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Block Scheduling is a tool used by school administrators in search of a form of alternative scheduling. In an attempt to find the best fit for their schools, administrators have been researching and experimenting with different forms of block scheduling for the past fifteen to twenty years. This process is not a task the administrator should take on alone; rather, he/she should incorporate the faculty, parents, and students into the decision-making process. The best option for school administrators considering this type of scheduling is to research different models, form committees to discuss the needs of the school, visit other schools using it, and collect advice from representatives teaching at those schools within a block schedule. The best option for music teachers is to do their own research. They must get involved with the scheduling design committee and not let block scheduling just “happen to them.” There are many benefits and drawbacks to alternative scheduling. All school districts should consider using a schedule that is best for the needs of the students and the overall curriculum. Results have shown that block scheduling will be a curriculum organizational strategy used for years to come. With careful planning, given the appropriate situation, block scheduling can be successful for school music programs. This concept is only beneficial with a supportive administration, willing students, teacher networking, and outstanding music educators with the passion to share enjoyment of music through a thriving program.

The Status of Block Scheduling in
Secondary Choral and Instrumental Programs in
Kansas Schools in 2006

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The American school system has been no stranger to change and adaptation. From the beginning of public education in the United States, the government, communities, and educators have identified the specific needs of their schools. At the outset, these needs were simple - educate our children to be able to function in the new world as a good citizen and as an individual. Subject areas were minimal and the depth of knowledge depended on the will of the individual student. We have come a long way from meeting in social halls and one-room school houses. With the evolution of school facilities has also come the development of a more sophisticated educational system.

As communities have grown, so, too, have the number of students and the need for more educators. With a greater number of teachers came the need for better teacher organization. Soon administrators came to aid in this organizational process and helped to bridge the gap between the community, parents, and teachers.

The middle of the 20th century brought ideas for even more development through administrators. School curricula continued to grow more complex, and with these complexities came the continuous development of the school day schedule. Traces of alternative schedules can be found in various forms as early as the 1960s; however, what we know today as the “Block Schedule” would not be visually conceived until the early 1980s. This relatively modern form of “reform scheduling” in the United States has spread like wildfire throughout the country in the past two decades.

Rigorous logistical, organizational growth and development for schools can be viewed as an exciting moment for the public educational system. However, one cannot help but ask “Is the growth *too* fast?” Have school administrators adequately “tested the

water” before jumping into such a drastic endeavor? With so many schools currently using one form or another of block scheduling, these questions may have been posed too late to be of any assistance at the present time. However, schools can benefit from an analysis of the current scheduling scenario.

How, exactly, do current music educators feel about block scheduling? There is a definite need to determine whether block scheduling is here to stay, or if it is merely an educational fad. Research collected for this study reflects the views of both experts who have compiled a rigorous amount of information on this topic as well as music educators themselves.

The author’s interest in this topic comes from his concern about the future of block scheduling. Has block scheduling been effective enough to be continued as an appropriate approach to the organization of a school day? Colleges and universities need to know if they should begin/continue to educate young teachers on how to structure their lessons for block scheduling periods. To a young educator, it appears as if many school districts have been “riding the fence” for too long, waiting for the next district to decide if block scheduling is right or wrong for it. A schedule should be formulated to fit the individual curriculum of a particular school. To the author, the process of trial and error is understood; however, it is uncertain if drastic measures should be taken during the course of students’ educational experience.

In order to attempt to answer these questions, a full yet concise review of literature concerning block scheduling has been assembled. Through careful research, questions have been addressed and analyzed. The definition of Block Scheduling was

introduced, along with examples of variations stemming from the original form of its modern model.

A few of the most important resources used to complete the literature review included two books written in collaboration by Larry R. Blocher of Wichita State University in Wichita, Kansas, and Richard B. Miles of Morehead State University in Kentucky. In 1996, Blocher and Miles introduced *Block Scheduling: Implications for Music Education*. This book discusses the survey the authors conducted with schools across the nation and includes models of schools currently using block scheduling. In 1999, the same authors released *Scheduling and Teaching Music*, which goes into greater detail about music educators who have found ways to succeed in their school music programs under a block scheduling format. The authors of *Scheduling and Teaching Music* do not “choose sides” in regard to accepting or rejecting block scheduling; they merely want to help other music educators plan rehearsals through greater variety and more efficiency with their individual teaching strategies.

The process of constructing a successful block schedule is explained in this document. The roles of each participating subject are carefully laid out. Administrators often spearhead the campaign through careful research when the idea of a new schedule is first conceived. Many administrators desire to raise standardized test scores, create opportunities for students to take more classes, and improve the overall educational experience for those attending the academic institution. They are also responsible for defining the roles of faculty members, student bodies, and respective communities during the development of new schedules.

There are many considerations to be addressed from a music educator's perspective. These considerations include finding out what is important in order to maintain the success of or create an even more successful music program. Music teachers need to know their role in this procedure and when exactly to get involved in the process of building new schedules. These teachers should be responsible for equipping themselves with facts just like other subject-area teachers. Administrators and music teachers alike need to know what initial obstacles they face during the development of a new schedule and how to go about overcoming these concerns.

Teachers and administrators must educate themselves on the benefits of block scheduling. They should carefully examine information proving the positive impact of block scheduling through test scores and the effects on school atmospheres. They should also examine the amount of time teachers have to plan and execute a lesson and compare it to the design of most block schedules. Music teachers need to identify the benefits of longer class periods and explore how different types of ensembles benefit in a variety of situations.

Administrators and teachers must also educate themselves on the drawbacks of block scheduling. Teachers need to understand how planning is affected by block scheduling. The total amount of accumulated class time within a new schedule should be compared to that of the older one. From this examination it should be determined whether or not teachers actually have "more time" to teach within their current schedule or a new one.

From many music educators' perspectives, a new schedule may affect the way their ensembles perform on certain days. Some ensembles may not play as well as they

could have if the ensembles had met during the school day prior to concerts. Students can be forgetful when they do not have a constant daily reminder about a concept or even a performance. This creates an even greater amount of specific long-term planning for music educators, as well as for the students they teach.

Actual music program scenarios are discussed as part of this document. There is a great need for the knowledge accumulated by music educators who have created successful music programs using a form of block scheduling to be passed into the hands of others. The process for their design and development must be carefully studied and the results obtained. Music educators should also take a look at programs where teachers have found themselves struggling due to hurdles in their schedules. Ways to overcome these hurdles must be uncovered and the process should be clearly and carefully documented for the benefit of others. These resources are vital to the success of music education in the future.

In order to collect current information from music educators across the state of Kansas, a questionnaire was developed based on the preliminary research compiled within the literature review. This questionnaire consisted of 16 specific questions regarding school sizes, teacher experience, student atmosphere, school curricula (before, during, and sometimes after block scheduling), and individual feedback from teachers in the field. These questionnaires were sent to music educators at schools of various sizes throughout Kansas. The willingness of these educators to share their experience and opinions was outstanding and greatly appreciated.

The goal of the research conducted within this document was to realize the current status of block scheduling in secondary choral and instrumental programs during

the 2005-2006 school year in Kansas Schools. The results were calculated and determined through information gathered in the questionnaire. The comments and scoring of the questionnaire do not necessarily reflect the views and beliefs of the author; rather, they reveal the views and beliefs of the educators participating in it. Depending on the circumstance of each individual, block scheduling was embraced, rejected, or something of a mystery to those who chose to participate. The reasons supporting the beliefs of each participating music educator were laid out for the reader to accept or reject at his/her discretion.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Definition of Block Scheduling

In order to understand how block scheduling was developed, it is important to examine school scheduling from the beginning. The traditional schedule, which is also referred to as the conventional or classical schedule, has been the cornerstone of American secondary school schedules. Since the traditional schedule is so basic, there is little variation of its structure when comparing it from school to school. Each day in a traditional schedule is the same throughout the week. Classes meet at the same times, with the exception of a few lab or physical education classes. The school day is divided into equal periods of length. It is more difficult to combine different sections of the same class subject for longer sessions. Passing periods are routine from day to day (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983). An example of the traditional schedule can be found in the following table.

Figure 1: Traditional Scheduling (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983)

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	A	A	A	A	A
2	B	B	B	B	B
3	C	C	C	C	C
4	D	D	D	D	D
5	E	E	E	E	E
6	F	F	F	F	F
7	G	G	G	G	G

Since the introduction of computerized scheduling programs, administrators have been constantly experimenting with their school's schedule. Through this experimentation, the administrators' goal was to create school schedules that are more centered on the individual students. Items for this goal included more independent study

experiences, small-group learning, and large-group instruction (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983).

The term most used to describe byproducts of this experimentation is the Flexible Schedule. Shortly after the initiation of computer scheduling programs, this title was generally attached to any sort of school scheduling modification. Even a small change such as using double periods for a science class while maintaining a predominantly traditional schedule was in many cases labeled as a flexible schedule. A true flexible schedule is more clearly defined as a schedule created through these early computer programs to develop the best possible schedule for a particular school. These programs dictated the placement and length of all classes depending on the individual needs of each subject. Even though these programs had the freedom of class placement, the length was restricted to only single and double period class formulas (Wiley & Bishop, 1968).

A more extreme approach to secondary school scheduling came in the form of the Variable Class Schedule or Modular Schedule. The modular schedule is limited only by the imagination of the creator through a computer program. It consists of a five day cycling period. Within this five day period, each day is slightly different. After five days, the cycle starts over. The length of each class period is determined by the subject matter and instructional material. There is greater variety for student learning with less formal class arrangements, created through a formal and informal class cycle throughout the course of a week (Wiley & Bishop, 1968).

In many cases the modular schedule was too free and the flexible schedule was too restrictive. The Flexible Modular schedule is a collaboration of these two models. This schedule is designed for a large number of students to be present at the same time

for a lecture or a presentation. It also allows for smaller groups to meet in a more informal setting to work on group projects, have class discussions, and to use reinforcement activities. In order to provide more structure, regular 50 minute class periods can be used to accommodate the appropriate subjects. If desired, subjects such as science and physical education can meet for longer 90 minute blocks of class time. Those who use this schedule have to be particularly cautious of unscheduled time. Since there are so many different variations for every student's schedule, gaps of time have to be accounted for and corrected when finalizing each schedule (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983). An example of a Flexible Modular Schedule can be found in the following table.

Figure 2: Flexible Modular Schedule (Dempsey & Traverso, 1983)

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
1	ENGLISH 10 Large Group		AMERICAN HISTORY Small Group	BIOLOGY	SPANISH II	
2	↓	GEOMETRY	↓	↓	↓	
3	↓	↓		↓		
4	↓	↓				ENGLISH 10 Small Group
5		SPANISH II		AMERICAN HISTORY Small Group	BIOLOGY	↓
6		↓		↓	↓	
7	GEOMETRY	↓				GEOMETRY
8	↓					↓
9	↓	ENGLISH 10 Small Group	GEOMETRY		PHYSICAL EDUCATION	↓
10		↓	↓			BIOLOGY LAB
11	SPANISH II	LUNCH	↓			↓
12		LUNCH	LUNCH		AMERICAN HISTORY	↓
13	LUNCH		LUNCH	LUNCH	↓	
14	LUNCH	AMERICAN HISTORY Large	ENGLISH 10 Small Group	LUNCH		
15		↓		GEOMETRY	LUNCH	LUNCH
16	BIOLOGY	↓		↓	LUNCH	LUNCH
17	↓	↓	SPANISH II	↓		
18	↓		↓		ENGLISH 10	
19	PHYSICAL EDUCATION			SPANISH I	↓	
20	↓		PHYSICAL EDUCATION	↓	↓	SPANISH II
21	↓	BIOLOGY LAB	↓	↓	↓	↓
22		↓	↓		GEOMETRY	
23	AMERICAN HISTORY	↓			↓	
24	↓	↓			↓	

Modern-day Block Schedule

As of 2005, it was estimated that some form of block scheduling is being used by more than 50 percent of high schools in the United States (University of Minnesota, College of Education & Human Development [UMCEHD], 2005). The original form of block scheduling appeared in what is referred to as the four by four “course semester.” In this type of schedule, a student attends four courses every day for 90 minutes within a 90 day semester. This type of schedule allows for students to finish the course work of eight

classes throughout a school year in the time it used to take to complete only six or seven (UMCEHD, 2005). An example of this type of schedule can be found in the table below.

Figure 3: Original Block Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
3	3	3	3	3
4	4	4	4	4

Educators gradually began to realize the benefits of this type of schedule. Many began to adapt the schedule for the specific needs of their school. The first modification to Block Scheduling was a concept called the Alternate Day Schedule. This modification allowed two separate schedules to be used in an alternate day rotation. An example of this type of schedule would call for students to attend four 90-minute period classes on one day and then four different 90-minute period classes on the next (Ester, 1996). At the beginning of each week, the rotation begins where it left off. An example of this type of schedule can be found in the table below.

Figure 4: Alternate Day Block Schedule

A	B	A	B	A
1	2	1	2	1
3	4	3	4	3
5	6	5	6	5
7	8	7	8	7

From the Alternate Day Block Schedule stemmed another variation. The Modified Block Schedule was designed to allow every class to meet for the same amount of time each week. This sort of schedule begins with the A/B rotation; however, on the last day of each week all subjects meet for a shorter period of time. During the course of a full five-day week, two days include a seminar period during a block of time (UMCEHD, 2005). The use of a seminar period is up to the teachers and administration. In most scenarios, a seminar period is used for students to get help on assignments, for general homework, and for student organizations to meet. An example of the Modified Block Schedule can be found in the following table.

Figure 5: Modified Block Schedule

A	B	A	B	Week's Last Day
1	2	1	2	1
				2
3	4	3	4	3
	Seminar		Seminar	Seminar
5	6	5	6	5
				6
7	8	7	8	7
				8

From the Modified Block Schedule came even more variations. The Hybrid Schedule (which consisted of three traditional and two block classes each day) brought a higher level of flexibility to programs using a block schedule. This schedule was particularly useful to administrators and teachers who wanted to aid subjects that benefited from longer class periods, yet allow courses needing a greater number of class meetings for shorter periods of time. An example of this schedule can be found in the following table.

Figure 6: Hybrid Schedule

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2	1	2	1
3	4	3	4	3
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7

Hybrid Schedules vary according to the type of schools in which they are used. Most school administrators using the Hybrid Schedule still want the benefits of an eight subject day. This is achieved through the use of a “zero period.” A zero period occurs before the school day actually begins, allowing greater flexibility in a student’s schedule. The following schedule is outlined in blocks of time. However, these blocks are interchangeable depending upon the curriculum of the individual student. For example, a student could have a schedule which consists of two large blocks (about 90 minutes each) followed by four smaller blocks of 45 minute increments. The following example was submitted by Judy Moore for publication by Miles and Blocher (1996).

Figure 7: Hybrid Schedule #2 (A Student’s Schedule)

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
8:15-9:00	9:30 - 11:05		11:10-11:55	12:00-12:45	12:50-1:35	1:40-2:25	2:30 - 4:05	
Spanish 2	Physics 1 st Sem. AP Gov. 2 nd Sem.		Lunch	Wind Ensemble	Pre Calculus	Chamber Choir	English 1 st Sem. Ger. 3 2 nd Sem.	

Constructing a Successful Block Schedule

In order to construct and implement a successful form of block scheduling, a number of items must occur. According to J. Allen Queen and Kimberly Gaskey

Isenhour (1998), “a block or flexible schedule can be molded to fit any school’s instructional, building, climate, student management, accountability, assessment, or fiscal needs” (p. 1). These attributes are usually discovered first by administrators in search of an answer for raised expectations in standardized testing and for the improvement in areas where test scores for their district are generally poor. Queen (1998) encourages administrators who are looking for an overall improvement in the scholastic areas through time management to carefully examine and consider the use of a block schedule.

It is the role of the administrators to present the idea of block scheduling to their faculty. At this time, a general model should be shown to the faculty, giving them an idea of how block scheduling functions, examples of its use in schools currently using it (or even examples of schools in the surrounding areas, if possible), and information on how it has been successful in school districts nationwide. After the initial presentation by the administrator, teachers should form their own committee to research, locate, and examine types of block scheduling models which will work for the needs of the school. By reading current information and visiting schools where block scheduling works, and where it does not work, the committee will be able to make an appropriate decision for the best type of schedule to use in their school (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

Once the committee has decided if block scheduling is, or is not, right for the school, their findings are presented to the entire faculty. One of the biggest mistakes at this point is to have the entire faculty vote on the information with which they have been presented at this meeting. A vote could possibly split the faculty which may cause anger and create a less cohesive working environment. The faculty should be able to ask questions of the committee, do their own research, and meet with the committee at a later

date. The best way for the administrator to decide how the faculty feels about a new form of scheduling is to allow members to speak and discuss the topic in an open forum and draw conclusions from the discussion (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

Following the discussion with the entire faculty, the administrator and committee can begin to discuss feedback and gain a general consensus from the group. If at least 70 percent of the faculty is willing to experiment with a new schedule, the administrator must then push for a new schedule to be fully implemented in one to two years. Failing to include the faculty in a scheduling change of such magnitude could lead to problems. Teachers feel less useful and less willing to aid in a smooth transition if they are not invited to give their input and express their needs for their individual subject areas. When teachers are invited to help in the decision making process, they take ownership in the schedule and are more willing to stand behind the final decision (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

After teachers and the administration have agreed to make the move to block scheduling, they face the task of introducing this concept to the community, parents, and students. This can be made known in a variety of different ways. At least one year in advance of the actual implementation of the new schedule, newsletters should be sent out to all of the parents. An all inclusive presentation should be given to the parents and students. This presentation should consist of “a panel discussion of teachers, parents, and students from a school currently using a block schedule” and “a general introduction of the concept of the specific block scheduling model, what it will mean to the individual child and what it means for the future” (Queen & Isenhour, 1998, p. 3). Parents and students should also receive a copy of an actual graphic representation of the schedule.

