

**Everything is Connected:**

**A Landscape of Music Education in Canada, 2021**

**The Coalition for Music Education**



Adam Jonathan Con, PhD

Betty Anne Younker, PhD

Kyle Zavitz, PhD (c)

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## Acknowledgements

### Primary Research Assistants

Héctor Vázquez, Ph.D., Music Education, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria  
 Kyle Zavitz, Ph.D. candidate, Music Education, Don Wright Faculty of Music, Western University

### National Partners

Coalition for Music Education  
 MusiCounts  
 Music Canada  
 Canadian Music Educators Association  
 People for Education  
 Canadian Network for Arts and Learning

### Advisory Board

Angela Elster, Coalition for Music Education  
 Eric Favaro, Coalition for Music Education  
 Kirsten Maclaine, Coalition for Music Education  
 Kristy Fletcher, MusiCounts  
 Nick Godsoe, MusiCounts  
 Sarah Hashem, Music Canada  
 Betty Anne Younker, Western University  
 Helen Coker, Canadian Music Educators Association  
 Lawrence O'Farrell, Canadian Network for Arts and Learning  
 Eloise Tan, People for Education

### Provincial Contacts

British Columbia, Mandart Chan  
 Alberta, Adam Bell  
 Saskatchewan, Jennifer Lang  
 Manitoba, Francine Morin  
 Nunavut, Mary Piercey Lewis  
 Ontario, Helen Coker  
 Quebec, Isabelle Heroux, Helene Lesvesque  
 Newfoundland and Labrador, Keira Galway  
 New Brunswick, Monique Richard  
 Nova Scotia, Eric Favaro  
 Prince Edward Island, Kirsten McLaine

### Secondary Research Assistants

Jennifer Brown  
 Summer Cowley

### Survey Design

Mark Reid

## Executive Summary

In support of music education across Canada, multiple professional organizations have advocated for equal access to music education for all students in the country. Recognizing the ongoing need for such work, the Coalition for Music Education began to outline a process with the goal to create a detailed report reflecting the status of music education in Canada. Specifically, in 2019, the Coalition began a journey to map the landscape of music education in Canada by identifying all the complex systems, structures, and elements that make up the current music education ecosystem. Forming the steering committee were six key partner organizations: the Coalition for Music Education as lead organization, the Canadian Music Educators Association, MusiCounts, Music Canada, People for Education, and the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning. In addition, Western University and the University of Victoria were named as university partners.

The purpose of this national study was to provide a body of data that reflects elements influencing music education in Canada. The focus of this study was not to advocate for the validity of music education in K–12 schools or compare the quality of music education between provinces, but rather to provide a foundation of information for future research. We hope that the wealth of data unearthed will become the sustenance for many research studies in the future; to this end, researchers may request the sharing of this data for specific research proposals.

The national music education study was divided into three phases using a top-down and bottom-up design. The purpose of this design was to document official government policies affecting music education and to survey the current reality of the administrators and K–12 music educators' perspectives. Phase 1, the top-down approach, began June 1, 2019, and ended April 15, 2020. During this phase, we identified stakeholders for consultation and conducted a review of official provincial government documents or policies. These documents included current curriculum links, time allotments for music instruction, postsecondary preservice teacher training, school district operations and responsibilities, hiring and funding practices, school acts, teacher certification, music education or advocacy organizations, and information regarding the inclusion of Indigenous content.

During 2020, data were collected via a survey as described below. With data collection and analysis completed, the writing of the document began. During this process, we decided that Section 1 would contain the narrative reflecting the goals and processes, and Section 2 would include a presentation of data as collected via a survey and analyzed with a focus on two topics: funding and the status of mandatory time for music instruction. As indicated above, all data collected via the survey will be made available for future research. The document concludes with Section 3, which indicates possible beginnings for future research. A table of categories and possible topics for consideration is offered.

## Section 1: The Narrative

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As a review of the various documents began, the challenges and complexities when attempting to determine a national identity of education, including music education, became quite transparent. Since Confederation, education has and continues to be a provincial responsibility; each of the 10 provinces has autonomy over education-based decisions, and each of the three territories align with one of the provinces. This provincial and territorial autonomy reflects and recognizes the distinct regional cultures, religions, economies, languages, and laws. The complexities and autonomy at the provincial and local levels plus the geographical vastness of the Canadian landscape challenge a national identity of education, including music education, and although there are similarities in many processes of how decisions are made, the differences continue to be maintained at provincial and local levels.

As we compared policy documents and survey results, it was interesting to note that the level of alignment between the two data sources varied. This provided a framework as data were analyzed and presented for the two chosen topics in Section 2: (a) funding and (b) status of mandatory time for music instruction.

Information presented in Section 1 has been culled from policy documents including provincial school acts; provincial curriculum; curriculum development; school districts, school boards, boards of education, and school service centres; hiring practices, music teacher certification, and postsecondary music education teacher training; Indigenous content and music education curriculum; and music education organizations and advocacy. A summary of each is provided in this executive summary with specifics provided in Section 1 of the document.

### Provincial School Acts

Provincial school acts, which outline the conditions under which schools are managed and regulated, serve similar purposes; the structure and content, however, vary from province to province. These governing policies have the potential to impact the delivery of music education because of the varying stipulation of who is involved as decisions are made about music education curriculum development, hiring, and course offerings. Specific to the area of curriculum, to some extent, each province's school act allows school districts or school service centres to develop courses, programs, and instructional materials.

Understanding of the following factors could strengthen opportunities for all stakeholders to have a voice as decisions are made: (a) the breadth of stakeholders involved in the curriculum consultation and design process, (b) provisions to develop courses, (c) policies to hire and who should teach music when a certified music teacher is not available, and/or (d) stating a requirement for the inclusion of Indigenous content. Ensuring that a broad spectrum of stakeholders is part of the process ensures a strong representation of the people and cultures which the education system serves.

## **Provincial Curricula**

The provincial course listing of curricula for K–12 schools is often the primary document used by decision-makers, such as school boards and school administrators, to either include music education in schools or make it elective. Each province and territory acknowledge the importance of music education either as a stand-alone subject or within an arts education framework (dance, drama, music, and visual art); as such, it could be said that an education through the arts is mandatory at the elementary level across Canada. Challenges occur from an interpretive perspective when deciphering how grades are identified and grouped across elementary and secondary levels, whether mandated instruction is for the arts in an interactive or stand-alone setting, and whether music is mandated as a stand-alone subject. The differences across the various provinces, and therefore territories, prohibit statements that generalize about the status of mandated instruction at a national level. Provincially stated mandatory time allotments for music instruction and actual time allotments provided as stated by music specialists and generalist teacher is discussed in-depth in Section 2 of this report.

## **Curriculum Development**

Consulting a wide spectrum of stakeholders as curriculum is reviewed ensures that decisions are as informed as possible. These stakeholders included the provincial ministry of education, music specialists, generalist teachers, Indigenous leaders, francophone teachers, postsecondary music educators, school administrators, school district arts administrators, parents, school trustees, and community musicians. Across the provinces there are varying levels to which each of these stakeholders have a say. What is of interest for further research is the extent to which each stakeholder is involved in the process and the level of understanding about the consultation process for each province. Such information could enhance equal access to music education for all K–12 students.

## **School Districts, School Boards, Boards of Education, and School Service Centres**

Overall, the provincial-based Ministry of Education is responsible for all aspects of a province's education system. Boards of education are primarily responsible for the distribution of funds to ensure the Ministry of Education guidelines, including curricular, are being met. Local school districts, school boards or school service centres, and school administrators, have a direct impact on all aspects of education, including music education, in terms of funding of programs, curricular decisions, time allotted, and hiring of teachers. Given that school boards, under their respective provincial school acts, are responsible to administer courses of study for all students, practices determining the extent of music instruction within the provincial K–12 curricula vary.

## **Hiring Practices**

In all provinces, the Ministry of Education identifies the qualifications required for teacher certification as determined by its school act. Ultimately, school boards are charged to complete the hiring process. There are differences across the provinces in terms of specific criteria-based hiring, including hiring

personnel who may be considered necessary to carry out curriculum, administration, and/or operations; and hiring processes.

### **Music Teacher Certification and Postsecondary Music Education Teacher Training**

Teacher certificate holders from any province in Canada may qualify for a certificate of qualification without requiring additional training, excepting evidence of language proficiency. To be employed as a professional teacher in public K–12 schools, an individual must hold a valid teacher certificate of qualification from the province in which they will be teaching. For the most part, the requirements from province to province are similar but require slight differences in either the content of courses taken, or credit hours earned. Every province except Newfoundland and Labrador has one teacher certification from kindergarten to Grade 12. There is no separate certification for elementary or secondary, nor is there a separate subject-specific certification for music. Although there is no difference in the teaching certificate that is conferred, postsecondary preservice teacher education programs of study prepare and certify students to teach at different stages of the schooling system (e.g., primary/junior, junior/intermediate, intermediate/senior).

Generally, there are two training processes involved in the preparation of certified music teachers: the music training and the teacher training. The two processes are distinct from each other but have a complex relationship. To teach in a K–12 school, proof of approved Ministry of Education coursework in teacher training is required. From province to province, there is a spectrum of what coursework constitutes training in music and music education; it is largely unregulated. In the elementary setting, many provinces consider the elementary teacher to be a classroom generalist teacher with a broad training in arts education, which may include one or more courses in music; that may be the only postsecondary training the teacher receives to teach the subject. In the secondary setting, most music teachers have a postsecondary degree in music or music education, as reflected in the Phase 2 national survey, where 97.3% of respondents who taught music in Grades 8–12 indicated they had a postsecondary music or music education degree. Nevertheless, it is possible to teach music at the secondary level without a postsecondary degree in music or music education, as reflected in the national survey, where 1.7% of respondents indicated they did not have a postsecondary degree in music or music education.

### **First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Content and Music Education Curriculum**

Since 2015, to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action, provincial and territorial governments have been working to include Indigenous content and ways of knowing in their K–12 curricula. However, there is little consistency from province to province, and a wide spectrum exists of what is considered Indigenous content and how that content is included in the classroom.

The report details the range of areas of Indigenous musical engagement as reported in each province. Some of the activities include singing, drumming, moving with and without games, watching performances by Indigenous artists, listening to and learning about storytelling, role playing, learning about significant historical facts and artifacts, and developing relationships with Indigenous artists and

local elders. Much work is left to be done as educators address decolonization and Indigenization in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) Calls to Action.

### **Music Education Organizations and Advocacy**

As part of this study, we have established a central location for information on Canadian music education organizations and music education advocacy organizations. Some organizations act both as music education advocacy and as a professional music education association. A national and provincial list is found in the first section of the report.

## **Section 2: The Survey**

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The Phase 2 bottom-up approach began April 15, 2020, and was completed on July 15, 2020. The primary activity of this phase was a national distribution of a survey investigating music education from the perspective of the K–12 music specialist, the K–12 school administrator, and the generalist teacher (primarily Grades K–7). We received national survey responses ( $N = 3,960$ ) representing every province and territory. Despite the survey distribution occurring during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, submissions included English survey responses ( $n = 2,474$ ) and French survey responses ( $n = 367$ ) from school administrators ( $n = 331$ ), specialist music teachers ( $n = 2,237$ ), and generalist teachers ( $n = 273$ ). The breadth of representation included urban schools (82.6%), rural schools (17.4%), public schools (93.2%), independent schools (6.1%), First Nations schools (0.6%), English language schools (80.4%), French language schools (22.9%), French immersion (28.3%), bilingual language schools (4.8%), and arts-designated (magnet) schools (4.1%).

The responses to questions covered a variety of topics, including (a) who provided music instruction within the school (music specialist or a generalist teacher), (b) the background of each respondent in terms of education and experience, (c) the number of music classes taught within and outside of the standard school day, (d) the types of musical experiences offered, (e) the role of technology, (f) an examination of careers in music, (g) challenges faced over the year, and (h) the perceived level of support from parent organizations and community. For the purposes of this report, we analyzed and present data in two areas: (a) funding and (b) time allocation for music instruction.

As data analysis began, it became clear that certain methodological considerations were needed. First, it is important to note that the results of the survey simply represent the perspectives of the respondents; the goal was not to generalize any results to a particular province. Second, there were a small number of responses from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut; they did not provide an accurate representation of the state of music education in the three territories. Thus, we decided not to include those data in this report. Do note, however, that the information will still be available to researchers. Third, categorizing the participants as teaching in elementary, junior, intermediate, or secondary environments was challenging as many taught in a blend of those settings within and across provinces, particularly in rural settings. The final problematic consideration was how the number of

minutes per week allocated to music instruction was interpreted. Level of specificity differed across provinces, as did the length of time (5- versus 6-day schedules). These last two considerations impacted how data were analyzed and presented for the two chosen topics. Data from policy documents and responses of the survey are presented per province with indications of the strength of an alignment (or not) between each—thus, policy versus practitioner.

### **Topic 1: Funding**

Specific questions to administrators for funding included the following:

1. Does the school receive designated funding for music instruction? (Y/N)
2. Who is responsible for providing music education—the district or the administration?
3. Did school administrators have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction? (Y/N)

The nature of sources of funding for music programs appears to be complex and not always understood. What is not known is whether the complexity is a result of how funds are allocated and filtered through the education system or whether administrators and teachers are unaware of what those sources are, how the allocation works, who is responsible, and whether funding is designated for music instruction at the school level.

In terms of schools receiving designated funding, administrators from six of the 10 provinces indicated that the school did not receive designated funding for music instruction—some were clearly in a majority whereas others represented about 50%–60% of the respondents. Teachers in eight of the 10 provinces indicated that school administrators were the strongest financial supporters of their music programs; teachers in the remaining two provinces indicated that school districts were the strongest financial supporters.

In terms of identifying who is responsible for providing music instruction, administrators from four provinces indicated that they are responsible, and those from the remaining six provinces indicated that it was the school district's responsibility. Of note, the teachers from eight provinces indicated that the administration is the strongest financial supporter, from one province they indicated that the district was the strongest supporter, and for the 10th province it was a more equal split between administration and school districts. Provincial education funding has had recent shifts, and it would be of interest to track the impact, if any, the shifts will have on funding for music programs.

In terms of flexibility and autonomy over allocation of funds for music education, the average for all provinces reflected that 65.9% of administrators indicated that they had this space. Newfoundland and Labrador had the highest percentage of administrators indicating they had this space (66.7%), and those in Nova Scotia (52.9%) indicated they had the fewest number of administrators who said that they had flexibility and autonomy over allocation of funds for music education.

### **Topic 2: Status of Mandatory Time Allocated to Music Instruction**

Specific questions for time allotted for music instruction included the following:

1. Is there mandatory time allotted for music instruction? (Y/N)
2. If so, how many minutes per week are allotted for music instruction?

Overall, there was consistency across provinces with regards to mandated time for music instruction at the elementary level, which aligns with what has been stated in policy documents. As students move through middle/intermediate/junior grades at the secondary level (typically Grades 6–9 or 7–9), the survey results reflect the offering as an elective, and it was consistently articulated as an elective at the senior grades (typically Grades 10–12). There was some confusion, as stated above, in that how grades are identified (as elementary or middle/junior/intermediate) can make clarification challenging when determining mandatory time for music instruction in specific grades. In addition, for some provinces music is articulated specifically (e.g., the Atlantic provinces), whereas for the remaining provinces it is part of the arts education—drama, dance, music, and visual arts. The specificity of music for the Atlantic provinces is probably due to the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum* (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2001), created nearly 20 years ago, which remains a foundational document for any recent curricular updates.

Reported were instances of teachers teaching the arts in an integrated model or separately— one or all of drama, dance, music, or visual arts (at the elementary level), or students choosing one or two (at the secondary levels). In some provinces, students could move through K–12 without receiving any music instruction.

How much time is allocated across the provinces varied, with survey data from Manitoba reflecting the highest minutes per week at the elementary level and from Prince Edward Island reflecting the highest minutes per week at the secondary level. Not all data per province reflected minutes per week at the secondary level, and for those that did, it was at the middle/junior/intermediate level. Of interest is the percentage of time spent on music out of a typical 1,500 minutes per week of instruction time; typically, it represents anywhere from 4.4%-6.8% of instructional time per week.

## Implications

### ***Educational Policy Reform and the Centralization/Localization of Decision-Making***

Within certain provincial documents (i.e., Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador), recent shifts in policies were designed to address issues of funding, exclusive education, and autonomy of local voices. The focus includes how best to allocate funds and balance provincial and localized decision-making when meeting the needs of the province as well as communities. With themes of flexibility, inclusivity, and efficiency receiving much attention, it would be of interest to follow the implementation of the shifts to determine the level of equal access to music education; some may actually exclude access if resources are not in place to support the recent shifts in policies.

### ***Strength of Alignment Between Policy Documents and Participant Responses***

Data as presented in Section 2 illuminate various aspects of provincial education systems. In most Canadian provinces, music is mandated at the primary/elementary level, but for some, music resides within a larger group labelled as fine arts (dance, drama, music, and visual arts). As noted, music as a subject is mandatory in four provinces: New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador. There appears to be alignment between the policy documents and survey responses in terms of mandated time for music instruction.

Variations across provinces in terms of time allocated to music instruction were found in both policy documents and survey responses. Although some did indicate recommended or minimal time for music or the arts, others did for other subject areas but not music or the arts. In terms of alignment between the two sets of data, the policy documents of the Atlantic provinces aligned most closely with survey responses.

## **Section 3: Beginnings—Future Research**

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One of the hopeful outcomes of this national study is that researchers will take the multiple data sheets to continue further research within each province and on identified themes. With survey data made available to researchers, further analysis and interpretation of those topics of interest could be presented in publications and at conferences, and findings could further inform the status of music education in Canada as well as implications for equitable access moving forward. In addition to the various topics covered in the survey, other topics emerged in conversations and while analyzing the data. The following are potential categories with topics listed within each category.

1. Alignment between provincial policy documents and implementation of curriculum by administrators and music educators:
  - a. Examine the level of alignment between policy documents and the survey results. How might the alignment strengthen conversation between policy makers, administrators, and music educators?
  - b. Identify those who make decisions and whether it is provincial, district, or school based in terms of hiring, funding, determining allotted time for music instruction, and providing oversight of curricular responsibilities.
  - c. Review opportunities to amend provincial school acts to allow for a broader representation of stakeholders in curriculum revision and Indigenous content.
  - d. Conduct a provincial investigation of school board practices for hiring and for music curriculum support.
2. Similarities and differences across rural and urban settings:
  - a. Examine the similar and different opportunities and challenges between rural and urban settings as decisions are made about implementing policy content.
  - b. Examine the similarities and differences across rural and urban settings in terms of student experiences, delivery of curriculum, and content.

- c. Examine the challenges of teaching music in rural schools with multiple grade levels within a classroom or school and the availability of specialized teachers.
  - d. Examine the differences, if any, between community support for music education in rural and urban schools.
  - e. Examine the effects of demographic change on music programs.
  - f. Examine the relationship between community-based music programs and K–12 school music programs.
3. Credentials required to deliver music instruction:
    - a. Identify what credentials are needed to deliver a quality music education.
    - b. Identify what one needs to understand and be able to do to effectively engage students in a quality musical experience.
  4. Preservice music teacher preparation and professional development:
    - a. Examine how preservice teachers for K–12 music are prepared overall, with a comparison between elementary and secondary grade levels.
    - b. Examine to what extent postsecondary preparation of music teachers goes beyond a performance-based emphasis to include improvisation, composition, world music, Indigenous content, popular music, and digital technologies.
    - c. Identify what professional development is available for generalist teachers and other teachers of music with varying credentials.
    - d. Identify what professional development is available in response to what has emerged due to living and teaching through a pandemic.
  5. Time allotted for music instruction:
    - a. Compare the percentage of instructional time allotted to music instruction and other disciplines.
    - b. Examine programs that have a balance of STEAM (science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics) disciplines in terms of allotted time for instruction per discipline.
    - c. Examine how schools configure timetables and allot time for music instruction.
  6. Indigenization and decolonization:
    - a. Examine how music educators establish collaborative relationships and appropriate protocols with local Indigenous communities in a good way.
    - b. Examine the role of contemporary Indigenous music.
    - c. Examine the role of Western classical music within a setting that honours decolonization.
    - d. Examine the provincial ministry resources which have been provided to support Indigenous content.
  7. Role of technology:
    - a. Examine the activities that constitute digital technology use in the music classroom.
    - b. Examine the technologies that have been embraced from living and teaching in a pandemic.

- c. Examine the changes that might occur in terms of one's ability and desire to implement technology in music education.
  - d. Examine what might be essential postsecondary digital technology training to prepare preservice music teachers.
8. Advocacy and music education organizations:
- a. Identify the influence, limitations, and interconnections with other music education and advocacy groups.
9. Other:
- a. Examine the room or space challenges for teaching music in K–12 schools.

The process of developing this report was made possible through the generosity of support from various organizations and individuals. Although the process was lengthy and complicated, the results provide much thought for reflection and direction for music education in Canada.

## Section 1: The Narrative

Music education in Canada exists in a complex, interconnected and interrelated ecosystem full of ambiguity in which stakeholders celebrate, question, and embrace 21st century opportunities and challenges. This living story acknowledges and reflects on our ability as music educators to address equity, diversity, and inclusion within the K–12 music classroom. An interconnection between each provincial government, local school boards, school administrators, and changing parent and student demographics creates a delicate web in which interwoven reverberations continue to uniquely influence one another. A struggle to address 21st century challenges in education is intensified by questions concerning traditional approaches to music education curriculum. Music educators, and postsecondary music and music education programs, continue to grapple with how best to include—with equal significance—world music, Indigenous perspectives and content, technology, and popular music within long-standing Eurocentric performance-based practices. These complex issues and diverse relationships contribute to why the inclusion of music education in the Canadian K–12 school curriculum has historically faced, and continues to face, many challenges. Nevertheless, the landscape of music education is rich, with creative learning experiences occurring from sea to sea to sea.

### The Study: The Canadian Context for Music Education

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The genesis of this national study of music education in Canada began in 2016. The Coalition for Music Education in Canada recognized that any future initiatives to advocate for equal access to music education would first require identifying all the systems, structures, and elements that make up the current music education ecosystem. However, in the context of the Canadian education landscape, this is no small feat. Canada is the world's second largest country by total land mass, at 9,984,670 km<sup>2</sup>. With an estimated population of 38,131,104 (Statistics Canada, 2021), Canada has one of the smallest population densities in the world, at 3.81%, with more than 80% of Canadians living in urban settings and over 66% living within 100 km of the southern Canada–U.S. border. Under the Constitution Act of 1867, the executive legislative responsibility for education is granted to the provinces and territories; thus, there is no federal ministry or department of education. Moreover, unlike the 10 provinces, the three territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut) do not have the same constitutional status and must coordinate with multiple provinces to establish their curriculum. The structure of each provincial education system allows for a greater regional perspective and naturally resists a one-size-fits-all or a national approach to music education. Hence, for this study, describing the uniqueness of each province when looking at specific parameters such as music education curriculum may provide a better understanding of Canada's diverse music education identity. Last, within each province, music education reflects the region and stakeholders of that region. Even within each province, there may not be a provincial perspective of music education considering the autonomy of school boards and school administrators, who make important decisions regarding the implementation of provincial curriculum

outcomes, school and program funding, and scheduling of classes, as well as the diversity of postsecondary preservice preparation of music educators.

### **Goals of the Study**

During the summer of 2019, when this national music education study began in earnest, the Coalition for Music Education narrowed its scope. The primary objective of the study was to create a marker of information to help all stakeholders with a vested interest in K–12 music education to better understand how the subject exists from region to region and to provide information supporting future growth and development in Canada. The focus of this study was not to assess the quality of music education in Canada, nor was it to advocate for the importance of music education as much of that advocacy research already exists. Although the study was conceived with an initial timeline in mind, the complexities of how music education is determined and implemented across the country required more time to investigate and thus resulted in extended deadlines. Specifically, it became clear in the beginning 6 months of the study that the amount of information to be gathered, the important consultation process needed from a wide spectrum of stakeholders, the complexity of the information, and the plan to organize and share the information would require a significant investment of time and resources.

### **Initial Planning: Organization of the Study**

The original scope and the limit of the national music education study was to gather as much information about how music education exists in each province, centrally store that information, and make it available to other researchers as specific research questions were identified for further investigation. To determine what information should be gathered, a period of consultation took place with a wide scope of stakeholders. In the middle of this initial process, it was determined that a second phase in the study should occur, which would include a survey to document how the provincial policies were working in the K–12 school music programs.

At this point in the process, the national study was organized into three phases. Each phase would have its own period of consultation, information gathering, and confirmation of information, followed by a general dissemination of the information with the participating partner organizations and eventually the broader community. The guiding approach for this study was a top-down and bottom-up design. Phase 1 (June 1, 2019, to April 15, 2020) was the top-down approach; it included any official government documents or policies that defined how music education should exist in each province and territory. Phase 2 (April 15, 2020, to July 15, 2020) was the bottom-up approach; it included an investigation into how music education exists from the perspectives of working K–12 music specialists, K–12 school administrators, and generalist teachers (mostly K–7). The information in Phase 2 was gathered via a nationally distributed survey. Phase 3 (July 15, 2020, to July 31, 2021) included observations of Phases 1 and 2, proposing future research based on what was discovered and what was yet to be discovered.

**Interruption: COVID-19**

The timing of this study took place during the worldwide coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. Phase 1 occurred 9 months before the COVID-19 pandemic affected Canada in March 2020. Phase 2 began 4 months before the pandemic; however, the production and distribution of the national music education survey to school educators and administrators occurred during the beginning of the pandemic: May 15, 2020, to July 15, 2020. During this time, music education programs were mostly shut down due to unknown and changing safety protocols regarding COVID-19 transmission. Even when K–12 school activities began to resume, most large performance ensemble classes were discontinued or highly restricted from singing or playing instruments due to ongoing COVID-19 protocols. Although some of the results of this national study reflect the state of music education pre-pandemic, the pandemic has provided music educators and the music education profession with an opportunity to reflect and reevaluate possible future directions.

**Specifics: The Study Process**

In April 2016, the Coalition for Music Education convened a leadership round table discussion with representatives from more than 20 organizations, which included organizations from music education, the arts, general education, and music industries, to discuss the need for a research study investigating the state of music education in Canada. At the conclusion of the discussions, the Coalition made a commitment to lead a national study focusing on the state of music education in every province and territory. Four national organizations agreed to form the first steering committee: Coalition for Music Education, Canadian Music Educators Association, MusiCounts, and Music Canada.

