewee confirmed that beginner band parents are less involved in make decisions for the band, but advocated that their opinions should be invited. The parent also verified that assessment for school bands is largely informal feedback during or after home-practice, and adds that *kulturskole* private instructors are another source.

The interviewee challenged several questionnaire results and parent and conductor behaviors observed at the rehearsal. This band parent contended that the School Band “B” conductor has enforced limitations on the band parents’ influence at school band rehearsals. According to the interviewee, the conductor forbids parental presence at rehearsals and that the two parents’ presence at the observed rehearsal was unusual, which explains the inaccuracy of such statements as, “Parents help with discipline,” “Parents help with classroom order,” and “Parents don’t help musically in rehearsals.”

Accurate perspectives, on the other hand, include those of parents’ assistance with equipment at rehearsal, parents’ influence on students’ home-practice, and parents’ influence on their children’s musical education. Furthermore, according to both the interviewee and questionnaire responses, the School Band “B” director’s perception that parents should not be in the room while the students rehearse and the collective participants’ perception that parents are not required to be in the rehearsal room are both deemed accurate. Figure 3 features these and other statements in order

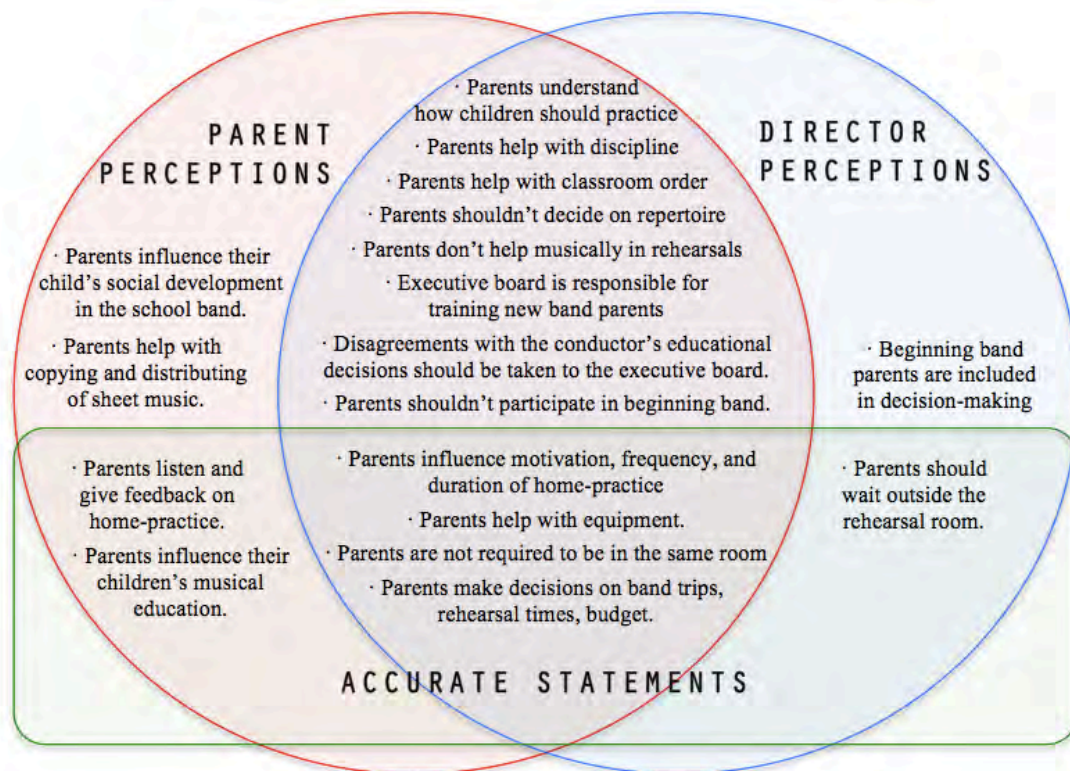


Figure 3. This Venn diagram illustrates questionnaire statements upon which School Band “B” participants perceive similarly (center) and differently (far left, far right), as well as their accuracy. Those in the lower frame were deemed accurate and those outside the frame were refuted by the observation and

to illustrate the extent to which band parents’ and band directors’ perceptions are accurate.

### C. Research question 3:

*To what extent does parental involvement impact music didactics in a Norwegian school band program?*

In order to answer the third research question, the six categories of didactics shall be reviewed. In *Musikkundervisningens didaktikk (Didactics of teaching music)*, Hanken and Johansen (1998) explain that all educational situations have in common six categories of didactics: frame factors, student and teacher preconditions, objectives, content, teaching methods, and assessment. “All these categories of didactics must be considered in relation to each other when the music educational activities should be planned, implemented, evaluated, and justified.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 31, translated by Snyder)



## 1. Frame factors

Frame factors are the limitations, or opportunities, which frame the educational situation. “A music education program always exists within certain limits that provide opportunities and constraints it must deal with.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 31, translated by Snyder) Frame factors can be physical, time frames, access to equipment, financial, organizational, etc. Expectations are also considered frame factors, which come from parents, among others. Home-practice is also considered an educational setting and therefore subject to the didactic category of frame factors. The student’s family situation and finances are included among the social factors that influence home-practice. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 150, translated by Snyder)

Focusing on home-practice, parents’ questionnaires suggest that parents determine the time frames for practicing. After *motivation*, most parents selected *frequency* and *duration* in response to the question, “In which areas do you have influence on your child’s home-practice routines?” The interviewee corroborated the accuracy of the responses:

*Interviewee:* “I have to [initiate home-practicing], I always have to say so— [my child] is not so eager to practice. I have to watch the time—15-20 minutes—it’s decided from the start.”

In addition to the time frames of students’ home-practice, time is also an issue parents consider when first enrolling their students in the school band. Several parent participants claim it is a myth that school bands expect much parental involvement by volunteering their time:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/3-5 years experience:*

“Many people think that the band is a lot of fundraisers, but it isn’t. There are many other activities that expect much more parental involvement.”

*Parent – School band “A”/was not in band/6 or more years experience:*

“[...] There is not as much effort volunteer work as many believe. Two large fundraisers per year plus flea market collection periodically throughout the year.”

Time expectation is a frame factor that might limit a student’s enrollment in the school band, and therefore lose this instrumental music education opportunity.

Halvorsen (1994) warns the frame factor of time expectations can have detrimental effects on a child's self-perception and consequently perception of music:

It happens, however, that some parents see that this is too much for them, or that this [Suzuki method] is not the kind of education they want. It is important that already at this stage they recognize this and leave—before the child starts. If the child has already started and is forced to exit the teaching, he can easily get a feeling of failure. (Halvorsen and Nøkleby 1998: 9, translated by Snyder)

How parents react to these frame factors may be influenced by certain preconditions. For example, a parent who played in school band as a child will already be familiar with the time expectations of band parents. Parent preconditions, therefore, have an impact on student preconditions.

## **2. Student and teacher preconditions**

Student and teacher preconditions include “characteristics, knowledge, skills and attitudes that they bring with them to the learning situation, and which have an impact on their preconditions to learn and to function in a learning situation.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 42, translated by Snyder) For this discussion, parent preconditions will be added to this category. Parent preconditions were revealed in the questionnaire research to have an influence on children's learning situation.

