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THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHORAL
AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE
LANSING, MICHIGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

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A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHORAL AND INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING, MICHIGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

By

Nancy Kay Stepp Witucki

This study describes the growth and development of music education in the public schools of Lansing, Michigan, from the establishment of the first school in 1847 until the present. As the capital of one of the states carved from the "Old Northwest" Territory, Lansing is representative of many Midwest communities in the way music became part of the public school curriculum. Although Lansing's music program had unique aspects, its development for the most part paralleled that of school music programs in other American cities. National trends in music education are compared to events in Lansing's music education history.

Primary sources were consulted in the preparation of this document, including one hundred and fifty years of minutes from school board meetings. Additional sources of information included music textbooks used in Lansing classrooms, articles from the local newspaper, documents prepared by the school system, personnel records maintained by Lansing Public Schools since 1847, and interviews with former district music supervisors.

The primary conclusion of this study was that the growth of music education in the Lansing Public Schools was largely contingent on the financial status of the school system. When the school district was financially solvent, the music program flourished; during times of financial hardship, the music program was among the first areas to experience budget cuts. Lansing, Michigan, is a city that is dependent on the

success of one industry, the automotive industry. Lansing is also primarily a working-class community. As such, the voters are reluctant to approve tax support for programs in the fine arts. Music groups such as marching bands and jazz bands have always enjoyed strong public support because these ensembles can demonstrate music learning through their performances. Unfortunately, the school district has never supported a comprehensive general music program, despite repeated efforts by the instructional staff and parents. And, yet, most experts agree the general music program should be the basis for any pedagogically sound program of music education.

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INTRODUCTION

The American philosopher Santayana wrote that “those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” His observation can be applied to historical accounts of the development of music curricula in the Lansing, Michigan Public Schools, which record a history of repeated struggles for academic recognition and financial support. To understand the events influencing that development, this study will trace the growth of choral and instrumental music in the Lansing Schools over a period of approximately one hundred and fifty years. Beginning in the first pioneer schools, music has always been an important part of the student’s day, and as this study will show, it has long been part of the Lansing School curriculum, often defying fluctuating educational trends and philosophies.

In the 1800s life on the midwestern frontier was vastly different from life in the more cultured atmosphere of the East Coast. In these wilderness communities, the principles of hard work, dedication, and a fierce spirit of independence were put into practice in the struggle of daily living. The designers of the first public schools were influenced by these principles as were the founders of the Lansing Public Schools. Early schools offered a functional “3R’s” curriculum that reflected not only the influence of established Eastern school systems but also the practical frontier values. The settlers, however, treasured music in their lives, and even though it was not absolutely necessary for survival and economic progress, they insisted that it be included in their children’s lives and, eventually in their education.

Surprisingly, considering the early settlers' interest in education, they apparently were not equally concerned with recording the history of their schools, particularly in the specific area of this study. The only published history of the Lansing Public Schools is a four-volume set of condensations of minutes from Lansing School Board meetings covering the years from 1847 to 1982. Information on the activities of the school district after 1982 has not been compiled but is available from the minutes of the school board meetings, various informative booklets printed by the school district, clippings from the Lansing State Journal, and testimony of music educators who were involved in the Lansing School District music program. The history of the development of music education in the Lansing Schools is even more cursory. With this study, all available information in Lansing School chronology will be compiled in a single source. A cohesive study, relating significant historical events to the development of music education in the Lansing Public Schools, should prove valuable to music educators and music students alike. Only in knowing where we have been can we look to the future; only in recognizing and documenting past errors can we avoid repeating them.

CHAPTER I
THE FOUNDING AND EARLY HISTORY
OF LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS TO 1900

A declaration in the Northwest Ordinance was the beginning of the development of public school education in Michigan. The framers, recognizing that knowledge was necessary for sound government, stated in the declaration that “the means of education would forever be encouraged.” Enacted on July 13, 1787, the Ordinance laid the foundation for an orderly government by dividing all lands northwest of the Ohio River into townships of 36 square miles. Each township, in turn, was divided into sections of one square mile with “section sixteen” set aside for the support of schools.¹ Thus, the Ordinance laid the basis for education in the territory with its declaration for encouragement of schools and its provision for the first financial support for public schools in this territory, which eventually became five states, including Michigan.

From 1787 until 1800, Michigan was part of the Northwest Territory. In 1805 Congress organized the Territory of Michigan, but settlers did not begin to arrive until after the War of 1812. The first to arrive took up land that was most accessible to Detroit and did not migrate to the area presently designated as Ingham County until the mid-1830s. The major hindrance to settling this area had been the lack of a direct trail to what was to become Lansing.

¹Willis F. Dunbar, Michigan: A History of the Wolverine State (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1970), 162.

After the War of 1812, Michigan settlers were concerned with building homes and communities while surviving in the Indian-inhabited wilderness. Established communities in the East, such as Boston, at the same time were concerned with developing school systems and experimenting with innovative programs. As early as 1635, Boston had established its Latin School and in 1821 opened the first high school in the United States.² In 1837, the same year Michigan achieved statehood, the Boston Public Schools were beginning an experiment that had particular repercussions for music education in the United States. In the early 1830s, Lowell Mason (1792-1872), a Boston musician, was introduced to the pedagogical philosophy of the Swiss education theorist, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827). Through his exposure to Pestalozzi's writings, Mason had become convinced that any child who could read could also sing. More important, he believed music ought to have a place in the American school curriculum.³ His work initiated a gradual change in the traditional attitude that music education was just for the gifted.

Mason developed his theories of music education at a particularly fertile time in American education. The 1800s marked a period in the United States when Horace Mann (1796-1859) in Massachusetts and John D. Pierce (1797-1882) in Michigan, as well as other early advocates, began to address the need for a free public education for all children. Lowell Mason shared Mann's conviction that every American child had the right to a free public education, and Mason expanded that conviction to include music in the school curriculum. In 1838, in order to convince the Boston Board of

²Chris A. DeYoung and Richard Wynn, American Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1972), i-ii.

³Harold F. Abeles, Charles R. Hoffer, and Robert H. Klotman, "History of Music Education," chap. in Foundations of Music Education (New York: Schirmer Books, a division of Macmillan, Inc., 1984), 12.

Education of the importance of public school music, Mason volunteered to teach music in one of the elementary schools without pay. The results were so successful that he was hired that same year as the first public school music teacher in the country.⁴

While Massachusetts had been the first to incorporate music education into the public school curriculum, but Michigan did not achieve that goal until 30 years later.

The development of music education in Michigan's public schools was influenced by the cultural background of its early settlers. Many of the early Michigan inhabitants had roots in New England, and it is likely that they were familiar with Lowell Mason's work and his theories.⁵ Another factor, as important as Mason's pioneering work in influencing music as a part of Michigan life and education, was the sizeable number of Michigan immigrants who came from what is now Germany. Wherever Germans settled they shared their love of music through organizing bands, orchestras, and singing societies. This tradition of music among the German immigrants, no doubt, influenced the inclusion of music in public school education.

A second important event in the development of public school education in Michigan came two years before statehood when the first constitution (1835) was passed.⁶ This document called for the establishment of a complete system of education, proposed a method of financing public schools, and provided for a state superintendent of public instruction. In 1837 the Reverend John D. Pierce, a Congregationalist minister who designed Michigan's free statewide public school

⁴Edward Bailey Birge, History of Public School Music in the United States, 2nd ed. (New York: Oliver Ditson Company, 1939; reprint, Washington, D.C.: Music Educators National Conference, 1966), 49-50 (page references are to reprint edition).

⁵Dunbar, 351.

⁶Ibid., 304-305.

system, was appointed the first state Superintendent of Schools. One of the acts authored by Pierce and signed by Governor Stevens T. Mason (1811-1843) directed the establishment of school districts in each township with financial support to come from the Section Sixteen School Fund.⁷

Michigan became a leader in school finance among the states included in the Northwest Territory because the state controlled all monies generated from the sale of “section sixteen” in each township, whereas other states allowed individual townships to control monies from land sales often with detrimental results for the development of schools. In Michigan, proceeds from the land sales were placed in the School Fund with interest income distributed to each school district according to its enrollment.⁸ The state’s early politicians and education leaders were both farsighted and innovative in providing the foundation for tax-supported school systems under public control. The structure they designed has served the young people of Michigan well, particularly in providing opportunities for a comprehensive education including the arts.

From the beginning, Michigan citizens emphasized the importance of education for their children. In fact, the residents of the various communities often built the first log schoolhouses with their labor as well as their financial support. These early schoolhouses were used not only to educate the young, but also to serve as community centers for the adults. On the frontier, far away from established settlements, it was only natural for the schoolhouse to become a gathering place for young and old alike. Many towns held singing and spelling bees, debates, and other cultural meetings in these log schoolhouses.

⁷Floyd R. Dain, Education in the Wilderness (Lansing, Michigan: Michigan Historical Commission, 1968), 212.

⁸Ibid., 208.

Among the musical activities held in the schoolhouses were singing schools similar to those held on the east coast. Mrs. Franc L. Adams, secretary of the Ingham County Pioneer and Historical Society, reports that the first singing school in the Lansing area was taught by Clark Preston of Leslie in 1841.⁹ They were particularly popular among young people as a parentally-approved activity, quite unlike dancing, for they allowed Lansing area youth to socialize away from their parents' watchful eyes.¹⁰

The first Lansing school was opened on May 1, 1847 in a clearing near the present Cedar Street School just south of Grand River Avenue. A hastily built schoolhouse had been in operation six months before the first state legislators arrived in the new capital on December 1st.¹¹ It is likely these newly elected officials were impressed with the building plans and the importance the early Lansing residents placed on their children's education. The new schoolhouse, built at the corner of what is now Cedar Street and Grand River (the current location of the First Methodist Church), was known as the First Ward School. Elihu Ellwood taught forty-eight students during the first winter term in the new building. In 1851, this building was replaced with a new four-room, two-story brick schoolhouse, which was used for the

⁹Franc L. Adams, Pioneer History of Ingham County (Lansing, Michigan: Wynkoop Hallenbeck Crawford Company, 1923), 18.

¹⁰*Ibid.*, 268.

¹¹Frederick C. Aldinger, History of the Lansing Public Schools: 1847-1944 (Lansing, Michigan: Lansing Board of Education, 1944), 4.

next twenty-five years.¹² The 1851 structure was demolished in 1876 for the construction of the present Cedar Street School.¹³

Early music education only occurred through private sources; it would not become part of the public school curriculum until 1880, after another thirty-nine years. The first recorded incidence of music education in Lansing shows that it took place in 1847 in a private school. A native of New York, Laura Burr, arrived in the new capital with her husband, Dr. H. S. Burr, on August 1, 1847, and one month later opened "River Grove" school on the banks of the Grand River where her husband instructed the students in music at 4:00 p.m. each day. Mrs. Burr must have offered the type of education, including instruction in music, that parents wanted because the school's enrollment increased from nine to eighty students by mid-December. However, early in 1848, an epidemic described as "brain fever" swept the area, killing Dr. Burr and most of his pupils and closing the school.¹⁴

Michigan's German population continued to encourage music. They organized a singing association, the Harmonie Society, in 1849 which brought many famous musicians to Michigan for concerts. Lansing's German population also founded the Liederkrantz Society in 1868 and built a clubhouse on North Grand River Avenue near Shiawassee Street. Their "Sängerfests," held at the Lansing Liederkrantz, drew singing groups from miles around.¹⁵

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., 32.

¹⁴Ibid., 43.

¹⁵Birt Darling, City in the Forest: The Story of Lansing (New York: Stratford House, 1950), 247.

In addition to the organization of vocal ensembles, the Germans were also responsible for another influential music group. Historian John Andrew Russell states that: "No humble efforts in the field of art exercised a greater popular influence upon musical taste in Michigan than an institution now pretty well passed out of the life of the state. This was the little 'German band'. . . ."¹⁶ The "little German band" was described as a group of four or five strolling brass and/or woodwind instrumentalists from the local community who usually performed for neighbors or street crowds. These "little German bands" were to have a profound impact upon music education in terms of creating both acceptance and demand for instrumental music in the community.

By 1849, the young city had two permanent school buildings, one in District Number 2 (Lower Town) on the east side of the river and one in District Number 4 (Middle Town) on the west side of the river. According to the first school census taken in 1850, 174 school-age children lived in the area. This number increased to 180 students in 1851, 200 in 1853, and 223 in 1855.¹⁷ As the population of school-age children rapidly increased, new buildings were opened. The curriculum during this time remained the same and was still limited to reading, writing, and arithmetic; it would be another generation before music education was offered to the students of Lansing.

While the expansion of the Lansing public school system proceeded in a systematic manner with its basic curriculum, the first school band was organized in 1856 at the House of Correction for Young Offenders located on a site just north of

¹⁶John Andrew Russell, The Germanic Influence in the Making of Michigan (Detroit: Herold Press, 1927), 227.

¹⁷Darling, 169.

where Eastern High School now stands. The band was formally established by 1870 under a new name, the Michigan Reform School Band, and was completely equipped with band uniforms and instruments. This music group appeared frequently in Lansing parades and rallies and predated any music education in the public schools.¹⁸ The fact that such a band made up of young amateur musicians existed at all indicates that the early interest in music for school children continued.

The Michigan Reform School Band was a brass band, no doubt influenced by the many brass bands that had been formed at the end of the Civil War. A large number of excellent regimental and concert bands, the offspring of Civil War military bands, appeared after 1865. The first adult band organized in Lansing was the Lansing Cornet Band which formed in July or August of 1865. Approximately fifteen young men played in this group, using a set of instruments that had been donated by the community. The instrumental teacher of the band members was Cyrus Alsdorf and the director was J. I. Christopher. The initial band lasted only a few months and was replaced by a second ensemble organized in 1867 with Joseph Robbins of Owosso as the instructor. With C. W. Christopher as its director, this second band lasted for one year.¹⁹

In 1868, a new set of German silver instruments, manufactured by Hall and Quinby of New York, was purchased and the band was reorganized. Band uniforms were added in 1870 and the Lansing Cornet Band became firmly established as a musical ensemble. The name of the band was changed to "Knights Templar Band" in

¹⁸Justin L. Kestenbaum, Out of a Wilderness: An Illustrated History of Greater Lansing (Woodland Hills, California: Windsor Publications, 1981), 41.

¹⁹A. Lee Thompson, Music in Lansing: Past and Present (unpublished paper, July 1969), 1.

1874 and the membership of the group began to grow. The Knights Templar Band participated in State Band Tournaments from 1877 to 1880 and frequently won awards for their performances.²⁰

During the post-war period (1865-1900) many professional groups toured the United States and inspired the formation of town bands. Every community had its brass band which usually was known by some grandiose name, such as "The Silver Cornet Band."²¹ Band leaders such as Patrick Gilmore and John Philip Sousa introduced the country to the sounds of a concert band and developed a repertoire for this type of ensemble.

Patrick Sarsfield Gilmore (1829-1892) started as a bandmaster during the Civil War. His ideas about public performance tended toward the spectacular and his concerts contained extremely large numbers of instrumental and choral groups. Copying the limited instrumentation of British bands, brass instruments had become the standard for town bands in the United States after the Civil War, but Gilmore was innovative in adding woodwind instruments to his sixty-six piece concert band. This group toured the country from 1876 to 1891, performing transcriptions of European composers.²² Many Americans were first exposed to classical music by Gilmore's band.

John Philip Sousa (1854-1932) also organized a band that toured the country, Canada, and the world between 1892 and 1932. Sousa's concert formats were more serious than Gilmore; the music was the featured attraction at a Sousa concert.

²⁰Thompson, 2.

²¹Dunbar, 242.

²²James A. Keene, A History of Music Education in the United States (Hanover, NH and London: University Press of New England, 1982), 283-284.

Subsequently, his band set new standards for performance of band music. In addition to the hundreds of marches Sousa composed for his band, he contributed to a growing body of concert band literature by continuing Gilmore's practice of arranging orchestral standards for wind ensemble.²³

Lansing also had its share of amateur instrumental groups. In old capitol records, mention is made of the appearance of the Lansing Sax Horn Band at the celebration of the 79th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence.²⁴ The Lansing Brass Band, under the direction of a Mr. Wilson, gave its first outdoor performance on a Monday evening near the middle of March, 1859.²⁵ Unlike the reform school band, this brass band was an adult group. These records confirm the existence of town bands in the Lansing area during the second half of the nineteenth century. The popularity of these bands, undoubtedly, set the stage for the introduction of instrumental music in the public schools.

During the second half of the nineteenth century, education in the State of Michigan slowly developed as a comprehensive program from kindergarten through higher education. The 1835 state constitution had provided for the establishment of University of Michigan branches in several communities. While these university extensions made higher education possible for many state residents, only young men were admitted. In 1855 Abigail and Delia Rogers started the Michigan Female Academy in reaction to the exclusion of young ladies from the university branches. Music, however, was not one of the curricular offerings at the Academy;

²³Ibid., 284.

²⁴Ford Stevens Caesar, The Bicentennial History of Ingham County, Michigan (Ann Arbor, Michigan: Shaw-Barton Company, 1976), 152.

²⁵Ibid., 155.

advertisements for the school did not list music among the many courses of study open to the female students. The Michigan Female Academy, which opened in the middle of the century, was one of the most successful of the schools for women.

Unfortunately, the school closed in 1869 after the sudden death of one of the sisters.²⁶

In 1880 the Female Academy grounds and building were taken over by the Michigan School for the Blind. From its inception, the School for the Blind provided music training for the enrichment of the lives of its students and as a possible vocation.²⁷ Braille music notation had made it possible for the visually-impaired students to read music. The school's curriculum contained a heavy emphasis on vocal and instrumental music. In 1884, just four years after its opening, thirty-five students out of an enrollment of seventy received voice lessons and forty-one took piano lessons.²⁸ One of the outward manifestations of the school's commitment to the performing arts can still be seen in its excellent auditorium.

The founding of the Michigan Agricultural College (later Michigan State University) in East Lansing also took place in the late 1850s. In spite of applications from several existing colleges to host the new school, Michigan lawmakers stipulated that a fully independent State Agricultural College had to be built within ten miles of Lansing. The first of the original land grant colleges, Michigan Agricultural College was dedicated on May 13, 1857. The school had a difficult time during its first twenty years of existence and very nearly did not survive its early economic hardships.

²⁶Aldinger, 6.

²⁷It should be noted that one of the School for the Blind's most successful graduates is Stevie Wonder, the recording star and music composer.

²⁸Charles R. Starring and James O. Knauss, The Michigan Search for Educational Standards (Lansing, Michigan: Michigan Historical Commission, 1969), 104-105.

Eventually the young college established itself among other existing universities, first in the areas of agriculture and home economics and, as the enrollment increased, in other areas of practical studies. Unfortunately, music education was not a part of campus life until the founding of the Michigan State University music department in 1924.²⁹ Although many future Michigan music educators would receive their academic training at this institution, public schools in the state were decades ahead of the university in establishing their music programs.

In spite of occasional setbacks, both public and private schools continued to flourish in the capitol. The city of Lansing was incorporated in 1859 with a population of almost three thousand. The first charter established the boundaries of the new city and set up three wards that recognized the three population centers of Lansing, each of which had its own primary school. An oversight of this first city government was that it did not create a city-wide school system; as a result, each ward continued to operate as a separate school district.³⁰

The reorganization of the Lansing Public Schools began with the charter granted to the city of Lansing by the State of Michigan in March 1861. This document provided for the consolidation of the separate school districts within the city limits and for the election of a single school board to operate the newly organized school system. A movement to merge school districts had actually begun with the Detroit schools in 1842 and spread to other urban centers, such as Lansing. As a result of consolidation, unified schools could employ better trained teachers, divide the children into grades, and establish high schools. The restructuring of the Lansing

²⁹Madison Kuhn, Michigan State: The First Hundred Years (East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University Press, 1955), 286-287.

³⁰Kestenbaum, 55.

school system centralized the district's facilities and administration and would later prove to be conducive to offering music and other fine arts instruction to Lansing students. By consolidating the three existing school systems, Lansing Public Schools could provide a complete education for the city's children.³¹

The end of the Civil War in 1865 brought an economic depression to the entire country, including Michigan. The hunting and timbering that had supported the original settlers were casualties of encroaching civilization, and new industries were slow to develop. Moreover, with thousands of soldiers returning from the War, many people were unable to find jobs. In spite of economic hardships caused by the recession, 1868 was a peak year in the growth of Lansing Public Schools. Faced with an increase of 318 children in three years, the board hired a superintendent, created a high-school department, and began grading its classes. The most important outcome of this year was the development of the first complete curriculum or course of studies for the entire school system. This curriculum was a document that specified the instructional objectives for all Lansing students and represented the school board's educational goals.

When the high school opened, the district regrouped its grades into four departments. (Numbers in parentheses show the modern day grade equivalents.) The primary department included the first three years of school (K-2); the secondary department served the next three years (3-5); the grammar department included the next three years (6-8); and the high school department was the final four years (9-12).³²

³¹Ibid.

³²Aldinger, 99.

Music appears to have been included in the 1868 curriculum as a diversion from the pressure of the academic classes. Since the school district had not hired music specialists at this time, the music “breaks” would have been conducted by the regular classroom teacher. The 1868 primary curriculum required vocal music instruction and participation in physical exercises for three to five minutes for not less than four times a day. These music and physical exercise interludes were offered only to third-year primary students; this limitation seems unusual since first and second year primary students were certainly also in need of music and physical activity. The music and physical exercise requirement continued for the next three years of secondary school. In grammar school, vocal music and physical exercises were only offered twice a day. Perhaps the reduction in these activities was due to the greater maturity of the grammar-level students. Lansing students were not able to study music at the high school; the curriculum did not mention any secondary music courses.³³

The economic hardships of this period produced an increasing protest against the burden of Lansing school taxes and the cost of employing a superintendent. In 1878, a negative voter reaction was triggered by the Lansing School Board’s decision to impose an extra tax levy to pay for a new high school. Many property owners were upset by an apparent lack of financial restraint by the school board; residents did not understand why the present high school building needed to be replaced. Several petitions, each demanding removal of the superintendent, were presented to the board during the 1870s and 1880s. The board denied the petitions,

³³Ibid., 99-103.

citing the need for a central administrator in a school district the size of Lansing, but used the occasion to reduce the superintendent's salary.³⁴

Another product of this rebellion by the electorate was an 1875 petition that demanded the elimination of "frivolous" classical and scientific courses from the high school curriculum. Among the courses listed were French, German, Natural History, and Trigonometry. Because of the petition, the Lansing School Board eliminated virtually all courses except basic reading, writing, and arithmetic. Any hopes of including music in the curriculum died during this time; if the students were not learning about history and studying languages, there certainly was no place for the fine arts in their courses of study. The reduced curriculum continued until 1879-1880, when the school board was forced to reinstate courses in order to maintain the district's accreditation by the University of Michigan. By the mid-1880s, the high school curriculum had been restored to its pre-1875 level.³⁵

The first Compulsory School Attendance Law was enacted in 1871. It established a requirement of twelve consecutive weeks of school attendance per year for children eight through fourteen years of age in rural districts and seven to sixteen in cities. In 1895, the requirement was increased and truant officers were hired to enforce the increased requirement of four months of consecutive school attendance each year within the prescribed ages.³⁶ In 1905 compulsory school attendance was extended from four consecutive months to the nine-month school year; this extension

³⁴Ibid., 68.

³⁵Ibid., 104.

³⁶Starring and Knauss, 94.

reflected the changes in society.³⁷ As more people were employed by industry, their children were no longer needed to work family farms and could attend school for longer than four months a year.

The compulsory school attendance law had a profound effect upon the Lansing School District in terms of providing instruction for an increasing number of students who remained for the entire twelve years of education. Prior to 1871, students would begin dropping out of school as early as the fourth grade. These children left school because their labor was needed by their families and a fourth grade education was considered sufficient for agricultural workers. Very few children remained in school until they graduated because a high school diploma was not necessary to be successful. Even school teachers needed only an eighth grade education to get a teaching certificate. Lansing Public Schools, however, would undergo some major changes as more children enrolled in the district and completed their twelve years of education. These changes would include the adding of new courses, the hiring of new teachers, the reorganizing of the district's structure, and the opening of several new school buildings.

In order to meet the needs of a larger and more diverse student population, the school district curriculum began to expand beyond the basic subjects; kindergarten, the fine arts including music, physical education, industrial arts, and other disciplines were added. As the school system grew in size and as additional subjects were added to the curriculum, a greater specialization among the instructional and administrative staffs

³⁷Ibid., 173.

became necessary. The first specialty teacher hired was in kindergarten; the second was to be a music teacher in 1880.³⁸

The first attempt to hire a teacher of vocal music was defeated by the Board of Education in October, 1877, by a vote of nine to three. The following year, the board rejected a group of Lansing residents' petition to hire a music teacher using private resources. The board still refused to hire a music teacher and countered the petition by stipulating that any singing in school would be taught by the regular teachers. At this time, of course, most teachers were not trained to teach music, but even when they were, there were few materials available for their use. However, the board did purchase fifty song books that year to be used in opening exercises in the Second Ward School.³⁹ Whatever the reasons were for the school board's actions, they limited music activity in the Lansing schools in the late 1870s to opening classroom exercises and to hymn singing.

The year 1880 marked the real beginning of music education in the Lansing Public Schools. That year, the school board hired a teacher of music for one year and ordered the music staff to be painted on the blackboards in all of the city schools. This last action appeared to indicate the permanence of music in the schools, since paint is difficult to remove from blackboards. In 1882, twelve "singing books" were purchased for use by the high school choir.⁴⁰ While the Lansing School District curriculum for 1883-1884 did not mention music as a separate course for any of the

³⁸Aldinger, 168.

³⁹Ibid., 169.

⁴⁰Ibid.

grade levels in the district,⁴¹ in May of 1885 the board passed the following resolution: "Resolved, that the matter of the advisability of employing a teacher of vocal music who shall have the superintendence and charge of teaching vocal music in the various schools of the city be referred to the committee on schools and teachers with the request to report at the next meeting of the board."⁴² This resolution was an indication that the school board members were serious about their intention to establish music education in the Lansing Schools.

As a result, the first permanent special teacher of vocal music was employed by the Lansing School Board for the 1885-1886 school year at an annual salary of \$400. Mrs. Flora Rarrick of Lansing was given the title "Supervisor of Music" and assigned to teach vocal music exclusively. For the next twenty-five years, vocal music was the only type of music offered to Lansing students, but music had finally become a permanent part of the public school curriculum. From 1885 on, music was accepted by the Lansing School Board as a subject in its own right; it was no longer considered a "frill." Miss Winifred Clark was included among the teaching staff of 1893-1894 and was employed as a teacher of music for an annual salary of \$500.⁴³

Lansing had changed considerably in the fifty years since the state legislature voted to relocate the capitol there. By the 1870s, the Lansing area had become somewhat of a cultural center. Literary and debating societies flourished in country schools until the 1880s. A short-lived Lyceum of Ingham County had been organized in Mason in 1846; the twenty-three members of this group started a library where

⁴¹Ibid., 106-109.

⁴²Ibid., 169-170.

⁴³Ibid., 69-71.

current topics were debated. In the 1850s, a group known as the “Capitol Senate” had met in Lansing and debated similar topics at the Lyceum, and the Young Men’s Association began a series of lectures in 1866. The North Lansing Library and Literary Association met in the basement of the Franklin Street Church and debated such topics as whether women should be allowed to vote. Similar groups also had been formed at the State Agricultural College.⁴⁴

A high point in the social life of the citizens was the opening of Buck’s Opera House in 1872. This magnificent 1,100 seat theater was built on the eventual site of the Gladmer Theater and marked its opening night with a performance of MacBeth by the famous actor Edwin Booth.⁴⁵ Amateur theater groups supplemented performances by professional players. Buck’s Opera House hosted performances by touring road shows and became the entertainment center for three generations of Lansing residents.

On April 18, 1893, Lansing’s prosperity came to an unexpected halt. One of the six local banks suspended operations, which started a run on the remaining banks. In spite of the financial community’s best efforts, four banks closed within four months and investors had to settle for a meager return on their savings accounts. Several Lansing area businesses had also closed by 1896, the low point of the depression; but by early 1898, a slow recovery began and the city started to rebound financially from the depression.⁴⁶

The status of the schools also improved and greater emphasis would be given to music education as an academic subject. The early history of the Lansing Public

⁴⁴Kestenbaum, 56.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., 66-67.

Schools indicates that music education was first regarded as a pleasant diversion from the basic subjects. The students experienced music as a relaxation from the demands of mathematics and reading, but during the late nineteenth century, music education was gradually accepted as part of the course of study. This occurred in 1885 when music began to be taught by trained specialists and was given course credit and grades in the secondary schools. The relatively late addition of music to the curriculum was due to many factors which are summarized in this quotation from Dunbar:

The arts require taste, leisure, and intelligence in order to flourish. Unquestionably the primary necessity of providing food, clothing, and shelter in a new land left little time for the pioneer to devote to the arts. Yet it is possible to overstress this cause for lack of interest. The German people who settled in Michigan exhibited a lively interest in music from the earliest years because they had a taste for it. One of the retarding influences in the development of the fine arts in Michigan was the Puritan tradition, which regarded beauty as a snare of the devil and those who devoted themselves to music, drama, or painting as lost souls. As has been observed, the New England Puritan influence was stronger in Michigan than elsewhere in the Middle West. But little by little in the period after the Civil War, courageous people dared to manifest interest in the arts.⁴⁷

The study of early Michigan and Lansing school systems and the pioneers who envisioned them, fought for them, and built them leaves an impression of remarkable vision. As the records cited in this chapter indicate, education was encouraged even prior to the statehood era and was provided for in the first constitution after statehood. With inadequate facilities and poorly trained teachers these early educational beginnings, no doubt, fell short of goals and expectations at the time. The historian, however, cannot overlook the fact that today's public school systems continue in the mold designed by these visionary pioneers.

⁴⁷Dunbar, 723.

CHAPTER II

THE GROWTH OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM 1900 TO WORLD WAR I

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, life in Lansing changed drastically due to the developing automotive industry. Municipal water and power companies and two telephone companies were established. As the schools responded to these changes, music education began to grow and to evolve into a permanent position in the curriculum.

Formerly an agricultural community, Lansing entered the industrial age with the founding of the Olds Motor Vehicle Company in 1897.¹ As a result, the city experienced a demographic change found in many cities in the early twentieth century when people began to leave the farms for the financial security of industrial jobs. Factory employees not only had leisure time, but they also had the income to pursue avocational interests. Freed from the constant drudgery of maintaining a farm with its uncertain economic returns, individuals had time to dream and to make plans for the future. Children could now attend school past the eighth grade because their labor and income were no longer needed to help support the family. These children would become the first beneficiaries of courses in art, in history and, most importantly to this study, in music.

During the first decade of the twentieth century, vocal music became a permanent part of the course of study for Lansing Public Schools. This action was

¹Kestenbaum, 72.

followed closely by the introduction of instrumental music classes in the second decade.² Both vocal and instrumental music were added to the Lansing curriculum because of the public's increased demand for cultural activities.

After 1912, an innovative type of architecture was introduced in the Lansing School District. The buildings were designed in units that would allow for later additions while maintaining the integrity of the original structure. Inadequate old buildings were torn down and new buildings erected when it became necessary to expand. The new Lansing school buildings, most significantly, reflected a change in district philosophy toward curriculum. Previously, schools had been viewed as a collection of classrooms which could be arranged in any haphazard manner with all of the classrooms of equal value and purpose; additions had been built in the most convenient locations. No particular concern had been given for the appearance of the buildings, for the traffic flow in the school, or for the effect of the school environment on its students. By contrast, the new system of architecture treated the school building as a complete entity with definite areas designated for certain activities. The new schools were centers for learning which, unlike the old schools, included all the arts.³

The school district's commitment to music was physically manifested in the architecture of its newest buildings which were not only attractive physically, but also included rooms specifically designed for music classes. Elementary buildings included centrally located rooms for music activities and had large "cafetoriums" for full school assemblies and programs. Each secondary school had special rooms for choral and

²Aldinger, 170.

³Ibid., 29.

instrumental music classes that provided the rehearsal space and storage areas required for large music ensembles.

With the population growth of Lansing after the introduction of the Oldsmobile, enrollment in the Lansing School District, within a fifteen year period, more than doubled from 3,072 in 1900 to 6,490 in 1915.⁴ To meet the educational needs of the children of these new residents, the district had to build more classrooms and had to develop new curricula. Industries required an educated workforce; the frontier curriculum of the basic subjects had become obsolete. More young people were completing their education and needed an education beyond reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Starting in 1912, the curriculum for Lansing Public Schools began to expand in two divisions: academics and electives. In the academic disciplines it was possible to offer more course variety and depth since students were remaining longer in school, and in the area of “elective” courses the schools began to offer instruction in the fine arts as well as courses designed to prepare students for leisure activities of adult life. Music classes, particularly ensembles, became very popular. In fact, the single largest area of growth and development in the Lansing curriculum at this time was in the area of the fine arts, especially in the number and types of music classes offered.⁵

By the turn of the century, vocal music had become an accepted part of the Lansing School District’s course offerings. In 1909, the first music curriculum was prepared by Corrine Cone, the supervisor of vocal music. With the development of a standardized learning sequence, vocal music assumed a permanent place in the course

⁴Ibid., 58.

⁵Ibid., 119.

of study for Lansing Public Schools. When Cone established these goals and objectives, she elevated music from a mere diversionary activity to a classroom subject.⁶

This first music course was very general in content. In first and second grade, the students learned rote songs, memorized beginning notation facts, and sang exercises written on the blackboard. Older students continued their study of music theory, improved their music reading skills, and used an unspecified music series as their textbook. The 1909 music program ended with the eighth grade, confirming the tendency that most students would not continue their education beyond this grade.⁷ Although the written record does not include many details, it does certify the existence of music as an legitimate course of study in the Lansing Public Schools.

In a new course of study for the Lansing Schools, introduced in 1910-1911, vocal music was listed for grades 1-3, omitted in grade 4, and appeared again for grade 5. Since no textbooks or objectives were included in the elementary music curriculum, the 1910-1911 course of study served primarily to document that music instruction continued to be provided for the children in the first six grades. Specific textbooks were listed for grades six through eight. Sixth graders used the New Educational Music Course⁸ Number 3 and seventh graders continued with Number 4 in the series. In the eighth grade, students completed the New Educational Music Course

⁶Ibid., 114.

⁷Ibid., 114-115.

⁸James McLaughlin, George A. Veazie, and W. W. Gilchrist, The New Educational Music Course (Boston, New York, Chicago, and London: Ginn and Company, 1904, rev. 1906).

and sang three-part songs. Apparently, Lansing students still could only study music through eighth grade since it was not listed as a course offering at the high school.⁹

In the early 1900s, success in public school music education meant teaching music reading. By emphasizing mastery of the printed page and proving that practically all children could be taught to read music, the profession raised music education from an uncertain beginning to a secure place in the school curriculum.¹⁰ Lansing's first two music curricula emphasized the development of music reading skills, evidence that the district's objectives were similar to music instructional goals in school systems across the country. The philosophy of music education at this time was that a child who could read music could unlock the mystery of understanding music. This belief was to guide general music teachers for the first two decades of the twentieth century.¹¹

Considering that Lansing was a wilderness settlement in 1847, the public school system was very current with its music program in the early 1900s. The organization of the Lansing music curriculum and the delivery of music instruction were consistent with contemporary theory and practice. Lansing, however, added instrumental music instruction to its curriculum at a time when many public schools across the country were just beginning to consider instrumental music classes. While there were a few isolated public school orchestras in existence before 1900, it was 1919 before orchestra was a standard part of a school's course offerings.¹² Lansing

⁹Aldinger, 115-116.

¹⁰Birge, 142-143 (page references are to reprint edition).

¹¹Ibid., 142-143.

¹²Keene, 290.

schools were almost a decade ahead of the national trend in offering an orchestra program. The establishment of a high school orchestra and the hiring of a special string teacher demonstrated a commitment to cultural activities on the part of the Lansing School Board and, ultimately, by the residents of Lansing.

In 1910 John W. Stephens was hired as Director of Music to form an orchestra at the high school, an important event in the history of music education in Lansing Public Schools. The instrumental music program began with this first high school orchestra. When Eastern High School was opened and grades seven through nine were separated into junior high schools in the mid-1920s, Stephens' responsibilities expanded to include all the secondary bands and orchestras.¹³

The first school orchestras contained instrumental students who were already trained through private lessons. The orchestra conductors had to take the performers who were available and merge them into an ensemble. These early groups rehearsed after school, without credit; it would be another generation before performance classes would receive course credit. The "instant" success of the first school orchestras helped to build their popularity and motivate younger students to practice so that they could be accepted as a member of the orchestra.¹⁴ Lansing Schools seem to have followed this same sequence of program development when John Stephens organized the orchestra at Lansing High School. The members of this orchestra were recruited by Stephens and had some previous formal musical instruction, probably from local amateur musicians.