In April 2017, the Coalition for Music Education convened a second leadership roundtable discussion, which included an exercise to determine the scope of the national study. The Coalition called for a commitment by the four partnering organizations to move the agenda forward by signing a Letter of Agreement. Meeting in Toronto, representatives from each of the organizations formed the steering committee to determine a timeline and next steps. The partnership agreed that the first step should include an inventory of existing or emerging research that would be relevant to a national study. The Coalition also made a commitment to assemble a list of academic researchers in every province and begin communications with them to gather their input, advice, and participation on the important project. Over the course of the year, the Coalition continued to seek advice from several key music education researchers at various Canadian universities regarding the scope of the study and determining the best course of action. The Coalition also began to seek potential funding sources. In May 2017, the Coalition and the Canadian Music Educators Association met with Hon. Doug Currie, then Chair of the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, to present the research agenda and seek support from the Council.

In 2019, Dr. Adam Jonathan Con, a music education researcher at the University of Victoria, began as principal investigator for the national study. Dr. Con had a broad experience of 15 years teaching K–12 public school music education and 18 years teaching postsecondary choral conducting

and music education; he is a certified Orff Schulwerk practitioner and has an extensive resume as an international choral conductor and clinician.

During the fall of 2019, the original four partner organizations steering the national study expanded to six principal partners; they included the Coalition for Music Education as lead organization, the Canadian Music Educators Association, MusiCounts, Music Canada, People for Education, and the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning. In addition, Western University and the University of Victoria were named as university partners.

The period of June 1 to November 1, 2019, was designated as a time to gather and understand what questions about music education had previously been asked, what information had been gathered, what the problems in previous studies had been, what information should be gathered for this study, and what questions stakeholders were asking. The overarching theme for the study would become, “How does one promote access to music education for all K–12 students in Canada?” From this theme, three related questions emerged:

1. What systems influence access to K–12 music education in Canada?
2. Who are the decision-makers that influence access to K–12 music education in Canada?
3. What is the spectrum of K–12 music education experiences in Canada?

A research assistant was appointed to support the principal investigator as data collection began for Phase 1. The data would be stored on the Coalition for Music Education central server with the intent to share the information with future researchers who would identify and investigate specific research areas. Other information on the server includes previous research related to music education in Canada within the past 15 years, and provincial government and music organization documents.

Beginning on July 1, 2019, we held consultation meetings for four days in Montreal, Quebec, with French and English music educators, postsecondary music education teacher preparation programs, and music and arts administrators. The primary objective was to listen to the various perspectives about how music education exists in Quebec, including the French and English perspectives, and share the goals of the national music education study.

In August 2019, we held further consultation meetings in Toronto and London, Ontario, and again in Montreal, Quebec, to continue the discussion about the national music education study with postsecondary researchers, educators, and arts administrators. These conversations provided excellent advice and perspective; however, the Coalition quickly realized that holding these meetings in each province would require funding and time beyond the Coalition’s resources. Moreover, finding dates and times when stakeholders were available proved to be difficult as July and August were vacation months for individuals who work in K–12 education, higher education, and government. This timing made it difficult to contact and meet with all the organizations and individuals who could potentially provide insight and information.

In October 2019, Adam Con and the Coalition made a formal presentation to the Canadian Music Educators Association’s provincial presidents and full board during its annual general meeting held in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. The Coalition shared the aspirations and direction of the study,

discussed the significance of teachers as researchers in the process of helping to collect data, and sought support from each of the provincial presidents. As well, we held consultations regarding the study with other national researchers and local music educators. Another presentation was made at the Canadian Network for Arts and Learning Creative Convergence Conference, which was held in Winnipeg, Manitoba, and continued networking and conversations to discuss the study were held at Tempo 2019 (Manitoba Music Educators' Conference). The Coalition continued to promote to government relations, communicating with ministers of education and the Council of Ministers of Education in hopes that the national research study would make its way onto the Council's agenda.

## **Phase 1: Top-Down Research**

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As previously mentioned, the components of what would become Phase 1 were the initial parameters of the entire national study. This would later develop into a top-down and bottom-up design, with Phase 1 becoming the top-down portion and Phase 2 becoming the bottom-up portion. Phase 1 officially began June 1, 2019, with the appointment of the principal investigator.

From the consultations held during Phase 1, a list of potential questions, ideas, and information reflecting the top-down approach was proposed. The scope, definition of the ideas, and the implementation were not yet discussed, with the hope that the principal investigator would begin to define and prepare plans to see what was achievable in the given time frame. The questions that arose included the following:

1. Music education curriculum:
  - a. When was the last provincial music education curriculum revision?
  - b. Who is involved in the curriculum revisions for music education?
  - c. What is the process for when music education curriculum is redesigned?
  - d. Is music education mandatory or optional? How is this determined, or how is policy interpreted?
2. Provincial government policies:
  - a. What broad provincial government policies or systems affect music education?
  - b. What specific provincial government policies or systems affect music education?
  - c. Who sets or has influence on these provincial policies?
3. School boards, local schools, and other groups:
  - a. Who makes decisions about provincial curriculum requirements regarding music education at the school district or local school level?
  - b. What are the hiring practices for music instruction?
  - c. How is music education instruction established, sustained, and supported?
  - d. What other groups affect music education? Parents? Community? Advocacy organizations?

4. Teachers of music education:

- a. What are the training paths and certification requirements?
- b. How many students take music compared to the total student population?
- c. What is the contact time for music instruction?
- d. What does music instruction look like for generalist teachers?

5. Other:

- a. Is there a difference between what happens in the rural setting compared to the urban setting?
- b. How is music education answering the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action? What does Indigenous content look like in music education?
- c. What does the inclusion of technology and digital music-making look like in music education?
- d. To what extent and how is world music included in music instruction?
- e. To what extent and how is popular music included in music instruction?

A suggested list of ideas was included:

1. Create a virtual map of Canada showing what information is available.
2. Gather existing national and provincial research related to Canadian music education.
3. Gather related national studies in music education from U.S. and international research.
4. Compare various aspects of music education between provinces.
5. Gather official provincial government music education policies and curriculum documents.
6. Later develop direction and process for Phases 2 and 3.
7. Develop a list of future recommendations for research.
8. Establish a list of provincial contacts to verify and help gather information.
9. Establish a central database of information related to the original questions in the research proposal to survey what was readily available.
10. Establish connections with each provincial music educators' association membership, arts consultants, and postsecondary music education researchers.
11. Survey, listen to, and engage music educators, arts consultants, and postsecondary music education researchers in various regions of the country.

The Coalition recognized that communications with music education representatives in each province would be a challenge. Convincing stakeholders such as music education researchers, educators, and administrators to participate was difficult as many had seen previous attempts as not directly relevant or had full workloads in their own contexts, and thus they were unable to provide time.

### Previous Research

Eighty-three studies of past and emerging Canadian national and provincial music education research conducted from 2005 to 2020 were collected and organized by provincial or national jurisdiction,

complete with internet links of file location or actual digital copies. We omitted studies that primarily focused on advocating for music education. Several pending studies were awaiting publication; our intention is to add links to those studies, and any relevant future studies, to the database for reference and sharing with stakeholders. Although it was determined in Phase 1 that, as much as possible, the focus would be on a national perspective, such a perspective would have been a collated understanding from provincial perspectives. One challenge for such an emerging understanding was that the various provincial studies examined a variety of topics across multiple criteria, thus providing few commonalities for comparisons. It became clear that the amount of work and information to be gathered would likely go beyond the initial scope of the study's timeline, so gathering the information became the priority.

### **Provincial Contacts**

A specific contact person in each province who worked in the K–12 music education field, was in postsecondary music education, or was familiar with the provincial music education setting, was established to help disseminate information and verify the information gathered. They became an essential part of the process in Phase 1 to keep lines of communication open and helped to promote the national survey in Phase 2. The list of primary contacts can be found in the acknowledgements.

### **Central Database**

The Coalition for Music Education acknowledged the need for a central location where stakeholders and researchers could find Canadian music education information and research. We allocated space on the Coalition's server to house all the data that were gathered during the national study.

### **National Study Advisory Group**

In March 2020, a national study executive advisory group was established to provide feedback to the Coalition and the principal investigator. The advisory group consisted of the six national organizations, Coalition for Music Education, Canadian Music Educators Association, Music Canada, MusiCounts, Canadian Network for Arts and Learning, and People for Education, with the addition of the two primary contributing research institutions, Western University and the University of Victoria. The group met monthly to help advise and support the research efforts.

### **The Top-Down Database**

Based on the initial Phase 1 consultations and suggested list, the top-down information gathered consisted of all official provincial government documents and relevant information that affected the inclusion of music education curriculum in K–12 schools. It included the hiring policies of music teachers, all music education organizations, postsecondary music teacher preparation, information related to school board practices, and policies and requirements for the inclusion and determination of Indigenous content. This information was placed in separate databases and then combined into one larger database centrally stored on the Coalition for Music Education server.

Unlike other countries, Canada does not have an open data exchange agreement or open access to information, and with no federal oversight of education, no national data on music education exist. To further compound issues related to accessibility of data, information sharing at the provincial level is carefully controlled; thus, obtaining any data from the respective provincial governments is difficult at best. As the leadership of a provincial government changes, new policies are sometimes developed, and access to the policies of the previous government are often removed from public viewing. With those restrictions noted, the information available and gathered included the following:

1. Provincial school acts and a web link to each one.
2. Provincial curricula:
  - a. links to current posted provincial curriculum;
  - b. dates of when the curriculum was last updated;
  - c. listing of music specific courses or content;
  - d. graduation requirements, if any, for arts or music education;
  - e. time allotment for music education;
  - f. historic or background information of curriculum development; and
  - g. people or organizations involved in the curriculum development.
3. Provincial music teacher certification, including provincial policies and teacher certification requirements.
4. Postsecondary preservice music education teacher training.
5. School district and board documents:
  - a. hiring practices,
  - b. funding responsibilities and policies, and
  - c. curriculum decisions.
6. Indigenous content:
  - a. provincial Indigenous offices, leading Indigenous perspectives, or content within the curriculum; and
  - b. specific Indigenous content related to music education.
7. Organizational documents:
  - a. music education, and
  - b. music education advocacy.

### **Provincial School Acts**

When Canada was founded in 1867 with the establishment of the British North America Act, education became a provincial responsibility. School acts (sometimes called education acts) outline the framework and conditions under which schools are managed and regulated. Although all provincial and territorial school acts outline the foundations of their respective systems, they vary in terms of structure and content. Specific information about music education is minimally referenced in a few provincial school acts; that which exists is contained in information about operations of a school. Other information in the

school acts include regulations about the governing of persons who are responsible for funding, access for student teachers, and development of curriculum, none of which includes specifics about music education. Given that school acts are periodically revised, understanding how each province uniquely outlines the allocation of funds, the hiring practices of teachers, the philosophical frameworks used to redesign curriculum, and the process for making curriculum-based decisions can directly impact the future of music education within a province. The spreadsheet containing links to each provincial school act will be made available on the Coalition website (<https://coalitioncanada.ca/en/research/>).

The most influential policies within a provincial school act are stated guidelines regarding how curriculum is designed, developed, and implemented. Officially, provincial school acts state that the Minister of Education or equivalent is responsible for establishing a program of study. Common to all school acts is the right of the Lieutenant-Governor in Council to overrule any decisions.

The context in which music education is presented within a provincial curriculum becomes the point of reference by which school boards and administrators make decisions regarding the degree of its inclusion in K–12 schools. Even if music education is mandated within a provincial curriculum, each province has unique parameters of influence on the design and development of curriculum and the degree of implementation within the classroom. In most cases, school boards are charged with the responsibility to provide instruction and assessment meeting the stated ministry-approved curricula.

Some differences across provinces are reflected in their respective provincial school acts with regard to how curriculum is developed and delivered. For example, the Manitoba Public Schools Act (1987/2021) allows school districts to cooperate with their schools to develop courses, programs, and instructional materials. It also stipulates that school districts have the right to nominate teachers to participate in curriculum design and development. Compared to other provinces, this school act provision ensures more direct input into the design of the provincial curriculum compared to other provinces. As such, the Manitoba music curriculum frameworks were developed by Manitoba teacher teams and led by government arts education curriculum leaders and writers who were contracted from the field and provincial universities. Manitoba school divisions are required to design music programs that support students to achieve the mandated music learning outcomes as stated in the curriculum framework documents. Thus, although some autonomy exists at the high school level to design music courses for Grades 9–12, these courses must address the Grade 9–12 music learning outcomes.

The British Columbia School Act (1996/2021) specifies teacher responsibilities in the delivery of curriculum, such as designing, supervising, and assessing educational programs and instructing, assessing, and evaluating individual students and groups of students. However, there is no policy about who participates in developing curriculum other than school boards that have the authority to develop and offer local programs.

The Alberta Education Act (2012/2021) contains specific language that allows school boards to hire competent individuals to teach a language or culture under the supervision of a certified teacher. It is not known if Alberta considers music education to fall under either of those two categories. The Saskatchewan Education Act (1995/2017) provides broad powers to school boards to allow them to

employ “ancillary personnel” considered necessary to administer programs; it also allows for boards to jointly hire teachers who a district may not otherwise be able to afford. This provision could apply to itinerant music teachers.

The Quebec Education Act (1996/2021) contains a provision to allow local school districts or school service centres to replace a program of study specially designed for one or a group of students who cannot benefit from it as set by the Minister of Education. The Quebec Education Act also has a separate Teacher Training Accreditation Committee from the ministry of education, school boards, and universities; it is made up of primary and secondary teachers, professional education staff, university professors, and university education representatives. Although not involved directly in the hiring of teachers, the Teacher Training Accreditation Committee certifies who can be accredited to teach, which allows a teacher to be eligible to be hired.

The New Brunswick Education Act (1997/2019) also allows school boards or district education councils to develop instructional programs unique to the character and economy of the community. The Newfoundland and Labrador Schools Act (1997/2018) acknowledges the autonomy of small rural schools to develop programs and courses that meet minimum requirements due to isolation or because students cannot be accommodated in another school.

Two provincial school acts have policies specifically addressing the inclusion of Indigenous content in school curricula. The New Brunswick Education Act (1997/2019) includes the requirement of the ministry to prescribe or approve programs meeting the unique needs of Mi’kmaq and Maliseet children; it requires the minister to enter into an agreement with a council of the Mi’kmaq or Maliseet First Nation. The act also mandates that the minister shall prescribe or approve programs that foster an understanding of Indigenous history and culture among all students. Nova Scotia’s Education Act (2018/2019) has similar requirements to provide and implement programs regarding the history, language, heritage, culture, traditions, and contributions to society of the Mi’kmaq. Although no direct language exists pertaining to the inclusion of Indigenous content in curriculum specific to music education, the implied understanding is that all subject areas will provide support of the Mi’kmaq traditions.

Teacher hiring practices are addressed in each of the provincial school acts; specifically, that a certified teacher holding a certificate of qualification is permitted to teach based on the criteria set by each provincial regulatory body. Each provincial regulatory body, under the authority of the Minister of Education and the Lieutenant Governor, then determines the qualifications and categories of each teacher.

Last, funding for school boards, as established by the provincial Minister of Education, is regulated within the respective provincial school act; however, there are some differences between the provinces on how budgets are determined and distributed. In general, school districts can determine budgets but are required to send the budget to the Minister of Education for approval. According to each provincial school act, the Minister of Education has the right to amend the budgetary allotment as they see fit. Funding models include one student per funding unit and course-based funding. In some

provinces, individual school budgets are determined in part by school boards, rather than purely by the provincial legislature (see Section 2 for details).

### **Provincial Curricula**

The provincial course listing of curricula for K–12 schools is often the primary document used by decision-makers such as school boards and school administrators to either include music education in schools or make it elective. Table 1 summarizes the provincial and territorial website-listed curricula for music education in Canada. Approval of courses of study for all students varies across the provinces but is shared at some level by the ministry and school boards. As such, practices determining the inclusion of music instruction within K–12 curricula vary provincially.

Each province lists music education curricula differently; thus, for the purpose of comparison, they are listed by all K–12 grades that share a common set of music education curriculum outcomes. The province could choose to group the general or music education curriculum outcomes this way. The music education outcomes might also be listed by music courses listings or changes in graduation requirements, which occurs mostly for Grades 10–12. It is not possible to divide the curricula by elementary and secondary designations as every combination of K–12 exists per province.

Table 1 indicates what music instruction is required from kindergarten to Grade 12 or 13. Requirement column: Indicates if music education is mandatory or elective. The indication of arts being mandatory references music education within a broader arts education which may include dance, drama, music, or visual arts. Time column: Lists any official government posting of required time allotments for music education. For many provinces, the time allotment for music education is embedded with other subjects, and in those cases, the distribution of time is left to the individual school boards and each school administration to decide. Hence, for the most part, time allotment for music education is not officially listed and is thus a matter of interpretation. Date column: Includes the verified publication dates of the most current curriculum. Curriculum column: Contains either the listed music concepts or specific music courses that define the music education curriculum. Note that during the gathering of this information, it was discovered that some provinces, such as Alberta, were in the process of reviewing and testing a new curriculum.

**Table 1**  
**Provincial Curricula Music Requirements by Grade**

Grade	Requirement	Time	Date	Curriculum
British Columbia				
K–8	All four arts mandatory	N/S	2016	Arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art. Music concepts: duration, rhythm, tempo, pitch, timbre, dynamics, form, texture, notation.
9	Unified arts or discipline specific	N/S	2016	Grade 9 includes specific subjects: dance, drama, music, visual art.
10	Arts or applied design, skills, and technologies: 4 credits	N/S	2018	Choral, contemporary music, instrumental, musical theatre (cross-disciplinary).
11–12	Arts or applied design, skills, and technologies: 4 credits	N/S	2018	Choral, contemporary music, instrumental, musical theatre (cross-disciplinary), composition and production.
Yukon				
K–8	All four arts are mandatory	N/S	2017	Follows BC curriculum, adapted with Yukon content, Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing.
9	Unified arts or discipline specific	N/S	2016	Grade 9 includes specific subjects: dance, drama, music, visual art.
10	Arts or applied design, skills, and technologies: 4 credits	N/S	2018	Choral, contemporary music, instrumental, musical theatre (cross-disciplinary).
11–12	Arts or applied design, skills, and technologies: 4 credits	N/S	2018	Choral, contemporary music, instrumental, musical theatre (cross-disciplinary), composition and production.
Alberta				
K–6	Music and visual art mandatory	10%	1989	Fine arts education: drama (optional), music, visual art.
7–9	Elective	75 hr/year	1988	Music.
10–12	Elective	N/S	1994	Instrumental, choral, general (10, 20, 30).
Saskatchewan				
K–5	All four arts mandatory	50 min/wk	2011	Arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art.
6–9	All four arts mandatory	50 min/wk	2009	Arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art
10–12	Two arts education courses mandatory	N/S 1 credit = 100 hr	2020	Band, choral, guitar, instrumental jazz, music, vocal jazz (10, 20, 30). Graduation: two arts education courses.

Grade	Requirement	Time	Date	Curriculum
Northwest Territories				
K–5	All four arts mandatory	N/S	2011	Combines AB and SK arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art.
6–9	All four arts mandatory	N/S	2009	
10–12	Elective	N/S	1991/ 1994	Choral music, instrumental music, general music (10, 20, 30). Graduation: Fine arts 3 credits.
Nunavut				
K–5	Mandatory	N/S	2011	Adapted SK curriculum.
6–9	Elective	Fine arts 60 hr/yr	2009	Adapted SK curriculum.
10–12	Fine arts required: 3 credits	N/S	1991	Adapted AB curriculum: choral, instrumental, general (1994).
Manitoba				
K–6	Arts mandatory:	10%	2021	Arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art.
7–8	local decision how many	8%	2021	
9–12	Elective	110 hr	2014	Music framework: making, creating, connecting, responding. Graduation: 13 optional credits of 30 credits in multiple subjects.
Ontario				
K–8	Arts mandatory	N/S	2009	Arts education: dance, drama, music, visual art. Skills: creative, analytical, critical thinking, communication.
9–10	One arts course each year	N/S	2010	The arts: dance, drama, music, visual art (required to take two arts courses). Expressing Aboriginal Cultures also meets arts credits. Music 9 and Music 10.
11–12	The arts: 1 credit elective	N/S	2010	University/college preparation or open (broad music knowledge and skills).
Quebec				
1–2 Cycle 1	Arts mandatory; music an option	18 hr/7 hr	2001/ 2009	Elementary English (2001); elementary French (2004, 2009). Arts education: dance, drama, music
3–4 Cycle 2		14 hr/11 hr	2001/ 2009	visual art. Music: specific learning outcomes/content.
5–6 Cycle 3		N/S	2001/ 2009	

Grade	Requirement	Time	Date	Curriculum
7–8 secondary I–II	Arts mandatory; music one option	N/S	2004	Music is cross-curricular, part of the greater Quebec education program and arts education. Music-specific content.
9, 10, 11 secondary III to V	Arts mandatory; music one option	N/S	2007	
New Brunswick				
K–5 EN	Mandatory	N/S	2004	Eight general arts outcomes.
6 EN		75 min/wk	2004	Music.
7 EN			2008	Music.
8 EN			2009	Music.
M–8 FR			2007	Music.
9	Arts mandatory	45/90 hr	2002	Requires 90 hr in music, physical education, technology (or 135 hr in one, 45 in another, and 90 in two).
10	Arts mandatory		2002	
11–12	Elective	90/110 hr	2002	Music 111, 113, 120, 122; Fine Arts 110; Graduation: 1 credit in fine arts/life development.
Prince Edward Island				
K		N/S		Prior to 2010, kindergarten was privatized. New K–12 music curriculum in development.
1–6	Mandatory	Rec 90 min/6 day	2002	Music specific.
7–9	Mandatory/ elective	160–180 min/6 day	1997	Grade 9 arts: music, visual art.
10–12	Elective	75/day	1997	Instrumental, vocal, strings. Graduation: 5 credits from program of studies that includes music.
Nova Scotia				
K–6	Mandatory	60 min/wk	2020	Music specific.
7–9	Music elective	N/S	2022	At least one elective required at each grade: explore music, band, family studies, technology education, visual art.
10–12	Elective	N/S	2008/15	Graduation: 1 arts credit: dance, drama, music, visual art.
Newfoundland and Labrador				
K–3	Mandatory	30%	2005	Music specific: 30% for social studies, religious, health, art, music, physical education.

Grade	Requirement	Time	Date	Curriculum
4–6	Mandatory	6%	2005	Music specific: 6% music.
7–9	Mandatory	5%	2009	Music and visual art: 5%.
Ensemble performance	Arts elective	55–60 hr	1993	Ensemble performance; experiencing music (2015); Graduation: 2 credits of fine arts.

Note. N/S = not specified.

Each province and territory acknowledge the importance of music education within an arts education framework that normally consists of four disciplines: dance, drama, music, and visual art. This broader arts education philosophy embraces 21st century learning and skills such as cross-curricular competencies, critical thinking, problem-solving, and collaborative learning. Based on what is listed on the provincial curriculum websites, it could be assumed that all K–6 students are learning each of the four arts disciplines except for those in the province of Alberta (Alberta Education, n.d.-a; Montgomery & Dust, 2007), which states two required arts: music and visual art. It is noted that Alberta is redesigning its curriculum (Alberta Education, 2020b). British Columbia’s curriculum suggests that the unified arts education language provides a way for educators to teach any of the four disciplines alone or in combination with the other arts (Government of British Columbia, n.d.).

Given that music is part of the recognized four arts disciplines, it could be stated that music education is mandatory from kindergarten to Grade 6 in every province and territory except in Nunavut, where it is mandatory from kindergarten to Grade 5 (Nunavut Department of Education, 2019). In Alberta, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Quebec, it is mandatory to Grade 6 (Alberta Education, n.d.-a, n.d.-b; Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, n.d.-a; Prince Edward Island Department of Education, 2002a, 2002b; Québec Ministère de l’Éducation, 2009). British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario, and Yukon require music education from kindergarten to Grade 8 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2016; Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.-b; Yukon Department of Education, n.d.). The provinces and territories of Newfoundland and Labrador, Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan designate mandatory music education from kindergarten to Grade 9 (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, n.d.-b; Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment, n.d.; Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2011a), and to Grade 10 in New Brunswick (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2004). Although all provinces and territories frame music education within the larger arts education framework, the four Atlantic provinces of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador have formed the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation. In the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum* (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2001), music is listed as a separate mandatory curricular course from kindergarten to at least Grade 6.

From the top-down approach, provincial curriculum documents demonstrate the expectation that schools are required to provide music instruction to all students from kindergarten to at least Grade

6 (except Nunavut), with some provinces extending that mandatory requirement to either Grades 8, 9, or 10. Music education in Grades 10 to 12 is elective or part of an elective suite to meet arts credits towards graduation. Table 2 shows the different mandatory and elective options for music education within each provincial and territorial curriculum.

**Table 2**  
**Provincial Listing of Mandatory or Elective Music Education**

Prov.	Grade												
	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
BC													
YT													
AB													
SK													
NT													
NU													
MB													
ON										One required arts course; may be music.			
QC													*
NB													
PE	N/A												
NS													
NL													

*Note.* Purple = music within an arts education; green = subject-specific music; blue = music as an elective; BC = British Columbia, YT = Yukon, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, NT = Northwest Territories, NU = Nunavut, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, PE = Prince Edward Island, NS = Nova Scotia, NL= Newfoundland and Labrador.

\* In Quebec, this level is CEGEP (general and professional teaching college).

## Curriculum Development

Determining who is represented during the consultation and decision-making process as curriculum documents are reviewed is essential to ensuring equal access to music education for all. Table 3 lists who was involved in each current version of the provincial curricula. It would also be helpful to know what policies and frameworks were used to develop the revised curriculum and the consultative process that occurred as revisions were debated and implemented.

**Table 3**  
**Participants in Provincial Curriculum Development**

Prov.	Ministry	Educators, generalists, music specialists	Francophone, First Nations, Métis, Inuit	Post- secondary academics	Administrators	Parents	School trustees
BC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
YT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
AB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
SK <sup>a</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
NT	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓
NU	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
MB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
ON	✓	✓	✓	✓			
QC	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
NB	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
PE <sup>b</sup>	✓	✓		✓			
NS <sup>c</sup>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
NL	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

*Note.* BC = British Columbia, YT = Yukon, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, NT = Northwest Territories, NU = Nunavut, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, PE = Prince Edward Island, NS = Nova Scotia, NL = Newfoundland and Labrador.

<sup>a</sup> Teachers' Federation also listed as a participant. <sup>b</sup> Revisional Committee also listed as a participant. <sup>c</sup> Educators from other provinces also listed as a participant.