Twelve of twenty-five parent participants in the questionnaire played in school band in their youth. This parent precondition was shown throughout the questionnaire results to have an impact on certain aspects of their children's musical education in school band. Parents who played in school band as a child indicated that they perceive themselves more able to contribute musically at rehearsals, which impacts all students enrolled in the band, and with home-practice. Furthermore, most parents with school band experience also indicated that they should wait for the director's invitation to help, that they should contribute musically in the learning situation, and that they would be more willing to participate at the beginning band level with their children.

As a student precondition, motivation has much influence on the child's music education. “In an educational context, motivation to learn is that which gives

direction and intensity to students' behavior in academic situations.” (Frymier 1973: 149) McPherson and O'Neill (2011) explain how students' motivation to study music is affected by their expectations:

In making choices about whether or not to become involved in music, students are influenced by their beliefs about their ability and by their interest and valuing of different subjects. Often their decisions are shaped by parents' aspirations and teachers' predictions about their future performance. All those who work within an educational context, and especially within subjects as demanding as music, have witnessed the way that students' decisions are affected by their perceptions of, and beliefs about, the subjects themselves, perceptions concerning their intrinsic merits and their inherent difficulty and instrumental value, especially for achieving high grades. (2011: 102)

Already in the second category of didactics, it is demonstrated that the categories are interrelated, as illustrated in Figure 1. Preconditions, such as students' motivation and beliefs about their ability, are influenced by frame factors, such as parents' expectations and their perceptions about their own ability.

Parent preconditions may also have an influence on teacher preconditions. Prior experience with parents might cause the school band director to make assumptions and enforce limitations on parental involvement. The conductor of School Band “B,” according to the interviewee, expects parents to remain outside of the learning situation:

*Interviewee:* “[The conductor] doesn't want parents there. I sat there the first time and pointed along in the music for my [child] but the conductor said (sternly), ‘He/she can do it him/herself.’ Of course, it's probably different with different conductors, but this one doesn't want parents there. There are quite a few parents who could help—parents who can play an instrument, who are schoolteachers, who are used to children. I can understand that there can be chaos at a rehearsal. If you've got a bunch of kids and you try to help the clarinet students, for example, then the kids behind your back may try to act up. [The conductor] should accept the help, but has certainly not invited it. We as parents of course want our kids to pay attention and learn something.”

Perhaps the perception is formed by the conductor's prior experience in which parents' musical contribution contradicted the conductor's methods and expertise. After all, during the observation of the school band's joint rehearsal with the adult amateur musicians, a well-meaning band parent assisted school band students yet repeatedly reinforced incorrect rhythms.

### 3. Objectives

Objectives for a school band can be cognitive, psychomotor, affective, knowledge, skills-based or behavioral. Hanken and Johansen (1998) give a definition of an objective:

[...] what you want with the program as a whole, and it usually puts into words what task one believes, for example, the elementary school, the music school, or the school band should have, both in relation to the individual student's development, and in relation to local environment and community. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 56, translated by Snyder)

This study is interested in *who* should determine the objectives. "*Participant-governance* means that those who are directly involved in the educational activity, that is, music teacher and student(s) also have the authority to set goals and have control over the teaching situation." (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 64-65, translated by Snyder) Considering parents as participants in the teaching situation, the study considered band parents' perceptions of their authority in making decisions in areas for the band, such as objectives.

From participants' questionnaire responses, it appears that instructors and parents have formed different objectives for the school band students. Parents exhibited an interest in behavioral objectives at the observed school band rehearsal, yet neither intervened nor expressed their objectives regarding incidents of misbehavior. One beginning band parent mentioned the child's enjoyment as an objective:

*Parent – School Band "C"/was in band/1–2 years experience:*

"Nothing other than that it's fun to see that [my child] enjoys him/herself, both physically and mentally."

The conductor of School Band "C" cited a specific incident in which a parent's lack of objectives (and teacher qualifications as a precondition) had a detrimental effect on the music education of beginning band students:

*Conductor – School Band "C:"*

"When a parent becomes beginning band conductor, and has no educational plan for training. We should not mess with the basic training, it should be for an educator."

Twelve of twenty-five parent participants and all three conductors suggested in their responses that parents should not make decisions for the school band regarding instructional choices. Objectives would appear to be a didactic category in which School Band “B” parents are less involved.

#### **4. Content**

Hanken and Johansen (1998) emphasize that content is both what students will learn (repertoire, concepts, etc.) and how they will learn it (singing, composing, etc.).

Music education programs are not only significant for the individual involved; it also has repercussions for society outside the teaching situation. What kind of content is selected, in other words, is not just a matter between the music teacher and the pupil. In some cases it our parents or other entities that directly or indirectly affect content selection. [...] A band director has to deal with a band parent organization. (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 76, translated by Snyder)

Repertoire selection became an area of dispute between questionnaire participants’ perspectives and the actuality described in the interview. Fifteen of twenty-five parents and all three conductors stated that band parents should not be included on decisions regarding repertoire selection. Four parent participants, on the other hand, indicated that band parents *should* be involved. The interview is likely among of these four.

The interviewee expressed dissatisfaction with the educational content of School Band “B” and even proposed a “music selection” committee for the band parent executive board. When asked what actions band parents can take if they are dissatisfied with the conductor’s content decisions, the interviewee took the concern to the executive board; eleven of twenty-five questionnaire participants responded they would do the same.

*Interviewee:* “We can talk to the executive board about it (dissatisfaction with content choices). We have mentioned it. It is a bit difficult because... the conductor takes it as criticism right away.”

The interviewee proposed that a band parent “musical selection” manager or committee could “take into account the youngest players,” asserting that difficult repertoire is primary cause of a high dropout rate for School Band “B.” While the

majority of questionnaire participants indicate that parents do not have an influence on content for the school bands, the case study reveals that parents have in fact been involved in this category, and that the interviewee's proposed method of involvement could have consequence not only on the school band's content but also motivation and retention.

## **5. Teaching methods**

Teaching methods "are ways to proceed in order to learn a specific content." (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 30, translated by Snyder) Because of its emphasis on parental involvement, particularly in the beginning stages of instrumental music education, the "Suzuki Method" was closely examined in Chapter II for its analogous potential for parental involvement in the "beginning band" phase of Norwegian school band education. The questionnaire responses revealed that two of three conductors would not be willing to include parents at the beginning band level, but more parents with the precondition of school band experience in the youth would participate.

According to the Suzuki method, parents are "teachers in the home." (Halvorsen 1994: 8, translated by Snyder) Twenty of twenty-five band parent participants stated that they are involved in their children's home-practice by listening and giving feedback. Eighteen participants indicated that they understand *how* their child should practice, but all three conductors disagreed. These perceptions cannot both be accurate. The interviewee gives additional insight:

*Interviewee:* "I have, in relation to this, experienced that the conductor and the executive board assume that parents know things should be, and those of us who are 'band people' understand, but I think those who have not themselves been in band can be easily scared. If you can read music and play an instrument, there are many things that are just obvious/a matter of course. For those who can't there's not enough information given."

This individual parent's perception makes assumptions about the conductor's and other parents' perceptions, but suggests that band parents do need training on proper teaching methods in order to be an effective "teacher in the home."