Parents, students, and community members should be encouraged to form a committee to research and discuss the new schedule and express their feelings and ideas to the administration. This committee should be notified of the advantages and disadvantages of block scheduling, along with documentation of the faculty's thought process through their own research (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

Students should also be encouraged to elect a block scheduling transition committee. The purpose of this committee is to meet with the administration periodically to share student concerns with the administration, as well as receive updates on the current status of the scheduling project. This also allows for the administration to reinforce the benefits of the new schedule such as the opportunity to take more electives with a greater variety, the ability to take a complete course in one semester, and an opportunity to retake a course within the same academic year. A committee such as this creates a smoother transition in the long run and allows for students to take immediate ownership of the new schedule (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

There are two ways a block schedule can be implemented within a school. The first is to implement block scheduling for every grade level and for every subject beginning on the first day of school. This would happen after a series of vigorous training seminars and instructional modification design plans. The second is to implement the block schedule slowly, grade by grade every year. This type of process would lend itself well primarily to larger high schools with separate teachers for every subject and every grade. After four years, the new schedule would be fully implemented. The second process could be modified to be subject specific by utilizing the new type of

scheduling in areas believed to benefit directly from longer class periods (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

This type of approach would allow specific subject teachers to be on a block schedule, while other teachers remain temporarily on the old schedule. In this instance, a form such as a modified block or a hybrid block schedule would be beneficial through the transition to a straight four by four block. By using the second process, a new schedule could be slowly tested while building the teachers' confidence in it. On the other hand, this type of approach is easier to reverse should results not satisfy the teachers, administrators or parents (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

The transition from a traditional schedule to a block schedule requires the development of new teaching strategies and instructional practices. The administrator must play a very important supervisory role in this transition. Teachers have to work on time management in the classroom to account for longer class periods and fewer actual class meetings. A common problem witnessed by administrators is the lack of structured lessons allowing for 80 to 90 minutes of class time. According to Queen and Isenhour (1996), 30 percent of teachers in schools using block scheduling abuse or misuse the last 30 minutes of class time. These kinds of problems should be identified early on, the teachers notified of the delinquency, and the administrator should work with the teacher on a frequent individual basis until the problem is corrected.

Constructing a Block Schedule and Maintaining a Successful Music Program

For every successful music program using block scheduling, there are usually some words of advice which come from those who have created and teach within it.

The most important act a music teacher can perform when dealing with the conception, development, and implementation of a block schedule for a school is to get involved at the beginning. By joining the scheduling committee, the music teacher is able to voice individual opinions, supply facts, and convince the rest of the committee to examine all of the possibilities which may affect the music program in the long run. It is also important to create a good relationship with other curricular areas. The better communication is between the music teacher and other subject area teachers, the more willing those teachers are to listen to ideas and concerns. The same is true for communication with the administration. By keeping administrators informed about concerns, they will be more willing to try to accommodate as many requests as possible (Blocher & Miles, 1999).

A music teacher should never be satisfied with a schedule that does not fulfill the needs of the music program. The administrator should make sure everyone agrees on a schedule that will work for the entire school; therefore, it is important to have knowledge of many different types of schedules and how they function (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

It is important for music teachers to continue to stay vocal in scheduling decisions made at their school. It is also important to keep parents and students in these programs informed during the development process. Once a schedule is decided upon, the music teacher should make sure the rehearsal time allotted in the new schedule is enough to accomplish goals for desired direction of the program (Milleman, 1996).

Another consideration for music teachers at schools implementing a new block schedule is not to assume all individual opinions are understood. Teachers should not appear to be inflexible, as the willingness to work with others allows for open lines of

communication. Teachers should be involved in the process from the beginning. If a teacher does not know or understand the logistics and status of the schedule's current development, information should not be discussed with the students, as it may be erroneous. It is important to stay open to everyone's suggestions and opinions. Taking sides early on can lead to rumors and miscommunication (Milleman, 1996).

Robert Canady (2005) identifies scheduling music classes as "one of the most problematic issues confronting schools considering the adoption of block scheduling" (p. 1). He offers four approaches to help teachers and administrators create solutions to this problem. His first idea is to require students to enroll in music each semester throughout the school year, allowing students to take six other classes. In the most basic form of block scheduling, students take four classes one semester and then four different subject classes the following semester. A solution such as this would be best received by a school switching from a six period day, mainly because there would still be the addition of one to two more classes. The most obvious drawback for some to this approach is the idea of students spending 25 percent of their school year involved in a music class (Canady, 2005).

The second approach would be to require enrollment in a musical ensemble for one semester and make the following semester an elective. Pulaski County High School in Dublin, Virginia, uses this policy, according to Canady. In their first year with this approach, 85 percent of those enrolled in the first semester enrolled again for the second semester (Canady, 2005).

The third approach presents the idea of splitting the block with another half block period class. This type of scheduling suggestion works well for students who would like

to be involved in multiple ensembles. For example, the choir could meet for half a period, and then the band could meet for the other half of the period. Students who do not wish to participate in both ensembles could enroll in other courses offered during the half block period time slot (Canady, 2005).

The fourth suggestion by Canady (2005) is to offer three courses each semester (six per year) and two year-long courses for every student. This is different from suggestion three because there would be only three full block time slots for every student during the course of a day. The two year-long courses would be offered in a variety of subject areas, including music ensembles. Another option for this approach includes requiring students to enroll in one year-long course (aside from their block period courses) and use the other half of the year-long course block as an activity period or seminar.

Benefits of Block Scheduling

According to William Andrekopoulos (1999), block scheduling has a variety of benefits. His school, Fritsche Middle School in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, began block scheduling during the 1996-1997 school year. The first and most obvious asset to block scheduling is providing longer class periods; this equals longer instructional time. These longer periods also provide more “in-depth, uninterrupted experiences resulting in less fragmentation” (Andrekopoulos, 1999, p. 2). Through these longer instructional periods, interdisciplinary experiences can be utilized more regularly. This type of schedule lends itself to the encouragement of cooperative learning, hands-on projects, discovery learning, problem solving, research, and decision making. Students can

receive a greater instructional focus on the subject matter through more consecutive time (Andreopoulos, 1999).

Students have different learning styles, and according to Andreopoulos (1999), block scheduling allows for the needs of both varied learning styles and instruction. In schools which use block scheduling, there is more “flexibility to coordinate special programs in academic and nonacademic subjects” (Andreopoulos, 1999, p. 2). With this flexibility comes the elimination of unnecessary passing periods between classes. This in turn leads to fewer discipline problems and improved attendance. Better attendance is also aided by “increased individualized teacher-student interaction” (Andreopoulos, 1999, p. 2). The community can be used as a learning resource by way of short field trips and longer presentations.

After the first year of block scheduling in his school, William Andreopoulos reported positive statistics in six different areas. Fritsche Middle School experienced a 15 percent decrease in incident referrals. There was a continuous decrease in tardiness to school. Fifteen percent more students were added to the honor roll. The number of 4.0 students doubled from the prior year. There was a 28 percent reduction in suspensions, which could have been partly due to the fifty percent decrease in individuals involved in fights (Andreopoulos, 1999).

Other benefits have been outlined from research compiled by Reginald Wild (1998). Wild describes concepts linked to improved school atmospheres through block scheduling. There have also been indications of fewer dropouts, higher grades, and a lower fail rate. Teachers are forced to “use more effective teaching strategies” (Wild, 1998, p. 4), meaning less lecture time and more time spent on projects and activities.

There is less emphasis on memorization and a greater need for problem solving through critical thinking. The overall depth of the material covered is enhanced by longer class periods. Teachers and students are forced to manage their time better because of less frequent class meetings (Wild, 1998).

In a study conducted by Joe Wilson and Laura Stokes (2000), students' perceptions of the effectiveness of block scheduling were carefully examined. Students were asked to rate the effectiveness of block scheduling through their individual experiences by rating each statement using the Likert Scale. The statement receiving the largest score as an advantage of block scheduling was "students have more opportunities to gain credit for graduation" (Wilson & Stokes, 2000, p. 3). This information supports the idea that a larger course selection leads to more desirable electives and the opportunity to retake courses within the same school year. Other advantages of block scheduling were "teachers get to know students better," "there is more student teacher interaction," and "teachers use a greater variety of instructional activities" (Wilson & Stokes, 2000, p. 3). Through this study, it was also discovered students believe they are more likely to earn higher grades because of the advantages block scheduling brings to their school.

The Musical Benefits With Block Scheduling

According to research compiled by Miles and Blocher (1996), there are a variety of benefits for music programs using block scheduling. Some teachers have found students know their music better through longer, more concentrated rehearsal times. Teachers enjoy having more time to play recordings and show instructional videos during the regular class period uninterrupted. Music teachers have been successful with

incorporating different types of activities in their classrooms. For programs fortunate enough to have an assistant, longer rehearsal times allow for more sectional rehearsals during actual class time. In a typical block period day, an instructor teaches only three periods a day with a 90 minute planning period (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Music teachers across the country have seen their numbers increase in their ensembles with the addition of block scheduling. Not only are there more students, but the overall musicianship has increased in more perceptible ways. Students are taking more initiative and ownership in the music programs, creating a sense of “responsibility for their overall education” (Miles & Blocher, 1996, p. 154).

There are rare occasions where some music ensembles are actually double-blocked within the school’s schedule. This allows an ensemble to continue to rehearse every day for 90 minute periods. In this case, the musical ensembles actually gained more time within the overall semester schedule. Since the ensemble still meets everyday, the retention from period to period is very high. The instructors find they have more time to focus on important developmental areas such as “technique, warm-ups, and detailed rehearsals” (Miles & Blocher, 1996, p. 171).

Block scheduling has forced teachers to change their methods, many times getting away from those that they were so accustomed to using in the past. Some of these changes have allowed for more actual written assignments and homework to be used along with effective rehearsal techniques. Since there is a longer amount of time between class meetings, many teachers have found students to be more willing to complete and hand in written assignments on time.

The Drawbacks of Block Scheduling

According to a study performed by Kevin Meidl, director of choral music studies at Appleton West High School in Appleton, Wisconsin, and president of the Wisconsin Choral Directors Association, there are many drawbacks to block scheduling. He found because of scheduling conflicts, 69 percent of the schools reported a great decrease in student enrollment in music classes. Group performance also dropped 65 percent in participating schools. Meidl also included information on the stress and personal concerns from the teachers themselves. According to a majority of the teachers surveyed, many felt they had to stay much later in the afternoon and evening to teach lessons, along with teaching longer hours in the classroom. This led directly to less time for classroom preparation, sectionals, and lessons (Meidl, 1997).

Jeff Lindsay (2005) discusses drawbacks of block scheduling in his article *Nature of the Problem*. He outlines three observations which serve as evidence of block scheduling as a hindrance in education. The first observation is the short adolescent attention span. In order to maintain focus in the classroom, “less instruction and more ‘fun’ activities are needed” (Lindsay, 2005, p. 4). Schedules utilizing longer class times are covering the material thoroughly, but are not necessarily covering the same amount as traditional schedules.

The second problem observed by Lindsay is retention of knowledge. In the original design of block scheduling as it is known, students take four classes which usually last a full year and forces them into the duration of a semester (Lindsay, 2005). Some subjects need continual attention in order to bridge the gap from one class to another. An example could be algebra classes. If a student takes an Algebra I class in the

fall semester, and Algebra II is not offered until the next fall, chances are, students will have a more difficult time recalling information learned a year prior to their next algebra course. Music classes are no exception to this concept. If band were only offered in the fall of each school year, students would have a hard time picking the instruments back up and playing them after a layoff of six months or more.

The third problem discussed is the amount of overall instructional time allowed to classroom teachers. In a standard block schedule, each block is approximately 90 minutes in length. This one block of 90 minutes is actually ten percent less time than two 50 classes, throughout the entire semester. Less time devoted to subject matter can lead to watering down of core content in major classes (Lindsay, 2005).

Cheryl Thomas (2001) identifies three “key pieces to block-scheduling” (Thomas, 2001, p. 75) which are frequently overlooked. The first piece is the selection of appropriate subject material. Block scheduling works very specifically with certain types of subjects. Those who integrate block scheduling into their schools often lose focus of the subject that may not be directly benefiting from this schedule due to the amount of time and the way the time is divided within the schedule (Thomas, 2001).

The second piece frequently overlooked is appropriate teaching styles. It has been a proven fact: students have different learning styles. In order for every student to learn effectively, each teacher has to teach to accommodate a wide variety of different learning styles. Thomas asserts that making teachers instruct within a block schedule is no different than “forcing a visual learner to learn everything by closing their eyes and listening to audiotapes” (Thomas, 2001, p. 75). A good administrator will be able to pattern the school schedule after the teaching styles currently used in the classrooms.

There are basically two different types of teachers of which administrators need to be aware while monitoring classroom activity. The first type of teacher is easily distracted in the classroom, tends to get off subject and discuss unrelated issues to a great extent, and has a general sense of relaxation because they will “always be enough time to present the material” (Thomas, 2001, p.75). This type of teacher does not do well in a block scheduling situation. The second type of teacher is constantly paranoid about not having enough time to complete the lesson each day, which causes frustration. These teachers are extremely creative and use a wide variety of teaching approaches in their classroom. This type of teacher is more likely to appreciate a block scheduling situation (Thomas, 2001).

The third key piece is appropriate level of cognitive development. Generally, students who thrive in a traditional schedule setting also do well in a block scheduling situation. It is the unmotivated, low ranking student who generally has trouble in a traditional schedule setting. These students tend to do even worse in a block schedule setting where there are longer class periods and fewer class meetings. These types of students prefer to have more classes, generally shorter in duration allowing for frequent introductions, shorter discussions of concepts and new material, and more time to get refocused throughout the school day (Thomas, 2001).

The Musical Drawbacks of Block Scheduling

According to research compiled by Miles and Blocher (1996) there are a variety of musical drawbacks for schools using block scheduling. Some courses actually have to be dropped from the curriculum because of lack of staff and time in the schedule. In some cases, music classes only meet for one semester per school year. This can be

catastrophic for a subject area originally designed to meet year round (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Teachers are expected to serve as role models for students and help to shape them into young men and women capable of functioning in and contributing to society. This type of development is usually a product of the establishment of each individual's role on an everyday basis. By meeting every other day, it is more difficult for teachers to aid in the personal development of their students. Few educators would disagree with the fact that music, in many cases, serves an important role in individual and group development (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

With a block schedule, such as a rotating A/B, music teachers continue to battle the concept of not meeting with their class everyday. This idea makes things very difficult for ensembles performing a concert on a day in which they do not have a class scheduled. Specific and precise logistics go into careful planning for an event falling into this category. In many cases, unless students practice between the time school dismisses and call time for the concert, they will be picking up their instruments for the first time that day, maybe just an hour before the concert (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Issues arise when some schools allow for an ensemble to be double blocked, meaning the class meets everyday for a 90-minute period. In many cases, students do not have the flexibility in their schedule to fill two of their 90-minute blocks with a single ensemble. If this is the case, the possibility of a student being able to enroll in two music ensembles is next to impossible (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

With the addition of block scheduling, many schools discover their students have a wider variety of classes from which to choose. There is also a greater sense of

flexibility for individual schedule design throughout a student's high school career. Some music teachers experienced problems with students taking advanced courses earlier, instead of taking electives like music courses throughout their high school career. By doing this, students miss out on musical experiences and ensembles see their numbers constantly fluctuating (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Some of the most recent work compiled by Blocher and Miles (2002) indicate the following concerns expressed by music educators. There have been two main concerns which have held strong throughout the growing pains of block scheduling. These concerns include overall student enrollment in music classes and scheduling conflicts with other classes. New concerns recently collected include the concern for student burnout, the subject of music (and the constant battle against being just an extracurricular activity), an increase in the work load for music teachers, and the increase in job dissatisfaction by music teachers. Given the research Blocher and Miles have contributed over the past 10 years, they have come to acknowledge "the implementation of a new schedule is not the answer. What music teachers do to, for, and with students in any music classroom (rehearsal) continues to be the most critical factor of any change effort. Clearly more research is needed" (Blocher & Miles, 2002, p. 3).

Wilson and Stokes (2000) also discovered what students perceive as disadvantages of block scheduling during a study through the use of a Likert Scale. The scores from the scale indicate "it is hard to make up work if you miss a day" (Wilson & Stokes, 2000, p. 4) as being the largest disadvantage for block scheduling. Other major disadvantages included "class periods seem to last too long" and "there is too much busy work in class" (Wilson & Stokes, 2000, p. 4).

Examples of Music Programs Using Block Scheduling

Nationwide, there have been reports of successful and unsuccessful secondary music programs. Along with these reports have been suggestions for what to do and what not to do. John Milleman believes the schedule at Angola High School in Angola, Indiana, works. Through careful research and consideration for the music programs, Angola High School was able to create a schedule which worked well for them (Milleman, 1996).

The principal of Angola High School first presented the idea of alternate schedules to the faculty after doing careful research of his own. For three years, the principal and the faculty carefully designed a schedule which best fit their school's needs. The high school band had a long tradition and the director, John Milleman, did not want a new schedule to hinder his program. He made it a point to be involved from the early stages to ensure that his ideas and considerations were carried out. Through block scheduling, Milleman found a way to continue the progress he had made with the band program and even strengthen his additional ensembles (Milleman, 1996).

During the first nine weeks of the school year, the program's main focus was on marching band. The marching band met for 90 minute blocks every other day, and on Monday and Wednesdays at 7:00 a.m. before school began. On the days the marching band met on Mondays and Wednesdays during the school day, band rehearsals could be as long as two and a half hours. With this extra time, the marching band actually found they had more rehearsal time than they did when they used a seven period schedule with periods lasting 50 minutes (Milleman, 1996).

The next nine weeks, marching band transitioned into concert band and jazz band. The concert band would meet for 45 minutes. Following concert band, those who were in enrolled in jazz band stayed and the rest of the students were placed in a 45 minute seminar class. The seminar class offered even more flexibility for the band schedule. While the head band director worked with the jazz band, the assistant director could pull students out of seminar to work on contest solos, small ensembles, and run sectionals. A schedule for rehearsals during seminar was decided two weeks in advance so students were able to plan accordingly (Milleman, 1996).

After witnessing success with his program, Milleman was able to outline many attributes included in the development of the school's schedule. The band had been very successful before the change to block scheduling and the administration wanted the same tradition to continue. The committee of teachers who met and designed the schedule stayed in contact with the band teacher during the development process. Through three years of careful and precise research, many concerns and questions were resolved before the schedule was even in place. With the old schedule, the school had the policy that band was a full year commitment; the administration was very careful to maintain the same policy. Parents were made aware of all of the considerations during the entire process; even the band parents showed interest by asking frequent questions (Milleman, 1996).

