

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION:
PERSPECTIVES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL FINE ARTS TEACHERS

by

MARCUS DALE BEAVER

(Under the direction of DR. SALLY J. ZEPEDA)

ABSTRACT

The study examined the perspectives of six middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision to understand what they needed and wanted from their supervisors in order to refine their artistic methods of teaching. Purposeful sampling was used to select six middle school fine arts teachers from three school sites in a large school district in central Georgia. Data from two semi-structured interviews were analyzed using the constant comparative method. Data from each case were analyzed separately and then across cases in which three common themes emerged: 1) Fine arts teachers believe that supervisors must be knowledgeable in the fine arts to help teachers improve, 2) The gap between the ideal and the reality of supervision in practice was wide for fine arts teachers, and 3) Fine arts teachers' artistic needs and wants are marginalized. Marginalization was due to accountability concerns, namely the arts are not included on standardized tests and part-time administrators provided supervision, and as such, supervision was considered "nonexistent" and "distorted" by the participants. Findings also indicated that to assist middle school fine arts teachers improve, instructional supervisors must understand the "world of the fine arts classroom," narrow the gap between the ideal and what is practiced, and be trained to observe fine arts classrooms with a "larger lens" in light of accountability.

INDEX WORDS: Instructional supervision, Accountability, Arts-based approaches to instructional supervision, Artistry in teaching, Marginalization.

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION:
PERSPECTIVES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL FINE ARTS TEACHERS

by

MARCUS DALE BEAVER

B.M., Florida State University, 1969

M.C.M., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 1971

Ed.S., The University of Georgia, 1996

A Dissertation Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2002

© 2002

Marcus Dale Beaver

All Rights Reserved

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPERVISION:
PERSPECTIVES OF MIDDLE SCHOOL FINE ARTS TEACHERS

by

MARCUS DALE BEAVER

Approved:

Major Professor: Sally J. Zepeda

Committee: C. Thomas Holmes
C. Kenneth Tanner

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
December 2002

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my father, Marion H. Beaver, for his consistent example of faithfulness, hard work, excellence, and High Calling; to my stepmother, Jerry Cole Beaver, for her ice cream and stellar portrayal of steadfastness; to my wife, Janice, for her noteworthy patience and extended longsuffering; to my amazing sons, Andrew Scott Beaver and Nathan Kyle Beaver, for their constant encouragement and “go-for-it” attitude; to my brother, Monte Alan Beaver and his beautiful family; to the loving memory of my mother, Addie Ruth Ford Beaver; and to my Heavenly Father, who remains closer than breathing and nearer than hands and feet.

This is ours!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This journey has been a sweet adventure, and I wish to thank the many people who traveled alongside and provided me with a detailed roadmap. Among those people are my parents, my family, my friends, teachers, students, and the six fine art teachers who served as participants in this study. Most significant, however, is my major professor, Dr. Sally J. Zepeda, for her untiring drive and maddening persistence for scholarship and excellence. Gratitude is also due to the professors who served on my dissertation committee, Dr. C. Thomas Holmes and Dr. C. Kenneth Tanner.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
LIST OF FIGURES	ix
 CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	6
Statement of the Problem.....	8
Purpose of the Study	10
Conceptual Framework	10
Research Questions	11
Definition of Terms.....	11
Significance of the Study.....	11
Overview of Research Procedures	12
Organization of the Study	13
2 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE	14
Introduction.....	14
The Marginalization of Fine Arts and Fine Arts Teachers	15
Fine Arts and Accountability	17
Artistry in Teaching	21
Arts-based Approaches to Supervision.....	24

	Intents and Purposes of Supervision.....	26
	Changing Perspectives in Supervision.....	27
	Supervision and Fine Arts.....	31
	The Middle School Environment and Supervisory Practices	33
	Summary.....	35
3	METHODS	38
	Introduction.....	38
	Symbolic Interactionism.....	38
	Research Questions	41
	Rationale for Qualitative Methodology	41
	Design of the Study.....	42
	Data Source	43
	Profile of the Participants.....	45
	Profile of Andrew County School District.....	46
	Data Collection	47
	Data Analysis	48
	Procedures for Data Analysis.....	49
	Trustworthiness	56
	Limitations of the Study.....	61
	Summary.....	61
4	FINDINGS	64
	Introduction.....	64
	Andrew County School District	66

Individual Cases	70
Common Themes	157
Cross Case Analysis.....	158
Summary	186
5 SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS	187
Introduction.....	187
Research Design.....	187
Previous Studies	191
Summary of the Findings	193
Discussion.....	194
Implications	206
Concluding Thoughts	209
REFERENCES	211
APPENDICES	
A INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	221
B INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS	223
C THE RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVE.....	226