¹³Aldinger, 170.

¹⁴Birge, 179.

The public schools were not the only source of cultural experiences for Lansing's residents. Every summer the annual gathering known as the "Chautauqua" would come to town. Originally a summer Bible school held at Lake Chataqua in New York in 1874, the Chataqua assembly method soon spread from New York to communities throughout the Midwest. The Chataqua (as Lansing residents knew it) was a traveling variety show that included a number of cultural activities, the favorite of which were the motivational speakers. From 1910 to 1917, the Chataqua was a regular summer visitor to the Lansing area and, for three to nine days, local citizens were entertained by various musical and dramatic acts. The Chataqua movement introduced thousands of Americans to classical music; many people in remote areas, otherwise, would never have heard the music of the European masters. A uniquely Midwestern phenomena, the Chautauqua stimulated interest and desire for cultural activities.¹⁵ With the traveling shows that performed in the opera houses and the annual summer Chataqua, the people of Lansing were no longer isolated from cultural experiences that were common to residents of much larger cities. Greater awareness of musical possibilities created by these traveling musicians helped to encourage support for music education in the public school system.

The Board of Education published a revised complete course of study for the Lansing Public Schools in 1916. This document stated that the "aim of the course in music is to help the pupils to love and appreciate good music, to impart to them a knowledge of the rudiments of the theory of music, and to develop the ability to read music intelligently."¹⁶ In their first three years of school, children were expected to

¹⁵Dunbar, 625.

¹⁶Aldinger, 124.

learn rote songs suited to the child voice. Third graders started in Book One of The New Educational Music Course¹⁷ and fourth graders completed it. In the fifth grade two-part singing was introduced and Book Two of The New Educational Music Course was completed. Sixth graders were busy musically, starting the year with two-part singing and moving to three-part harmony after spring break. The sixth graders also worked in Book Three of the New Educational Music Course and Book Four of the Eleanor Smith Music Course.¹⁸ Seventh and eighth graders sang music in four parts, finished the New Educational Reader and completed Book Four of the Eleanor Smith Music Series. For the first time, music was listed as a department at the high school.¹⁹

High schools across the country were beginning to include music as an academic course of study, and Lansing was no exception. The development of high school music courses for academic study actually had its foundations in the last decades of the 1800s because the emphasis on teaching sight-reading in elementary school produced students who could perform standard choral repertoire in high school. These students were capable of singing any of the choral works of the master composers.²⁰ The addition of vocal music to Lansing's high school was a logical extension of the kindergarten to eighth grade general music program which had been part of the district's curriculum since 1885. There was hesitation by school boards

¹⁷James McLaughlin, George A. Veazie, and W. W. Gilchrist, The New Educational Music Course (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1906).

¹⁸Eleanor Smith, The Eleanor Smith Music Series (Chicago: American Book Company, 1908).

¹⁹Aldinger, 124-125.

²⁰Birge, 165.

across the country to give credit for music courses because of the traditional attitude that music required talent whereas the more “practical” subjects, math and history, for example, could be mastered by any diligent student. The first school system to give academic credit for music study was the Chelsea, Massachusetts, Public Schools in 1906.^{21 22}

By the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, the framework of the present secondary school program including chorus, orchestra, harmony, and music appreciation was visible in many high schools, but not yet in Lansing. A striking feature of this high school music movement was the rapid spread of instrumental music.²³ Although the Lansing School Board did not consider orchestra and band to be “practical” subjects, these classes were offered because there was a increasing demand for instruction on these instruments. The 1916 course of study presented the first official recognition of a music department at the high school.²⁴ Lansing may have established its secondary music program a few years later than many school districts, but local students were now able to study music from kindergarten through their senior year in high school.

A concert program from the Seventh Annual May Festival, dated May 24 and 25, 1917, illustrated the many offerings among Lansing’s music classes. The two-day event began with a special afternoon performance for children by a soprano from New York City, accompanied by the wife of John W. Stephens. On the night of May 24th,

²¹Ibid., 170.

²²It is interesting to note that the Chelsea schools were also the home of one of the first public school orchestras.

²³Birge, 172.

²⁴Aldinger, 127.

a five-hundred voice children's choir sang, followed by a high school chorus of two-hundred, and several selections were performed by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. The May Festival concluded the evening of May 25th with a performance of The Creation by Franz Joseph Haydn. Three professional soloists from New York City were accompanied by the City Chorus, the High School Glee Clubs, and the Lansing Symphony Orchestra.²⁵

John W. Stephens was the director for the May Festival and apparently had initiated this concert series the first year he arrived in Lansing. The orchestra that performed on this 1917 concert was a school orchestra; Stephens did not organize the Lansing Symphony Orchestra until thirteen years later. The high school orchestra had only been in existence for seven years and had advanced to the level of performing Haydn's music. This two-day festival represented a very ambitious undertaking for a public school music department.

By the spring of 1918, a credit course for music had been developed at Lansing High School. First-year classes included sight-reading and musical analysis. In the second year, students studied history of music and music appreciation, and, in the third year, students completed courses in elementary harmony and advanced harmony. Music students were also required to participate in one performance class, either chorus, orchestra, glee club, or band in addition to their theory classes. Credit up to a maximum of one unit was also granted to those who were taking music outside of school if their private teachers were qualified and the instruction was of high school level. A total of eight credits in music was given toward graduation to all students

²⁵Program for concert located in the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

electing music as part of their high school work.²⁶ Performance classes still did not receive course credit or grades, and most of these groups rehearsed after regular school hours. The music students carried one music class a semester and participated in a musical ensemble, a music curriculum which was very similar to course requirements set by other school systems at the same time.

Elementary instrumental music students in Lansing had to begin on their chosen instruments with private instructors from the community since vocal music was the only choice for grades K-8. In high school these students were finally able to play in ensembles that were organized by the school district. In 1919 elementary orchestra was introduced in the Lansing Public Schools with weekly class sessions offered at several centrally located sites. Children from other buildings were transported to these lesson sites. Josephine Cradds established the program in 1919 and continued as its only instructor until 1931 when the elementary orchestra program was discontinued, an economic victim of the Great Depression.²⁷

Teaching beginning instrumental students in groups, rather than individually, was a concept unique to American music education. The class instrument teaching method had its beginning in Maidstone, England, with violin classes taught at the Parish Church. Not surprisingly, these classes were sponsored by a manufacturer of violins, in part to increase sales of instruments. In 1910, Albert Mitchell, a general music teacher in the Boston Public Schools, traveled to England to study violin class

²⁶Ibid., 129.

²⁷Brewer, Anna L., The History and Growth of the Lansing Public Schools, vol. 2 (Lansing, MI: Board of Education, 1962), 126.

methods. He summarized his observations in the Mitchell Class Method ²⁸ and applied his new techniques in his violin classes which met outside of school. These group lessons were so successful that within a year he was teaching only instrumental classes. The Boston School Board affirmed its support of Mitchell's method in two ways: first, by assigning him to full-time instrumental music instruction; and, second, by scheduling his violin classes during the school day.²⁹ Music education took a step forward when instrumental classes began to be offered as an academic class and not as an after-school activity.

The Mitchell Method techniques became widely known and adopted and eventually were applied to the teaching of all orchestra and band instruments. In 1917, a demonstration of the Mitchell Class Teaching Method was given at the Grand Rapids, Michigan meeting of the Music Supervisors National Conference.³⁰ This presentation offered the first national exposure of class-teaching techniques and received the immediate attention of the instrumental music teachers in attendance who were searching for an effective solution to the difficulties of starting beginning musicians. Prior to this class-teaching method, secondary instrumental ensembles could function to some degree while dependent on outside private instruction to train their members, but the directors of these groups had to accept the students who were available. These conductors had no control over the instrumentation of their ensembles or even whether the group would have sufficient members to survive from

²⁸The Mitchell Class Method denotes a technique for instructing beginning instrumental students in groups rather than in the one-to-one instructional ratio of private lessons.

²⁹Birge, 194-195.

³⁰Keene, 289-290.

year-to-year. Group instrument classes provided an efficient and economical answer to the problem of beginning instrumental music instruction. Music directors were able to train their prospective ensemble members and could control the balance of their ensembles with the instruments started in the beginning groups. As noted earlier, Lansing Public Schools adopted the class violin method two years after the Grand Rapids demonstration.

In spite of the growth of music programs in the Lansing Public Schools, the music staff remained very small. The teaching staff in 1917-1918 included John W. Stephens as the Director of Music and Miss Elva Trickey as Assistant Director.³¹ Stephens was the instrumental music teacher and served as Director of Music until his death in 1932. Trickey was hired as the Elementary Music Assistant in 1917 and directed the elementary general music program until 1928.³²

World War I had started during the time instrumental music was becoming established as part of the Lansing Public Schools curriculum. The effects of the war on schools were obvious in many ways, ranging from food shortages and gas rationing to the predominantly female instructional staff due to the number of young men who enlisted in the armed forces.

Nationally, the school band movement was accelerated as an indirect result of the war. Music was an important morale force in winning the fight; songs such as "Over There" extolled the gallant efforts of the American soldiers. Military bands became a part of every camp with each regiment having its own band. The patriotic music provided by these bands was a very important part in maintaining the morale of

³¹These administrative titles are misleading in modern usage since there were very few music teachers in the school district at this time.

³²Aldinger, 72.

the fighting forces. From a pedagogical viewpoint, many of the hundreds of band leaders trained by the army would become the first public school band directors following the war. Military training was introduced into the high schools and these cadet programs required band music for their drills and ceremonies.³³ Other influences on public school bands included the professional concert groups that toured the country, such as the band conducted by John Philip Sousa. The importance given to music, in general, and to band music, in particular, as a primary element in America's war effort established the value of instrumental music in the public schools.

Another influence on the momentum of the school band movement was the municipal band. As discussed in Chapter I, the first amateur bands organized in America were for adults. Most communities had an ensemble of winds and percussion instruments that entertained at civic functions and led the parade for the Fourth of July. Large industries sponsored company bands around the turn of the century as a way of maintaining peaceful labor relations, and these industrial bands existed until the Great Depression. The golden age of the town band occurred between the years of 1870-1930; as the town bands disappeared they were gradually replaced by bands from the public schools and colleges.³⁴ The expansion of bands into the public school was a natural outcome of the earlier importance of the town band.

Bands had always been closer to show music in their origins and had to prove themselves to the arts patrons in the community to be considered a worthy addition to the school curriculum. Considering that the town band was the precursor of the school band, one is surprised that school bands were even started because the town bands

³³Birge, 205-206.

³⁴Keene, 284-285.

were largely recreational ensembles, performing at civic functions and building dedications. The members of these bands were probably self-taught and offered enthusiasm in the place of musical finesse. Traveling concert bands such as Gilmore's and Sousa's groups did much to establish the concert band as a legitimate musical ensemble.

School bands as part of the curriculum were accepted more slowly than vocal music and orchestra. A major reason for this problem was that many of the first music supervisors were vocal music teachers who did not have an instrumental music background. In addition, administrators were reluctant to introduce instrumental music programs because of the expense involved in maintaining these groups. In order to have a performing group, the schools needed to provide instruments and rehearsal space, as well as uniforms. On the other hand, choral and orchestral classes were relatively inexpensive to offer, especially when compared with the expenses of a marching band. Eventually, popular demand convinced administrators to fund school band programs.³⁵

While the first public school orchestras consisted of pupils trained by private teachers, school bands had to train their members from the very beginning. In fact, many school bands were associated with an orchestra to provide wind musicians. Money was often provided for the school to purchase instruments necessary to complete the existing instrumentation of a group. Students changing to these instruments learned from instruction books, from occasional traveling musicians, and

³⁵Birge, 177-178.

from each other. Consistently, these first school bands were described as boys' bands since the first groups, apparently, were not open to girls.³⁶

Because vocal music was the first accepted form of music education in American schools, the principal concerns of music educators in the early 1900s were in the area of vocal music. After 1912, music educators began to show more interest in instrumental music, although this interest was primarily in school orchestra programs. Orchestras had always had the best professional symphonic organizations as their role models and the introduction of orchestra into the schools required no justification. Edward Birge conducted a survey on the status of instrumental music in the public schools in 1919: of the schools which responded, 79% had school orchestras; but only 24% had school bands.³⁷

As noted in the first chapter, Lansing Public Schools waited almost forty years, from the founding of the school system in 1847 until 1885, to introduce vocal music into the elementary school curriculum. After 1900, music education in Lansing developed in a manner similar to music education programs across the country with the establishment of an elementary general music curriculum as the first step for Lansing students. After the turn of the century, new additions to the music program occurred quickly. Orchestra was introduced at the high school in 1910, followed by the high school music course for credit in 1918 and the elementary string program in 1919. The rapidity with which the school district adopted the class method for beginning violin was commendable for a Midwestern town. As a result, instrumental music grew very quickly in the Midwest, and Lansing was part of this movement.

³⁶Birge, 184.

³⁷Keene, 290.

During the first two decades of the twentieth century, music education in the Lansing Public Schools expanded rapidly, in direct contrast to the number of years that had passed between the founding of the school district and the establishment of vocal music programs in the previous century.

CHAPTER III

MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM WORLD WAR I THROUGH WORLD WAR II

The early 1920s in Lansing became a period of booming prosperity, fueled by the enormous growth of the automotive industry. William C. Durant, a former president of General Motors, left the company to build his own three-million dollar plant. At the same time, a two-million dollar expansion was announced by Olds Motor Works. A related growth in the local construction industry resulted in the completion of several of the downtown's most notable buildings. Within a period of five years, the Louis Cass Building, the Michigan Theater, the Washington Square Building, the Hotel Olds, and the Masonic Temple were built.¹

Prosperity in the private sector meant extra tax dollars were available to the city. Growth in the construction industry was matched by several public works projects, including improvement of city parks and repair of roads and bridges. New zoning laws controlled the haphazard development of the downtown area and restricted factory construction to certain locations. The public works projects and the zoning regulations improved the appearance of the capitol city and silenced the residents' concerns that their city was emerging as a factory town, rather than as the capitol city of Michigan.

¹Kestenbaum, 90-92.

Lansing's public school system was also a beneficiary of the rapid economic growth of the early 1920s. Increased tax revenues provided more funds for education. Prior to World War I, Lansing's elementary schools housed grades K-8 and the one high school contained 9th through 12th grades. Several factors, discussed in Chapter I, led to an increase in the number of students attending public school and, especially, in the number of students completing their high school education. As a result, Lansing's already substandard schools were overcrowded and in need of either expansion or replacement. A city planner, hired in 1921 to make a detailed study of Lansing, described the public school buildings as inadequate because both the high school and public library were too small to accommodate the enrollment and school buildings were poorly maintained.²

In 1921, the Lansing School Board, responding to this report of overcrowded buildings, regrouped grades K-12. The new structure defined junior high schools for grades 7-9, elementary schools for K-6, and the senior high school for grades 10-12.³ This reorganization was inspired by the need to build more classrooms in the most efficient manner and by current educational research on the advantages of housing seventh, eighth, and ninth grade students in a separate facility. Lansing Public Schools were among the first school districts in the nation to develop and to build junior high schools.⁴

Three junior high schools were constructed within five years. The first, West Junior High School, opened in 1919. Built on the south side of Kalamazoo

²Ibid., 91.

³Aldinger, 130.

⁴R. L. Lyman, "The Walter H. French Junior High School of Lansing, Michigan," The School Review (June 6, 1929): 435.

Elementary School, it was expanded twice to house a growing student enrollment and was considered to be a very modern facility for its time with a pool, a gymnasium, and a full-service cafeteria.⁵ East Junior High School opened in 1921 and was built at the corner of Jerome and Pennsylvania on thirteen acres of land that had originally belonged to the Boy's Industrial School. In 1922 the school was renamed for Henry R. Pattengill, a prominent politician and supporter of education. A senior high school was later added to the Pattengill site.⁶ The third junior high school was completed in 1925 at the corner of Cedar and Mt. Hope and named for Walter French. When the school first opened, it also housed grades K-6.⁷ J. W. Slaughter, the principal at Walter French from its opening until his retirement in 1944, received national recognition for his contributions to the introduction and development of the concept of the junior high school.⁸

The building program also extended to the high school level. Eastern High School was built in 1928 on a site immediately west of Pattengill Junior High School. The new school was the most expensive facility among the district's properties with construction costs of over one-million dollars; an expansion in 1936 added a third floor and a girls' gymnasium.⁹ After Eastern High School opened, the former Lansing High was renamed Central High School.

⁵Aldinger, 42-43.

⁶Ibid.

⁷Ibid., 43.

⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 April 1944.

⁹Aldinger, 44.

The new organization and expansion of the Lansing Public Schools required a complete revision of the school system's curriculum. The 600-page course of study was accepted by the school board in 1922 and represented the most comprehensive program developed by the school district.¹⁰ The music course of study included the Progressive Music Series¹¹ for Grade One. Second and third grade students continued with Book One in the Progressive Music Series and used the first manual in the series. In the fourth and fifth grades, students used Book Two and Manual Two of the Progressive Music Series and also studied from Book One of the New Educational Music Course.¹² In sixth grade, students worked in the New Educational Music Course, Books Two and Three, and the third manual in The Progressive Music Series. The only instrumental music experience available for elementary students was sixth grade orchestra which met for 45 minutes once a week during the second semester of sixth grade.¹³

Participation in music class was required of all elementary Lansing students. Junior high school pupils had a weekly one-hour vocal music class, using the advanced texts in the Progressive Music Series. Band, orchestra, piano, and violin were offered at the junior high schools as electives by the students. Senior high school students could elect from chorus, glee clubs for both boys and girls, violin, band, and orchestra.

¹⁰Ibid., 130.

¹¹Horatio W. Parker, Osborne McConathy, W. Otto Meissner, and Edward B. Birge, The Progressive Music Series (Boston, New York, and Chicago: Silver, Burdett & Co., 1914, rev. 1920).

¹²James McLaughlin, George A. Veazie, and W. W. Gilchrist, The New Educational Music Course (Boston, New York, Chicago, and London: Ginn and Company, 1904, rev. 1906).

¹³Aldinger, 132.

Up to three units of credit toward graduation were offered for high school music classes.¹⁴

A national trend in music education that occurred at the same time as the opening of Lansing's junior high schools was the music contest movement. Band contests were started in Michigan in 1920 by J. Harold Powers, head of the music department at Central Michigan College of Education in Mount Pleasant. The number of participants increased steadily and in 1923 the contests were moved to the campus of Michigan State College of Agriculture (now Michigan State University).¹⁵ Bands from Lansing's three junior high schools and two senior high schools participated in the state band festivals at Michigan State and frequently received awards for their excellent performances.¹⁶

The first national school band festival was held in Chicago on June 4-6, 1923. This event was organized by several music dealers and musical instrument manufacturers and featured local high school bands from the Chicago area. After receiving complaints about commercial interests running an educational music festival, the contest originators turned the administration of the band contest over to the National Bureau for the Advancement of Music¹⁷ and the Music Supervisors National

¹⁴Ibid., 133.

¹⁵Keene, 296.

¹⁶The Journal of Instruction, pub. by Lansing Public Schools, vol. II, (Nov. 1928), 4.

¹⁷The National Bureau for Advancement of Music was established in 1916 to advance all forms of music and was widely respected by musicians and music educators. C. W. Tremaine was the first Executive Director.

Conference¹⁸ but continued to underwrite the expenses. Under the direction of these two professional organizations, the band festival developed into a nationally recognized competitive event and attracted groups from around the country.¹⁹ The music contest provided a national forum for school bands and stimulated the school contest and festival movement that influenced secondary school music until the outbreak of World War II. There is no record, however, of a band from Lansing Schools attending the national festival.

From the festival movement came four significant and related outcomes. The first occurred when instrumental manufacturers began to realize the economic potential of public school music programs. As the number of adult bands began to decline, manufacturers had to develop new markets. The second was the formation of state and national associations by teachers of instrumental music to discuss problems in their profession and to share solutions. The founding of Interlochen Arts Camp by University of Michigan music faculty in 1927 was the third outcome.²⁰

The fourth outcome would have the most significance for future music educators. Many of the school bands who were involved in the contests were strictly brass ensembles. The typical instrumentation of a British brass band, consisting of only brass instruments and percussion, had influenced the instrumentation of American town bands and, in turn, public school bands. The balanced timbre of a wind group, which included all of the woodwind, brass, and percussion instruments, was in danger

¹⁸Established in 1910, this national organization consisted of music educators who supported school music programs. The name was changed to the Music Educators National Conference in 1934.

¹⁹Keene, 296-301.

²⁰Birge, 271 (page references are to reprint edition).

of being lost. A special committee of the MSNC was appointed to develop a standard band instrumentation for a 72-piece ensemble. Members of this committee included John Phillip Sousa, Edward Franko Goldman, and Herbert L. Clark, three musicians who had helped to develop and to popularize the wind band. The committee's work has become the accepted standard for American bands to this day.²¹ Thus music contest movement, begun as a way for Chicago music dealers to increase business, became an important force in the development of instrumental music programs.

The postwar years were a time of rapid change and growth, not only in Lansing, but also in surrounding areas. East Lansing and the Michigan State College of Agriculture experienced the same economic growth as Lansing. As a result of this increased prosperity, the Michigan State College of Agriculture expanded its course offerings beyond its original departments of agriculture and home economics. Among these new additions was the founding of the School of Music in 1924. Michigan State College of Agriculture became Michigan State College in 1925 to represent its broader curriculum.²²

During the same period of time, radio stations began to broadcast in the Lansing area. The first radio station in operation in Michigan was WWJ in Detroit, which began operating on August 20, 1920.²³ Station WREO, sponsored by REO Motor Car Company, followed four years later. WREO was only on the air for a few hours daily, but it made the reception of radio programs accessible to audiences who only needed to possess an inexpensive crystal set. In addition, by placing transmission

²¹Keene, 304.

²²Kestenbaum, 94.

²³Dunbar, 613.

wires in the Prudden Auditorium, the new radio station was successful in increasing the size of the listening audience.²⁴ WREO also furthered music in the community with the formation of the Orpheus Club, a chorus of male employees from the Reo Motor Company, who presented a regular singing program on the radio.^{25 26}

New technology would soon eliminate the problems of accessibility to music for any individual with the appropriate equipment. The Victor Talking Machine Company recognized this trend and subsequently organized its educational department in 1911 to popularize the use of the record player in music classrooms.²⁷ Radio, phonographs, and later, the movies, would change the way Americans experienced music and drama. Consumers could choose when they wanted to be entertained, rather than being restricted by attending performances. Live performing groups declined in popularity and many town “opera” houses closed or were converted to movie theaters in the 1920s. In Lansing, Buck’s Opera House became the Gladmer Theater, a community auditorium where a variety of cultural events took place²⁸ and the Michigan Theater became a movie theater.²⁹

Lansing’s music groups occasionally performed in public in unusual locations. For example, during the summer of 1926, the Lansing High School Band was the official band at Camp Custer in Battle Creek. The boys in the band participated in

²⁴Kestenbaum, 96.

²⁵Thompson, 6.

²⁶The Greater Lansing Orpheus Male Chorus is still in existence. After the radio station ceased to broadcast, membership was opened to men in the Lansing area.

²⁷Birge, 211.

²⁸Kestenbaum, 56.

²⁹Ibid., 92.

military training exercises as well as providing music for military events. A picture of the band in their uniforms confirms the fact that it was an all-male organization.³⁰

In 1928 the school district announced the establishment of an exchange program with the music department at Michigan State College. Music students from the college would be observing classes in the Lansing Public Schools under the guidance of John W. Stephens. In return, Lansing instrumental music students would have the opportunity to study privately at minimal cost with first-chair players from the Detroit Symphony Orchestra. These individuals taught private lessons for the MSC Music Department and would provide the same services for Lansing student musicians.³¹

At the midpoint of the second decade of the Twentieth Century, Lansing's prosperity seemed to be assured. Car sales continued to increase and unemployment was nonexistent. Sales for the REO Motor Car Company in 1927 increased 65% over the previous year's record.³² With its other industries doing equally well, the city appeared to be continuing in its economic success. Unfortunately, the car market became saturated during the middle of 1927. By 1929 the automotive industry was in the middle of a massive slump. Since the economic prosperity enjoyed in Lansing during the 1920s was dependent on car sales, local factories began laying off workers long before the collapse of the stock market on October 29, 1929. Between March

³⁰Lansing Educational News, vol. 2, no. 2 (November 1926), 9.

³¹Lansing Educational News, vol. 3, no. 7 (May 1928), 7.

³²*Ibid.*, 98.

and August of 1929, Lansing's eighteen largest industries had reduced their labor forces by 60 percent.³³

During the Depression, however, music remained a part of everyday life in Lansing. John W. Stephens wanted to promote classical music in the community. As a result, Stephens founded the Lansing Symphony Association when he organized a group of approximately sixty musicians for their first rehearsal in the fall of 1930. Stephens became ill and died shortly after the first performance. Izler Solomon, concertmaster and assistant conductor, assumed the direction of the fledgling symphony.³⁴ Initially, the Board of Education supplied music and rehearsal space for the string orchestra; as it became established, the symphony association increased its outreach program by rewarding students who had musical ability with scholarships for further study.³⁵

Public support for cultural activities ended during the Depression, but when local support dwindled, federal programs assisted by funding existing arts programs in this country. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) became a major force in maintaining American culture during the 1930s by supporting the creative efforts of artists in all areas.³⁶ Although the Lansing area was the recipient of WPA-funded labor and construction projects, there is no evidence that any form of local cultural activity was supported by this federal program.

³³Ibid., 98.

³⁴Thompson, 7.

³⁵Darling, 264.

³⁶Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman, 12-18.

Lansing's economy was at its lowest point in November, 1932 but gradually improved over the next three years. One of the primary economic leaders emerging from the Depression was the Olds Motor Company, whose sales had remained fairly stable during the worst economic times. The demand for automobiles suddenly increased in the spring of 1933, and the company announced plans for a 2.5 million dollar expansion to meet the demands of the industry. Lansing's two other car manufacturers were not as fortunate as Oldsmobile; Durant's company went bankrupt shortly after the beginning of the Depression. The REO Motor Car Company made several unsuccessful attempts to market a competitive automobile; however, the company abandoned this endeavor and eventually concentrated on building trucks and buses.³⁷

Lansing's public schools experienced the same financial difficulties as the city. Faced with a drastic reduction in operating funds, the school board was required to make equally drastic cuts in services. Two elementary buildings were closed and several after-school and summer programs were eliminated. The district's staff was reduced and the remaining teachers received salary cuts ranging from five to twenty percent. Another casualty of the Depression, previously discussed in Chapter II, was the elimination of the beginning string program.³⁸ It is a positive reflection on the management skills of the Lansing School District administrators that they were able to preserve curricular essentials, including music instruction, during this difficult time.

The Lansing music staff, already small in number, did not experience layoffs. Although John W. Stephens, Music Supervisor and an instructor of instrumental music,

³⁷Kestenbaum, 100.

³⁸Aldinger, 55.

died in 1932, he was replaced by his son, Harper, who was hired to teach vocal and instrumental music.³⁹ Elva Trickey was the elementary music assistant under Stephens from 1917 until December 1925. She was replaced by her sister, Eda Trickey, who served as a music assistant from January, 1926 until her promotion to Supervisor of Elementary Music in 1928. She remained in that capacity until June 1937 when she resigned her position to be married. The Elementary Music Supervisor's job remained unfilled until the hiring of Pauline Austin as Director of Elementary Music in January, 1939.⁴⁰

During this period, Lansing's elementary classrooms were self-contained.⁴¹ The Elementary Music Supervisor would visit elementary schools to teach a lesson once and return on another occasion to observe the classroom teacher conducting a music session. Eda Trickey functioned in this capacity and also provided additional musical instruction for classroom teachers during evening hours.⁴²

A decade that began with an economic depression ended with a second world war. When conflict erupted in Europe in 1939, Lansing's industries immediately shifted into war production. Within a few months, over a quarter of the city's labor

³⁹This position was left vacant until S. Earle Trudgen became Director of Music in August, 1956.

⁴⁰Brewer, 126.

⁴¹The self-contained classroom was a product of the Depression. School districts were able to economize by eliminating unnecessary personnel, some of whom were music specialists. As a result, classroom teachers became responsible for the music instruction of their students, and the music specialists who were retained by the District functioned as consultants. After the Depression ended, school administrators continued to use self-contained classrooms, since this arrangement seemed to meet the goals of the students.

⁴²Brewer, 126.

force was involved in manufacturing weapons and related materials; the high unemployment rate of a few years earlier ended quickly. Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Lansing's factories went into a twenty-four hour daily operation schedule, seven days a week. And, for the first time, thousands of women were employed to replace the men who were serving in the armed forces. Locally, Michigan State University was involved in the effort by educating thousands of officers who were assigned to the Army and Air Corps.⁴³

Although World War II dominated the conscious thought of the nation, the demands of daily life were still present. In the midst of a war, the work of educating the young continued. The 1921 course of study, which guided instructional programs for the Lansing Public Schools, was outdated and no longer applicable in a vastly changed society. Therefore, the district embarked upon a total revision of its curriculum, motivated by concern for the best interests of its students. Over a period of two years, committees of teachers restructured the district's course of study under the guidance of an outside expert.^{44 45}

The music course is described in detail in the 1940 document and an examination of the curriculum illustrates the basis for music instruction beginning at the kindergarten level through high school.⁴⁶ In kindergarten, music was used to develop a sense of rhythm through learning songs appropriate to various bodily

⁴³Kestenbaum, 109-110.

⁴⁴Aldinger, 141-142.

⁴⁵The 1940 curriculum was a complicated document which consisted of several thousand pages in comparison to the 1921 version which contained of 600 pages.

⁴⁶Perhaps this represents a more secure position for music among the subjects offered by the school district.

movements. The songs that were chosen related to animals, community life, holidays, Mother Goose, nature, and toys. Through singing, the children not only learned to improve their pitch discrimination but also, hopefully, gained enjoyment from these musical experiences. Singing activities were supplemented with records and the playing of basic rhythm instruments such as drums, triangles, and bells.⁴⁷

In the first, second, and third grades, music instruction was based on the textbook, The Music Hour Series.⁴⁸ First grade music classes worked on matching tones and rhythmic development and sang rote and original songs. In the second grade, students continued with the material started the previous year and increased their use of the music text. Music theory taught in second grade included the value and names of notes, simple time signatures, and the names of the staff lines and spaces. Third grade music study began the use of vocalise syllables in sight-reading. Third year students also learned additional theory facts about note values and time signatures, and extended their knowledge of technical terms.⁴⁹

In the fourth, fifth, and sixth grades, the students continued to build on their musical experiences from the lower elementary grades. Music instruction closely followed the organization of The Music Hour Series. Fourth grade students used volume three of this series; fifth grade students, volume four; and sixth grade students, volume five. Music classes at the elementary school level were required for all students.⁵⁰

⁴⁷Aldinger, 142.

⁴⁸Osbourne McConathy, W. Otto Miessner, Edward B. Birge, and Mabel E. Bray, The Music Hour Series (Boston: Silver-Burdett & Company, 1927).

⁴⁹Aldinger, 144.

⁵⁰Ibid., 147.

Beginning in junior high school, Lansing's students had a greater choice among the music classes offered. In the seventh grade, physical education met four times a week and vocal music once a week to count as one credit in a required course. Seventh grade students could also select one elective course from among boys choir, violin 1 or 2, band 1 or 2, and orchestra 1 or 2. Harp 1 or 2 was offered only at West Junior High and girls choir 1 or 2 only at Pattengill Junior High. Students choosing violin, band, or orchestra were assigned according to their playing ability in the subject. Eighth grade students could elect chorus 1 or 2; violin 1, 2, 3, or 4; band 1, 2, 3, or 4; or orchestra 1, 2, 3, or 4. Harp 1, 2, 3, or 4 was taught at West Junior High.⁵¹

The numbers following the name of each class indicate the semesters of study from a beginning level (1) to an advanced level of study (4). Typically, seventh grade students would take semester 1 and 2 of a class and eighth grade students would continue with semesters 3 and 4. Ninth grade music electives were the same as what was offered for eighth grade students with the addition of semesters 5 and 6. Ninth grade students could also receive an extra credit for private music study outside of the school building.⁵²

During the early 1940s, the school district reorganized its high schools. J. W. Sexton High School⁵³ was built on the west side of town and opened during the second semester of the 1942-43 school year. Central High School was renamed

⁵¹Ibid., 148.

⁵²Ibid., 149-150.

⁵³The School Board broke precedent in naming the new high school after a living individual. Dr. Sexton, who had served the district for over thirty years, was Superintendent at the time the high school was dedicated.

Lansing Technical High School after its students were moved to Sexton on February 1, 1943. The school district now operated two academic high schools and a vocational high school.⁵⁴

Music departments at the two high schools offered slightly different courses. At J. W. Sexton High School students could choose from choir, boys glee club, girls glee club, orchestra, strings, band, small instrumental ensembles, and theory. Eastern High School's music electives were choir, orchestra, chorus, boys band, girls band, glee club, vocal theory, and instrumental theory.⁵⁵

The Lansing Public Schools music staff had increased in the years since 1917 when John W. Stephens and Elva Trickey were the only music instructors. For the first time, a music administrator was listed on the 1943-1944 staff roster. Pauline Austin served in this capacity, having been promoted from her earlier position of Director of Elementary Music. Russell Switzer directed the music program at Sexton High School and William McIntire was at Eastern High School. The Pattengill Junior High music staff included Gladys Wiltrout, Walter C. Jenvey, and Harold Harvey. At Walter French Junior High, Gwendolen Miller and Allan Knoll taught music. West Junior High's music instructors were G. W. Chambers, Josephine Marsh, and Josephine Maidenburg. No elementary music teachers were listed among the school district employees in 1943-1944.⁵⁶ Pauline Austin continued to teach all of the elementary music classes despite her new job title.

⁵⁴Aldinger, 45.

⁵⁵Ibid., 155-157.

⁵⁶Ibid., 77-89.

The rapid expansion of the Lansing music program, particularly at the secondary level, is worth noting. The establishment of an instrumental music program at Lansing High School in 1910 set a precedent for the school district. As each new junior high and senior high opened in the 1920s and 1930s, both vocal and instrumental music were among the courses offered. Lansing Public Schools continued to support and expand its music programs, even during World War II.

In turn, Lansing's music groups were recognized nationally for their support of the war effort. The music department at Sexton High School under the direction of Russell W. Switzer, received a national award for their local wartime support. The Sexton Band and Choir performed at bond drives, various rallies, and also played for departures of military personnel. Both of the high schools and the three junior high schools helped to maintain an atmosphere of normalcy in wartime Lansing with their frequent concerts. The Junior Civic Orchestra was active and involved music students from the three junior high schools. Gifted young musicians were able to attend summer music camp at Interlochen with financial support from their home schools and the Lansing Symphony Association.⁵⁷ During this time in Lansing's secondary schools not only were large music ensembles active, but enrichment opportunities were also available for talented individuals.

As the war approached its conclusion, Lansing's School Board continued its support of expanding music programs in the junior and senior high schools. West Junior High presented a request to the board in 1945 for the purchase of new uniforms. After much discussion on this matter, the school board not only lent

⁵⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 1 January 1945.

West Junior High the money to buy band uniforms, but it also made arrangements to provide a location for marching band practice.^{58 59}

Unfortunately, this support did not extend to the elementary music program. During the same year, School Board members discussed a proposal presented by Superintendent Dwight Rich⁶⁰ to hire two additional elementary music teachers. Dr. Rich's rationale for increasing the elementary music staff was that most school systems the size of Lansing offered more music instruction for their younger students. He also argued that student interest in taking music courses at the junior and senior high school level started with music experiences in the elementary grades. However, the board did not agree with Superintendent Rich, choosing instead to continue its support of secondary music programs by hiring H. A. Bergen as a music teacher for Eastern High School at the beginning of the 1945-46 school year while adding no additional elementary music teachers.⁶¹

This action by the Lansing School Board would explain why the roster of school district employees did not include any elementary music teachers. Beginning in the mid 1940s, the minutes of school board meetings do show that student teachers in music were placed in several elementary buildings.⁶² The written record, however,

⁵⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 24 April 1945.

⁵⁹West Junior High School was built in downtown Lansing and was not surrounded by open fields for marching practice as were the other secondary schools. The band actually had to march on a street that was closed during their practice sessions.

⁶⁰Dr. J. W. Sexton, Superintendent of Lansing Public Schools, retired on August 1, 1945. Dr. Dwight H. Rich, Principal of Eastern High School, was promoted to Superintendent at that time.