There were a few new advantages to their carefully designed block schedule. The program was now contained within the frame work of the actual school day following the marching band season. Extra ensembles, lessons, and sectionals could be taught during the jazz band time slot. Clinicians, guest artists, and instructional videos could be used

during class time without interruption during a 90 minute block of time (Milleman, 1996).

Judy Moore, who is the chair of the music department at Eleanor Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, Maryland, believes their school's version of the Hybrid Block Schedule works. The high school is made up of more than 3,060 students and offers many classes in the area of music. Some of the classes offered during the school day at the high school include orchestra, music survey, marching band, piano, guitar, choir, and choir band. Music electives outside of the school day include musical theater, string quartet, flute choir, dixieland band, and jazz band (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Eleanor Roosevelt High School's hybrid schedule is made up of both 45 minute classes everyday for the entire school year and 90 minute classes which meet everyday during the course of a semester, adding different classes at the beginning of each semester. All music classes meet as 45 minute, school year long classes. This schedule accommodates music teachers who like to see their students everyday and other subject teachers who prefer longer class periods every other day (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

As a new schedule, many conflicts have been resolved for students. An extremely talented student who wishes to be involved in as many ensembles as possible can actually be enrolled in three major ensembles at the same time. Since the three major ensemble types (Band, Orchestra, and Choir) all meet at different times, the option for a student to be enrolled in each ensemble is a possibility (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Since the school is so large, this schedule is able to easily accommodate most students. However, this schedule also holds advantages and disadvantages. Students have many different choices. Since there are many different course offerings, this leads

to smaller class sizes (which can be beneficial for some subjects). Teachers who have subject areas which lend themselves better to meeting everyday have this freedom. Lab classes have more time to introduce concepts and complete experiments and activities. Longer class periods create more planning time for longer classes. However, if a teacher is ill or cannot be in the building, problems can arise if plans are not laid out extremely carefully. There are fewer transition periods which lead to less traffic in the hallways (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Carmel High School in Indianapolis, Indiana, was faced with scheduling issues as they planned to increase enrollment in their building by moving the ninth grade class into the high school. The school made a three year commitment to a scheduling plan based on the idea of an eight block, four period day, rotating A/B schedule. This schedule was decided upon after much discussion and debate among the faculty, administration, and parents. Throughout the decision making process, the performing arts department was strongly against this type of schedule, and the teachers were very vocal about their opinions of this concept. When the debate finally came to a vote, the majority of the faculty accepted the new eight block, four period day, rotating A/B schedule by 75 percent (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

After a year of using their new schedule, the performing arts faculty members realized they had made a mistake by opposing idea of block scheduling. During this time they had discovered many advantages to this new schedule. Rehearsals were very beneficial with added length and the outcomes were very positive. Longer class sessions allowed for short field trips during actual class time to perform in the community. This allowed for a continued growth in communication and support from the other faculty

members because their classes were not affected by missing students. This schedule did not include a study hall, which meant students had to enroll in more electives, which led to higher enrollment in fine arts classes (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

With advantages, some disadvantages are created as well. General organization can be effected when ensembles meet every other day. Keeping all of the groups informed about logistics with performances and trips can be challenging. Discipline, classroom organization, and musical concepts are sometimes more difficult to retain. With more distance between class meetings, consistency from meeting to meeting is generally weaker. The A/B schedule creates a problem from week to week because class time can be cut down by a third every other week. This creates even more distance between class meetings when a class last meets on a Thursday and does not meet again until Monday of the following week (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

The teachers at Bourbon County High School in Paris, Kentucky, use what they describe as a Modified Block Schedule with Split Block Classes. Most of the school day is divided into 90 minute class periods. In an attempt to increase enrollment in electives and to appease subjects benefiting most from everyday class meetings throughout the year, some blocks had the option of being divided into 45 minute halves (Miles & Blocher, 1996). An example of Bourbon County High School's schedule can be found in the following table.

Figure 8: Bourbon County High School Optional Split Block Schedule (Miles & Blocher, 1996)

Daily Schedule

Whole Block Option	Split Block Option
Block One	Block One
Block Two	Block Two
Block Three	Split Block One
	Lunch
Lunch	Split Block Two
Block Four	Block Four

During the time Bourbon County High School was studying the possibility of using a form of block scheduling, the director of the music department served on the committee as a volunteer. As a committee member, the director did extensive research on block scheduling and the various effects on music programs. With this information, the director was able to persuade the rest of the committee to take a serious look at the modified block schedule form. Through this step, the school became aware of the needs of the music program and the administration was willing to comply with those needs through the justification of the research presented (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Emporia High School in Emporia, Kansas, uses a version of a modified, rotating block schedule. The rotating blocks occur from Monday through Thursday and on Friday with all seven classes meet for 42 minutes. Prior to the addition of block scheduling, the school was on a six subject schedule with classes meeting for 55 to 60 minutes each day. The move to a block schedule allowed for the addition of one more class and a seminar period (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Through the research conducted by the committee before the current schedule was put in place, advantages of an eight block schedule were exposed. An eight block schedule allows students to take a greater variety of classes. Statistics have shown that

students who take advanced or college preparatory classes in the areas of social studies, science, mathematics, and English score higher in college entrance examinations such as the American College Test (ACT). A schedule such as this allows students to take the classes they need. Students have more time to prepare for classes with class meetings occurring every other day. Students have two evenings instead of just one to work on homework for each class. Student athletes have the opportunity to take additional credits. There are fewer class periods each day. Moving from each class takes time out of the school day. By having fewer class periods each day, there is less transition time between classes. Block scheduling allows for a greater number of classes to be taken by the individual student. An increase in the variety of classes should also increase the enrollment in music classes (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Teachers are required to use more creativity with the eight block/seven period schedule. By having more time to present a topic, teachers can use an assortment of different techniques to accommodate various learning styles. With longer class periods, the quality of activities can be increased. Guest speakers can come for a longer, more convenient amount of time. Laboratory experiments can be begun and easily completed during the same period. Audio and visual resources can be used in a more beneficial manner (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

After this new schedule had been implemented, teachers, administrators and parents began to notice advantages and disadvantages. Since the music teachers do not see their students every day, new problems are created. Announcements have to be planned carefully and concerts need to be scheduled on days rehearsals take place. Through the act of careful planning, teachers and students alike learn how to plan and

organize their time effectively. With a built-in Seminar class, students spend more time on homework at school and less time taking work home. Students actually turn in more homework because they have more time to ask appropriate questions and receive extra guidance. Teachers are given a 90 minute planning period everyday which means they take less work home as well. Classes are not interrupted because standardized testing and recruiting visits happen only during Seminar (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Emporia High School proposed a few suggestions for dealing with block scheduling. It is important to get involved in the planning process. It is important to quickly develop a schedule which works best for each music program. It is also vital that a positive attitude be maintained when creating and developing a block schedule. Developing and maintaining a method for executing rehearsals is critical to staying organized and being effective in the classroom. It is important to format a schedule which best fits each individual school (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

CHAPTER 3: QUESTIONNAIRE AND PROCEDURE

Purpose

At first, block scheduling appears to be a greater undertaking than most administrators, teachers, parents, and students ever realize. In order to even consider making these types of adjustments within a school's schedule, a huge amount of research must first be compiled. Reading and researching alone does not provide enough information to make any sort of long-term decision. These ideas must be networked through word of mouth; administrators have to share these ideas with teachers, parents, and students. Committees must be formulated, speakers should come in and share their experiences, and schools utilizing block scheduling must be visited by representatives to witness different schedules in motion first hand (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

Administrators must gain acceptance from teachers and parents, and a huge margin must represent the movement for schedule reform before it is given a projected deadline. Failure to first accomplish this may lead to chaos in the school and in the community. A vote on such an issue could divide the faculty, creating more problems down the road (Queen & Isenhour, 1998).

Music teachers must do their own research and get involved at an early level during the development of a block schedule. It is essential for music teachers not to let block scheduling just "happen to them." Block scheduling can be very beneficial in many situations and very harmful to programs in other situations (Blocher & Miles, 1999).

The benefits of block scheduling are numerous. Longer class periods allow for the encouragement of cooperative learning, hands-on projects, discovery learning, problem solving, research, and decision making. Musically, teachers have found that students come to know their music better through longer, more concentrated rehearsal times. Teachers have more time to play recordings and show instructional videos during the regular class period uninterrupted. In some schools, numbers have actually increased in musical ensembles because students are given the opportunity to take a greater number of classes through block scheduling (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Among the drawbacks of block scheduling, schools experience more classes of greater duration; however, teachers have 10 percent less total classroom time with their students during the course of a semester. Less total time devoted to a subject matter can lead to watering down of core content. Musically, numbers are reported to be falling in schools using block scheduling. Some courses even have to be dropped because there is a lack of staff and time in the schedule. Some music ensembles are forced to meet for only one semester during the academic year. Schedules utilizing a rotating A/B approach can also cause problems for ensembles when a concert falls on a day the group does not meet (Miles & Blocher, 1996).

Block scheduling has worked for many school music programs. The measures of success are usually questioned in these schools. Students who do well in a traditional schedule tend to do well in a block setting. Those students who suffer through the school day in a traditional schedule often do no better, or even worse, when switching to a block schedule. Block scheduling tends to work for a variety of different schools; however,

larger schools tend to have greater success with it because of the large number of students, faculty members, and abundant resources which can be used.

The key purpose for this research was to collect information on the process of constructing a block schedule in Kansas schools, discover what framework is necessary for a successful block schedule, and reflect on the overall success or the lack of success block scheduling has had within the state. Information gathered during the course of this research period was taken from the 2005-2006 school year. This information was collected through an on-line survey data-base called Zoomerang. (See the Appendix for a copy of the questionnaire.) Teachers were invited to access the Zoomerang site through a link sent to them via e-mail.

The most traditional method for gaining information on the process of constructing a block schedule within a school system is to read about how other schools have implemented it, correspond with administration and teachers from schools currently using it, and collect the specific needs requested by the faculty members themselves (Queen & Isenhour, 1998). This questionnaire will target the third step of this process specifically in order to determine whether or not music teachers were consulted during the research process and if their involvement (or lack there of) led to the success or shortcomings of the music program under a block schedule in their schools.

There is a standard framework necessary for a block schedule to be successful in any school (Queen & Isenhour, 1998). This framework, which includes the procedures for building an individualized form of block scheduling and incorporating the proper human and technical resources, should be used as a list of guidelines for school districts to follow as they consider implementing block scheduling. The variations in this

framework help schools to be successful by taking the block schedule model and making it their own. Information collected from this questionnaire will reveal the variations necessary for a successful block schedule from each music teacher's point of view and expose what modifications would help his/her program to grow further through block scheduling.

There are still many unanswered questions about the overall success of block scheduling. Results produced through statistics and test scores are just beginning to surface either justifying or taking away from block scheduling as it is currently in practice in Kansas. This questionnaire will reveal, from the music educator's point of view, the overall success or the lack of success block scheduling has experienced within the state.

Procedure

The Zoomerang survey program was selected for the following reasons: (a) this type of survey is cost efficient and entirely postage free as a service offered through the university; (b) as an electronic questionnaire, the time spent constructing, sending, answering, returning, are considerably shorter and produce results easier to analyze; (c) this questionnaire could be limited to music educators only through an e-mail invitation and could reach a large amount of people in a short amount of time.

In order to collect data from a substantial representation of music educators across the state of Kansas, a large number of questionnaires would have to be sent out.

Approximately 200 questionnaires were sent to music educators at schools representing each of the six school size classifications in the state of Kansas. Educators were randomly selected based on the following criteria: (a) an e-mail address available for

them to be reached, (b) they fell into one of the Kansas school classifications, and (c) they were chosen for even distribution among the school classifications (approximately to 30 educators per classification). Once the email invitation was sent to each of the educators, about two weeks was allowed for them to visit the site, fill it out, and submit it. This particular questionnaire was designed to take from five to ten minutes to fill out, depending on the amount of detail the educator wished to include. From these 200 questionnaires, 112 music educators visited the Zoomerang site and completed the questionnaire.

Description of online questionnaire

The online questionnaire was designed to allow for maximum results in a short amount of time. In order to achieve this goal through the design of the questionnaire, a few elements had to be present. First, the questionnaire had to be designed for schools of every size. Block scheduling is assumed to be a type of scheduling currently used in large and small sized schools. Second, the questionnaire had to encompass the entire realm of secondary music education; it had to be appropriate for choir, band, and orchestra teachers. Third, the questionnaire had to be highly representative of the factors music educators have dealt with through their short or long period teaching within a block schedule. From these elements, 16 questions were carefully selected to create a short, yet all inclusive questionnaire.

The first question asked the educators to disclose the size of school in which they taught. The choices given as answers for the first question included Kansas school classifications 1A through 6A. The results gathered from this question indicate the total distribution of voluntary representation of school sizes throughout this questionnaire.

The second question collected a representation of the distribution of specific musical areas. The choices were: (a) elementary (in case a teacher now taught elementary), (b) instrumental secondary, (c) vocal secondary, and (d) all grades, vocal and instrumental. These four main areas were believed to best represent each of the main divisions music educators are assigned to on a common basis throughout the state. Depending on the size of school, the specific concentration may be very broad or extremely specific.

The third question targeted each music educator's individual teaching experience by years. The choices included: (a) 1-2 years, (b) 3-6 years, (c) 7-15 years, (d) 15-20 years, (e) 20-30 years, and (f) 30 years or more. The yearly divisions gathered from this question give an indication of six major divisions of experience, which produce a broader indication of the actual level of success block scheduling is experiencing at different times in a music educator's career.

In question four, the volunteers are asked to indicate if they were using a type of block scheduling. Since this questionnaire is helping to find a representation of schools using block scheduling in Kansas, not every music educator answering it necessarily teaches within a block schedule. This question merely indicates results of the current trend for scheduling in secondary Kansas schools.

For those using block scheduling, question five took the data a step further by collecting information about how long block scheduling had been in place for each respective school. The choices for this question include the following: (a) 1-2 years, (b) 3-5 years, and (c) 6 or more years. The results for this question give a timeline for the overall longevity of block scheduling in the state.

A major concern for music educators is the overall enrollment pattern for musical ensembles when block scheduling is used (Miles & Blocker, 1996). Question six deals with these patterns and collects information in order to uncover a substantial representation of a normal enrollment pattern. The exact question reads *How has the enrollment in your music ensembles and classes been affected since the implementation of Block Scheduling?* The choices for this question include the following: (a) it has increased, (b) it has decreased, and (c) it has stayed the same. The results acquired from this question will reflect the impact block scheduling has had on the overall growth and development of music ensembles.

In order to collect specific opinions of music educators, question seven was formulated to allow each teacher to list his/her greatest concern with block scheduling from an individual perspective. By allowing each teacher to list an individual concern, the teacher is able to reflect on an experience to date and formulate meaningful answers. The results will provide a list of concerns from actual educators in the field. The answer will help other music educators whose schools are considering the addition of block scheduling or whose programs already using block scheduling are in need of adjustments to benefit student learning.

Along with their own concerns, teachers also relate to the concerns of their students. In question eight, the music educator is asked to list what is believed to be the greatest concern for music students when using block scheduling. The results of this question will aid in giving an accurate representation of the thoughts of music students and may even provide examples for or solutions to creating an environment even more conducive to learning.

Some schools using one of the several variations of block scheduling are still in the early stages of developing a schedule that works best for the entire school. Should a school district experience some major setbacks, it may consider returning to a traditional schedule. Question nine allows for music teachers to express whether or not their schools have reverted back to or explored the option of returning to the seven or eight period school day. Results from this question should produce a good representation of schools that have experienced a hindrance while being involved with a block schedule.

Most school districts do a considerable amount of research when exploring the option of using a form of block scheduling. Part of this process usually includes an administrator asking the music educator for his/her personal input. Question 10 allows teachers to express whether or not their administration asked for their opinions during the research process. The results from this question will generate a percentage of music educators who either have or have not been asked to be involved in the development of this schedule.

After taking into consideration the level of their requested involvement in the research process, teachers are then asked to rate whether their program has been successful in using block scheduling. Question 11 was formulated to judge the success of block scheduling from the teachers' standpoint.

In question 12, teachers are asked to list a few reasons as to why their school's block schedule has or has not been successful. With this question, teachers will take a look at their experience and weigh the positives and negatives for each issue. This question will present views from both sides of the issue and help give justification to both.

With the growing trend of adapting block scheduling, schools of every size can be found experimenting with it. Many teachers have experienced teaching at different sizes of schools. Question 13 asks *Do you think block scheduling works with every size of school?* Through this question, teachers will take information gained from personal experience or their colleagues' experience and decipher whether or not block scheduling should be used with every size of school or only with schools with a certain number of students.

Question 14 takes a look at the future of block scheduling. Through the prospective of the music teacher, the issue is explored as being an educational fad or a type of schedule that could be around indefinitely. Teachers are asked to choose one of these options and reflect on why they believe the future of block scheduling is going to take a particular route it will take. The results will reflect, from the music educator's standpoint, what lies ahead for block scheduling.

Few teachers have what they consider to be the perfect schedule. Question 15 asks teachers to respond with any changes they would make to their current schedule. Results from this question will reflect both additions and subtractions to current schedules. The information gained should also highlight what teachers and administrators should consider when building and developing their own version of block scheduling.

Question 16 takes the information from question 15 a step further. It asks music teachers to offer any advice they may have for other music teachers whose school may be considering block scheduling. At this point they are free to give their own input on what they wished they would have known and how they would rate their own involvement in

involvement in the block schedule planning process. This question also asks what each teacher would tell administrators considering switching to block scheduling. Results for this question should also be taken into account by other teachers and administrators who are planning to incorporate a form of block scheduling into their schools.

Through this thorough, yet short, questionnaire, music educators have been asked to share their insights into different aspects of block scheduling. Their views offer a glimpse of the current status of block scheduling in the state of Kansas. The data collected from this questionnaire will reflect the impact of the growing trend block scheduling has become and serve as a basis for other Kansas school districts to make decisions affecting thousands of school children in the future.