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 3.1: Examples of Open-ended Questions	50
Figure 3.2: Examples of Modified Interview Questions.....	51
Figure 3.3: Examples of Original Interview Questions, Participant's Response, and Probing Questions	51
Figure 3.4: Artifacts Used to Describe the Context of the Study	52
Figure 3.5: Codes and Meanings	53
Figure 3.6: Research Questions and Accompanying Categories	54
Figure 3.7: Example of Respondent Validation.....	57
Figure 4.1: Demographic Information.....	67
Figure 4.2: Profile of Participants	70
Figure 4.3: Example of Interview Questions Related to Research Questions	71

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school fine arts teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts. Given the pressure for universal accountability across grade levels, this study can provide insights about the needs of fine arts teachers and types of supervision that instructional leaders should consider as they work with various populations of teachers.

Since the inclusion of fine arts into the American public school curriculum in the 19th century, methods of supervision and evaluation of fine arts teachers have posed a dilemma for educational leaders (Rust, Astuto, Driscoll, Blakeney, & Ross, 1998). School leaders did not know if fine arts teachers were to be considered artists or teachers, specialists or generalist, and consequently, how the artist-teacher was to be supervised (Barone, 1998; Porter, 1994; Topping, 1991). While Fowler (1988) affirmed that “the artist who teaches cannot escape the need to master teaching techniques” (p. 74), others asserted “there is still the issue of specialized knowledge and technique that are central to the artistic experience and how these are recognized, nurtured, and assessed” (Rust et al., 1998, p. 513). The instructional program is the heart in which schools are built; therefore, the findings of this study can only strengthen, support, and provide resources needed to help teachers grow and improve their craft of teaching.

Traditionally, fine arts teachers have had little choice in the process of identifying what they need and want from supervision (Benson, 2001). Due to the relatively small number of fine arts teachers at the middle school level, they “often teach their specialization alone without the support of colleagues, and rarely in the mainstream of curriculum and instruction” (Rust et al., 1998). Many middle school fine arts teachers are itinerant, traveling to more than one school site daily, and due to the small number of fine arts teachers at this level, they are often marginalized (Benson, 2001; Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999). Adding to the marginalization of fine arts at the middle school level was the National Commission of Excellence report (1983) that subordinated the arts within the K-12 curriculum. The Commission, in effect, positioned the arts to a second-tier status by omitting them from their objectives. For fine arts teachers, this status was not a welcome placement. The arts community made the omission an issue, resulting in the formulation of the National Coalition for Arts Education (1992).

Given the perennial nature of their itinerant status (Benson, 2001), middle school fine arts teachers experience demands that are unique to not only the subject matter taught, but also, to the needs of the students at this grade level. The needs of fine arts teachers and what administrators can do to support them have not, to date, been reported extensively in the research within the fields of instructional supervision, fine arts, or middle level education issues.

The work of the middle school fine arts teacher is complex; pre-adolescent children are legendary for their unique nature, unpredictable behavior, mood swings, and boundless energy (Coleman, 1980; Mills, Kile, Pollak, Struder, & Usnick, 1997; Steinberg, 1985). Middle school students are caught in the middle of social, physical,

emotional, and intellectual development, and these changes are stressful and “wider than [what] elementary and high school students” experience (Kramer, 1985, p. 45). In other words, middle school students go through a type of “metamorphosis” (Toepfer, 1998) as they transition from childhood to adulthood. Eichhorn (1966) named this period, *transescence*, a combination of the terms transition and pubescence.

With the background of the developmental needs of middle school students and the construct of differentiated and developmental supervision, perhaps fine arts teachers should be equally nurtured by the learning opportunities afforded to them vis-à-vis a type of supervision that is more responsive to adult learning needs. Toepfer (1998) made the case that the “one size fits all” (p. 603) types of supervision are particularly ineffective in middle school levels, and suggested that “Supervisory procedures and activities should be developed in response to instructional and program needs unique to this particular educational level” (p. 603).

Turning Points (1989), the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development Report, acknowledged the unique nature of the middle school students, but this report did not “attempt to define or characterize the requisite teaching expertise” (Mills et al., 1997, p. 57) or to identify the type of supervision to support teachers of mainstream core courses, let alone, the work of the often marginalized fine arts teachers at the middle school level.

Through a literature search on the supervision of fine arts teachers at the middle school level, a paucity of research was found; yet, issues and needs faced by middle school fine arts teachers are unique and worthy of in-depth study. Does this dearth of

research mean that the voice of the middle school teacher regarding supervision is marginalized?