⁶¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 18 December 1945.

⁶²Brewer, 13.

does not reveal whether this acceptance of student teachers in music was an effort to compensate for a shortage of trained professionals.

World War II created many changes in Lansing, both for its residents and for its businesses. The manufacture of war materials by area factories had helped to hasten the recovery of the local economy after the Great Depression. As the War appeared to be ending, city officials attempted to develop a plan to maintain the economic recovery and to avoid the type of recession that had followed the conclusion of World War I. The construction of new buildings provided one means of maintaining full employment for Lansing citizens. In May 1945, the City of Lansing announced plans to build its long overdue City Hall building. At the same time, the State of Michigan purchased property west of the capital and began the construction of several new state office buildings.⁶³

Lansing had continued to grow during the years between the two world wars. The federal census recorded the city's population as 57,327 in 1920; in 1940, 78,793 people were living within the city limits.⁶⁴ In twenty years, the community experienced a population increase of 21,466 or over thirty-seven percent. In direct relation to the population increase, the physical size of the city was also growing. By early 1946, discussions were underway by members of the City Council who were interested in expanding the city limits south to Cavanaugh Road and east to meet the East Lansing line. In order to protect its interests, the Lansing School Board adopted a policy that no geographical area would be added to the school district unless it was

⁶³Kestenbaum, 110.

⁶⁴Aldinger, 57.

first incorporated into Lansing's city limits.⁶⁵ This new policy would have a far-reaching effect on the rapid expansion of the city limits and the size of Lansing School District during the next three decades.

Within a period of twenty-five years, Lansing had experienced two world wars and the city had seen its economy change from the heights of prosperity to the depths of depression and rebound to its previous level. During these years, in spite of the massive instability in the city's economic climate, music education at the secondary level continued to grow and to flourish in the Lansing Public Schools while all of the elementary general music instruction remained the responsibility of only one teacher.

⁶⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 25 February 1946.

CHAPTER IV
THE GROWTH OF MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING
PUBLIC SCHOOLS FROM THE END OF WORLD WAR II TO 1959

After the conclusion of World War II, life gradually returned to normal in Michigan's capital city. Soldiers returned, families were reunited, and rationing became a distant memory. One of the first signs of peacetime appeared when automobile factories returned from wartime production to their domestic production schedule. Once again, the sales of Oldsmobiles began to rise steadily although it would be 1949 before car purchases exceeded the previous record year of 1941.¹

During the decade of the 1940s, Lansing's population grew steadily from 78,753 to 92,129 residents. In the years between 1950 and 1960, the increase reached 108,128 people who resided within the boundaries of the city. Growth developed with annexations of adjoining areas that extended the city limits southwest to the Eaton County line and north to the Clinton County line while the eastern boundary expanded to the East Lansing city line.²

During World War II, evening cultural and social activities virtually came to a halt in Lansing as city lights were frequently dimmed in the evenings in anticipation of possible enemy air strikes. The construction industry was also curtailed sharply during the war years. In the early years following the war, the return of peacetime

¹Kestenbaum, 112.

²Ibid.

was marked with the resumption of activities and events that had been part of everyday life; theater marquees were illuminated with thousands of light bulbs and the dome of the capitol building was lit again at night. Construction businesses received a boost with the start of the long-awaited new City Hall and plans were made for the Lansing Civic Center to be built on the site of the old Prudden Auditorium, the place of many pre-war performances.³

The population growth of Lansing during the 1940s was matched by an increase in the size of the city's school district. By the end of World War II, the real estate holdings of the Lansing Public School system, which consisted of twenty-three elementary schools, three junior high schools, two high schools, and a technical-vocational high school, were estimated at \$9,243,000. The school system, operating on an annual budget of two million dollars, served 14,043 students with a staff of 658 teachers, business executives, specialists, and support personnel.⁴

The creation of junior high schools in the 1920s had allowed the school board to resolve overcrowding problems at the secondary level; in the years following the war, the district found it necessary to focus on the problems created by overcrowding at the elementary level. At the beginning of the 1946-1947 school year, the number of registered students exceeded building capacity at four of the elementary schools in the district: Barnes, Maplewood, Verlinden, and Willow. In an attempt to rectify the overcrowding problem, the school board arranged for a special millage election to be

³Ibid., 114.

⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 11 November 1945.

held on November 5, 1946 at which the voters approved a five-mill levy to finance the immediate construction of additional elementary school buildings.⁵

Between the years of 1945 and 1959, the district opened new buildings, built additions on some schools, and eliminated outdated facilities. Overcrowded conditions continued to persist at Barnes, Foster, Genessee, Maplewood, Moores Park, Walter French Elementary, and Willow elementary schools as late as the fall of 1948. In 1949 this situation was partially relieved with the opening of Mt. Hope Elementary School, the first elementary school to open in the Lansing District in nineteen years, and Elmhurst Elementary School in 1951.⁶

During this time, the Lansing School District was surrounded by numerous small school districts, each of which consisted of one or two elementary level buildings. Once the students in these areas entered the secondary level, they attended the nearest Lansing junior or senior high school on a tuition basis since no secondary level buildings existed within their respective school districts. In effect, the secondary students who resided in these districts ceased to be part of their home school after they graduated from the sixth grade.

The Everett School District, located directly south of Lansing, was the first of these small school systems to propose a permanent solution to this dilemma. Beginning in 1949, a group of administrators from the Everett District initiated a series of negotiations with city representatives. As a result of their discussions, the Everett School District became a part of the city of Lansing in the spring of 1950.⁷

⁵Brewer, 20.

⁶Ibid., 26.

⁷Ibid., 27.

This annexation resulted in adjustments in building assignments to accommodate the influx of new students. In 1951, the former Everett School, which housed grades kindergarten through twelve, became an elementary level building, and the junior high school students were reassigned to Walter French Junior High School. The elementary grades that had been located at French were transferred to nearby elementary school buildings.⁸

Following the successful resolution of the Everett School District issue, the Lansing School Board became increasingly concerned about the growing number of out-of-district students who were enrolling in the secondary schools and in July, 1949 began discussions on ways to circumvent the impending problems.⁹

The problems of providing a secondary education for students in the K-6 districts surrounding Lansing were difficult to solve. In 1955, a committee including school board members from the affected districts was formed to search for possible solutions. One of the findings by this committee was that one out of every four students who attended secondary schools in Lansing lived outside of the city limits.¹⁰ This report showed that vocal music was offered in seventeen out of the nineteen schools that were represented on the committee and instrumental music was offered in five school systems. These results were consistent with other school district records since only five of the nineteen districts operated K-8 schools.

⁸Ibid.

⁹Ibid.

¹⁰Schools and the Lansing Community: A Report of the Lansing Community Area School Study Committee 1955-1956 (Lansing, Michigan: Board of Education, 1956), 3.

In the final report the committee stated that only Lansing had the necessary student population to offer a K-12 education program and recommended that the smaller districts merge into one large consolidated district in order to meet more effectively the needs of their students.¹¹ Two years later on May 9, 1957, the Lansing School Board passed a resolution that declared that tuition students would no longer be accepted after June, 1960 unless their home school districts were annexed to Lansing.¹² As a result, many of the small districts found it necessary to consolidate with the Lansing School District in order to continue the education of their students past the elementary level.

In 1952, three new elementary schools, Willow, Lyons, and Maple Hill, opened; within a two-year period two more schools, Gier Park School (1953) and Fairview Elementary (1954), had opened.¹³ Four years later, five additional elementary schools had been added to the district: Bingham in 1956 and Lewton, Cavanaugh, Kendon, Moores Park School in 1957.

Several building changes took place in Lansing Schools in the early 1950s including the closing of Technical High School in June 1948. The building was converted to an administrative office facility and housed the Board of Education.¹⁴ Another school, Larch Elementary, ceased to operate in 1950 and the building was eventually sold to a private business. Several schools were enlarged in order to meet the needs of the students in the district. In 1949, Sexton Senior High School added an

¹¹Ibid., 23.

¹²Ibid., 52.

¹³Brewer, 35.

¹⁴Ibid., 25.

auditorium which was designed to support the performing arts, featuring the latest innovations in lighting and staging, choir and instrumental risers, and an elevator for moving music equipment.¹⁵ An extra floor was added over the boiler rooms at Pattengill and West Junior High Schools to create additional facilities for the special education program,^{16 17} and a fourteen-room addition to Walter French Junior High School was dedicated on November 11, 1957.¹⁸

Thomas Elementary School on the northern side of town was converted to a seventh grade building in 1954. By 1956, the eighth and ninth grades had been added and the new building was named C. W. Otto Junior High School in memory of a Lansing businessman who was a lifetime supporter of the public schools.

In 1956, the voters of Lansing passed a millage to fund a replacement for the Grand River Elementary School, to build four additional elementary schools, to add all-purpose rooms to three other elementary schools, to build a new senior high school in the south end, and to provide needed shop equipment for vocational programs at Eastern and Sexton High Schools.¹⁹ The size of the district also increased as the result of the annexation of three additional school districts: Horsebrook, Pleasant Grove, and Northwestern, in 1958 and 1959.²⁰

¹⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 October 1949.

¹⁶Brewer, 37.

¹⁷*Ibid.*, 43.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 50-51.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 48.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 293.

One of the first changes in school district facilities during the late 1950s was the demolition of the old Townsend School, located on the northwest corner of Townsend and Washtenaw streets. After it was torn down, the property was temporarily rented to a private company as a parking lot; the school district planned to hold this land as a possible future site for a new public library.²¹ Named for previous landowners, Everett Senior High School was built in the southern Lansing area and opened in September, 1959. Construction of the new high school was not completed until the following spring.²²

During the summer of 1958, administrators for Lansing Schools predicted a possible increase of one thousand secondary students over the enrollment of the previous year. A record enrollment of 21,500 students in grades K-12 was expected for the fall of 1958.²³ The sudden increase in secondary students prompted the school board to remind outlying districts that a date had been established for the termination of tuition students.

Just as increases in school enrollment required changes in the facilities to accommodate the students' physical needs, so the music programs expanded to satisfy the increased numbers and interest generated by public school music groups' participation in civic rallies supporting the local war effort. By 1945, each secondary school featured a band, orchestra, and choir program.²⁴ Despite the national trend of decreasing support for public school orchestra programs during that era, both the

²¹Ibid., 46.

²²Ibid., 58.

²³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 August 1958.

²⁴Aldinger, 77-82.

orchestra and band programs continued to flourish in the Lansing Schools following the war. Across the country, the importance of military bands during wartime had led to an increase of interest, if not support, in public school band programs.²⁵ Although the local student enrollment levels in the various bands outnumbered those in the orchestra, the administration and community continued to support the orchestral program.

During this time, Lansing's beginning band and orchestra classes started in the seventh grade. The majority of students purchased their own instruments and the schools provided the larger, more expensive instruments. At the junior high school level, both violin and orchestra classes were offered. Class instruction in violin was provided for beginning students, especially for those youngsters who could not afford private lessons. The junior high school string orchestra was a performance ensemble and studied compositions arranged for violin, viola, violoncello, and string bass. Most of the secondary band and orchestra classes met daily for one class period. Junior high school and senior high school bands existed primarily as concert groups; however, the members were also expected to march.²⁶ The high school marching bands were active and appeared at local football games and parades, as well as out-of-town events. At the junior high school level, the marching band functioned as a training group; their sole marching performance occurred in the annual Memorial Day parade.

Additional performance opportunities for combined groups of students from different schools in the district began to occur as enrollment increased and the

²⁵Abeles, Hoffer, and Klotman, 19.

²⁶Course of Study in Music for the Public Schools of Lansing, Michigan (Lansing, Michigan: Board of Education, 1922, rev. 1930), 61-73.

numbers of students in the music programs grew. Elementary Music Supervisor Pauline Austin organized an All-City Elementary School Choir which was comprised of students from the various elementary schools. Austin would visit each elementary school to audition students interested in singing in the choir. The group rehearsed on Saturday mornings in the music room at Old Central²⁷ and sang at special events.²⁸ One of their first appearances occurred at the Eastern High School Auditorium at 7:30 p.m. on March 15, 1949 where, under the direction of Austin, they participated in the "Orchestra and Choral Festival" and performed six Mexican and Spanish folk songs.²⁹

The festival featured a district-wide performance by choir and orchestra members from the city's three junior high schools and two senior high schools which had been selected for one of several combined groups of music students. The All-City Junior High School Orchestra, the All-City Junior High School Girls' Chorus, the All-City Junior High School Boys' Chorus, and the All-City Junior High School Mixed Chorus were organized specifically for a performance at this event. In addition, the All-City Senior High School Girls Glee Club and the All-City Senior High School a Capella Choir³⁰ performed under the direction of Doris Anderson and William McIntire.

²⁷"Old Central" referred to the former Lansing High School Building.

²⁸Brewer, 127.

²⁹Program obtained courtesy of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department archives.

³⁰A Capella Choirs were a national trend in high school choral music, featuring an unaccompanied ensemble that performed primarily religious music. The movement was at its height in the mid 1930s.

Interspersed between the choirs and orchestra in this concert were instrumental soloists, including a number performed by a harpist.³¹ The harp soloist may have started her study of the instrument as a student at West Junior High School. West offered a unique music course for the harp that began with a single donated instrument. Harry E. Gardner, principal of West Junior High School from 1920-1944, had a love of classical music and was particularly fond of the harp. As a result of his devotion to the instrument, West was the first junior high school in the country to offer instruction in harp.³² Patricia Will, the instructor of harp for West Junior High School and Sexton High School, was listed on the yearly roster of the music department staff from 1958 through 1961.³³

Band students from the five secondary schools were also provided opportunities for performances as combined units. Appearing in the above mentioned program were advertisements for upcoming events. Listed among the events was a band festival scheduled for June 1, 1949, at the Pattengill Field. Although the specific program for this event was not on file, the concert most likely consisted of performances by various marching bands since it was staged on a football field.

In addition to her duties as Music Supervisor in the Lansing School District, Pauline Austin was active in community music programs as well. Among her many activities was her membership in the Lansing Symphony Association, where she served as president for a time. One of her personal goals as Music Supervisor for Lansing

³¹Aldinger, 150.

³²Information obtained from the program for the dedication of Gardner Junior High School in 1969.

³³Music Department Rosters, 1955-1960. Courtesy of Lansing Public School Music Department Archives.

Schools was to expose the children to at least one live performance of symphonic music; her position as president of the Association provided a way for her to achieve this goal when she convinced the president of the J. W. Knapp company to sponsor a children's concert to be presented by the Lansing Symphony.³⁴

The first Children's Concert, "A Musical Circus," took place in the spring of 1947 in the old Prudden Auditorium before a full house. Tickets were priced at ten cents and were sold at the schools. At one point in the evening, the audience was introduced to the instruments in the orchestra through a rendition of Tchaikovsky's "Peter and the Wolf." The concert was well-received; shortly thereafter, the Knapp company placed an advertisement in the Lansing State Journal that thanked the people who organized the event and described the enthusiastic reactions of the children who attended the concert. The second concert was held in the fall of 1947, only a few months after the initial performance. During the next two years, the series was expanded to two different concerts and moved to the auditorium at Eastern High School. Each event had a theme, utilizing music chosen to appeal to the young audience. In subsequent years, the Lansing Symphony continued to schedule Children's Concerts on a regular basis.

The Lansing School District remained supportive of its music programs at both elementary and secondary levels in the 1950s. Beginning in 1955, the school district published annual reports in the Lansing State Journal. In the March 1956 school district report, two choirs are pictured. In the March 1957 report, vocal and instrumental music classes were described as enrichment experiences available to all

³⁴Undated clipping from the Lansing State Journal. Courtesy of the Lansing Public School Music Department Archives.

elementary students, while participation in music classes was portrayed as an important extra-curricular choice for students enrolled at the secondary level.³⁵

Additional evidence of administrative support for district music programs is documented in numerous existing district publications from the time. One booklet, which was published by the district in the early 1950s, promoted the instrumental music programs at West Junior High and Sexton Senior High Schools. This publication was written for beginning instrumental music students and their parents; it described the music programs at these schools and provided answers to frequently asked questions on the benefits of participation in music. Several photographs of the performing groups at the two schools appeared in the booklet including the West Junior High School Orchestra under the direction of Josephine Marsh; the West Junior High School Band under the direction of George Chambers; and the Sexton High School Orchestra and Band, both of which were conducted by Hal Bergan. The picture of the West Junior High School Orchestra included nine harp players; one harpist was pictured with the Sexton Senior High School Orchestra.³⁶

Beginning in the early 1950s, several changes occurred in the school district's curriculum. Between 1949 and 1951, the school board conducted a scheduling experiment at the junior high school level where the school day was increased from six to seven periods. In the new system, each student was required to take five academic and two elective classes per day. The elective courses were divided into two categories, fine arts or practical arts, with the requirement of one elective class from

³⁵"Annual Report of the Lansing Public Schools", supplement to the Lansing State Journal.

³⁶"Opportunities in Music." Undated booklet circa 1950. Courtesy of the Lansing Public School Music Department archives.

each division. After evaluating the results of the study in 1951, the school board decided to eliminate the two categories for elective classes and to return the junior high school class schedule to its previous arrangement.³⁷ The decision to eliminate the categories reflected a consensus that all elective classes were of equal importance. The Lansing junior high schools would remain with this type of scheduling until the conversion to middle schools began in the mid-1980s.

Lansing's secondary school bands were very active during this time. As a result, the school board developed three separate policies solely for the band programs. In 1950, the board adopted a policy that no band trips could be made without the formal approval of the school board.³⁸ In 1951, this decision was expanded with an additional stipulation concerning the number of trips outside the state that Lansing school bands could take.³⁹ A similar policy on junior high schools bands was added in 1952.⁴⁰ During the 1950s, the district began to experience the first retirements of its original instrumental instructors. George Chambers, band director at West Junior High School, retired in 1953 after thirty-two years of teaching and was replaced by Richard Astalos in the fall of that year.⁴¹

The music instructional area that had remained in need of additional staff since the period following the war was the elementary vocal program. In 1945, there were nine full-time and one part-time instrumental teachers compared to one elementary

³⁷Brewer, 32.

³⁸Ibid., 29.

³⁹Ibid., 36.

⁴⁰Ibid., 38.

⁴¹Ibid., 36.

music instructor, Pauline Austin.⁴² At the elementary level, Austin had the sole responsibility for teaching music to every student until 1946⁴³ when student teachers from the Music Department at Michigan State College provided some additional assistance.⁴⁴ The situation began to change in 1952 when the district hired Susan Eckley as a “helping teacher”⁴⁵ in music. For the first time, Lansing Public Schools had two full-time instructors for the elementary vocal music program and, after 1957, student teachers were assigned less frequently.

In 1956, S. Earle Trudgen was appointed Director of Music for Lansing Public Schools. Trudgen was the choir director at Sexton Senior High School for six years prior to his promotion. By this time, the department of music had grown to the point where two administrators were needed to coordinate its many programs within the district. Austin continued to function as the Director of Elementary Music and, as the second administrator, Trudgen was responsible for the elementary instrumental and all secondary music programs. During the tenure of the two administrators, the elementary vocal music staff continued to grow. The second helping teacher in music was added in 1958 and a third one was hired in 1961.⁴⁶

One of the music department’s opening activities for each new school year was a sing-along in every elementary building. Each sing-along was lead by Earle

⁴²Aldinger, 77-82.

⁴³Ibid., 170.

⁴⁴Brewer, 127.

⁴⁵A “helping teacher” was a designation used for a degreed, certified specialist who served several elementary schools. Helping teachers were also employed in the elementary art and elementary physical education programs.

⁴⁶Ibid.

Trudgen, Pauline Austin, and the helping teachers. The goals of these assemblies were to get the children to sing, to have a good time singing, and to introduce some of the songs they would be learning during the year. Teachers in the building received mimeographed copies of the music prior to the sing-along and used them to teach the children the songs ahead of time. These elementary school sing-alongs helped to build a positive image for the Lansing Music Department. Through this type of participation, many children were encouraged to continue their musical experiences by enrolling in music elective classes at the junior high school and senior high school levels.⁴⁷

The elementary string program was reinstituted twenty-two years after being discontinued during the Depression. The school board approved the program to start with the second semester of the 1953-1954 school year and students in the fifth and six grade in twelve elementary schools were involved in the preliminary phase. Instruction on the violin was the only class offered at the elementary level; those students who wished to explore the other stringed instruments were afforded the opportunity later at the junior high school level. Many of the violins used in this initial program were donated by the community. Pauline Austin organized the elementary string lessons and hired an instructor to teach the first semester of the original program.⁴⁸ Betty Wilcox and Janet Wirth were hired in the fall of 1955 to

⁴⁷Information located in records from the archives of Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁴⁸Brewer, 126.

expand the elementary violin classes. Each taught in twelve to thirteen buildings and met each group of students twice a week for thirty minutes.⁴⁹

From the initial twelve schools that started with the elementary string program in January 1954, three additional schools were included in 1955-1956. By the following year, all of the elementary schools had an on-site string program with instruments provided by the school district. When the program was first established, violin students were instructed in combined groups of fifth and sixth grades. Within the elementary groups, optional small ensembles were formed to provide the motivated students additional performance opportunities, such as Parent-Teacher Association meetings. At the end of each school year the string teachers combined all of their students in one orchestra for a spring concert.⁵⁰

The establishment of the elementary string program was the first major development in the growth of Lansing's instrumental music program since the opening of the junior high schools in the 1920s. Beginning instruction had always been offered to Lansing students, but these starting classes were only taught at the secondary level. With the introduction of string instruction in the fifth grade, the orchestra program soon provided opportunities for students to develop their musical skills through participation in a performing group at the upper elementary level. Beginning band classes, however, were not offered at the elementary school level but continued to remain at the seventh grade level.

During the 1950s, the Lansing Symphony Orchestra continued with their series of Children's Concerts. In 1950, the Symphony introduced a solo competition for

⁴⁹Roster of music staff, 1955-1956, from archives of Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁵⁰Brewer, 126-127.

music students under the age of eighteen which gave many young musicians from the Lansing area their first opportunity to perform with an orchestra.⁵¹ The winners of this competition were subsequently featured at the next Children's Concert. In 1951, the Lansing School Board voted to excuse sixth grade students from their regular classes so they could attend the annual Children's Concert. Pauline Austin used the occasion to prepare and distribute printed materials on the music to be performed. Lansing teachers shared the information with their pupils and listened to recordings prior to taking their classes to the concert.⁵²

During these years, the music department used many different methods to bring music to the children of Lansing. During the school year 1957-1958, experimental televised music lessons were broadcast to fifth graders in thirteen buildings.⁵³ Pauline Austin taught these television classes, the success of which can be judged by the fact that the project was extended to all fifth grade classrooms in the spring of 1959. The televised music course program was continued by Margaret Franz for third grade students beginning in the fall of 1959 and continued to be so successful that she worked as a half-time teacher in television instruction through 1963.⁵⁴

The centennial of the chartering of the city of Lansing occurred in 1959, and a committee of prominent individuals organized a ten-day festival which was held in the latter part of June. One of the highlights of the celebration was a lengthy parade, entitled "Centennial Parade of Transportation." The parade was divided into ten

⁵¹Undated Lansing State Journal clipping from the Lansing School District Music Department Archives.

⁵²Ibid.

⁵³Brewer, 57-58.

⁵⁴Ibid., 139-140.

divisions, each of which illustrated a specific period in the history of transportation. Marching bands from Lansing's four junior high schools and three senior high schools were interspersed among the parade divisions. Other marching units from surrounding communities also participated in this event, including a marching accordion band from Auburn, Michigan.⁵⁵

The Lansing Public Schools Music Department supported the centennial by providing two major musical performances as a tribute. The Centennial Band Concert was held at Sexton High School Memorial Stadium at 7:45 p.m. on June 4, 1959 with all of the secondary school music ensembles participating. The junior high school bands were combined into one group and the senior high school bands into another. Each band director conducted one selection. The closing number, "God Bless America," was performed by the combined bands under the direction of Earle Trudgen.⁵⁶

Unlike the combined band performance which consisted of existing bands at the secondary level, the membership of the centennial orchestra was comprised of a select group of students. In preparation for the centennial performance, Nancy Critelli, an elementary string teacher, requested the names of the most proficient players in each junior high school orchestra to form a Junior Symphony in the fall of 1958. The first Junior Symphony contained approximately seventy students from grades five through eight. Beginning in November, rehearsals were held on Saturday mornings in the old Lansing School District Administration Office on Capitol Avenue. Four

⁵⁵Information from Lansing Centennial, a souvenir historical program. Program from the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁵⁶Concert program obtained from the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

Lansing teachers shared in the direction of this first group. Nancy Critelli and Jean Grua were elementary string specialists and Duane Smith and Douglas Kelshaw taught orchestra at the three junior high schools. The orchestra provided a centennial concert in the Sexton Senior High School Gymnasium on June 2, 1959.⁵⁷

Three combined choirs also sang in the concert consisting of a seventh grade chorus, an eighth and ninth grade girls chorus, and a mixed chorus. Choir directors from the city's secondary schools shared in conducting these groups. The concluding selection featured all of the choirs accompanied by the Junior Symphony under the direction of S. Earle Trudgen.⁵⁸

The intention of the orchestra teachers who organized the Junior Symphony was to provide a one-time experience for its members during the centennial celebration. The following fall many of the orchestral students who participated in the centennial performance expressed a strong desire to continue performing as a group. As a result of this widespread interest, Duane Smith approached Earle Trudgen to propose its continuation; he also volunteered to serve as the sole conductor in addition to his regular duties. With Trudgen's approval, the first rehearsal for the young orchestra occurred on November 5, 1959, in the bandroom at West Junior High School. The Junior Symphony gave three concerts during its first regular season and has continued to be a component of the music program in the district through the present time.⁵⁹

⁵⁷Duane P. Smith, The First Twenty-Five Years: Lansing Junior Symphony (Lansing, Michigan: Lansing Public Schools Music Department, 1985), 1.

⁵⁸Ibid., 3-4.

⁵⁹Ibid., 5.

The decade of the 1950s was one of rapid change for America. The euphoria which enveloped the country after World War II began to dissipate, beginning with the Korean Conflict (1950-1953). In 1954, racial segregation of schools was declared illegal by the United States Supreme Court, a decision that would initiate a significant change in the field of education in the early 1960s. Another international event which would affect public schools in the United States was the Soviet Union's launch of the first man-made satellite in October of 1957.

The launching of Sputnik provided the impetus for a philosophical change in American education. The public, looking for reasons why the Soviet Union had been able to develop the first satellite, immediately blamed the schools. The general consensus was that the schools were not providing an adequate education for their students. As a result of the dialogue, the concept that a balanced education included learning experiences from all academic areas was abandoned almost overnight. The public demanded the creation of new programs in science and mathematics at the public school level; therefore, financial support for the fine arts was sharply reduced as school boards across the country scrambled to reallocate funds. Not since the Great Depression had public school fine arts programs experienced such a sudden lack of financial and administrative support.

The late 1950s brought the largest amount of federal assistance for the Lansing Schools since the Great Depression and the school building construction funded through the Works Progress Administration. The country's reaction to the launching of Sputnik had been to demand redirection in school curricula with emphasis on the sciences at the expense of other subjects; therefore, Congress created the Defense Education Act to finance public school programs in science and math and to provide grants for teachers to develop these programs. As a result, the Lansing School District

began a lengthy association during this era with federally-funded educational programs.⁶⁰

Prior to the Sputnik era, music educators had already begun a nationwide quest for a guiding philosophy that would establish the educational value of music study. The Music Educators National Conference (MENC) was one of the leaders in the re-examination of the goals of music education and many of its members began to promote the philosophy of aesthetic education, defined as training in experiencing feelings as opposed to the traditional performance-based approach to a musical education. Aesthetic education became a frequently debated topic in music education academic circles in the 1950s, but it would become the guiding music educational philosophy for the next twenty years.⁶¹

During a period of fifteen years, music education in Lansing grew from a music department with two instructors to a staff of twenty-four full-time specialists. As a result, the offerings and services of the music department became as diverse as the student population it served. By the end of the 1950s, Lansing's music teachers were not content merely to maintain established programs; experiments in instruction by television began before most families owned a set. As the decade of the 1960s approached, new ideas and teaching techniques would be developed to meet the needs of Lansing's young musicians.

⁶⁰Edward L. Remick, The History and Growth of the Lansing Public Schools: vol. 3, With emphasis on Years 1962-1966 (Lansing, MI: Board of Education, 1966), 67-68.

⁶¹The philosophy of the aesthetic education movement can be found within a landmark text by Charles Leonhard and Robert W. House entitled, Foundations and Principles of Music Education (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), 83-120.

CHAPTER V
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1960 TO 1969

The unprecedented growth experienced by Lansing Public Schools during the 1950s began to stabilize in the early 1960s. On June 4, 1959, the school district held a special election seeking approval of two millage requests. The first proposal was for a two-mill increase in the building and sites levy and the second one was for a three-mill increase in the operations levy; both millage requests were for three years.¹ Lansing voters defeated the two proposals by a three-to-one margin. This was the first loss at the polls for Lansing schools in over a decade.² The school district had to reduce expenses to compensate for the shortage of tax revenue; these budget reductions included cuts in the music department budget.³

Unfortunately, the June 1959 millage defeat was to be the first of many such losses for the school district during the next two decades; it was followed by another defeated millage request in August 1960.⁴ After losing two consecutive millage votes in two years, the Lansing School Board preceded the third election with an informational campaign. School board members explained to the voters the nature of

¹Brewer, 62.

²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 June 1959.

³Brewer, 62.

⁴Ibid., 63.

the three proposals on the ballot which would provide tax revenue to cover operating expenses, to erect new school buildings, and to issue bonds for a new library. After three millage election attempts, on April 3, 1961 voters approved all three proposals.⁵ Compounding the school district's difficulties at the polls were financial problems for the State of Michigan which resulted in the delay of state aid payments to the public schools in 1959-1960 and again in 1960-1961. For two years in a row, Lansing Schools had to borrow several million dollars to pay their expenses. Eventually, the state aid payments were received, although they arrived several months late.⁶

While the 1950s had been a decade of rapid expansion for Lansing Public Schools, the early 1960s seemed to signal a period of reduction in the rate of growth. For the first time in many years, the state was experiencing economic difficulties. Financial problems were responsible for a new reality that school millages did not receive automatic approval when presented to the voters. As a result, the Lansing School Board would face challenges in planning for the economic survival of the district during a period of reduced operating budgets.

One area of positive growth was the annexation of the North School District in August of 1960. This action resulted in the addition of 1,200 students to the Lansing School District. The annexation extended the city limits south to Willoughby Road, the southern boundary of Lansing to this day, and the additional students increased state aid payments, easing the tight financial situation.

Although the rate of construction had slowed from the previous decade, new facilities continued to be built to meet the educational needs of the district's students.

⁵Ibid., 68-69.

⁶Ibid., 68.

In 1960-1961, plans were made to replace Grand River and Willow Street Elementary Schools and to open a new elementary school on Wainwright Street.⁷ The old Everett School was renamed the Cedar-Holmes Building and was remodeled for administrative offices.⁸ The Board announced the location of a new public library, to be completed by 1963, on the corner of Capitol Avenue and West Kalamazoo Street. To finance this endeavor, they proposed selling the former Townsend lot with the proceeds applied to building costs.⁹

The southern expansion of the city's population was responsible for the opening of new elementary schools and Everett High School in this section of the city. In 1963, a fifth junior high school was built in the Colonial Village area and named Dwight Rich Junior High School, honoring a former superintendent of the Lansing Public Schools who retired in 1962.¹⁰

Despite the successive millage defeats, The Music Department remained a fully functioning, positive part of the Lansing School District. Although the school district experienced budget cuts, the Music Department staff continued to provide music instruction for the children in the city's schools. At the beginning of 1960, all but one of the junior high school music departments contained band, orchestra and vocal music directors. Pattengill Junior High School did not have a string teacher and one string specialist served West and Otto Junior High Schools. High school instrumental music instructors taught both band and orchestra. Sexton and Eastern High Schools had

⁷Ibid., 65.

⁸Ibid., 70.

⁹Ibid., 72.

¹⁰Remick, 13.

vocal music directors, while the instrumental teacher at Everett High School was also responsible for the vocal music program. The music staff also included a harp instructor who was employed at West Junior High School as well as Sexton High School.¹¹ The elementary general music program continued to employ 2.5 full-time instructors in addition to Pauline Austin.

Lansing's school children not only benefitted from their public school music experiences, but they continued to enjoy the annual Children's Concerts provided by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. Throughout the decade of the 1960s, area sixth graders were exposed to classical music at these concerts. The Children's Concerts were scheduled twice a year on a weekday. In the course of an afternoon, the Symphony presented two consecutive performances with the first one designed for area youth audiences and the second, exclusively for Lansing Public School sixth graders. The Children's Concerts continued to feature the winner(s) of the Young Artists Competition as soloists. Following the retirement of Pauline Austin in 1966, S. Earle Trudgen, Director of Music for Lansing Public Schools, became the Master of Ceremonies for this event. The J. W. Knapp Company maintained their financial support of the concert series; additional financial assistance was provided through grants from the Musicians' Union.¹²

Lansing Public Schools music departments offered a schedule of frequent local performances. In addition to individual concerts at their home schools, choirs and instrumental groups from across the city would combine to perform all-city concerts.

¹¹Roster obtained from the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department, 1960-61.

¹²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 2 May 1961, 18 April 1964, 28 April 1965, 1966, 8 May 1968.

A vocal music festival was held on June 2, 1962 in the Everett gymnasium. Opening this concert was an elementary choir of 350 children directed by Pauline Austin and L. Frances Powell, one of the elementary "helping teachers." A junior high girls' choir and a junior high mixed choir each sang three songs. The junior high groups were conducted by the vocal music teachers from the four junior high schools, Alice Nelson (Walter French), Earl Nelson (Otto), Diane Marshall (Pattengill), and Dorothy Strohman (West). The presence of a combined a capella choir indicates this type of ensemble continued to be offered at the city's three high schools. Directorship of the high school choir was shared by LeRoy Clemens (Everett), Frank McKowen (Sexton), and John Moore (Eastern). All of the vocal students combined to sing the concluding number, directed by S. Earle Trudgen.¹³

The second All-City Music Festival was held in the spring of 1963 in the Civic Center. The first all-city festival, given during the previous year, was so successful the audience overflowed the Everett High School gymnasium. A newspaper account of this event gives an idea of the number of students enrolled in the Lansing music program at that time. An elementary school choir of 600 children from 15 schools was directed by Pauline Austin. The orchestra program was represented by a combined junior high school and senior high school group of 200 musicians under the direction of Douglas Kelshaw (French) and Duane Smith (West and Otto). A junior high school band of 230 students was conducted by Richard Astalos (French), Ray Bartholomew (Otto), Robert Montgomery (Pattengill) and Walter Saraton (West). LeRoy Clemens (Everett), Duane Corbett (Sexton) and Kenneth Rooker (Eastern) shared the director's duties for a 247 piece high school band. A girls' glee club

¹³Concert program obtained from the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

consisting of 266 voices and a junior high chorus of 248 were jointly conducted by Beatrice Jackson (Pattengill), Alice Nelson (French), Earl Nelson (Otto), and Dorothy Strohman (West). A 270 member senior high school choir was directed by Frank McKowen (Sexton), John Moore (Eastern), and Tom Thompson (Everett). The finale featured all of the choral groups singing “God of Our Fathers,” and was accompanied by the senior high school band under the direction of S. Earle Trudgen.¹⁴

A year later all of the junior high school choirs presented a joint performance on May 26, 1964 in the Dwight Rich Junior High School auditorium. In the concert, four different combined choirs each sang three numbers. Sandra Brown (Rich) directed the seventh grade singers while Alice Nelson (French) conducted the Girls Glee Club. Earl Nelson (Otto) directed both the Boys Chorus and the Spiritual Choir. Accompanists for this concert were Richard Cardinal (Pattengill) and Dorothy Strohman (West). All of the choral students formed one massed group under the direction of S. Earle Trudgen to sing the four concluding numbers.¹⁵

The emphasis in all-city musical performances in the early 1960s helped to build popular support for the Lansing Public Schools music programs. Combining students from several schools for an all-city concert guaranteed a large audience to witness the results of music instruction in the public schools. Lansing’s music teachers had learned the importance of public awareness of the school music programs in maintaining community support.

Many changes in education first made their appearance in the early 1960s and would continue to impact Lansing Public Schools for the next twenty years. One of

¹⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 1963 (undated clipping from the Music Department Archives).