CHAPTER 4: DATA

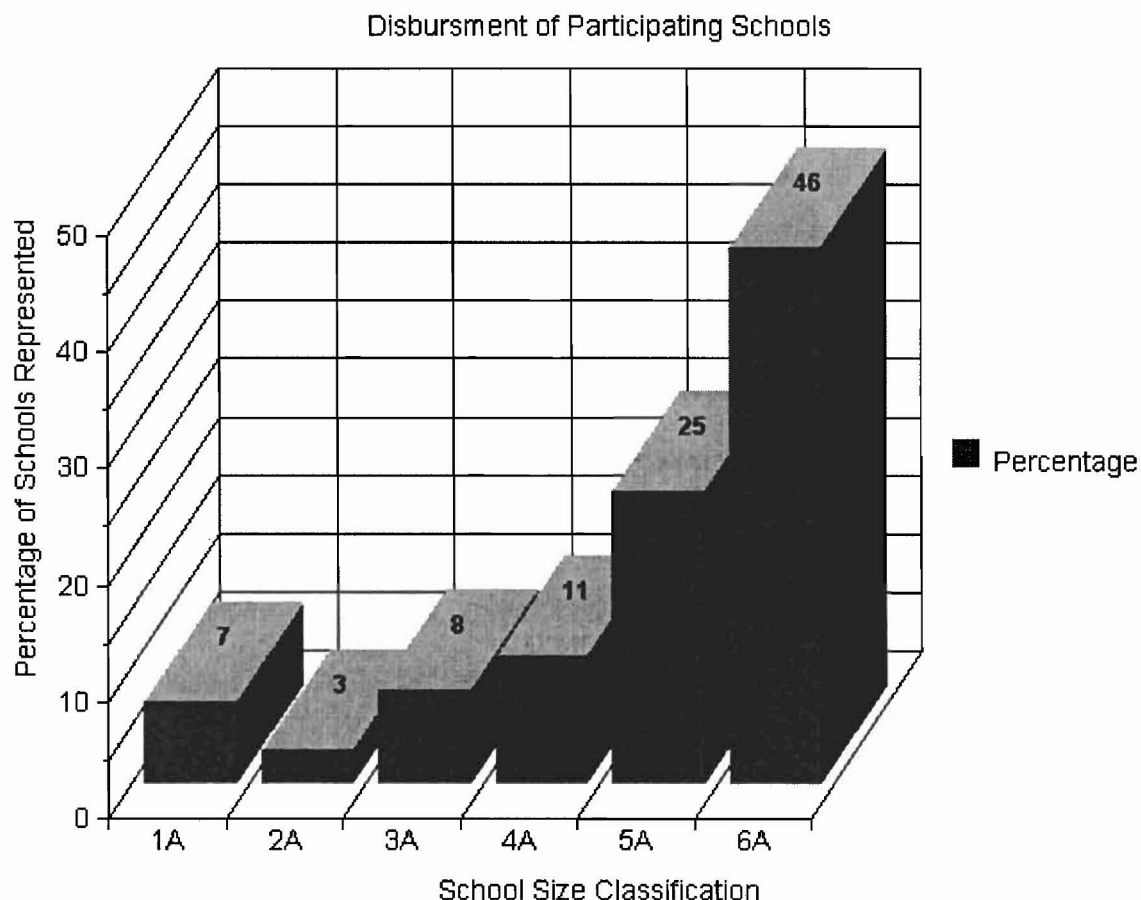
Results

One hundred and twelve of two hundred music educators visited the Zoomerang site and filled out a questionnaire regarding the use of block scheduling in Kansas secondary schools. The initial 200 educators represented all of the six Kansas school size classifications, 1A through 6A. The questionnaire was designed to take approximately ten minutes to complete, depending on the amount of detail the educator wished to include. Upon receiving the questionnaire, each educator was allowed approximately two weeks to visit the Zoomerang site (accessed from a link included in his/her e-mail invitation), complete, and submit.

Question 1: What is the size of your school?

Results from the first question for the online questionnaire provided a percentage of schools representing each of the six school classifications. The size classification most represented consisted of educators from class 6A, making up 46 percent of the participating group. The second largest representation came from educators in the 5A classification with 25 percent of those responding. The next three groups were made up of similar percentages: class 4A represented 11 percent, class 3A represented eight percent, and class 1A represented seven percent of the participating group. The smallest representation came from the 2A classification category, which represented only three percent of the participating group. The following graph provides an illustration of the distribution of schools participating in the questionnaire.

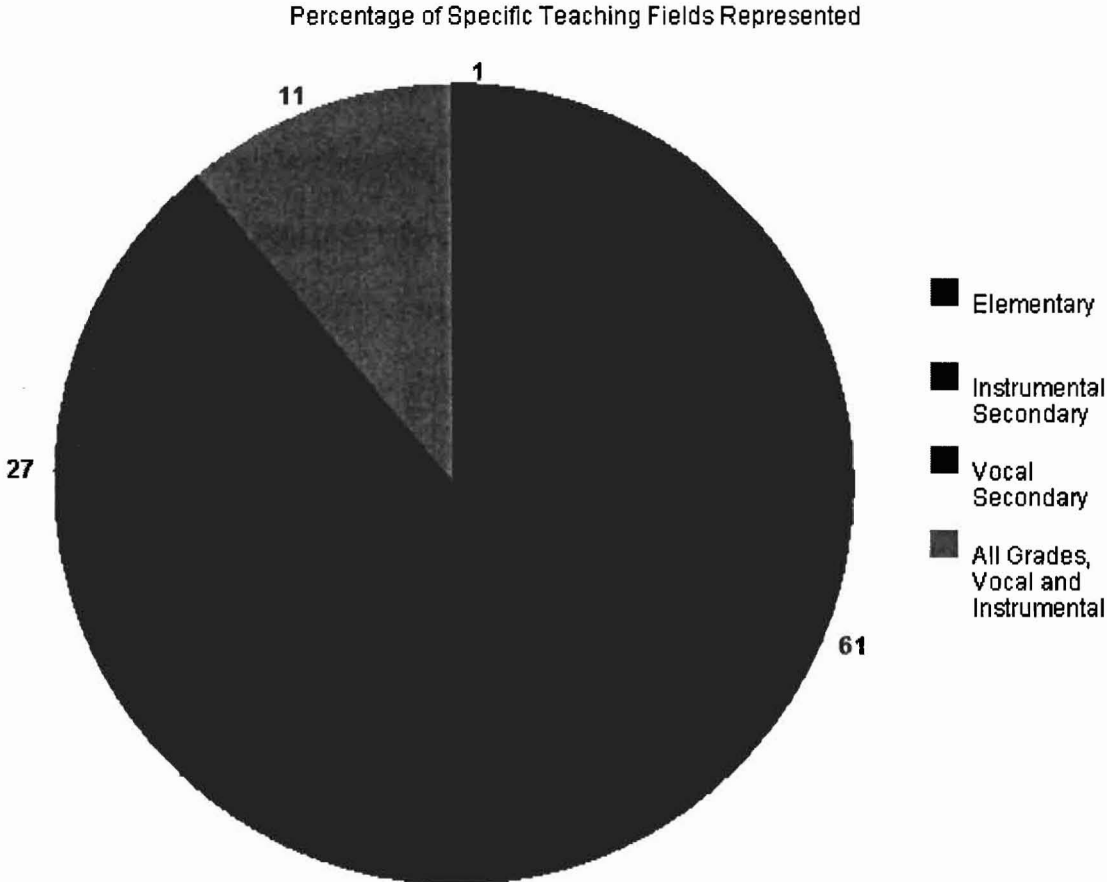
Figure 9: The Disbursement of Schools Participating in the Questionnaire



Question 2: Do you teach:

Categories to choose from with this question included elementary, instrumental secondary, vocal secondary, all grades vocal and instrumental. The following graph illustrates the representation of participating educators from four different areas of music education.

Figure 10: Specific Teaching Fields Represented



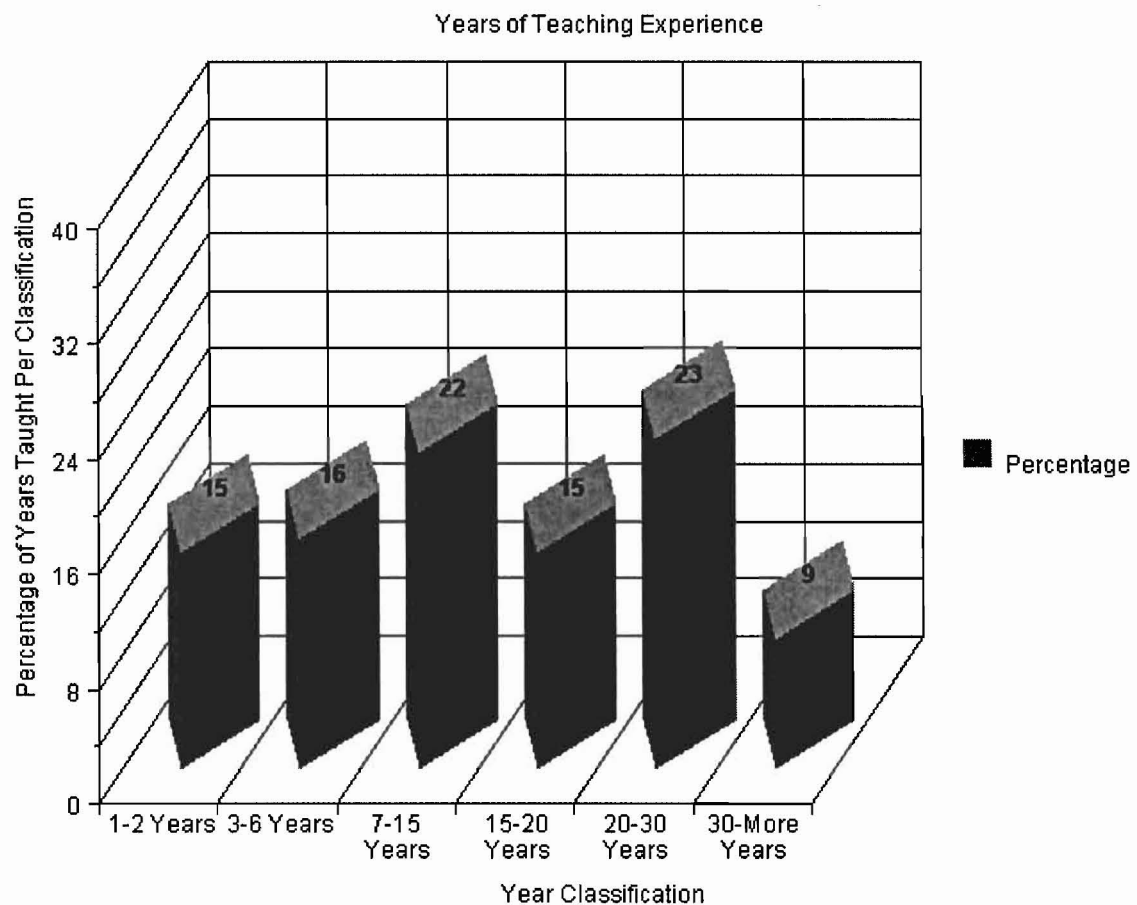
Sixty-one percent of the educators responding to this survey consisted of secondary instrumental instructors. It is important to note this field includes band and orchestra instructors. The secondary vocal category provided a lower representation by contributing just over a quarter of the participating teachers with 27 percent. In small schools, it is not out of the ordinary to have only one music educator for both band and choirs. Eleven percent of those contributing represent educators who instruct both vocal

and instrumental music at all grade levels. It is also important to note that one percent of the total consists of teachers who instruct at the elementary level only.

Question 3: How many years have you taught?

Question three targets years of teaching experience. The following graph provides a break-down of each teaching experience category.

Figure 11: Years of Teaching Experience



From the six different categories, nearly every plateau consisted of at least 10 percent representation or more. The smallest group represented, 30 years or more, had the most years of teaching experience but represented only nine percent of the participating group. The 20 to 30 years of teaching experience category displayed the

largest representation out of the participating group with 23 percent of the responses. Those who have been teaching for seven to 15 years contributed 22 percent of the participants in the questionnaire. The categories representing those who have taught one to two years and 15 to 20 years added 15 percent of the representation each, and the three to six years of experience group accounted for another sixteen percent.

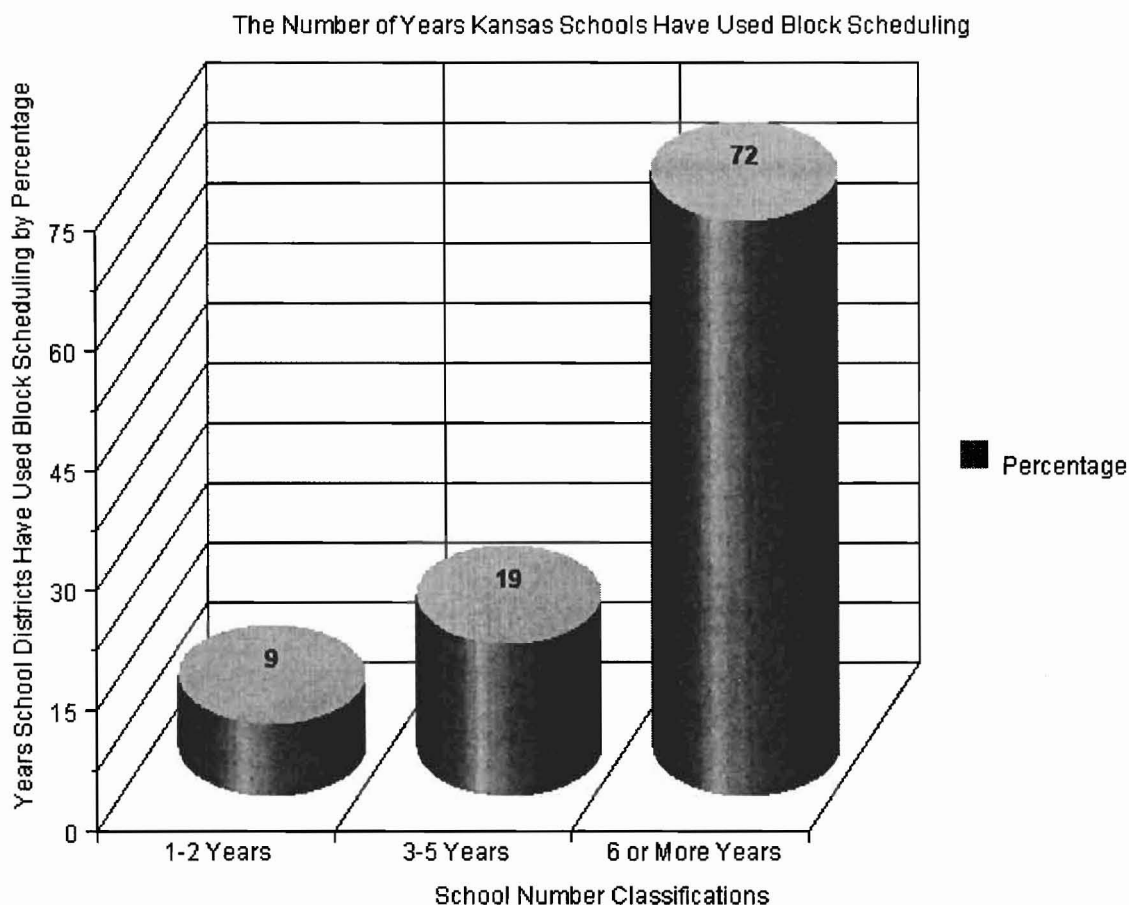
Question 4: Does your school use a form of Block Scheduling?

Since it was unknown which schools currently use block scheduling, question four gathers the percentages of schools using a form of block scheduling. According to the results, 60 percent of the educators answering this questionnaire are currently working in a school system which uses a form of block scheduling. Forty percent of those participating confirmed their school system was not currently using block scheduling.

Question 5: How long has your school used a form of block scheduling?

Responses for this question were divided into three separate categories: 1) 1-2 years, 2) 3-5 years, and 3) 6 or more years. Nine percent of the participating educators reported their schools had been using a form of block scheduling for the past one to two years. Nineteen percent confirmed their schools had been using a form of block scheduling for three to five years. The remaining 72 percent of participating educators reported teaching in schools using a form of block scheduling for six or more years. The following graph shows the number of years each of the educators' school systems has been affiliated with a form of block scheduling.

Figure 12: The Number of Years Kansas Schools Have Used Block Scheduling

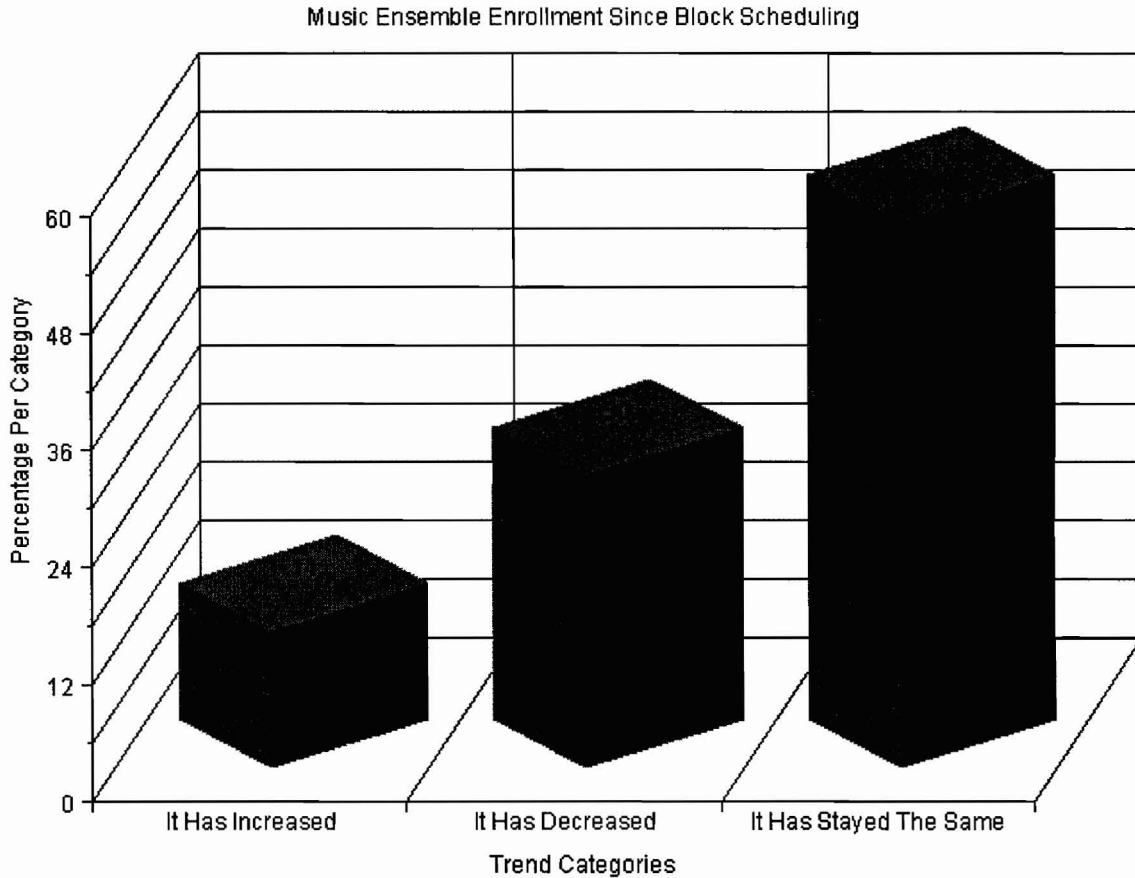


Question 6: How has the enrollment in your music ensembles and classes been affected since the implementation of Block Scheduling?