The original intention of this study was to investigate who was involved in each jurisdiction's music education curriculum development; however, not all provinces and territories post this information. Some list names of people involved in curriculum development but not who they are or their professional title. Besides the provincial Ministry of Education, music specialists, generalist teachers, First Nations leaders, francophone teachers, postsecondary music educators, school administrators, school district arts administrators, parents, school trustees, and community musicians have important contributions to the process, reflecting the unique culture of a particular province and region. As

previously mentioned, some provincial school acts, such as Manitoba's Public Schools Act (1987/2021), provide for the inclusion of a broad spectrum of stakeholders to the curriculum revision and consultation process. The other provinces may have included many of the stakeholders during their curriculum revision process, but the full extent of the consultation process and who the participants represent was generally not disclosed. As well, there is no existing official policy to ensure full representation.

### **School Districts, School Boards, Boards of Education, and School Service Centres**

Overall, the Ministry of Education is responsible for all aspects of a province's or territory's education system. Boards of Education are primarily responsible for the distribution of funds to ensure the Ministry of Education guidelines, including curricular, are being met. Local school districts, school boards, or school service centres, and school administrators, have a direct impact on all aspects of education, including music education, in terms of funding of programs, curricular decisions, time allotted, and hiring of teachers. Because school boards, under their respective provincial school acts, are responsible to administer courses of study for all students, practices determining the extent of music instruction within the K–12 curriculum vary. A possible reason for this varied practice could be the way school boards interpret the broader arts education provincial curriculum based on their funding priorities each year.

In each province, the school or education act provides a variety of policies giving school boards different degrees of influence. For example, British Columbia's School Act (1996/2021) allows school boards to provide all or part of an educational program by means of distributed learning only with agreement of the minister. Alberta's Education Act (2012/2021) has provisions to allow its school boards to develop and approve educational resource materials and other supplies and services, and to develop and offer local programs for use in schools. Manitoba school boards have a unique role in provincial curriculum revision: school divisions nominate teachers with the expertise to participate in curriculum revision (Public Schools Act, 1987/2021). From those nominations, the Manitoba government selects the teachers to participate in curriculum development teams. The minister has the authority to make regulations establishing programming standards and dispute resolution processes if there is a disagreement about the appropriateness of educational programming. Ontario's Education Act (1990/2019) gives school boards the authority to provide instruction in courses of study that are either prescribed or approved by the minister.

Quebec acknowledges the expertise of teachers in the Quebec Education Act (1996/2021), entrusting them to the select methods of instruction and the means of evaluating student progress. As noted, a school service centre may, with the authorization of and subject to the conditions determined by the minister, allow a school to replace a program of studies established by the minister with a local program of studies designed for a student or a category of students who are unable to benefit from the established programs of studies. The school service centre must submit every such local program of studies to the minister for approval.

In New Brunswick, the school board is known as the district education council. Subject to approval by the minister, the district education councils may develop instructional programs, services, and courses that are “unique to the character and economy of the community” (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2009, p. 1). They can choose, from the optional programs listed by the ministry, which services and courses will be offered in each school within the school district. Teachers are required to implement the prescribed curriculum. In both New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, the minister prescribes or approves programs and services that respond to the unique needs of Mi’kmaq and Maliseet children as well as foster an understanding of Indigenous history and culture amongst all students.

Nova Scotia’s Education Act (2018/2019) refers to its school districts as regional centres of education. The person normally referred to as a school superintendent, called a regional executive director, is responsible to the minister for administering and evaluating the prescribed and approved public school program of study and ensuring that all schools adhere to it. The principal of each school is responsible to ensure teachers’ consistency of instruction.

Prince Edward Island allows school boards to develop policies that enable teachers to assist in the development, implementation, and evaluation of pilot or local programs. Its Education Act (2016/2020) grants the minister the power to approve, prohibit, or establish courses of study, the amount of instruction time, educational programs, instructional materials, categories of instructional licenses, and authorizations to substitute for teachers.

Newfoundland and Labrador’s Schools Act (1997/2018) has specific provisions to allow a school board to establish programs in its schools by making an arrangement with another board or educational body in Canada. The board is responsible for the expenditure, conduct, and evaluation of adequate program and performance standards in the school. School boards have permission to establish, maintain, and operate schools that satisfy the minimum requirements as approved by the minister. Due to isolation or the inability to accommodate rural students, the minister can require a designated “small” school to be maintained and operated. The superintendent of a school district, known as the director, is responsible for administering, supervising, and evaluating programs and services, as well as the programs for K–12 grades and policies for the promotion of students. Teachers are directed to provide instruction of prescribed or approved courses of study and encourage and foster learning. Adams and Rose (2007) noted that the music curriculum is designed to be taught by music specialists with the acknowledgement that it is appropriate for generalists to deliver the program, when necessary, such as in small or isolated communities.

### **Hiring Practices**

In all provinces, the ministry identifies the qualification for teacher certification as determined by its respective school act; school boards are charged to complete the hiring process. Differences across the provinces in terms of specific criteria-based hiring practices include hiring personnel considered necessary to carry out curriculum, administration, and/or operations, and hiring processes. Common to

all provinces is the final approval by the Minister of Education for all hiring. Some provinces, such as Saskatchewan, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Quebec have different provisions under several specified circumstances to hire noncertified persons to provide instruction if a certified instructor is not available. For music education, this provision means that a musician without any teacher training could be hired to provide music instruction.

### **Music Teacher Certification and Postsecondary Music Education Teacher Training**

Under the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement* (Internal Trade Secretariat, 2021), teacher certificate holders from any province may qualify for a Certificate of Qualification without requiring additional training, excepting evidence of language proficiency. To be employed as a professional teacher in public K–12 schools, an individual must hold a valid teacher certificate of qualification from the province in which they will be teaching. For the most part, the requirements from province to province are similar but require slight differences in either the content of courses taken or credit hours earned.

Every province except Newfoundland and Labrador has one teacher certification from kindergarten to Grade 12. There is no separate certification for elementary or secondary, nor is there a separate subject-specific certification, such as for music. Newfoundland and Labrador has three certifications: primary/elementary, secondary, and primary/elementary/secondary.

Although postsecondary preservice teacher education programs of study may prepare students to teach at different stages of the schooling system (e.g., elementary, secondary), there is no difference in the teaching certificate that is conferred. Generally, two processes are followed in the preparation of certified music teachers: the music training and the teacher training. The two processes are distinct from each other but have a complex relationship. To teach in a K–12 school, proof of approved Ministry of Education coursework in teacher training is required. From province to province, there is a largely unregulated spectrum of what coursework constitutes training in music. In the elementary (K–6 or K–7) setting, many provinces consider the elementary teacher to be a classroom generalist teacher with a broad training in arts education, which may include one or more courses in music; that may be the only postsecondary training the teacher receives to teach the subject. In the secondary setting, most music teachers have a postsecondary music degree; however, it is possible to teach music without a degree in music or music education. Ultimately, the school district and school administrator decide whether a teacher applicant has the necessary qualifications for the vacant position. Wasiak (2015) captured this confusion when he stated that the definition of a music teacher has less to do with credentials and “more to do with one’s teaching assignment” (p. 78).

The music training prepares the content knowledge and skills of the musician. Every Canadian province has several postsecondary institutions that provide music training. Once a music degree has been approved by the provincial Ministry of Higher Education, the institution is responsible for managing music coursework, not the ministry. Postsecondary training of music teachers primarily consists of degree pathways, which include Bachelor of Music, Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Arts, and Bachelor of Education, as well as dual degree, concurrent degrees, and after degree. Within a music

degree, a wide variety of concentrations of study are available, such as performance, music education, or composition.

The teacher training prepares the individual to meet the requirements for teacher certification. The postsecondary teacher certification program is approved by the provincial Ministry of Education with specifically approved minimum coursework leading towards certification. The postsecondary teacher training programs may or may not have music education–specific content. Normally, a post–bachelor’s degree teacher certification program, or what is called an after-degree program, follows the undergraduate music degree. In some cases, the after-degree program is a second undergraduate Bachelor of Education degree. If the first undergraduate degree is in music education, the student will likely be able to transition into a teacher certification program without having to take other coursework. If the first degree is not in music education, further music education courses may be required depending on the program requirements for music education. Some postsecondary institutions provide dual or combined music and education degrees.

Table 4 lists the Canadian music education teacher preparation programs. Although teachers are certified for the most part K–12, most postsecondary music teacher training programs specify music teacher preparation at the secondary level and elementary/middle school level, with a few programs indicating a K–12 music teacher preparation program. Many of the postsecondary programs further divide their music education training program by choral or instrumental focus.

**Table 4**

**Postsecondary Institutions With Music Education or Music Preparation Programs**

Prov.	Music education programs	Link
BC	Trinity Western U., BA	<a href="https://www.twu.ca/sites/default/files/2020-21-music-major.pdf">https://www.twu.ca/sites/default/files/2020-21-music-major.pdf</a>
	U. British Columbia, BMus, BEd	<a href="https://music.ubc.ca/music-education-1">https://music.ubc.ca/music-education-1</a>
	U. British Columbia: dual degree BMus /BEd	<a href="http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=12,210,381,364#19351">http://www.calendar.ubc.ca/vancouver/index.cfm?tree=12,210,381,364#19351</a>
	U. Victoria, BEd: choral/instrumental	<a href="https://www.uvic.ca/education/curriculum/undergraduate/home/programs/elmbed/index.php">https://www.uvic.ca/education/curriculum/undergraduate/home/programs/elmbed/index.php</a>
	U. Victoria, BMus, Music Ed	<a href="https://www.uvic.ca/finearts/music/undergrad/programs/education/index.php">https://www.uvic.ca/finearts/music/undergrad/programs/education/index.php</a>
AB	Kings U, BMus/BA	<a href="https://www.kingsu.ca/programs/bachelor/music/streams/music-education">https://www.kingsu.ca/programs/bachelor/music/streams/music-education</a>
	U. Alberta, BMus/BEd: elementary/secondary	<a href="https://www.ualberta.ca/music/our-programs/undergraduate-programs/bachelor-of-music-bachelor-of-education.html">https://www.ualberta.ca/music/our-programs/undergraduate-programs/bachelor-of-music-bachelor-of-education.html</a>
	U. Calgary, dual BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/arts-4-12-15.html">https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/arts-4-12-15.html</a>

Prov.	Music education programs	Link
	U. Lethbridge, dual BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.uleth.ca/future-student/program/music-education">https://www.uleth.ca/future-student/program/music-education</a>
	Concordia U, BEd (after BMus degree)	<a href="https://concordia.ab.ca/education/bachelor-of-education/">https://concordia.ab.ca/education/bachelor-of-education/</a>
SK	U. Saskatchewan, BMus	<a href="https://admissions.usask.ca/music-education.php#About">https://admissions.usask.ca/music-education.php#About</a>
	U. Regina, BMusEd/BMus	<a href="https://www.uregina.ca/education/Programs1/Undergraduate_Programs/bmused.html">https://www.uregina.ca/education/Programs1/Undergraduate_Programs/bmused.html</a>
MB	U. Manitoba, BMus: early/middle, choral, instrumental, guitar/strings	<a href="https://umanitoba.ca/explore/programs-of-study/music-bmus#program-details">https://umanitoba.ca/explore/programs-of-study/music-bmus#program-details</a>
	Brandon U., 5-year BMus+BEd after degree; 6-year BMus Specialist + 2-year BEd	<a href="https://www.brandonu.ca/music/programs/undergraduate/">https://www.brandonu.ca/music/programs/undergraduate/</a>
	Canadian Mennonite U, BMus— Music Ed. Concentration—no certification; early/middle, secondary choral or instrumental	<a href="https://www.cmu.ca/academics/music/programs">https://www.cmu.ca/academics/music/programs</a>
ON	U. Toronto, BMus, BEd, or M.T. after degree	<a href="https://music.utoronto.ca/programs.php">https://music.utoronto.ca/programs.php</a>
	U. Western Ontario, B.Mus	<a href="https://music.uwo.ca/departments/music-education/bmus-music-education.html">https://music.uwo.ca/departments/music-education/bmus-music-education.html</a>
	Queen's U., dual BMus/BEd	<a href="https://sdm.queensu.ca/dan-school-programs/bachelor-of-music-education/">https://sdm.queensu.ca/dan-school-programs/bachelor-of-music-education/</a>
	Wilfrid Laurier U., BMus, BEd after degree	<a href="https://www.wlu.ca/programs/music/undergraduate/music-bmus/concentrations/index.html">https://www.wlu.ca/programs/music/undergraduate/music-bmus/concentrations/index.html</a>
	U. Windsor, dual BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.uwindsor.ca/music/444/new-5-year-concurrent-bachelor-music-music-education-honours-bachelor-education">https://www.uwindsor.ca/music/444/new-5-year-concurrent-bachelor-music-music-education-honours-bachelor-education</a>
	Lakehead U., Hons BA/BEd Primary, Hons BA/BEd Intermediate/Senior	<a href="http://csdc.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid = viewcatalog&amp;catalogid = 27&amp;chapterid = 7882&amp;topicgroupid = 25852&amp;loaduseredits = True">http://csdc.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid = viewcatalog&amp;catalogid = 27&amp;chapterid = 7882&amp;topicgroupid = 25852&amp;loaduseredits = True</a> <a href="http://csdc.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid = viewcatalog&amp;catalogid = 27&amp;chapterid = 7882&amp;topicgroupid = 25853&amp;loaduseredits = True">http://csdc.lakeheadu.ca/Catalog/ViewCatalog.aspx?pageid = viewcatalog&amp;catalogid = 27&amp;chapterid = 7882&amp;topicgroupid = 25853&amp;loaduseredits = True</a>
	U. Ottawa, BMus	<a href="https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/undergrad/bachelor-music-education-profile/">https://catalogue.uottawa.ca/en/undergrad/bachelor-music-education-profile/</a>

Prov.	Music education programs	Link
	Brock U., BMus—MusEd concentration; concurrent BA/BEd (Grades 4–10); music, vocal	<a href="https://brocku.ca/webcal/undergrad/musi.html">https://brocku.ca/webcal/undergrad/musi.html</a> <a href="https://brocku.ca/programs/undergraduate/concurrent-education-juniorintermediate-grades-4-10/">https://brocku.ca/programs/undergraduate/concurrent-education-juniorintermediate-grades-4-10/</a>
	U. Guelph, BA Music	<a href="https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sofam/music/degree-info">https://www.uoguelph.ca/arts/sofam/music/degree-info</a>
	U. Waterloo, Hons BA or BA Arts/Business	<a href="https://uwaterloo.ca/future-students/programs/music">https://uwaterloo.ca/future-students/programs/music</a>
	York U., BEd or BA/BEd	<a href="https://music.ampd.yorku.ca/programs/">https://music.ampd.yorku.ca/programs/</a>
QC	McGill U., Dual BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.mcgill.ca/music/about-us/music-education">https://www.mcgill.ca/music/about-us/music-education</a>
	Laval U, BEd—Music Ed	<a href="https://www.mus.ulaval.ca/etudes/etudier-au-1er-cycle/cheminement-passerelle">https://www.mus.ulaval.ca/etudes/etudier-au-1er-cycle/cheminement-passerelle</a>
	Bishop’s U., BA/BEd	<a href="https://www.ubishops.ca/wp-content/uploads/25-Music-2021-MOD-Sept-2.pdf">https://www.ubishops.ca/wp-content/uploads/25-Music-2021-MOD-Sept-2.pdf</a>
	U. Quebec Montreal, BMus	<a href="https://etudier.uqam.ca/programme?code = 6377">https://etudier.uqam.ca/programme?code = 6377</a>
	U. Sherbrooke (joint with Laval U.), BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.usherbrooke.ca/musique/futurs-etudiants/premier-cycle/baccalaureat-en-enseignement-de-la-musique/">https://www.usherbrooke.ca/musique/futurs-etudiants/premier-cycle/baccalaureat-en-enseignement-de-la-musique/</a>
NB	U. New Brunswick, BEd	<a href="https://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/undergrad/schoolyears/index.html">https://www.unb.ca/fredericton/education/undergrad/schoolyears/index.html</a>
	U. Moncton, BMus/BEd	<a href="https://www.umoncton.ca/repertoire">https://www.umoncton.ca/repertoire</a>
	Mount Allison U., BMus, BA/BEd after degree	<a href="https://www.mta.ca/degrees/music/">https://www.mta.ca/degrees/music/</a>
PE	U. Prince Edward Island, BMusEd	<a href="https://www.upei.ca/programs/music-education">https://www.upei.ca/programs/music-education</a>
NS	Acadia U, BMus/BEd after degree	<a href="https://music.acadiu.ca/degree-programs.html">https://music.acadiu.ca/degree-programs.html</a>
	Dalhousie U, BMus—no music ed	<a href="https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/school-of-performing-arts/programs/music-programs.html">https://www.dal.ca/faculty/arts/school-of-performing-arts/programs/music-programs.html</a>
	St. Francis Xavier U., BA	<a href="https://www.stfx.ca/academics/arts/music">https://www.stfx.ca/academics/arts/music</a>
NL	Memorial U, BMusEd (second degree)	<a href="https://www.mun.ca/undergrad/programs/education/bmus-ed2.php">https://www.mun.ca/undergrad/programs/education/bmus-ed2.php</a>

*Note.* BC = British Columbia, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, PE = Prince Edward Island, NS = Nova Scotia, NL= Newfoundland and Labrador, U = University.

### Indigenous Content and Music Education Curriculum

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada publicly released its final report detailing the history and legacy of Canada’s Indigenous residential school system. Ninety-four Calls to Action were

presented to redress the legacy of residential schools and to advance the Canadian reconciliation process. Specifically, Calls to Action 62 to 65 ask federal, provincial, and territorial governments in consultation and collaboration with residential school survivors, Indigenous peoples, and educators to prepare teachers and provincial curricula in Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 331).

Since 2015, provincial and territorial governments have been working to include Indigenous content and ways of knowing in their K–12 curricula. To prepare preservice teachers for this revised curriculum, postsecondary teacher training programs have also worked towards decolonizing and including Indigenous content and knowledge in their curricula, thus finding ways to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) 94 Calls to Action. Yet, there is little consistency; from province to province, a wide spectrum exists of what is considered Indigenous content and how that content is included in the classroom.

Two points of conflict provide ongoing challenges to the process of decolonization and Indigenous inclusion within music education. First, postsecondary preservice music teacher preparation programs mostly exist within a larger music conservatory model and a long-standing tradition and emphasis of Eurocentric Western classical music training and performance practice. Second, the Indigenous concept of All My Relations (i.e., everything in the universe is connected) is central to understanding Indigenous ways of knowing and being. As such, from an Indigenous perspective, music education is not a separate curricular subject to be studied but rather part of the whole being in all aspects of life and culture. This Indigenous epistemology of music is often overlooked as music educators unconsciously teach Indigenous music through the lens of their Western musical standards and training. Furthermore, although some provincial curricula may require the inclusion of Indigenous content in music education, few resources have been provided on appropriate protocols or how to navigate cultural appropriation.

To understand the state of K–12 music education and the extent to which Indigenous content is included in the music classroom, the same top-down and bottom-up approach was applied in this study. For the top-down approach, information was gathered and posted on the Coalition spreadsheet of all the provincial First Nations education policies, First Nations education leadership and advocacy organizations to identify what First Nations initiatives have been implemented into the provincial education curriculum. Moreover, the provincial music education curricula were reviewed to see what Indigenous content had been included or possible ways the curricula were designed with decolonization or Indigenous ways of knowing in mind.

First Nations schools are operated by local First Nations on reserve land and receive federal funding through the Department of Indigenous Services Canada. The Assembly of First Nations (2020) has reported that there are 526 First Nations schools across Canada, with 29% in urban settings, 47% in rural settings, 3% in remote settings, and 21% located in isolated/fly-in communities. The curriculum in each of these schools uniquely reflects the cultural heritage of their traditional territories. Between 1997 and 2012, the Government of Canada signed a Tripartite Education Agreement with each province

to support First Nations student success and Indigenous self-determination of First Nations education systems, advance First Nations education in all K–12 schools, and promote equitable access to educational outcomes for First Nations students transferring between provincial public schools and First Nation schools.

First Nation organizations are involved in providing support as Indigenous content is designed and implemented in provincial K–12 curricula, promoting local ways of knowing and being, advocacy, and professional development activities; fostering connections between school and Indigenous communities; and supporting First Nations communities and students, among other responsibilities. Each province and territory has its unique way of addressing Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum. Within the curriculum documents of British Columbia, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, and Nova Scotia, designers have revised their curriculum to implement Indigenous content, cultures, and ways of knowing the K–12 music classroom. Nevertheless, the degree of Indigenous perspectives present in music-making in the curriculum varies among these provinces. In the case of Newfoundland and Labrador, Alberta, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Prince Edward Island, Indigenous music is suggested as one of the options within a multicultural approach to music education. In the cases of Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and Yukon, while borrowing the provincial curricula of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan, these territories have adapted their educational practices and contents to serve their local Indigenous contexts.

In British Columbia, both the curriculum (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2020) and *Professional Standards for BC Educators* (BC Teachers' Council, 2019) require that all educators, including music educators, embed Indigenous content, pedagogies, perspectives, and worldviews in their K–12 classes. Individual music teachers, under the guidance of school Indigenous cultural workers and culture bearers, have taken the initiative to learn Indigenous ways of knowing and being by developing relationships with local Elders and song keepers. Over time, these music teachers are entrusted to teach their students songs deemed appropriate by the people who guide them. Since 2016, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples have collaborated regularly with one another in many settings.

Unique to the province of British Columbia was the establishment of the Indigenous Steering Committee (ISC) for Music Education in British Columbia. Established in 2019 by Dr. Anita Prest as a result of two projects funded through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council, the goals of the ISC are to guide further initiatives to embed Indigenous perspectives, pedagogies, and worldviews in music education and in the classroom. The ISC comprises 20 Indigenous peoples from Cowichan Tribes, Anishinaabe, Mikisew Cree, Métis, Gitksan, Echo Dene, Mi'kmaq, Nuu-chah-nulth, and Haida nations, as well as music educators who represent research partner groups such as local Elders, Victoria Native Friendship Centre, the British Columbia Ministry of Education Indigenous branch, the Indigenous departments of two school districts, Pacific Opera, British Columbia Music Educators Association, and music education professors from the University of Victoria and the University of British Columbia. The ISC is currently advising on the conception and creation of a two-day conference in February 2022—also supported by Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council—for approximately 220 music educators,

school district Indigenous leaders, culture bearers, and Elders from across all 60 school districts. The purpose of the conference is to foster a dialogue among participants regarding the development of local solutions for embedding Indigenous ways of knowing and being in music classes.

In Alberta, the only direct mention of Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum is in Aboriginal Studies 10–20–30 course (Alberta Education, 2002). Music making is not directly mentioned; nevertheless, the curriculum notes that one of the goals of the program is for students to reflect that art is holistic and is integrated in all aspects of Aboriginal life. Alberta has an Indigenous Education Specialist Council (previously named First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Council; <http://www.indigenousedc.ca/>), which is in charge of advocating for Indigenous students and their issues, as well as providing professional development for educators. Alberta entered into a tripartite agreement in 2010. The Alberta curriculum is currently being revised using a guiding framework (Alberta Education, 2020b); thus, specific Indigenous inclusion in the curriculum is forthcoming.

Saskatchewan includes Indigenous content from kindergarten to Grade 12. From K–9, students experience traditional Indigenous music-making, dance, and songs (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, n.d.). From Grades 10–12, students can engage in Indigenous drumming and singing, as well as examine the diverse music of Saskatchewan’s Indigenous peoples. There is a call to identify contemporary Indigenous artists and their influence in popular culture. With regards to following appropriate cultural protocol, teachers are advised to invite community resource persons to teach songs and dance in a culturally appropriate way. The Saskatchewan School Boards Association (n.d.) provides First Nations and Métis education services support to the province’s Indigenous Constituency, including initiatives, programs, and projects that aim towards reconciliation.

In Manitoba, the provincial curriculum calls for students to be exposed to past and present representations of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis music-making from kindergarten to Grade 12 (Manitoba Education, 2021). It is recommended that teachers consult with and invite the participation of Elders or divisional/departmental consultants responsible for Indigenous education when designing for arts education and learning. Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre (n.d.) provides the province’s leading education, administration, technology, language, and culture services to First Nations schools in Manitoba. It also offers professional development training for school board members, administrators, teachers, and teaching assistants.

In Ontario, local school boards are required to implement curriculum through their own planning and the implementation strategies identified in their board action plan on First Nation, Métis, and Inuit education. For music education, in kindergarten to Grade 8, students learn Indigenous cultures using chants, songs in different languages, and throat singing (Government of Ontario, 2016). The First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education Association of Ontario’s (n.d.) purpose is to promote initiatives and teaching strategies in education based on the worldviews and knowledge system of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples.

In Quebec, Indigenous music is addressed as part of music appreciation repertoire so that students can become familiar with music from diverse cultures. The First Nations Education Council

(n.d.) is an association that brings together eight First Nations of Quebec, namely the Abenaki, Algonquin, Atikamekw, Huron-Wendat, Innu, Maliseet, Mi'kmaq, and Mohawk, to promote pride and success for First Nation communities in education. This organization provides pedagogical support, develops framework policies, and acts as a spokesperson with the Quebec government. In 2017, the Advisory Board on English Education published a document called *Indigenous Education: Walking on Both Sides of the River*, identifying ways to support the Indigenous school system.

New Brunswick's Education Act (1997/2019) is one of only two provincial acts that includes the requirement of the ministry to prescribe or approve programs that meet the unique needs of local Indigenous students (in this case, Mi'kmaq and Maliseet children), but only if the minister has entered into an agreement with a council of the Mi'kmaq or Maliseet First Nation. The act also mandates that the minister shall prescribe or approve programs that foster an understanding of Indigenous history and culture among all pupils. Indigenous music is suggested as one of several options of a multicultural approach to music education, particularly to music and instruments from different cultures. The mission of New Brunswick First Nation Education Initiative Incorporated is to establish and maintain an educational jurisdictional model for First Nations education (Human Development Council, 2021), which aims to improve capacity for First Nations educators, ultimately leading to improvements in the educational outcomes for all First Nations students attending band-operated and provincial schools.

The curriculum of Prince Edward Island makes connections to Indigenous cultures through the Mi'kmaw language curriculum Grades 7–9. In this context, music is suggested as a tool to foster students' language skills. Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island (2014), through its education program, provides advice, identifies the needs of First Nations, and develops partnerships with educational stakeholders.