¹⁵Program obtained from the Lansing Music Department Archives.

the first of these issues to surface was the desegregation of Lansing's schools. The African-American population of Lansing increased significantly during World War II as people moved to the area in search of employment.¹⁶ In fact, the black population in the State of Michigan had doubled during the 1940s.¹⁷ In the 1950s, restrictive housing practices had confined most of the minority population to Lansing's west side. The racial composition of the nearby schools mirrored the surrounding neighborhoods. By 1960, three elementary schools were 90% black, one elementary was 70% black, a junior high school was 90% black and its corresponding high school was 95% black.¹⁸

In 1963, the local branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) made an appeal to the Lansing School Board, requesting elimination of segregation in the public schools. Within a year, the Board had adopted a statement on equal opportunity of education and appointed a Citizens Advisory Committee to develop an integration plan.¹⁹ These were the first two steps in a desegregation program that would not be fully implemented until the late 1970s.

Another area of education that experienced a great deal of change was in state and federal support of local public schools. State aid to public schools in Michigan began during the Depression because communities in the state varied widely in their financial support of the local schools. Federal aid to schools began for the same reason and expanded very quickly during the early 1960s.²⁰ The goal of the

¹⁶Kestenbaum, 111.

¹⁷Dunbar, 694.

¹⁸Kestenbaum, 112.

¹⁹Ibid.

²⁰Dunbar, 741.

federal assistance programs was to provide equal educational opportunities for the nation's school children.

President Lyndon Johnson, a former school teacher, was sympathetic to the financial problems experienced in the nation's public schools. On April 11, 1965, he signed Public Law 89-10. The Title I portion of this bill established funds to be allocated to school systems on the basis of the number of children from low income families within each district. Lansing Public Schools received its first Title I grant of \$353,365 in 1966. In addition, many individual departments from the district applied for and received grant money.²¹

The majority of federal funds awarded to Lansing Schools came from the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. This act contained several titled programs offering grants for the purchase of library resources and instructional materials, financing educational centers, funding research projects, and an almost unlimited list of programs to improve the education of students from low income homes. The ultimate goal of ESEA was to break the cycle of poverty found in these families. Any new project submitted for ESEA funding had to be an addition to the school curriculum, and, if accepted, the grant would pay 100% of the cost of the new program.²²

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act also provided support for arts in the schools through cultural enrichment programs. On a national basis, this legislation was to prove to be very valuable to music education. The funds provided through

²¹Georgia Mead and David Schultert, The History and Growth of the Lansing Public Schools, vol. 4 (Lansing, MI: Board of Education, 1982), 55.

²²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 23 May 1965.

ESEA gave the arts a chance to grow in low income areas.²³ In the Lansing schools ESEA funds were used for the purchase of music instructional materials such as textbooks, records, record players, and rhythm band instruments.

Federal grants also paid for the services of music specialists at three elementary schools.²⁴ Beginning during the last month of school year 1965-1966, the ESEA music program continued for the next two academic years. Anna Pence taught general music at Kalamazoo and Michigan Elementary Schools; Alice Lee Thompson was assigned to Main and Kalamazoo Street Schools.²⁵ The high percentage of minority students enrolled at all three buildings qualified these schools for federal aid funding for special programs. These children received two music lessons a week in comparison to the rest of Lansing's elementary students who had a music class two or three times a year.²⁶

During the early 1960s Lansing Public Schools were not alone in the problems faced by its music teachers. Music departments in public schools across the country were experiencing financial difficulties and budget cuts. Recognizing the problems and difficulties, the first federally-supported conference in arts education focused attention on the nation's public school music education programs. The Yale Seminar was held on the Yale campus from June 17-28, 1963, with thirty-one participants who represented different areas of the field of music education. While the conference recommendations did not result in widespread curricular changes, it called specific

²³Abeles, 20.

²⁴Willis, 6.

²⁵Music Department Rosters 1965-1968.

²⁶Willis, 6.

attention to the content of music education programs. A subsidiary of the conference, the Juilliard Project, published nine volumes of selected literature for use in music classes.²⁷

The physical expansion of Lansing Public Schools ended in the late 1960s with the annexation of the last few elementary school districts surrounding Lansing. A portion of the Community School District by Coolidge Road was added to Lansing Public Schools through court action. Although the school board appealed this decision, requesting instead that all of the Community School District be annexed, the appeal was denied.²⁸ The school system also annexed the portion of the former Island School District located at the southeast city limits. The remainder of the Island School District was divided among three neighboring towns.²⁹

When the entire Sheridan Road District was annexed in May 1965, the School Board accepted a district that included property in Clinton County; part of the district within Ingham County had previously been added to Lansing Schools. For the first time, the Board had to make an exception to its requirement of political merger before the school district could be annexed.³⁰ This decision also applied to the next three school districts to annex to Lansing; Hurd, Gunnisonville, and Valley Farms School Districts in Clinton County all voted to merge with Lansing Schools in October 1965.³¹ Through the process of annexation, the number of school districts in Ingham

²⁷Abeles, 21.

²⁸Remick, 11.

²⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 20 November, 1964.

³⁰Remick, 17.

³¹*Ibid.*, 22.

County dropped from 113 in 1940 to thirteen in 1965.³² All of the remaining school districts in the county were K-12 school systems.

The school district also continued to upgrade and expand its current buildings throughout the second half of the 1960s. Lincoln School was closed in 1965 due to the age of the building. This action allowed the former Lincoln students to be integrated into nearby elementary schools with a low percentage of minority students.³³ Reo, Averill, and Attwood Elementary Schools were opened at the same time Lincoln School was closed. The locations of the three new elementary schools reflected the shift in the city's population away from the center of town and southward to the suburbs.³⁴ Simultaneously, Lansing's population was also expanding to the north. Post Oak Elementary School opened in 1965 and was enlarged just one year later. The rapid growth of subdivisions in the Post Oak area created one of the most crowded schools in the district.

Lansing's high school bands had always been active with frequent parades and out-of-town trips. The decade of the 1960s would prove to be no different in the performance schedule for the instrumental groups. Eastern High School's band went to the New York World's Fair in 1964. The band, under the direction of Kenneth Rooker, gave a concert in the Tiparillo Band Shell. The students raised the money for the four day trip through candy sales and other fundraising events.³⁵

³²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 June, 1965.

³³Remick, 19.

³⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 23 September, 1964.

³⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 August, 1964.

Evaluation of the Lansing Public Schools music programs had always been based on classroom observations and the results of elementary and secondary ensemble performances throughout the district. By the late 1960s a need arose for a comprehensive survey of music education in the Lansing schools. Benjamin C. Willis, a retired Chicago superintendent and head of an educational services company was hired by the School Board in May, 1967 to study Lansing's music programs. The introduction to his report states that his recommendations would provide Lansing with a music program that would be a model for other cities of the same size.³⁶

Willis' report is valuable because it described the Lansing Public School music program both as it was and as the program should be. In May of 1967, Lansing included 48 elementary schools, 2 elementary special education schools, 5 junior high schools, and 3 senior high schools. Forty-seven of the elementary buildings were served by five helping teachers in music; because the school district allotted a weekly instruction period for music in grades K-6 with the classroom teacher primarily responsible for the music lessons. This instructional responsibility was in keeping with the philosophy of the self-contained classroom that guided Lansing's elementary schools at the time. However, the children's music education was largely dependent on their teachers' ability to provide music instruction.³⁷

The helping teachers in music met with the children once every three to four weeks for twenty minutes. Given the limited amount of time available, these specialists focused on rote and recreational singing.³⁸ Willis mentioned the three

³⁶Willis, 1.

³⁷Ibid., 5.

³⁸Ibid.

elementary schools that participated in the ESEA music project and the increased amount of weekly music instruction enjoyed by these students.³⁹

At the time of the Willis study, the choral program in Lansing Schools in 1967 was well-established. Several of the elementary buildings had children's choirs, either directed by a helping teacher or one of the classroom teachers. All of the secondary schools had choral groups that performed at a high level of competence, but, Willis noted, the junior and senior high schools did not offer general music classes, and secondary music courses were performance groups.⁴⁰

Thirty of the district's fifty elementary schools offered beginning instruction in violin for fifth and sixth graders. These lessons were taught by three string teachers who traveled between several buildings. In school year 1966-1967, approximately one out of every eligible ten fifth and sixth grade student was studying violin. Elementary woodwind and brass instruction was not offered at this time.⁴¹

Beginning band was offered in all five junior high schools with intermediate and advanced band classes for eighth and ninth grade students. At Pattengill Junior High School, the band director also instructed the orchestra students. The other four junior high schools shared the services of two orchestra teachers. Junior high school band enrollment in 1966-1967 was 10% of the total student body; orchestra enrollment was 2.5%. The Willis report judged the junior high school music facilities

³⁹Ibid., 6.

⁴⁰Willis, 9.

⁴¹Ibid., 7.

were quite adequate, with the exception of a lack of funding for supplies such as sheet music.⁴²

At the high schools, one instrumental teacher taught both band and orchestra. In each instance, the instructor's schedule was completed by the inclusion of non-music instructional assignments. High school music groups enrolled about 4.5% of the total high school enrollment. Facilities for high school music classes were adequate, with the same budget restrictions noted for junior high school instrumental programs.⁴³

After describing the state of Lansing's current music program, Benjamin Willis explained that the central feature of a comprehensive music program was a general music program for grades K-12. He recommended the district hire twenty additional elementary music specialists plus a coordinator of general music to offer adequate elementary music education in Lansing's schools. The additional staff would allow the teachers to meet with each class twice per week as well as offer special programs such as elementary choirs.⁴⁴ He also recommended the addition of two violin as well as five brass and woodwind teachers to expand the elementary instrumental music program to all fifty schools.⁴⁵

For the junior and senior high schools, Willis suggested developing appropriate general music courses as extensions of the elementary program. This would allow non-performing students to continue their music studies.⁴⁶ The hiring of a Supervisor

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid., 8.

⁴⁴Ibid., 17.

⁴⁵Ibid., 19.

⁴⁶Ibid., 22, 25.

of Instrumental Music and the expansion of the high school orchestra program were additional suggestions.⁴⁷

Within two months, Benjamin Willis had completed his comprehensive survey of the existing music program in the Lansing Public Schools. His document, which offered a concise description of music in Lansing in 1967 and listed suggestions to improve the program, was presented to the Board of Education on July 6, 1967. Details of the Willis report appeared in an article in the Lansing State Journal the next day. Perhaps the title of the newspaper account reflected the city's attitude toward music education. The words "Expert Claims Thirty More Music Teachers Are Needed" drew attention to the report, but, unfortunately, the article did not discuss the philosophy of music education described in the report which justified the final recommendations.⁴⁸

Willis' report shared a common philosophy espoused in the final recommendations of a national music seminar held during the same year. Music Educators National Conference and several other influential music groups sponsored a conference at Tanglewood, the summer home of the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Representatives from all areas of the music profession debated the problems and potentials for music in American society. Among the conference's findings was the need for adequate time for music instruction by a music specialist. The recommendations of the Willis report for the future of Lansing's music program were consistent with national music education goals as defined in the conference.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Ibid., 26.

⁴⁸"Lansing [MI] State Journal, 7 July, 1967.

⁴⁹Abeles, 22.

Perhaps as a result of the Willis report, the elementary brass and woodwind program for Lansing Public Schools began in 1968 with the purchase of approximately one hundred instruments. Director of Music S. Earle Trudgen surveyed the elementary schools to determine which buildings were interested in offering elementary band instruction. The ESEA grant which funded the general music program at Kalamazoo, Michigan, and Main Elementary Schools ended in the spring of 1968. The following fall both Anna Pence and Alice Lee Thompson, former teachers in the ESEA project, became a part of the regular music staff. Pence was assigned as a half-time elementary band instructor and a half-time beginning band instructor at Pattengill Junior High School. Thompson taught half-time in the elementary band program and half-time beginning band at Otto Junior High School.⁵⁰ In 1969, Anna Pence was assigned to teach elementary woodwind and brass full-time when Thompson became vocal music instructor at Otto Junior High School.⁵¹

While the school board considered the future of its music program in Lansing, the existing music program continued to grow. The Sexton High School Band performed during the halftime show at a Detroit Lions football game in 1968.⁵² Frank McKowen pioneered a music appreciation course at Sexton High School, one of the first non-performance classes offered to high school students.⁵³ This course was

⁵⁰Music Roster, 1966-1967 and 1968-1969 courtesy of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department Archives.

⁵¹Music Roster, 1969-1970 courtesy of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department Archives.

⁵²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 November, 1968.

⁵³Remick, 101.

described as having been designed to allow special education students to participate;⁵⁴ this is the first mention of the inclusion of special education children into junior and senior high school music classes.

School year 1969-1970 brought the first change in staffing for high school orchestra. Dahlia Menken was hired to teach orchestra at both Pattengill Junior High and Eastern High Schools. This arrangement lasted only for one year, in 1970-1971, the Eastern High School Band Director was again teaching orchestra.⁵⁵

The Lansing Junior Symphony continued throughout the decade of the 1960s. In its second year, it became an area-wide orchestra and moved its rehearsals to Monday afternoons in the Otto Junior High School bandroom. Duane Smith remained its only conductor.⁵⁶ In 1961-1962, the symphony added a televised performance to its schedule and presented assemblies at the Lansing junior high schools.⁵⁷ By 1964-1965, the Junior Symphony membership had increased to 85 students. The Matinee Musicale adopted the group as a junior music club, making symphony members eligible for several scholarships.⁵⁸ Eugene Rebeck, a Lansing junior high school string teacher, joined Duane Smith as a co-conductor of the Junior Symphony in 1967-68.⁵⁹

⁵⁴Ten Years of Work Experience: 1954-1964 (Lansing, MI: Lansing Board of Education, 1964), 5.

⁵⁵Music Rosters 1969-1970, 1970-1971. Courtesy of the Lansing Music Department Archives.

⁵⁶Smith, 8.

⁵⁷Ibid., 10.

⁵⁸Ibid., 17.

⁵⁹Ibid., 24.

Smith and Rebeck continued as to share conducting duties until Smith's retirement in 1993.

Lansing's school enrollment grew steadily during the 1960s. From 27,556 students in 1962-63, the number of school-aged children grew to 30,847 in 1965-66⁶⁰ and 32,648 in 1970-71.⁶¹ The school district had to change the location of its facilities to meet the needs of an expanding population. In 1967, Community Elementary School was closed.⁶² The Marvin Beekman Center⁶³ for Special Education Children opened in 1968-69 and featured many innovative programs for handicapped youth, including on-site horse stables. Wexford and Woodcreek Elementary Schools also opened during the same school year.

Christianity School, which had been closed in 1968, was sold in 1969 to FMC Corporation while Lincoln School was sold to General Motors.⁶⁴ A much needed junior high school in the south end of Lansing opened in 1969 and was named for the first principal of West Junior High School, Harry E. Gardner.⁶⁵ After Gardner Junior High School was completed, students from the West Junior High School were reassigned to either Gardner or Dwight Rich Junior High School.⁶⁶ The former West building was remodeled and subsequently used as an alternative instructional center.

⁶⁰Remick, 57

⁶¹Mead and Schulert, 111.

⁶²Ibid., 115.

⁶³The school was named for the administrator who had been instrumental in the building and operating center.

⁶⁴Mead and Schulert, 7.

⁶⁵Ibid., 112.

⁶⁶Ibid., 115.

This period of time was marked by many changes in school district facilities and structures. The late 1960s brought change in leadership for Lansing Schools when William Manning resigned as Superintendent in November, 1967 and was replaced by Stephen A. Partington one month later.⁶⁷

Integration became a priority for the district as the school board took the first steps in the process of desegregation. The first busing program involved only Sexton High School. In 1967, when the Board used the Advisory Committee's recommendations to develop a busing plan to facilitate the integration of the three high schools, a group of white citizens filed a lawsuit to block the proposed busing plan. After the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) filed a brief in support of the school district's plan, the school board was ordered to comply with the busing plan.⁶⁸ Desegregation began voluntarily on the elementary school level in 1969-1970 when Main Street School opened its enrollment to non-minority students.⁶⁹

In spite of a negative beginning with the defeat of two operating millages, the 1960s proved to be a ten-year period of steady growth for Lansing Public Schools. The district expanded physically to its present day boundaries and the increasing student population necessitated the building of several new schools. The Music Department shared in the growth of the school district. Federal aid money had funded two additional elementary vocal music teachers as well as the purchase of music instruction supplies. With the addition of the elementary brass and woodwind program

⁶⁷Ibid., 4.

⁶⁸Kestenbaum, 112.

⁶⁹Mead and Schulert, 9.

in 1968, students could begin the study of an instrument while they were still in fifth and sixth grade. Unfortunately, the pattern of slow and steady growth witnessed in the 1960s would soon come to a halt in 1970.

CHAPTER VI
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1970 TO 1979

For Lansing Public Schools the decade of the 1970s began in the same manner as the previous decade, with the defeat of a millage proposal. The difference in the effect of the two elections was in the millage amount that was not approved. Voters in 1960 had turned down a three-mill increase, voters in 1970 turned down a 24-mill increase which would have provided a significant portion of the school district's operating funds. The 1970 millage defeat left the school board in the position of having to cut two million dollars from the operating budget.¹

Adding to the economic hardships for Lansing Public Schools was a Michigan State Supreme Court decision in July of 1970 that textbooks and instructional supplies must be furnished free to public school students.² While the school district had always provided textbooks to students in grades K-8, high school pupils had purchased their own books. Regardless of the budget deficit, the school board was required to spend \$167,000 to purchase senior high school textbooks and instruction supplies for grades K-12.³ The decision also implied that public schools would have to furnish instruments for music students at no charge. Purchasing and maintaining all of the

¹Mead and Schulert, 11.

²Ibid.

³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 December 1970.

instruments for a band and orchestra program would have been an impossible expense for a financially-secure school system. For the Lansing Schools, this requirement could have meant the end of the instrumental music program.

Fortunately, a state official's opinion delineated the application of the court decision to instrumental music programs. The clarification stated that schools would be required to provide the expensive instruments, such as the double reeds and low brass, and a few of the less expensive instruments. The Attorney General suggested that students might need to share instruments or change to an available instrument.⁴ This interpretation of the court decision released Michigan's public schools from the requirement of providing an instrument for every band and orchestra student.

The school district still had to cut over two million dollars in programs before the 1970-1971 school year started. Initially, the board planned to place fourth and fifth grade students on half-day sessions. The Michigan School Board denied this plan, stating that the cuts could not affect just one group of students.⁵ The Lansing School Board then voted to eliminate all extra-curricular activities at the high school, including the athletic programs. The board also shortened the length of the high school day from six to five hours and raised class sizes across the district.⁶

The school board was also forced to lay off sixty-eight teachers⁷ and to eliminate twenty-six administrative and clerical positions.⁸ The helping teachers and

⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 December 1970.

⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 August 1970.

⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 August 1970.

⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 July 1970.

⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 25 August 1970.

librarians were among the first teachers to be laid off because they were not assigned to a specific classroom of students. In 1969-1970, there had been seven full-time elementary music helping teachers and two part-time teachers. In 1970-1971, however, the elementary vocal staff was reduced to three full-time and three part-time teachers. One year later, only three full-time elementary music teachers remained. In an effort to trim the number of administrative positions in the district, the school board assigned S. Earle Trudgen, Director of Music Education since 1955, to the newly created position of Coordinator of Music Education in 1970. Although this new title did not result in a reduction of his salary or job responsibilities, it represented the removal of the position from the administrative structure in the district. The elementary instrumental music and all secondary music staff members were unaffected by the budget cuts.⁹

Lansing Public Schools operated a strictly academic program during the 1970-1971 school year. While the district's curriculum was spared, all extra-curricular activities had been eliminated. A group of parents called "People United for Students" raised the money to offer a limited secondary sports program.¹⁰ Lansing State Journal articles from August and September of 1970 describe the efforts of the students and their parents to raise the \$140,000 needed to fund the fall sports program.

On April 5, 1971, the Lansing School Board again approached the voters with a 24-mill tax proposal. As in the previous year, it was defeated which left the school district in a very precarious financial position. The requested millage represented half

⁹Music Department Rosters, 1969-1972.

¹⁰Mead and Schulert, 11.

of the district's operating budget; this defeat left the school board without the financial resources to operate the school district.¹¹

Four months later the board scheduled another special election. The millage proposal was presented in two packages: a 21-mill tax would allow the district to offer the same level of services as in 1970-1971; and an additional 2-mill tax to reinstate services which had been eliminated during the previous year. The basic 21-millage was approved, but the additional 2 mills were defeated. The board was able to rehire the 440 teachers who had been pink-slipped in April 1971.¹² The millage vote clearly indicated that Lansing's voters were willing to support a minimum academic program, although they were strongly against being taxed for additional services such as elementary vocal music teachers.

As the 1971-1972 school year began, the district had the millage to offer a "bare-bones" curriculum. During this time, Superintendent Carl Candoli¹³ introduced the concept of building autonomy. The philosophy behind building autonomy was that building staff should make the decisions regarding the operation of their specific school. Rather than operating a centralized budgeting and purchasing office, each building would be assigned its own budget and each school's staff would determine how to allocate the available funds.¹⁴

Building autonomy would have an impact on the already decimated elementary vocal music program. Elementary building staff members chose to allocate their funds

¹¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 April 1971.

¹²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 11 August 1971.

¹³Candoli was appointed superintendent of Lansing Public Schools after the retirement of Stephan Partington in 1971.

¹⁴Mead and Schulert, 108-109.

for instructional supplies and teacher's aides. The elementary vocal music program became the financial responsibility of the school district, and none of the elementary schools decided to hire additional music teachers from their building budgets. As a result, the forty-five elementary schools operated by Lansing in 1971 were served by only three music specialists. Since these specialists were able to visit each classroom a few times during the school year, they served primarily as music advisors to the elementary-level teachers instead of providing direct music instruction to the students. Occasionally, a music teacher would be hired with PTA funds, but these positions were based on hourly pay and seldom lasted for more than a year.

Integration of the Lansing Public Schools returned as an area of contention for the School Board with the publication of the Report of the Citizen's Committee on Educational Opportunity on April 20, 1972. This blue-ribbon committee of 48 citizens was formed in September 1971 to develop a plan to integrate Lansing Schools. Three carefully researched plans for integration were offered, including a cost analysis and transportation schedule for each option. The committee's report was published as a supplement to the Lansing State Journal on April 23, 1972, to increase public awareness of the committee's work.¹⁵

One of the primary recommendations of the Citizen's Committee was the complete integration of Lansing Public Schools by fall of 1972. This plan was challenged by Max Shunk, a member of Citizens for Neighborhood Schools. Shunk presented a petition containing 11,000 signatures against busing to the School Board

¹⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 23 April, 1972.

on March 2, 1972. Superintendent Carl Candoli denied the petition, citing legal precedent and a court order to integrate the schools.¹⁶

The School Board voted in May, 1972 to adopt the cluster plan proposed by the Citizen's Committee. The cluster plan grouped several elementary schools, each containing either a high percentage of majority or minority students. Busing students among the clustered schools was designed to racially integrate each building. The School Board voted to cluster two sets of schools beginning in September 1972, with a third cluster scheduled to begin a year later.¹⁷

The Citizens for Neighborhood Schools responded by initiating a recall movement against six of the Lansing School Board members who had voted for the cluster plan. Petitions for the recall of Richard Beers, Kathryn Boucher, Hortense Canady, Clare Harrington, Nellie Nussdorfer, and Clarence Rosa were filed on June 14, 1972, and validated by July 6, 1972. The Board set a recall election date of November 7, 1972 for all of the preceding Board members except Clare Harrington.¹⁸

¹⁹ In spite of the recall election, Superintendent Candoli announced that the implementation of the Cluster Plan would begin in September 1972. One hundred staff members had been selected to teach in these schools and special workshops were offered to students and parents to orient everyone involved to the new procedures.²⁰

¹⁶Mead and Schulert, 14.

¹⁷Ibid., 15.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹The minutes do not explain why Harrington was deleted from the recall effort.

²⁰Mead and Schulert, 15.

The NAACP filed a class action suit against the recall of the five Board members and requested an injunction to prevent the altering of the desegregation plan adopted by the Lansing School District. Judge Fox conducted the hearing on the NAACP suit. He did not cancel the recall election, but did state he would maintain jurisdiction on any case pertaining to desegregation of the Lansing Schools.²¹

Five board members were recalled in the November, 1972 election. Governor Milliken then appointed five interim board members; new officers had to be chosen since three of the recalled members were officers. A special school board election was set for January 11, 1973,²² and resulted in the election of Bruce Angell, Joan Hess, Joseph Hobla, Max Shunk, and J. P. Williams.²³

In spite of the school board's struggles with the desegregation plan, the business of the school district continued in a normal fashion. The school system continued to close buildings that were outdated and opened new schools where they were needed. Kalamazoo and Hurd Elementary Schools were closed in 1970.²⁴ Kalamazoo School was remodeled into an administrative center for the school district and was named in honor of retiring Superintendent Stephan A. Partington in 1971.²⁵ Hurd Elementary School was eventually sold to the Italian-American Club in 1978.²⁶

²¹Ibid., 16.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., 17.

²⁴Ibid., 115.

²⁵Ibid., 12.

²⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 3 March, 1978.

Harry Hill High School opened in Lansing's south end in 1971 with Joseph Rousseau as its first principal.²⁷ The new high school featured the latest innovations for high schools, including flexible and modular scheduling. West Junior High School became the site of the new Academic Interest Center (AIC) in 1971. High School students attended the center for two hours, either in the morning or the afternoon. AIC gave students an opportunity to take elective classes that were not offered at their home schools. Among the music class choices were orchestra, music theory, guitar, and sitar lessons. String students were required to attend the AIC to continue to play in the high school orchestra.²⁸

Articles publicizing the music program appeared frequently in the local newspaper. Lansing's Coordinator of Music Education, S. Earle Trudgen, was a favorite source of information on music topics. In one interview, Trudgen carefully explained the status of the elementary instrumental music program. As of 1972, 12 elementary schools did not have an instrumental music program and four lacked a room for music instruction. Thirty-five schools offered either band or orchestra, and five had both band and orchestra because some of the students had started in one program and then the program changed; these five schools would soon offer only band or orchestra. With an elementary instrumental music staff equivalent of three full-time string teachers and one full-time woodwind and brass teacher, the violin students began their string class in the fourth grade and the band students in the fifth grade.²⁹

²⁷Mead and Schulert, 115.

²⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 January 1972.

²⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 7 February, 1972.

Comparison of the status of the Lansing music program as described in this 1972 article with the Willis report in 1967 shows some advances had been made in the elementary instrumental music program in five years. The elementary band program, which did not exist in 1967, had been established by 1972. Instrumental music was not offered in 20 elementary buildings in 1967, but by 1972 this had been reduced to 12 schools. Like Willis, Trudgen stated that 25 additional music teachers would be required to offer a basic general music program.³⁰ He went on to explain that the elementary art and physical education staffs similarly needed to be increased in order to keep a balance among the helping teachers.

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra continued their Children's Concerts throughout the 1970s. One goal of this series was to familiarize the children with the instruments of the orchestra. Many Lansing area school children had their first introduction to orchestral music at these concerts; articles in the Lansing State Journal described the delight of the young audiences in words and pictures.³¹ An effort was made by the organizers of the Children's Concert to share the experience with handicapped youth, as chronicled in several of the pictures from these concerts.

The Lansing Junior Symphony also continued successfully as a performing ensemble throughout the 1970s. Under the direction of co-conductors Duane Smith and Eugene Rebeck, the orchestra experimented with different types of concert formats by dividing the year into three concert cycles. The first cycle ended with two holiday concerts, the second cycle included the Kids Koncerts, and the third cycle contained

³⁰In 1971-1972, three elementary vocal music teachers were employed by the Lansing School District.

³¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 October 1972, 23 January 1972, 4 November 1974, 17 November 1974.

the spring performances. In 1970, the All-City Elementary Orchestra, directed by Janice Hardesty, appeared on the spring concert.³² During the Christmas season of 1970, the Junior Symphony taped an hour-long concert for television.³³ Three years later, the orchestra played in different locations in an effort to broaden its audience. To encourage young musicians in the Lansing area, the Young Artists Concert series was established as a performance strictly for secondary music students.³⁴

In 1974, the Junior Symphony began a chair-sponsor campaign which proved to be a more successful fundraiser than the ticket sales had been.³⁵ Two years later, the group started the Kids Koncerts series which were scheduled during the school day. These concerts were planned for children in grades K-4, since the Lansing Symphony limited the audience for its Young Peoples Concerts to upper elementary students.³⁶ The Kids Koncerts became so successful that the 1978 performance was held in the Eastern High School field house in order to accommodate 4,600 children.³⁷ During its 20th season, the Junior Symphony gave 11 concerts and went on a two-day bus tour of Michigan giving performances in Owosso, Port Huron, and Roscommon.³⁸ While the Lansing Junior Symphony had developed and changed during its two decades of existence, it continued to offer talented youths an opportunity to play in an area-wide orchestra.

³²Smith, 30.

³³Ibid., 33.

³⁴Ibid., 42.

³⁵Ibid., 45.

³⁶Ibid., 51.

³⁷Ibid., 56.

³⁸Ibid., 58.

A special event in Lansing was a concert by Karen and Richard Carpenter on November 11, 1974. The sister and brother rock-duo requested the help of fifteen sixth grade students as an elementary chorus for their popular song, "Sing." Fifteen children from two elementary schools practiced with their music teachers to prepare for this experience.³⁹

Lansing's students were exposed to music outside of school through Lansing Symphony concerts and other vocal music group performances. However, music experiences offered students by the school district continued to be limited by the number of available music teachers. In 1972-73 the elementary general music staff was increased by one specialist. The five junior high schools had band, orchestra, and vocal instructors. Lansing's high schools offered only band and vocal music, orchestra students traveled to AIC for their ensemble experiences. During the summer of 1973, vertical staffing was introduced in the string program. With vertical staffing, an orchestra teacher was assigned to a specific junior high school and also taught at the corresponding elementary feeder schools. String students would have the opportunity to study with the same teacher for six years (fourth through ninth grade).⁴⁰

For the following year, the fourth elementary general music teaching position was funded by federal grant money as were the positions of three other music specialists. The rest of the music staff remained as it had been since 1970. The one new assignment during 1973-74 was the placement of an orchestra teacher for one

³⁹Lansing State Journal, 4 November 1974.

⁴⁰Music Roster, 1972-1973, Courtesy of the Lansing Music Department Archives.

period a day at Eastern High School.⁴¹ Orchestra was apparently no longer offered at the Academic Interest Center after 1973.⁴²

One change that did occur for the Lansing Schools' music staff was in the coordinator's position. S. Earle Trudgen, head of the department since 1956, retired in 1975. His successor was Duane Smith, founder of the Lansing Junior Symphony and a string teacher in the school system since 1958. Smith's responsibilities included the entire music program in Lansing Public Schools, both vocal and instrumental, since the position of Elementary Music Supervisor had been eliminated when Pauline Austin retired in 1966.

In the mid 1970s a district-wide effort to improve arts instruction for Lansing students began. The 1975-1976 annual pre-school conference of Lansing School District administrators, which focused on fine arts education in the school system, included several guest speakers who had been invited to speak to the district's administrators on the importance of the arts in public schools. No doubt, many innovative ideas were exchanged during the conference. A new approach tried during the school year was the establishment of a volunteer program to offer fine arts experiences to elementary school children under the name "All the Arts for All the Children."⁴³

A team of specialists in art, music, drama, and movement was organized to help teachers include the arts in their classroom lessons. The Creative Arts Specialist

⁴¹Music Roster, 1973-1974, Courtesy of the Lansing Music Department Archives.

⁴²Music Roster, 1974-1975, Courtesy of the Lansing Music Department Archives.

⁴³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 6 October 1975.

Team (CAST) emphasized the common concepts that united the four fine arts disciplines.⁴⁴ The unified arts approach used by the CAST program was similar to comprehensive music courses that were developed in schools across the country during this time.⁴⁵ Humanities courses, linking music and art with social studies and English, had been pioneered in Lansing at three junior high schools and one high school in the mid 1960s.⁴⁶ With the CAST program in the mid-1970s, the school district seemed to be attempting to offer more fine arts learning experiences to its students without expanding its current teaching staff.

Since the early 1970s Lansing voters had communicated an unwillingness to finance any more than a basic educational program. They had provided their public school system with a sufficient tax-millage to operate its programs at a subsistence level since 1971; consequently, the school district had not been able to reinstate program cuts made after the millage defeat in 1970. In April 1973, city residents had renewed the district's basic operating millage of 21-mills. In the same election, voters defeated a request for additional tax dollars to improve elective course offerings in the public schools.⁴⁷ The reluctance on the part of citizens to support their local schools was demonstrated in the two special elections that were needed just to renew this basic millage three years later.⁴⁸

⁴⁴Ibid.

⁴⁵Keene, 361.

⁴⁶Remick, 99-100.

⁴⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 3 April 1973.

⁴⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 10 April 1976.

The size of the elementary general music staff was directly related to the financial health of the school system. Because Lansing lacked adequate funds to operate a comprehensive educational program, the district's 47 elementary schools were serviced by only three music specialists. Evidence of continuing economic problems was apparent in requests to the staff to curtail personal telephone calls and to lower the temperature in classroom.⁴⁹

In spite of the disastrous cuts in the elementary general music program, local supporters did not give up hope of improving the situation. At a school board meeting in 1974, representatives from the Lansing Fine Arts Council, Lansing Area Dance Council, and Lansing Symphony Association urged Board members to include the arts in the curriculum to a greater extent.⁵⁰ Two years later, parents appeared before the Board to convince the school district to place greater emphasis on art, music, and physical education in elementary instruction.⁵¹

Lansing School District music teacher Lucille Harrington was at the front of a 1976 movement to make the community and parents aware of the lack of elementary music instruction. On her own time and at her own expense, Harrington had conducted a survey which was designed to collect information on elementary music programs. She sent over 200 questionnaires to school systems in other capitol cities in the United States, as well as to school systems in cities of similar size to Lansing in the states of Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. The results of her survey showed that each Lansing elementary general music teacher served more buildings than in any

⁴⁹Mead and Schulert, 19.

⁵⁰Ibid.

⁵¹Ibid., 22.

other school system in Michigan. Harrington also found that in 88 Michigan cities surveyed, elementary students had music once a week, twice a week, or every other day. Lansing elementary students rarely had a music lesson due to the large number of schools assigned to each teacher. While the school board was not moved to action by Harrington's survey, board members did not dispute the accuracy of her research.⁵²

In the community, the information campaign, however, had been effective. The Lansing School Board was bombarded for months by parents complaining of the lack of elementary art, music, and physical education. In June of 1976, the school district coordinators in art, music, and physical education made a presentation to the Board on the needs of the elementary program. Their presentation outlined the need with these figures: the district had three specialists in each area and each specialist was assigned to sixteen schools, 185 classrooms, and 5,500 children. They pointed out that with this teaching load, each instructor was able to visit a classroom 2-3 times a year. In concluding, the coordinators presented three different plans with corresponding budgets for the school board to study.⁵³

Following the coordinators' presentation in June 1976, the School Board did make a few additions to the elementary program by allocating \$135,000 for arts' improvements. One full-time and two part-time elementary arts teachers were hired and an inter-arts specialist was appointed to promote the integration of the arts into the school curriculum. The 1976 annual report described the comeback of Lansing's arts

⁵²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 June 1976.

⁵³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 18 June 1976.

programs with the emphasis placed upon the arts as an integral part of the curriculum.⁵⁴

While the music program received attention for a short while, the school district as a whole had experienced recurrences of existing problems. Enrollment in Lansing peaked in 1971-1972 with 32,980 students. During the next eight years, the number of the pupils in Lansing began a gradual decline from 30,527 in 1975-76 to 26,339 in 1979-80.⁵⁵ This decline in enrollment would have a corresponding effect on the amount of state aid received, the number of schools operated by the district, and the number of teachers it employed.

The racial composition of Lansing's student population began to change in the early 1970s. The movement of white families from the city and their replacement by minority families was tracked in an annual ethnic report prepared by the school district. The report showed that the increase in minority students was first evident in elementary student population distributions in 1968. The increase in the percentage of minority students appeared in the secondary student ethnic report three years later.⁵⁶

Declining enrollment was first evident in the elementary school population. A school district which had been scrambling to provide enough elementary classrooms fifteen years earlier, was now forced to close schools. Cedar Street School was closed in 1974 after part of a classroom ceiling fell⁵⁷ and the old school was sold to the

⁵⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, Annual Report, 29 October 1976.

⁵⁵Mead and Schulert, 111.

⁵⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 July 1971.