As discussed in Chapter II, the Suzuki method has certain expectations of the parents. Mills (1973) lists that parents must attend all lessons and rehearsals, inspect the condition of the child's instruments and supplies, help the student reflect on the rehearsal immediately, and avoid discouragement. Parent participants indicated positive perceptions of the latter two actions in their questionnaire responses. Participants, did not indicate a perception that they should attend all rehearsals, however veteran band parents appear more likely to attend more frequently.

Additional examples of the parent's job that not observed in the case study include "to work closely with the teacher" regarding methods for home practice, correcting the child's playing position, and helping the child "with workbooks, flash cards, and other forms of drill, as well as on reading within a rhythmic framework." (Mills and Murphy 1973: 198-199) Most band parent participants perceive an understanding of teaching methods, however, this perception may be based in ignorance. School Band "C" conductor refers to such an incident with grim consequences on children's instrumental music education:

*Conductor – School Band "C:"*

"When a parent became the beginning band conductor and had no educational plan for training. We should not fool around with the basic training, it should be for an educator."

Unlike the Suzuki methods requirements, band parents and band directors of the three central Norwegian school bands are not in cooperation regarding teaching methods.

## **6. Assessment**

"The term assessment describes a structured and systematic method to judge anything in relation to certain criteria," (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 117, translated by Snyder) Furthermore, assessment invites the questions of what is to be assessed, who are to be assessed, who will be assessing, and how the assessment is to be conducted. Because Norwegian school bands are extracurricular, the students are not subject to the school's formal assessment criteria and methods. Formal assessment may occur at band festivals in which bands may voluntarily participate. Otherwise, assessment of musicians in Norwegian school bands occurs informally, as explained by the interviewee:

*Interviewee:* “There is feedback from the conductor, there’s nothing more than that. There is no one-to-one feedback, either, the feedback is to the whole group. [...] In the school band context, I don’t know that the students know if they’re progressing or not. Regarding home-practice, some parents can give feedback then.”

*Researcher:* *So most feedback comes from practicing at home?*

*Interviewee:* “Yes, and from the *kulturskole* teachers, but right now [my child’s] teacher is very careful at giving feedback. I think he/she could be much more critical! (laughs)”

Confirming the interviewee’s statement, twenty of twenty-five parent participants wrote that they listen and give feedback when their child practices at home. The informal assessment of Norwegian school band students’ musical performance occurs as a group at school band, individually at *kulturskole* private lessons, and allegedly as part of students’ home-practice routines. Therefore, as one of the primary sources of assessment, parents influence how their children are assessed and what aspects of the musical performance are to be assessed.

Figure 4 replaces the six categories of didactics on Bjørndal and Lieberg’s (1978) “didactic relations model” (see Figure 1 in *II.B.*) with examples of parental involvement within corresponding categories of didactics. Just as Bjørndal and Lieberg’s “didactic relations model” depicts the interrelations between the six categories of didactics, Figure 4 illustrates how each aspect of parental involvement is the result or cause of another. For example, the questionnaire participants were unanimous in their expectation that the band parent executive board should communicate objectives to beginning band parents, who in turn establish the home-practice routines for their child. In summary, although the band parents exhibit more presence in certain didactic categories (e.g. frame factors, preconditions, assessment) than others (e.g. objectives, content, methods), the interrelation of the six didactic categories enhances the extent to which band parents’ involvement impacts the music didactics of School Band “B.”



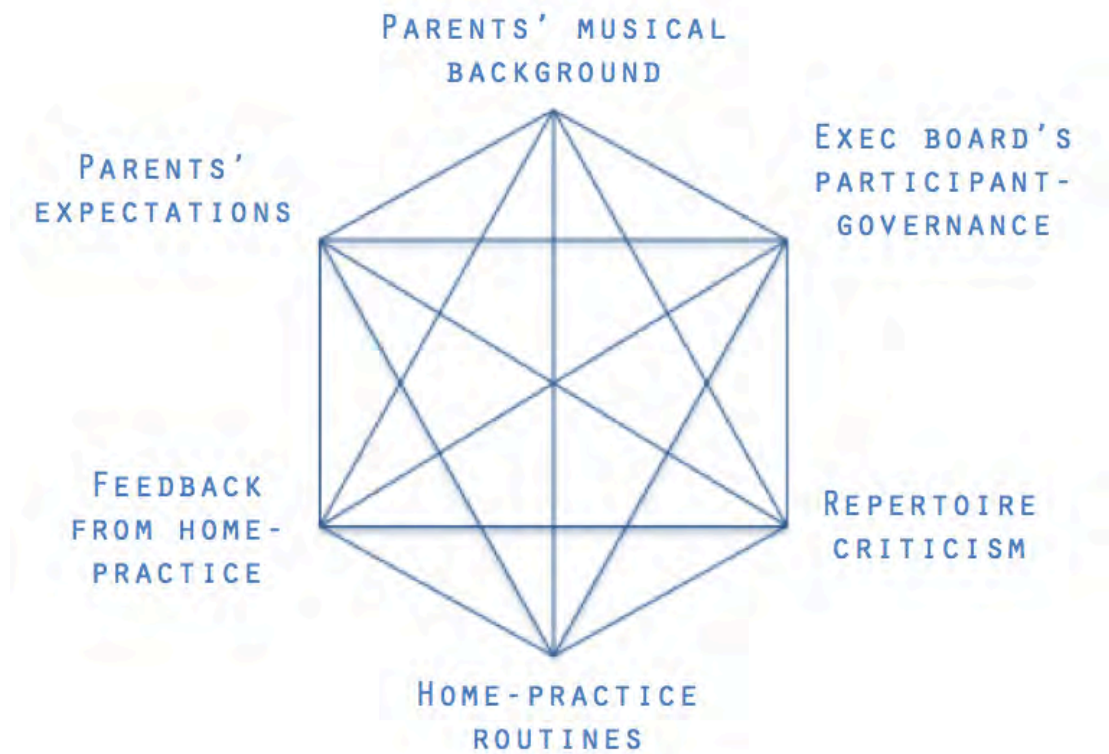


Figure 4. The “didactics relations model” of Bjørndal and Lieberg (1978) is replaced by select examples of parental involvement in order to demonstrate the interrelations between parents’ influence in all six categories of didactics.

**D. Research question 4:**

*How might the parental involvement structure of a Norwegian school band be improved?*

The first and second research questions addressed the connection between the band directors’ and band parents’ perceptions of parental involvement and their accuracy within three school bands in central Buskerud, Norway. The third research question considered parents’ influence on categories of music didactics:

[...] why students should learn music, what music they should learn, and what they should learn about and via music. Furthermore, it attends to the social and cultural conditions for music teaching and learning. (Johansen 2010: 3)

Having established the sizeable extent to which band parents’ involvement impacts music didactics in a Norwegian school band program, the fourth and final research question challenges the inaccuracy found in the third research question: the extent to which band parents’ and band directors’ perceptions of parental involvement are *inaccurate*. Theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter II will combine with

Chapter IV research analysis to form strategies for improving the band parent involvement structure of the central Buskerud school band from this case study.