A significant reason for the slight of teachers regarding their supervisory needs has been grounded in the fact that teachers' voices have been noticeably absent from the process (Blumberg, 1989; Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Gitlin (1990) noted that teachers have had little say in determining standards for good teaching, while McGreal (1983) explained, "teachers have been viewed as passive recipients of others' expertise" (p. 10).

In addition to the lack of voice from middle school fine arts teachers and marginalization issues, the accountability movement has caused a theoretical dilemma for fine arts teachers. The new reform, with its emphasis on standardization and testing, was and continues to be inconsistent with artistic and aesthetic foundations (Donmoyer, 1999; Flinders, 1989). Whereas a basic premise of the accountability movement attempted to give uniformity to curriculum and learning, a primary focus of including arts into the curriculum was to stress the importance and the understanding of individualistic and artistic modes of learning and expression. In other words, the accountability movement was not congruent with the perspectives and programs of fine arts teachers, and this movement further negated the fine arts approaches already established (Donmoyer, 1999; Flinders, 1989).

Issues of artistry-in-teaching were uncovered during the discourse of supervisory methods. However, experts did not agree on the place of artistry in teaching, and Barone (1998) addressed the question when he asserted, "There is still no consensus on the wisdom of identifying teaching as an art. This is even more true for supervision"

(p. 1120). Furthermore, Cook (1998) described specialist/generalist concerns and explained, “There has been virtually no attention paid in recent years to supervision that is designed to address the specific characteristics of separate academic areas” (p. 1254). In particular, Cook noted a surprising paucity of research pertinent to the use of generalists versus specialists in the supervision of teachers. Do middle school fine arts teachers need a supervisor who is a specialist or a generalist to ensure positive, professional growth? Which do teachers prefer and why?

With the assertion that fine arts teachers have had little voice, have been marginalized, given second-tier status, and have experienced confusion about their artistic role in an era of standardization, Glanz’s (1995) pronouncement, “The gaps in our knowledge of public school supervision are vast” (p. 109) is worth considering in relation to middle school fine arts teachers. In other words, the perspectives of the middle school fine arts teachers are unknown and sparse in reference to supervisory practices, and in regard to this lack of literature, Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) concluded, “Until we know and understand a lot more about teachers’ and supervisors’ beliefs, assumptions, values, opinions, preferences, and predispositions, our theoretical perspectives are indeed not ‘very useful in and of themselves’” (p. 87).

Some questions emerged from this discussion. Do middle school fine arts teachers get what they need and want from their supervisors? Do supervisors “alter supervision models to fit the context and the characteristics of teachers” (Calabrese & Zepeda, 1997, p. 217)? What leadership characteristics do administrators need to demonstrate support middle school fine art teacher growth and their professional development?

Background of the Study

The inclusion of fine arts into the American school curriculum was consistently framed against a backdrop of struggle and status. An exhaustive history outlined the struggle as educators, citizenry, and politicians debated the philosophical, theoretical, practical, and educational implications of fine arts in schools. Hence, the status of fine arts shifted alongside public and political demands to fit the tenor of the times.

Fine arts were first introduced into the curriculum of the early common schools. Though the state of fine arts remained an unstable discipline in schools, as long as fine arts played a utilitarian role, they were acceptable (Wolf, 1992). Wolf further explained, “The arts were admitted to the common curriculum, so long as they served virtue, religion, citizenship, and industry and so long as they assumed the look, the practices, and the diction of industrial or clerical work” (p. 948).

With the advent of Dewey’s Progressive Movement, and his book, *Art as Experience* (Dewey, 1934), the arts found a more favorable stage. The movement nurtured a child’s creativity, encouraged natural impulses and talent, and urged free expression (Wolf, 1992).

During the 1950s, examples of Dewey’s movement were still present in schools. Flexible curricula, electives, and interdisciplinary ideas were openly practiced. Fine arts flourished in this environment. However, with the launching of Sputnik in 1957, American education “responded to the needs and emotions of the time, and science instruction received an immediate infusion of both interest and money” (Keene, 1982, p. 354). Again, the fine arts within the educational arena were pushed to the side.

Although the 1960s were characterized by social instability, there was a shifting back toward the humanities and social sciences in educational settings. This setting brought about renewed interest in reestablishing the status of fine arts in the curriculum. For example, in 1965, Congress founded the National Foundation of Arts and Humanities Act. The same year, the National Endowment for the Arts supported research and the importance of education in the arts.

Since the 1970s, with the advent of child development theory, interest in children's thinking, cognitive development, and intelligence research, "arts education began to emerge in some circles as an important means of achieving curricular integration and addressing the needs of increasingly diverse groups of learners" (Rust et al., 1998, p. 508).