⁵⁷Mead and Schulert, 115.

adjacent Bethlehem Temple in 1978.⁵⁸ Forest Road Elementary School, closed in 1976, was eventually sold to the congregation of Kchillat Israel as a place of worship.⁵⁹

The School Board also voted to close Barnes, Foster, Horsebrook, and Maple Hill Elementary Schools in 1979. Parents of students involved in the closures protested the Board's selection of these specific schools, but a lengthy study by a committee of parents supported the board's choice of the four schools that would be closed. Barnes School was sold to Lansing Christian Schools and Maple Hill Elementary became the Head Start Center for Lansing. Foster School was converted to a city recreational center while Horsebrook was sold to the Lansing Board of Realtors. The Cedar-Holmes Building was also closed in 1979 to be demolished at a later date to make room for a shopping center.⁶⁰

Compared with the many elementary buildings, the school district only opened two new buildings during the same time period. The Harry E. North Elementary School, on the south side of Lansing, offered unique facilities for handicapped students. The school enrolled both handicapped and non-handicapped children. A new west-side elementary school was named in honor of the late Vivian Riddle, a former Lansing teacher.⁶¹

In 1975, the State of Michigan sold 38 acres of the former Boys' Training School site to Lansing Public Schools. The land was purchased to expand the Eastern

⁵⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 3 March 1978.

⁵⁹Mead and Schulert, 115.

⁶⁰Mead and Schulert, 26-28.

⁶¹*Ibid.*, 112.

High School/Pattengill Junior High School complex. Included with the property was a badly neglected basketball facility. The school district renovated the field house for use by the Eastern teams with the repairs completed in time for the 1976 basketball season.⁶²

The declining school population of Lansing is shown in a comparison of the number of schools closed during the 1970s with the number of new schools that were opened. Over a ten year period the district closed ten elementary schools. At the same time, one high school and two elementary schools were opened.⁶³ Lansing's school enrollment began to decline after 1972 and lower student numbers first appeared at the elementary school level. The school district reacted to the reduction in the number of K-6 students by closing elementary schools. Secondary schools would be affected by the declining enrollment during the next decade. The first step in adjusting to fewer secondary students occurred in 1979, when the school board decided to move ninth grade students to the high schools beginning in the 1981-1982 school year.⁶⁴

Another problem that persisted for the school district throughout the 1970s was its desegregation program. The 1972 recall of School board members who approved the desegregation plan did not mean the end of integration in Lansing Schools. The newly elected school board voted to repeal the cluster-desegregation plan and reinstituted K-6 neighborhood schools in Fall, 1973. The NAACP filed a request with U. S. District Judge Noel P. Fox for a restraining order to protect the desegregation

⁶²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 2 February 1975.

⁶³Mead and Schulert, 112, 115.

⁶⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 12 February 1979.

program. After the School Board and the NAACP failed to reach a voluntary settlement, Judge Fox ordered the reinstatement of the desegregation plan during the 1973-74 school year.⁶⁵

The Lansing School Board reacted to Judge Fox's order by appealing his decision to the U. S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati. The Appellate Court sent the case back to Judge Fox for a trial on the merits. After hearing arguments from both the School Board and the NAACP, Fox ruled that the Lansing School Board had illegally chosen to operate a segregated-school district. He ordered the board to submit a comprehensive desegregation plan for the entire school system by March 1, 1976.⁶⁶

The NAACP submitted a desegregation plan creating six clusters involving 20 schools. Kindergarten students would attend school in their neighborhood buildings. For the first time, first and second grade students would be bused along with grades 3-6. This plan was implemented in 1976 and was successfully put into operation, in spite of the legal action surrounding the program.⁶⁷

When the U. S. Sixth Court of Appeals ruled in favor of the desegregation program, the School Board appealed the ruling to the U. S. Supreme Court. During this two year course of the appeals process, desegregation became an established part of Lansing schools. On June 26, 1978, the Supreme Court refused to hear the School Board's petition, ending six years of litigation over the desegregation plan.⁶⁸

⁶⁵Mead and Schulert, 94-95.

⁶⁶Ibid., 95-96.

⁶⁷Ibid., 96.

⁶⁸Ibid., 97-98.

Declining student enrollment and desegregation were two of the major difficulties facing Lansing Public Schools in the late 1970s. A third and, perhaps, more important problem was in the area of finances. Although Lansing voters had consistently approved a millage throughout the decade that maintained the budget at current levels, any requests for additional tax revenue were denied. In 1979, the voters renewed the district's existing millage for another three years. Two additional proposals to provide income for building maintenance and program improvements were defeated.⁶⁹ Lansing schools had operated on a 21-mill tax rate which was first approved by the voters in 1971.

One source of additional funding for the school system had been state and federal aid programs. Beginning with an initial Title I grant of \$353,365 in 1966, outside funding added \$5.3 million dollars to Lansing's operating budget in 1976-77.⁷⁰ Fortunately, federal programs such as ESEA continued to finance necessary supplies and instructional assistance through the 1970s.

Under the guidance of Coordinator of Music Duane Smith, Lansing's music program continued to gain the attention of the public through community performances. In March 1976, two thousand Lansing students participated in a Bicentennial Concert at the Civic Center. Appearing on the program was a 900 voice children's choir, an elementary band, a sixth and seventh grade orchestra, a string orchestra, a junior high school band, a senior high school band, and a secondary level choir.⁷¹ The Everett Chorale traveled to Sweden a month later as part of an exchange

⁶⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 March 1979.

⁷⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 September 1976.

⁷¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 7 March 1976.

concert with a Swedish school.⁷² During June of that year, the Sexton High School Band went to Hawaii to participate in a parade and concert. The band represented the Michigan Lions Club at the national Lions convention.⁷³

Music instruction for elementary students remained a weakness in Lansing's music program. In 1976, quadrant organization was introduced to the Lansing district. Elementary schools were grouped into one of four quadrants, each with its own administration. Smith was able to hire an additional elementary general music teacher so each quadrant would have its own music specialist.⁷⁴

Vertical staffing for the elementary and junior high school string programs had proven to be successful because students were more likely to continue with orchestra in junior high school with the same director from their elementary violin classes. The elementary woodwind and brass program had continued with just one full-time specialist who taught fifth and sixth grade band in approximately 12 buildings.

Many of Lansing's instrumental students were unable to purchase their own instruments. Donated violins had long been available to the beginning orchestra students. In 1977-1978, the School board allocated \$56,000 for the purchase of addition elementary instruments.⁷⁵ With this funding, school-owned woodwind and brass instruments, as well as school-owned stringed instruments, were made available at no charge for student use.

⁷²Mead and Schulert, 22.

⁷³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 25 June 1976.

⁷⁴Mead and Schulert, 22.

⁷⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 3 February 1978.

Duane Smith was often able to use federal and state aid money to help finance music in Lansing's schools. In 1977, Smith developed a proposal for the Lansing Basic Music Project. His premise emphasized the fact that schools with a regular music program created a happier environments for their students. With the help of State Senator Earl Nelson, a former Lansing music teacher, Smith's project was funded for two years. The grant paid the salaries of 4.5 general music teachers and allowed the children in nine elementary schools to receive weekly music classes.⁷⁶

Frank McKowen, vocal teacher at Sexton High School since 1956, retired suddenly in 1979. A Lansing State Journal interview with McKowen probed the reasons for his departure from teaching. The major reason he cited was a significant drop in the number of students enrolled in the choir program at Sexton had resulted in his teaching assignment including non-music courses. McKowen felt the limited elementary general music program hurt secondary choirs because the children had not been introduced to singing at a young age. Another reason why choir enrollment had dropped was the elimination of the sixth period at the high school; this situation of limited class periods made scheduling music classes difficult for many students. Abolishing school assemblies meant the choir students could not perform for their friends; therefore, vocal music did not have the support of the student body. McKowen chose to leave the field of teaching rather than to accept the demise of his once 80-member chorus.⁷⁷

A companion article to the McKowen interview summarized the status of the elementary general music program and compared the funding for sports to funding for

⁷⁶Basic Music Project Report, Lansing Public Schools Music Department Archives.

⁷⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 4 February 1979.

the arts. The comparison effectively showed the arts programs received a tiny fraction of the money spent on school sports.⁷⁸

The school district did not intend to increase its elementary specialist staff when it accepted a three year \$260,000 federal grant. Instead, the Title IV money was used to train classroom teachers for instruction in art, music, and drama.⁷⁹ This application of grant money reflected a continuation of the same self-contained classroom philosophy to which the district had subscribed since the Great Depression.

Music Coordinator Duane Smith made a presentation on the status of the elementary music program to the Lansing School Board on February 6, 1979. In the fall of 1978, there were four general music positions funded by the school district and 4.4 positions funded through the Lansing Basic Music Project. Nine buildings were served by the Basic Music Project; 13 buildings had special music help funded with federal aid; and 25 buildings were served by the general music staff. One side-effect of the Basic Music Project was that it reduced the number of schools assigned to the regular elementary music teachers and increased the frequency of their visits to non-Project buildings.⁸⁰

The elementary instrumental music program employed the equivalent of three full-time string instructors and one woodwind and brass teacher. The Lansing Basic Music Project funded a .2 woodwind and brass specialist. Thirty-one elementary buildings had instrumental music programs: 17 buildings had string programs only, 2 buildings were brass and woodwinds only, and 12 buildings had both string and band

⁷⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 4 February 1979.

⁷⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 23 March 1979.

⁸⁰Records located in the Lansing Public Schools Music Department Archives.

instruction. Six of the 12 schools that offered both elementary orchestra and band were fifth and sixth grade centers created by the cluster-desegregation busing plan.

Smith had been able to double the number of Lansing elementary general music teachers with the grant for the Lansing Basic Music Project. For two years, students in the nine schools involved in the project received weekly music classes taught by a specialist. The Basic Music Project was successful in these target schools and produced testable results in overall improvement of student attitudes. In spite of parent support for the program, the Project ended in June 1978 when the State of Michigan eliminated its funding. Former Basic Music Project teachers were then reassigned to other federally-funded music positions or became part of the regular music staff.

As the Lansing Public Schools approached the 1980s, the situation for its music program remained as it had for two decades. Secondary music performance programs received strong public support and, as a result, these programs were fully-staffed and fully-funded. The elementary orchestra and band classes, which were feeder programs for the secondary music groups, enrolled more students each year.

The weakness in Lansing's music curriculum was the lack of a sequential general music program, especially in the elementary schools. For twenty years parents, teachers, and outside consultants had called attention to the lack of an elementary music program. Frank McKowen's retirement from his position as choir director at Sexton High School because students were not enrolling in choral music gave additional emphasis to this weakness in the general music program. Consistently, the argument was presented that children needed to be exposed to music at an early age, but equally consistent was the failure to give attention to and to fund the elementary school music programs.

The elementary general music program was directly related to the financial status of the school district. Since the elementary specialists did not have an assigned teaching load, the school board funded these positions last and Lansing's voters had consistently defeated any millage requests above the basic operating millage vote for ten years. The creative use of the teaching staff that was available and the application of federal and state funding for salaries of music personnel allowed the department to serve as many students and elementary schools as possible. While the elementary general music program was not reduced further after 1971, economic prospects indicated the program would not be expanded as the school district approached the 1980s.

CHAPTER VII
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1980 TO 1985

At the beginning of the 1979-1980 school year, a teacher strike delayed the opening of school for five weeks when representatives for the Lansing Board of Education and the Lansing Schools Education Association were unable to reach agreement on a new contract. In spite of a court injunction obtained by the school board and a lawsuit filed by several parents, the strike lasted until the two bargaining agencies reached a tentative agreement. As a result, the new school year did not start until the end of September and was extended until the last day of June to include the state-mandated 180 days of instruction.

Labor relations were not the only problem facing the Lansing Public Schools at the beginning of the 1980s, for the start of a new decade did not bring an end to the financial difficulties of the 1970s. The school board would have to make tough decisions as it struggled to offer an adequate educational program on a limited budget for the thousands of Lansing Public School students. Unfortunately, these problems would continue to trouble the district for the next fifteen years.

The Lansing School Board began its initial 1980-1981 school year meeting by electing Ruby Magee as its president, the first female to serve in this capacity since the late 1960s. The remaining board officers were William Heater, vice president; Gilda Richardson, secretary; and Vernon Ebersole as treasurer. Two other school

board members who were present at this meeting were Myra Ford and Gladys Beckwith. They had replaced Max Shunk and J. C. Williams after the November, 1979 election.¹

One of the first activities of the new board was to appoint a special committee to investigate the financial status of the school system. Because budget predictions indicated that the Lansing schools might face an \$8.4 million deficit within a 3-year period, the committee was formed to plan the economic future of the school district.² One of the primary reasons for this deficit was the decline in Lansing's public school student population from a high enrollment of 33,070 in 1971-1972 to a low of 26,339 in 1980-1981. The school system had suffered a loss of 20.4% of its student population within a nine-year period and the lower number of students resulted in a corresponding reduction in the amount of state aid the district received.³

Another factor affecting the financial status of the school system was the change in real estate values. Through the mid-to-late 1970s, the cost of real estate had increased dramatically. Public school districts were direct beneficiaries of these increases since property taxes were based on the actual value of the real estate. The real estate boom, however, ended in the early 1980s and schools were again faced with uncertain predictions in the amount of funds they would receive from the state equalized value of taxable property within their district boundaries.⁴ Additional factors

¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 4 January 1980.

²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 February 1980.

³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 22 February 1980.

⁴Ibid.

in the budget deficit were rising costs in such areas as employee fringe benefits and instructional supplies.⁵

The school board moved with great expedience in addressing the problem of the predicted revenue deficit. In late March of 1980, school administrators were ordered to trim \$1.9 million from the following year's (1980-1981) proposed budget. Board members refused to balance the budget by transferring funds from the district's equity fund. A school board mandated requirement to maintain an emergency fund equivalent to 3% of the annual budget had been breached once in 1970 when the district was without an operating millage. In the event of a financial emergency, school board members did not want to be in the position of having to close the schools due to lack of funds.⁶

The early 1980s were a time of financial difficulty for many cities and towns; Lansing was not unique in this aspect. The State of Michigan also faced its own budgetary problems; in May 1980, Governor William Milliken was forced to make executive cuts to balance the state's budget. Michigan's constitution requires the state budget to be balanced; the state government, unlike the national government, is not allowed to operate in a deficit situation. Education was one of the areas most affected by the governor's cuts. Specifically, Lansing Public Schools faced a loss of 1.1 million dollars in state aid.⁷ The timing of these state budget cuts in May created a second problem for the public schools, which are required by state law to submit a balanced budget by July 1st for the following school year. Michigan's schools had

⁵Ibid.

⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 March 1980.

⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 24 May 1980.

less than two months to compensate for the loss of state aid in their proposed budgets for 1980-1981 school year.

Just as state aid for public schools had become an important source of operating funds for Lansing Public Schools, the number of district programs dependent upon federal education assistance had grown steadily. In 1970, the Office of State and Federal Programs for Lansing Public Schools dispersed \$1,092,613 in federal funds; by 1980, this total had grown to \$4,756,579.⁸ Unfortunately, just as the state had reduced its financial assistance to schools, the federal government also began to cut back on various educational funding programs. The Emergency School Aid Act (ESAA) had provided 1.2 million dollars in funding for Lansing's twenty cluster schools in 1979-1980. These funds were used to hire thirty teachers, including counselors, art, physical education, and bilingual instructors; thirty teaching aides were also paid through this program. The school district was notified that its ESAA funding would be reduced to \$330,000 for the 1980-1981 school year.⁹ This devastating cut of 66% from the previous year would mean the end of many of the supplemental services offered to the students in the cluster schools.

Amidst all of the economic problems facing the school district, Lansing's music programs continued as they had in the past. One change among the music staff was the retirement in June 1979 of C. Duane Corbett after twenty-four years as the band director at Sexton High School. Tom Jones, band director at Gardner Junior High School, replaced Corbett at Sexton. The reassignment of the former band director at Walter French Junior High School to a classroom left this position open for

⁸Mead and Schulert, 55.

⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 June 1980.

the fall of 1980. Most of the other music staff members remained in the same teaching assignments as the previous year; one of the exceptions was that the author succeeded Tom Jones as the band director at Gardner.

A series of articles in the Lansing State Journal highlighted difficulties in Lansing's music programs. The first article was an interview with Amel Eiland, band director at Everett High School. The school board proposed to assign Eiland to teach band at both Everett High School and Walter French Junior High School to save the expense of employing a second teacher for the junior high school. Eiland used the interview as an opportunity to describe the music programs in Lansing as among the weakest band programs in the area and claimed that judges at music festivals would automatically give the band a low rating if they knew it was from Lansing. After he started teaching at Everett High School, he discovered it was necessary to schedule out-of-town band trips in order to recruit and to keep students as members of the band.¹⁰

Eiland continued the interview by describing how he would take an easy composition and adapt it for his band. Although this was not considered to be a good method educationally, it earned results in performance. He blamed the weaknesses of Lansing's music program on the lack of elementary music instruction in the district. With only eight teachers to cover forty-one buildings, elementary children were rarely exposed to music lessons taught by a specialist. Eiland predicted that high school music classes would not be full until elementary and junior high school music instruction received more importance.¹¹

¹⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 August 1980.

¹¹Ibid.

Eiland reminded the interviewer that the elementary vocal music program had been gutted after the 1970 millage defeat. Other factors influencing the success of high school music programs were the elimination of the sixth hour at the high school during the 1970 budget cuts and the elimination of gym waivers for music students. As a result, students were required to meet more graduation requirements in fewer class hours; consequently, the music enrollments dropped because students were forced to take required courses instead of music electives.¹²

The school district had attempted to raise the tax rate by one-mill in 1979, but the request was defeated; part of this millage increase would have gone to fund the elementary vocal music program. Eiland pointed out that music was supposed to be a top priority in 1980-1981, according to the Advisory Instructional Council. He questioned whether this supposed status would inspire more administrative support for the district's music program.¹³

The teachers' union defended Amel Eiland before the school board, presenting its argument that one individual could not be responsible for the band programs at two secondary schools. The solution to the staffing problem was to assign Eiland to teach the four sections of band at Everett High School and one section of band at Dwight Rich Junior High School, to relieve an overload teaching situation for the band teacher at that school.¹⁴ Since Eiland would no longer be the only band instructor at two secondary schools, the problem was considered to be resolved; and he had successfully

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 22 August 1980.

used the interview to call attention not only to his problems, but also to problems which had persisted in the Lansing music program since 1970.

The Citizens Advisory Committee on Fiscal Needs presented its final report to the Lansing School Board on October 10, 1980. Among the committee's recommendations was the closure of Harry Hill High School as a grade 9-12 building and its conversion to an academic interest and technical-vocational center. Pattengill Junior High School would no longer serve grades 7-9; it would, instead, become an extension of Eastern High School. One of the most controversial recommendations in the committee's report was the reassignment of ninth grade students to the high schools and the conversion of the district's junior high schools to middle schools with grades 6-8. Valley Farms and Pleasant Grove Elementary Schools were recommended for closure in 1981-1982 with four additional elementary schools to be closed in 1983-1984.¹⁵

Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music Education for Lansing Public Schools, was very protective of the school music programs. The November 19, 1980 edition of the Lansing State Journal included a letter to the editor from Smith complaining about the lack of coverage for the city's marching bands. Specifically, an article in the paper about an upcoming parade did not name the four Lansing high school bands which would be marching. Instead, the article mentioned an out-of-town band. Smith pointed out that the community was quick to criticize when the bands did not appear in a parade; the least the local paper could do would be to identify the four marching

¹⁵Mead and Schulert, 29.

bands by their individual school names. Smith's letter drew support from the district's music staff.¹⁶

Obviously, Lansing's marching bands remained very active in the community. An All-City Marching Band participated for the first time in Hudson's Thanksgiving Day Parade in Detroit. The school district had difficulty deciding which marching band should represent Lansing, so the band directors were asked to recommend students for a combined marching unit to represent all four schools in the parade.¹⁷

Another music organization that successfully continued into the new decade was the Lansing Junior Symphony. Under the co-directors, Duane Smith and Eugene Rebeck, the orchestra had stabilized at seventy-two members. The performing schedule for the group had developed into an established calendar with two Kids Konzerts, a holiday concert at the Wharton Center at Michigan State University, the Young Musicians Concert, and the spring Awards Concert. All of the Junior Symphony concerts were taped for later rebroadcast by television technology students.¹⁸ During the 1980-1981 school year, the symphony moved to Hill High School as its home base and presented a total of nine concerts. The orchestra's membership had increased to seventy-six students from twenty-five different schools.¹⁹

As the school board studied the recommendations of the Citizens Advisory Committee on Fiscal Needs, other cost reduction options were debated. The board did agree with the committee's suggestion that middle schools were less expensive to

¹⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 19 November 1980.

¹⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 26 November 1980.

¹⁸Smith, 60.

¹⁹Ibid., 62.

operate than junior high schools, primarily because middle schools did not have interscholastic athletic teams. The school board also considered the elimination of high school advanced courses with low enrollment numbers.²⁰

In the midst of the Lansing School Board's painful budget-cutting deliberations, a presentation from State Representative David Hollister did not bring good news as he warned the school board that financial problems would be worse the following year. State aid to Lansing Schools had dropped by \$2.5 million, a reduction of 11% because of the state of Michigan's economic problems. Lansing's enrollment had actually dropped by only 3%, but state aid had been reduced more than expected due to the governor's emergency cuts. Hollister also pointed out that the 1968 Headlee amendment to the state constitution would prevent state government from recovering tax money of more than 9.4% a year.²¹

Harry Hill High School was on the list of buildings recommended for closure or for conversion by the Citizens Committee. In spite of the questionable future of the school, the band remained extremely active. The seventy-eight member Hill Marching Band, under the direction of Diane Singletary, traveled to Atlanta, Georgia, to attend the Peach Bowl in January 1981. The band members had raised the money for the trip through several fundraising events.²²

In January 1981, the Lansing State Journal printed the results of the Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) testing from the previous fall.²³ Scores

²⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 26 November 1980.

²¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 December 1980.

²²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 January 1981.

²³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21-22 January 1981.

from local school districts were displayed in a chart that clearly showed Lansing students scored the lowest among twenty area schools. The next day an interview with Matthew Prophet, the Superintendent of Lansing Public Schools, criticized the paper for comparing the testing performance of Lansing students with surrounding cities. A later comparison did show that Lansing students performed at an acceptable level on the state-wide tests when the scores for Jackson, Flint, Saginaw, and Detroit schools were considered.

In February 1981, after several months of discussion, the Lansing School Board voted on a plan to implement the conclusions of the Citizens Advisory Committee for Fiscal Needs. The board agreed to convert Hill High School to a vocational center, to close Walter French Junior High School (this was a deviation from the committee's recommendation to close Pattengill Junior High School), and to close eight elementary schools over the next three years. The junior high schools would be converted to middle schools, one at a time, between 1983 and 1986.²⁴

A unique performance of the Wizard of Oz by five schools in the northeast section of Lansing premiered during February 1981. The leading roles were filled by students from Eastern High School and the high school's auditorium was the performance site. Pattengill Junior High School and Bingham, Oak Park, and Grand River Elementary Schools supplied students for the chorus and the "Munchkins." Polly McGurrin, inter-arts and humanities specialist, was responsible for bringing these five school groups together so successfully.²⁵

²⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 6 February 1981.

²⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 February 1981.

In spite of numerous efforts to reduce expenses, the Lansing School District had a potential budget deficit of 2.8 million dollars for school year 1981-1982. In July of 1981, the board decided to eliminate the high school golf, cross-country, and tennis teams. The balance of the remaining 2.1 million dollar deficit was to be taken from the school district's equity fund.²⁶ The one bit of good financial news for the school district at this time was that the State of Michigan would fund most of the cost to convert Hill High School to a vocational-technical center.²⁷

One month later, as the start of the 1981-1982 school year approached, it became apparent that additional cuts would be necessary to balance the budget. Among the suggested cuts were the elimination of 3.4 elementary art, music, and physical education specialists from a current total of sixteen teachers. Specifically, the board planned to lay off one art teacher, one instrumental music teacher, and 1.4 elementary physical education teachers.²⁸ This was the first time that board had not proposed reducing the elementary general music staff. Tom Ferris, president of Lansing School Education Association, expressed concern at a school board meeting over the reductions in the elementary art, music, and physical education teaching staffs.²⁹

On September 17, 1981, Louise Lantz, a Lansing elementary general music teacher, made a presentation to the Lansing School Board on the importance of elementary general music instruction. She listed the many ways that the elementary

²⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 May 1981.

²⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 1 July 1981.

²⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 August 1981.

²⁹Mead and Schulert, 31.

music teachers assisted the classroom teacher by demonstrating how to conduct a music lesson. The specialists encouraged the classroom teachers to include music in their lesson plans in between the visits by the music instructor. In addition, the music teachers organized and rehearsed special music programs in the buildings they served. Lantz referred the board members to the results of a 1980-1981 survey of Lansing elementary teachers in which the classroom teachers requested more assistance from the music specialists. The elementary general music staff had also received individual training in the use of Orff instruments, since many of the elementary buildings had purchased sets of Orff instruments using ESEA funds.³⁰

Lantz was supported in her appeal to the Lansing School Board by several of the other elementary art, music, and physical education teachers. These individuals addressed the school board members to insist that their subjects were not “frills” to be eliminated in a budget crisis. Several building administrators had informed the elementary specialists that they would be reassigned to classrooms as vacancies developed. Deputy Superintendent Gary Wegenke stated the emphasis in the district was changing from using specialized instructors in art and music to placing the responsibility for instruction in all areas on the elementary classroom teacher. Superintendent Prophet also pointed out the district could not afford to continue doing everything that had been done in the past.³¹

Amazingly, during all of these discussions on school finances, the district music staff continued doing what they did best--teach music. The school district functioned on two levels; administrators and board members debated the economics of

³⁰Notes from Louise Lantz’ speech, located in the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

³¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 18 September 1981.

operating the school system, while the district's teachers engaged in the business of education. On the elementary level, the four general music specialists visited the ten to twelve buildings assigned to each teacher. Elementary instrumental music was available for fifth and sixth grade students in violin or woodwind and brass, depending on which instrumental teacher was assigned to the building. The junior high school orchestra teachers taught violin at the elementary schools while Anna Pence was the only elementary woodwind and brass instructor. Secondary music programs offered choir, orchestra, and band choices for students; a few of the schools also had group piano instruction (Dwight Rich Junior High School and Everett High School). Enrollment in the district's music programs had remained at a steady 15 to 20 percent of the total student population, despite the overall drop in the number of Lansing students.³²

Lansing voters approved a 25.78 basic operating millage on February 10, 1982. The new millage rate represented an increase of one-mill over the old rate. This approval was a welcome change from the series of millage defeats that had dominated school district millage elections since 1970. Residents, however, were consistently unwilling to be taxed for any extra programs, as a one-mill option for three years to fund additional programs was not passed.³³

The Lansing School Board established a schedule for the conversion of junior high schools to middle schools. Dwight Rich would open as the first middle school in the Lansing system, starting in September 1983. Gardner Junior High School would become a middle school in September 1984; Otto Junior High School would convert

³²Music staff roster 1981-1982. Courtesy Lansing Public Schools Music Department archives.

³³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 10 February 1982.

to a middle school in September 1985; and finally Pattengill Junior High School would change to a middle school in September 1986. The board adopted a philosophy for middle school programming that considered it to be an extension of elementary school. One of the characteristics of a middle school would be the elimination of varsity sports and other competitive programs, such as cheerleading and marching band.³⁴ School administrators were directed to develop specific middle school plans and programs consistent with this district philosophy.³⁵

Matthew Prophet, superintendent of the district for the past three years, announced he would be leaving Lansing Schools on April 1, 1982 to become superintendent of the Portland, Oregon Public Schools.³⁶ The new Superintendent for Lansing Public Schools was Dr. Robert Chamberlain, a life-long teacher with the district.³⁷ Chamberlain's list of major goals for the school district in 1982-1983 included the statement that all schools would be expected to raise their state test (MEAP) scores by ten points in September.³⁸ This goal followed the news in February that Lansing students had scored lower than most large urban school districts on the 1981 MEAP test, including students in Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Flint.³⁹

The superintendent's other goals for the coming school year included fiscal solvency, improvement of the district's public image, encouragement of community

³⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 19 March 1982.

³⁵Mead and Schulert, 33.

³⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 6 November 1981.

³⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 19 February 1982.

³⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 9 April 1982.

³⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 February 1982.

involvement with the public schools, warfare against school voucher plans, and involvement of school personnel in decision-making roles.⁴⁰ None of the new superintendent's goals addressed the arts programs; in fact, only one of his six goals focused on school curriculum.

The Lansing School Board again had to make program cuts to balance the proposed budget for the 1982-1983 school year. Included among the cuts were 2.6 elementary physical education teachers, eliminating the elementary physical education staff. The elementary art staff also lost one position; in the past two years the art staff had been reduced by half. Other teaching (a total of forty teachers were laid off), administrative, and security positions were eliminated as well as a 5% cut across the district made in the supply budget.⁴¹ For the second year in a row, the elementary general music staff had been exempted from staff reductions.

Two long-time music teachers retired in June 1982. Jean Grua retired from Pattengill Junior High School after teaching orchestra for twenty-six years in Lansing. Douglas Kelshaw retired from Dwight Rich Junior High School after an equal number of years in the school system.⁴² Gradually, music teachers who had started their careers with Lansing in the 1950s were beginning to retire and new instructors were taking their places.

Two weeks into the start of the 1982-1983 school year, the State of Michigan announced it would delay half of the expected amount of state aid until June 1983. Lansing Public Schools was able to borrow the missing aid money from its equity

⁴⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 9 April 1982.

⁴¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 20 June 1982.

⁴²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 27 June 1982.

fund, but, in doing so, the district lost \$100,000 in interest which had already been figured into the budget. Superintendent Chamberlain said the lost interest would have to be eliminated from the budget.⁴³ The superintendent's staff had already received notification that another significant source of funding for Lansing would be changed. During the administration of Ronald Reagan, a budget reconciliation bill was passed by Congress and signed into law by the President. Fifty-seven categorical federal projects in education were abolished as separate sources of funding and the total amount allocated for the combined programs and grants was reduced by one-fourth. In 1982-1983, the school district realized its first reduction in its major education program funding from Title I, as well as services and grants that were funded through other categorical programs.⁴⁴

The school district finally had some good financial news when David Smith, Assistant Superintendent for Finance, announced the 1982 Fourth Friday count had located 512 more K-12 students than had been predicted. The additional students helped to compensate for the reduction in state aid from \$603 a student in 1981 to \$576 a student in 1982.⁴⁵

In October 1982, the Lansing School Education Association filed a grievance that stated Jack Mike, Eastern High School band director for three years, should have been laid off and his position filled with a teacher with more seniority in the district. The school system argued that Mike held the strongest credentials to teach in that position. An arbitrator from Detroit found in favor of the district's decision to retain

⁴³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 September 1982.

⁴⁴Mead and Schulert, 56.

⁴⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 October 1982.

Mike in the band director's assignment at Eastern. Although the teachers' union did not agree with the arbitrator's decision, both the union and the district had agreed to abide by it.⁴⁶

Not surprisingly, considering the new superintendent's primary goal for the district's students, in the fall of 1982 Lansing students made bigger gains on the state math and reading tests in the fall of 1982 than in any year since the MEAP was first initiated in 1968. Since the students had been heavily drilled on test-taking skills prior to the actual administration of the test, district officials warned that test score gains this large probably would not be repeated.⁴⁷

As the school year progressed, music ensembles from Lansing Public Schools continued their usual participation in civic functions. The district's 211 member All-City Marching Band participated in Hudson's Thanksgiving Day Parade; its members were selected from among the three high school marching bands and practiced as a group before the big parade in Detroit. Lansing State Journal articles and pictures showed Everett's band playing for a Christmas parade and Eastern and Sexton's choir singing carols under the state capitol rotunda. Lansing's music ensembles were most visible to the public during holiday times. The marching bands from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools were traditional participants in the Memorial Day and Veterans' Day Parades in May and November.

With the conversion of Dwight Rich Junior High School to a middle school due to take effect in September, the school board began to refine the definition of a middle school. The board did decide that marching band and band uniforms would

⁴⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 4 October 1982, 6 October 1982, 7 October 1982.

⁴⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 November 1982.

not be a part of middle school, but orchestra and band would continue to be taught as they had been in the junior high schools. William Webb, Director of Secondary Education, was interviewed in the Lansing State Journal about music classes in the middle schools. Webb stated that while band and orchestra would be offered in middle school, the emphasis in these classes would be on instruction in music. Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music for Lansing Public Schools, expected more students in grades six through eight music classes than ever before.⁴⁸

Middle school students would have a different daily schedule than junior high students. Sixth grade students would have five core subjects, scheduled in four-hour blocks and taught by two-teacher teams. Sixth grade students would also take physical education and one elective class. Seventh grade students would receive their basic instruction from three-teacher teams and would continue to take physical education and one elective class. Eighth grade students would study social studies, science, language arts, and math from four different teachers and would have two elective classes.⁴⁹

The school district offered its annual School Showcase at the Lansing Mall on February 1 through 3, 1983. Elementary and middle school music groups were scheduled to perform during the day and each high school was assigned a specific evening for its ensembles. Curriculum Director William Helder and Art Coordinator Peggy King showed slides of Showcase events at a board meeting to demonstrate the positive effect of this event on community relations. Both Helder and King were recognized for their leadership in organizing the Lansing Public Schools Showcase.⁵⁰

⁴⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 June 1983.

⁴⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 31 January 1983.

⁵⁰Lansing [MI] Public School Board of Education, Minutes of Meetings, 17 February 1983.

The Lansing School Board had started the new year (1983) by electing the same slate of officers as the previous year, and among the first items on their agenda was revision of graduation requirements. With the addition of ninth grade to the high school, graduation requirements needed to be increased to incorporate the fourth year of education now offered at this level. Beginning with students entering high school in 1983-1984, students would need to complete thirty-eight credits in order to graduate. Of these thirty-eight credits, eighteen units were required courses. The remaining twenty credits were not specified and could be selected from the courses offered by the high school, this meant high school students would be able to elect their music courses for all four years.⁵¹

For the first three years of the 1980s, the school district had to reduce programs and staff to balance its budget; the next school year was to be no different. David Smith, Associate Superintendent for Business and Finance, predicted a budget deficit of \$4.5 million for 1983-1984. Smith recommended the board take \$1.3 million from its equity fund and cut \$2 million from the next year's projected 76 million dollar budget. Included on the list of proposed cuts was the elimination of 5.8 elementary music specialists from the current total of seven teachers. The decimation of the elementary music program would save the school district a total of \$160,000.⁵²

In an apparent contradiction to this proposal, the Lansing School Board adopted a resolution to provide a comprehensive curriculum to meet the varied needs of the students. Art, music, and physical education were considered an integral part of the comprehensive curriculum and would be awarded the same consideration as academic

⁵¹School Board Minutes, 20 January 1983.

⁵²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 March 1983.

subjects. At the elementary level, the district would take the necessary steps to ensure that art, music, and physical education would be offered to the students.⁵³ This resolution by the board members does not appear to agree with the proposed elimination of the elementary music program from the board meeting two weeks earlier. (The apparent contradiction was resolved in early May when the final state aid appropriation allowed the continuation of the elementary music program.)

Superintendent Robert Chamberlain described the uncertain state of Michigan's finances at a school board meeting in late March 1983. If the April 1st state aid payment was deferred, Lansing would be eight million dollars in arrears; the district had already borrowed money to meet its June payroll and to pay bills. In light of the need to reduce next year's budget by two million dollars, administrative staff was reduced for the first time since 1969. The nine positions which were eliminated included the assistant director of media services, supervisor of public library services, four elementary school principals, and three assistant secondary principals. Administrative contracts required notification of lay-off before April 1st, unlike the teachers' contract which allowed lay-offs through the first half of the summer vacation.⁵⁴

April 1983 was the release date for the report by the National Commission on Excellence in Education. When Secretary T.H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education on August 26, 1981, it was charged with examining the quality of education in the United States and making a report to him within eighteen months. The report detailed the failure of the public schools to prepare high school

⁵³School Board Minutes, 17 March 1983.

⁵⁴School Board Minutes, 24, March 1983.

graduates adequately for future education and employment and offered several recommendations to correct this situation. The committee created a list of the "Five New Basics" of four years of high school English, three years of Mathematics, three years of science, three years of social studies, and one-half year of computer science.⁵⁵ Unfortunately for the fine arts, the National Commission on Excellence in Education did not consider instruction in the arts to be a part of the "Five New Basics."