### **1. Social constructionist theory**

The social constructionist view of teaching and learning holds implications for this study regarding the social context parental involvement in school bands. Burr (Pearce 2009) identified four “key assumptions” for a social constructionist approach to research:

- *A critical stance toward taken-for-granted knowledge.* It invites us to be critical of the idea that our observations of the world unproblematically [sic] yield its nature to us, to challenge the view that conventional knowledge is based upon objective, unbiased observation of the world.
- *Historical and cultural specificity.* All ways of understanding are historically and culturally relative [...] products of that culture and are dependent upon the particular social and economic arrangements prevailing in that time.
- *Knowledge is sustained by social processes.* It is through daily interactions between people in the course of social life that our versions of knowledge become fabricated.
- *Knowledge and social action go together.* Descriptions or constructions of the world therefore sustain some patterns of social action and exclude others. Our constructions of the world are therefore bound up with power relationships because they have implications for what it is permissible for different people to do, and for how they may treat others. (as cited in Pearce 2009: 39)

These social constructionist assumptions are significant in the study of the social processes and power relationships occurring among the Norwegian school band and its band parents.

The band parent interviewee took a critical stance on knowledge taken for granted by the conductor and parent executive board of School Band “B:”

*Interviewee:* “I have, in relation to this, experienced that the conductor and the executive board assume that the parents understand how things should be, and those of us who are ‘band people’ understand, but I think those who have not themselves been in band can easily be scared. If you can read music and can play an instrument, there are many things that are just obvious/a matter of course. For those who can’t, there’s not enough information.”

In the case of School Band “B,” social processes are impaired. The questionnaire results implied that beginning band parents are less positive that they are “involved in the decisions that are made in the band” than veteran band parents, and the interviewee claimed that executive board is “at the conductor’s mercy” and that the school band is experiencing a dropout problem due to the lack of communication and cooperation. Burr’s fourth key assumption explains this deficiency:

Our constructions of the world are therefore bound up with power relationships because they have implications for what it is permissible for different people to do, and for how they may treat others. (as cited in Pearce 2009: 39)

The power relationships between the band parents and band director of School Band “B” do not benefit the students’ music education.

## **2. Critical didactics and False Necessity theory**

Revisiting German philosopher Jürgen Habermas’ three “knowledge–interests,” technical, hermeneutic, and emancipatory, the third interpersonal force concerns School Band “B” most:

Habermas talks about the *emancipatory, liberating* knowledge–interest. It is about freeing people from the rituals of habit that keep them trapped. (Thurén 1993: 170, translated and emphases added by Snyder)

Unger (1987a) further advises there are other indeed possibilities for forming society other than these rituals habits. Unger’s False Necessity theory suggests that human society must not necessarily be structured in a historically prescribed way.

History is surprising because these frameworks do not come from a closed list of possible frameworks or succeed one another according to a master plan. To imagine society truly is *to understand how these institutional and imaginative orders of routine social existence get historically made and how they are internally composed*. (Unger 1987a: 82, emphasis added by Snyder)

Tveit (2012), through analysis of historical Norwegian legislative texts since 1739, states that the parent–teacher relationship has long been an issue within Norwegian public education:

[D]ifferent perspectives of teachers and parents have remained an unresolved challenge over the centuries. This certainly represents a challenge in a

democratic body, especially with respect to the teacher's role. (Tveit 2012: 240)

Because the interviewee played in school band as a child, historical comparison could be made of the parent–teacher relationship in Norwegian school bands. When asked in what ways being a band parent today is different from when the interviewee was in school band as a child, the subject supposed there were no noticeable differences:

*Interviewee:* “Rehearsals are about the same anyway. We got driven to the school and dropped off at the rehearsal, and I do pretty much the same thing now! I don't know that there was more involvement of parents then than there is now.”

*Researcher:* *The executive board was set up the same?*

*Interviewee:* “Yeah... Well, it was a much bigger school band and a much bigger executive board. And I seem to remember much better cooperation between the board and the director than I experience now. But I don't think the parents had any more influence than they have now.”

According to the interviewee's response, the extent of band parents' influence has remained consistent despite new generations of band parents and instructors. This band parent structure appears to be maintained as a “ritual of habit.”

Unger's False Necessity theory supports Hanken and Johansen's (1998) definition of *critical didactics*. Teaching and education are societal functions and take place in an already established cultural context, “Teaching and education is therefore set in a larger social and political context.” (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 221, translated by Snyder) The authors continue:

The existing society is perceived as far from perfect; it seems oppressive and alienating. The pedagogy's goal will therefore be to contribute to freeing people from the oppression. It shall contribute to *social change* through spreading awareness about the basic social conditions and thereby develop a critical attitude. The critical spotlight is also directed towards the educational activity. (1998: 221, translated by Snyder)

Critical spotlights in this study were illuminated by band parents themselves. The following section reviews band parents' own strategies for improving the parental involvement structure of their school bands.

### **3. Band parents' proposals**

#### **i. Combine resources**

The final prompt of the questionnaire invited parents and conductors to share “*anything else you want to say regarding your experience as a band parent/your experiences with band parents.*” A number of participants shared critical viewpoints. One parent proposed a radical restricting not only of his/her child’s school band, but the others in the county. By combining resources, according to this parent, the musical development of each child could be enhanced:

*Parent – School Band “A”/was in band/3–5 years experience:*

“This doesn’t have anything to do with the research, but I think it is a shame that the school bands in the community for the most part sit separately each with far too few members. I think there is room for only one school band in [the county]. It would, in my view, give the children a much better experience of playing in a band, with a bigger instrumentation the band sounds better and fuller, at the same time all the municipal resources could be directed toward the one band instead of among several small ones which are almost not sustainable.

“The reason I mention this is that I perceive that among the school bands in [the county] there are conductors/instructors, parents, and other powers in the band milieu in general who against thinking bigger and possibly a merger to, for example, [The County] *skolekorps*. If I could as a parent freely decide one thing, it would be to merge the school bands in [the county].”

This band parent is aware of resistance to this proposal in the form of “powers in the band milieu.” Tradition might be a primary reason for the “powers” to resist such a radical proposal. This band parent, however, has Habermas’ *emancipatory, liberating* knowledge–interest in “freeing people from the rituals of habit that keep them trapped.” (Thurén 1993: 170, translated and emphases added by Snyder)

#### **ii. All-inclusive communication**

Two other parents and one conductor also answered the final open-ended prompt of the questionnaire with somewhat critical viewpoints. The three responses addressed the importance of all-inclusive communication:

*Conductor – School Band “B:”*

“It is important to involve new parents early in the band’s activities so that they also feel a part of the group identity.”

*Parent – School Band “C”/was not in band/1-2 years of experience:*  
“Maybe not enough information about expectations for practice and playing in general. Otherwise good.”

*Parent – School Band “A”/was not in band/6 or more years of experience:*  
“I want to emphasize that parents’ attitude toward other parents is important. We must be aware that if we do not ‘click together’ then we exclude other new parents. We cannot leave everything to the director/board! Band is a social project too! It is more ‘commercial’ than daycare/school. However, it consists of the same kids and parents. ‘Customers’ = musicians/parents who can easily choose other arenas if they’re dissatisfied. Therefore, cooperation and leadership is essential. [...]

“Therefore, cooperation between the administration, educators and parents is important for the band’s present and future. The children’s involvement is also important. Let them have a voice in leadership! Listen to their concerns and needs. Conduct ‘performance reviews’ with members. [...]