Responses for this question were also divided into three categories: (a) it has increased, (b) it has decreased, and (c) it has stayed the same. Fourteen percent of the participating educators reported an increase in the enrollment of their music ensembles and classes since the implementation of block scheduling in their school system. Thirty percent confirmed a decrease in the overall enrollment in their music ensembles and classes since the change to block scheduling. Fifty-six percent of those responding to the questionnaire indicated that enrollment had stayed the same for music classes and

ensembles. The following graph illustrates the effects of block scheduling on music ensembles and class enrollment.

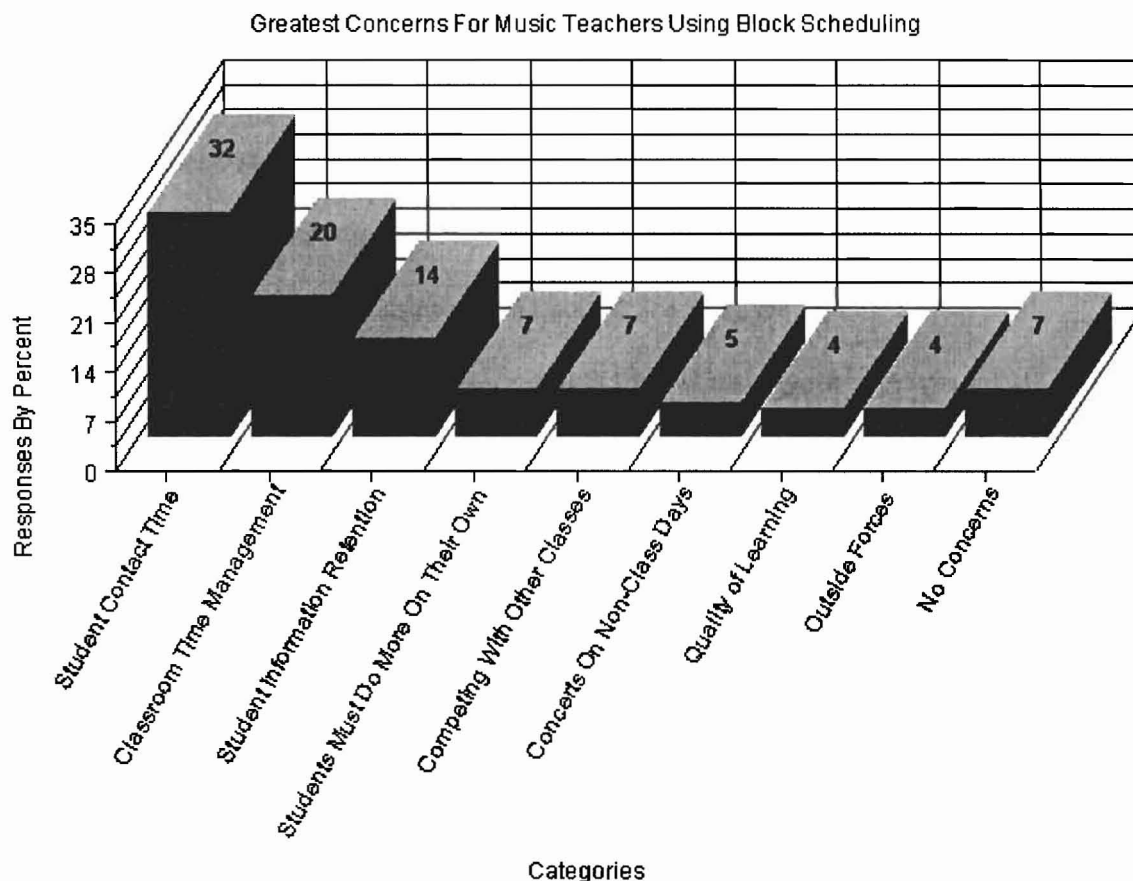
Figure 13: Music Ensemble Enrollment since Block Scheduling



Question 7: As a music teacher, what has been your greatest concern with the use of block scheduling?

Responses for this question were decided solely by each participant. Each of the individual responses has been divided into nine different categories. The following graph represents each category.

Figure 14: Greatest Concerns for Music Teachers Using Block Scheduling



The most common response for this question was the lack of total contact time with each class. Since block scheduling allows for longer class periods and fewer class meetings, the lack of contact time caused concern for 32 percent of the music educators responding to question seven. One junior high teacher expressed his/her concern for meeting with one of his/her bands for a 30 minute time period only three times a week. Other music educators agreed - there was a lack of daily repetition young musicians need in order to grow and develop as musicians. Between class meetings, there are significant amounts of time students are away from the ensemble and their instruments. Students do not practice to make up for lost days caused by scheduling or other events. Many educators expressed the need to maintain daily contact with their students and how

important this contact is to their learning as individuals and to the music program. Daily rehearsal is believed to be an integral part of a strong program.

The second most common response was the concern for managing longer amounts of time in the classroom. Approximately 20 percent of the music educators participating in this questionnaire expressed their concern about managing a class at least 90 minutes in length while maintaining an active, learning engagement with their students. Many agreed 90 minutes is too much time at infrequent intervals for students to remain focused both mentally and physically. The physical demands for singing and/or playing for 90 minutes are overwhelming for young musicians. One vocal instructor said he/she would rather see his/her singers for 45 minutes a day than for 90 minutes two or three times a week. Total rehearsal time appears to be lost when compared to the traditional schedule. Performance-based schools struggle to meet expectations if students do not meet every day for shorter periods of time.

With large gaps of time between each class period, 14 percent of those participating in this questionnaire reported their greatest challenge was with students retaining information from class meeting to class meeting and from rehearsal to rehearsal. The information is not as fresh in the students' minds as it could be if the class met every day. Some teachers admit they spend more time re-teaching previous material than they ever had to while using a traditional schedule. Rehearsals are less consistent. Memorization also becomes a problem without daily repetition.

Since students meet for less time during the school week, there is a greater need for them to do more work outside of the classroom. Seven percent of the music educators responding to this questionnaire said it is even more important for students to practice on

their own and for teachers to make clear what should be practiced. Students do not have the repetitive rehearsals they need to stay mentally and physically strong as a musician. Some educators have become even more worried about students turning in assignments.

With the addition of a block schedule, new problems can surface. Seven percent of the participating music educators found that there are not as many spaces in the school block to avoid scheduling core classes at the same time as band, orchestra, and choir. It is also more difficult for students to be involved in multiple ensembles. Many directors have seen a declining enrollment in their ensembles due to other class conflicts. Some schools are still using the original type of block scheduling which includes ensembles meeting for only one semester during the school year. Educators have reported a reduction in “elective” offerings which in many cases includes music classes.

Other problems surfacing with block scheduling include problems on concert and performance days. Five percent of those participating in this survey reported they had problems with students remembering performances on days when the ensemble does not meet. Concerts have not been as successful when the class has not met on the same day. Many directors refuse to schedule concerts on days when their ensemble does not meet. Four percent of music teachers recognize other scheduling problems beyond their control. Student absences and field trips can reduce class meetings to only one or no meetings each week. Snow days and teacher in-service days can also lead to only one rehearsal a week.

Four percent of the participating music educators believe the quality of music education in their schools is deteriorating with block scheduling. Some believe performances and concerts are not as polished and that the number of pieces included on

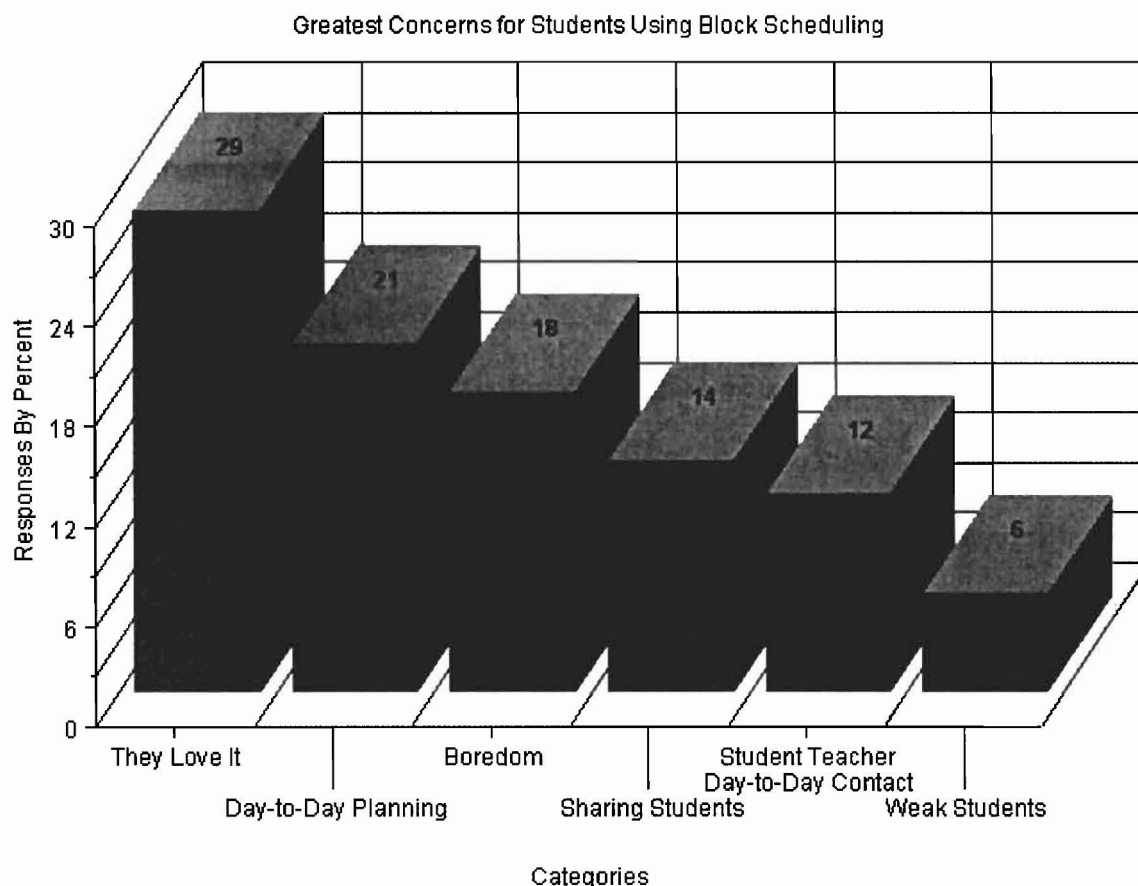
the program have had to be reduced. One teacher reported his/her ensemble loses 50 minutes of rehearsal time in two weeks when comparing his/her present schedule with a traditional seven or eight period schedule.

Although many music educators have experienced hardships with block scheduling, others are experiencing quality results. Seven percent of the participating group reported no concerns with block scheduling. Some believe their program would suffer without block scheduling. Most of these educators are using some type of modified block. One teacher, in particular, expressed pleasure with the current schedule. It allows for the class to meet four times a week with a planning period each day. Another director would only support an A/B rotating block with all classes meeting on Friday.

Question 8: What has been the greatest concern for your students with the use of block scheduling?

Each of the responses has been divided into six different categories. The following graph represents each category.

Figure 15: Greatest Concerns for Students Using Block Scheduling



The most common response for this question was not a concern; rather, the comments support the appreciation students show for block scheduling. Twenty-nine percent of the participating educators indicated their students love block scheduling. Students have smaller amounts of homework each night and, in most cases, they have the opportunity to finish it during a 90-minute seminar period. Teachers have found they are able to work with students on a one-on-one basis more frequently. Students like having only four classes each day. One educator commented that his/her school had been using block scheduling for 10 years, so the students had no other schedule for comparison. Since this is the only type of schedule the students know, they like it and generally do not have problems.

The most common concern among students observed by music educators is the amount of day-to-day planning a student must do to stay ahead in every class. Twenty one percent of the educators participating in this survey claimed that their students' individual planning was their greatest concern. Teachers have found that students have a difficult time keeping track of when classes are held and remembering when projects are to be completed.

The daily A/B rotation can also greatly confuse the students. It is easy for students to get behind in classes if they miss a few days due to illness or for other reasons. When traditional scheduling was the dominant form of curriculum organization, music teachers worked hard to keep their students practicing. Within a block schedule, students are not playing every day, and the lack of daily practice greatly hinders results which in turn creates greater problems. From day to day, students are not retaining as much information, leading to less continuity from rehearsal to rehearsal.

Eighteen percent of those participating in the questionnaire listed boredom as the second greatest challenge faced by their students. Rehearsals can seem incredibly long and boring if time is not effectively utilized and organized. When playing and singing, students become fatigued and bored during hour and a half rehearsals. Teachers are restricted to presenting fewer pieces during performances because a great deal of time is spent re-teaching the material. Some teachers feel they cannot force their students to be productive during the entire class period because of its length. Some students also do not appreciate extended theory lessons designed to "fill-in" long class periods.

Among other listed concerns, sharing students with other subjects during the same period continues to become a serious issue. Fourteen percent of the participants said it

was sometimes difficult working with block scheduling because students are not always able to get into the music classes they want depending on the amount of required classes being offered at the same time. Some students split time in core classes, leaving them to go to a music ensemble rehearsals. In some schools, elective classes are slowly starting to dwindle because of poor scheduling, which leads to lower enrollment. In some extreme scenarios, music classes only meet for a semester instead of an entire school year, making the development of musical concepts very difficult for the following school year.

Twelve percent of those taking the questionnaire reported their students desired to have music ensemble rehearsals each day. Students prefer the every day contact with their teachers because it helps with musical development, retention of information from one rehearsal to the next, and a greater sense of continuity throughout the school year. With a lack of continuity, many teachers believe the quality of an ensemble can suffer greatly in a short amount of time.

Responses to question eight also identified the needs of weaker students. Six percent of educators have found students who have had poor practice habits have a more difficult time keeping up with the rest of the ensemble. Other educators agree block scheduling allows weak and lazy students to become even weaker and lazier.

Question 9: Has your school reverted back to or explored the option of returning to the seven or eight period school day?

Block scheduling is a an individualized form of scheduling. Many schools have experimented with different variations and have found success. Other schools have tried it and have chosen other alternatives. This question targets those school districts that

have tried block scheduling but found that it is not necessarily the answer to their problems. Sixty-nine percent of the participating music educators confirmed their school has not reverted back to a traditional schedule, while 31 percent reported their school to have either switched back to a traditional schedule, or is in the process of exploring the option.

Question 10: If block scheduling was implemented during the time you have been at your respective school, were your opinions taken into consideration upon the adoption of a block schedule?

This question was designed to find out how common it is for music educators to be asked for their input during the development of a block schedule. Forty-seven percent of the participating music educators reported their options and input were sought during the development of the schedule; however, 53 percent confirmed they had not been asked to share any opinions or input.

Question 11: Have you found block scheduling to be successful for your program?

Music educators were asked to review their accomplishments and setbacks for their program while using block scheduling in question 11. Forty-one percent of the participating music educators reported block scheduling has led to success for them in the classroom and for their program. Fifty-nine percent confirmed block scheduling was not working for their program. It has hindered their work in the classroom, and some changes are in order for their program to succeed.

Question 12: By listing a few reasons, explain why your school's schedule has or has not been successful.

Following the yes or no responses from question 11, those participating were asked to explain why they believe block scheduling is helping or hindering the success of their music programs. Most of the educators supporting block scheduling were currently teaching in a modified block schedule. Those who were experiencing the most problems generally were using a less flexible form.

Many music educators commented on how they had to make a large adjustment from a traditional schedule block scheduling. Some of the largest adjustments affected their preparation for classes. On the other hand, some teachers have used block scheduling their entire career, and this type of schedule is all they know.

Music educators have found they are able to conduct a varied and more exciting rehearsal in a 90-minute time frame and not feel rushed. Bringing in guest artists and clinicians or holding sectionals is easier. Teachers feel they can cover more material and a wider range of concepts. Teachers also admit their schedule makes it easier for students to take their music classes because they have more options and at least one more class period to fill. Teachers feel more prepared, more efficient, and concepts are taught more effectively. Those supporting block scheduling believe the students retain more information because of the longer class periods. Many school districts have found the students love having only four classes a day, and teachers enjoy teaching only three classes a day with a long planning period. These educators say they make it work. Good teachers can adapt to it when they make the commitment.

Outside of the music program, music teachers also confirm their school system's test scores have been going up. In most cases, this was the reason block scheduling was

adopted in their districts. Students have also found it is easier to take more classes to prepare them for standardized testing.

Those using a form of modified block scheduling have generally seen positive results because of the added flexibility during the course of a school week. Some schools have seven period days on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday, followed by an even block day on Thursday and an odd block day on Friday. This type of schedule allows for subject areas benefiting from everyday contact to see their students four days a week.

Subject areas needing longer class periods also benefit from Thursday and Friday block period days. Music educators have found this type of schedule to be particularly helpful for sectionals and alternative activities in the classroom, helping to create more variety in their instruction. Planning is also easier because the schedule remains the same from week to week.