The Lansing music staff, aware of proposed cuts in the elementary music program, formulated a list of reasons for its continuation as in the past. The publication was addressed to teachers in the district and started with the benefits of music instruction for young children. Other rationale offered included the affective objectives attained through music classes and the ways in which music could reinforce academic goals. The music teachers authored a convincing document on the benefits of elementary music classes which explained why music was necessary in the public schools and attempted to educate the other instructional staff on the unique reasons for maintaining the current program.⁵⁶ Minutes for Lansing School Board meetings for March and April of 1983 contain several appeals by parents and teachers alike to maintain the elementary music program. Eight speakers made presentations on this topic at a single meeting.⁵⁷

As the 1982-1983 school year ended, the school board still had to make several difficult decisions concerning the budget for the following school year. Among the suggested cuts was the reduction of the elementary music staff to one general music

⁵⁵Ibid., 24.

⁵⁶Document located in the archives of the Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁵⁷School Board Minutes, 28 April 1983.

teacher and one instrumental music teacher. Public discussion on this proposal questioned how these two music teachers could possibly serve all of the elementary buildings in the school system. Elementary teachers repeatedly informed the school board that music was the one subject they could not teach in their classrooms.⁵⁸ A solution to this dilemma arrived a few days later when the school district was informed it would be receiving a larger-than-expected state aid package. By making budget cuts totaling \$1.6 million dollars, the board, therefore, was able to balance the budget while sparing the elementary music program.⁵⁹

Once again the elementary general music program came very close to being completely abolished and was saved at the last possible moment. Even with the threat of the possible elimination of elementary music, the district's music teachers had been active throughout the 1982-1983 school year and had even begun to expand their programs. Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music, made a special presentation at a school board meeting to show excerpts from a videotape demonstrating how the Lansing School District had developed young symphony audiences. The Lansing Junior Symphony, completing its twenty-fifth year as a youth orchestra, was moving the location of its popular Kids Konzert series to Wharton Center on the campus of Michigan State University. Attendance at the bi-yearly concerts had increased beyond the seating capacity of any of the school district's auditoriums.⁶⁰ A choir for senior citizens, the Over Forte Choir, had been organized by Polly McGurrin, the district's

⁵⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 May 1983.

⁵⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 May 1983.

⁶⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 1 June 1983.

inter-arts/humanities specialist and coordinator of volunteers and senior citizens' programs.⁶¹

During the summer of 1983, the school administration considered a new direction for the district's curriculum. In late June, Superintendent Chamberlain presented the school board with a twenty-three page response to the report of the National Committee on Excellence in Education. The single largest change that Chamberlain suggested was the addition of a compulsory sixth hour at the high school.⁶² The Superintendent's statement followed the release of Michigan Educational Assessment Program test results that showed Lansing's students still lagged behind scoring norms for these tests.⁶³ Other negative information on the performance of Lansing students included the drop-out rate which was 8.8% in 1980-1981. This percentage was three percent higher than the state drop-out average and was the second highest rate in the state.⁶⁴ When the superintendent gave his address to school administrators prior to the opening of the 1983-1984 school year, he emphasized the need to return to basic instructional goals.⁶⁵ Lansing Public Schools were among many school systems that focused on teaching the basic subjects after the publication of A Nation at Risk.

Another change for Lansing students would be the district's purchase of books for each student. Many teachers had only one classroom set of texts for their students.

⁶¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 July 1983.

⁶²School Board Minutes, 23 June 1983.

⁶³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 20 March 1983.

⁶⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 July 1983.

⁶⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 31 August 1983.

If they taught a course at the secondary level, this meant that all students assigned to a specific teacher would share one set of books. Superintendent Chamberlain announced that by September 1983, students would have individual copies of textbooks and could expect to have more frequent homework assignments.⁶⁶

In 1982, Superintendent Chamberlain's goal of increasing state math and reading test scores by ten points was achieved. His 1983 goal of improving instruction in the basic subjects was not as easily measured by the Lansing students' test performance. In November of 1983, students did show a slight improvement in their overall scores on the MEAP test. However, only fourth grade mathematics and seventh grade reading scores surpassed state test goals.⁶⁷ School officials announced that the test scores for individual buildings would be examined to determine schools that needed assistance in preparing their students to take the Michigan Educational Assessment Program tests.⁶⁸

In 1983 Lansing Public Schools had a Sunday evening radio show on station WILS, entitled "A Class Operation," which broadcast interviews with district employees. Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music, was a guest on the December 11th show. His comments summarized the state of music education in Lansing Schools at that time; during the school year 1983-1984, there were 1,217 students enrolled in secondary band classes, 237 in orchestra, 249 in choir, 150 in piano classes, and 89 students taking other music courses. At the elementary level there were 275 band and 331 violin students. Smith described music as a performing art, available to all K-12

⁶⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 December 1983.

⁶⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 22 November 1983.

⁶⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 30 November 1983.

students in the district. Elementary students frequently participated in holiday and spring programs and elementary musicals were very popular. Several city-wide groups offered performing opportunities for Lansing's young musicians. The Lansing Junior Symphony was celebrating its twenty-fifth season and an All-City Jazz Band and an All-City Elementary Choir were in the planning stages. Lansing students were fortunate to have several opportunities to hear symphonic concerts. The long-established Young People's Concerts were offered for area fifth and sixth grade students by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra. The Junior Symphony performed its Kids Koncerts for students in grades K-4 and its Young Musicians Concerts for instrumental music students.

Smith also pointed out that the district's music groups were among the most publicly visible representatives of the school system. Thousands of people watched at least one ensemble from Lansing in a school performance, at a football or basketball game, in a parade, at a public service performance, or in the Lansing Showcase at the Lansing Mall each February. The public esteem generated by Lansing's school music groups was invaluable to maintaining a good relationship with the community.⁶⁹

At the start of 1984, the Lansing School Board elected Myra Ford as president, Gilda Richardson as vice president, Gladys Beckwith as secretary, and Gail Kleine as treasurer.⁷⁰ Everett High School's band had planned a trip to Florida in March 1984 and the students had not succeeded in raising all of the money necessary for expenses. The February 21, 1984, "Onlooker" column in the Lansing State Journal contained an appeal from Superintendent Robert Chamberlain for contributions to Everett's Band for

⁶⁹Duane P. Smith, Notes for December 11, 1983, interview on WILS. Located in archives of Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁷⁰School Board Minutes, 5 January 1984.

the trip. One month later the students were still short \$7,000 of the total of \$20,000 needed for the trip. Frantic, last-minute efforts raised an additional \$9,000 two days later.⁷¹ One hundred and sixty Everett High School band members cheered when director Amel Eiland told them to pack their sunscreen. The students did not know until the day before they were due to leave that the final total for the trip had been raised.⁷²

During the time the Everett band was earning money for its Florida trip, the band at Eastern High School achieved a new excellence in performance for Lansing school bands. Under the direction of Jack Mike, the Eastern Band earned a first-division rating at district band and orchestra festival. This was the first time in twenty years that a Lansing band had received a first-division.⁷³

Early March was a busy time for Everett High School musicians. The high school presented the musical Oliver in the auditorium with Everett students in the leading roles. Under the direction of Tom Ferris, drama teacher at Everett, this production also included students in the chorus from Gardner Middle School and from two elementary schools--Everett and Cavanaugh. The concept of a joint musical helped to unite students from the same area of the city and to introduce the younger students to the music program at the high school.⁷⁴ One month later the music department at Sexton High School presented the musical Kismet.⁷⁵

⁷¹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 24 March 1984.

⁷²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 27 March 1984.

⁷³Lansing Public Schools publicity release, 19 March 1984.

⁷⁴School Board Minutes, 1 March 1984.

⁷⁵School Board Minutes, 5 April 1984.

During the spring, many additional performances were held. The All-City Elementary Choir sang on the Junior Symphony's Spring Kids Koncert at the Wharton Center. One week later the Elementary Choir gave a joint concert with the Senior Citizens' Choir at Hill Auditorium. Eastern High School had its annual Big Band Bash in late April and Woodcreek Elementary Choir sang for a school board meeting.⁷⁶

The Lansing School Board made some adjustments in the established schedule for school closings. Walnut Elementary School would remain open and Genesee Elementary School would be closed in its place.⁷⁷ The board also decided to close four elementary buildings a year early to save money. Holmes, High, Oak Park, and Genesee Elementary Schools would close in June 1985 to save an additional \$225,000. The school system's desegregation plan would be maintained in the reassigning of students to other schools. Pattengill Junior High School would also be converted to a middle school a year earlier than originally planned.⁷⁸ Pleasant Grove Elementary School was sold in October 1984 to Capitol City Mason Association for \$250,000.⁷⁹

In his annual report to the Lansing School Board, Dr. Chamberlain wrote "our emphasis on reading and math has not caused us to neglect the arts. Indeed, this was an outstanding year for the arts."⁸⁰ The superintendent went on to describe the achievements of the Lansing music program in the past year. He listed the formation

⁷⁶School Board Minutes, 19 April 1984.

⁷⁷Lansing[MI] State Journal, 3 May 1984.

⁷⁸School Board Minutes, 17 May 1984.

⁷⁹School Board Minutes, 4 October 1984.

⁸⁰Robert Chamberlain, "Annual Report", published in School Board Minutes, 21 June 1984.

of the All-City Elementary Choir, the reinstatement of high school orchestras at the home schools, the Lansing Junior Symphony celebrating its twenty-fifth year, the growing number of requests for tickets to children's symphony concerts, and the first-division rating earned by Sexton's Choir and Eastern's Band at festivals. Chamberlain also described the many positive ways the music groups had represented the school district to the community.⁸¹ His speech was very similar to Duane Smith's comments on the December 1983 radio program.

The day before Superintendent Chamberlain's address, the Band Boosters from Eastern High School sent a strongly worded letter to the school board, reminding them of the hard work necessary by the band members to produce an excellent marching unit. The Boosters requested the board's help in upgrading and maintaining the existing band program; assistance was also asked in re-establishing music instruction for the elementary grade levels.⁸²

For the first time in three years, the school district did not experience any teacher layoffs during the summer. Although student enrollment had dropped to 23,520 in 1983-1984, resignations and retirements accounted for any necessary reductions in instructional personnel.⁸³ Lansing voters approved a 27.78 school millage in early September. This rate was a renewal with two new mills added to the tax rate. One mill was designated for maintenance of school facilities and the second was for current programs and library improvements. The millage rate was approved

⁸¹School Board Minutes, 21 June 1984.

⁸²Letter to Lansing Board of Education, 20 June 1984. Located in archives of Lansing Public Schools Music Department.

⁸³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 August 1984.

for a period of five years.⁸⁴ This would be the first school year of this decade that the school board was not forced to balance the operating budget by cutting programs and staff.

Verna Holley, vocal music teacher at Sexton High School, was chosen Lansing Teacher of the Year for 1984-1985. Holley had built the choir at Sexton from thirty students when she first began teaching in Lansing to over seventy-five members in five years. The Sexton Choir had received a first-division rating at district choral festival during the winter and had gone on to earn a first-division rating at state festival in May.⁸⁵

Sexton High School was also the site for an October orchestra workshop. Organized by Eugene Rebeck, the Sexton orchestra director, the event involved 225 students in five orchestras from nearby schools. The students rehearsed several massed group selections and also practiced in small groups. The day concluded with a concert featuring each individual orchestra and ending with the massed numbers. Lansing's high school orchestras were represented by the Sexton Orchestra and the Everett High School Orchestra under the direction of Janice Hardesty Flower.⁸⁶ Such an event demonstrated that instrumental music in Lansing included orchestras as well as bands.

For the third year in a row, Lansing's fourth, seventh, and tenth grade students showed improvement in their Michigan Educational Assessment Program test scores. The fourth grade students exceeded the state goals for reading and mathematics while

⁸⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 12 September 1984.

⁸⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 3 October 1984.

⁸⁶Lansing Public Schools publicity release, 23 October 1984.

seventh grade students exceeded the state goal in reading. Lansing's tenth grade students just missed reaching the state goal in reading. Overall the three grades tested in this annual assessment program scored higher than just four years ago.⁸⁷

Just as Lansing's music groups ended 1984 with a flurry of holiday performances, 1985 continued the pace, starting with a Jazz Fest '85 which featured the jazz bands from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools. The early months of the new year were also a time for high school musicals with Sexton High School presenting Kiss Me Kate in late March.⁸⁸

The Lansing School Board started 1985 by electing Myra Ford to president, Max Shunk to vice president, Gladys Beckwith to secretary, and Vernon Ebersole to treasurer.⁸⁹ Among the business conducted by the board was the acceptance of the retirement of Superintendent Robert J. Chamberlain, effective as of June 30, 1985, after thirty-five years with Lansing Public Schools. Vernon Ebersole moved to appoint Richard Halik as superintendent of Lansing Schools as of July 1, 1985. The school board's vote on Ebersole's motion was six in favor and three against with three members abstaining from the vote.⁹⁰ Dr. Halik was the fourth consecutive superintendent to be chosen from within the ranks of Lansing School District employees.

The school board accepted purchase offers for the sale of two of the elementary schools which had been closed in the past two years. Everett Elementary School was

⁸⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 8 November 1984.

⁸⁸School Board Minutes, 7 February 1985.

⁸⁹School Board Minutes, 10 January 1985.

⁹⁰School Board Minutes, 4 April 1985.

sold to North Point Plaza for \$320,000.⁹¹ The former school was remodeled into offices and became part of a shopping center. Oak Park Elementary was sold to Neogen Corporation for \$160,000.⁹² Holmes Elementary became the location of Lansing's alternative education program after it closed as an elementary school in June 1985. High Street Elementary School was sold to the Catholic Diocese of Lansing for \$90,000 in November of 1985. Altogether, Lansing had closed fourteen schools since 1971 as a result of declining student enrollment.⁹³

In June of 1984, the school board had offered a voluntary sixth period at each high school, but student enrollment was very disappointing.⁹⁴ One year later the board voted to initiate a mandatory sixth period for high school students beginning with ninth and tenth grade students in the 1986-1987 school year. The sixth period would be required for eleventh and twelfth grade students during the following year. This additional hour of instruction offered more opportunities for high school students to take courses beyond the bare minimum required for graduation.

In his final report to the school board, Superintendent Robert Chamberlain listed what he felt were the major accomplishments of his administration. New curriculum statements had been developed for math, reading, and language arts programs and a single reading program had replaced the many different previous programs in use throughout the elementary schools. Since 1982, student mathematics and reading scores had improved on the state assessment tests and there had been a

⁹¹School Board Minutes, 10 January 1985.

⁹²School Board Minutes, 25 April 1985.

⁹³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 5 June 1985

⁹⁴School Board Minutes, 22 June 1984.

gradual closing of the gaps in majority/minority test scores Chamberlain had established a district-wide homework policy, had restored the sixth period to the high schools, and had strengthened graduation requirements. A new writing program started on the elementary level would now be extended to the middle school and high school level. Lansing Public Schools had a four-year high school program and the junior high schools had been converted into middle schools. Chamberlain also described the many ways the public image of the school district had been enhanced, mostly through public performance of the school system's numerous music groups.⁹⁵

For a change, Lansing Schools approached a new school year with a healthy budget; the proposed 1985-1986 budget had a projected surplus of \$324,145. Of particular interest to the music staff was the inclusion of \$35,000 for the repair and replacement of school-owned instruments for middle school and high school instrumental music programs. Between the years of 1980 and 1984, cuts in funding for Lansing Schools had averaged \$1.5 million a year. The school district was forced to reduce expenses during this period because the economy of State of Michigan was weak. The district, along with the other school systems in the state, had experienced deferred state aid payments and reduced state funding for education.⁹⁶

Dr. Halik's first address to the school board as Superintendent of Lansing Public Schools revealed his top priority would continue to be improvement of classroom instruction and student achievement. Halik noted that undue pressure must not be put on teachers to produce higher test results for students; test results were only one facet in student evaluation. The second area of emphasis for the coming year

⁹⁵School Board Minutes, 6 June 1985.

⁹⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 20 June 1985.

would be on reducing student suspensions. New attendance rules for the high schools would be implemented in the fall to work closely with parents in eliminating student truancy and tardiness. The establishment of in-school suspension rooms at the middle schools would reduce the number of suspensions for sixth through eighth grade students. Halik described fiscal responsibility as his third priority for action in the coming year. Along with a realignment in teaching staff, he pledged to support improvements in the basic programs of the school district.

The second annual City-Wide Pep Rally at Sexton High School's Memorial Football Stadium was a positive start to the 1985-1986 school year. The rally drew over 1,600 students who were entertained by the marching bands, cheerleaders, and athletes from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools.⁹⁷ Early September also brought the news that Lansing students scored above average in mathematics, at the average level in reading, and below average in language arts on the spring 1985 Scholastic Aptitude Tests.⁹⁸ Sadly, Dr. Halik announced at the September 19th school board meeting that Lucille Harrington, a long-time elementary general music teacher with the school district, had passed away during the previous week.⁹⁹

The State School Aid Act of 1985 provided special incentive funds for schools meeting certain requirements. One of the stipulations to apply for these funds was that a school system offer one year of fine or performing arts with at least 10% of the students in grades 9-12 enrolled in one of these areas. In a recognition of the success of Lansing's school music programs, the school board applied for and received these

⁹⁷School Board Minutes, 5 September 1985.

⁹⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 6 September 1985.

⁹⁹School Board Minutes, 19 September 1985.

additional funds.¹⁰⁰ The Lansing School District Music Department provided confirmation of the number of students enrolled in district-wide music classes. Lansing music programs served 1,980 secondary music students for an increase of 16.5% over the 1984-1985 enrollment tally, and at the elementary level, 476 students played violin or brass and woodwind instruments. The total music enrollment of 2,456 students represented an increase of 250 students in one year.¹⁰¹

As 1985 drew to a close, the school board minutes mentioned the many performances Lansing music ensembles presented during the holiday season. Eastern High School's Jazz Band represented the school district in the third annual High School Showcase at Wharton Center on December 3rd. The Lansing Junior Symphony presented its annual holiday concert on December 17th at Wharton Center. These two special performances were in addition to the myriad of concerts given by music groups in their home schools.

In summarizing, the first four years of the 1980s were a time of economic hardship for the Lansing School system. Although the school board was forced to make some very painful cuts in the operating budget for the district, the music program received the support it had always been granted. Every year the elementary general music program would be slated for elimination, but at the last minute the teachers would be spared from lay-offs. The district's budget directors would consider the elementary general music program to be expendable, but the board ignored those recommendations. The elementary general music staff did not grow, but neither was it eliminated. The protection of Lansing's music program came at a time when many

¹⁰⁰School Board Minutes, 3 October 1985.

¹⁰¹School Board Minutes, 17 October 1985.

neighboring school districts were reducing their music instructional staff. Lansing Schools finally had some good financial news with the preparation of its operating budget for 1985-1986. For the first time in five years, the district anticipated a budget surplus and did not start a new school year with painful cuts.

CHAPTER VIII
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1986 TO 1990

To guide the Lansing Public Schools through the remainder of the 1980s, the following officers were elected at the first meeting of 1986 for the Board of Education: William Heater-president; Gail Kleine-vice president; Nancy Erickson-secretary; and Joan Hess-treasurer.¹ This slate of officers would also serve during 1987. Highlighting district activities for the year was the upcoming celebration of the 125th birthday of Lansing Public Schools on March 13, 1986. The Lansing Mall Showcase on February 14th featured activities and events in honor of the founding of the school district.² Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music, and the other coordinators received commendations from the school board for their organization of a successful Showcase.

In March of 1986, the board debated a controversial requirement of a 2.0 grade point average for all Lansing high school students involved in athletics or other extra-curricular activities. The original proposal did not define what activities were considered to be "extra-curricular." Music classes in the high schools were part of the daily class schedule and earned credit toward graduation. Initially, the policy

¹School Board Minutes, 9 January 1986.

²School Board Minutes, 6 March 1986.

under consideration mandated that a 2.0 grade point average was required to participate in band, orchestra, and choir; if this proposal were accepted, many students would not be able to continue in their music groups. For many high school students, their music ensembles represented the one area in which they experienced success.³

The 1985-1986 budget for Lansing Schools had included \$35,000 for the repair and replacement of musical instruments. Each secondary building had submitted a list of items to be purchased with these funds for their specific use. Music Coordinator Duane Smith noted that the combined lists from all the schools totaled more than twice the allotted amount, indicating a definite need for more funding for instrumental repair and replacement.⁴

The enrollment in music classes at the middle schools and high schools was up 16.5% from the previous year. On the secondary level, 1,980 students participated in a daily music class. A total of 476 students were enrolled in elementary band and orchestra, a drop of 6% from the previous year. Overall, music enrollment had increased 11.3% during a time when the total enrollment of the school district remained the same; this was a significant jump for a one-year period. Contributing to this increase was the conversion of Otto and Pattengill Junior High Schools to middle schools and the extension of the elementary band and orchestra program to the fifth grade. Instrumental and choral music classes were now available to more students.⁵

The first few months of the new year were a time of great activity for Lansing's music groups. The music department at Sexton High School was busy

³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 7 March 1986.

⁴Staff Notes, published by the Lansing Public Schools Music Department, January 1986.

⁵Staff Notes, January 1986.

during the winter as the students worked to earn money for their trip to Disneyworld. On March 28th, one hundred and seventy-five band, orchestra, and choir students left by bus for the Florida resort. During their stay, the groups performed throughout the park. In late April, Lansing Public Schools hosted the state band and orchestra festival for the lower peninsula. Over a two-day period, one hundred and twenty groups visited the city to perform at one of the six secondary school sites. Among the high school ensembles participating in the state festival was the band from Eastern High School under the direction of Jack Mike. Members of the Eastern Band received a first-division rating for their performance; in order to compete in the state festival, the band had already received a first division rating at district festival in February.⁶

Several individual teachers in Lansing's fine arts programs received acknowledgment for their achievements. Karen Sprecher, Everett High School dance teacher, was selected as the 1986 Michigan Dance Teacher of the Year by the Michigan Dance Association. This state-wide honor was in recognition of the dance program Sprecher had developed at the high school. Music Coordinator Duane Smith and the secondary instrumental music teachers were congratulated by the school board for the well-organized state band and orchestra festival.⁷ A scholarship fund was established in the memory of Lucille Harrington with the proceeds to be used to purchase staging equipment for elementary musicals. During her many years as a general music teacher, Harrington had delighted in producing music programs

⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 March 1986.

⁷School Board Minutes, 8 May 1986.

involving an entire elementary school building. The designation for the use of her memorial funds was chosen to honor her personal interest in elementary shows.⁸

In late spring, the school board members began to develop their goals for the next academic year. Among the goals for school year 1986-1987 were mastery of basic skills, concern for the transition of students from middle school to high school, evaluation of district programs, research into Lansing student behavior and motivation, and cooperative agreements with other educational agencies such as Lansing Community College and Ingham Intermediate Center.⁹

The school board goal which attracted the most attention from Lansing's music educators was the agreement to integrate art, music, and physical education throughout the K-12 school district curriculum. The board specified that, in cooperation with parents and community groups, specific plans would be developed to integrate art, music, and physical education throughout the K-12 curriculum and to provide appropriate inservice for teachers to insure implementation of this goal. In addition, a strategy would be developed for consideration by the board in the spring of 1987 that would result in having "quality" music, art, and physical education programs in place throughout the district by 1996. This strategy would include a definition of what was considered "quality" in these areas and an appropriate sequence of steps to achieve such quality.¹⁰

The board's goal seemed to indicate a concern to extend instruction in music, art, and physical education to all grade levels and expanded the resolution adopted by

⁸Staff Notes, January 1986.

⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 9 May 1986.

¹⁰School Board Minutes, 19 June 1986.

the school board in March 1983 in support of a comprehensive K-12 fine arts program for the school district. Perhaps, during the next decade, music, art, and physical education would become a regular part of the elementary curriculum. The Music Steering Committee pledged its involvement in the effort to develop a plan to address the school board goal of bringing the district's art, music, and physical education programs up to a quality standard by 1996.¹¹

As the 1985-1986 school year drew to a close, the district's music groups entered their busiest time of the year. The Over Forte Choir, a group of singing senior citizens, had grown to thirty members under the direction of Craig Fenter. The Lansing Junior Symphony presented one of their continuing series of Kid's Koncerts on April 29th at Wharton Center. Appearing with the Junior Symphony was the All-City Elementary Choir, conducted by Diane Singletary.¹²

During the school year, several members of the district's secondary music staff had labored to create a curriculum guide for the secondary music classes. When the proposed document was presented to the Instructional Council for approval, the council disagreed with the affective statements in the initial proposal. Council members felt the affective statements needed to be revised because measurement of these objectives would be difficult. After revision, the secondary music curriculum was adopted by the Instructional Council on May 14, 1986. This statement of course expectations remains Lansing's secondary music curriculum guide to this day. The music department curriculum was developed under the direction of Music Coordinator Duane Smith, with assistance from the following individuals: Diane Singletary

¹¹Staff Notes, 26 November 1986.

¹²Staff Notes, 22 April 1986.

prepared the objectives for band; Gwen Bodiford, Estelle Henderson, and Verna Holley wrote the choral statements; Eugene Rebeck and Roland Sunkins were the authors of the orchestra objectives; and the piano class statements were written by Suzanne Rebeck.¹³

Dr. Richard Halik, Superintendent of Lansing Public Schools, delivered his state-of-the-school address to the district administrators and school board members on August 14, 1986. Among his comments was the observation that the state exercises too much control over local school curriculum.¹⁴ Halik's remarks presented an interesting contrast to the board's activities one month later when the school district applied for incentive funds under section 21 of the State Aid Act for 1986-1987. One of the requirements for this application was the offering of one year of fine or performing arts with at least 10% of the student body in grades 9-12 enrolled in a course in this area.¹⁵

The third annual city-wide Pep Rally at Sexton High School's stadium was a complete success and a positive start to the 1986-1987 school year. The school board extended special appreciation to Physical Education Consultant and Athletic Director Anne Johnson for organizing the event.¹⁶ Students from the three city high schools demonstrated that they could peacefully co-exist at an emotionally charged activity. The publicity the district received about the annual pep rally was helpful in building community relations.

¹³Staff Notes, 22 April 1986.

¹⁴Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 August 1986.

¹⁵School Board Minutes, 18 September 1986.

¹⁶School Board Minutes, 4 September 1986.

During the first semester of the 1986-1987 school year, elementary instrumental music enrollment increased 25% over the number of students registered one year earlier. Either band or orchestra was offered in all thirty-three of the city's schools; 595 fifth grade students were involved in the program. On the secondary level, 1,989 students were enrolled in music classes. Enrollment in band classes was up .9%; orchestra students increased by 6.1%; choral music lost .8% of its students; and piano classes served 3.4% more students. The school board continued its financial support of the instrumental music program by allocating an additional \$35,000 for the repair and replacement of secondary musical instruments.¹⁷

December is always the second busiest time of the year for music teachers, surpassed only by the spring with its end-of-the-year concerts; December 1986 was no exception for Lansing's music educators. The School Board Minutes and articles from the Lansing State Journal describe the many performances by Lansing music groups during this month. Everett students, under the direction of Tom Ferris, presented excerpts from "America Singing" for the annual High School Showcase at Wharton Center on December 9th. School board member Adell Flourry commented on the fine concerts he had attended at Otto Middle School and Sexton High School.¹⁸ These performances were in addition to countless holiday concerts given by Lansing's bands, orchestras, and choirs at their home schools.

The Beekman Center serves handicapped students who reside within the Lansing School District, and music instruction has always been a part of the school's curriculum. Evidence of the success of the Beekman Center music program was seen

¹⁷Staff Notes, 13 October 1986.

¹⁸School Board Minutes, 18 December 1986.

in a performance of the Beekman Glee Club for the Lansing Pioneer Civitan Club on December 19, 1986. The club expressed its appreciation with a donation to the Beekman music program.¹⁹

The school board requested the assistance of the music department in providing a description of what the district music program should look like in 1996; the report was requested for presentation to the board in the spring. After consulting with the district music staff, Music Coordinator Duane Smith decided that the elementary general music program was the area that was most in need of improvement. The report to the school board summarized this decision and explained the reasons behind it.²⁰

Retired Otto Middle School Band Director, Raymond Bartholomew, received the "Member Emeritus Award" from Henry Nelson of the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association in recognition of his efforts to improve instrumental music in the local secondary schools. Bartholomew had retired in June 1986 following a thirty-year career at Otto. During his tenure, the Otto bands had won several first-division ratings at district and state band festivals.²¹

For the first time in almost two years, a potential budget deficit again faced the school district. Dr. Halik informed the school board that the proposed state formula for the following year included a 3.3% increase in state funds. Even with the state aid increase, the Lansing School District would still experience a 1.7 million dollar deficit

¹⁹School Board Minutes, 8 January 1987.

²⁰Staff Notes, 26 January 1987.

²¹School Board Minutes, 5 March 1987.

with no increase in salary for employees. The operating budget was directly related to employee costs since 80% of the budget was used for salaries and fringe benefits.²²

The school board's awareness of public demand for elementary art, music, and physical education instruction was rekindled when Michael Dudley, a representative from Elmhurst Elementary School's Parent-Teacher Association, presented the board with petitions from several Lansing School Parent-Teacher Associations supporting comprehensive art, music, and physical education for all grades throughout the district.²³ The musical potential of elementary-aged students was successfully exhibited at a school board meeting when second and third grade students from Maplewood Elementary School performed at the May 21, 1986, meeting.

Five weeks later, Michael Dudley again addressed the school board on behalf of the newly formed "Champions for Children," a group of elementary parents and teachers who wanted to improve art, music, and physical education instruction in the district's thirty-three elementary buildings. Dudley indicated the group was willing to work cooperatively with the board to achieve that goal and presented supportive letters signed by numerous elementary school parents. Members of the parent-teacher organization offered their assistance in seeking outside sources of financing for the elementary programs. Kenneth Harrow, another member of Champions for Children, pointed out that art, music, and physical education were just as important a part of the elementary instructional program as the required academic subjects. He contended the lack of strong programs in these three areas was a factor in the number of families

²²School Board Minutes, 23 April 1987.

²³School Board Minutes, 7 May 1987.

that move out of the Lansing School District into communities where art, music, and physical education are included in the total K-12 curriculum.

During the same school board meeting, the president of the Lansing Schools Education Association, Patricia Rose, added that the inclusion of more art, music, and physical education specialists in the elementary schools was a major issue in the current contract negotiations between the teachers' union and the school board. She continued that the district must have a strong arts program at the elementary level if the secondary school programs are to be successful.²⁴ At the time, Lansing Schools had no elementary physical education teachers; three art and eight music specialists rotated among the district's elementary schools to teach art and music classes.

Several board members responded to the appeal of the parents' group for more elementary art, music, and physical education instruction. Gilda Richardson said she supported the arts in the elementary schools and thanked the parents for their comments at the meeting. Gail Kleine urged the elementary parents to become involved in the district's total budget process so they could more readily understand that the attainment of their goal would only be accomplished by cutting other items in the budget. She stated that the board did care about improving elementary instruction in these three areas. Nancy Erickson also thanked the parents for attending the meeting and noted the approved budget for 1987-1988 did contain about \$475,000 for elementary art, music, and physical education programs. She further stated she was committed to the Lansing School District and did not want her children educated in any other school district. Adell Flourry pledged to work cooperatively with the Champions for Children and noted he was anxiously awaiting the administration's

²⁴School Board Minutes, 18 June 1987.

response to the comprehensive report the board had received on May 21st on improving the elementary arts programs.²⁵

During the same meeting, the board of education adopted a 92.1 million dollar general fund budget for the 1987-1988 school year. To balance the budget, the board used \$2 million of its \$3.3 million reserve fund and made \$889,000 in personnel and supplies cuts. The budget for the following year also had a projected deficit of two million dollars.²⁶

In June 1987, Champions for Children had reorganized under the name of Citizens for Art, Music, and Physical Education. Liz Harrow, spokeswoman for the group, addressed the Lansing City Council about the organization's search for funding from grants, foundations, and common resources to secure art, music, and physical education instruction in each of the thirty-three elementary schools in the Lansing system. The Lansing Board of Education could not afford to fund these areas because other programs would have to be eliminated to pay for the art, music, and physical education instructors needed to expand the current staff. The sixty-five member committee requested the City Council to endorse the concept that school quality is an economic issue because a number of families move out of the city due to concern for their children's education.²⁷

Dr. William Helder, Director of Curriculum and Staff Development, stated in an interview that the school district had never provided an art, music, and physical education teacher for each elementary building. Seven physical education specialist

²⁵School Board Minutes, 18 June 1987.

²⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 19 June 1987.

²⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 27 July 1987.

positions were eliminated in 1969-1970 during a period of severe financial difficulty for the district. In the Lansing Public Schools, elementary teachers have always been responsible for teaching art, music, and physical education in their classrooms. Helder said the school district had tried to retain the elementary general music teachers during times of teacher lay-offs because the elementary teachers indicated that teaching music was too difficult an area for the classroom teacher.²⁸

As the 1987-1988 school year began, long-range plans were underway to expand art, music, and physical education instruction in Lansing Schools; 11,500 elementary students were served by three physical education teachers, 5.65 general music teachers, 3.2 instrumental music teachers, and 2.5 art teachers. The school board was planning to seek a millage hike during 1989-1990 to provide funds to expand instruction in these three areas. The millage proposal was one of the recommendations made in May by the district's Arts Education Committee; this committee of parents, teachers, administrators, and two outside consultants was formed as part of the board's ten-year plan to implement a comprehensive K-12 fine arts program. Among the other committee recommendations were 1.) to require newly hired elementary teachers to have training in art, music, and physical education methods; 2.) to require sixth grade students to take an art class; and 3.) to offer vocal and instrumental music, drama, art, and dance at all of Lansing's secondary schools.²⁹

Assistant Superintendent William Webb stated at a school board meeting that the two million dollar improvement program for elementary art, music, and physical education instruction could not be achieved without a millage increase. He did not

²⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 27 July 1987.

²⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 September 1987.

indicate the precise raise in the millage rate that would be required to generate the necessary funds. The Citizens for Art, Music, and Physical Education proposal called for adding nineteen art specialists, ten physical education specialists, and 25.7 general music specialists for the elementary grades. Progress was made in increasing the number of elementary specialists when the teachers' contract was settled in August 1987. One of the new provisions necessitated the hiring of three physical education teachers and one general music teacher to provide released time for elementary classroom teachers. This addition to the contract was an important step in preventing the reduction of the elementary general music staff;³⁰ these teachers were now, specifically, protected by the agreement between the teachers' union and the school board.

During a school board meeting in October 1987, a speaker opposed the use of fake weapons by the drill teams of two of the city's high school marching bands. School board member, William Heater, had voiced the same concern. Dr. Halik responded that drill teams were necessary for the marching bands to participate in competitions.³¹ When the Junior Board of Education, comprised of representatives from each secondary school, discussed this issue, the general reaction of the group was that the rifles were less violent than the game of football. Whether or not the drill teams carried plastic rifles, Lansing's marching bands were successful in competition; Eastern High School Marching Band under the direction of Jack Mike won the first-place trophy in Eastern Michigan University's Homecoming Parade.³²

³⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 September 1987.

³¹School Board Minutes, 15 October 1987.

³²Staff Notes, 20 October 1987.

Musical organizations and their activities dominated the Lansing area events calendar. The Lansing Symphony Orchestra continued its long-established Young Peoples Concert series with a concert on November 18th at Wharton Center. The All-City Elementary Choir resumed rehearsals for the year in the Dwight Rich Bandroom. The Over Forte Choir, directed by David Wallis, met on Thursdays at 1:00 p.m. at the Mount Hope Methodist Church.³³

As the holiday season approached, Lansing's many musical groups were busy. The Lansing Junior Symphony presented its very popular Christmas Concert to a full house at Wharton Center on December 15th; the school district had received 5,400 requests for tickets when the facility was limited to an audience of 2,400. The annual Wharton Center High School Showcase continued as a demonstration of artistic talent by local high school students. Representing Lansing Public Schools in the 1987 Showcase was the Sexton High School Orchestra, directed by Eugene Rebeck.³⁴ As usual, the district's music ensembles were involved in holiday productions in their home schools. The music department newsletter, Staff Notes, contained two pages of December concert listings for school groups.

With the beginning of a new year, the school board elected the following officers for 1988: Gilda Richardson-president; William Heater-vice president; Gladys Beckwith-secretary; and Adell Flourry-treasurer.³⁵ The school board provided financial support for the district's marching bands by assisting with the purchase of new uniforms; \$20,000 each was allocated for both the Everett and Eastern High School

³³Staff Notes, 20 October 1987.

³⁴Staff Notes, 4 December 1987.

³⁵School Board Minutes, 7 January 1988.