Although these are honest viewpoints, only the third offered a strategy. This parent calls for the “cooperation between the administration, educators, and parents,” but also identifies the students as part of the decision-making structure.

“Performance reviews” as a strategy for students to assess the school band program would exemplify participant–governance. If administrators, educators parents, and students cooperated on establishing of what is to be assessed, who are to be assessed, who will be assessing, and how the assessment is to be conducted, then the participants would be given an opportunity to raise such concerns as appropriateness of repertoire.

### **iii. *Skolekorps–kulturskole* relationship**

The final question of the interview asked the subject to hypothetically change one thing about how the school band, the *kulturskole*, and the parents work together. The interviewee provided a radical response. Instead of the extracurricular position Norwegian school bands have currently as a subdivision of the municipal *kulturskole*, the interviewee proposed the school band be part of the students’ school day, as a course in the elementary school.

Placing the school band under the auspices of the public school would alter several educational and sociocultural aspects for the school band. Assessment,

objectives, methods, and content would be subject to national standards. Frame factors would also be different, including rehearsal and storage spaces, rehearsal times and frequency, and funding, for example. If the public school employed the school band conductor, there might be different requirements and expectations for the instructor than the *kulturskole* or band parent executive board currently has. Finally, if School Band “B” was restricted to rehearsals during the elementary school day, this might expel the already few older students from the band.

#### **iv. Suzuki method and discourse**

In the early stages of this study, the incorporation of aspects of the Suzuki method was considered as a potential strategy for improving the parental involvement structure of Norwegian school bands. Suzuki method’s natural inclusion of parents at all stages of instrumental music education might address the deficiencies mentioned early. A questionnaire item designed to assess participants’ willingness to include an aspect of the Suzuki method in the Norwegian band parent structure was met with some negative responses:

*Parent – School Band “B”/was in band/1–2 years of experience:*  
“It’s not be done this way in this band.”

*Parent – School Band “B”/was not in band/3–5 years of experience:*  
“No, since I can’t read music, or play any instrument, that would be difficult.”

*Conductor – School Band “C:”*  
“No. I have seen too many examples of how it can go wrong—that a person without the proper qualifications trained beginners incorrectly. It is extremely important that the person teaching students to play has the proper qualifications.”

The selected responses seem to convey an ignorance of the Suzuki method’s objectives, but this may be due to the purposeful avoidance of referring directly to the Suzuki method in the questionnaire prompt. The second statement above is disconcerting, since the parent has expected his or her young child to master activities that are too “difficult” for the parent.

The School Band “C” director is correct that the person teaching students to play should have the proper qualifications. However, questionnaire responses indicated that parents are indeed “teachers in the home,” as Halvorsen wrote. (1994:

8, translated by Snyder) The majority of parent participants answered the open-ended question, “*What do you do when your child practices at home?*” with the phrase, “listen and give feedback.” If parents have not been given training on what to assess or how to assess, ignorant parents’ feedback might instruct their children incorrectly. Band directors and band parents must agree on such expectations.

Despite the unanimous decision that the band parent executive board is responsible for training new band parents their responsibilities and duties, the band director must communicate his or her expectations of the parents. However, by accepting that parents are “teachers in the home,” the band director must also accept parents’ influence in all six categories of didactics. Band parents and band directors must engage in *discourse*.

Habermas has in fact devised his own universal language rules to define discourse:

- (1) All speech– and language–competent subjects may participate in discourses.
- (2a) Everyone should be able to question any claim.
- (2b) Everyone should be able to introduce any assertion into the discourse.
- (2c) Everyone should be able to express his or her preference, attitudes, and needs.
- (3) No participant may, through a force from within or from outside the discourse, be prevented to safeguard the rights as stipulated by the virtue of rules (1) and (2). (Nerheim 1996: 359, translated by Snyder)

The extent to which the band parents’ and band directors’ perspectives are inaccurate for the case of School Band “B” suggests that communication within the current structure has not been a reasonable discourse.

The conductor of School Band “B” perceives that parents are satisfied and included in decisions:

*Conductor – School Band “B:”*

“I have mostly good experiences with the parents in my band. They are positive and very attentive to my opinions. They often request the conductor’s advice and tips in executive board issues.”

The interviewee, however, perceives that the executive board is “at the conductor’s mercy” and that parents are literally locked out of their children’s rehearsals. A true



discourse, one in which “everyone should be able to express his or her preference, attitudes, and needs,” might remedy the situation.

#### **v. Introducing Script theory**

The first and second research questions revealed that although the School Band “B” band parents’ and band director’s perceptions overlap significantly, the accuracy of these perceptions is limited. The fourth research question strives for a strategy which can resolve the inaccuracies. Although designed for family therapy, Byng–Hall’s Script theory may be applied to improve the parental involvement structure of School Band “B.”

Byng–Hall uses the theatrical concept of a “script” to describe the repeatable actions, speech, and predetermined behaviors among families.

Script is one element of the metaphor of theatre, itself deeply embedded in our culture—‘all the world’s a stage.’ To a family therapist the concept of a script can have several uses. The focus of much family therapy is the oft-repeated redundant circular sequence of family interaction; in other words, family scenarios with a common script. (Byng-Hall 1985: 301)

The script metaphor also implies roles for the family members, or the parents and conductor school band, in this case. Formative context, featured in Chapter II, defines institutional arrangements that form preconceptions of how people should interact and how power should be distributed, as in the school band context, and preconceptions “that delude us into thinking that society and history have a script.” (Unger 1987b: 207) The interviewee from School Band “B” perceives that very little has changed in being a band parent since her or she was in school band as a child, and that “parents had any more influence than they have now.” This implies that the school band script has been replicated over time.

Scripts, according to Byng-Hall, can be rewritten. Generalized from the case study questionnaire responses, observation, and interview, School Band “B” has a current script where the parents’ role at a rehearsal is entirely offstage. Parents are expected to be at rehearsals, but not in the same room as the students:

*Interviewee:* “The executive board tries to get parents to be on duty at rehearsals. They have a set up a list for us to volunteer and sign up.”

*Researcher: What does a volunteer do at the rehearsal?*

*Interviewee: "Mostly you make coffee and cut up fruit, but you don't get to contribute musically in any way."*

The conductor takes the onstage role, and band parents are the "teachers in the home." School Band "B," however, has not provided a script for the instrumental music education that takes place in the students' homes.

Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005) define *parental role construction* as "parents' belief about what they are supposed to do in relation to their children's education and the patterns of parental behavior that follow those beliefs." (2005: 108) Although originally describing the elementary school classroom, Hoover-Dempsey, et al., (2005) define three constructs for parental involvement that are transferable to other socially constructed learning situations, like the school band:

These constructs focus on parents' motivations for involvement and include (a) an active role construction for involvement (i.e. parents believe that they should be involved) and a positive sense of efficacy for helping the child learn, (b) perception of invitations to involvement from the school, teacher, and student, and (c) important elements of parents' life context that allow or encourage involvement. (Hoover-Dempsey 2005: 106)

In the case of School Band "B," despite parents' belief that they should be involve (a) and parents' musical background (c), the interviewee lamented a lack of invitations to involvement from the teacher. (b)

Although several questionnaire participants expressed aversion to the incorporation of aspects of Suzuki method at the beginning band level, School Band "B" might benefit from the "script" that Suzuki methodology provides.