Another popular example of modified block scheduling currently being employed included modification within the framework of a solid block schedule. In this schedule, some students attend a straight four by four rotating A/B schedule every week. Other students can request a modified schedule, giving them one more class by splitting one block each day. This practice allows ensembles to meet every day for 45 minutes. A 90-minute block can be shared with another music ensemble. For example, half the block could be used for band, while the other half could be for choir. Other ensembles (as well as other subjects) could be split during the same block to allow for more options. Teachers in those programs have made it clear to the administration that daily contact with students is vital for continued success.

Those teaching within a modified block schedule tend to be less satisfied with their programs. Some believe the quantity of programs has suffered. They have been forced to drop certain ensembles because of scheduling constraints. Concerts and performances are limited because of less classroom meeting time. Performances have to be shorter and the number of performances have had to be reduced.

Teachers in these situations also feel they have a demanding teaching load without adequate preparation time. Teachers who like to provide additional help to students at times other than during class meetings are “at the bottom of the food chain” with no time to work with students outside of the school day. They have found block scheduling works for some subjects, but it has been bad for most. The problems have been more trouble than they are worth, and they continue to multiply.

The greatest challenge facing many music programs is teachers not being able to meet with their ensembles every day. On a rotating A/B block schedule, instructors who meet with their class on Thursday will not meet with them again until the following Monday. A greater problem emerges when the following Monday falls on a holiday. The ensemble will not rehearse for nearly a week in this circumstance. If the students do not practice to retain the information they learned in the previous class meeting, the lesson may have to be re-taught. This problem could grow into a larger dilemma as performances such as contests and marching band shows draw near.

The length of the class meeting was also a common problem discussed by those participating in the questionnaire. Some educators admit their greatest issues are dealing with keeping students focused for 90-minute class periods. Instructors generally counter this problem by presenting two, 45-minute lessons. This method can work at the high

school level; however, those teaching at the junior high level face a larger challenge.

Other subject area teachers present only as much information as is needed to fill a traditional 45 or 50 minute class period. They allow students to do “homework” during the other half of the period. In essence, the teacher is presenting only half as much information as he/she would in a traditional scheduling format.

Many music educators have seen a drastic drop in enrollment in their ensembles. Sometimes students have to choose between a core class and a music ensemble. Block scheduling allows for more classes to be offered; however, this can also create more conflicts. Schedules which utilize seminar periods actually limit the course offerings available to students. This practice increases reliance on “study halls” to make up for lost time. In some schools, college credit courses are offered during the same time as music ensembles. This makes it even more difficult for upperclassmen to maintain their dedication to music ensembles.

During this time of scheduling trial and error, schools continue to fall victim to changing schedules from year to year. One educator expressed his/her concern for the music program being adversely affected by the implementation of a new schedule every year for the past few years. Teachers are being forced to simply “deal” with the schedule changes. One music educator best described this trial and error approach by saying, “It’s a matter of figuring out how to make something work, even though it may not be the best choice. We have to work with the cards we’re dealt.”

Question 13: Do you think block scheduling works with every size of school?

This question was designed to establish whether or not the success of a block schedule depends on how large or small the school may be. Only 16 percent of the

educators participating in the questionnaire agreed block scheduling can work in any size of school and the music program can still be successful. Eighty-four percent of those participating disagreed. These teachers believe block scheduling should be reserved for only certain sizes of schools, those which are generally larger and can handle a wider variety of classes because of their larger numbers.

Question 14: Do you expect block scheduling to soon pass as an educational “fad,” or do you see this type of scheduling staying around for a while? Please explain.

The future of block scheduling is yet to be determined. This question takes aim at block scheduling down the road through the eyes of those who are presently teaching in Kansas. Teachers answering this question were making a prediction, more or less, of what is to come. Fourteen percent felt they could not determine either way from the evidence they have seen in their school system thus far. A few felt both block and traditional scheduling will continue to be accepted ways to organize a school day. They believe block scheduling will remain successful for those who succeed at it and be dropped in schools where teachers fail. According to a few educators, new models will continue to emerge as new governmental mandates are initiated.

Thirty-three percent of those participating in the questionnaire agree block scheduling is an education fad. In education, theories come and go and the same is true for block scheduling. One high school music teacher said his/her school was making the switch back to a seven-period day after experimenting with block scheduling for quite some time.

Currently, education’s main emphasis appears to be on standardized test scores. If this trend fades, many believe block scheduling will fade as well. Some school

districts have discovered that their test scores have not improved since the implementation of block scheduling. Music educators also believe many schools just “dive into” block scheduling without doing the appropriate research. There may not be enough proof that test scores are actually going up as a result of block scheduling if there is even any change at all in some districts.

Some teachers believe traditional schedules will return because they are less expensive than block scheduling. There is great deal of evidence supporting block scheduling in only larger schools. Smaller schools will eventually turn away from block scheduling because of its expense and need for students to be successful. In larger schools, only modified block will remain because of its flexibility. It could pass with time, perhaps 10 years or so, but the belief of many teachers is that block scheduling is another bad idea for education.

There are also those who believe block scheduling is here to stay. Fifty-three percent of the participating music educators gave reasons for the continuation of block scheduling. In general, people are getting accustomed to block scheduling. It is good for students to have fewer classes per day which limits the amount of homework. When executed correctly, block scheduling meets the needs of students and teachers alike. Discipline problems have decreased and the amount of teacher planning time has increased. Creative scheduling helps to solve many different types of problems.

These educators believe there are even more models to be explored in order to make block scheduling more favorable. School districts and teachers will continue to adapt as well. For many different disciplines, it has been effective. Administrators believe it is the answer to raising standardized test scores. Also, many teachers have

concluded more can be accomplished during one long class meeting than in two shorter ones. Student athletes benefit as well with less homework to do each night.

Many music teachers believe government programs will help keep block scheduling in place. As long as *No Child Left Behind* is being enforced, block scheduling will continue to spread across the country. These same educators believe it could lead to a decline in the arts, a problem some are already witnessing first hand.

Most music teachers surveyed believe block scheduling will continue because longer classes allow for more in-depth study by students, which in turn may help them prepare for college. Educators in smaller school settings question this idea mainly because going to college is not necessarily on the personal agenda for some of their students. For this and other reasons, these teachers have had trouble coping with the realization that block scheduling will be around for years to come.

Question 15: If you could make changes to your schedule, what would they be?

At this point in the development of block scheduling, there are many different models, and new ideas emerge every school year. Question 15 targets the developments and ideas of Kansas music educators.

Twenty-five percent of those participating in the questionnaire said they did not have recommendations for change in their current schedule. Some currently utilize a form of block scheduling, while others are still using traditional approaches. Others agree that block scheduling works with certain types of ensembles, i.e. marching band and jazz ensemble. Block scheduling appeared to be the choice among those teachers who like their current schedule.

For those who admitted they would like to see a change, 22 percent claimed that a traditional schedule was their primary option. To these educators, everyday contact is vital to their program. Many believe this contact is essential for all fine arts classes. The ideal schedule would consist of seven to eight periods lasting approximately 45 minutes with four-minute passing periods between classes. Some who were currently using traditional scheduling and liked it would like slightly longer class periods.

Suggestions for changing block schedules varied. Most of those using a form of block scheduling reported they would make only slight changes in order to create a modified model. Forty-five percent of those participating stated they would rather teach under a modified block format, or change the modified block slightly. Some of these modifications include allowing all performing ensembles to meet on the same day. This would allow for better organization of concerts. Other music educators would like to see some ensembles for longer periods of time and others for shorter periods. One teacher said he/she would like to see his/her ensemble for 90 minutes every day, while others would like more frequent class meetings for shorter amounts of time. Another educator commented that he/she would like to split one block for both choir and band.

Also suggested by an educator was a modified model which would include using block for two days a week, giving each class the opportunity to have a longer class period during the week, and then using a traditional schedule for the remainder of the week. This type of schedule proved to be popular with many music educators because of more frequent rehearsals. A different version of this model would allow for traditional scheduling four days each week and then rotate block schedules on the remaining day

over the course of two weeks. Those using a seminar period would like to move it to the last period of the day.

Many music educators believe block scheduling should always be designed to take into account the needs of each different subject area. Fine arts teachers generally would like to meet their students more frequently for shorter amounts of time, while teachers of other subject areas prefer longer class periods, no matter when they are held. It appears that when used correctly, modified block can benefit all subjects.

Changes outside of block scheduling include the trimester system which allows for an hour with each class and student contact everyday. Class conflicts continue to haunt some music teachers in every type of schedule. Other changes include grouping students strictly by ability. In this approach, learning styles and the rate at which students learn are highly variable.

Question 16: What would you tell a music teacher whose school is considering block scheduling? What would you tell the administrators?

Here, music teachers had the opportunity to give their personal input to educators in school districts considering the switch to block scheduling. They were also asked to add what they would tell administrators spearheading a campaign to explore a block schedule.

Many music educators wished their colleagues “good luck” in this endeavor. They further advised educators to not set musical sights too high. Block scheduling either forces ensembles to play fewer selections in performances or the same amount of literature but with easier music than the ensemble has played in the past. The quality of playing by the group will suffer in the long run. Due to other classes being offered and

students with short attention spans being enrolled, the program could also lose students. Rehearsal time will be at a premium and extra rehearsals must be expected. Students need daily reinforcement and daily physical development to create the ideal tone and fundamental sound. Retention of material is not as high when block scheduling is the format. Teachers are forced to plan further in advance. These music educators also warn others about being careful when making compromises in a block schedule. These teachers caution others to insure that where compromises are made, the music program should not suffer unduly.

Teachers and administrators should avoid scheduling back-to-back performance ensemble rehearsals in a block plan. This practice could lead to three or more continuous hours of singing or playing. Others believe all performing ensembles should be placed on the same day in order to allow for every ensemble to rehearse the day of a performance.

Teachers are encouraged to get involved early in the planning process for any new schedule. The negative and positive aspects should be explored thoroughly when discussing block scheduling. Some believe only a fixed block schedule should be supported, while others believe modified block scheduling is the only way musical ensembles can succeed. Music teachers should have open minds and find out how to make a schedule work for everyone. By maintaining close communication with administrators on expectations, improvements, or possible deterioration of the program and what can be done for the continued growth of musical ensembles, a great working environment will result. If the school or development committee does not see the

importance of a teacher's subject area, he/she should look at his/her options which includes finding a better place to teach music.

Some music educators feel that block scheduling should continue to be opposed by all those teaching in the fine arts. They believe block scheduling does not help students, which was its original purpose from the beginning. Music is also best retained with daily practice. Without the daily contact there is no opportunity for daily announcements for travel plans, game schedules, and performances. One music educator advised any teacher in this situation to "Get out now! It is a losing battle to change the administrator's minds. The other teachers are happier because of more planning time, and there are less discipline problems because students are in the halls less."

There are a few music teachers who are more optimistic. They believe block scheduling works great for longer activities and sectionals. Schedules tend to be what teachers make of them. In most cases it is a matter of being more creative in designing lessons. Teachers should do what is best for the school as a whole and not impose their will on everyone. The teacher must do everything he/she can to educate each student, no matter what type of schedule is used.

In this questionnaire, music educators agree on many considerations to be taken into account concerning administrators. They should look at how the school will be affected as a whole. Even though science labs and other curricular areas may benefit, some subject areas will have a difficult time sustaining long-term growth using the shorter instructional time periods.

It is best to decide what is most beneficial for the district based upon what is best for the students. Too often, scheduling decisions are made for the wrong reasons. Some

courses work better if they meet daily. These requests must be recognized by the administrator. Fine arts classes are essential to the curriculum and school community. Ignoring these concerns can and, in some cases, do cause a division between teachers and the administration.

Administrators should ask themselves, "How important is a fine arts program?" They will have to understand that the quality and the number of students involved in the music program will be affected by a block schedule. Daily rehearsal and practice are important for growth and steady advancement. With block scheduling, administrators should expect fewer music concerts throughout the school year. Ninety minutes of playing or singing can be an incredible physical and mental strain on most students. According to these surveyed music teachers, repetition is the key, not longer period of time with less frequency.

Test scores should be reviewed, along with the size of school when considering either block scheduling or a seven or eight period day. Statistics on attendance and behavior of students should be considered as well. To many music educators, test scores appear to be more important to their administrators than a well-rounded education for every student. When appropriate changes are made everyone should benefit.

To both music educators and administrators, questionnaire participants offer these words of advice. If implemented correctly, block scheduling can be helpful to a music program. Unfortunately, music programs are often overlooked in the planning process for block scheduling. It is truly a great adjustment. Teachers and administrators should expect to see the quality of music programs to drop in many circumstances. Students will have fewer elective opportunities, making it harder to maintain a quality fine arts

program. Block scheduling hinders students from building on what they have been leaning in all classes, including music classes.

According to one music educator, studies show shorter intervals of repeated instruction and learning will help students retain more information. Teachers and parents should be aware of the physical limitations and endurance levels of students during longer rehearsal sessions.

All educators should be encouraged to question the trend of block scheduling. The data for the correlation between block scheduling and higher test scores should be investigated. Some educators believe even if this information is highly sought after, it still will not be found.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

The process of building a new schedule relies heavily on the roles educators, administrators, students, family members, and community members each accept. The review of literature revealed how these roles affect everyone. Administrators should be open-minded and regarded as the decision makers; however, their choices should rely greatly on the ideas and beliefs of their faculty. All music educators should know before, during, and after the institution of a new schedule what is important in order to create or maintain success.

The benefits and drawbacks of block scheduling should be evident to all who are in the process of developing or who are currently teaching with a form of block scheduling. Elements such as test scores and time management should be taken into account. The total amount of accumulated class time should be acceptable for every subject area in the curriculum. There are many issues to consider, sacrifices to make, and a great deal compromise needed for any schedule to function properly.

The questionnaire was developed to obtain information from music teachers in the field. Specific questions were asked in order to expose school sizes, musical subject area taught, years of experience, which schools use block scheduling, how long those schools have used block scheduling, ensemble enrollment numbers, teacher and student concerns, the future of block scheduling, and what type of programs succeed when using a form of block scheduling. With the information collected from this questionnaire, the current status of block scheduling among many music educators in Kansas was brought into focus.

One objective for this study was to collect opinions of the future of block scheduling. Many teachers hoped it is an educational fad; however, most agreed block scheduling would be a part of the education system long into the future. Teachers were also asked to share the improvements they would make to their current schedules, whether it be traditional or block. These suggestions made clear what was important for a successful music program to stay in working order.

Through this study, specific concerns for music teachers were brought to the surface. Despite a strong representation of music educators who support block scheduling, most teachers reported finding more problems than answers. These problems tend to divide faculty members and create separation from administrators. Those who supported block scheduling did provide several excellent models for other music educators to follow. These innovative schedules should be shared with the rest of the education community as a closer step to resolving the on-going debate.

Though this study covered a great deal of information regarding block scheduling in Kansas, more research is needed. Information such as (a) finding out what teaching strategies work best for each individual ensemble and music class for different block schedule models, (b) how many more schools are currently using or thinking of using block scheduling, (c) more information from an administrator's perspective, perhaps an administrator questionnaire, and (d) research to discover what Kansas colleges and universities are doing to prepare their students for teaching in districts using block scheduling.

Information collected from this study indicates at least 61 percent of Kansas schools are currently using a form of block scheduling. However, 31 percent of music

educators participating in this questionnaire report their school have already or are currently looking into switching back to a traditional seven or eight period schedule. Many educators believe block scheduling to be a trend that is growing and will continue to grow with the continued emphasis on standardized test scores for schools across America. The statistics provided throughout the questionnaire suggest otherwise.

Even though 59 percent of the survey respondents believe it is hindering school music programs and 84 percent believe it does not work with every size of school, 53 percent believe block scheduling will be with their school districts for years to come. Seventy-two percent currently teach at school where block scheduling has been used for six or more years. Thirty percent of the participating music educators have seen the enrollment in their music ensembles decrease. If enrollment has been decreasing for six or more years, a few Kansas music programs are in serious trouble.

Less than half of the participants teaching at schools currently using block scheduling said they were asked for their opinions for their current scheduling model. This indicates a few possibilities: (a) block scheduling was thrown into the curriculum with little or no research, (b) enrollment for their ensembles has suffered because of too many class conflicts, and (c) some music teachers and administrators may be experiencing diminished interaction regarding this issue. It is of concern to discover that fifty-three percent of the music educators participating in this questionnaire said they were never asked to share their input for block scheduling. Teachers should not be ignored on this issue.

Many music educators have found success with block scheduling despite hardships and continuous compromise with their colleagues and administrators. New and

innovative modified block scheduling models have opened the door of compromise for schools across Kansas and the United States. Modified Block Scheduling has helped educators and administrators alike to understand the concept behind creative scheduling. Block scheduling should be a continually evolving concept. It has to be a flexible entity with the school faculty, administration, and the community. Block scheduling should not be forced on a school curriculum. It should be introduced through research, teamwork, and the elements which govern it.

These music educators believe block scheduling will be a part of education for a long time to come, regardless if they want it to be or not. Many administrators have taken into account the needs of fine arts programs in their respective schools and its contribution in producing well-rounded individuals. These administrators have helped to create and institute flexible, functional, modified block schedules which will help their schools experience success in each subject area.

The following are a few examples of schedules preferred by most music educators participating in this study and were given as examples through the comments collected. All three of these models help satisfy the needs of subject areas desiring longer class periods with less frequent meetings and those subject areas who wish to meet more frequently for shorter periods of time.

Figure 16: Functional Modified Block Schedule #1

A	B	A	B	Week's Last Day
1	2	1	2	1
				2
3	4	3	4	3
	Seminar		Seminar	Seminar
5	6	5	6	5
				6
7	8	7	8	7
				8

This model has been used for at least 10 to 15 years. It has proven to be a fine functioning example of a Modified Block Schedule.

Figure 17: Functional Modified Block Schedule #2

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	2	1	2	1
3	4	3	4	3
5	5	5	5	5
6	6	6	6	6
7	7	7	7	7

The schedule above is also known as the Hybrid Block Schedule. It allows for two rotating 90-minute blocks per school day and three shorter periods for classes benefiting from shorter, more frequent amounts of time.

Figure 18: Functional Modified Block Schedule #3

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	1	1	1	2
2	2	2		
3	3	3		
Seminar	Seminar	Seminar	3	4 Seminar
5	5	5		
6	6	6		
7	7	7	7	8
8	8	8		

This type of schedule favors school districts who value the traditional schedule but would like to have longer class periods for two days a week. Schedule number three could also be changed by removing the seminar period from the first three days, which would extend the remaining seven periods for 50 minutes in length. This would still allow for a seminar period on Friday.