Nova Scotia has the other provincial school act that provides and implements programs about the history, language, heritage, culture, traditions, and contributions to society of the Mi'kmaq. Indigenous music is addressed only as part of music appreciation repertoire for students to become familiar with music from diverse cultures. The Council on Mi'kmaq Education (n.d.) is responsible for providing guidance to the Minister of Education on the development, implementation, evaluation, and funding of education programs and services for Mi'kmaw students in the public school system.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, one of the sections for the specific curriculum outcomes for K–6 is "Contexts." In this section, students learn music that represents their own and other cultures. Teachers are given suggestions to play recordings of music that address Indigenous people's identity and issues with social injustice and racism. There are no specific references to Indigenous music from Grade 7 and up. Mamu Tshishkutamashutau (Let's All Learn Together) Innu Education is involved in the development of the K–12 Innu schools' curriculum and pedagogy (see for example Mamu Tshishkutamashutau, 2016).

The three territories borrow curricula from British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. Yukon adapted the British Columbia school curriculum to fit the Yukon local culture and context, which includes Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing and doing (Yukon Department of Education, n.d.). The

Northwest Territories adapts curricula from Alberta and Saskatchewan for arts education. A ministry-approved foundational curriculum of Dene Kede and Inuuqutigiit in K–6 encompasses the languages, cultures, and worldviews of five Dene Nations: Gwich'in, Sahtú, Dehcho, Tłı̨chǫ, and Akaitcho (Northwest Territories Department of Education, Culture, and Employment, n.d.). This curriculum addresses drumming as an important part of Dene culture. In Nunavut, the curriculum was revised in 2000 to create the Pinasuaqtavut—The Bathurst Mandate—which purposefully embedded Nunavut culture throughout the curriculum. Inuit beliefs, laws, principles, and values, along with traditional knowledge, skills, and attitudes, are what the Government of Nunavut and Elders refer to as Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Nunavut Department of Education, 2019). Although the music education portions of the curriculum are adapted from the curricula of Saskatchewan and Alberta music education outcomes, they are really part of a learning continuum and cross-curricular design.

In Phase 2, the bottom-up perspective included K–12 music specialists and generalists representing every province and territory to describe the spectrum of Indigenous content used in music classrooms. First Nations schools across Canada also contributed to the national survey. Respondents were asked to identify whether Indigenous instrumental or vocal music was included in their teaching and to provide examples of those activities. The survey yielded a total of 2,510 responses from music specialists ( $n = 2,237$ ) and generalist teachers ( $n = 273$ ).

Table 5 shows music specialists' and generalist teachers' perceptions of what percentage of their curriculum included Indigenous content. In general, more music specialists than generalist teachers included Indigenous content in the music classroom; 1.2% or less of the respondents included Indigenous content in more than 30% of their music classes. Of the music specialists, 6.9% of K–7 elementary music specialists and 6.6% of 8–12 secondary music specialists indicated that they did not know if they included any Indigenous content. Of the music generalists, 37.8% of K–7 elementary generalist teachers and 28.0% of 8–12 secondary generalist teachers did not know if they included any Indigenous content, which suggests that more awareness is needed. In addition, from the responses, 11.2% of 8–12 secondary music specialists and 8.0% of generalist teachers do not include any Indigenous content in their music classrooms, nor do 7.4% of K–7 elementary specialists and 4.9% of K–7 elementary generalist teachers.

**Table 5**  
**Survey Responses to Percentage of Indigenous Content Inclusion**

Indigenous content inclusion in the music classroom	All respondents ( $n = 2,510$ )	Elementary K–7 music specialists ( $n = 1,451$ )	Elementary K–7 generalists ( $n = 225$ )	Secondary 8–12 music specialists ( $n = 632$ )	Secondary 8–12 generalists ( $n = 25$ )
Do not know	10.2%	6.9%	37.8%	6.6%	28.0%
0%	8.4%	7.4%	4.9%	11.2%	8.0%
Less than 10%	63.3%	67.5%	46.2%	63.0%	40.0%

10%–30%	16.8%	16.7%	10.7%	18.4%	20.0%
30%–50%	1.2%	1.2%	0.4%	0.8%	4.0%
More than 50%	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Given that each province has different curriculum requirements and not all respondents indicated that they included Indigenous content, we determined that a list of the range of Indigenous content would be most helpful. Every province and territory listed drumming, singing, dancing, chanting, and listening as the main activities. Most of the activities were led by culture bearers, Elders, or First Nations community leaders. Few to no responses described Indigenous music inclusion in traditional choral or band settings. Table 6 lists by province the variety of Indigenous content inclusion in the music classroom.

**Table 6**  
**Survey Descriptive Responses to Examples of Indigenous Content**

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
BC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developed relationship with Indigenous singer sharing gifted three songs</li> <li>• Role models to teach drumming</li> <li>• Drumming, singing, dancing group taught weekly by Indigenous composer and leader</li> <li>• Drumming circles, traditional songs by permission</li> <li>• Orff style songs and drumming and movement</li> <li>• Coast Salish anthem, Coast Salish songs</li> <li>• Guests to teach drumming and spoons</li> <li>• Drum and stick game, Slahal</li> <li>• Drum circle in Indigenous Education Centre</li> <li>• Local Okanagan song, drumming</li> <li>• Drum circle and drum making led by local Indigenous education worker</li> <li>• Pieces given by permission</li> <li>• Seneca First Nations lullaby</li> <li>• Music Canada series</li> <li>• Robert Buckley arrangements of Squamish Nation melodies</li> <li>• Guest Indigenous artists, Indigenous role model program</li> <li>• Haisla traditional hand drum, singing, and dancing</li> <li>• Secwepemc drumming</li> <li>• Gifted songs to our school district for use by local Elder</li> <li>• Local First Nations welcome song</li> <li>• Gifted songs taught by local First Nations musicians, drums, and shakers</li> <li>• Circle games, stick games, the Bone Game</li> <li>• Listening and analyzing sounds and music compared to other music</li> <li>• MusicPlay resources</li> <li>• Local Elders have come in to teach songs periodically</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
YT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No responses</li> </ul>
AB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cree songs, gifted</li> <li>• Vocal, recorder, drums</li> <li>• Listening and round dances</li> <li>• Stoney Nakoda drumming, singing, dancing, led by Elders from the reserve</li> <li>• Unit on Métis, First Nation; students choose traditional or contemporary artists and do a biography</li> <li>• After training from a local Elder, local songs, singing games</li> <li>• Sherryl Sewepagaham's music in choir</li> <li>• Kits from Indigenous consultant in collaboration with music consultant with help from an Elder</li> <li>• Rhythm stick games, some singing, drumming</li> <li>• Orff orchestrations</li> <li>• Mostly guest artists perform</li> <li>• Music appreciation</li> <li>• Music Alive, keeping the beat to Indigenous recordings</li> <li>• YouTube performances</li> <li>• Indigenous Singers of Canada book from Themes and Variations</li> <li>• Drumming and circle dance</li> <li>• Listening, Tanya Tagaq, Red</li> <li>• Guest Indigenous dances</li> <li>• Activities that incorporate history, storytelling, drumming, singing, role playing, and exploring artifacts</li> <li>• Canada in Cree, Cree vocabulary</li> <li>• FNMI music, dance kit: A Place Like This Song, Elder Wilson</li> <li>• Pow wow and Métis jig dancing</li> <li>• Taking authentic First Nations repertoire and integrating into curriculum</li> <li>• FNMI Edukit, First Nations Music and Celebrations</li> <li>• Northern Spirit Flute, Rich Dube, Saskatchewan</li> <li>• Cree drumming group led by Indigenous liaison worker</li> <li>• Culture bearers and Indigenous educator collaborations</li> <li>• Shawl and jingle dress dancing, spirit flutes</li> <li>• Dene drumming, singing, dancing, round dances, gifted gathering songs</li> <li>• Buffalo drumming, dancing stick, rawhide rattles</li> <li>• Huron Carol, Land of the Silver Birch</li> </ul>
SK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pow wow, First Nations drumming</li> <li>• Modern Indigenous artists</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drum group</li> <li>• Different music played by the band or sung by the choir</li> <li>• Métis fiddles</li> <li>• Hoop Dance, First Nations spirit flute</li> <li>• Sherryl Sewepagaham and Rich Dube</li> <li>• Listening</li> </ul>
NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extracurricular integrated Indigenous culture program, drumming</li> </ul>
NU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inuit drumming, dancing</li> <li>• Throat singing</li> <li>• Traditional and contemporary songs in Inuktitut</li> </ul>
MB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening; learn how the drum is made, purpose and protocols</li> <li>• Appreciation</li> <li>• Guest performer</li> <li>• Elder teaching drum making and songs</li> <li>• Tabla instruction</li> <li>• Hand drumming with drum circle, gifted songs by elders and divisional Elder</li> <li>• Gifted songs and singing games</li> <li>• Indigenous songs from Canada, around the world</li> <li>• Métis fiddle</li> <li>• Gourd rattles, drums, Indigenous flutes</li> <li>• Local Manitoba artists, instrument construction, traditional drumming</li> <li>• Native American flute, Indigenous folktales</li> <li>• Drum group</li> <li>• Resources from MMEA Tempo Conference</li> <li>• Inuit throat singing, Cree songs, Pow Wow Club, smudging</li> <li>• Indigenous songs in our choral program</li> <li>• Exposure to cultural music</li> <li>• Guest presenters, teaching songs and drumming</li> <li>• Inuktitut songs, MusicPlay curriculum</li> <li>• Chanting gathering drum, jingle dancing</li> <li>• Sherryl Sewepagaham Orff Arrangements</li> <li>• Circle of Courage Group</li> <li>• Rich Dube Indigenous flutes replaced recorders</li> <li>• Winston Wuttunee, Val Vint, Ted Longbottom</li> <li>• Cree drumming</li> <li>• Traditional round drum singing</li> <li>• Pow wow drumming, hoop dancing, spirit flutes</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
ON	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Videos of Indigenous musicians, go to concerts</li> <li>• Discussion of cultural appropriation, concert band pieces with Indigenous themes, some cowritten songs</li> <li>• Indigenous songs and drums</li> <li>• We live next to the six Nations and try to include teachings</li> <li>• Study Indigenous performers but not perform</li> <li>• Share songs that have been gifted by Indigenous community members</li> <li>• Listening activities, Indigenous Singers of Canada</li> <li>• Culture rooms, weekly practice with both male and female drum circles</li> <li>• Constructing flutes led by Indigenous friends</li> <li>• Building cultural understanding and appreciation</li> <li>• Elder, guest, share special songs</li> <li>• Haudenosaunee music</li> <li>• Beating activities, visual art activities</li> <li>• Resources from Alberta</li> <li>• One culturally specific song for band or choir</li> <li>• Listening, Asani throat singing</li> <li>• Drum circle</li> <li>• Métis music</li> <li>• Study of and exposure to Indigenous music</li> <li>• Guest artist collaboration</li> <li>• Some workshops, story telling</li> <li>• Listening</li> <li>• We had one excellent demonstration from an Indigenous group</li> <li>• First Nations, Georgina Island, songs</li> <li>• Canada in English, French, Ojibwe, and American Sign Language</li> <li>• Social songs for the Six Nations Territory</li> <li>• Drum making, led by local leader</li> <li>• Female and male drumming groups led by Elders</li> <li>• Videos, throat singing, powwows, Canadian Indigenous artists</li> <li>• Orff arrangements</li> <li>• As a Métis and a member of a drumming group, I've been granted access to songs</li> <li>• Striving to maintain Ojibwe language through songs</li> <li>• Using Indigenous songs and stories with permission in the Orff creative process: soundscapes using the medicine wheel/four directions, examining contemporary Indigenous song forms, beat boxing with throat singing, and drums in various Indigenous cultures</li> <li>• YouTube, throat singing</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pow wow choir</li> <li>• Inuit children’s songs from Ottawa Inuit Friendship Centre</li> <li>• Obwisana and Gitsignakomim: stick passing games, MUSICPLAY, Denise Gagne</li> <li>• Polyrhythmic drum</li> <li>• Métis fiddlers</li> <li>• We have 30 deerskin drums, made with an Indigenous leader</li> <li>• Librarian is Anishinaabe and teaches students traditional songs; she invites Elders to lead students through drumming circles</li> <li>• Indigenous songs with permission from creators</li> <li>• Lessons incorporating watching and listening to performances and music</li> <li>• Every concert has one or two Indigenous songs showcased</li> <li>• Teaching songs and their meanings as gifted to me</li> <li>• Ojibway musical instruments</li> <li>• Collaborations with Métis French teacher, Sasha Stevens, drumming, singing</li> <li>• History of music in Canada, Grade 10, lots of Indigenous content to listen and study</li> <li>• Twin flames song, human, and learned lyric in Inuktitut</li> </ul>
QC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participated in a song at school by Elisapie, refrain in Inuktitut</li> <li>• Listening to music works, simple songs with percussion</li> <li>• Back to school song</li> <li>• Anie Couni, Oh Wataney</li> <li>• Presented a concert with Indigenous songs</li> <li>• Drumming</li> <li>• Tragically Hip songs about residential schools</li> <li>• Inuktitut songs</li> <li>• Culture Days, fifth year special</li> <li>• Elisapie’s Song: We Walked</li> <li>• Listening to Indigenous artists</li> <li>• Carl Orff Canada, Indigenous music content</li> <li>• Innu and Iroquois traditional songs</li> <li>• Inuit melodies, played on the flute</li> <li>• Grades 1, 2, Inuit Song Okitokiunga</li> <li>• Native American recorder songs</li> <li>• Virtual choir of throat singers</li> <li>• Guest Indigenous dancer, storyteller</li> <li>• Qilautik, Inuit drum</li> <li>• Tribute to Katia Makdissi-Warren</li> <li>• Song of Florent Vollant, Elisapie</li> <li>• Music appreciation, traditional instruments and songs</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
NB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drumming led by an Elder</li> <li>• MusicPlay programme</li> <li>• Students sing in Mi'kmaq at public performances</li> <li>• Occasional song and game activities</li> <li>• Song training from Mi'kmaq</li> <li>• Indigenous music PowerPoint presentation</li> <li>• Guest Drummers</li> <li>• Music history and listening unit, appreciation</li> <li>• Indigenous leaders taught songs</li> <li>• Mi'kmaq Honour Song</li> <li>• Drumming, changing singing</li> <li>• Drumming chants start all school gatherings and Christmas concert</li> <li>• Special guest Elder talks about culture and performs songs with students</li> <li>• CD of commonly used Indigenous songs, listening activities with book</li> <li>• We have one Indigenous drum and take turns using it</li> <li>• Indigenous language and culture leader runs drumming and singing group</li> <li>• We try to bring Indigenous groups to perform</li> <li>• Online, YouTube</li> <li>• Maliseet teacher instructs drumming and periodically, drum making</li> <li>• I organize Orange Shirt Day which includes the Honour Song, Jeremy Dutcher video; talk about Indigenous issues, culture, and inclusion</li> <li>• Indigenous music from Canada is part of World Music</li> <li>• Drum circles</li> <li>• Credit courses focuses on Inuit music</li> <li>• Mary Percy's Drum Choir book, taking students to see Jeremy Dutcher</li> <li>• Art appreciation activity</li> <li>• Guest from Papineau reserve taught Mi'kmaq music</li> <li>• I borrow a native drum from another school and let students use it</li> <li>• Boys drumming group</li> <li>• Elders come to school and perform with students with buffalo drums, the gathering drum, and rattles</li> <li>• Inuit throat song, Mi'kmaq song appreciation activities</li> <li>• Community Elder teachers drumming activities twice weekly</li> <li>• On occasion we might have a ceremonial song</li> <li>• Indigenous pilot project, drumming class for middle school students</li> <li>• Appreciation of music and work written on an Indigenous artist</li> <li>• Drumming and singing in Mi'kmaw</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Nations students are able to join First Nations drumming, taught by Oromocto First Nation and coordinated by a First Nations teacher</li> <li>• Canada in Mi'kmaq</li> <li>• Drumming group for interested students instructed by 2twoElders from Tobique First Nation; students taught drumming and songs</li> </ul>
PE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mi'kmaq drum workshops and song-sharing with local musicians</li> <li>• Listening, Mi'kmaq music but no singing</li> <li>• Some students in Grade 5 learned a couple of Mi'kmaq songs from a guest</li> <li>• Throat singing, Mi'kmaq students performing dance in full regalia</li> </ul>
NS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mi'kmaw songs, drumming, stories, games, chants</li> <li>• <i>O Canada</i> in Mi'kmaq</li> <li>• Songs of First Nations</li> <li>• Flute making with special guest</li> <li>• Mi'kmaq music</li> <li>• Buffalo drums, hand drums, gathering drum</li> <li>• Various Indigenous songs</li> <li>• Mi'kmaq honour song, friendship song</li> <li>• Contemporary Indigenous artists like Easter Owl</li> <li>• Song based on poet, Rita Joe</li> <li>• Indigenous support worker makes drums and teaches students the honour song</li> <li>• Guest artist to learn about the native drum</li> <li>• Listening and composition</li> <li>• Community supports Mi'kmaq songs and dances and music based on First Nations' poetry. Every year we try to add two to three Mi'kmaq songs to build up our community repertoire</li> <li>• Practice <i>O Canada</i> in an Aboriginal language</li> <li>• Video clips of Indigenous vocal, songs, honour song, listening</li> <li>• Native American Drum and song</li> <li>• Orff program of First Nations songs</li> <li>• Mi'kmaq dancing</li> <li>• Throat singing</li> </ul>
NL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous songs learned aurally</li> <li>• Never seen an Indigenous band score</li> <li>• Is music composed by an Indigenous song writer considered Indigenous?</li> <li>• Listening program</li> <li>• Government resources</li> <li>• Various songs, activities, movement, instrumental play along</li> </ul>

Prov.	Indigenous Content in Music Classrooms
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mi'kmaq vocals and drumming</li> <li>• Singing games and activities</li> <li>• Drumming, singing and dancing, Mi'kmaq culture</li> <li>• Grade 5—a little background history, and two songs</li> <li>• Classroom selections to sing</li> <li>• Grades 3–6: Indigenous instrumental/vocal selections are explored and performed</li> <li>• Throat singing</li> <li>• Singing games</li> <li>• Folk unit, Canadian folk music</li> </ul>

*Note.* BC = British Columbia, YT = Yukon, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, NT = Northwest Territories, NU = Nunavut, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, PE = Prince Edward Island, NS = Nova Scotia, NL= Newfoundland and Labrador.

### Music Education Organizations and Advocacy

As part of this study, we established a central location for information on Canadian music education organizations and music education advocacy organizations. Some organizations act both as a music education advocacy and as a professional music education association. Although each province might have similar types of organizations, each organization reflects the uniqueness of its members and region. As such, each organization often serves different purposes than their provincial counterpart organizations. This national and provincial list (see Table 7) will be made available on the Coalition website.

**Table 7**

### Music Education Organizations in Canada

Association Name	Link
	National
Canadian Band Association	<a href="https://www.canadianband.org/">https://www.canadianband.org/</a>
Canadian Federation of Music Teachers' Association	<a href="https://www.cfmta.org/en/">https://www.cfmta.org/en/</a>
Canadian Music Educators Association	<a href="https://cmea.ca/">https://cmea.ca/</a>
Canadian Network for Arts and Learning	<a href="https://www.eduarts.ca/">https://www.eduarts.ca/</a>
Carl Orff Canada	<a href="https://www.orffcanada.ca/">https://www.orffcanada.ca/</a>
Choral Canada	<a href="https://www.choralcanada.org/index.html">https://www.choralcanada.org/index.html</a>
Coalition for Music Education	<a href="https://coalitioncanada.ca/en/">https://coalitioncanada.ca/en/</a>
Dalcroze Canada	<a href="https://www.dalcrozecanada.com/index.php/en/">https://www.dalcrozecanada.com/index.php/en/</a>

Association Name	Link
Kodaly Society of Canada	<a href="https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/">https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/</a>
MusicFest Canada	<a href="https://musicfest.ca/">https://musicfest.ca/</a>
Music Canada	<a href="https://musiccanada.com/">https://musiccanada.com/</a>
MusiCounts	<a href="https://www.musiccounts.ca/">https://www.musiccounts.ca/</a>
<b>British Columbia</b>	
BC Band Association	<a href="https://bcbandassoc.ca/">https://bcbandassoc.ca/</a>
BC Choral Federation	<a href="https://bcchoralfed.com/">https://bcchoralfed.com/</a>
BC Guild of English Handbell Ringers	<a href="https://www.bcgehr.com/">https://www.bcgehr.com/</a>
BC Kodaly	<a href="https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/ksbc">https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/ksbc</a>
BC Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="http://www.bcorff.ca/">http://www.bcorff.ca/</a>
BC Music Educators Association	<a href="http://www.bcmusiced.ca/">http://www.bcmusiced.ca/</a>
BC Registered Music Teachers' Association	<a href="https://bcrmta.bc.ca/about-us/">https://bcrmta.bc.ca/about-us/</a>
Coalition for Music Education in BC	<a href="https://www.cmebc.org/">https://www.cmebc.org/</a>
<b>Yukon</b>	
Music Yukon	<a href="https://music yukon.com/">https://music yukon.com/</a>
Yukon Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="https://www.yrmta.ca/">https://www.yrmta.ca/</a>
<b>Alberta</b>	
Alberta Advocacy Alliance	<a href="https://albertamusicadvocacy.ca/">https://albertamusicadvocacy.ca/</a>
Alberta Band Association	<a href="https://www.albertabandassociation.com/">https://www.albertabandassociation.com/</a>
Alberta Kodaly Association	<a href="https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/aka">https://www.kodallysocietyofcanada.ca/aka</a>
Alberta Music Education Foundation	<a href="https://www.amef.ca/">https://www.amef.ca/</a>
Alberta Registered Music Teachers' Association	<a href="https://armta.ca/">https://armta.ca/</a>
Alberta Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="https://www.albertaorff.ca/">https://www.albertaorff.ca/</a>
Carl Orff, Calgary Chapter	<a href="http://www.calgaryorff.com/">http://www.calgaryorff.com/</a>
Carl Orff, Lethbridge Chapter	<a href="http://lethbridgeorff.org/">http://lethbridgeorff.org/</a>
Choir Alberta	<a href="https://www.choiralberta.ca/">https://www.choiralberta.ca/</a>
<b>Saskatchewan</b>	
Saskatchewan Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="https://sites.google.com/site/saskatchewanorffchapter/">https://sites.google.com/site/saskatchewanorffchapter/</a>
Saskatchewan Band Association	<a href="https://www.saskband.org/">https://www.saskband.org/</a>
Saskatchewan Choral Federation	<a href="https://www.saskchoral.ca/leadership.html">https://www.saskchoral.ca/leadership.html</a>

Association Name	Link
Saskatchewan Music Educators Association.	<a href="https://saskmea.ca/">https://saskmea.ca/</a>
Saskatchewan Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="https://www.srmta.com/">https://www.srmta.com/</a>
Northwest Territories	
Music Teachers Assoc. of the Northwest Territories	<a href="http://www.musicteachersnwt.com/">http://www.musicteachersnwt.com/</a>
Nunavut	
Nunavut Teachers Association	<a href="https://ntanu.ca/">https://ntanu.ca/</a>
Manitoba	
Manitoba Band Association	<a href="https://www.mbband.org/">https://www.mbband.org/</a>
Manitoba Choral Association	<a href="https://www.manitobasings.org/">https://www.manitobasings.org/</a>
Manitoba Classroom Guitar Association	<a href="https://www.manitobaguitar.ca/">https://www.manitobaguitar.ca/</a>
Manitoba Music Educators Association	<a href="https://www.mymmea.ca/">https://www.mymmea.ca/</a>
Manitoba Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="http://www.manitobaorff.org/home.html">http://www.manitobaorff.org/home.html</a>
Manitoba Registered Music Teachers' Association.	<a href="https://www.mrmta.org/?page_id=525">https://www.mrmta.org/?page_id=525</a>
Ontario	
Ontario Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="https://www.ontarioorff.ca/">https://www.ontarioorff.ca/</a>
Carl Off Ottawa Chapter	<a href="http://www.ottawaorff.com/">http://www.ottawaorff.com/</a>
Canadian Band Association Ontario Chapter	<a href="https://cba-ontario.ca/">https://cba-ontario.ca/</a>
Choirs Ontario	<a href="https://choirsontario.org/about/">https://choirsontario.org/about/</a>
Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario	<a href="http://www.etfo.ca/Pages/Home.aspx">http://www.etfo.ca/Pages/Home.aspx</a>
Ontario Band Association	<a href="https://www.onband.ca/">https://www.onband.ca/</a>
Ontario Kodaly Society	<a href="https://www.kodalysoctyofcanada.ca/kso">https://www.kodalysoctyofcanada.ca/kso</a>
Ontario Music Educators Association	<a href="https://www.omea.on.ca/">https://www.omea.on.ca/</a>
Ontario Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="http://ormta.org/">http://ormta.org/</a>
People for Education	<a href="https://peopleforeducation.ca/">https://peopleforeducation.ca/</a>
Quebec	
Alliance chorale du Quebec	<a href="https://www.chorales.ca/fr/">https://www.chorales.ca/fr/</a>
Quebec Chapter of Carl Orff Canada	<a href="https://www.orffquebec.ca/">https://www.orffquebec.ca/</a>
Federation des associations de musiciens	<a href="http://www.fameq.org/">http://www.fameq.org/</a>

Association Name	Link
educateurs du Quebec (FAMEQ)	
Quebec Band Association	<a href="https://www.quebecbandassociation.com/">https://www.quebecbandassociation.com/</a>
Quebec Music Educators Association	<a href="https://qmea-aemq.org/">https://qmea-aemq.org/</a>
Quebec Music Teachers Association	<a href="http://apmqmta.org/en-ca/">http://apmqmta.org/en-ca/</a>
RÉCIT	<a href="https://www.recitarts.ca/fr/musique/primaire/">https://www.recitarts.ca/fr/musique/primaire/</a>
New Brunswick	
New Brunswick Band Association	<a href="http://nbbamusic.weebly.com/home.html">http://nbbamusic.weebly.com/home.html</a>
New Brunswick Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="http://www.nbrmta.com/">http://www.nbrmta.com/</a>
Prince Edward Island	
Prince Edward Island Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="https://www.peirmta.ca">https://www.peirmta.ca</a>
Prince Edward Island Music Educators Association	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/Prince-Edward-Island-Music-Educators-Association-PEIMEA-100994565236697/">https://www.facebook.com/Prince-Edward-Island-Music-Educators-Association-PEIMEA-100994565236697/</a>
Nova Scotia	
Kodaly Society of Nova Scotia	<a href="https://kodalysocietyofnovascotia.weebly.com">https://kodalysocietyofnovascotia.weebly.com</a>
Nova Scotia Band Association	<a href="http://novascotiabandassociation.com/">http://novascotiabandassociation.com/</a>
Nova Scotia Choral Federation	<a href="http://www.nscf.ca">http://www.nscf.ca</a>
Nova Scotia Music Educators Association	<a href="http://nsmea.nstu.ca/">http://nsmea.nstu.ca/</a>
Orff Nova Scotia	<a href="http://www.orffnovascotia.com/">http://www.orffnovascotia.com/</a>
Newfoundland and Labrador	
Newfoundland and Labrador Registered Music Teachers Association	<a href="http://www.nlrmta.ca/">http://www.nlrmta.ca/</a>
Newfoundland and Labrador Teachers Assoc. Special Interest Music Council	<a href="https://nlmsic.com/">https://nlmsic.com/</a>

## Phase 2: The Bottom-Up Perspective

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During Phase 1, it became evident that gathering readily available information or surveying institutional policies would provide insights when understanding the complexity of the various systems in which music education exists. However, it was also evident during the consultation periods that what is written in policy is not necessarily reflected in reality. Even within a single province, the reality for music

education in one school within one school district may not be the reality for another school in the same school district. Moreover, although stakeholders and provincial contacts were able to provide important information and answers about what was occurring in music education within their regional experiences, few individuals were able to put their experiences within any larger context to what is happening in other regions of the country.