A script also provides some stability for the family. If members wander beyond the scripted routine it will be noticed and if the errant behavior seems to threaten the stability of the family, attempts are made to bring that member back into line. (Byng-Hall 1985: 303)

Too much communication is better than too little according to Halvorsen. (1998) Communication controls our "life-world," *unsere Lebenswelt*, Habermas' German expression for the world in which we live. (Imsen 1998: 342) Information to be communicated to parents, according to Halvorsen, includes proper teaching methods,

practicing psychology, and instrument care, among others. She adds to the teachers' communicative responsibility:

It is our responsibility to inform parents and assume a positive attitude toward teaching, towards the relationships of parent–child, parent–teacher and child–teacher. Without a close and good teamwork with the parents, one cannot create an optimal environment for the child, either in the home or at school. (Halvorsen and Nøkleby 1998: 8, translated by Snyder)

The current script for School Band “B” is missing true discourse in which each participant is “able to express his or her preference, attitudes, and needs” (Nerheim 1996: 359, translated by Snyder). The lack of discourse does not allow for “an optimal environment for the child.” By collaborating on a new “script,” the School Band “B” parents’ and band director’s perceptions would likely overlap to a greater extent and achieve greater accuracy, and consequently enhance the students’ instrumental music education.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Norway has a rich tradition of instrumental music teaching in the form of *skolekorps*, or school bands. The Norwegian school band provides extracurricular music education and consequently often has external management: parents of the students in the band. Because of this implicit autonomy, the Norwegian school band has been the educational setting for this study of parents' and band directors' perspectives on parental involvement.

### A. Problem statement

Band parents' involvement, as Odland (2013) reported, has an undeniable impact on both the musical education and the management of the school band yet there is an underrepresentation of research on the implications of parental involvement on music education. The purpose of this study is to investigate band parents' and band directors' perspectives of parental involvement and its possible effect on three band programs.

This study has focused on three objectives. The first objective of this study was to ascertain how parents and band directors perceive parental involvement in Norwegian school bands and to what extent their perceptions coincide with each other's and with actuality. The secondary objective was to understand the role that parents play in aspects of their children's musical education. The third objective was to identify potential areas for improving the traditional social structure of band parents and the school band program. Four questions were addressed by this study:

1. To what extent do band parents' and band directors' perceptions coincide regarding parental involvement in the instrumental music education in Norwegian school bands?
2. To what extent are these perceptions accurate?
3. To what extent does parental involvement impact music didactics in a Norwegian school band program?
4. How might the parental involvement structure of a Norwegian school band be improved?

## **B. Conclusions of this study**

On the basis of data obtained in this investigation, the following conclusions can be made:

1. Band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement coincide on areas in which band parts should and should not make decisions for the band. Mutual perceptions of areas in which band parents make decisions for the band are accurate.
2. Band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement coincide on the parents' understanding of home-practice routines, but band directors perceive that parents do not influence their children's musical education. The latter perception is inaccurate. Mutual perceptions that all band parents understand how their children should practice are inaccurate.
3. Band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement coincide on parents' enforcement of proper rehearsal behavior. Mutual perceptions that band parents help with discipline and classroom order are inaccurate.
4. Band parents' and band directors' perceptions of parental involvement coincide on the perception that the band parent executive board is responsible for teaching new band parents on their responsibilities and duties. Mutual perceptions that the executive board teaches new band parents on their responsibilities and duties are inaccurate. The band parent executive board serves primarily economic and organizational purposes.
5. Band parents influence all areas of music didactics. Band parents' time expectations and influence on students' motivation to practice are frame factors. Band parents' youth experience playing in a school band becomes a student precondition. Band directors' attitude and previous experience with band parents becomes a teacher precondition. Band parents expressed behavioral objectives. Band parents communicate disapproval of repertoire. Band parents initiate and give feedback for home-practice.

## **C. Implications of this research**

Using one central Buskerud, Norway, school band as a case study, along with questionnaire responses from two additional central Buskerud school bands, this study has revealed one category of involvement in one school band program in which band parents' and band directors' perceptions coincide and are accurate (band parent decision-making areas), and three categories of involvement in which their

perceptions coincide but are inaccurate (understanding of home-practice, enforcement of rehearsal behavior, and the band parent executive board's responsibilities).

To increase participation in the school band by parents, it is clear that band directors should consider more carefully the perceptions and actuality of parents' involvement in each category of didactics and the impact it has on the school band program. Together, band directors and band parents need to develop strategies for communicating the importance of and expectations for parents' involvement. For example, simply the recommendation for home-practice is not enough—further guidance is necessary from the band director for the student and parent.

One question for band directors, however, is whether or not parent-training regarding home-practice could make a difference for band students and the band program as it has for Suzuki string studios. This study suggests that for the benefit of the child and the entire school band program, band parents need to reexamine the accuracy of their preconceived, scripted roles. This study also suggests that band directors need to initiate a discourse with band parents in order verbalize expectations of parental involvement in didactic areas that can encourage the success of the “teachers in the home” – the parents.

#### **D. Limitations of this research**

There are limitations to qualitative research. Denscombe (2003) points out that “it becomes more difficult to establish how far the findings are from the detail, in-depth study of a small number of instances may be generalized to other similar instances.” (2003: 281) Therefore, generalizations are not necessarily legitimate beyond the cases studied here. Further limitations appear in response to questionnaire prompts or interview questions as the subjects may have a desire to either “defend” or “blame” their school band and/or band parent organization by providing less than accurate information.

#### **E. Recommendations for future research**

The purpose of this study is to investigate band parents' and band directors' perspectives of parental involvement and its possible effect on three band programs in

order to determine areas of potential improvement. Results from this study inspire recommendations for further research:

1. There should be a survey of Norwegian school band students' perspectives to triangulate the accuracy of the band parents' and band directors' perceptions. This research should aim to more clearly measure the impact parental involvement has on individual students' and school bands' musical achievement.
2. There should be a survey of Norwegian *kulturskole* instructors' perspectives. To what extent do *kulturskole* instructors' and parents' perspectives coincide? This comparison could shed light on "home-practice" routine expectations and parental involvement in other music educational activities.
3. There should be a comparative study of Norwegian school band parent executive board role constructions and American school band executive board role constructions. This recommendation is inspired by the reform suggestion from this study's band parent interviewee who proposed to remove the central Buskerud school band from the *kulturskole* and place it into elementary school, similar to the typical American school band.
4. A parent-training program could be developed for parents of beginning band students. The study should assess the students' musical achievement and the school band's retention rate over time.
5. This study found a lack of structured assessment among Norwegian school bands. "The term assessment describes a structured and systematic method to judge anything in relation to certain criteria." (Hanken and Johansen 1998: 117, translated by Snyder) However, Norwegian school bands lack a systematic method and authoritative criteria. Do Norwegian school band students receive sufficient feedback? How is students' musical performance evaluated in Norwegian school bands? There should be study of Norwegian band directors' current assessment practices and recommendations for nationwide formal assessment criteria.