By means of this questionnaire, it has become apparent that many music educators would like to teach, or continue to teach, within a traditional schedule. These educators realize, however, other subject areas greatly benefit from block scheduling. Since teachers appear to benefit from more lab time, music educators lose rehearsal time but gain sectional time through creative planning. Where content instructors such as English or social studies can have more preparation time, music educators can also gain more planning time to execute the next marching band rehearsal. It is when subject-area teachers and administrators meet in the middle that block scheduling becomes successful for a school district.

In education, things are ever changing. Schedules have always been changed in order to fit the needs of each individual school system. Schedules will continue to

change to fit new needs and innovative teaching methods. As long as schedules are decided with a communal effort, teachers and administrators alike will continue to work hand in hand for the greater good of their students and the future of American education.

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APPENDIX

Printed Questionnaire and Results:

Block Scheduling: A Questionnaire for its use in Kansas Schools

Survey Results (Included Responses)

Block Scheduling: A Questionnaire for its use in Kansas Schools

Report created on: Tuesday, May 02, 2006 3:40:00 PM

The results of your survey are displayed below. If your survey includes text responses, click the "View" button to read individual results. To exclude a particular response, click the Included Responses button. You can then view the set of individual responses that are currently included and select those you wish to exclude. Results below contain only included responses

EXCLUDE BLANK RESPONSES

Launch Date 02/28/2006 - 7:09 PM

Modified Date

Close Date 05/02/2006 - 3:41 PM

Email Invites 0

Visits 112

Partials 0

Completes 74

Go to Individual Complete Responses:

Show respondent's emails.

INCLUDED RESPONSES

EXCLUDED RESPONSES

Included Respondents: 74

Excluded Respondents: 0

- Cross Tabulate
Cross reference multiple questions
- Download Results
Receive results in spreadsheet format

Responses: Completes only Partials only Completes & Partials

1. What is the size of your school?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
1A	5	7%
2A	2	3%
3A	6	8%
4A	8	11%
5A	18	25%
6A	33	46%
Total	72	100%

2. Do you teach:

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Elementary	1	1%
Instrumental Secondary	45	61%
Vocal Secondary	20	27%
All Grades, Vocal and Instrumental	8	11%
Total	74	100%

3. How many years have you taught?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
1-2	11	15%
3-6	12	16%
7-15	16	22%
15-20	11	15%
20-30	17	23%
30-More	7	9%
Total	74	100%

4. Does your school use a form of Block Scheduling?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	44	60%
No	29	40%
Total	73	100%

5. How long has your school used block scheduling?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
1-2 years	4	9%
3-5 years	9	19%
6 or more years	34	72%
Total	47	100%

6. How has the enrollment in your music ensembles and classes been effected since the implementation of Block Scheduling?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
It has increased	6	14%
It has decreased	13	30%
It has stayed the same	24	56%
Total	43	100%

7. As a music teacher, what has been your largest concern, with the use of block scheduling?

[VIEW](#) 51 Responses

8. What has been the largest concern for your students with the use of block scheduling?

[VIEW](#) 43 Responses

9. Has your school reverted back to or explored the option of returning to the seven or eight period school day?

	Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	15	31%

No	████████████████████	33	69%
Total		48	100%

If block scheduling was implemented during the time you have been at your respective school, were your options taken into consideration upon the adoption of a block schedule?

		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	████████████████████	16	47%
No	████████████████████	18	53%
Total		34	100%

11. Have you found block scheduling to be successful for your program?

		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	████████████████████	17	41%
No	████████████████████	24	59%
Total		41	100%

12. By listing a few reasons, explain why your school's schedule has or has not been successful.

[VIEW](#) 45 Responses

13. Do you think block scheduling works with every size of school?

		Number of Responses	Response Ratio
Yes	████████	9	16%
No	████████████████████	49	84%
Total		58	100%

Do you expect block scheduling to soon pass as an educational "fad," or do you see this type of scheduling staying around for a while? Please explain.

14.

[VIEW](#) 52 Responses

15. If you would make changes to your schedule, what would they be?

[VIEW](#) 46 Responses

What would you tell a music teacher whose school is considering block scheduling? What would you tell the administrators?

16.

[VIEW](#) 53 Responses

Survey Results (Included Responses)

[REPORT OVERVIEW](#)

Block Scheduling: A Questionnaire for its use in Kansas Schools

Questions that required written responses are displayed by individual query. The "Report Overview" button or "Back" button will return you to your survey results.

Each individual respondent is referenced under the # column.

7. As a music teacher, what has been your largest concern, with the use of block scheduling?

#	Response
1	management of time to maintain active student engagement
2	Not seeing every kid each day
3	not enough contact time with students. They don't practice at home to make up for lost days.
4	I only see my 6th grade band students 3 times a week for 30 minutes each time.
5	Less consistent contact time with students.
6	Not seeing students for daily repetition.
7	Concerts on block days where I do not see one of my performing ensembles because it is not their block.
8	No concerns
9	Getting assignments in, rehearsal for concerts (I would not want a concert on a day I don't see my students)
10	My concern is the students remembering things from one class period to the next.
11	Contact time.
12	Depending on the type of block schedule used, a school's curriculum offerings may loose electives.
13	The biggest challenge is not being able to see and work with the students on a daily basis.
14	I have no grave concerns with block scheduling. If we were on the 7 period day here, my enrollment would suffer due to the amount of classes kids are required to take these days.
15	Having consisten rehearsals
16	Not seeing my students everyday.
17	The inconsistency of not seeing my students every day.
18	Not having students everyday.
19	Students not being able to rehearse on a daily basis, or large amounts of time away from the instrument/ensemble
20	Block scheduling in music makes it even more important that students practice on their own, and that teachers make clear what needs to be practiced. (I did teach in a district which used block scheduling a few years ago.)
21	90 minutes too long for kids to remain focused both mentally and physically.
22	Length of rehearsal Lack of daily rehearsal Quantity of programs or number of songs in a program
23	Maintaining daily contact with students.
24	Too much time at infrequent intervals. I don't see my students but every other day and then I see them for an hour and 45 minutes. No high school student will sing for that long straight.
25	Ours is a modified block, only Wednesdays and Thursdays. It's great. We see every class 4 times a week. No concerns for me, as I have a plan each day. Many teachers don't have plan time one day a week, and are teaching 85 minute periods back-to-back. Really exhausting.
26	Student absences and field trips would cut class meetings to one time or less per week.
27	ONLY SUPPORT FIXED BLOCK - IT works then for music!!! MW T/Th Friday all classes
28	Continuity, information is not fresh in the students mind as we only see them every other day. Loss of rehearsal time is also a problem. Every two weeks we lose a 50 minute rehearsal if compared with a regular every day schedule.
29	That there are not as many spaces in the schedule to avoid overbooking core classes the same time as band. Also, having students involved in both band and jazz band is a concern because there are only so many spaces a student can fill up with electives.
30	The students have not had the repetitive rehearsals that they need.
31	missing a day with kids
32	The physical demands of playing an instrument for 90 minutes is overwhelming for young students. Schools that

emphasize performance will struggle meeting those expectations if young students do not meet daily for shorter periods of time.

- 33 I'd rather see my singers for 45 minutes daily than 90 minutes 2 or 3 times per week.
- 34 Retention. Since we do not meet every day, I feel we spend a lot of time relearning.
- 35 The band students have a difficult time playing for much longer than 45 minutes. The 90 minute block is too much time!
- 36 Declining enrollment and being locked in to situations that only support assessment goals and not the needs of students... question 9--we have a 10 period day...I teach 8 different classes...four of those classes have advanced and beginners at the same time--it is exhausting!
- 37 1. Students remembering performances on days we don't have band. 2. The focus is not as good as it was when we had band everyday.
- 38 Memorization is very difficult. The hardest thing is not seeing the students everyday - it is very difficult to have continuity.
- 39 I don't get to see the students enough.
- 40 They are looking into doing this in our middle school in the coming years. I fear that we will lose students to other interests/electives due to less time to get this experience in. I also fear that we will lose instructional time and consistency in teaching. They changed my 6th grade Orchestra schedule this year so that I only see them MWF instead of every day. We are VERY behind in the curriculum, and they are pulled from a core class to come to Orchestra--parents HATE this and some students have dropped due to this schedule.
- 41 Lack of daily practice.
- 42 Our block system has 4 classes meeting daily for 90 minutes for one semester. Each ensemble meets for a semester only.
- 43 Less contact time with students. Having to teach and reteach the same things every class period.
- 44 Trying to rehearse groups together (like 7 & 8 orchestra. I travel to a grade school and district office and it would be glad to have all three grades back to back. I teach 6th and 7th orch 3rd and 4th hours and come back for 8th grade 10th hour!
- 45 My largest concern has been retention of ideas from one class period to the next. I am fortunate to have a modified block in my schedule. I see kids 4 days a week (which is much better than teachers whose block requires an every other day approach). I truly feel band kids need the repetition on a daily basis in order to develop their chops properly. My schedule is meets all classes M,T, and F. Then we have a 70 min block on W and a 90 min. block on Th. I feel on Th, I lose their attention, and of course their chops give up. I try to have other activities, listening to recordings, writing, rhythm reading, tests....to break up the day, but I am not a fan of the 90 min. junior high class period.
- 46 Seeing students every other day.
- 47 Block scheduling in the middle school does not effect music classes.
- 48 Not enough rehearsal time
- 49 Retention of learning from one rehearsal to the next.
- 50 I see the students 3 days one week and 2 days the next. Sometimes because of inservice or snow days I may only see the students 1 day a week.
- 51 I am worried that the students are not learning as much as they would if they were to meet every day for a less amount of time.

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Survey Results (Included Responses)



Block Scheduling: A Questionnaire for its use in Kansas Schools

Questions that required written responses are displayed by individual query. The "Report Overview" button or "Back" button will return you to your survey results.

Each individual respondent is referenced under the # column.

8. What has been the largest concern for your students with the use of block scheduling?

#	Response
1	They love it.
2	They love it. Smaller amounts of homework and they get a seminar to do homework.
3	6th grade band students miss another core class to come to band.
4	Planning and thinking ahead for classes 2 days away.
5	Boring rehearsals that run too long.
6	n/a
7	I haven't heard anything. I think this is the only thing that they know for high school.
8	No Block
9	Same as above.
10	I have no concerns with students on the block schedule. In fact, I am able to work with kids more because of block scheduling and our seminar period.
11	Less continuity.
12	My kids love block scheduling for their other classes....and since it is the only thing they know, they really have no concerns.
13	Inconsistency
14	What day is it? (which classes do they go to on that day)
15	Those who had poor practice habits had a an even more difficult time keeping up.
16	Same as 7.
17	Length of rehearsal Quantity of songs in a program
18	Conflicts with "singleton" courses offered opposite music classes.
19	Not seeing me every day.
20	They like it. Everyone gets a break once a week.
21	having to meet on T/thursday evenings for marching band since I only see them M/W/F but it works well.
22	Continuity
23	They enjoy block scheduling for the pure fact of "only 4 classes a day!"
24	Not being able to rehearse on a regular basis.
25	lack of daily practice
26	My school is on a modified block. Our students still do meet everyday for 45 minutes. It has affected the course choices for students. Often if another course cannot be matched up band or choir, it will affect the students schedule. This is often an overlooked element of block scheduling and fine arts courses.
27	It's much healthier for singers to rehears for 45 minutes a day than for 90 minutes 2 or 3 times per week.
28	Other teachers not using the whole class period and/or not being able to focus for the entire hour and a half.
29	My students do not like that we have implimented a theory lesson into the band schedule.
30	Students not being able to take electives
31	Getting behind in classes if they miss a few days.
32	The students love it, because with the semoinar of 90 minutes every other day, they get their homework done. Of course, this is our 10th year so they don't know any other way.
33	They like it for the most part.
34	Long classes.

- 35 They only get music one semester each year.
- 36 I think the majority of the students prefer the block schedule because it allows them to be lazy!
- 37 Trying to take another 8th grade elective which is the same hour as my 8th orchestra.
- 38 Losing their chops, boredom
- 39 There isn't much. It is all they have been exposed to.
- 40 Students are not always able to get into the music classes they want because of required classes being offered at the same time
- 41 ?
- 42 Class dose not meet often enough so the quality of the group has gone down.
- 43 Keeping track of when classes are and remembering when things are due.

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Each individual respondent is referenced under the # column.

12. By listing a few reasons, explain why your school's schedule has or has not been successful.

#	Response
1	We are on a modified block schedule - MTW are 7 period days, with even hour block on Thursday, odd hour block on Friday. One extended rehearsal period each week is helpful for incorporating sectionals, assessment, alternate activities, field trips, etc.
2	The school's focus is to give kids extra time to get needed help to improve grades and assessment scores. Those scores continue to ascend.
3	We are on a straight block so if I see my students on Thursday, I don't see them again until Monday. And God help us when we have Monday off for a holiday, then I don't see them until Tuesday. Do they practice at home so they remember what I taught last week? Of course not.
4	6th grade band enrollment has dropped because students miss another core class.
5	Have not had block scheduling
6	Since we are on a modified block (Thurs and Fri only), we see all students 4 times per week. This allows for great flexibility with regard to planning and pacing varying rehearsal strategies.
7	I can run a more varied and exciting rehearsal in 90 min. and not be rushed. I can cover more materials and concepts.
8	We've adjusted our approach to preparation.
9	We have a traditional 7 period day which is safe and what the faculty is used to. A part of me would be like to try a modified block. I think a true 4X4 block would be very challenging for a band program.
10	I think it has worked. Through all of my teaching and student teaching, I've dealt with block scheduling, so I cannot honestly tell you what has not been successful compared to an eight period day.
11	classes were too long, issues of students being able to focus for 1.5 hours a class
12	It's a matter of figuring out how to make something work even though it may not be the best choice. We have to work with the cards we're dealt.
13	My school's schedule is successful because more kids can participate in band due to the schedule. Even on an 8 period day, we would not even have enough time to take instruments out of cases. The block schedule is not as bad as it seems.
14	Block schedule allows a longer band rehearsal of 90 min. once a week which makes it easier to run sectionals or have guest clinicians, etc.
15	Our school has changed schedules every year for the past few years. The 90 minute periods are too long for some subjects, and students have a hard time staying interested for the entire period. Also, some teachers are not trained properly in teaching on block schedule, so they end up teaching half of what they were teaching on a traditional schedule. The biggest problem in music classes are not seeing the students every day and having to re-teach a lot of information each class period.
16	Students aren't able to focus as well for 90 minutes, and two 45 minute lessons are more effective, even though mathematically they are in class the exact same number of minutes. The time spent in the 45 minute lessons is more efficiently used
17	Teachers can learn to make either schedule workable.
18	I would say that it has a few drawbacks but I think that a good teacher can adapt to it.
19	I have found the quantity of programs has suffered. We have had to shorten the length of programs or shorten the number of programs from 4 a year to 2 or 3 a year.
20	Our school uses a modified block. There are four blocks per day; alternating "black" and "gold" days. The 1st/2nd block and 5th/6th block are split. Band, jazz ensembles, orchestras, and some choirs do meet daily as parts of one of the split blocks. Some students (particularly musicians) have five or six classes per day, while others (following the strict block) have four blocks per day. Our music instructors feel that daily contact with students is vital to our continued success.
21	Too many classes conflict with my class. Not a whole lot of scheduling options.
22	Again, I would hate an every day block. I have watched it bring down the quality of programs in surrounding areas. Ours works because it is a modified block.
23	Fixed block works great for all seasons.

- 24 I think we have been fairly successful because the educator's in our department have evolved. We are more prepared and more efficient and have found ways to use the time we have effectively.
- 25 Block scheduling has not been successful because I don't see students everyday. Retention of music, especially around contest time and performance (games, concerts) suffers because I may not see students for 4 days due to a weekend and block scheduling. Also, to help avoid the overbooking of core classes the same time as band, I have been flexible in having my school move band to anywhere they want it, therefore limiting us to outside rehearsal time.
- 26 Even with varying activities the attention span of a middle school aged student can not stay focused for 90 minutes.
- 27 we make it work
- 28 I think it has limited the course offering available to students and increased the reliance on study halls to make the schedule work.
- 29 We have a modified block schedule, so I still am able to see students four days per week, most weeks.
- 30 1- many teachers do not teach the entire class period. 2- student retention. 3- students have much difficulty focusing for an hour and a half.
- 31 The students have other classes that conflict with band that they have to take. Also, the college courses that the school offers are up against band.
- 32 demanding teacher load without adequate prep time--exploratory teachers are "at the bottom of the food chain"--no time to work with students for the "extras" beyond the day.
- 33 This is our first year with block scheduling, that is why I did not answer #11. It is really to early to tell if it is a success or failure.
- 34 It is set up here that seniors can opt out of seminar if they have turned in their exit portfolio. This then affects the master schedule so that students don't have to enroll in a full day, and the electives get left out. There are many class conflicts.
- 35 It is not successful for music classes because we lose rehearsal time.
- 36 Kids like it, teachers like it. Music/foreign language/math wish we had daily classes. Teachers each have a full 90 minute plan EVERY day, so teach 3, plan 1 each day. Because of that, we will never get rid of the block. Wish we had 8 period day for electives!
- 37 I think the block schedule is good for some classes, but bad for the majority of them.
- 38 I can't say it has helped or hindered-just made some scheduling issues hard. Especially going to orchestra festival and the young peoples concerts. It has caused the district music office to have to change dates-although the state testing dates have caused more problems!!!!!!!!
- 39 Please see my answer in number seven.
- 40 It allows for more time to detail music. I feel the students retain more because there is more repetition in the course of a class period.
- 41 Previous school, band was every other day. It is hard for students to remember with days between rehearsals. I made it work, but it was hard.
- 42 I don't see my students every day; required classes often are offered only once and studnets need those classes to graduate.
- 43 We are successful in block scheduling, but would prefer to have shorter class periods, every day.
- 44 It dose make it easier for kids to take more classes.
- 45 Kids forget to turn in assingments They seem to forget what they have learned by the next rehearsal I think that block sceduling is good for most subjects, but not for the arts to much knowledge is lost from the spread of the class periods.