The elements of what would become Phase 2 emerged during Phase 1 when stakeholders asked how the national study would reflect the reality of what is actually happening in Canadian K–12 schools. One of the suggestions of how to address this need was to gather case studies from different regions of each province. The most frequent suggestion to capture what was happening in schools was to create a survey for music teachers. The survey would be a broad sweep of music education in Canada, and it would be designed to initiate further detailed studies at the provincial level. This would then become the bottom-up approach.

Phase 2 began in April 2020, with consultations as to the criteria of the survey, the survey respondents, and the distribution method. Three target groups were chosen to get their perspectives on music education: (a) music specialists—teachers who had a postsecondary degree in music or music education and taught K–12 music exclusively; (b) generalists—teachers who taught all subjects, primarily elementary K–7, including some music; and (c) K–12 school administrators.

The survey was designed with one web link for the English version and one link for the French version, with three separate sets of questions: one for music specialists, one for generalist teachers, and one for school administrators. Each respondent was asked to self-identify, and depending on their choice, the survey would automatically direct them to the appropriate questionnaire. There were many common questions in all three surveys, with the largest bank of questions reserved for the music specialists. To help identify and compare the responses from each of the three sets of respondents, participants were asked to identify the following categories:

1. Urban or rural: If their school was in a setting with a population of 1,000 or more, it was urban. The school was rural if it was in a setting with a population of 999 or fewer. Although Statistics Canada (2018) has defined urban settings by both populations over 1,000 and a density of 400 or more people per square kilometre, we determined that adding the density to the definition would confuse respondents.
2. Type of school: public, independent/private, or First Nations (on reserve/self-determined).
3. School program language: English, French, French immersion, bilingual.
4. Arts-designated (magnet) school.
5. Student population.
6. Students enrolled in or who participate in music instruction.
7. Grades in which music is taught with options for K–12.

The survey was distributed during the peak of the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, so we also posed a set of nine questions asking respondents' opinions about job security, physical health, mental and emotional well-being, ability to use and access new technology, pressure to provide music

instruction online, availability of music technology and resources to teach online, safety protocols for returning to the classroom, future of the school's music program, and their students' ability to use and access music technology.

The survey for school administrators specifically asked these seven questions:

1. Did their school have a music specialist or generalist teachers providing music instruction?
2. Was music instruction a priority at their school?
3. Did they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction?
4. Did they have discretionary funds for music instruction?
5. Did their school receive designated funding for music instruction?
6. Who was responsible for determining whether music instruction is provided at their school?
7. Based on a set of options (qualified music teachers, timetable, funding, room allocation for music instruction, noise), what were their challenges in providing music instruction at their school?

The survey for music specialists asked the following:

1. Years of music teaching experience.
2. Grades taught.
3. Postsecondary music training.
4. Music certification: Orff, Kodaly, Dalcroze, RCM.
5. Whether they felt the training they had received was adequate preparation.
6. Whether they primarily taught music, taught only music, or mostly taught another or other subject(s) and some music.
7. If they were itinerant, and if so, the number of schools at which they taught.
8. How many music classes were taught within the standard school day.
9. How many music classes were taught outside of the standard school day.

For various aspects of teaching music and the music curriculum offerings, music specialists were also asked questions in these 11 areas:

1. If music was mandatory or elective.
2. Frequency of music courses offered in a given academic year, including minutes per week.
3. Types of musical experiences taught: band, choir, jazz band, recorder, music theory, musical theatre, music history, Orff, Kodaly, listening, rock, pop, instrumental world music, orchestra or strings, vocal world music, Indigenous music, music composition, arranging, contemporary instrumental or vocal, hip hop, guitar, computer, electronic music, audio recording, music production, ukulele, drumming/drum line, and Dalcroze.
4. Specific examples of the types of activities meeting Indigenous content inclusion.
5. The amount of digital technology involved in their teaching.
6. Beyond a career as a performer, what other careers in music were discussed or explored with students.

7. The financial support of the music program and what sources that funding comes from, such as parents, community, school administration, school district, and provincial government.
8. Funding needs.
9. The level of encouragement their music program has received from parents, the community, non-music-participating students, school administration, the school district, and the province.
10. Challenges of their music program and if they can address those challenges, such as funding, teacher staffing, designated music classroom, timetabling, student demographics, students with learning needs, student financial abilities to participate in music, academic choices over music, and parental pressure.
11. Parent organizations and how they support the music programs.

By April 2020, the national survey was developed and ready for testing with a pilot group. The survey was created using the SurveyMonkey online platform. The survey was prepared in English and translated into French for the pilot survey release on April 29, 2020. The pilot survey closed on May 9, 2020, with 51 English survey respondents and 9 French survey respondents for a total of 60 responses. Respondents included all three target groups: 48 specialists, seven generalists, and five administrators. Responses and feedback from the pilot group were evaluated, and the survey was revised to reflect the feedback.

On May 15, 2020, both official English and French surveys were released and distributed through the network of provincial contacts, Canadian Music Educators' Association provincial presidents, partner organization websites, social media, and music education organizations. The Coalition recognized that communications with music education representatives in each province would be a challenge, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic and at the end of the school year. Convincing stakeholders such as music education researchers, educators, and administrators to participate would be difficult: many had seen previous attempts as not being directly relevant or had full workloads in their own contexts, and thus were unable to provide time.

The initial plan for the timeline of the survey was to leave it open and observe the frequency of responses. Given the timing (i.e., the end of the school year and the relative beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic), teachers were expressing the need for more time to fill it out. The survey remained open for responses until July 16, 2020. To provide an incentive to respond, MusiCounts provided three \$5,000 awards to support school music programs. Each school that provided a survey response was entered into the draw. To account for possible multiple entries, respondents were asked to supply the names of their school strictly for the purposes of the draw. A review for duplicate entries was conducted when the survey closed.

The total number of survey returns was 3,960. After clearing duplications, and corrupted and unusable responses, a total of 2,841 usable responses was obtained. Submissions included 2,474 English responses and 367 French responses. The completed survey by the three respondent groups included 331 school administrators, 2,237 specialist music teachers, and 273 generalist teachers. The provincial

distribution of responses included is found in Table 8. Some of the overall identifying characteristics of respondents included the following:

- 82.6% taught in urban schools and 17.4% in rural schools;
- 93.2% taught in public schools, 6.1% in independent/private schools, 0.6% in First Nations schools;
- 80.4% taught in English, 22.9% in French, 28.3% in French immersion, and 4.8% in bilingual classrooms.
- 4.1% taught in arts designated (magnet) schools.

**Table 8**  
**Provincial Distribution of Survey Responses**

Area	Total respondents	Administrators	All teachers	Music specialists	Generalist teachers
National	2,841	331	2,510	2,237	273
Urban	2,346	253	2,093	1,915	178
Rural	495	78	417	322	95
BC	388	49	339	314	25
YT	6	2	4	4	0
AB	395	44	351	320	31
SK	122	13	109	103	6
NT	9	4	5	5	0
NU	2	1	1	1	0
MB	304	45	259	246	13
ON	750	77	673	579	94
QC	322	19	303	301	2
NB	235	32	203	120	83
PE	45	10	35	32	3
NS	129	17	112	103	9
NL	134	18	116	109	7

## Summary

The original motivation for this study was the continuing advocacy for equal access to music education in Canada. Much work has been done over the years by multiple groups. In response to that work and in recognition of moving forward, the Coalition for Music Education recognized the need to identify the

systems, structures, and elements that define, support, and guide the music education ecosystem. Several challenges are noted in this report, including the geographical vastness of Canada, provincial autonomy over all education-based decisions, and the differing constitutional status of the three territories, which in turn requires each to coordinate with provinces to establish its curriculum. The complexities and autonomy at the provincial and local level challenge a national identity of education, including music education, and although there are similarities in many decision-making processes, the differences continue to maintain provincial and local identities.

As a nation, we have a common value and responsibility of ensuring equal access to education (as with health care), but resources can influence or inhibit equal access depending on provincial and local economies as well as priorities at the local level. The level of equal access is stronger in Canada than in some other countries, particularly those where local taxes greatly influence resources for local education. However, other factors do influence resources in a variety of ways. One other identifying factor is a sense of Canada's mosaic flavour, which is strengthened as differences are recognized due to provincial and local cultural strengths and values.

As this national music education study began in earnest (summer of 2019), the Coalition for Music Education narrowed its scope with the primary goal of a collected body of information that could serve as a starting point for researchers interested in understanding how music education is defined and supported within each province, and in researching ways to continue to support future growth and development. Gathering the information was consuming: a variety of stakeholders were identified for consultation; provincial documents were examined with a top-down vision of what policies existed in determining various aspects of education, including music education; and a survey was constructed and disseminated to collect a bottom-up understanding of what was occurring at provincial and local levels in music classrooms as perceived by administrators and music educators. One curiosity was to make transparent the strength (or not) of the alignment between policy and practice. As the project unfolded in 2019, COVID-19 impacted the process throughout 2020 and into 2021 as each of the researchers was consumed with creating new ways and strengthening current ways of working in the ever-changing landscape in response to the pandemic.

During 2021, with data collection and analysis completed, the writing of the document began. The goal of compiling and presenting the information continued to guide our work, with the understanding that interpretation would unfold as researchers sought out the data to support emergent research questions. To that end, Section 1 contains the narrative—the story—reflecting the goals and process. Section 2, presents the data as collected and analyzed in response to two questions, one related to funding for music programs and the second related to the status of mandatory time for music instruction. Presentation of data for the other topics covered in the survey will occur as continued research is pursued. This report concludes with Section 3, which begins a new iteration of discovery. It includes a table of categories with possible research ideas and questions to provoke curiosities that in turn may fuel further investigation.

## Section 2: Where Policy and Practitioner Meet

The purpose of this study was to provide an in-depth look into the state of music education in Canada, from both top-down and bottom-up perspectives. This section identifies the degree to which these two perspectives align. The data as presented include content from official policy and curriculum documents and results from a nationwide survey completed by administrators, generalist teachers, and music specialist teachers. For the purposes of this document, two of many topics are considered: (a) funding practices and (b) whether music is mandatory, and the mandated amount of time for music instruction. Each is presented at the provincial level. The other topics are for further study.

The Fathers of Confederation intended that the country be a federation, with much autonomy and self-governance at the provincial level. Their decision aligned with the differing cultures, economies, religions, languages, laws, and requirements of education that were found across the country at that time. This autonomy and self-governance remain today at the provincial level, and indeed at the school board levels. It results in significant complexity when attempting to conduct a comparative analysis across the country with respect to aspects of education including funding, mandatory time for music instruction, requirements to teach music, and music curricula. For the purposes of this section, then, each province is examined as a single entity. The first topic, funding practices, includes (a) content as officially presented in policy documents and school acts, and (b) data as collected from the survey participants. An analysis is presented that examines how the policy content aligns with the survey data. The second topic, the status of mandatory time for music instruction, includes (a) evidence of mandatory time for music instruction; (b) if mandatory, at what grades is time mandated for music instruction; and (c) if time is mandated, the length of time required or suggested for music instruction.

### Methodological Considerations for Section 2

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Here we explain methodological considerations for how data were collected and analyzed, including processes for data analysis and organization, and what topics to include in this report. Note that all data that include decimals were rounded to the nearest 0.1.

#### Reporting on Provincial Data

We collected data from all the provinces and territories of Canada. Due to the low response rates from participants in the three territories (Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut), the data as reported did not accurately represent the state of music education within these contexts. As such, they have not been included in the results.

#### Categorization of Participants as Elementary, Secondary, Junior, and Intermediate

An important facet of this project was the examination of whether music is mandatory or elective across the Canadian context, as well as the amount of time music instruction is taking place in classrooms.

Section 1 explored this topic from a provincial policy level (i.e., what is officially stated); this section examines the consonance and/or dissonance of such policy documents with the survey data (i.e., what educators and administrators reported is happening).

Because provincial policy dictates music to be mandatory or elective at varying stages (often categorized along the lines of elementary or secondary), analyzing the sum of all data from all stages would provide little valuable information. Instead, the most meaningful and accurate data are reflected by first organizing participants provincially and then by the categories of elementary, secondary, or junior/intermediate, depending on how each provincial policy is organized. Participants were organized based on their responses to the question, “Your school includes Grades: \_\_\_” with the option to select any grade from K–13. In many instances, participants indicated that their school includes both elementary and secondary grades; for example, 188 respondents indicated that their school includes Grades K–11, K–12, or K–13. In such instances, participants were grouped into the elementary category. This categorization inevitably influenced responses to questions about whether music is mandatory and how much instructional time they provide. Figures are provided in the Appendix that illustrate how participants were divided into the different groups provincially. This speaks to a recurring theme in Canadian music education research—and indeed within this report—that the almost limitless variety both between and within provincial and territorial contexts makes establishing general themes and narratives difficult.

### **Minutes per Week of Music Instruction**

There is a spectrum of how time allotted for music education instruction is officially indicated from province to province, and an even wider spectrum of how time allotment is applied within schools. Most provincial curricula do not specify the amount of time for music education instruction; rather, music is embedded within a group of subjects which the province recommends students receive as a percentage of the overall instructional time. Some provinces, such as Manitoba, Alberta, and Newfoundland and Labrador, do indicate a percentage of time for music education, but specifics are limited.

From the survey, responses were varied to the question, “How many minutes per week do students receive music instruction?” For data management purposes, responses were analyzed and were reported at 5-min intervals. Some respondents answered with a singular number value (e.g., 60 min); others provided a range (e.g., 60–90 min), which was averaged ( $[60+90] \div 2 = 75$ ) and rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 min. Others included number values for different grades (e.g., K–3: 30 min; 4–6: 45 min). In these cases, values were averaged based on number of grades ( $30 \times 4 + 45 \times 3 = 255 \div 7 = 36.4$ , rounded to the nearest multiple of five: 35 min). If responses were organized in a manner consistent with categories established based on policy organization (i.e., “elementary: 50 min; junior: 150 min”), responses were appropriately categorized. Others still included the total times for their cycles (e.g., 110 min per 6-day cycle), which was calculated to fit within a 5-day week ( $110 \div 6 \times 5 = 91.7$  min), and then rounded to the nearest multiple of five (90 min). Many respondents included times based on extracurricular activities (e.g., K–6: 3 times/week for 30 min; Grades 7 and 8: 1 time/week for

2.5 hr, band [optional]—2 hr/week, choir [optional]—30 min/week). As is evident, such responses were difficult to reduce to singular number values. In such instances, we dismissed optional extracurriculars and averaged the responses (K–6 = 90 min, 7–8 = 150 min;  $[90 \times 7 = 630] + [150 \times 2 = 300] = 930 \div 9 = 103.3$ , rounded to nearest multiple of five = 105 min). Finally, where provincial responses included significant outliers, adjusted mean values were included. This was the case for the provincial data of British Columbia, Quebec, and Ontario.

Because of the imperfect nature of splitting participants into categories (elementary, junior, intermediate, and secondary), coupled with the imperfect nature of averaging and rounding minute values as expressed above, researchers who split the categories differently and round values differently will likely come to different values. The complicated and diverse responses to the question “How many minutes per week do students receive music instruction?” reflect the diversity of the Canadian music education landscape. Although we have provided empirical values through a system of averaging and rounding, the strength of the data lies in its nuance, which is ultimately irreducible.

### **Reporting Secondary Minutes per Week**

Frequency of music instruction at the secondary level is difficult to determine due to several variables. Considerations such as courses being available for a single semester, the number of courses students wish to take, and after-school programs, among others, ensured that an average value would provide little insight into the case of music instruction at the secondary level. For this reason, the question of how many minutes students received music instruction at the secondary level was not calculated or included in this section.

## **Topic 1: Funding Practices**

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In each province, education funding is primarily the responsibility of the Minister of Education, who establishes school board funding, and then the school boards establish school funding. The process by which the minister and the school boards make decisions and navigate funding differs from province to province (Ali, 2020).

### **British Columbia**

#### ***Policy Documents***

According to a 2018 report by the Independent Funding Model Review Panel,

The current [BC] funding model utilizes student counts from grades K to 9, where one student equals one funding unit, with some flexibility in grades 8 and 9. Funding from grades 10 to 12 is course-based, and there is flexibility at the secondary level for students to take additional courses. (Trumpy et al., 2018, p. 25)

This report noted that the British Columbia education funding model has remained largely unchanged since 2002, and in response the Minister of Education appointed a committee in 2017 to provide

recommendations on how the funding model could be changed. This report highlighted 22 recommendations to combat issues of inequity and improve educational quality (Trumpy et al., 2018).

According to the British Columbia School Act (1996/2021), the minister approves the proposed budget of a board, based on a headcount × funding per student model. The board submits its expected headcount for the following year by February 15, which the minister can approve or reject. The board must accept a budget by June 30 of each year for the next fiscal year. From the British Columbia Ministry of Education (n.d.) website, the following three points are noted:

The provincial government and BC's 60 elected Boards of Education co-manage the education system in British Columbia. The province establishes the amount of grant funding for public education annually and uses a funding formula to allocate these funds to Boards of Education. Boards manage and allocate their allotment based on local spending priorities. In addition, the province provides capital costs and funding for special programs through supplemental government funds. The funding allocation system provides financial resources for the operation of the K–12 system by using data collected from schools and districts and applying formulae to ensure equity across British Columbia. (para. 1–3)

### **Survey Results**

When British Columbia administrators ( $n = 49$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 29 (59.2%) identified the district as being primarily responsible. Thirty-two (65.3%) administrators indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 33 (67.3%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and 18 (36.7%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. Whereas approximately two-thirds of administrators do not have designated funds for music education, the majority of administrators have flexibility and autonomy over discretionary funds for music education. When British Columbia teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 9).

Even though administrators indicated that the districts are primarily responsible for determining whether music instruction is provided, they believed they had autonomy over discretionary fund allocation. This opinion was supported by the teachers' responses, who indicated that the administrators are primarily responsible for their program's financial support.

**Table 9**  
**British Columbia Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	23	7.3%	11	3.5%	79	25.2%
None	67	21.3%	26	8.3%	141	44.9%
Little	104	33.1%	97	30.9%	55	17.5%
Some	100	31.8%	130	41.4%	36	11.5%
Strong	20	6.4%	50	15.9%	3	1.0%

Note. *n* = 314.

## Alberta

### ***Policy Documents***

In Alberta, school boards prepare and send their proposed budget and financial statements to the minister. They also appoint an auditor to prepare a report on their financial statements for the minister, as well as communiqués between the board and the auditor (Alberta Education, 2021). The minister then approves or rejects the board's proposed budget. Alberta implemented a new funding model in 2020:

The current funding framework is distributed through base instruction funding. Additional funding is provided for services and supports, such as the number of English as a second language learners, and community characteristics, such as socio-economic and geographic challenges faced by school authorities. Funding to school authorities is also provided through targeted funding for operations and maintenance and system administration. The funding framework allocates funding directly to school authorities, who then allocate funding to individual schools. The new funding model provides school authorities with increased flexibility to meet the needs of the children and students they serve. (Alberta Education, n.d.-e, Overview section, para. 2)

The funding rates for specific grades, shown in Table 10, are based on information from Alberta Education's (2020a) *Funding Manual for School Authorities 2020/21 School Year*. The general formula is based on multiplying a weighted moving average by a base instructional rate, and these values can vary greatly when considerations for additional grants and services are required.

**Table 10**  
**Alberta Education Funding Formula at Different Grades**

Grade	Funding formula
K–9	WMA FTE enrolment × base instructional rate (grade level rate)
10–12 (1st–3rd year)	Grade 10–12 WMA enrolment × 100% of high school base rate
10–12 (4th year)	Grade 10–12 WMA enrolment × 50% of high school base rate
10–12 (> 4th year)	Grade 10–12 WMA enrolment × 25% of high school base rate

Note. WMA = weighted moving average, FTE = full-time enrolment.

It is important to note that there has been pushback on this new model. In response to this funding model, Support Our Students Alberta (2020) released an infographic that included data claiming that with this new funding model, “75% of Alberta’s school boards would be funded for fewer students than actually enrolled.”

### Survey Results

When Alberta administrators ( $n = 44$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 34 (77.3%) identified the school administration as being primarily responsible. Twenty-nine (65.9%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 34 (77.3%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and seven (15.9%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Alberta teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 11).

**Table 11**  
**Alberta Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	26	8.1%	4	1.3%	59	18.4%
None	85	26.6%	18	5.6%	161	50.3%
Little	82	25.6%	93	29.1%	69	21.6%
Some	96	30.0%	131	40.9%	27	8.4%
Strong	31	9.7%	74	23.1%	4	1.3%

Note.  $n = 320$

Seven Albertan administrators (15.9%) indicated that they received designated funding for music education, the lowest result of administrators in any province. This may be due to the newly

implemented funding model, which is viewed by the province as an increase in financial flexibility for schools and school authorities. Further investigation would be needed to assess this new model as it is implemented into the school systems.

## **Saskatchewan**

### ***Policy Documents***

In 2009, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Education released its New Education Funding Distribution Model (updated in 2012), which allocated funding to Saskatchewan boards of education through the provincial general revenue fund and education property tax revenue. The Saskatchewan Ministry of Education (2012) noted,

Under the new model, the entire amount of property tax revenue is equalized across the province. Change to a school division's tax revenue is offset by provincial funding: if a school division's tax revenue increases, their grant funding will decrease to compensate. The total approved funding for the division will not change. Therefore, a school division will no longer benefit from having a richer tax base than another division. (pp. 1–2)

According to the province's Education Act (1995/2017), boards of education prepare estimates of revenues and expenditures required for the school division for the following fiscal year. The minister may approve these estimates or require the board to make changes. The Saskatchewan School Boards Association (2015), in a module titled "Education Finance and the Board's Role," noted that

school boards have always been required to provide a board-approved budget to the Ministry of Education. School boards are to submit their final proposed budget to the Ministry by June 30. Ministerial approval is required for a board's final budget. . . . Once the Minister is satisfied with the school board's budget submission, a letter approving the current year's budget will be sent to the school board Chair, the Director of Education, and the CFO. (p. 22)

Moreover, since 2009, in addition to funds provided through the province's general revenue, Saskatchewan levies a property tax that is used specifically for education (Saskatchewan School Boards Association, 2015).

### ***Survey Results***

When Saskatchewan administrators ( $n = 13$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, nine (69.2%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Eight (61.5%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, eight (61.5%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and seven (53.8%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Saskatchewan teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school districts were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 12).

**Table 12**  
**Saskatchewan Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	4	3.9%	6	5.8%	16	15.5%
None	4	3.9%	10	9.7%	8	7.8%
Little	11	10.7%	28	27.2%	35	34.0%
Some	52	50.5%	36	35.0%	31	30.1%
Strong	32	31.1%	23	22.3%	13	12.6%

*Note.* *n* = 103

It is interesting to note that Saskatchewan teachers rated the financial support of the districts above administration, as opposed to those in provinces such as British Columbia and Alberta. This finding is perhaps unsurprising given that a higher percentage of Saskatchewan administrators (53.8%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music education than those in British Columbia (36.7%) and Alberta (15.9%).

## **Manitoba**

### ***Policy Documents***

In Manitoba, the board appoints an auditor who is authorized through the Chartered Professional Accountants Act and informs the Minister of Education. The job of the auditor is to provide a report to the board that includes a professional opinion of the board's financial position. The auditor sends the complete report to the minister. Dawson (2008) wrote:

Manitoba Funding derives from both the province and school boards. Provincial share comes from the provincial consolidated fund and from property tax levies accessed through Education Support Levy. Government determines how much money will come from GRF and from its portion of property tax that does not include farming properties. School boards access to property assessment is through Special Levy as a requirement of boards in this shared funding model. (p. 12)

Action to remove such levies occurred during the 2019 fall election:

During the fall 2019 election campaign, and more recently in the November 2019 Speech from the Throne, the Premier of Manitoba announced plans to remove the education portion of property taxes. The phase-out is scheduled to begin the first year after the budget is balanced and be completed over a maximum of 10 years. (Commission on Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education, 2020, p. 120)

With the removal of property tax levies, the Government of Manitoba (2020) noted it had the third-highest spending in Canada at \$14,733, after Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. For the 2021–2022 school year, specific instructional support per public school student is \$1,927, with specific financial allocations for various areas such as curricular materials, library services, counselling, and professional development (Manitoba Education, n.d.-b).

### **Survey Results**

When Manitoba administrators ( $n = 45$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 31 (68.9%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Twenty-nine (64.4%) administrators indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 31 (68.9%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and 30 (66.7%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Manitoba teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed both their districts and administration were strong financial supporters (see Table 13).

**Table 13**  
**Manitoba Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	14	5.7%	11	4.5%	74	30.1%
None	11	4.5%	11	4.5%	8	3.3%
Little	23	9.3%	40	16.3%	69	28.0%
Some	85	34.6%	107	43.5%	65	26.4%
Strong	113	45.9%	77	31.3%	30	12.2%

Note.  $n = 246$

Manitoba teachers indicated higher levels of support by both their administration and districts than did survey respondents in the other western and prairie provinces.