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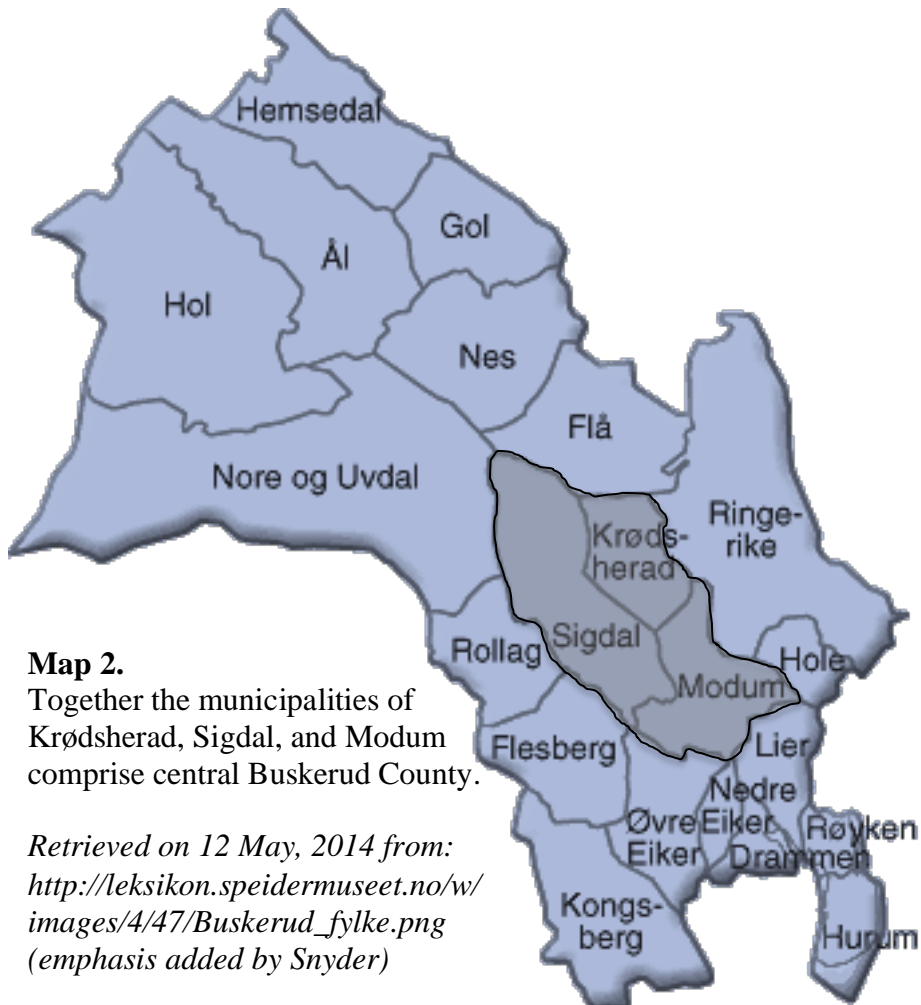
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**APPENDIX A  
MAPS**



**Map 1.**  
Buskerud County, Norway (in black)

*Retrieved on 12 May, 2014 from:  
[http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/  
commons/d/d3/Norway\\_Counties\\_  
Buskerud\\_Position.svg](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/d/d3/Norway_Counties_Buskerud_Position.svg)*



**Map 2.**  
Together the municipalities of  
Krødsherad, Sigdal, and Modum  
comprise central Buskerud County.

*Retrieved on 12 May, 2014 from:  
[http://leksikon.speidermuseet.no/w/  
images/4/47/Buskerud\\_fylke.png](http://leksikon.speidermuseet.no/w/images/4/47/Buskerud_fylke.png)  
(emphasis added by Snyder)*

**APPENDIX B**  
**COVER LETTER AND**  
**BAND PARENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Som student på mastergradstudiet i musikkpedagogikk ved Norges musikkhøgskole skriver jeg en masteroppgave som handler om involvering av foreldre i skolekorps.

Prosjektet har som mål å øke forståelsen for hvordan foreldre påvirker pedagogiske- og ledelsesmessige aspekter av skolekorps og, hvis mulig, hvordan dette forholdet kan forbedres.

Grunnlaget for forskningen er svarene dine på dette spørreskjemaet.

Svarene vil bli holdt anonyme, det skal kun brukes til denne oppgaven og vil bli slettet etter at jeg har levert inn oppgaven.

Send dette spørreskjemaet tilbake til meg *innen 30. april*.

Takk for at du bruker litt av tiden din til å hjelpe meg videre med masteroppgaven!

Med vennlig hilsen,  
Alex Snyder (Sign.)  
[edw.alex.snyder@gmail.com](mailto:edw.alex.snyder@gmail.com)  
Gaupeveien 7  
3370 Vikersund

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1. I hvilket skolekorps tilhører du?
2. Hvor mange barn har du i korpset?
3. Hvor mange år har barnet/barna vært involvert i korpset?
4. Spilte du i korps som barn?  
 Ja             Nei
5. Kan du lese noter?  
 Ja             Nei
6. Hvor ofte er du tilstede på korpsøvelsene?  
 Hver uke     En gang i måneden    Sjelden     Aldri

**Hvor enig er du i følgende påstander?**

7. Jeg forstår hvordan mitt barn skal øve hjemme.  
 Enig             Litt enig     Litt uenig    Uenig
8. Jeg forstår hvordan mitt barn skal oppføre seg under korpsøvelsene.  
 Enig             Litt enig     Litt uenig    Uenig
9. Jeg har innflytelse på mitt barns sosiale utvikling i korpset.  
 Enig             Litt enig     Litt uenig    Uenig
10. Jeg har innflytelse på mitt barns musikalske oppdragelse.  
 Enig             Litt enig     Litt uenig    Uenig
11. Jeg er involvert i avgjørelser som gjøres i korpset.  
 Enig             Litt enig     Litt uenig    Uenig

**12. På hvilke områder har du påvirkning på musikantenes øvelsesrutiner?**

- Hvor ofte
- Varighet
- Intensitet
- Innhold
- Motivasjon
- Utholdenhet
- Andre \_\_\_\_\_

**13. På hvilke områder burde foreldregruppa kunne ta avgjørelser for korpset?**

- Repertoar
- Pedagogiske valg
- Øvingstider
- Øvingslokaler
- Rekruttering
- Instrumentbesetningen
- Budsjett
- Konsertplanlegging
- Korpsturer
- Hyre/sparke dirigenter
- Hyre/sparke instruktører
- Andre: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. På hvilke områder burde IKKE foreldrene ta avgjørelser for korpset?**

- Repertoar
- Pedagogiske valg
- Øvingstider
- Øvingslokaler
- Rekruttering
- Instrumentbesetningen
- Budsjett
- Konsertplanlegging
- Korpsturer
- Hyre/sparke dirigenter
- Hyre/sparke instruktører
- Andre: \_\_\_\_\_

**Når du er tilstede under en øvelse, hvilke oppgaver burde du utføre?**

- 16. Burde du være tilstede i samme rom med korpset hele tiden?  
 Ja                       Nei
- 17. Burde du vente utenfor?  
 Ja                       Nei
- 18. Burde du hjelpe til med disiplinen i korpset?  
 Ja                       Nei
- 19. Burde du hjelpe til med å peke i notene imens korpset spiller?  
 Ja                       Nei
- 20. Burde du hjelpe til med å bære/sette opp utstyr?  
 Ja                       Nei

21. Burde du hjelpe til med å kopiere og dele ut noter?

Ja  Nei

22. Burde du hjelpe til med arbeidsroen?

Ja  Nei

23. Burde du vente å gjøre noe helt til du får noen instruksjoner fra dirigenten?

Ja  Nei

**24. Hvem sitt ansvar er det å lære nye korpsforeldre sine plikter og oppgaver?**

Styret  Dirigenten  Lære ved å gjøre det selv  Andre:

\_\_\_\_\_

25. På hvilke måter tror du korpsforeldrene har påvirkning på musikantenes musikalske utdanning?

26. Hvis du er uenig med dirigentens pedagogiske valg, hva gjør du da?

27. Hva gjør du når barnet/barna ditt/dine øver hjemme? (Lytter til? Er barnet alene? Gir tilbakemeldinger? Passer tiden?)