Marching Bands. During the discussion period that preceded the vote on the uniform motion, Assistant Superintendent for Finance David B. Smith pointed out that the board had allotted \$45,000 for band uniforms in the 1987-1988 budget. Board member William Heater stated he did not think the school board should be buying band uniforms when there was a financial deficit, but he explained he would vote for the motion since the Eastern Band did not use rifles for its drill team.³⁶ A \$35,000 budget allotment for secondary instrumental music programs resulted in the purchase of 244 instruments and related items.³⁷

The projected budget deficit became a more serious possibility when Dr. Halik proposed the elimination of eleven positions by reorganizing the structure of Lansing's central administration. This restructuring would save \$375,000 to \$400,000. Four of the eleven administrators were area consultants who had the option of returning to a classroom position. Halik also recommended laying off fifteen to eighteen teachers due to the decline in enrollment; this reduction in instructional staff was not related to the financial problems of the district.³⁸ Duane Smith, Coordinator of Music, described the financial situation of the school district as one of the most serious problems it had faced. As of the end of May, no solutions to the budget deficit had been adopted and the resolution of the budget crisis would probably not occur until mid-summer.³⁹

The Finance Committee, a standing committee of the school board, spent many hours developing the budget for the 1988-1989 school year; even with painful

³⁶School Board Minutes, 18 February 1988.

³⁷School Board Minutes, 21 January 1988.

³⁸Lansing [MI] State Journal, 18 May 1988.

³⁹Staff Notes, 27 May 1988.

reductions, the budget still had a half a million dollar deficit. The school board adopted a \$94 million budget for the upcoming school year, this was an increase of 1.3 million dollars over the previous year's operating budget. To balance the budget, the board planned to increase the property tax rate and to implement almost five million dollars in program and supply cuts (including the elimination of nearly 70 full-time equated positions), with the rest of the shortage to be taken from the district's fund equity.⁴⁰

Originally, the proposed budgets cuts included the elimination of the entire elementary instrumental music program. Although the elementary instrumental teaching positions equated to 3.2 full-time staff members, these positions were filled by six different music teachers who were high on the seniority list. Because the loss of the elementary instrumental music program would have had tragic results for secondary instrumental music programs and chaos would have been created by the reassigning of these experienced teachers and the lay-offs of less experienced teachers, the final cuts, as approved by the school board at the June 16, 1988, meeting included only the elimination of the piano technician position. The annual \$35,000 band and orchestra repair and replacement funding was gone and supplies, textbooks, and maintenance funds were reduced for all schools and departments. The position of Music Coordinator was cut in half and Duane Smith was also assigned to coordinate the district's Computer Education program.⁴¹

Among the outstanding achievements of the Lansing Public Schools music program was the performance of the Eastern High School Band under the direction of

⁴⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 June 1988.

⁴¹Staff Notes, 16 June 1988.

Jack Mike. Eastern's Band had earned a first-division rating at district band and orchestra festival in February and continued to the state festival level to earn another first-division rating. For the past three years, the band had received the top rating at the state band and orchestra festival.⁴²

Included in the 1988-1989 State School Aid Act was an additional thirty dollars per student for schools which offered one-year of fine or performing arts if 10% of the grades 9-12 students enrolled in a class in this area. The board had applied and received this incentive funding every year it had been offered. Lansing's secondary music programs met a minimum state level for performing arts classes in order for the district to receive this extra financial support.⁴³

With the start of a new school year, music activities in the Lansing Schools resumed after summer hiatus. All three of the high school bands performed in the Grand Ledge Marching Band Festival on October 5, 1988. The Everett Marching Band, directed by Arnel Eiland, also received a first-division rating at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Marching Band Festival on October 15th.⁴⁴

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra's Young People's Concert on November 9, 1988 at Wharton Center entertained a full house of 2,400 elementary students; the Music Department had received 3,900 requests for tickets to this event. With new sponsors to finance an additional rehearsal for each children's concert, the symphony was able to play compositions written especially for young audiences. Members of the Lansing Symphony belonged to the musicians' union and were compensated for

⁴²School Board Minutes, 5 May 1988.

⁴³School Board Minutes, 15 September 1988.

⁴⁴Staff Notes, 24 October 1988.

rehearsals and concert appearances. Previously, to save money, the orchestra had performed music at the Young People's Concerts that had been rehearsed for its regular concert season.⁴⁵

November and December were a busy time for music students from Eastern High School. The members of the Eastern High School Marching Band raised the money needed to pay the band's expenses to march in Detroit's 1988 Thanksgiving Day Parade. Band members left Lansing after school on the day before Thanksgiving and spent the night in a hotel. The same evening, the band participated in a band competition at Cobo Hall and after the parade the next morning, the students returned to Lansing.⁴⁶ The Concert Choir and Q S Edition, a vocal jazz ensemble, from Eastern represented Lansing Schools in the annual Wharton Center High School Showcase in mid-December.⁴⁷

At the first meeting of 1989, the Lansing Board of Education elected the following officers: Gilda Richardson-president; Myra Ford-vice president; Gail Kleine-secretary; and Nancy Erickson-treasurer.⁴⁸ The board faced an immediate problem of an anticipated 6.28 million dollar budget deficit. Among the possible solutions to this difficulty were reducing personnel, programs, and services; using part of the district's fund equity; asking the voters for an increase in the school millage; and offering a

⁴⁵Staff Notes, 24 October 1988.

⁴⁶Staff Notes, 23 November 1988.

⁴⁷School Board Minutes, 1 December 1988.

⁴⁸School Board Minutes, 5 January 1989.

bond proposal for building improvements.⁴⁹ A special millage election was scheduled for June 12, 1989.

The All-City Elementary Choir had become an established part of the activities of the Lansing Music Department. Under the direction of Diane Singletary, the choir was actually two groups in one. During their second year in choir, students became part of the All-City Elementary Select Choir and performed more frequently than the full choir. The Select Choir gave more concerts because the members were experienced in singing and the smaller group was easier to transport to performance sites away from the group's home base at Dwight Rich Middle School than the full choir. By 1989, the complete ensemble had grown to over one hundred elementary members.⁵⁰

The issue of art, music, and physical education instruction for elementary students was a recurring topic at school board meetings. Patricia Rose, president of the Lansing School Education Association, addressed the board in March to remind them of the comprehensive arts program developed in 1987. She wanted to convince the board to set aside some of the extra millage funds for program improvements in these three areas.⁵¹ Rose did announce that the teachers' union would support the school board's request for an additional four mills in the June 12th election.⁵² Dr. Halik recommended the district place a \$25 million bond issue on the same ballot; the

⁴⁹School Board Minutes, 9 February 1989.

⁵⁰Staff Notes, 24 February 1989.

⁵¹School Board Minutes, 2 March 1989.

⁵²School Board Minutes, 16 March 1989.

proceeds from the sale of bonds would finance asbestos removal, computers, and other needed equipment and maintenance.⁵³

The month of April 1989 brought awards of excellence for performing groups from Lansing high schools. Sexton High School's Jazz Band competed in a Jazz Festival at Aquinas College, winning honors as a full group and for several individual performers. At the same time, Eastern High School's Band received a first-division rating at district band and orchestra festival.⁵⁴ The Everett High School Dancers, directed by Karen Sprecher, was invited to perform at the Michigan Youth Art Festival at Western University on May 11th.⁵⁵

Twenty elementary teachers from Lansing attended the April 21, 1989 meeting of the school board to address the members about the lack of comprehensive art, music, and physical education instruction for students in grades K-12. These teachers pointed out that art classes twice a year were not adequate and one librarian could not serve three to four elementary schools. The music skills of high school students were severely lacking because they did not receive sufficient elementary music training. The teachers described the situation as an on-going problem created when thirty-three elementary schools had to share three art, three physical education, and four general music teachers.⁵⁶

The teachers gave specific examples of school systems with financial problems, similar to those being experienced in Lansing Schools, which allocated more funds for

⁵³School Board Minutes, 23 March 1989.

⁵⁴School Board Minutes, 6 April 1989.

⁵⁵School Board Minutes, 20 April 1989.

⁵⁶Lansing [MI] State Journal, 21 April 1989.

elementary art, music, and physical education programs than Lansing did. A parent from Maplewood Elementary School spoke in support of the presentation by the teachers. In response, school board member Nancy Erickson urged the parents and teachers to work to help pass Proposal A and B on the June 12th ballot. Board president Myra Ford assured the delegation that the school board did not consider elementary art, music, and physical education programs to be “frills.” She promised that the board would continue to study the problem of providing adequate instruction in these three areas.⁵⁷

The June 12th millage request and bond proposal were defeated. As the school board met to make a decision on how to balance the budget, a proposal to offer financial incentives to buildings based on their students’ scores on the annual Michigan Educational Assessment Program (MEAP) test was developed. Elementary buildings were offered \$100 for meeting the state goal in math, \$100 for meeting the state goal in reading, and \$100 for meeting the state goal in science with half of the students. Any elementary school which achieved all three goals would receive a bonus of \$200. The maximum grant of \$500 per elementary building was to be spent on improving art, music, and physical education in the building. The bonuses for secondary schools were doubled to reach a maximum of \$1,000 per school; the grant was also to be spent on art, music, and physical education instruction. The board budgeted \$23,500 to pay for these MEAP incentive grants.⁵⁸

As the school board considered the recommended budget for 1989-1990, agreement on the list of cuts submitted for approval was reached with the exception of

⁵⁷School Board Minutes, 20 April 1989.

⁵⁸School Board Minutes, 15 June 1989.

the reinstatement of the ninth grade fall sports teams and the assistant athletic directors at each of the three high school. In exchange, the board chose to cut the district-wide athletic director and her secretary for the second semester. The MEAP incentive plan was withdrawn with no specific reason given for this action. Forty-four of the sixty-six positions eliminated were members of the teaching staff, including the total lay-off of the elementary art staff (2.5 positions).⁵⁹ School board member Adell Flourry commented during the budget meetings that when he was elected to the school board four years ago, he dreamed of improving art, music, and physical education instruction in elementary schools as well as adding elementary counselors. Flourry noted that all he had done since joining the board was to cut programs in order to balance the budget.⁶⁰

For the first time, a summer marching band of middle school and high school students from the seven secondary schools was organized. Under the direction of Amel Eiland, the group marched in the city's 1989 Fourth of July parade. Dr. Halik commended Eiland for forming the band.⁶¹

Dr. Halik had good news for the school district when he announced Lansing Public Schools would be receiving \$660,442 more in state aid money than had been anticipated. The Finance Committee recommended replacing the following items which had been eliminated from the new budget; high school transition programs, 8.7

⁵⁹School Board Minutes, 22 June 1989.

⁶⁰School Board Minutes, 29 June 1989.

⁶¹School Board Minutes, 20 July 1989.

reading teachers, and 4.5 adult education teachers. The remaining \$100,000 would be placed in the district's fund equity.⁶²

The opening of the 1989-1990 school year brought a new organization for the elementary art, music, and physical education program. Instead of teaching all of the students in a given building and then moving to another site, music teachers worked only with students in grades 3-5. Elementary art was offered to third grade students and physical education was taught to all students in grades K-5. Deputy Superintendent for Instruction Yvonne Putnam explained to a parent at a board meeting the reason for the reorganization: the elementary specialists would be able to provide more comprehensive and sequential instruction by concentrating their efforts at specific grade levels. Dr. Eva Evans supported Putnam's response by reminding the parents attending the meeting that the elementary classroom teacher was responsible for instruction in these three areas.⁶³

The new format for the elementary music specialists represented a change in the philosophy that the specialists were assisting the classroom teacher by demonstrating methods to include music in lessons for elementary students. The original philosophy supported the school district's contention that the elementary classroom teacher was responsible for conducting lessons in art, music, and physical education. The new distribution of elementary music services assigned the specialists to teach the third, fourth, and fifth grade students directly. The classroom teacher was not in the room to observe the music lesson; the music instructors provided contractually-guaranteed planning time for teachers. A serious problem created by the

⁶²School Board Minutes, 27 July 1989.

⁶³School Board Minutes, 7 September 1989.

new music schedule was the lack of teaching materials for the traveling specialists. When the music teachers visited a building only a few times a year, they could bring all of the materials needed for the music lessons. With a more frequent schedule of instruction, the district needed to provide textbooks for the itinerant specialists.⁶⁴ Consequently, the school district spent \$47,989.26 for the purchase of new music books for the district-wide program.⁶⁵

Dr. Evans announced the establishment of a new performing arts program at the Black Child and Family Institute, a private organization located in the former Genesee Elementary School. The program would run for thirty-three consecutive Saturday mornings beginning on September 23rd and would serve one hundred students.⁶⁶ While the school district reorganized the elementary art, music, and physical education program to maximize the number of students who could be taught by the small number of Lansing Schools elementary fine arts specialists, the private sector was able to introduce new music programs.

When the June 12th millage request was defeated, the school board scheduled a second election. Rather than placing two separate funding proposals on the ballot, the board decided to ask for a renewal of the original millage rate of 36.78 mills plus an increase of four mills. On September 28, 1989, the voters of Lansing approved the district's millage proposal; the new millage rate would raise 7.2 million dollars a year for six years. With the additional income, the school board reinstated winter and spring high school sports programs, rehired four reading specialists who had been laid

⁶⁴Staff Notes, 2 October 1989.

⁶⁵School Board Minutes, 2 November 1989.

⁶⁶School Board Minutes, 21 September 1989.

off, reinstituted the dropout prevention program, and allotted funds for the purchase of library books. The board also deposited funds in the district's equity account, which had been used to balance the budget for the past two years.⁶⁷

Unfortunately, the school district would begin having financial problems within a few years if state aid funding was not increased. Comptroller David B. Smith explained to the school board that due to the overwhelming defeat of two state-wide tax proposals, the district would not be receiving any increase in state aid funding. He observed that if the Lansing Schools continued to spend funds at its current rate, by 1991-1992 the district would again be using its fund equity to balance the budget.⁶⁸

While the school district struggled with financial issues during the first part of the 1989-1990 school year, Lansing's music groups had started their rehearsals and scheduled concerts as usual. Numerous school groups played downtown for the "Silver Bells in the City," on the Friday before Thanksgiving. The All-City Elementary Select Choir sang for a school board meeting. Sexton High School's Jazz Band, directed by Tom Jones, performed for a Lansing Area Safety Council dinner. Several board members commented on the quality of the Jazz Band's concert during a meeting of the school board. The Vice-President of the School Board, Myra Ford, recognized the talent of all three city high school band directors.⁶⁹ Lansing Junior Symphony presented the always popular Kids Koncert at Wharton Center on

⁶⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 September 1989.

⁶⁸School Board Minutes, 16 November 1989.

⁶⁹School Board Minutes, 2 November 1989.

December 10th; the Music Department received over 4,200 requests for the available 2,400 tickets.⁷⁰

As the first half of the school year ended, William Heater attended his last meeting of the Lansing Board of Education and Gilda Richardson conducted her last meeting as the president of the school board.⁷¹ In January the following officers were elected: Myra Ford-president; Gail Kleine-vice president; Rosa Jimenez-secretary; and Nancy Erickson-treasurer. The other members of the 1990 school board were William Carter, Douglas Slade, Gladys Beckwith, Gilda Richardson, and Adell Flourry Jr.⁷²

Choral ensembles from Lansing Public Schools were involved in city ceremonies for the birthday of Martin Luther King. The All-City Elementary Select Choir sang in Lansing City Council Chambers on January 12th and the Music Department organized an All-City Secondary Choir to perform at the Martin Luther King luncheon on January 15th at the Lansing Center. This group was jointly directed by the vocal teachers from the city's secondary schools; Gwen Bodiford, Chris Carter, Estelle Henderson, Verna Holley, and Diane Singletary shared the conductor's podium for the luncheon concert.⁷³

During the first week of January, the new elementary music books and records arrived. Each elementary school received one classroom set of fourth and fifth grade textbooks, teacher's guides, and records; these materials were to be shared among the classes and were to remain in the building for the use of the traveling music specialist.

⁷⁰Staff Notes, 21 December 1989.

⁷¹School Board Minutes, 21 December 1989.

⁷²School Board Minutes, 11 January 1990.

⁷³Staff Notes, 24 January 1990.

The series the school board had chosen for use in all the fourth and fifth grade classrooms across the district was Holt Music published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. The initial student reaction to the new series was very positive. Previously, the district had used the Making Music Your Own series published by Silver Burdett and these textbooks were now outdated. An additional difficulty with the old music books was the elementary schools no longer owned complete sets of the texts, teacher's manuals, and records; and the music teachers could not rely on these materials being in the each building for their instructional use.⁷⁴

On April 28th, five Lansing secondary schools hosted the 1990 Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association State Band and Orchestra Festival. This was the second time in five years that the Lansing Schools were the centralized site for the state festival. The Eastern High School Band under the direction of Jack Mike again earned a first-division rating at the state festival for the fifth year in a row. In addition, it was the first time the Eastern Band received the highest rating from all four judges.⁷⁵

The Lansing Board of Education was addressed by Comptroller David B. Smith who reviewed Lansing School District enrollment trends and revenue projections for the next five years. This presentation was one of the first steps in the preparation of the 1990-1991 school year operating budget for the district. Smith recommended that part of the income generated by the four mill increase approved in 1989 be saved to avoid a deficit budget in the future. The proposed budget did include \$8,000 for the repair of secondary musical instruments. This was the first time in two years that the

⁷⁴Staff Notes, 24 January 1990.

⁷⁵Staff Notes, 30 April 1990.

school board had been able to allocate funds for the instrumental music programs; this funding had been eliminated in June 1988 during a time of severe program cuts for the school district. The proposed budget also contained funds to hire a piano technician to maintain the district's 235 pianos; this position had been eliminated two years ago.⁷⁶

May and June are traditionally the busiest time for school performing arts groups. The spring of 1990 was no exception, as evidenced in two-page list of concerts published by the Music Department. The summer band program, with rehearsals at Everett High School, was again offered during the summer of 1990. This group met daily for several weeks in June and marched in the city's Fourth of July parade.⁷⁷

Several changes took place among Lansing music teachers in the summer of 1990. Anna Pence, elementary band instructor, retired after twenty-eight years with the school district. Amel Eiland, band director at Everett High School, transferred to the elementary band instructor's position. He was replaced at Everett by Joshua Hicks, a former Everett band student. Jack Mike, the band director at Eastern High School, resigned to take a similar position in the Hartland, Michigan, Public Schools; he was replaced by Martin Miles, who had taught band in Chesaning and Eaton Rapids. Mary Jane Montague was hired to teach choir at Everett High School while Chris Carter was on sabbatical.⁷⁸

The State Aid Act for 1990 contained a quality-incentive program which would provide an additional \$25 per student in state aid monies. To qualify for these

⁷⁶School Board Minutes, 3 May 1990.

⁷⁷School Board Minutes, 7 June 1990.

⁷⁸Staff Notes, 20 September 1990.

additional funds under Public Act 25, each school board had to adopt a resolution by October 30th to assure the state that the district was moving to satisfy certain requirements. Among these requirements were annual reports by the school district, the adoption of a core curriculum, and the implementation of an accreditation process for each building in the school system to meet minimal performance standards. The Lansing Board of Education scheduled a study session to consider the mandates of the new incentive program before adopting the required resolution.⁷⁹

At the same school board meeting, the members were informed that the district would be receiving an estimated 1.7 million dollars more in state aid money than was anticipated in the 1990-1991 school operating budget. The Finance Committee was directed to consider ways the additional income could be spent. Among the original proposals before the committee was the use of the additional state aid money to improve elementary art, music, and physical education instruction.⁸⁰ The committee chose to recommend the expenditure of \$300,000 for the district's special education programs, to use \$565,000 of the money to fund Public Act 25 expenses such as the printing of annual reports, and to place the remaining \$835,000 in the fund equity.⁸¹ Apparently, the committee members changed their minds on using the additional state aid money to fund improvements in elementary art, music, and physical education.

The new schedule for elementary music instruction lasted for one academic year. In the fall of 1989, the elementary specialists had been scheduled to instruct only the upper elementary grade levels; for example, music teachers worked

⁷⁹School Board Minutes, 19 July 1990.

⁸⁰School Board Minutes, 19 July 1990.

⁸¹School Board Minutes, 6 September 1990.

exclusively with third, fourth, and fifth grade students. Students in grades K-2 had received no instruction from the art and music teachers; the only specialists assigned to serve K-5 were the physical education teachers. In his annual state-of-the-school address, Dr. Halik announced a new rotation for elementary specialists. Music classes for students in grades K-5 would be taught on a year-long basis; art and physical education teachers would visit the elementary schools on eleven-week cycles.⁸²

The members of the school board and the members of the teachers' union ratified a new contract prior to the opening day of school. The three-year agreement guaranteed more art, music, and physical education instruction for the district's elementary students. Elementary classroom teachers would have preparation time while their students were with the specialists. For the first time, the school district would have to provide substitute teachers if the regular art, music, or physical education teachers were absent; previously, these classes were simply canceled in the event the specialist was not available.⁸³

With the start of a new school year, the district's music teachers were already occupied with organizing their classes. Diane Singletary, the director of the All-City Elementary Choir, traveled to each elementary school to audition fourth and fifth grade students who were interested in joining the choir. The first rehearsal of the Over Forte Choir took place on September 20th under the continued guidance of director David Wallace. The Lansing Junior Symphony held new member auditions as the orchestra prepared to begin its thirty-second performing season. The Lansing Symphony Orchestra scheduled its annual Young People's Concerts for November 7th

⁸²Lansing [MI] State Journal, 16 August 1990.

⁸³Lansing [MI] State Journal, 7 September 1990.

and May 1st at the Wharton Center; the Junior Symphony's Kids Konzerts were set for December 11th and April 16th in the same facility.⁸⁴

Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, Dr. Eva Evans, reviewed elements of Public Act 25 which required Michigan school districts to take specific actions in the coming years to improve instructional programs and student outcomes or face the loss of a significant percentage of state-aid funds. The Finance Committee presented three resolutions for approval by the school board in order to qualify for special incentive funds available under the 1990-1991 State Aid Act. The board had to adopt these resolutions by October 30th in order to be eligible for the additional state aid money.⁸⁵

Also included in the minutes from this particular school board meeting was the administrative response to the final report of the Citizens' Committee on Long-Range Planning. The committee's report had contained specific recommendations for the district; the goal in section C was to strengthen educational foundations. The document stated:

A comprehensive elementary curriculum will nurture the whole child. It provides a strong basic education as well as art, music, drama, and physical education. Building on the foundation of the elementary program, the middle school program will recognize the unique characteristics of the age group, emphasize socialization skills, continue broad exposure to art, music, drama, and physical education, use team teaching, and expand extracurricular options for students.⁸⁶

The administrative response to this section stated the Instruction Council was rigorously considering this as a component of its restructuring emphasis and additional art, music, and physical teachers had been hired to provide more instruction at the

⁸⁴Staff Notes, 20 September 1990.

⁸⁵School Board Minutes, 4 October 1990.

⁸⁶School Board Minutes, 4 October 1990, Appendix A.

elementary level. (This action was required by the newly adopted teachers' contract.) Dr. Halik's answer also mentioned the many musical opportunities available to Lansing students in the community.

Lansing Schools' music groups were already busy only six weeks into the new school year. The marching bands from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools participated in the annual Grand Ledge Marching Band Festival. Lansing Junior Symphony accepted a record number of new members into the group; fifty-seven students would be joining returning symphony members for a total of eighty-two musicians in the orchestra. And the Lansing Symphony added a new component to its popular Young People's Concert series, the "Friends of the Lansing Symphony" docent program would provide for a classroom visit by a volunteer prior to the concert date. The docent would talk to the students about the music they would hear and how they should behave at a concert.⁸⁷

As the school year entered the holiday season, performing arts groups began their second busiest time of the year. In addition to concerts at their home schools, many secondary bands, orchestras, and choir presented public-service appearances at local nursing homes and hospitals. The Music Department's newsletter, Staff Notes, contained a full-page listing of concerts in just the month of December.

Financial problems that began for Lansing Public Schools at the beginning of the 1980s continued to cause difficulties for the school system for the next ten years. A millage increase in 1988 provided a temporary solution to inadequate funding for school programs, but revenue deficits would again plague the district within three years. The school board also struggled with the recurring question of providing

⁸⁷Staff Notes, 17 October 1990.

adequate instruction in art, music, and physical education for elementary students. In spite of well-organized parent-teacher groups to support programs in these areas and the findings of the Citizen's Committee on Long-Range Planning, the number of elementary art, music, and physical education specialists increased only slightly during the decade. That increase was due to a clause in the new teachers' contract which guaranteed additional planning time for elementary classroom teachers. One area of Lansing's music programs that continued to grow successfully was the secondary performing arts groups. Marching bands, concert bands, orchestras, and choirs had always enjoyed the support of the public because their performances were evidence of the students' achievements. As Lansing Public Schools entered the final decade of the twentieth century, the system would continue to search for answers to situations that had troubled the district for more than fifty years.

CHAPTER IX
MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
FROM 1991 TO JUNE 1995

The Board of Education of the Lansing Public Schools elected the following officers at the first meeting of 1991: Nancy Erickson-president; Gail Kleine-vice president; Adell Flourry-secretary; and William Carter-treasurer. Karen Sprecher, dance teacher from Everett High School, was chosen to be the "Employee of the Month" for January. At the same board meeting, a revision to the mission statement of Lansing Public Schools was discussed. To demonstrate a commitment to the arts and humanities, the following phrase was added: "an appreciation for the arts and humanities and a desire for lifelong learning."¹ The addition of this phrase to the mission statement was an important gesture of support for the fine arts programs of the school district.

The school board approved the expenditure of over \$25,000 for the purchase of music textbooks, records, and teacher's guides for the third-grade level. The elementary general music teachers had identified the lack of a music book for this grade as an instructional deficiency. With the new books, the music teachers would be able to offer more meaningful learning experiences for the third grade students.² The

¹School Board Minutes, 17 January 1991.

²Staff Notes, 22 January 1991.

music textbooks and records arrived during the middle of February and were immediately delivered to each elementary school.³

Eugene Rebeck and Duane Smith, co-conductors of the Lansing Junior Symphony, were selected as the district's "Employees of the Month" for February in recognition of their work with the youth orchestra.⁴ Founded by Smith in 1958, the Junior Symphony was presenting its thirty-third concert season. One of the group's annual Kids Konzerts was scheduled for April 16, 1990 at the Wharton Center.⁵

The school board had appropriated \$8,000 for the repair and replacement of secondary musical instruments in the 1990-1991 operating budget. Duane Smith, Music Coordinator, had requested that secondary instrumental music instructors submit a list of their desired expenditures for their individual programs. The total cost of the requested purchases totaled \$22,400, compared with the \$8,000 that had been allotted for this purpose. Hence, Smith was only able to fulfill a small portion of each instructor's request.⁶

Lansing's high school instrumental and choral ensembles often won awards for their participation in various festivals and competition. The first middle school group to earn a significant award was the Gardner Middle School Orchestra under the direction of Janice Hardesty Flower. The Gardner Orchestra received a first-division rating at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association District Band and

³Staff Notes, 13 February 1991.

⁴School Board Minutes, 14 February 1991.

⁵Staff Notes, 13 March 1991.

⁶Staff Notes, 13 March 1991.

Orchestra Festival on March 2nd, 1991.⁷ The last middle school/junior high level instrumental group from the Lansing system to receive a first-division at district festival was the Otto Junior High School Band, directed by Ray Bartholomew, in the 1970s. The Gardner Orchestra did participate in the state band and orchestra festival in early May and received a second-division rating.

As the school board began to plan for the following school year, the members articulated possible goals for the school system. When the board finalized its goals for the 1991-1992 school year, none of the objectives specifically mentioned music or the arts. However, the school board did increase its financial support of the music program by allocating \$35,000 for instrument repair and replacement. This allotment was a substantial increase over the \$8,000 repair and replacement funding in 1990-1991.⁸ The school board was investing money for a good reason; Lansing's music program was an active one. The April edition of the Music Department newsletter contained a two-page listing of school performances scheduled during the last six weeks of school.⁹

The Middle School Review Committee was organized to complete a ten-year review of the middle schools in the Lansing School District. When the committee was unable to complete its work in the designated time period, it was renamed the Middle School Advisory Committee and given a one-year extension to finish its designated task. One of the recommendations of the original committee was that the Music Steering Committee should examine the feasibility of including marching in the most

⁷Staff Notes, 13 March 1991.

⁸School Board Minutes, 18 April 1991.

⁹Staff Notes, 22 April 1991.

advanced band classes at the middle school level. Marching band had been a part of the junior high school band curriculum and was eliminated in the conversion to middle schools because it was not considered an appropriate activity under the district's middle school philosophy. Middle school band directors attended meetings of the Advisory Committee to express their viewpoints that marching band was not suitable for middle school students. Despite the reactions of the middle school band directors, the committee's final report requested that the Music Steering Committee study the issue.¹⁰

One of the reasons for converting the junior high schools to middle schools in the mid-1980s was that middle schools would be less expensive to operate. The inter-scholastic junior high school athletic program was expensive when the cost of coaches, uniforms, and transportation to games was totaled. In the same vein, marching bands were also expensive to equip and to maintain. After five years without a junior high age marching band program, suddenly the Music Department was asked to consider re-establishing the program.

The same rapid reversal of policy occurred in the sports program when one of the board members requested an extra \$20,000 to make middle school sports competitive. The request was tabled for further study and, instead, Dr. Halik recommended that the \$20,000 be used to improve the existing middle school intramural program in 1991-1992. Members of the school board argued that middle school students deserved the opportunity to compete against students from other schools. Halik responded by stating the previous middle school committee had recommended against a competitive sports program as not being appropriate for this

¹⁰School Board Minutes, 25 April 1991.

age group. The board members were split in their support of Dr. Halik's request and response.¹¹

As the school district prepared to open for the 1991-1992 academic year, there were several changes among the music instructional staff. Chris Carter returned from sabbatical leave and was again teaching choir at Everett High School. Mary Jane Montague, who had substituted for Carter the previous year, was filling in for Diane Singletary, who was on leave. Sallie Jones was hired to teach band at Dwight Rich Middle School and Janice Flower added another section of orchestra at Gardner Middle School. Teri Van Steel was teaching an orchestra class at Eastern High School. The growth of the elementary strings program necessitated assigning Suzanne Rebeck almost entirely to elementary instrumental music.¹²

The fall months also brought the return of traditional cultural activities in the capitol city. The Lansing Symphony Orchestra had offered its Young People's Concert series every year since the late 1940s. Thousands of elementary students had their first introduction to the orchestra and to classical music through this program. The first Young People's Concert for 1991-1992 was scheduled for October 30th at Wharton Center.¹³

Success came early to the members of the 1991-1992 Everett Marching Band. The band members received perfect scores at the Michigan School Band and Orchestra Association Marching Band Festival. The Lansing State Journal published a picture of the Everett band members shaving the head of the Everett band director, Joshua Hicks.

¹¹School Board Minutes, 11 July 1991.

¹²Staff Notes, 20 September 1991.

¹³Staff Notes, 20 September 1991.

Apparently, Hicks had made a bet with his students that they could give him a haircut if they earned first place at the festival.¹⁴

In October of 1991, the Lansing State Journal published a story on how band booster groups helped raise money to cover shortages in funding for school instrumental music programs. The Lansing School District had five traveling teachers in art, music, and physical education to serve thirty-three elementary schools. Two schools subsidized music programs by paying the salary of a part-time music teacher from building funds; those two buildings were Forest View and Lewton Elementary Schools. The article examined in depth how parent groups had assumed financial responsibility for desired school programs when funding was eliminated or reduced.¹⁵

As the 1991 holiday season approached, Lansing's school music groups, as usual, were active in community performances. The November Music Department newsletter listed a full page of December concerts; new to the list were the number of elementary school groups presenting musicals. The Lansing Junior Symphony performed its first Kids Koncert of the year on December 10th to a full-house at Wharton Center.¹⁶

The Lansing Board of Education elected the following officers for 1992: Nancy Erickson-president; Gail Kleine-vice president; Adell Flourry Jr.-secretary; and Rosa Jimenez-treasurer. These same officers would also serve during 1993. The school board adopted a code of ethics for Lansing School District School Board members. The code of ethics was developed in response to a situation which developed during

¹⁴Staff Notes, 16 October 1991.

¹⁵Lansing [MI] State Journal, 14 October 1991.

¹⁶Staff Notes, 26 November 1991.

the previous year when a school board member made a racially-oriented remark at a meeting.¹⁷

Robert Aldrich, a member of the school board, complimented director Joshua Hicks and the members of the Everett Jazz Band for their performance at the Martin Luther King luncheon on January 15, 1992 in the Lansing Center. Board President Nancy Erickson echoed Aldrich's comments.¹⁸ Lansing Schools sponsored a district-wide talent show to raise money for the Lansing Education Assistance Fund (LEAF). Over 125 district employees took part in the show, which was performed to a full-house in the Hill Auditorium. Several members of the district music staff were on the program.¹⁹

An abrupt change in music personnel occurred with the health leave granted to Everett choir director, Chris Carter, in March of 1992. Mary Jane Montague was reassigned to teach the choirs and piano classes at Everett High School. Barbara Harris, an elementary general music substitute teacher, assumed Montague's teaching position which included one choir at Gardner Middle School, two music classes at Otto Middle Schools, and elementary general music classes.²⁰

The City of Lansing had given a grant to the Lansing Symphony Orchestra to allow the continuation of the "Music in Our Schools" program. The grant permitted the Brass Quintet from the symphony to perform free of charge at several elementary schools. Students at Attwood, Averill, Elmhurst, and Fairview Elementary Schools

¹⁷School Board Minutes, 9 January 1992.

¹⁸School Board Minutes, 23 January 1992.

¹⁹Staff Notes, 20 February 1992.

²⁰Staff Notes, 25 March 1992.

were able to hear the quintet perform. The purpose of the program was to introduce students to music, musicians, and instruments to which they might otherwise never be exposed.²¹

The Middle School Advisory Committee presented its final recommendation to the school board in early April. Among the suggestions made by the committee were for middle schools to move gradually toward a flexible teaming system to meet the needs of middle school students. The committee emphasized teaming could only be introduced after much planning and then it needed to be piloted by small groups of students. The recommendation to reinstate the marching band program for the advanced groups was still in the final document.²²

Dr. Halik presented his recommendations for the 1992-1993 operating budget at a special study session of the school board. Among the possible budget additions, Halik listed increasing the textbook allowances for all buildings, adding staff for the bilingual program, including funds for staff development, increasing the elementary library book allowance, and funding computer training for district staff. The budget reductions list was more extensive than the list of additions. Halik's most controversial cut was the elimination of twenty-one elementary reading teacher positions. The superintendent also planned on raising secondary class sizes, reducing the adult education staff, and charging students \$25 to participate in sports. Other cuts included reducing custodial work hours and reducing travel allotments.²³

²¹Staff Notes, 25 March 1992.

²²School Board Minutes, 9 April 1992.

²³School Board Minutes, 30 April 1992.

Comptroller David B. Smith informed the school board that the state legislature might delay the August state aid payment until October and then would spread the remaining nine payments over the rest of the school year. During the month of May, many individuals spoke out at school board meetings against the proposed lay-off of twenty-one reading teachers. Dr. Halik responded to the speakers by repeating that the reading teachers were not protected by the contract like the elementary art, music, and physical education specialists. The superintendent repeated to the audience at the board meeting that Lansing Public Schools was facing a seven million dollar deficit which could only be eliminated through budget cuts and the use of the district's fund equity.²⁴

The teachers' union offered its help in preparing a list of less damaging ways to save 1.1 million dollars.²⁵ After receiving a list of budget reductions from the LSEA, the school board was able to develop an alternate budget to save 16.5 of the 21 reading positions.²⁶ One of the definite cuts for next year was the reduction of the amount allocated for Lansing's marching bands by \$43,219.²⁷

The month of May also was the start of the busy spring concert season for Lansing's music groups. The marching bands from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools all participated in the Michigan Marches into The 21st Century Parade on May 9, 1992 through downtown Lansing. The Everett High School Jazz Band and the Gardner Middle School Concert Band also played at the capitol for the Spring Capitol

²⁴School Board Minutes, 12 May 1992.

²⁵School Board Minutes, 7 May 1992.

²⁶School Board Minutes, 21 May 1992.

²⁷Lansing [MI] State Journal, 17 June 1992.

Concert series. The spring of 1992 marked the beginning of retirement for two of the elementary general music teachers. Sue Thomas retired after teaching in the Lansing Schools for twenty-six years and JoAnn Russell retired after sixteen years.²⁸

During the summer, the board began to develop their goals for the upcoming school year. The objectives the school board members adopted for 1992-1993 included preliminary planning for schools of choice, developing of school partnerships, implementing a core curriculum, developing a strategic plan to increase student achievement, and long-range fiscal planning. Several of the board goals were directly related to requirements mandated by Public Act 25.