## **Ontario**

### **Policy Documents**

The Ontario government estimates it will allot \$32.95 billion to education in 2021–2022, accounting for 3.87% of total GDP (Government of Ontario, 2021; Ontario Ministry of Finance, 2021). According to the Ontario Ministry of Education (n.d.-a):

Funding entitlements for school boards can be generated on a per-pupil, per-school, or per-board basis depending on the structure of each grant within the GSN [grants for student needs] regulation. There are two major components of the GSN:

- The Foundation Grants cover the basic costs of an educational experience that is common to all students, which is allocated based on student enrolment and the number of schools.
- The Special Purpose Grants address the unique needs of students, schools and school boards related to location, student and school needs, and a board's demographic profile. (p. 1)

As found in the *2019–20 Education Funding: A Guide to the Grants for Student Needs* (Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d.-a), the People for Education (n.d.) noted that in Ontario, whereas the province provides funding to boards based upon the grants allotted through the grants for student needs, “Most funding can be moved from one category to another, which means that many funding decisions are made at the board level” (The province section, para. 2). Furthermore, principals decide how to distribute resources for specialized personnel, including “whether their school can have staff such as a teacher-librarian, a music teacher or department heads” (People for Education, n.d., The school section, para. 1).

In 2018, People for Education released an arts education report which revealed that only 46% of elementary schools reported having a full- or part-time music teacher. Of the 470 Ontario teachers it surveyed who were categorized as elementary, 383 (81.5%) identified as specialist teachers and 87 (18.5%) identified as generalist teachers (People for Education, 2018).

### **Survey Results**

When Ontario administrators ( $n = 77$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 46 (59.7%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible, 56 (72.7%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 54 (70.1%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and 20 (26.0%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Ontario teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 14).

Administrators from Ontario responded similarly to those from British Columbia and Alberta, indicating that it is more common to have discretionary funds and flexibility to allocate funds than it is to have funds designated for music education use. Ontario teachers responded similarly to their British Columbia and Alberta counterparts as well, noting that they believe school administrators are primarily responsible for financially supporting their music programs.

**Table 14**  
**Ontario Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	45	7.8%	9	1.5%	61	10.5%
None	80	13.8%	34	5.9%	68	11.7%
Little	161	27.8%	120	20.7%	233	40.2%
Some	232	40.1%	267	46.1%	165	28.5%
Strong	61	10.5%	149	25.7%	52	9.0%

Note. *n* = 579

## Quebec

### **Policy Documents**

In Quebec, education funding is allocated through budgetary rules, providing two types of allocations: (a) basic allocations for foundational services and (b) additional allocations for enveloped grants to enact ministry priorities (Ali, 2020, p. 18; see also Québec Ministère de l'Éducation, 2021). Funding comes from the province's general revenues and property taxation, which is limited by the government.

In June of 2020, French-language school boards became school service centres, a shift that "is intended to bring the decision-making process as close as possible to the students and to those who are most directly involved in their education, with their best interests in mind" (Gouvernement du Québec, 2021, Description section, para. 1). This includes the creation of boards of directors made up of parents, community members, and staff members, which are "tasked with administering the affairs of the school service centre, specifically with regard to the proper management of public funds, while ensuring that its educational institutions enjoy the optimum conditions for carrying out their educational mission" (Gouvernement du Québec, 2021, Board of directors section, para. 1).

The budgeting process is laid out within the Quebec Education Act (1996/2021), and according to the Québec Ministère de l'Éducation (n.d.),

In accordance with section 472 of this Act, each year, after consulting with the school boards, the Minister shall establish the budget rules to determine the amount of operating expenses, capital expenditures and debt service expenses allowable for the purpose of subsidies to be allocated to school boards annually and submit these rules to the Conseil du trésor for approval. Furthermore, under section 475 of the *Education Act* . . . , the Minister must include in the budget rules the payment of fiscal balance subsidies to school boards. (para. 2–3)

### Survey Results

When Quebec administrators ( $n = 19$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective schools, 10 (52.6%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Twelve (63.2%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, seven (36.8%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and four (21.1%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Quebec teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 15).

**Table 15**  
**Quebec Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	56	18.6%	11	3.7%	46	15.3%
None	78	25.9%	24	8.0%	26	8.6%
Little	77	25.6%	96	31.9%	115	38.2%
Some	72	23.9%	116	38.5%	65	21.6%
Strong	18	6.0%	54	17.9%	49	16.3%

Note.  $n = 301$

### New Brunswick

#### Policy Documents

New Brunswick education is largely funded through the province's School Districts Grant, accounting for \$1.168 billion of the total \$1.351 billion funds estimated to be expended during the 2020–2021 year (New Brunswick Department of Finance and Treasury Board, 2020, p. 27). In an appendix of the 2006 report that has come to be known as the *MacKay Report on Inclusive Education*,<sup>1</sup> Dumas (2005) noted:

The New Brunswick Department of Education has a particular structure in that it consists of two distinct education sectors, i.e., Anglophone and Francophone, under the direction of two Assistant Deputy Ministers. Under this structure, in place since 1974, both linguistic sectors manage their public school system from kindergarten to Grade 12. Through a budget allocation formula specific to each sector the Department of Education provides direct funding for programs and services offered by the Anglophone and Francophone school districts. There are no local education levies in New Brunswick. (Appendix L, p. 1)

This officially bilingual context is unique to New Brunswick, “operat[ing] parallel anglophone and francophone school systems with four English boards, 3 French boards, 43,000 anglophone students, 29,000 francophone pupils, and 25,000 French immersion students” (Ali, 2020, p. 19).

According to the New Brunswick Education Act (1997/2019), the Financial Administration Act outlines how funds are to be determined, the minister then sends allocated funds (budget) to each district education council, and principals are responsible for the funds provided by the district for the school. The New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (2017) has released a policy document entitled *Financial Responsibilities of School Districts* to “[ensure] compliance with financial standards and consistency of reporting practices” (p. 1). This document was originally released in 1981, demonstrating that financial practices have largely remained unchanged except for minor revisions in 1994, 2001, 2002, 2012, and 2017.

### **Survey Results**

When New Brunswick administrators ( $n = 32$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 16 (50.0%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Twenty-one (65.6%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 25 (78.1%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and six (18.8%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When New Brunswick teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 16).

**Table 16**  
**New Brunswick Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	8	6.7%	3	2.5%	12	10.0%
None	28	23.3%	10	8.3%	19	15.8%
Little	48	40.0%	35	29.2%	49	40.8%
Some	30	25.0%	48	40.0%	28	23.3%
Strong	6	5.0%	24	20.0%	12	10.0%

Note.  $n = 120$

Only six (18.8%) New Brunswick administrators indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction; however, 65.6% of the administrators stated that they have flexibility or autonomy to allocate funds and discretionary funds to support music education. This finding once again aligns with teachers, who identified the school administration as providing the highest financial support for their music programs.

## Prince Edward Island

### ***Policy Documents***

Education in Prince Edward Island is funded entirely from the Provincial Operating Fund and is broken up into two main grants: the Salaries, Wages, and Benefits Grant and an Operation Grant (Ali, 2020). School boards (both English and French language) have authority to seek ministerial and local approval for funding from additional local property levies, but Dawson (2008) noted that this opportunity has not been utilized. Although instructional positions for education staff are allocated based on a class size factor, Prince Edward Island also adopts a Flex Factor, wherein

instructional positions will be allocated to Education Authorities in order to provide for positions in specialized areas such as physical education, music, art, programs delivered outside of the regular classroom and for such other school needs identified by the Education Authorities including Education Authority office-based staff. (Ministry of Education and Lifelong Learning, 2021, p. 3)

The allocations for such positions vary based on student enrolments at the schools, as well as at the primary/elementary, intermediate, and high school level. According to Prince Edward Island's Education Act (2016/2020), the minister establishes the funding program for education authorities, and the authorities submit budget information in accordance with regulations and minister directives (Clause 86).

### ***Survey Results***

When Prince Edward Island administrators ( $n = 10$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, nine (90%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Six (60%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, seven (70%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and six (60%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Prince Edward Island teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that school districts, administration, and government did not tend to provide strong support, but of those three groups, they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 17).

**Table 17**  
**Prince Edward Island Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	3	9.4%	2	6.3%	7	21.9%
None	6	18.8%	3	9.4%	2	6.3%
Little	8	25.0%	7	21.9%	15	46.9%
Some	12	37.5%	14	43.8%	5	15.6%
Strong	3	9.4%	6	18.8%	3	9.4%

Note. *n* = 32.

It is interesting to note how Prince Edward Island teachers perceived the financial support from their community, as reflected in their responses. Table 18 includes the total responses of all specialist teachers nationally juxtaposed against the responses of Prince Edward Island teachers. The data reflect that these teachers believe, on average, that they receive much more financial support from their communities than do other teachers nationally.

**Table 18**  
**Prince Edward Island Teacher Responses to Level of Community Financial Support**

Responses	All specialists ( <i>n</i> = 2,237)		Prince Edward Island specialists ( <i>n</i> = 32)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	221	9.9%	2	6.3%
None	952	42.6%	3	9.4%
Little	580	25.9%	7	21.9%
Some	371	16.6%	14	43.8%
Strong	113	5.1%	6	18.8%

### Nova Scotia

**Policy Documents.** Education funding within Nova Scotia derives from two major sources, the Consolidated Revenue Fund and a provincially determined property tax (Dawson, 2008, p. 12). School boards, with agreement of the municipalities in their regions, may raise additional property tax revenue. Ali (2020) noted,

Nova Scotia's education system has recently undergone some significant reforms as the government implements recommendations from "Raise the Bar," a sweeping 22

recommendation report that has led to the abolition of all but francophone school boards and removal of 1,000 principals and vice principals from the Nova Scotia Teachers' Union. (p. 19)

Glaze's (2018) *Raise the Bar* report will likely continue to shape Nova Scotia's education policy and funding practices in the coming decade, especially given Nova Scotia's traditionally top-down approach to funding, as outlined in the Education Act (2018/2019):

The Minister shall, in each fiscal year, provide to a regional centre and each municipality, that in accordance with this Act is to make payments to the regional centre, a statement for the immediately following fiscal year of:

- (a) the amount of financial assistance to be paid by the Minister to the regional centre;
- (b) the total of the minimum municipal contributions to be paid by the municipalities to the regional centre; and
- (c) the rate, as determined by the regulations, to be used in determining the minimum municipal contributions. (Clause 67)

**Survey Results.** When Nova Scotia administrators ( $n = 17$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 17 (100%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Eight (47.1%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 11 (64.7%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and eight (47.1%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Nova Scotia teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 19).

It is interesting to note that 100% of Nova Scotia administrators identified the school district as having the primary responsibility for determining whether music instruction is provided at their schools, yet only 47.1% noted their schools received designated funding for music education. Moreover, teachers noted that their financial support came from the school administration, more so than the district.

**Table 19**  
**Nova Scotia Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	6	5.8%	7	6.8%	16	15.5%
None	28	27.2%	8	7.8%	15	14.6%
Little	37	35.9%	34	33.0%	38	36.9%
Some	24	23.3%	39	37.9%	24	23.3%
Strong	8	7.8%	15	14.6%	10	9.7%

Note.  $n = 103$ .

## Newfoundland and Labrador

**Policy Documents.** Newfoundland and Labrador's education funding program includes six different envelopes (Ali, 2020). The main grant, the Financial Assistance Grant, covers \$747.2 million of the total \$824.0 million (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Finance, 2019, p. 185). Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education (2018) released an Education Action Plan based on Collins et al.'s (2017) report entitled *Now Is the Time: The Next Chapter in Education in Newfoundland and Labrador*. According to the plan, it "outlines 82 recommendations, within the nine focus areas, to improve educational outcomes in Newfoundland and Labrador" (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2018, p. 2).

According to the CBC (2019), "The 2019 provincial budget allocated \$13 million for the plan's implementation, up \$6 million from the previous year" (The action plan section, para. 8). According to Education Minister Brian Warr, it includes that "350 teacher resources are being hired over a three-year period to ensure students have access to the supports they need" (as cited in CBC, 2019, The action plan section, para. 4).

Newfoundland and Labrador's Schools Act (1997/2018) outlines the budget development process:

(65.1) The Boards send the Minister a copy of their annual budget for the following year. (66.1)

This budget shall be audited by someone licensed as an auditor and must be presented to the Minister "in the form and at a time that the Minister may require."

(75.3) The boards are then responsible for the expenditure of said funds.

**Survey Results.** When Newfoundland and Labrador administrators ( $n = 18$ ) were asked whose primary responsibility it was to determine whether music instruction is provided at their respective school, 14 (77.8%) identified the school district as being primarily responsible. Twelve (66.7%) indicated that they have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, 18 (100%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and 15 (83.3%) indicated that they receive designated funding for music instruction. When Newfoundland and Labrador teachers were asked to rate the level of financial support their music program receives from different groups, they indicated that they believed school administrators were the strongest financial supporters (see Table 20).

Newfoundland and Labrador administrators identified that although they have moderately high levels of flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds (not unlike the responses from other provinces), 18 (100%) indicated that they have the use of discretionary funds for music education, and 15 (83.3%) indicated they receive designated funding for music instruction, the highest of any province.

**Table 20****Newfoundland and Labrador Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Response	School district		School administration		Provincial or territorial government	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
N/A	1	0.9%	6	5.5%	27	24.8%
None	17	15.6%	10	9.2%	5	4.6%
Little	37	33.9%	13	11.9%	37	33.9%
Some	46	42.2%	44	40.4%	28	25.7%
Strong	8	7.3%	36	33.0%	12	11.0%

Note. *n* = 109.

### Summary: Topic 1—Survey Results of Funding Practices

The nature of sources of funding for music programs appears to be complex and not always understood. What is not known is whether the complexity is a result of how funds are allocated and filtered through the education system or whether administrators and teachers are unaware of what those sources are, how the allocation works, who is responsible, and whether funding is designated for music instruction at the school level. Table 21 demonstrates administrator confusion as to whether they receive school-designated funding.

**Table 21****Administrator Responses to School-Designated Funding for Music Instruction**

Province	Yes		No	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
British Columbia	18	36.7%	31	63.3%
Alberta	7	15.9%	37	84.1%
Saskatchewan	7	53.8%	6	46.2%
Manitoba	30	66.7%	15	33.3%
Ontario	20	26.0%	57	74.0%
Quebec	4	21.1%	15	78.9%
New Brunswick	6	18.8%	26	81.3%
Nova Scotia	8	47.1%	9	52.9%
Prince Edward Island	6	60.0%	4	40.0%
Newfoundland and Labrador	15	83.3%	3	16.7%

Note. The yes/no question read, "The school received designated funding for music instruction."

Teachers in eight of the 10 provinces indicated that school administrators were the strongest financial supporters of their music programs. Saskatchewan teachers ( $n = 103$ ) and Manitoba teachers ( $n = 246$ ) indicated that school districts were the strongest financial supporters. Many of the Manitoba teachers also noted that they felt financially well supported by their administration (see Table 22).

**Table 22**

**Administrator and Teacher Responses on Funding Practices**

Province	Administrators	Teachers
British Columbia	District	Administration
Alberta	Administration	Administration
Saskatchewan	District	District
Manitoba	District	Districts and administration (equally)
Ontario	Administration	Administration
Quebec	Administration	Administration
New Brunswick	Administration	Administration
Nova Scotia	District	Administration
Prince Edward Island	District	Administration
Newfoundland and Labrador	District	Administration

*Note.* Administrators were asked, “Whose responsibility is it to provide music education?” Teacher specialists were asked, “Who is the strongest financial supporter?”

Administrators from Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and New Brunswick identified the same group responsible for providing music instruction as those the specialists indicated as being the strongest financial supporters. Participants from three of the four Atlantic provinces indicated otherwise (i.e., administrators stated that the district was responsible, whereas the specialists indicated that the administrators were the strongest supporters). It is worth noting that recent shifts in provincial education funding models have occurred in Alberta (Support Our Students, 2020), and in Quebec’s French language school service centres (Québec Ministère de l’Éducation, 2021). Any impact of these shifts on funding practices for education in general, and music education specifically, remains to be seen.

When asked whether administrators had flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction, the responses were relatively consistent. On average, 1 in 3 administrators in Canada do not believe they have flexibility and/or autonomy to allocate funds for music education. Nova Scotia had the lowest number of administrators who believed they had flexibility and autonomy over such funds (see Table 23).

**Table 23**  
**Level of Flexibility and Autonomy to Allocate Funds for Music Instruction**

Province	Yes		No	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
British Columbia	32	65.3%	17	34.7%
Alberta	29	65.9%	15	34.1%
Saskatchewan	8	61.5%	5	38.5%
Manitoba	29	64.4%	16	35.6%
Ontario	56	72.7%	21	27.3%
Quebec	12	63.2%	7	36.8%
New Brunswick	21	65.6%	11	34.4%
Prince Edward Island	6	60.0%	4	40.0%
Nova Scotia	8	47.1%	9	52.9%
Newfoundland and Labrador	12	66.7%	6	33.3%
All provinces	218	65.9%	113	34.1%

*Note.* The yes/no question read, “I have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction.”

## Topic 2: Mandatory Time for Music Instruction and Length of Mandated Time

The second topic reflects the status of mandatory time to be allotted for music instruction and the amount of time that is required. As articulated in Section 1, the critical inclusion of music as a required subject continues to be supported, particularly with increasing research that reflects the impact music has on the brain (e.g., Blood & Zatorre, 2001) and the understanding that informed musical engagement is an intelligence—a way of knowing the world (Eisner, 2002; McPherson, 2007). Differences in how each province functions in terms of funding, how decisions are made about who teaches what, and how decisions are made about teacher education and certification, including music teacher education, continue to make comparisons across provinces challenging. To that end, as we did for Topic 1, we present relevant provincial documents and survey results for each province.

### British Columbia

#### ***Policy Documents***

In a separate document outlining what is new for arts education in British Columbia’s new curriculum (Alliance for Arts, 2017), choices offered for K–8 allow for flexibility at the teacher level as decisions are made about providing either a discipline-specific or an integrated arts instructional approach. Blending of the arts disciplines is not required, yet it is an option. For the Grade 9 curriculum, a general curriculum is offered in arts education as well as a discipline-specific curriculum for dance, drama, music, and visual arts. The choice of the offering is at the discretion of the teacher and their

administration. The curriculum for Grades 10–12 allows teachers to offer a variety of options that include dance, drama, music, visual arts, and cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary arts courses (Alliance for Arts, 2017).

### Survey Results

Results from British Columbia are presented in Tables 24 and 25. See the Appendix, Figure A1, for British Columbia elementary and secondary split details.

**Table 24**

#### Music Instruction: British Columbia Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Response	Elementary ( <i>n</i> = 256)		Secondary ( <i>n</i> = 81)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mandatory	173	67.1%	1	1.2%
Elective	22	8.5%	73	90.1%
Both	55	21.3%	7	8.6%
Other	8	3.1%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 25**

#### Minutes per Week: British Columbia Elementary Teachers’ Responses

Calculation	Minutes
Mean	113.4 min
Mean (adjusted, <i>n</i> = 252)	88.9 min
Median	85.0 min
Other	110.0 min

Note. *n* = 256. The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?”

As shown in Table 24, responses from British Columbia teachers who teach elementary grades (*n* = 256) reflect that 67.1% of the schools have mandatory music instruction and 8.5% have it as an elective. Some schools (21.3%) have programs that include both mandatory music instruction and those that are electives. Of the British Columbia teachers who teach secondary grades (*n* = 81), 90.1% reported that their programs are elective, 1.2% reported them as mandatory, and 8.6% reported teaching in schools that have mandatory music instruction and programs that are electives.

In terms of number of minutes per week as shown in Table 25, the average time (mean) as reported by teachers categorized as elementary was 113.4 min per week (adjusted at 88.9 min). For an approximate average of 1,500 min per week, music instruction accounts for 5.9% of the weekly instructional time.

## Alberta

### Policy Documents

For elementary schools Grades 1–6, mandatory time for art and music is indicated to be 10% of the school week; no specific hours are listed. For Grades 7–9, 75 hr is listed as the mandatory time (Alberta Education, n.d.-d). Per another government resource, for Grades 1–6, fine arts are required programs of study, including visual art, drama, and music (Alberta Education, n.d.-d).

For secondary grades (Grades 7–12), music programs are considered optional (Alberta Education, n.d.-b, n.d.-c). Specifically, the optional junior high school music program can be experienced in a choral, instrumental, or general music setting. Schools can offer one, all, or none of these programs (Griffin, 2007). Other fine arts programs—visual art and drama—are also optional programs of studies.

### Survey Results

Results for Alberta are presented in Tables 26 and 27. See the Appendix, Figure A2, for Alberta elementary, junior, and secondary split details.

**Table 26**

#### Music Instruction: Alberta Teachers Categorized as Elementary and Junior

Response	Elementary ( $n = 231$ )		Secondary ( $n = 50$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Mandatory	135	58.4%	5	10%
Elective	7	3.0%	23	46.0%
Both	88	38.1%	22	44.0%
Other	1	0.4%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 27**

#### Minutes per Week: Alberta Elementary and Junior Teachers’ Responses

Calculation	Elementary teacher responses ( $n = 231$ )	Junior teacher responses ( $n = 78$ )
Mean	84.6 min	135.8 min
Median	90.0 min	124.0 min
Mode	90.0 min	150.0 min

Note. The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?”

Responses from Alberta teachers who teach elementary grades ( $n = 231$ ) reflect that 58.4% of the schools have mandatory music instruction and 3.0% have it as an elective. Some schools (38.1%) have programs that include both mandatory music instruction and those that are electives. Of the Alberta teachers who teach junior grades ( $n = 50$ ), 46% reported that their programs are electives, 5% reported

them as mandatory, and 44% reported teaching in schools that have mandatory music instruction and programs that are electives. Of the Alberta secondary teachers ( $n = 70$ ), 80% teach elective programs, 1.4% teach mandatory programs, and 18.6% reported having mandatory music instruction with electives.

In terms of number of minutes per week, the mean as reported by teachers categorized as elementary was 84.6 min per week. For an average of 1,500 min per week, music instruction accounts for 5.6% of the weekly instructional time. Teachers categorized as junior indicated that the mean reported time is 135.8 min, or 9.1% of the weekly instructional time.

## Saskatchewan

### *Policy Documents*

Saskatchewan policy documents reflect arts education as a required area of study in its core curriculum for the elementary level (K–5), with aims and goals listed for K–12 (Saskatchewan Ministry of Education, 2011b). Mandated time is indicated for K–9; specifically, 200 min per week for arts instruction. Of the 200, 50 min per week is to be dedicated to each of the four arts disciplines—dance, drama, music, and visual art.

### *Survey Results*

Results for Saskatchewan are presented in Tables 28 and 29. See the Appendix, Figure A3, for Saskatchewan elementary and secondary split details. Of the Saskatchewan teachers who teach elementary grades ( $n = 58$ ), 58.6% reported having mandated and elective music instruction. Of that number, 19% reported as having mandatory music instruction, and 22.4% reported as having music instruction as an elective. Of the Saskatchewan secondary teachers who responded to the question about whether music instruction is mandatory ( $n = 51$ ), 66.7% reported it as elective, 3.9% reported it as mandatory, and 29.5% reported as having programs that included mandatory time and as an elective. In response to the number of minutes of music instruction per week, the mean reported by teachers categorized as elementary was 95.7 min, which is higher than required, and is 6.4% of a typical 1,500 min of instruction per week.

**Table 28**

### **Music Instruction: Saskatchewan Elementary and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( $n = 58$ )		Secondary ( $n = 51$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Mandatory	11	19.0%	2	3.9%
Elective	13	22.4%	34	66.7%
Both	34	58.6%	15	29.4%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

*Note.* The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 29****Minutes per Week: Saskatchewan Elementary Teachers' Responses**

Calculation	Minutes
Mean	95.7 min
Median	90.0 min
Mode	75.0 min

Note.  $n = 58$ . The question read, "Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_?"

**Manitoba****Policy Documents**

The policy documents for Manitoba reflect arts education as compulsory for Grades 1–8 with recommended time allotments; no specifics are indicated for music in terms of mandated instructional time or number of recommended time allotments (Government of Manitoba, n.d.). A system-wide implementation of an arts education K–8 occurred in 2011 and included dance, drama, music, and visual arts. For Grades 9–12, a system-wide implementation of an arts education was initiated in the 2015–2016 school year and included curriculum frameworks for each of the disciplines—dance, drama, music, and visual arts.

The recommended time allotments for the arts include 10% of instructional time for students in Grades 1–6 and 8% of instructional time for students in Grades 7 and 8 (Manitoba Education, n.d.-a, 2021; Manitoba Education and Advanced Learning, 2015). The number and choice of arts subjects offered depends on the local context. For secondary grades, a music framework includes a variety of music education courses, strands, and approaches. In terms of arts education in general, schools can offer the disciplines individually, in combination with each other, and/or integrated with other subject areas.

**Survey Results**

Results for Manitoba are presented in Tables 30 and 31. See the Appendix, Figure A4, for Manitoba elementary and secondary split details.

**Table 30****Music Instruction: Manitoba Elementary and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( $n = 195$ )		Secondary ( $n = 64$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Mandatory	105	53.8%	1	1.6%
Elective	20	10.3%	55	85.9%
Both	69	35.4%	8	12.5%
Other	1	0.5%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, "At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_?"

**Table 31**  
**Minutes per Week: Manitoba Elementary Teachers' Responses**

Calculation	Minutes
Mean	102.0 min
Median	90.0 min
Mode	75.0 min

*Note.*  $n = 195$ . The question read, "Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_?"

Of the 195 Manitoba elementary teachers, 53.8% reported music instruction as mandatory, 10.3% reported it as an elective, and 35.4% reported teaching programs as part of mandatory instructional time and as an elective. Of those teaching in the secondary setting ( $n = 64$ ), 1.6% reported music instruction as mandatory, 85.9% reported it as elective, and 12.5% reported teaching programs as part of mandatory instructional time and as an elective. The elementary teachers' responses ( $n = 195$ ) indicated a mean of 102 min is devoted to music instruction. Out of approximately 1,500 min of instruction per week, 6.8% of the time is devoted to music instruction.

## Ontario

### *Policy Documents*

For elementary and secondary schools, arts allotment is left to the individual school boards. In English-language elementary schools, arts as a discipline are listed as a required for Grades 1–8 within the learning programs (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2016).

### *Survey Results*

Results for Ontario are presented in Tables 32 and 33. See the Appendix, Figure A5, for Ontario elementary and secondary split details.

**Table 32**  
**Music Instruction: Ontario Elementary and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( $n = 470$ )		Secondary ( $n = 201$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Mandatory	431	91.7%	2	1.0%
Elective	5	1.1%	173	86.1%
Both	30	6.4%	25	12.4%
Other	4	0.9%	1	0.5%

*Note.* The question read, "At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_?"

**Table 33**  
**Minutes per Week: Ontario Elementary Teachers' Responses**

Calculation	Minutes
Mean ( $n = 470$ )	78.2 min
Mean (adjusted, $n = 465$ )	72.5 min
Median	70.0 min
Mode	60.0 min

*Note.*  $n = 470$ . The question read, "Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_?"