28. Aspirant-nivå: Ville du ha deltatt på alle øvelsene og da også hjelpe til under selve øvelsen musikalsk? (eks. spille, lære basic musikkteori, instrument-vedlikehold etc.)

29. Skriv gjerne ned eksempler på hvordan du har blitt involvert i korpsets aktiviteter tidligere.

30. Er det noe mer du vil si ang. din opplevelse som korpsforelder?

**APPENDIX C**  
**BAND DIRECTOR QUESTIONNAIRE**

1. I hvilket skolekorps tilhører du?
2. Hvor mange musikanter er det i korpset?
3. Hvor ofte er foreldrene tilstede på korpsøvelsene?  
 Hver uke     En gang i måneden     Sjelden     Aldri

**Hvor enig er du i følgende påstander?**

4. Foreldrene forstår hvordan deres barn skal øve hjemme.  
 Enig     Litt enig     Litt uenig     Uenig
5. Foreldrene forstår hvordan deres barn skal oppføre seg under korpsøvelsene.  
 Enig     Litt enig     Litt uenig     Uenig
6. Foreldrene har innflytelse på barnas sosiale utvikling i korpset.  
 Enig     Litt enig     Litt uenig     Uenig
7. Foreldrene har innflytelse på barnas musikalske oppdragelse.  
 Enig     Litt enig     Litt uenig     Uenig
8. Foreldrene er involvert i avgjørelser som gjøres i korpset.  
 Enig     Litt enig     Litt uenig     Uenig

**9. På hvilke områder har foreldrene påvirkning på musikantenes øvelsesrutiner?**

- Hvor ofte
- Varighet
- Intensitet
- Innhold
- Motivasjon
- Utholdenhet
- Andre \_\_\_\_\_

**10. På hvilke områder burde foreldregruppa kunne ta avgjørelser for korpset?**

- Repertoar
- Pedagogiske valg
- Øvingstider
- Øvingslokaler
- Rekruttering
- Instrumentbesetningen
- Budsjett
- Konsertplanlegging
- Korpsturer
- Hyre/sparke dirigenter
- Hyre/sparke instruktører
- Andre: \_\_\_\_\_



**11. På hvilke områder burde IKKE foreldrene ta avgjørelser for korpset?**

- Repertoar
- Pedagogiske valg
- Øvingstider
- Øvingslokaler
- Rekruttering
- Instrumentbesetningen
- Budsjett
- Konsertplanlegging
- Korpsturer
- Hyre/sparke dirigenter
- Hyre/sparke instruktører
- Andre: \_\_\_\_\_

**Når foreldre er tilstede under en øvelse, hvilke oppgaver utfører de?**

12. Er de tilstede i samme rom som korpset hele tiden?  
 Ja             Nei
13. Venter de utenfor?  
 Ja             Nei
14. Hjelper de til med disiplinen i korpset?  
 Ja             Nei
15. Hjelper de til med å peke i notene imens korpset spiller?  
 Ja             Nei
16. Hjelper de til med å bære/sette opp utstyr?  
 Ja             Nei
17. Hjelper de til med å kopiere og dele ut noter?  
 Ja             Nei
18. Hjelper de til med arbeidsroen?  
 Ja             Nei
19. Burde de vente å gjøre noe helt til de får noen instruksjoner fra dirigenten?  
 Ja             Nei

**20. Hvem sitt ansvar er det å lære nye korpsforeldre sine plikter og oppgaver?**

- Styret             Dirigenten     Lære ved å gjøre det selv     Andre

21. På hvilke måter tror du korpsforeldrene har påvirkning på musikantenes musikalske utdannelse?

22. Hvis foreldrene er uenig med dine pedagogiske valg, hva gjør du da?

23. Aspirant-nivå: Vile du la foreldre delta på alle øvelsene og da også hjelpe til under selve øvelsen, musikalsk? (eks. spille, lære basic musikkteori, instrument-vedlikehold etc.)

24. Skriv gjerne ned eksempler på hvordan foreldrene har blitt involvert i korpsets aktiviteter tidligere.

25. Er det noe mer du vil si ang. dine opplevelser med korpsforeldre?

## APPENDIX D INTERVIEW GUIDE

### PROFILE

Were you in band as a child? How is being a band parent different today than when you were in band? Do parents have more influence on children's' band education today? How?

### HOME-PRACTICE

*"I understand how my child should practice at home:"* Parents agree and conductors disagree. Why do you think there is a difference of opinions?

*"In which areas do you have influence on your child's home-practice routine?"* How is home-practice initiated in your home? Concluded? What happens?

### MUSICAL DEVELOPMENT

*"I have influence on my child's musical education."* In what ways do non-musical parents have influence? How do you think this can be improved?

How is school band students' musical performance assessed?

### REHEARSAL DISCIPLINE

*"Should I help with discipline?" "Should I help with classroom order?"*

Parents and directors indicated, "yes," to both statements.

Observation of parental involvement at School Band "B" rehearsal:

*During the half hour the school band rehearsed alone, music was made for eleven minutes. The remainder of the rehearsal, and even while playing, students were climbing the walls, screaming, and talking back to the director. The director responded twice to the misbehavior during the half hour. Two parents were present during much of the rehearsal, commented to each other about the poor behavior and lack of focus, but did not intervene.*

This scene did not agree with the answers parents and conductors provided.

Why not? Is this typical behavior for a School Band "B" rehearsal?

*"Should you wait outside the rehearsal room?"*

Parents: "No." Director: "They do." Parents say that shouldn't wait outside, so why aren't more parents present in the rehearsal room?

*"Should you wait to assist until you receive instructions from the conductor?"*

Parents said they should help, and directors say they don't. Why do you think this is?

## EXECUTIVE BOARD

*“In which areas do should band parents be able to make decision for the band?”*

Band trips, rehearsal times, and budget — NOT instrumentation, repertoire, or instructional choices. Can you think of a time when parents have made decisions in this areas? What were the consequences?

*“Whose responsibility is it to teach new band parents their responsibilities and duties?”* Unanimous response: Executive board. How does the executive board train the new parents? How does the conductor train new parents?

*“I am involved in decisions that are made in the band.”* Beginning parents are less positive, veteran parents are more positive. Do you think more new band parents should be involved in decisions, or is it okay to wait until they become the more experience parents? On which decisions should beginning band parents be included?