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Do you expect block scheduling to soon pass as an educational "fad," or do you see this type of scheduling staying around for a while? Please explain.

#	Response
1	I think with the importance of assessments, schools will change accordingly, allowing adequate time to be sent helping kids improve their skills and scores. With the fade of assessments, this time might diminish.
2	Usually things come and go. Hopefully this will go soon.
3	I think it will be around for a while. From a student standpoint, it is helpful to have fewer classes each day for a more extended period of time. This helps limit the amount of homework for them.
4	Block scheduling will eventually phase itself out. We have a high school in our district that has been on block schedule for a few years and is going back to the 7 period day.
5	I believe block scheduling is here for a long time because when it is executed correctly it meets the needs of students and teachers alike.
6	I things change. Tests scores have not improved since the implementation of block scheduleing
7	I have no idea.
8	Yes though modified block hybrids will probably continue. I don't think true block will last because standardized test scores, to my knowledge, have not been improved or even maintained after its implementation.
9	I see it as staying for a while. I think people are getting used to it, especially in our medium.
10	It will pass, it is a fad.
11	fad, fewer schools are considering the block. we tried it for about 8 years but the faculty wanted to go back to a regular 6 period day.
12	Small schools - It will pass because it's expensive to run a block schedule. Large schools - It's a keeper. Fewer passing periods means fewer discipline problems.
13	Everything in education is a "fad".
14	I believe the block will stay for a while. Discipline issues have decreased here due to our block schedule. When kids are not in the halls, there will be no trouble. Also, the teachers like the planning time they have during the day.
15	no, creative scheduling can solve a lot of problems
16	I hope it is. I think everything in education is a "fad." As educators we are constantly trying to recreate/create an environment that is best for student learning and to that end, things constantly come and go.
17	I see this type of scheduling staying around because it is very good for teachers and administrators. Teachers only have to plan for 3 classes per day instead of 6. Teachers have students do homework in class and teach half as much in each class period. Administrators like block scheduling because students are in the halls half as much with fewer passing periods in each day.
18	It wont last.
19	I anticipate some type of modified block will be explored for the next 8-15 years, while tradition schedules will still be around.
20	It will stay for those who are successful with it, and pass for those who are not successful with it. Teaching must be managed differently for each kind of schedule.
21	I think that we will be seeing many more types of alternative schedules in the coming years that will make block scheduling seem favorable.
22	No. Administrators seem sold on it because of state testing ... they think it is necessary.
23	As long as public schools and their administrators exist, we will keep fiddling the schedules to find "the one".
24	I believe that it will be at our school for a long time to come.
25	It's very helpful for science classes which need extended lab time. Teachers of writing also appreciate the extended time. Some kids don't function well when there are frequent changes during the day. I don't see it going away, but I do see schools searching for more successful alternatives.
26	I hope it passes as another bad idea for education.

- 27 yes - I think we'll shift back to daily for financial reasons as well.
- 28 I think it is hear to stay. It is effective for many disciplines.
- 29 I think both. I think it works for some places, and in other places it doesn't. But I also see it as an educational fad. I think for the sake of our school, it is an education fad. I don't think they truely looked into testing scores, attendance and behavior studies fully before diving into the block schedule.
- 30 Topeka Shawnee Heights has had block since the 1970's. It is something that will keep coming and going.
- 31 staying around because administration likes it
- 32 I think it will stay around. It is effcent for teachers and administrators. If you can tackle many items in one meeting, why have two? This does not account for students ability to maintain continued focus, but does allow for guided practice.
- 33 I think a modified block is a good compromise and I hope schools will consider it, rather than taking an all or nothing approach. Junior High students with 8 or 9 class periods per day, with sports after school have a LOT to keep track of and the block helps somewhat.
- 34 Yes, I believe it will pass. It is already being phased out all over the country (if not already gone!), because people are realizing it does not work very well.
- 35 I think that some form of adapted block schedule will be around for a while.
- 36 As long as NCLB is implemented we will continue to see a decline in the arts...this problem will NOT CHANGE.
- 37 I think it will be around for awhile in one form or another. I think as education becomes more individualized block schedules and traditional 7 period days will modify to fit the needs of the students.
- 38 I don't think it is a fad, unfortunately.
- 39 It will (has been) around for awhile.
- 40 I think it will pass on, but maybe not for another 10 years or so.
- 41 I think it will be around a while simply for convenience of staff. I think it is a "fad" but a lot of districts have done block scheduling for so long that it may be difficult to get out of it. I also think that it helps get in all of the increased requirements that students must endure these days. If I understand block scheduling correctly, they are able to get through more of a subject in less time. I think that a lot of schools are on a modified block or split block schedule so that they have more choices within each block, as well.
- 42 Ours is here to stay because of the planning time it offered teachers.
- 43 yes
- 44 It will be around. Longer classes allows for more in-depth study by students.
- 45 I think it will stick around.
- 46 I see it as staying for a long time. Also they will lengthen the block to add more time to Reading, writing, math if test scores drop in the least. Also NCLB will cause more block scheduling.
- 47 I am not sure, I feel math and science really want this longer period and those two areas are considered to be "core" classes, these are standardized testing areas, so I potentially see it staying the same at my school. I feel my principal is trying to please everyone, so that is why we have a "modified" block. The other 3 junior high schools in my district have "full" block.
- 48 No, many core teachers like block scheduling. Fine arts usually don't.
- 49 I think it has run its course. Class time is reduced by using a block schedule instead of a regular schedule which allows classes to meet each day.
- 50 Don't know
- 51 I am sorry to say that it will stay around, administrators like it because it means less time in the halls because they only change class 4 times a day, which means less discipline problems.
- 52 I think that block sceduling will be around for a while. I first remember hearinf about it in 1995 when they started it at my school. Schools seem to think that since you are spending more time on one subject the students are learning more. This may be the case for some subjects, but not for the arts. Kids also have a short attention span and are more likely to "space off" in a block sceduling situtation since the classes are longer. Still, schools around the state seem to like it. One thing that I think school districts use a positive attribute to the scheduling is that it prepares the students for college, but in a small school setting how many of your students are actually going to go on to college?

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15.If you would make changes to your schedule, what would they be?

#	Response
1	Block 2 days a week so each class can have a long period once a week and then regular schedule the rest of the week.
2	Not put my 6th grade band class against another core class.
3	We have an 8 period day, 4 min. passing periods and 45 minute classes. This works very well.
4	Can't think of any changes.
5	All performing ensembles on the same day block
6	Longer class periods during traditional days.
7	none
8	Modified block with 6-7 periods a day, block on Thurs and Friday with seminar on one day. The Olathe District is the schedule I am referring to.
9	If we need to still entertain the block schedule the best one is to block 2 days and see all classes 3 days. This helps the lab teachers but doesn't kill the subjects that need to see students on a regular basis.
10	One change would happen...I would move Seminar to the last period of the day.
11	none, we have a regular 7 period day M,W,F and block on Tues, Th. and I feel it works very well.
12	I would love to be on a 7 or 8 period day.
13	I would go to a traditional 7 period day.
14	More rehearsals per week, as in 3-4 instead of 2-3
15	Allow more different classes so that we could teach students at the level they will learn best. Advanced math students are not mixed with those who are not ready for it. With the pressure to perform, it is particularly difficult to mix the various ability level players in one orchestra.
16	For concert band, I would like to see my kids every day for shorter amounts of time. Block scheduling is fine for my marching band and jazz ensemble.
17	None. I am a part time teacher and for personal scheduling reasons I prefer to keep the block scheduling (I only come in every other day instead of everyday for part of a day). However, I do feel "the best" teaching scenario is to meet everyday. If I taught full time I would want to see all my students everyday for a shorter period of time.
18	I'd like the type of course to dictate the daily or block slot it is placed in. Science labs, technology courses, or even English and Social Studies might work better in a 90-minute block, while many of the fine arts, foreign language, and math classes could benefit from meeting daily.
19	I really hadn't thought about that. I would try to make my class time shorter and more frequent.
20	None.
21	We have 42 minute classes. I would like 55-60 minutes and only a 7 period day, instead of 8 periods.
22	none
23	I think it would be interesting to try the modified block, allowing the classes that need to meet daily to do so, as well as allowing the classes more successful in the block format to continue with what works for them.
24	I don't know, I've had a different schedule every year and I've just gone with it. I've not actually thought about what or which schedule I'd like.
25	To go to a modified block. Have two "skinnies" or 45 minute classes that take place every day during the 90 minute time period of other classes.
26	class each day
27	It is a balancing act. If I want to eliminate study halls or increase the course options for students, I would need to teach in 90 minute blocks. There is no silver bullet.
28	I like our modified block schedule.
29	I would like to see if a trimester system would work. We would have about an hour with each class, but we would see

them every day.

- 30 I am looking into splitting a block and having it be half band and half choir.
- 31 students need to be grouped by ability..."one size does not fit all"
- 32 I would make a modified block and have some classes go 45 minutes and some go 90 minutes. Some classes like the sciences with lab applications like the 90 minutes. So block scheduling is helpful. For other classes it is to long.
- 33 I would go back to he 8 period day. I need to see the students everyday.
- 34 Go to an 8 period day but remain on block schedule - I can't fight it at this school.
- 35 I would love to see all of my middle school students every day, all grades, and for a full period. I feel that consistency is key.
- 36 I'd have orchestra every day for 90 minutes! And I'd have an 8 period schedule to allow for another elective choice.
- 37 all classes every day
- 38 none
- 39 meet everyday!
- 40 I am lucky, I see my instrumental students 5 days a week. They did cut the explo hours to 43 minutes. I wish my hour were longer.
- 41 Our original schedule was M,T,TH,F 42 min. every class. Then week A would be WED ODD classes 70 min. and week B would be WED EVEN classes 70 min. I liked this schedule. On 70 min. day, I would test kids, or sightread, or have extra activities, it seemed to be just the right "extended" length.
- 42 I think all fine art classes should be every day.
- 43 Go to a seven-period schedule so that there is adequate teaching time for each class, and add several sections of required classes so students can get into the classes they want.
- 44 I would go with a modified block - let the classes where the block is very beneficial keep it, but give some shorter class periods a split block to work with.
- 45 Have class everyday or at least 3 times a week.
- 46 I don't know because once you start messing with one part of schedule it messes up another class. I would not know were to fix other than switching it back to 7 or 8 class period days.

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What would you tell a music teacher whose school is considering block scheduling? What 16. would you tell the administrators?

#	Response
1	avoid scheduling that results in students who are in multiple music classes from rehearsing back to back. This was an initial problem for us when our block day resulted in advanced choral students being in choir for 3 hours straight (chamber choir 1-1/2 hours, chorale 1-1/2 hours).
2	I love it. It's a great time to have longer activities, break into sectionals. You have to manage time well, however, and make sure kids don't sing too long. But, it's valuable time when used well.
3	good luck. Don't set your musical sights too high. You will have to do easier music.
4	Make sure the students' best interests are kept in mind.
5	As a middle school teacher I understand that students' attention spans can only hold for so long. Keeping kids engaged in one subject for upwards of an hour and thirty minutes is pushing their limits. Also, studies show that shorter intervals of repeated instruction and learning will help students retain more information. Regarding band students, teachers should be aware of the physical limitations and endurance levels of students during a longer session. Only seeing the students 2-3 days per week could also be detrimental to the students' technical growth, as their practice time is not being monitored on the days the students do not have band class. Administrators should look at how the school will be affected as a whole. Even though science labs and other curricular areas may benefit, other subject areas, namely electives would have a difficult time sustaining long term growth through the shorter instructional time periods.
6	Schedules are what we make of them as educators. Decide what is best for your building based upon what is best for the students.
7	All performing ensembles on the same day block
8	Consider a modified block: 2 days block, 3 days traditional schedule.
9	Be open. Find out how to make it work. Keep in close communication with administrators on their expectations of the program, what they can/need to do to create a fertile environment for the music program under whatever schedule, and keep them posted about improvements or deterioration in the program and what are the possible causes including schedule.
10	you do not want it
11	forget it
12	Music Teacher: If music is important to your district, make sure you are on the committee creating the schedule. They will need your ideas and must understand the conflicts it could create. If music is not important, look for a better school to teach music. Administrator: There is more to life than high test scores. Find a well rounded approach for all students in your school!
13	It can work it's a matter of being creative. Block schedule is not the best choice for subjects that need repetitive teaching.
14	Go into it with an open mind...look at all sides of the issue. Do your own research because there is so much misinformation out there concerning the block schedule.
15	be careful that what you give up for a block schedule is given back somewhere else and if at all possible have some modifications to make most days as routine as possible.
16	Good Luck!
17	I would encourage them to not follow the trend of block scheduling. I would ask them to really find data to back up block scheduling as something that can improve test scores. I believe if they really look into the data, they will not find it.
18	Don't start it unless you do split block for fine arts.
19	Fight it! List out the negatives of using a strict block schedule.
20	Block scheduling prevents students from building on what they have been learning in all classes, including music classes.
21	Plan your rehearsals differently. 90 minutes is different from 50 minutes.
22	Frankly, I would tell the music teacher to do what is best for the school as a whole and not be so selfish as to try to impose his/her will on everyone else. That said, any educational decision should be based on what is best for kids and, too often, these decisions are made for the wrong reasons.

- 23 The block scheduling can work. In some ways it is nice to have a longer rehearsal period ... gives plenty of time for sight singing and repertoire rehearsal. The daily practice is important and that is something you can't have in block scheduling. I use rehearsal CD's to help students have music to rehearse with on the "off" days. Administrators will have to understand that the quality or quantity of the music program will be effected by a block schedule. Daily practice is important to continue with the same output. With block scheduling expect that the number of programs throughout the school year or the number of songs on the program will need to be less. The quality will probably suffer if the same number of programs is expected.
- 24 Get on the scheduling committee! To the administrators: realize that some courses (music, math, foreign language) work better if they meet daily.
- 25 I would tell them both to not do it. There is a type of scheduling that incorporates both block scheduling and some regular hour classes.
- 26 If they can make a modified block work, wonderful. Music, math, and foreign language all do better with shorter, more frequent lessons. Avoid the straight A/B thing.
- 27 Look out for missed rehearsal and contact time with students!
- 28 only support it if it's fixed.
- 29 A teacher teaches, you have to do everything you can to educate that student, no matter the schedule. This will however make teaching music more difficult in many ways and administrators need to understand that.
- 30 A music teacher, well...they teach how to teach in the block schedule in school, at least they did me. So I don't really know how to teach 7 or 8 periods. But, I'd tell a teacher to make sure they have a set routine for everyday that includes different activities along with playing for variety. 85 minutes at our school is a very long time to sit and play. Or just sit for that matter. Administrators: truely look into testing scores and size of school when considering either block scheduling or 7/8 period day. Also look into attendance and behaviors of students. These things all play into how the schedule is set up. Making the appropriate changes should hopefully benefit everyone.
- 31 Music teacher: Be prepared to become creative or leave the school. Administrator: How important is the fine arts program to you?
- 32 it can work. try to limit as much as you can.
- 33 Teachers: Get involved in the process. Fight for maintain daily time with younger (1, 2 and 3 year students). Don't view the process in a vacuum. Everyone is working towards finding solutions for their classroom and students. Administrators: Recognize the requests of fine arts teachers. Fine arts classes are essential to your curriculum and school community. Ignoring their concerns will on sharpen the divide.
- 34 For a pure block schedule, combine chorus with study hall, if study hall is commonly used in your school. Then you won't lose kids from your program and you can have sectionals while the other singers study. Obviously you can't do this all the time, but if you offer it, you'll get some kids who otherwise would have chosen study hall over choir.
- 35 Fight it to the death!!! It does not help the students, which should be the main reason to even consider a change!
- 36 Adapted block scheduling is the way to go. Strict 4x4 block is not very good.
- 37 fight for getting students into classes by ability. Afterall, you don't put kids who can't read into classes with kids who have been reading for 4 years!!
- 38 Music teachers: Get involved with the schedule making process, try to be flexable. Read a book by Larry Blocker called Block Scheduling, Implications for the school music program. Administrators: Consider that most kids are in band or choir to play an instrument, or to sing. 90 minutes is a real strain on them. Repetition is the key, not an increased time with less frequency.
- 39 Get out now!!! It is a losing battle to change the admistration's minds. The other teacher's are happier because of more planning time, and there are less discipline problems because students are in the halls less.
- 40 Investigate all options. Find examples of all possibel schedules you can find.
- 41 Be sure to try to get music as an every-day course anyway; perhaps a "seminar" period. At least for your honor band or top performing group, daily continuity is very important.
- 42 You will like some things about it - tune, set up, put away only 3 times instead of 5. Nice 90 minute rehearsal times, but you miss seeing them daily for announcements, travel plans, game schedules, etc. Music is retained best with daily practice. :)
- 43 dont do it
- 44 Longer rehearsal periods are great for musical ensembles. Classes need to meet daily for consistency.
- 45 It is a big adjustment! The quality of the programs certainly will drop.
- 46 I would say it will cause students to have fewer electives. It will make keeping a fine arts program at a quality level harder and harder. With fewer choices, some students who are not top students but excell in sports and arts etc will be discouraged-I could see more dropping out. Give them bigger blocks of R,W,M with the same boring activites and lectures with time to "sit" in class and do homework-that is really motivating! (Not)
- 47 If implemented correctly block scheduling can be helpful to a music program, but unfortunately music programs are often overlooked in the planning for block schedules.
- 48 Kids need daily reinforcement and a daily work out for their chops to develop properly for the ideal "tone, fundamental sound, etc....."
- 49 The school should tried a modified block. Let the fine arts have rehearsal every day along with some core classes.
- 50 I would tell any music teacher that rehearsal time will be at a premium and expect to schedule extra rehearsals before or after school. I would tell the administrators that they are short-changing their students and depriving them of class time.
- 51 Retention of material is not as high using block schedule - and you have to plan much further ahead.
- 52 The quality of your group will decrease. Students do not use the extra class time effectively, they still put homework off till the last minute.

53 Although you see the students for a long period of time, block scheduling can actually hurt a music program. Due to other classes being offered and students' short attention span you may find your program down in numbers.

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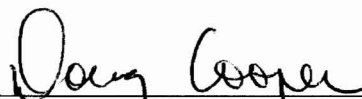
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Date

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