“Schools of choice” was a term that referred to students being able to attend the school they choose instead of the school near their homes. The Lansing Board of Education had appointed a committee to develop a Schools of Choice plan for the district; the target date for starting the program was school year 1994-1995. The committee was reminded that the cost of the program was an important concern for its success.²⁹

With the start of the 1992-1993 school year came changes among the Lansing music staff. Chris Carter, choir director at Everett High School, had died during the summer; he was remembered for the many years that he directed the Everett Chorale and for his dedication to his students. Barbara Harris and Diane Singletary joined the elementary general music staff in the positions left vacant by the retirements of Sue Thomas and JoAnn Russell. Mary Jane Montague was assigned to two hours in the Everett choral program and the rest of her time was in elementary general music.

²⁸Staff Notes, 14 May 1992.

²⁹School Board Minutes, 9 July 1992.

Martin Miles directed the band at Eastern and taught two hours in the music program at Otto Middle School. The rest of the music staff positions remained the same as last year.³⁰

The elementary general music teachers continued to visit all of the elementary schools throughout the year, unlike the elementary art and physical education teachers who would visit a school daily for a specific number of weeks. Classes received a music lesson once every three weeks.³¹ While the frequency of elementary music instruction was still less than desirable, Lansing's elementary students had more music lessons than in the past.

Two high school marching bands from Lansing participated in the Fall 1992 Motor City Classic at the Pontiac Silverdome and returned with the top awards. The Everett High School Marching Band, under the direction of Joshua Hicks, won first place and a \$1,500 cash award. The Sexton High School Marching Band, conducted to Tom Jones, won second place and a \$1,000 award.³² To have two city bands win the top honors at a competition in such a large venue was an acclamation for the Lansing music program.

By the fall of 1992, the school district had completed the purchase of music textbooks for grades K-5; the series chosen for district-wide use was Holt Music published by Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. In addition to a classroom set of student texts for each grade, each building also had a set of teacher's guides and records to accompany each grade level. One unexpected problem with the new music materials

³⁰Staff Notes, 14 September 1992.

³¹Staff Notes, 14 September 1992.

³²School Board Minutes, 1 October 1992.

was the elementary general music teachers were having difficulty locating all of the textbooks and records in some of the buildings. Duane Smith, Music Coordinator, had to send a memo to each building that it was imperative that these materials be available for use by the music instructors.³³

The marching bands from Eastern, Everett, and Sexton High Schools participated in the 1992 Veterans' Day Parade through downtown Lansing. The Music Department newsletter described the frigid weather the day of the parade. The weather was not the only difficulty faced by the high school band members. One of the three buses transporting the Everett Marching Band was involved in a minor traffic accident on the way to the parade; as a result, the percussion section arrived after the other units had left. The Everett students had to double time down a side street, but they were able to catch up with the remainder of the band and finish the parade.³⁴

As the 1992 holiday season approached, the students in Lansing's performing arts groups were preparing for special appearances. On the schedule for the month of December were thirty-one separate holiday concerts; December 15th alone was the date for eight performances. In addition to concerts by most of the secondary instrumental and choral groups, several elementary buildings presented either holiday concerts or musicals. The number of concerts given by Lansing school groups was evidence of a well-established performance program throughout the district.³⁵

At the first meeting of the Lansing Board of Education for 1993, the following officers were elected: Adell Flourry, Jr.-president; Gladys Beckwith-vice president;

³³Staff Notes, 14 October 1992.

³⁴Staff Notes, 11 November 1992.

³⁵Staff Notes, 11 November 1992.

Robert Aldrich-secretary; and Sharon Peters-treasurer.³⁶ With the beginning of second semester, additional changes occurred among the district's music staff. Gary Norris, band director at Pattengill Middle School, was on health leave and was replaced by Margaret Manolakoudis, a former Lansing student and a recent music graduate from Michigan State University. Amel Eiland, elementary band instructor, moved to a new position as a Mentor in the department of State and Federal Programs. Glen Akers, former band director at Lansing Christian School, assumed Eiland's elementary band assignment.³⁷

The Lansing Symphony Orchestra moved the date for its second Young People's Concert of the 1993-1994 season from April to February. Requests for tickets to the spring concert had gradually declined, due to the many activities that were also scheduled for the end of the school year. The Symphony moved its Young People's Concert to mid-winter in order to spread events for elementary students more evenly throughout the school calendar.³⁸

Preliminary information processed during the development of the operating budget for 1993-1994 showed the school district had a potential budget deficit of 10.5 million dollars, this amount would rise to 11.4 million dollars if the Ingham Intermediate School District did not pay for special education programs.³⁹ One month later, Dr. Halik presented a list of possible budget cuts to the school board. The superintendent informed board members that the school district was only twelve to

³⁶School Board Minutes, 6 January 1993.

³⁷Staff Notes, 14 January 1993.

³⁸Staff Notes, 14 January 1993.

³⁹School Board Minutes, 11 February 1993.

eighteen months away from bankruptcy unless there was meaningful state aid reform. Among the proposed music department cuts were reducing the marching band allotment by \$15,000 and combining consultants for athletics/physical education/fine arts to save \$192,000.⁴⁰

Music Coordinator Duane Smith wrote in the departmental newsletter that his entire thirty-eight year profession career had been dedicated to the Lansing School District and he had experienced several financial crises during those years. He had never encountered an economic situation quite as desperate as the one facing the school district in the spring of 1993. Unless the Michigan Legislature was willing to completely overhaul the state aid program and provide the necessary financial support to the public schools, education in the state would soon be in real trouble. Smith reminded the music staff that during times of budget cuts, music is one of the first areas to be considered for elimination.⁴¹

The school board accepted the final report of the Schools of Choice Committee. The 1992-1993 state aid act did not include funds for transportation of schools of choice candidates. Consequently, Lansing's Schools of Choice plan could not include transportation for students who chose to attend schools other than their assigned attendance school. This stipulation severely limited the opportunities for Lansing students to attend other schools in the district if their parents were unable to provide transportation.⁴²

⁴⁰School Board Minutes, 11 March 1993.

⁴¹Staff Notes, 15 March 1993.

⁴²School Board Minutes, 22 April 1993.

Comptroller David B. Smith presented a recommendation to the school board based on the 1993-1994 state aid bill adopted by the house and assuming voter approval of Proposal A on the June 2nd ballot. His department projected a budget deficit of five million dollars; this amount would increase if categorical aid was eliminated and health insurance costs for employees rose by more than ten percent.⁴³ Comptroller Smith appeared before the school board two weeks later to inform members of the need to make \$4.5 million in budget cuts. Among the approved cuts was the loss of \$15,000 for marching band uniforms. This was the only direct reduction for the district's music programs. Dr. Halik agreed to realign the Central Administration to eliminate the Instructional Support Director's position to save \$80,000. Other budget reductions were still being discussed by the board members.⁴⁴

The Lansing Junior Symphony had given its second Kids Koncert for the year on April 13th at the Wharton Center. This performance marked the start of the busy spring concert season for the district's music ensembles. Twenty-eight events were on the calendar of the Lansing Music Department between April 26th and the end of the year; and these were just the concerts that had been reported to the music department secretary.⁴⁵ Lansing bands, orchestras, choirs, and even the elementary schools ended the school year with a concert. The Gardner Middle School Orchestra, directed by Janice Flower, and the Gardner Middle School Concert Band, directed by Nancy Witucki, received recognition for receiving the highest ratings at the Music in the

⁴³School Board Minutes, 1 May 1993.

⁴⁴School Board Minutes, 13 May 1993.

⁴⁵Staff Notes, 23 April 1993.

Parks competition held at Cedar Point in Sandusky, Ohio.⁴⁶ Lansing band students would again be able to participate in a summer marching band program taught at Everett High School by Everett director, Joshua Hicks.⁴⁷

The Early Retirement Incentive Program in the teaching contract for 1992-1993 encouraged several experienced teachers to retire early. Among the teaching staff who accepted the early retirement incentive were six members of the district's music staff. Verna Holley, Sexton Choir and Piano; Louise Lantz, elementary general music; Gary Norris, Pattengill Band; Eugene Rebeck, Dwight Rich and Sexton Orchestras and elementary strings; Margaret Wilkening, elementary general music; and Duane Smith, music coordinator, all chose to retire at the end of the 1992-1993 school year. Lansing Public Schools were losing six music teachers with a combined teaching experience of over 140 years.⁴⁸

During the month of June 1993, the school board met on a weekly basis in order to develop an operating budget before the state-mandated deadline of June 30th. Dr. Halik informed the board that the defeat of Proposal A would increase the district's deficit to \$9 million. In order to adopt a balanced budget before the deadline, Halik recommended the board make \$4 million in cuts and transfer the balance of the shortage from the fund equity account. The superintendent pointed out the budget would need to be reassessed in August to determine if additional cuts were needed; he did not want Lansing Public Schools to have to close early because of the lack of funds to operate. The Kalkaska, Michigan, Public Schools closed in April

⁴⁶School Board Minutes, 3 June 1993.

⁴⁷Staff Notes, 17 May 1993.

⁴⁸Staff Notes, 17 May 1993.

1993 when voters refused to approve a millage to generate the sufficient funds to operate the school system. The school board was in the unfortunate position of not knowing what the true budget deficit would be until the Governor signed the State Aid Act.⁴⁹

By the June 10th board meeting, the proposed list of budget cuts totaled 4.3 millions dollars and was approved by the school board. In order to balance the budget, over five million dollars would have to be transferred from the district's fund equity to the operating budget. This transfer would lower the amount of money in the fund equity account to less than three percent of the operating budget; the school board had long ago established this percentage as the minimum amount for the account. Board member, Robert Aldrich, asked Dr. Halik to prepare additional reductions ranging from three to seven percent of the total 1993-1994 budget in case extra cuts needed to be made.⁵⁰

The proposed school board goals for 1993-1994 were to work with employee groups to contain health care costs; to begin long-range planning for infrastructure needs; to implement schools of choice (required by Public Act 25 to be operational by the fall of 1994); to begin planning to renew the current millage which would expire in December of 1994; to continue the mandates of core curriculum and school accreditation requirements; and to plan to ensure that high school graduates receive a state-endorsed diploma. Focus schools would be piloted in at least three elementary buildings during the 1993-1994 school year.⁵¹ It is interesting to observe that all but

⁴⁹School Board Minutes, 3 June 1993.

⁵⁰School Board Minutes, 10 June 1993.

⁵¹School Board Minutes, 15 July 1993.

one of the school board goals for the coming year were influenced by current economic factors or by the requirements of Public Act 25.

The 1992-1993 State School Aid Act had required school districts to implement proficiency-testing for high school students in order to receive state-endorsed diplomas.⁵² The Michigan Legislature had designed the state-endorsed diploma program to increase the credibility of a high school diploma earned in one of the state's public schools. The graduating class of 1994 would be the first group of students to earn a state-endorsed diploma by passing a test in mathematics, science, and reading. Deputy Superintendent Dr. Eva Evans announced that 48% of the senior class had already achieved the necessary scores, the remaining 52% of the seniors would have two more opportunities to retake the test, in October and March.⁵³

The 1993-1994 State Aid Act, as passed by the Legislature in late August, would produce approximately \$300,000 for the Lansing School District than was anticipated in the operating budget. Dr. Halik announced the additional funds would be used to offset the amount transferred from the fund equity to balance the budget. He did not expect to make any further reductions in expenses for the school year.⁵⁴

In September of 1993, District Athletic Director Anne Johnson presented plans to the school board for a middle school intramural athletic program with competition between the four Lansing middle schools. Program expenses would be paid through a fee paid by the students who participated in the sports.⁵⁵ Kris Nickiloff, founder of

⁵²School Board Minutes, 12 March 1992.

⁵³School Board Minutes, 19 August 1993.

⁵⁴School Board Minutes, 3 September 1993.

⁵⁵School Board Minutes, 9 September 1993.

Lansing Youth and Recreation League, donated \$20,000 to the Lansing Educational Assistance Fund (LEAF) to pay the expenses of the interscholastic athletic program for the four middle schools in the fall. The students would not have to pay a fee to participate in the sports program.⁵⁶ One immediate effect of the new sports program was the repair of bleachers in the gymnasiums of the middle schools. Without the competition of interscholastic junior high school sports, the bleachers had been allowed to deteriorate since the district's conversion to middle schools in the mid-1980s.

One of the outcomes of the previous summer's struggle to pass a State Aid Bill was the decision by the State Legislature to eliminate property taxes for financing school operations beginning in 1994. With the elimination of this revenue source, the public schools would be completely reliant upon the state for their operating funds. This drastic move on the part of the law-makers inspired much debate at the capitol during the fall of 1993 to determine the best way to fund the public schools.

Dr. Halik was interviewed by a reporter from the Lansing State Journal on the effect of Governor John Engler's proposed school finance reform plan on Lansing Schools. Halik gave the specific amount of state aid the district would receive and explained the insufficient support it would provide. When Engler criticised Halik for releasing the figures, the Lansing Superintendent responded that it was his responsibility to inform the community of the effect of Engler's proposal. Many other school districts in the state would have the same economic problems as Lansing.⁵⁷

With the retirement of Music Coordinator Duane Smith in June of 1993, administrative responsibilities for the music department were reassigned to Anne

⁵⁶School Board Minutes, 16 September 1993.

⁵⁷School Board Minutes, 7 October 1993.

Johnson, District Athletic Director. In addition to being responsible for the management of the athletic program for Lansing Schools, Johnson was now in charge of the elementary art, music, and physical education programs. Originally the elementary art, music, and physical education programs each had a separate coordinator, but financial difficulties had caused the reassignment of all administrative duties to one individual.

The publication of the music department newsletter had also ceased with Smith's retirement. Although communication among the many branches of the Lansing music program was now lacking, the district's bands, orchestras, and choirs were as active as ever. In addition to concerts at their home schools, the high school groups were especially busy with public service appearances and out-of-town trips. The All-City Elementary Choir and the Lansing Junior Symphony were two ensembles that continued to draw members from schools across the district. In the case of the Junior Symphony, members came from the greater Lansing area. A further salute to the quality of Lansing's music programs was the selection of Joshua Hicks, band director at Everett High School, as the Lansing School District Teacher of the Year for 1994.⁵⁸

The State Legislature struggled during the fall of 1993 to develop a system to fund the public schools without the local property tax, which had been limited to six mills by a vote of the governing body in July. The local property tax had long been the primary means of funding Michigan's schools and over the last twenty years had become an unsatisfactory method of school finance. Public school students received an education dependent on the revenue generated by the property tax in their

⁵⁸School Board Minutes, 2 December 1993.

communities. Cities and towns with high property values did not have to levy as large a millage rate as areas with low property values and the gap in spending between the poorest and the richest schools in the state amounted to several thousand dollars per student.⁵⁹

The legislature compromised on a system of school financing known to voters as Proposal A. The new system was approved overwhelmingly by voters in March 1994 and relied upon an increase in the state sales tax from four to six percent. In exchange, the public schools were now primarily funded through a basic state grant based on the number of students in each school system. Starting with school year 1994-1995, all school systems reached or moved toward a basic grant of \$5,000 per student. The lowest spending districts in the state were immediately granted \$4,200 per student when Proposal A became effective. These school districts would also continue to receive the largest increases in funding each year until all school districts received the same basic grant allotment per student. Proposal A also contained an option that school districts could seek an enhancement millage of up to three mills with voter approval. Michigan voters were very reluctant to grant this additional tax money; sixty percent of the enhancement tax requests were turned down.⁶⁰

The last year that Michigan schools was funded under the old system was school year 1993-1994. As the board considered the changes the new system would bring, it also developed the district's goals for 1994-1995. Among these goals were the establishment of focus schools; two additional types of schools being considered were a fine arts elementary focus school and a secondary focus school. The

⁵⁹Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 August 1994.

⁶⁰Lansing [MI] State Journal, 28 August 1994.

superintendent was directed to develop a long-range plan to address the expiration of the current millage in December 1994 and to study health care cost containment. Dr. Halik was also instructed to develop programs to address the needs of “at-risk” students in compliance with state law. (During 1994-1995, the district would receive \$6 million in funds for at-risk programs.) Two additional board goals were to examine the school code for compliance with current state regulations and to continue efforts to promote gender equity throughout the school district.⁶¹ Once again, the school board goals for the upcoming school year were guided by immediate concerns; the board did not mention any academic areas in the goals.

In addition to the increased activity that marked the beginning of a new school year, there was a new event being organized by the school district. Lansing Public Schools were planning to showcase the abilities of students and employees during the “World Class Talent, Teaching, and Technology Fair” at the Lansing Center on November 17th and 18th. One exhibit hall was the stage for performing arts demonstrations while a another hall held visual and printed displays of the district’s various curricular areas. A second event taking place at this time was the Young People’s Concert presented by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra on November 9th at the Wharton Center. The Friends of the Lansing Symphony offered their docent program to visit classrooms to help prepare the children to attend the concert.⁶²

During the months of November and December, school music groups gave concerts at their home schools and, frequently, performed in various locations around the city. The World Class Talent, Teaching, and Technology Fair was the site of

⁶¹Board of Education Goals for 1994-1995.

⁶²Superintendent’s Bulletin, Lansing School District, 26 October 1994.

many concerts by the district's bands, orchestras, and choirs. Silver Bells in the City was scheduled at the same time as the school system's "T-3 Fair" and provided another performance opportunity for Lansing's music groups. Community-service appearances by school music ensembles included caroling at the capitol, visiting nursing homes and senior citizen centers, and giving elementary school assemblies.

The school board scheduled a special millage election on February 7, 1995, to vote on the renewal of the eighteen mill levy on non-homestead and non-qualified agricultural property which expired on December 1st. One of the difficulties the school district faced was explaining to voters that the renewal of the eighteen mills on business and commercial property would not raise taxes for homeowners. Under the state's revised system for funding public schools, district homeowners paid only six mills of property tax for school operations. The passage of the business and commercial tax was required to receive the full basic grant per student in state aid funds. Like most communities, Lansing voters approved the business and commercial millage rate.⁶³

Among the school district performances during the winter months, was the second District-Wide Talent Show. Scheduled for February 16th and 17th in the Hill Center's Helder Auditorium, the performers were all employees of the Lansing School District. The beneficiary of the proceeds of the talent show was the Lansing Educational Advancement Fund (LEAF), a non-profit organization which provided financial support to various educational activities.⁶⁴

⁶³School Board Connection, Lansing Board of Education, 3 November 1994.

⁶⁴Superintendent's Bulletin, 8 February 1995.

The school district's music and art programs received financial support from a benefit concert given by jazz saxophonist Tim Cunningham, a graduate of Everett High School and Michigan State University. The concert was scheduled for May 19, 1995 at the Wharton Center. The opening acts included the Everett and Sexton High School Jazz Bands, the QS Edition from Eastern High School, Karen Sprecher's Everett Dancers, and violinist Melissa White of Wexford Elementary School. A special recognition at the concert was given to Dr. Eva Evans who retired from the school district after thirty years of services. Evans sang with Cunningham during part of the performance.⁶⁵ Although the concert was intended as a fundraiser for the district's music program, the concert itself became an affirmation of the variety of musical talent inherent in Lansing's many performing groups.

The first year of school funding under Proposal A was the 1994-1995 school year. Even with a slight increase in state aid per student and the at-risk money received by the district, the budget forecast was a deficit of 1.55 million dollars for 1994-1995.⁶⁶ In anticipation of possible staff reductions, Dr. Halik was authorized by the school board to implement any necessary personnel layoffs for the 1995-1996 school year. As the board attempted to reduce the projected expenses of the district for the coming year by \$5 to \$6 million, an unidentified number of staff positions would probably be eliminated.⁶⁷

As the 1994-1995 school year came to a close, the district's music ensembles were busy with end of the year concerts. Each secondary band, orchestra, and choir

⁶⁵Superintendent's Bulletin, 19 April 1995.

⁶⁶School Board Connection, 2 March 1995.

⁶⁷School Board Connection, 4 May 1995.

gave a spring concert in their home school. Some of these groups also played at the Capitol for the Spring Concert Series. Other organizations had special out-of-town trips to celebrate the end of the year. Elementary schools also presented programs in their buildings; some of these programs were more concert-like in format while others were mini-musicals. The end of the year activities were recognition that music was an important part of the school environment.

The most current statement of the music education program of Lansing Public Schools is a two and a half page document that describes the types of music classes taught in the district. As of June 1995, the elementary instrumental music program offered either band or orchestra to fifth grade students in each building. The students could use school-owned instruments and received two thirty-minute lessons a week. During the 1994-1995 school year, a unit in playing the recorder was introduced in all of the fourth grade classrooms in the district. Vocal music was taught to all grade levels in the thirty-four elementary buildings in the school system, each class had a total of ten thirty-minute lessons from an elementary general music teacher. These classes were in addition to any individual school performances that were given. The Lansing Elementary All-City Choir, in existence for eleven years, offered an after-school opportunity for fourth, fifth, and sixth grade students to participate in a performance choir. The Young People's Concerts were given by the Lansing Symphony Orchestra twice a year for students in grades 4-6.⁶⁸

Vocal music was part of the curriculum at both the middle school and high school levels. These choirs performed for their families and friends at annual concerts as well as singing at community service and school district functions. The school

⁶⁸Lansing School District Arts Programs, Lansing Public Schools Music Department, June 1995.

district also offered band and orchestra at the middle school and high school levels. The bands and orchestras performed for many activities in addition to their home school concerts. The Lansing Junior Symphony, established in 1958, offered an opportunity for string players in grades 6-12 and high school wind players to lay in an extra-curricular orchestra. The members of the Junior Symphony came from the tri-county area and rehearsed once a week at the Hill Center for Academics and Technology.⁶⁹

In June 1995, Lansing Public Schools was five years from the end of one century and the start of a new one. In a five year period, the district had had to adapt to the requirements of Public Act 25 as well as operate its schools during a time of continuous financial insecurity. The music education program of Lansing Schools was, as it has always been, tied to the economic status of the school district. In spite of five years of on-going deficits, the impact of budget cuts did not directly affect the school music program. Where the music program had always been well-established, the performing arts classes at the secondary schools, instrumental and choral music continued as in the past. The one weakness of Lansing's music program, elementary general music, even experienced a modest improvement. The general music teachers met each class ten times a year, which was a slight increase in contact time over previous years. In spite of five years of economic problems, the Lansing music program was still very much a part of the school curriculum.

⁶⁹Lansing School District Arts Programs, June 1995.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The growth and development of music education in the Lansing, Michigan Public Schools parallels the growth of music programs in other American communities. Music was first introduced into the Lansing curriculum as a diversion for the pupils in the form of music “breaks” that were conducted by classroom teachers. The classroom teacher continues to be responsible for much of the elementary music instruction to this day. With the hiring of the first vocal music teacher in 1880, music officially became a part of the course of study for Lansing Public Schools forty-seven years after the first school building was opened.

The first music curriculum dates from 1909 with instruction to vocal music in grades K-8. This early curriculum reflects the emphasis on the development of music reading skills that dominated music education in the United States in the early twentieth century. Instrumental music was introduced into the Lansing system in 1910 with the hiring of John W. Stephens to teach orchestra at the high school. The establishment of instrumental music in Lansing Schools occurred ten years before most school systems across the country began orchestra programs.

The course of study for Lansing Schools in 1916 shows that elementary children were learning songs taught by rote, studying music theory rudiments, and learning how to read music. The elementary music teachers seemed to have combined

the advantages of both teaching rote songs and teaching music reading skills to the children. In this 1916 curriculum, the high school music department is listed for the first time and a credit course for high school music was developed in 1918. Lansing students could now participate in music from K-12 and receive academic credit for their high school music studies. The high school vocal music program apparently was a successful one; a concert program from 1917 listed the performance of The Creation by Haydn.

With the establishment of junior high schools in the Lansing Schools in the early 1920s, music experiences were available for more students. At the elementary level, vocal music was offered while students could select from band, orchestra, choir, and piano instruction at both the junior and senior high schools. An elementary string program had been organized in 1919, with sixth grade students being transported to centralized locations for violin lessons; this program was discontinued in 1931 due to budget cuts caused by the Great Depression and did not become a part of the curriculum again until 1954.

With the development of a new music curriculum in 1940, Lansing children learned age-appropriate songs, rather than the sentimental ballads of the past. Elementary children continued to study music theory facts and the use of syllables for music reading. A disparity in instructional emphasis is noted with the music personnel assignments for 1940; the secondary music programs employed nine full-time instructors and one part-time instructor while one individual was responsible for the entire elementary music program. Pauline Austin was the only elementary music teacher in the Lansing system until 1952. This imbalance among the number of elementary general/vocal music staff members and the number of secondary music performance directors continues to this day.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the Lansing School District rapidly increased in size through the annexation of neighboring school districts which operated only elementary buildings; these districts became part of the Lansing system so that their students would be able to attend secondary school. Additional elementary music teachers were hired to offer instruction to the students in these annexed areas; by the 1969-1970 school year, there were seven full-time music teachers and three part-time instructors working in the district.

Three consecutive millage losses in 1970 and 1971 resulted in disastrous reductions for the Lansing music program. By 1971, the elementary music staff had been cut to three full-time instructors to serve the nearly fifty elementary buildings in the school district. Again, the disparity in elementary and secondary music programs was illustrated by the lack of staff reductions among the secondary music teachers. One of the reasons cited for the elementary music teacher lay-offs was that they were not assigned to a specific classroom of students.

Beginning in 1976, the school board witnessed the first attempt by a group of teachers and parents to request additional elementary art, music, and physical education instruction for the students in Lansing. At the same time, funding was appropriated for the purchase of musical instruments by the school district to be made available to students who could not provide their own. Elementary violin instruction began in the fifth grade and elementary band was offered for sixth grade students. The school district was making instrumental music instruction available for more students although the elementary general music staff had not yet recovered from the 1970 budget cuts. In an effort to ease the situation, a state grant from 1977 to 1979 provided for the hiring of an additional 4.5 elementary general music teachers. These instructors were to be a temporary addition to the elementary staff; when the state

funding was eliminated, these teachers were reassigned to fill vacant positions among the regular district staff.

Lansing Schools experienced several years of severe funding deficits during the early 1980s. For four consecutive years, proposed budgets cuts called for partial or total elimination of the music education staff. Each year the school board would listen to appeals from parents and teachers to maintain the elementary general music program and, inevitably, the program would be spared. Although the elementary general music staff was not increased, the program was not eliminated unlike other fine arts programs. During this time, the entire elementary physical education staff was laid off and the elementary art teachers were reduced by one-half. In 1983, the Lansing Board of Education adopted a resolution to provide a comprehensive curriculum for K-12 and music was to be a part of it. This resolution appeared to be in conflict with the budget-cutting actions of the board in other areas.

In 1986, a group of parents and teachers formed "Champions for Children" to improve elementary art, music, and physical education instruction for Lansing students. Later renamed "Citizens for Art, Music, and Physical Education," this well-organized group of volunteers appealed to the Lansing City Council for assistance in funding these programs for Lansing youth. In the plans for improving art, music, and physical education instruction developed by Lansing administrators during the 1987-1988 school year, was the scheduling a millage election to generate the funds to hire additional elementary specialists. A severe financial crisis in 1988 and the defeat of the millage request in 1990 brought an end to these optimistic goals.

As Lansing Public Schools approach the new century, music education during the 1990s has remained exactly as it has been for several decades. The secondary music performance classes continue to be the strongest part of the Lansing music

program. These groups enroll the maximum number of students possible and the high school groups, in particular, are noted for their excellence in competition.

The elementary general music program continues to employ four full-time teachers. An improvement for the elementary music curriculum was the recent purchase of a new music series for grades K-5. Lansing elementary students receive ten thirty-minute lessons from a music specialist during the school year; this is not a desirable situation, but it is a slight increase over the instructional time of ten years ago. The elementary general music teachers are also now protected from lay-offs by specific provisions in the teachers' contract. This protection did not occur due to concern for the elementary music education of Lansing's children, it is there solely to guarantee planning time for the elementary classroom teacher.

Recommendations

Public schools are established and maintained by the community for the education of its children and the local standards are reflected in the curriculum of the public schools. Lansing is a city that is largely dependent on the success of a single industry and the success of car sales impacts on the economy of the entire state of Michigan.

Because Lansing is a working-class community, the voters have had a long tradition of supporting basic educational needs. When the school district has requested additional funding for extra-curricular improvements, the request has always been denied. This determination on the part of Lansing taxpayers to fund only basic programs dates back to a voter rebellion in 1878 when the school board attempted to levy an extra tax for the construction of a new high school. The citizens did not understand why the old high school needed to be replaced.

Music education has always been synonymous with the term “frills” to many individuals. The music program of the Lansing School District has had a constant battle to be considered a legitimate part of the school curriculum. It was almost fifty years after the first school was opened before a vocal music teacher was hired in the district. This reluctance to consider music an academic subject has continued from the first days of the school system’s existence. Even though high school students could receive course credit for their music classes in 1916, these credits were applicable only for music theory and music appreciation classes. The performance groups rehearsed after school and received no academic credit.

Lansing’s performing groups have traditionally received greater support than the elementary general music program. This is due, in part, to the fact that the bands, orchestras, and choirs can demonstrate their learning through public appearances. The achievement of these groups is visible and can be witnessed by the audiences. Lansing’s performing groups also have had a long history of involvement in community events since World War I. Additional validation of the accomplishments of the students in the secondary bands, orchestras, and choirs can be seen in the numerous awards that these groups have earned in competitions. Communities measure student achievement through its output and performing arts groups fulfill this requirement.

Although the elementary vocal music program was the first type of music education to be established in the Lansing School District, this program has had to struggle to continue as part of the music curriculum. Each time the school system has faced a budget deficit, the elementary music program has been one of the first areas to be considered for reduction or elimination usually because the school district administrators did not understand the importance of the elementary general music

program in the education of Lansing's students or for the continued success of the secondary performance ensembles.

The Board of Education hired Benjamin Willis, an outside consultant, to conduct a complete survey of the Lansing music program in May of 1967. His report, dated July 6, 1967, identified the absence of a comprehensive general music program as the greatest shortcoming in the Lansing program. Willis cited current research that showed that music instruction was an important component of a student's education.¹ He referred to the objectives of general music classes as exposing young people to the nature of the human condition; experts would later label these objectives as aesthetic education. Willis argued for the extension of general music classes to the secondary level since school systems such as the Lansing Public Schools emphasized secondary performance classes and did not provide music education for the 75% of the student population who were not enrolled in band, orchestra, or choir.² He also recommended that the general music program be expanded to a comprehensive K-12 curriculum with a coordinator and a minimum staff size of twenty-five specialists.³

The Board of Education must have been concerned about the state of the music program in Lansing Schools as evidenced by the hiring of an outside consultant to conduct a comprehensive survey. It was unfortunate, however, that the school district was unable to follow the recommendations of Benjamin Willis. Three years later, the elementary general music staff was further reduced to three full-time teachers; Lansing

¹Willis, 12-13.

²Ibid., 14.

³Ibid., 17.

Schools was not in a financial position to employ twenty-five additional music teachers as was recommended by Willis.

The success of the Lansing music program has always been dependent on the financial status of the school district. In times of economic prosperity, the elementary general music staff may have been increased by the hiring of one teacher; when budget deficits were necessary, the general music staff was reduced. Although the school district never totally eliminated the elementary music teacher positions, the school system has never been able to employ enough instructors to make the elementary music program really effective with at least weekly music lessons in every school. In comparison, many of the neighboring school districts schedule elementary music classes twice weekly.

The Lansing Schools have been fortunate in the quality of instructors who have taught in the district's music program. Duane Smith, former Coordinator of Music, observed that music classes are the one academic area where the instructor is the sole determinant of the success of the group.⁴ Many of these dedicated instructors spent their entire teaching career in the Lansing Public Schools and the calibre of the district's bands, orchestras, and choirs have reflected this devotion. Lansing's music staff is the reason for the success of the music program.

Music educators were given a valuable tool with the publication of Frames of Mind by Howard Gardner in 1983.⁵ Gardner presents a convincing argument that intelligence takes multiple forms, not just the type that can be measured with an Intelligence Quotient test. One of the seven types of intelligence that he describes is

⁴Smith, 1983 script for radio interview.

⁵Howard Gardner, Frames of Mind, 99-127.

musical intelligence. If music truly is a form of intelligence, then music education must be offered to all students. The form of music education that Gardner describes takes place in a general music classroom, not in a performing group where the educational objective is mastery of the music for the next concert.

The one recommendation that I would make for the Lansing Public Schools would be the implementation of a general music program throughout grades K-12. The school district has always awarded financial priority to its performance groups and, as a band instructor for the district, I can understand the reasons for this action. However, if the goal of music education is the aesthetic education of all students, then greater importance has to be given to the general music program. All students need to have a background in music and the present structure of the Lansing music program does not meet this need.

The importance of general music instruction for children was recognized in the Elementary-Secondary Assistance Act approved by the national government in 1963. This program provided millions of dollars in federal assistance for music programs in financially deprived areas. In 1986, the Lansing Board of Education adopted a resolution to provide "quality" art and music programs by 1996. For the first few years following the adoption of this resolution, the board was active in soliciting information on what components of music and art were needed in a "quality" program. With 1996 less than six months away, very little has been mentioned about this school board goal.

For the past nine years, the annual school board goals have been guided by requirements of specific state and federal programs. The school board goals for 1995-1996 are closely tied to the requirements of Public Act 25 and to local issues such as safety in schools. In fact, the only mention of music in a current document of the

school district is on the list of Lansing School District Exit Outcomes. Number eight on this list is students will have an appreciation for arts and humanities. This goal may be difficult to achieve with a total of thirty hours of music instruction in elementary school and perhaps no secondary music experiences unless the child enrolls in a performance class in middle school and high school.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION PROPOSAL BY THE
UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE ON RESEARCH
INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

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MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

March 21, 1995

TO: Nancy Witucki
2800 Aurora Dr.
Lansing, MI 48910

RE: IRB#: 95-001
TITLE: THE HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CHORAL AND
INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC EDUCATION IN THE LANSING,
MICHIGAN PUBLIC SCHOOLS
REVISION REQUESTED: N/A
CATEGORY: 1-C
APPROVAL DATE: 03/20/95

The University Committee on Research Involving Human Subjects (UCRIHS) review of this project is complete. I am pleased to advise that the rights and welfare of the human subjects appear to be adequately protected and methods to obtain informed consent are appropriate. Therefore, the UCRIHS approved this project including any revision listed above.

RENEWAL: UCRIHS approval is valid for one calendar year, beginning with the approval date shown above. Investigators planning to continue a project beyond one year must use the green renewal form (enclosed with the original approval letter or when a project is renewed) to seek updated certification. There is a maximum of four such expedited renewals possible. Investigators wishing to continue a project beyond that time need to submit it again for complete review.

REVISIONS: UCRIHS must review any changes in procedures involving human subjects, prior to initiation of the change. If this is done at the time of renewal, please use the green renewal form. To revise an approved protocol at any other time during the year, send your written request to the UCRIHS Chair, requesting revised approval and referencing the project's IRB # and title. Include in your request a description of the change and any revised instruments, consent forms or advertisements that are applicable.

**PROBLEMS/
CHANGES:**

Should either of the following arise during the course of the work, investigators must notify UCRIHS promptly: (1) problems (unexpected side effects, complaints, etc.) involving human subjects or (2) changes in the research environment or new information indicating greater risk to the human subjects than existed when the protocol was previously reviewed and approved.

If we can be of any future help, please do not hesitate to contact us at (517)355-2180 or FAX (517)336-1171.

Sincerely,

David E. Wright, Ph.D.
UCRIHS Chair

DEW:pjm

cc: Robert Erbes



OFFICE OF
RESEARCH
AND
GRADUATE
STUDIES

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APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

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1. Where did you attend college and what degrees do you have? What year did you graduate with each degree?
2. Were you employed in any other school systems prior to being hired by the Lansing school system? If so, where and when did you teach in another system and what was your specific teaching assignment?
3. Did you work for any other school systems after you left Lansing? If so, where and when did you work in another system and what was your specific teaching assignment? If you left Lansing schools due to your retirement, what year did this occur?
4. What years were you employed by the Lansing school system? If you were a music teacher, what positions did you hold during those years and what buildings did you service? If you were promoted to an administrative position, what year did this occur and what were your specific supervisory duties?
5. What was the music program like when you first joined the Lansing teaching staff? Be specific as to the types of programs offered and the approximate number of students who were served by the music staff. What conditions do you feel contributed to the status of the Lansing music program as it was when you first arrived?
6. What changes took place in the Lansing music program while you were on the staff? What events and/or conditions were responsible for these changes?
7. During your years as a Lansing music teacher, what changes or programs did you personally initiate? Were these programs maintained by your successors?
8. What positive musical events or changes took place during your tenure? What negative events or changes took place? What was the reason for these changes or events?
9. When you left the Lansing schools, what did you feel would be the future of the music programs? If you have kept in touch with the news and events of the Lansing school system, has your opinion changed? If so, how?
10. Is there any other information you would like to provide that is relevant to this topic?

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