Of the 470 Ontario elementary teachers, 97.1% reported music instruction as mandatory, 1.1% reported it as elective, and 6.4% reported as teaching programs that were mandatory and as an elective. Of the 201 Ontario secondary teachers, 1.0% reported music instruction as mandatory, 86.1% reported it as elective, and 12.4% were teaching programs that were a combination of mandatory and elective. Of the participants categorized as elementary ( $n = 470$ ), the adjusted mean for minutes of music instruction per week was 72.5. Within 1,500 min of instruction per week, students spent 4.8% of their time receiving music instruction.

## Quebec

### ***Policy Documents***

The Quebec policy documents revealed that for Grades 1 and 2, 7 hr per week of nonapportioned time were to be spent across three disciplines—a second language, ethics and religious culture, and the arts education (two of dance, drama, music, or visual arts). Eighteen hours per week of apportioned time were to be spent across language of instruction, mathematics, and physical education (Gouvernement du Québec, n.d.).

For Grades 3–6, 11 hr of nonapportioned time were to be spent across seven disciplines—second language, ethics and religious culture, geography, history, citizenship education, science and technology, and arts (two of dance, drama, music, or visual arts). Fourteen hours of apportioned time were the same as for Grades 1 and 2; that is, language of instruction, mathematics, and physical education.

For Grades 7 and 8, one course of dance, drama, music, or visual art is required; 200 hr is required for 8 credits. Fifty hours is listed for one of the arts in each of Grades 9, 10, and 11, for a total 150 hr across the three grades (Gouvernement du Québec, n.d.). Across all grades, although arts education is mandatory, it is chosen from one or two of the subject areas (depending on the grade level)—dance, drama, music, or visual arts. A student could move from Grades 1–11 and not have taken a music class throughout their public school experience.

### ***Survey Results***

Results are presented in Tables 34 and 35. See the Appendix, Figure A6, for Quebec elementary and secondary split details.

**Table 34**  
**Music Instruction: Quebec Elementary and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( $n = 213$ )		Secondary ( $n = 90$ )	
	$n$	%	$n$	%
Mandatory	179	84.0%	3	3.3%
Elective	8	3.8%	48	53.3%
Both	23	10.8%	39	43.3%
Other	179	1.4%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 35**  
**Minutes per Week: Quebec Elementary Teachers’ Responses**

Calculation	Minutes
Mean ( $n = 213$ )	86.1 min
Mean (adjusted, $n = 206$ )	68.5 min
Median	60.0 min
Mode	60.0 min

Note.  $n = 213$ . The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?”

Of the 213 Quebec elementary teachers, 84% reported music as mandatory, 3.8% reported it as elective, and 10.8% reported as teaching music as a mandatory subject and as an elective. As noted above, the term *mandatory* is not necessarily for music but rather for a subject area within the discipline of the arts. Of the 90 teachers who taught at the secondary level, 3.3% reported music as mandatory, 53.3% reported it as an elective, and 43.3% reported teaching music as both a mandatory subject and as an elective. Of the teachers categorized as elementary ( $n = 213$ ), the adjusted mean of music instruction per week was 68.5 min. Within 1,500 min of instruction per week, students spend 4.6% of their time receiving music instruction.

## New Brunswick

### ***Policy Documents***

The latest document that includes the status of New Brunswick’s education system was published as Appendix L to the *MacKay Report on Inclusive Education in New Brunswick* (Dumas, 2005). The content includes minutes per week for music in the English schools (K–8), and the percentage of time per week for music instruction in the French schools (K–8) with a required arts education credit (9–12).

Specifically, for the English schools, music instruction is to be provided for 60 min for K–3 and 75 min for 4–8. For the French schools, 6% of instruction in arts education is to be provided for K–6, 4% of total time for 7–8, and, as noted, one arts education credit is to be completed sometime during Grades 9–12.

The language in the following quote indicates that the minutes as listed for K–5 are not mandatory but rather suggested:

Teachers need to connect the standards of achievement with the frequency and intensity with which students are engaged in music learning activities. For example, students who are engaged in music learning for 75 minutes per week all year should be expected to attain higher standards of achievement than other students who might be engaged in music learning for 30 minutes per week all year. Within each of the contexts, students should be able to achieve the full spectrum of achievement standards. (New Brunswick Department of Education, 2004, p. 13)

### Survey Results

Results are presented in Tables 36 and 37. See the Appendix, Figure A7, for New Brunswick elementary and secondary split details.

**Table 36**

#### Music Instruction: New Brunswick Elementary and Secondary Teachers

Response	Elementary ( <i>n</i> = 165)		Secondary ( <i>n</i> = 38)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mandatory	121	73.3%	2	5.3%
Elective	4	2.4%	11	28.9%
Both	37	22.4%	24	63.2%
Other	3	1.8%	1	2.6%

Note. The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 37**

#### Minutes per Week: New Brunswick Elementary Teachers’ Responses

Calculation	Minutes
Mean	67.1 min
Median	60.0 min
Mode	60.0 min

Note. *n* = 165. The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?”

Of the 165 New Brunswick teachers categorized as elementary, 73.3% indicated that music instruction was mandatory, 2.4% that it was an elective, and 22.4% that some programs they taught included mandatory music instruction whereas others were an elective. Of the 38 secondary participants, 5.3% reported that music instruction was mandatory and 28.9% that it was an elective; 63.2% taught both mandatory programs and ones as an elective. In response to average minutes for music instruction per week, the responses of the 165 teachers categorized as elementary resulted in a mean of 67.1 min. Of the 1,500 min of instruction typically experienced in a week, 4.5% is experienced as music instruction.

## Prince Edward Island

### Policy Documents

The following information is not from policy documents as found on the web but rather from Griffin (2007). The content was collected via a personal communication with V. Allen-Cook, who worked at the Department of Education at that time as an arts education curriculum specialist.

For elementary grades, general music is required for Grades 1–6 with a recommended minimal instructional time of 90 min per a 6-day cycle. Any variation of the instructional time in music may occur since decisions about timetabling are made at the school level. For the grades at the secondary level, recommended music instructional time for Grades 7–9 (Intermediate) is 160 to 180 min per a 6-day cycle and for Grades 10–12 (senior high), it is 75 min per day totaling 375 min per week. Again, the time may vary from school to school pending decisions about timetabling.

### Survey Results

Results are presented in Tables 38 and 39. See the Appendix, Figure A8, for Prince Edward Island elementary, middle, and secondary split details.

**Table 38**

**Music Instruction: Prince Edward Island Elementary, Middle School, and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( <i>n</i> = 24)		Middle school ( <i>n</i> = 6)		Secondary ( <i>n</i> = 5)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mandatory	16	66.7%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Elective	0	0.0%	6	100.0%	4	80.0%
Both	8	33.3%	0	0.0%	1	20.0%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?”

**Table 39**

**Minutes per Week: Prince Edward Island Elementary and Middle School Teachers’ Responses**

Calculation	Elementary teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 23)	Middle school teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 12)
Mean	71.5 min	149.2 min
Median	75.0 min	150.0 min
Mode	75.0 min	150.0 min

Note. The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?” Number of minutes are higher than those reported by elementary teachers because teachers categorized as middle included responses of average elementary and junior high amounts. Some middle school teachers may be teaching in rural areas that include Grades K–8 in one school.

Of the 24 Prince Edward Island teachers categorized as elementary, 66.7% reported their music instruction was mandatory, 0% reported it as an elective, and 33.3% reported programs for which music instruction was both mandatory and elective. Of the six teachers categorized as middle, 100% reported their programs as elective. Of the five teachers categorized as secondary, 80% reported their programs as elective whereas 20% reported as mandatory and electives.

For the number of minutes of music instruction per week, the 23 Prince Edward Island teachers categorized as elementary reported a mean of 71.5 min. Of the 1,500 min of instruction typically experienced in a week, 4.8% is experienced as music instruction. This is very close to the recommended time of 90 min per 6-day cycle, which averages to 75 min per week. The 12 teachers categorized as middle reported a mean of 149.2 min. Of the 1,500 min of instruction typically experienced in a week, 9.9% is experienced as music instruction. Again, the time is close to the recommended time of 160–180 min per 6-day cycle: 160–180 min over 6 days equals 133–150 min over 5 days. The answers for the minutes of music instruction at the secondary level were reported such that it was not possible to accurately determine the time as experienced.

These answers indicate that teachers in Prince Edward Island are largely including music education instruction at a frequency consistent with curricular guidelines. As well, participant responses regarding music instruction as mandatory or elective harmonize with what government curricula suggest.

## **Nova Scotia**

### ***Policy Documents***

Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (n.d.-b) released its revised “Time to Learn” strategy in 2015 for Grades P–6, which outlines the minimum instructional time for various subject areas. Music receives 60 min per week of instruction from P–6.

For Grades 7–9, instruction is required for a variety of disciplines with a required two courses from technology education, family studies, or arts education. At each grade level, students take at least one of the following electives: Band Instruments, Explore Music, Family Studies, Technology Education, Visual Arts (Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2014). As with Grades K–6, minimum time allotments are provided for language arts and mathematics but no other discipline. Among the high school requirements is a one credit arts course (dance, drama, music, or visual arts). Minimum number of hours for one credit is 110 hr of instructional time.

### ***Survey Results***

Results are presented in Tables 40 and 41. See the Appendix, Figure A9, for Nova Scotia elementary, junior, and secondary split details.

**Table 40****Music Instruction: Nova Scotia Elementary, Junior, and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Elementary ( <i>n</i> = 76)		Junior ( <i>n</i> = 17)		Secondary ( <i>n</i> = 19)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mandatory	55	72.4%	3	17.6%	0	0.0%
Elective	6	7.9%	4	23.5%	14	73.7%
Both	15	19.7%	9	52.9%	5	26.3%
Other	0	0.0%	1	5.9%	0	0.0%

Note. The question read, "At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?"

**Table 41****Minutes per Week: Nova Scotia Elementary and Junior Teachers' Responses**

Calculation	Elementary teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 76)	Junior teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 17)
Mean	66.6 min	102.6 min
Median	60.0 min	100.0 min
Mode	60.0 min	90, 120 min

Note. The question read, "Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?"

Of the 76 Nova Scotia teachers categorized as elementary, 72.4% listed music as mandatory, 7.9% as elective, and 19.7% reported teaching courses that were part of the mandatory instruction as well as an elective. Of the 17 categorized as junior, 17.5% reported music as mandatory, 23.5% as elective, and 52.9% as teaching courses within both the mandatory requirement and elective. Of the 19 teachers categorized as secondary, none reported they were teaching music programs as mandatory, 73.7% reported teaching as electives, and, oddly enough, 26.3% listed as doing both.

For the number of minutes of music instruction per week, the 76 teachers categorized as elementary reported a mean of 66.6 min. Of the 1,500 min of instruction typically experienced in a week, 4.4% is experienced as music instruction. For the 17 teachers categorized as junior, they reported a mean of 102.6 min. Of the 1,500 min of instruction typically experienced in a week, 6.8% is experienced as music instruction.

**Newfoundland and Labrador****Policy Documents**

For intermediate grades (7–9), the government groups music and visual art together, and it recommends that this grouping be allotted 5% of instructional time. For secondary grades (10–12), the government requires two fine arts credits be earned for graduation.

According to the Essential Graduation Learnings from the Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education (n.d.-a), in the 2020–2021 Program of Studies, music is mandatory for Grades 1–3 (primary), with a 30% time allotment recommended for a variety of disciplines, including music. For Grades 4–6 (elementary), music is mandatory, with a time allotment for music instruction of 6% of the total instructional time. For Grades 7–9 (intermediate), the time allotment is 5% of the total instructional time. For high school (secondary), there are no music requirements for graduation; however, there is a fine arts requirement of two credits.

Note that groups of grades taught by the participants made it challenging to separate the data into the categories as reflected on the website (i.e., primary, elementary, intermediate, and secondary). For example, participants who identified as elementary taught K–4, K–6, or K–9; as intermediate, Grades 4–6; as junior, Grades 7–9, and as secondary 10–12.

### **SURVEY RESULTS**

Results are presented in Tables 42 and 43. See the Appendix, Figure A10, for Newfoundland and Labrador primary/elementary, intermediate, and secondary split details.

**Table 42**

#### **Music Instruction: Newfoundland and Labrador Primary/Elementary, Intermediate, and Secondary Teachers**

Response	Primary/elementary ( <i>n</i> = 79)		Intermediate ( <i>n</i> = 15)		Secondary ( <i>n</i> = 22)	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Mandatory	61	77.2%	7	46.7%	2	9.1%
Elective	1	1.3%	1	6.7%	8	36.4%
Both	17	21.5%	7	46.7%	12	54.5%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

*Note.* The question read, “At your school, music instruction is \_\_\_\_?” For primary/elementary teachers, data include participants who identified as primary or elementary teachers and taught K–4, K–6, or K–9.

**Table 43**

#### **Minutes per Week: Newfoundland and Labrador Primary/Elementary and Intermediate Teachers’ Responses**

Calculation	Primary/elementary teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 79)	Intermediate teacher responses ( <i>n</i> = 15)
Mean	87.8 min	77.0 min
Median	85.0 min	80.0 min
Mode	90.0 min	50, 90 min

*Note.* The question read, “Average of minutes for music instruction per week is \_\_\_\_?”

Of the 79 Newfoundland and Labrador teachers categorized as primary/elementary, 77.2% reported that the music instruction was mandatory, 1.3% reported it as elective, and 21.5% reported that some programs which included music instruction were mandatory whereas others were an elective. Of the 15 teachers categorized as intermediate, 46.7% reported music instruction as mandatory, 6.7% reported it as elective, and 46.7% reported it as both mandatory and elective. Of the 22 teachers categorized as secondary, 9.1% reported their programs as mandatory, 36.4% as elective, and 54.5% reported as both mandatory and elective. The requirement of two fine arts credits for high school students would account for the mandatory programs, and programs other than what is listed but offered would account for those identified as elective.

In terms of the number of minutes that students received music instruction, primary/elementary teachers reported a mean of 87.8 min per week. Out of a typical 1,500 min of total instruction per week, 5.6% is experienced as music instruction. The intermediate teachers reported a mean of 77.0 min. Out of the 1,500 min, 5.1% is experienced as music instruction.

### **Summary: Topic 2—Survey Results for Mandatory Time for Music Instruction and Length of Mandated Time**

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Survey results reflected that time is mandated for music instruction at the elementary level but as an elective occurring at the secondary level (see Table 44). This finding aligns with policy documents in which language about mandatory time is consistently included for elementary goals and outcomes but as an elective as students move through middle/intermediate/junior grades at the secondary level (typically Grades 6–9 or 7–9). Music is consistently articulated as an elective at the senior grades (typically Grades 10–12).

In terms of minutes per week of music instruction as reflected in the mean and percentage within a typical 1,500 min of overall instruction, Manitoba teachers reported the highest for the elementary level: 102.0 min of music instruction, comprising 6.8% of total instruction time. Prince Edward Island teachers categorized as junior reported the highest value of music instruction: 149.2 min, comprising 9.9% of total instruction time. Note that teachers in only four provinces were categorized as junior: Alberta, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland and Labrador, according to the organization of their provincial curricular documents.

**Table 44**  
**Mean Minutes per Week of Music Instruction by Province**

Province	Elementary		Junior	
	M	%	M	%
BC	88.9	5.9%		
AB	84.6	5.6%	135.8	9.1%
SK	95.7	6.4%		
MB	102.0	6.8%		
ON	72.5	4.8%		
QC	68.5	4.6%		
NB	67.1	4.5%		
PE	71.5	4.8%	149.2	9.9%
NS	66.6	4.4%	102.6	6.8%
PE	71.5	4.8%	149.2	9.9%
NL	87.8	5.6%	77.0	5.1%

*Note.* Mean calculated as percent of instructional minutes per week within a 1,500 min week. BC = British Columbia, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, NS = Nova Scotia, PE = Prince Edward Island, NL= Newfoundland and Labrador.

## Implications

### Educational Policy Reform and the Centralization or Localization of Decision-Making

Several shifts have recently occurred in provincial education policies designed to address issues of funding, inclusive education, and autonomy of local voices. Some of these issues are addressed within Alberta's new funding model (Support Our Students, 2020), Quebec's recent implementation of school service centres (Québec Ministère de l'Éducation, 2021), Nova Scotian reforms due to Glaze's (2018) *Raise the Bar* report, New Brunswick's move towards "flexible learning environments" (New Brunswick Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, 2019, p. 9), and Newfoundland and Labrador's (2018) *Education Action Plan*, to name a few. These policy reforms and recommendations have been received with varying levels of optimism and concern. Many of them focus on how best to allocate funds and to centralize or localize decision-making in order to serve the province, communities, and children. Themes of flexibility, inclusivity, and efficiency have taken the front seat in policy decisions, with policy makers arguing that the focus of these themes is better suited to meet students' education needs and to develop the future generation of citizens (and workers). As advocates for equal access to music education experiences, we are concerned that potential downsides of such a focus may arise if it excludes access for some students because of a lack of resources required to implement what is stated in the policy documents.

### **Discrepancy Between Policy Documents and Participant Responses**

The data from Section 2 illuminate some key features of Canada's current education system. Notably, in many instances there is a disconnect between what is officially stated in policy documents with regard to whether music is mandatory and what teachers have indicated. As an example (amongst many), we look at the *Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes for K–8 Music* (Manitoba Education, 2011, 2021), both editions of which succinctly summarize the provincial rationales for embedding a subject such as music within an arts umbrella:

Manitoba schools may offer one or more individual arts disciplines (music, dance, drama, and/or visual arts). Schools have the flexibility to choose the number and combination of arts disciplines appropriate for their local context, resources, and needs. The number of arts disciplines offered in a school will depend upon available resources, allocated instructional time, staffing, and the arts implementation approach used in the school. (p. 2)

It is interesting, then, that 89.2% of Manitoba teachers categorized as elementary indicated that music education was either mandatory or both mandatory and elective (35.4%). We are heartened by teacher responses related to how much music education takes place within their schools, yet selection bias may be present, meaning that participant responses may not accurately reflect the perspectives of all teachers and music educators within their province. In other words, responses from a more comprehensive provincial survey may not align with this necessary albeit introductory snapshot of Canadian music education.

### **Mandatory Music and the Atlantic Arts Education Curriculum**

In most Canadian provinces, music is mandated at the primary/elementary level within a larger group of courses such as fine arts. Music as a subject is mandatory in only four: New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador. That music is mandatory within these provinces may be due to the structuring of the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Arts Education Curriculum* (Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, 2001) nearly two decades ago, which remains a foundational document for the development of more recent Atlantic curricula. Responses from teachers from all provinces and territories indicate that for the most part, they believe music is mandatory or both mandatory and elective at the primary/elementary level.

### **How Many Minutes? Policy Versus Practice**

In some provinces, their curricula and program of studies outline specific “amounts” of time devoted to the instruction of subjects, including music; however, this is not the case for all provinces (see Table 45).

Table 45

**Mandated Elementary Instructional Minutes per Week and Reported Values in the Survey**

Prov.	Min per week arts per music instruction	Reported values
BC	Unlisted	88.9 min (adjusted)
AB	10% total instructional time in art and music K–6 ~ 150 min art and music	84.6 min
SK	50 min per week music K–5 10% total instruction time arts 1–6	95.7 min
MB	8% total instruction time arts 7–8 ~ 9.5% arts (142.5 min arts)	102.0 min
ON	Unlisted Cycle 1: 7 hr for two of four arts disciplines (music, plastic arts, drama, dance), second language, ethics, and religion	72.5 min (adjusted)
QC	Cycle 2: 11 hr for two of four arts disciplines (music, plastic arts, drama, dance); second language; ethics and religion; geography, history, and citizenship; and science and technology	68.5 min (adjusted)
NB	English K–6 music ~ 67.5 min French 5.6% total instruction time music (84 min)	67.1 min music
PE	75 min 1–6 music	71.5 min music
NS	P–6 60 min per week music ~ 6% total instructional time music K–6	66.6 min music
NL	~ 90 min	87.8 min music

*Note.* BC = British Columbia, AB = Alberta, SK = Saskatchewan, MB = Manitoba, ON = Ontario, QC = Quebec, NB = New Brunswick, PE = Prince Edward Island, NS = Nova Scotia, NL = Newfoundland and Labrador. Values as reported by elementary music specialists.

In the Atlantic provinces (New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador), specialist elementary teachers' survey responses mirror closely the provincially mandated instructional times for music education. It is interesting that despite Atlantic provincial curricula mandating music, Atlantic teachers on average reported less music instruction time than specialists in the other provinces, where music is grouped within larger fine arts or general categories.

## Section 3: Beginnings—Conclusion and Future Research Avenues

The goals of this study were to identify and provide data that reflect the many elements influencing music education and to prepare a pathway forward for further research. The abundance of data collected provides a foundation for research that can enhance all stakeholders' understanding about those influences and guide us as we strive for a quality music education, one that is accessible to all. In Phase 1, data sets of official top-down policies and documents provided a wealth of information offering many details that help to explain why access to music education is so complex from province to province. In Phase 2, the national survey also provided an abundance of important data, giving stakeholders a taste of how the reality of music education aligns or not with official policies. Nonetheless, we are mindful of the limits of the number of respondents to the national survey, and thus encourage caution when generalizing within a provincial context as well as recommending policies based on the responses.

### Conclusion

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Much has been learned throughout the study process, a process that will be ongoing beyond this report. First, it has been made more transparent that education, and consequently music education, was never designed with a one-size-fits-all model in mind. Since the establishment of Canada in 1867, this country has acknowledged the importance of promoting and celebrating diversity in educational practices, reflecting distinct cultures, religions, languages, economies, and laws in each province and territory. Adding to this richness and complexity are the many decision-makers who affect the delivery and operation of education; these decision-makers include provincial governments, local school districts, K–12 schools, postsecondary institutions, school administrators, individual faculties, parents, and organizations involved in education. This landscape, which is varied and rarely generalizable, is the foundation on which music education rests.

As outlined in Section 1, the vision of this report was to complete two phases of the national music education study. Each phase required researchers to collect and analyze data and to report the findings in response to questions posed. In Section 1, we described the study process and methodology, then identified and described all the top-down government policies and systems that prepare, secure, sustain, and restrict music education in K–12 schools. In Section 2, we presented findings that revealed the degree of alignment (or not) between content listed in provincial policy documents and the perceptions of school administrators and music teachers found in the survey results.

In Section 2, themes in the form of questions emerged as data were analyzed and interpreted around two selected areas: funding and mandatory time allocated for music instruction. First, the strength of an alignment or not between policy and practice became apparent; specifically, what is written in provincial government policy documents and what is implemented within each province and at the local level varied across the country and indeed within provinces. Policy documents included

information about provincial school acts, provincial curricula, curriculum development, hiring practices, certification and postsecondary teacher training for music educators, and Indigenous content and music education curriculum. Who are the decision-makers as policy is created, and who determines the implementation of those policies? These stakeholders vary across the country and within each province; further investigation could bring about recommendations for each as alignment between policy and practice is strengthened.

The second theme that emerged in Section 2 was the need to examine whether funding and mandatory time for music instruction could be guaranteed at each school in the country, and if so, how? A subset of this theme then focused on policy that recommended only qualified music educators deliver music instruction and stipulations such that “qualified” would be consistent within each province and from a national perspective. With such a policy in place, decision-making at the local level could reflect stronger consistency when compared at the provincial and national levels. Table 46 shows the national survey questions which provided sources for data to address the two Section 2 topics: (a) funding and (b) status of mandatory time for music instruction.

**Table 46**

***Themes and Survey Questions Asked***

Theme	Survey questions asked to administrators and teachers who teach music
Funding	<p>Does the school receive designated funding for music instruction? (Y/N)</p> <p>Who is responsible for providing music education—the district or the administration?</p> <p>Did school administrators have flexibility and autonomy to allocate funds for music instruction? (Y/N)</p>
Status of mandatory time	<p>Is there mandatory time allotted for music instruction? (Y/N)</p> <p>If so, how many minutes per week are allotted for music instruction?</p>

## Future Research Avenues

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Because of the vast data banks developed from the national survey responses, it was clear that further analysis of these data, as presented in this project, would need to continue. Other data collected would need to be analyzed and interpreted based on a variety of research ideas, including those presented in this third section—we consider them “beginnings” for future research projects. With these continued avenues for examination, the Coalition is excited about the possible directions researchers will take as they uncover the opportunities and challenges of aspects that influence music education programs across the country.

Moving forward, a goal for the Coalition is to centrally store the data and make them available to other music education researchers as specific research questions are identified for further investigation. To that end, several possible research areas and questions arose as the data were collected, analyzed, and presented; these topics are based on what was discovered and questions that were posed in speculation of what was yet to be discovered. Here we present 10 proposed categories for future research:

1. Alignment between provincial policy documents and implementation of curriculum by school districts, school administrators, and music educators
2. Rural and urban settings
3. Requirements to deliver music instruction
4. Preservice music teacher preparation and professional development
5. Time allotted for music instruction
6. Indigenization and decolonization
7. Role of technology
8. Advocacy and music education organizations
9. Physical space allocations
10. Other

The first category is alignment between provincial policy documents and implementation of curriculum by school districts, school administrators, and music educators. Given that the important task of gathering all official government documents has been completed and will continue to be updated as policies are revised, the next step of aligning these policies with the survey results and any other future surveys would help to determine whether the stated policy and the reality of practice align. Further questions to identify the specific stakeholders and decision-makers in each province would allow for comparisons as to how decisions are made regarding music education. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Examine the level of alignment between policy documents and the survey results. How might alignment strengthen the conversation between policy makers, administrators, and music educators?
- Identify who makes decisions and whether they are provincially, district, or school based in terms of hiring, funding, determining allotted time for music instruction, and providing oversight of curricular responsibilities.
- Review opportunities to amend provincial school acts to allow for a broader representation of stakeholders in curriculum revision and Indigenous content.
- Conduct a provincial investigation of school board practices for hiring and music curriculum support.

The second category for future research is telling the story of the similar and different opportunities and challenges across urban and rural settings. What impacts the implementation of policy, and are the

needs the same within and across each of these settings? This question, of course, speaks to the variations found across and within provinces. How can policy guide and yet be flexible enough to permit local stakeholders to have a voice about what is necessary at their level as experienced? Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Study the similar and different opportunities and challenges between rural and urban settings as decisions are made about implementing policy content.
- Investigate the similarities and differences across rural and urban settings in terms of student experiences, delivery of curriculum, and content.
- Explore the challenges for teaching music in rural schools with multiple grade levels within a classroom.
- Determine whether community support for music education differs between rural and urban schools, and if so, identify the specifics.
- Examine the effects of demographic changes on music programs.
- Probe the relationship between community-based music programs and K–12 school music programs.

The third category suggests future research into the range of music teacher credentials; specifically, the spectrum of training necessary to deliver a quality music education program in K–12 schools. How music specialists and generalist teachers feel about their training and whether their training provided the necessary tools to competently teach music in the K–12 setting are important questions when reviewing the alignment with how postsecondary programs prepare K–12 music teachers. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Identify what credentials are needed to deliver a quality music education.
- Compile data on what one needs to understand and be able to do to effectively engage students in a quality musical experience.

Topics in the third category lead to the fourth category, which seeks future research into preservice music teacher preparation and professional development and what content in these programs adequately prepares music specialists and generalist teachers for the work they must do in the K–12 music classroom. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Examine how preservice teachers are prepared overall for K–12 music, with a comparison between elementary and secondary.
- Assess to what extent postsecondary preparation of music teachers goes beyond a performance-based emphasis to include improvisation, composition, world music, Indigenous content, popular music, and digital technologies.
- Identify what professional development opportunities are available for generalist teachers and other teachers of music with varying credentials.
- Identify what professional development opportunities are available in response to living and teaching through a pandemic.

The fifth category asks questions regarding the time allotted for music instruction, which varies from school to school, district to district, and province to province, and for which there is no agenda to equalize time allotments. Future research could identify a balance of time that is proportional for STEAM disciplines. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Compare the percentage of instructional time allotted to music instruction and to other disciplines.
- Examine programs that have a balance of STEAM disciplines in terms of allotted time for instruction per discipline.
- Examine how schools configure timetables and allot time for music instruction.

The sixth category reflects the need to continue to address the 94 Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (2015) report. Although the national survey shared a diversity of ways that Indigenous content and ways of knowing and being are included in the K–12 music classroom, it became clear that much work is yet to be done. What are good ways forward as music educators reconcile current Western classical performance-based content with the goal of enriched inclusivity? Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Examine how music educators establish relationships and appropriate protocols with local First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities in an effective manner.
- Explore the role of contemporary Indigenous music.
- Investigate the role of including Western classical music in the decolonization process.
- Determine what provincial ministry resources have been provided to support Indigenous content inclusion.

The seventh category identifies much-needed work in digital technology in the K–12 music classroom. Just as COVID-19 has created much disruption, so too has it increased awareness of the role that technology can play in permeating educator and student experiences in and through music. In many ways, post-COVID-19 questions are significantly influenced by questions about digital technology. How has COVID-19 affected the use of digital technology, what are students using in the music creation process, and what is now expected in the music classroom moving forward? Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Examine what activities constitute current and future digital technology use in the music classroom.
- Document the technologies that K–12 music teachers have learned and adopted from living and teaching in a pandemic.
- Examine what changes might occur in terms of educators' ability and desire to implement technology in music education.
- Explore what might be essential postsecondary digital technology training to prepare preservice music teachers.

The eighth category for future research and action suggests that more collaboration between music education advocacy groups and music education organizations is essential to unifying and strengthening the goal for equal access to quality music education. Promoting collaboration through ongoing professional development for generalist teachers could also be a significant solution to improving access and inclusion to quality music education. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Document what actions music education advocacy groups have taken, and which actions have yielded success.
- Investigate why some provinces seem to need advocacy organizations whereas others do not.
- Identify influences, limitations, and interconnectedness among music education and advocacy groups.

The ninth category, which received responses in the national survey from K–12 school administrators and music specialists, was regarding physical space allocation for music instruction. Future research could explore aspects of space allocation for music instruction and any space challenges when teaching music in K–12 schools. Possible research topics in this category include the following:

- Examine whether K–7 schools have different space allocation needs compared to 8–12 schools.
- Determine the spectrum of space challenges for the music education classroom.
- Investigate whether there is a standard formula for appropriate space allocations for music classrooms.
- Explore what elements of design or configuration work for the different needs of a music classroom.

Finally, how can a country that is vast and geographically separated have at its roots a value for education through music while still retaining its values of diversity within local culture? Moreover, how might educators move towards more consistency on the many policies across provinces with a guarantee that the practice reflects the policies? Might it be possible to converge on equal access to music education with a guarantee of time allocated and support taught by qualified music educators as a start? How might colleagues across organizations align to work together for such a goal to be realized? These and other research avenues are ripe for investigation.

The process of developing this report was made possible through the generosity and support from many music, arts, education and music education organizations, universities, and individuals. The process was lengthy and complicated; however, the information gleaned provides much thought for reflection and future direction for music education as all those involved in music education continue to learn while advocating, teaching, and researching. We are excited about the possibilities of future findings and implications of this study as we strive together for equal access to K–12 music education. There is much left to be done; this report marks what we see as the beginning of a journey towards understanding the state of music education in Canada and achieving a music education for all.

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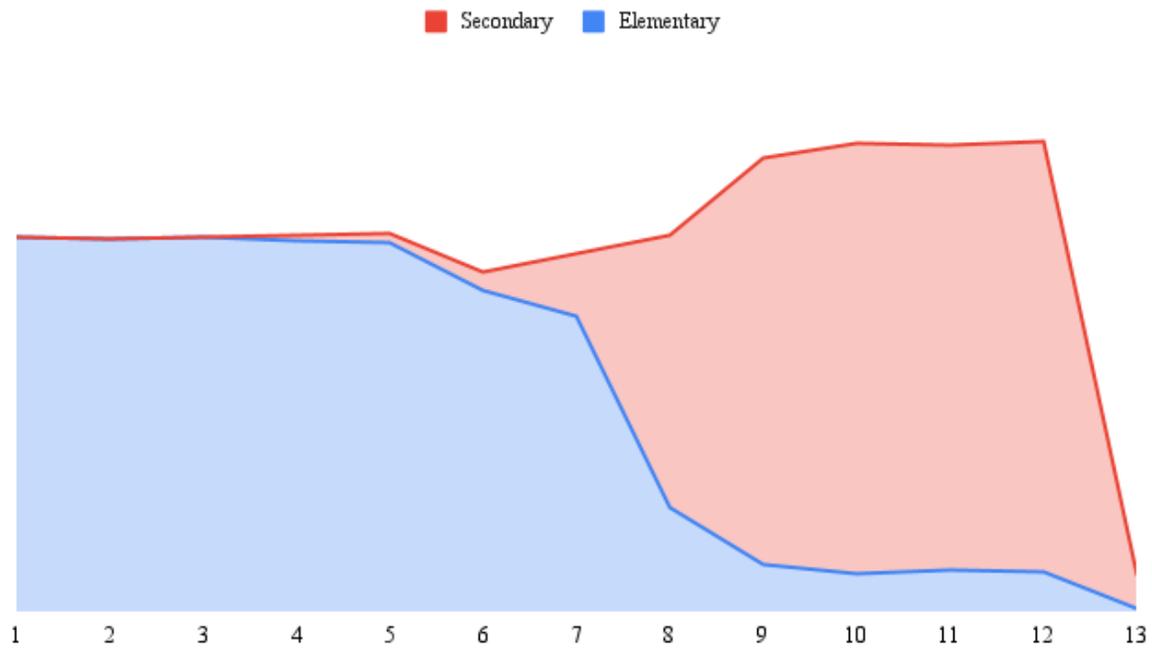
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## Appendix: Elementary and Secondary Survey Responses by Province

**Figure A1**

**British Columbia Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary**



**Figure A2**

**Alberta Respondents Split Into Elementary, Junior, and Secondary**

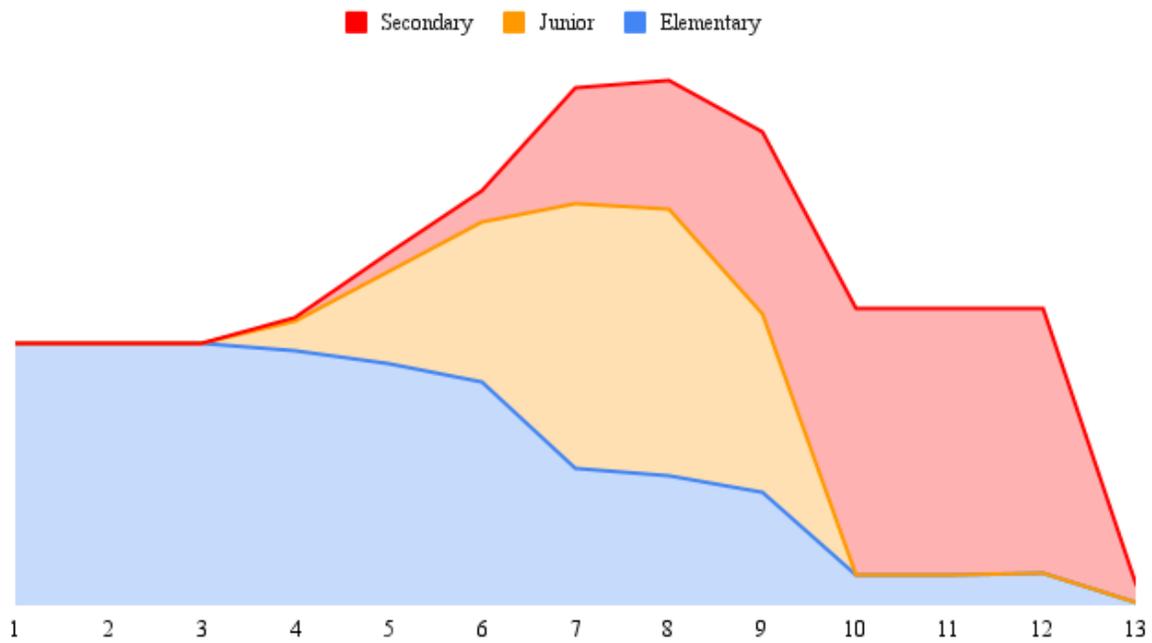


Figure A3

## Saskatchewan Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary

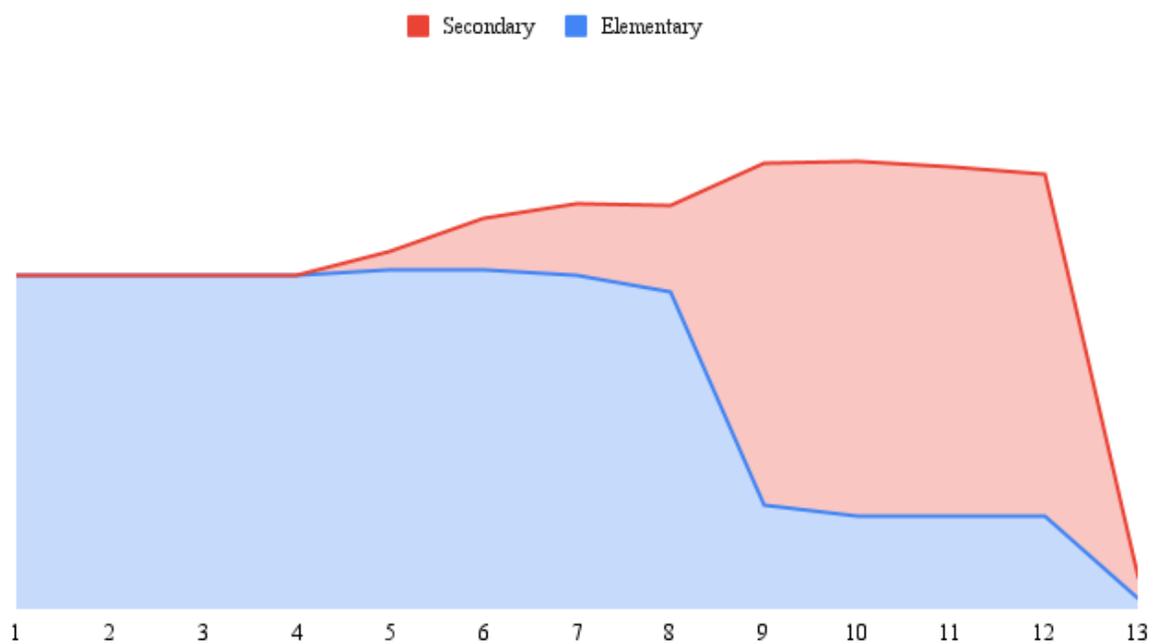
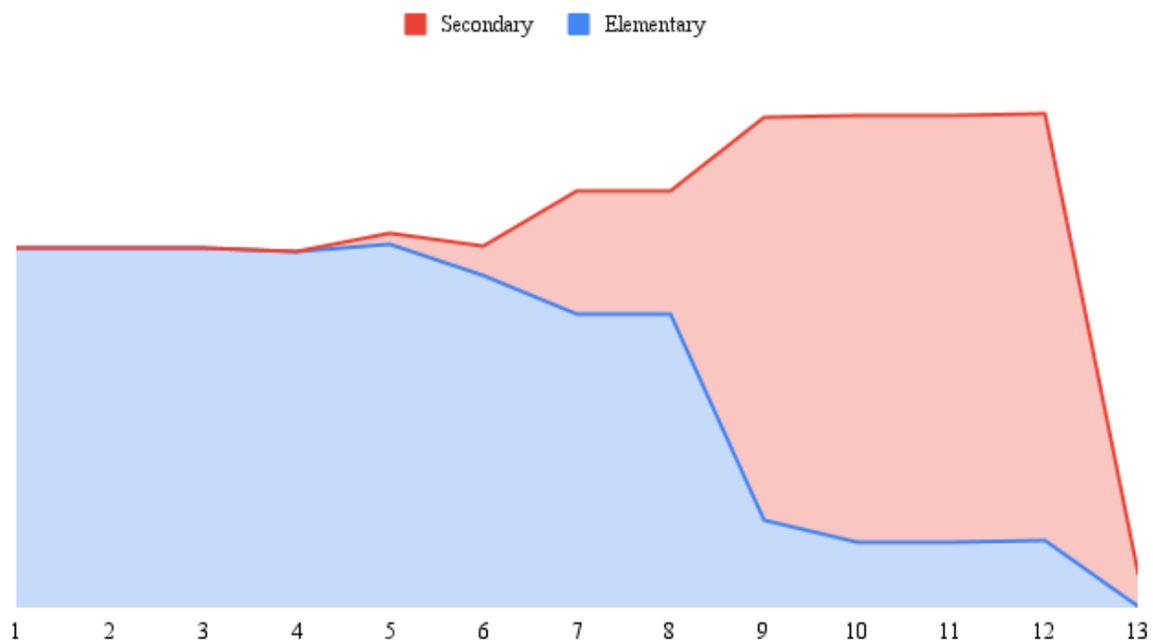
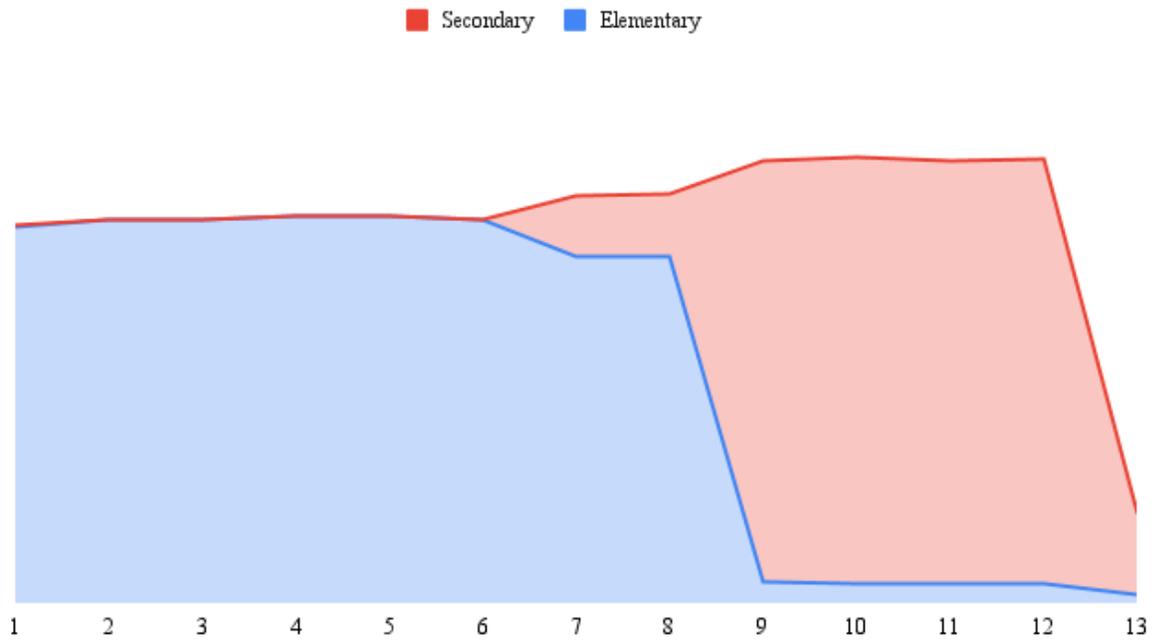


Figure A4

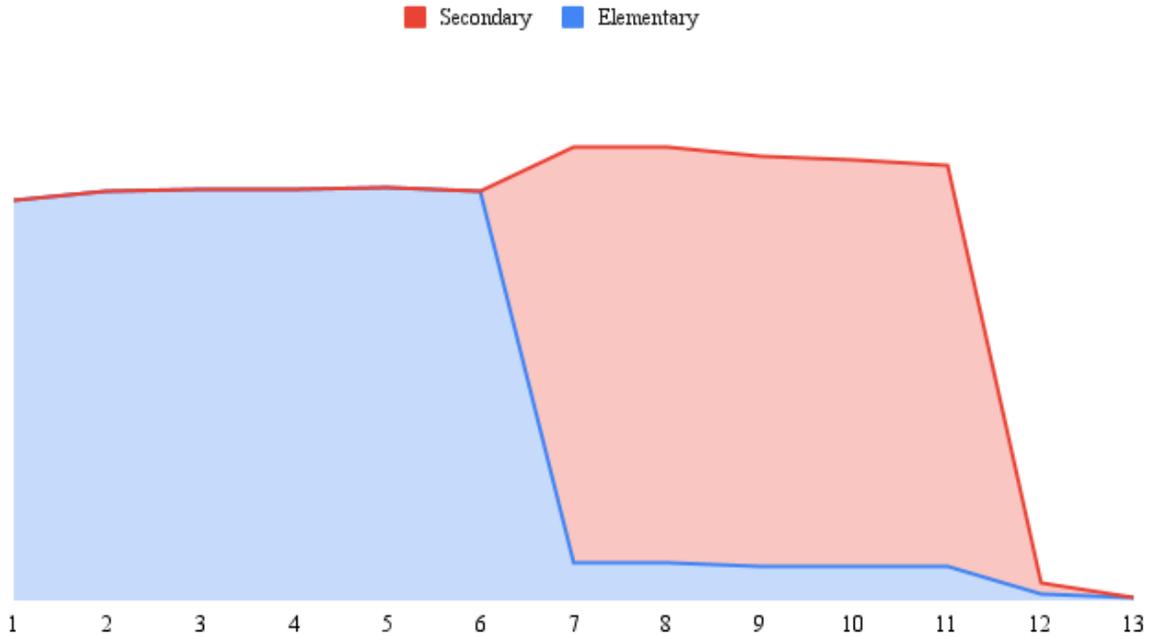
## Manitoba Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary



**Figure A5**  
**Ontario Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary**

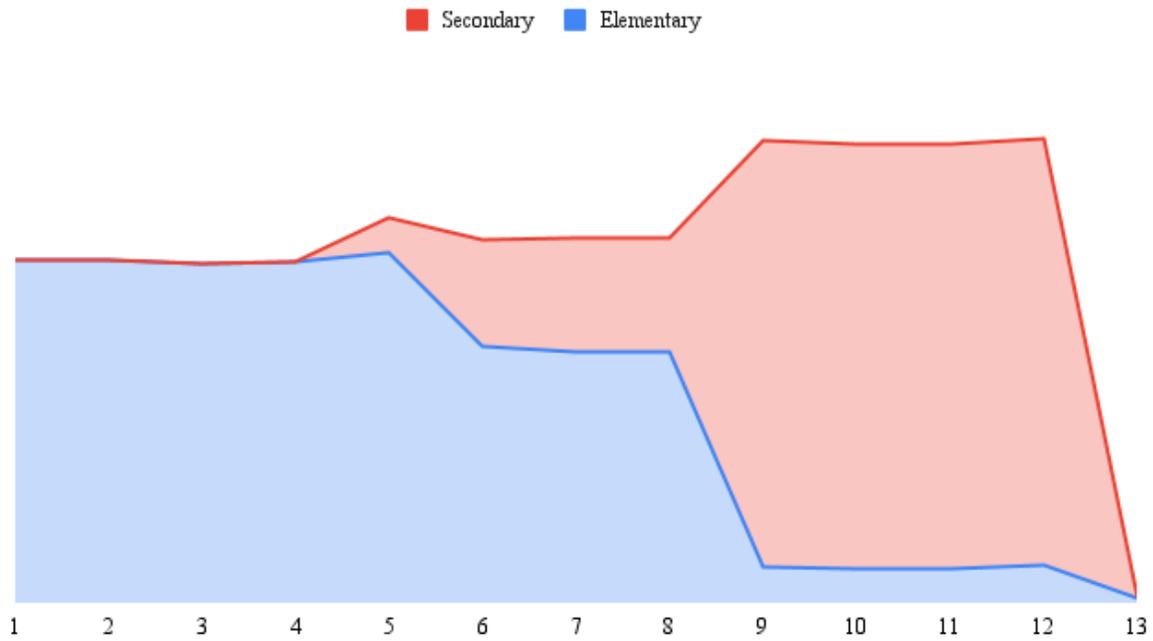


**Figure A6**  
**Quebec Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary**



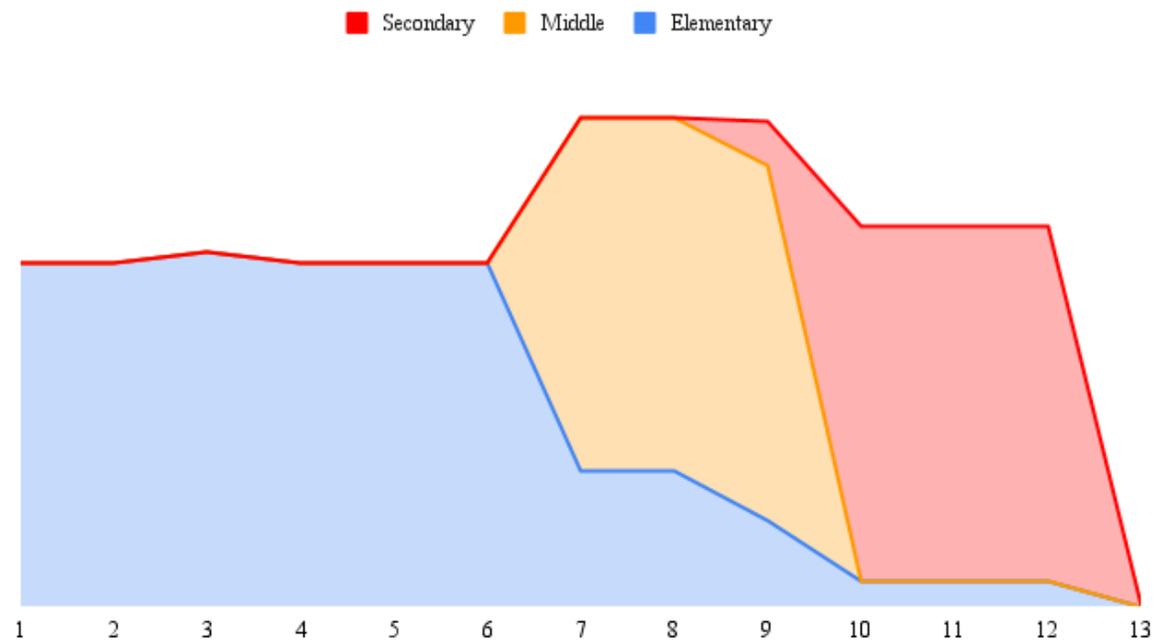
**Figure A7**

**New Brunswick Respondents Split Into Elementary and Secondary**

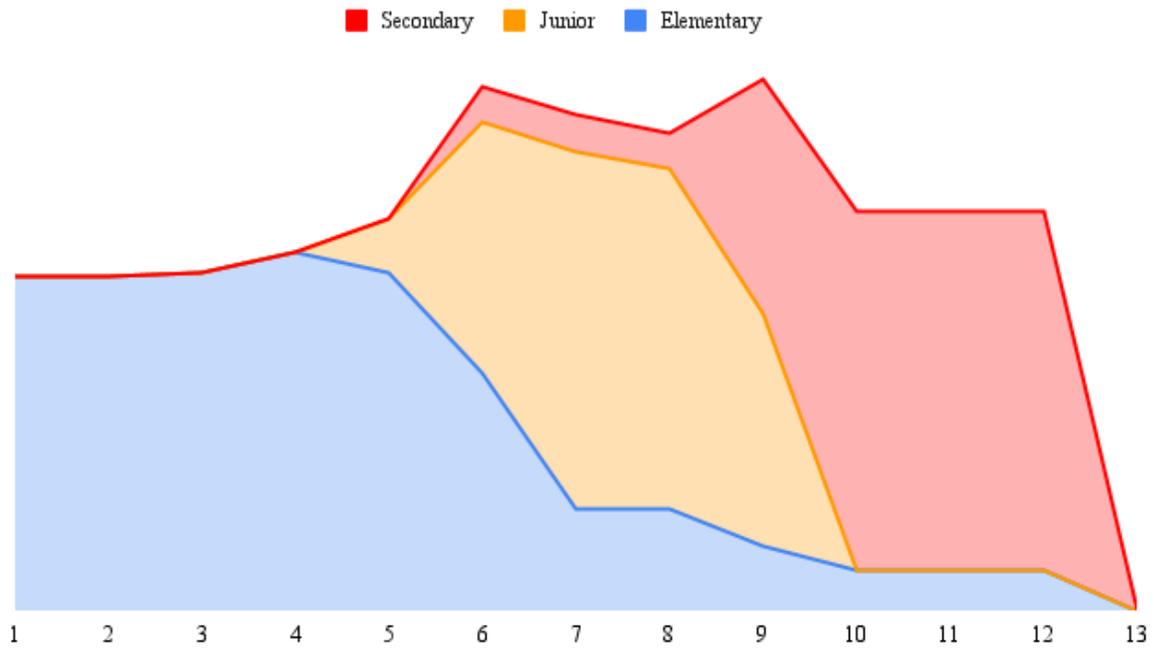


**Figure A8**

**Prince Edward Island Respondents Split Into Elementary, Middle, and Secondary**



**Figure A9**  
**Nova Scotia Respondents Split Into Elementary, Junior, and Secondary**



**Figure A10**  
**Newfoundland and Labrador Respondents Split Into Primary/Elementary, Intermediate, and Secondary**