Now, as in the past, interest in and support of the arts has waxed and waned with the cycles of change in education and the political and economic forces at work in the country (McLaughlin, 1987). Yet, the status of fine arts education has remained grim (Rust et al., 1998; Wolf, 1992). Rust et al. (1998) addressed the current status of fine arts this way:

In the wake of California's Proposition 13, school districts throughout the state and in other parts of the country have followed California's lead toward lower expenditures for schools. Arts programs have either been cut back severely or abandoned. (p. 506)

In the 1980s and the 1990s, significant calls for reform were heard, and Mark (1986) explained, "By the turn of the decade, there was general recognition that something had to be done to improve American education" (p. 18). For example, *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform*, developed by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, called for the professionalization of teaching.

Sizer's (1984) book, *Horace's Compromise*, and Goodlad's (1984) book, *A Place Called School*, were significant treatises recommending improvements in American schooling.

In 1991, the National Endowment for the Arts took the first step in a long-range effort to improve the way the arts were taught in public school classrooms and introduced discussion of the benefits of arts education into the national dialogue on education reform. The National Endowment for the Arts panel noted, "That although systematic efforts to infuse arts appreciation into public school curricula have existed at least since the mid 1960s, the arts remain on the edges" (West, 1991, Online).

Established against the backdrop of struggle and status, the voices of fine arts teachers remained unheard, marginalization issues abounded, and accountability reform concerns complicated fine arts teachers and their roles with mainstream curriculum. Experts agreed on the need for research on instructional supervision from the perspectives of teachers (Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). In the case of middle school fine arts teachers, the voices so far have not been examined or reported in the research. A study of the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers might offer a voice and perspective into supervisory practices not known, yielding more appropriate insight to the needs of middle school fine arts teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Today's middle school fine arts teachers are faced with more struggles than ever before. Not only have they been given little voice in the process of supervision and constantly marginalized through their itinerancy, but also their status has been compromised and diminished (Benson, 2001; Mills et al., 1997; Rust et al., 1998; Mahlmann, 1993; Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999). Accountability demands have served to

further confuse the underpinnings of the artistic practices and perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, and educational leaders have grappled with the methods and strategies, (Topping, 1991) to provide this group of teachers with appropriate supervision.

Currently, there is little research that has addressed these issues. Perspectives from teachers are needed but limited. Enough is not known from middle school fine arts teachers as far as what they need and want from supervision, and the work of Zepeda and Ponticell, (1998) served as the basis for this study—What do fine arts teachers need and want from supervision?

Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) explained that the “practical wisdom of competent teachers remains a largely untapped source of insights for the improvement of teaching” (p. 505). Hence, the goal of this study was to uncover this untapped source and identify, more specifically, fine arts teachers’ needs and wants from supervision. From this viewpoint, the researcher wanted to discover the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers. To shape this study, the researcher began by reflecting on several questions, which included:

- What are the supervisory practices that will enhance middle school fine arts teachers’ professional growth?
- Are standard supervisory models enough for these specialized teachers?
- Are existing supervisory models appropriate for middle school fine arts teachers?

Toepfer (1998) surmised that adopting elementary and high school supervisory practices as a basis for middle school practices have proven to be ineffective, and that

“a supervisory program that responds to the range of those needs in the middle level school” (p. 603) was long overdue. This study focused on middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision.

Purpose of the Study

In the broadest sense, the purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they teach—the arts.

Conceptual Framework

This perspective-seeking study is grounded in the conceptual framework of symbolic interactionism. According to Langenbach, Vaughn, and Aagaard (1994), symbolic interactionism is defined as:

A research tradition in sociology in which individuals’ identities are seen as being continually shaped by their interactions with others, and therefore, delve beyond literal explanations of narratives or human behavior in an attempt to understand a culture and its people. (p. 376)

The purpose of this study was to distil the pertinent perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers in regard to their supervisory experiences. The interpretative approach that symbolic interactionism offered allowed the researcher to “enter into the perceptions, attitudes, and values of the community” (Crotty, 1998, p. 8), while dealing with issues of language, symbols, communication, and interrelationships. “At its best [symbolic interactionism] is the notion of being able to put ourselves into the place of others” (p. 8), explained Crotty. Using the research tradition of symbolic interactionism will provide

for the voices of teachers to carry the message of their supervisory needs and wants via a study of their perspectives of instructional supervision.

Research Questions

The research questions centered on the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision. The following general questions guided this study:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?
2. What do middle school fine arts teachers need and want from their instructional supervisors?

Definition of Terms

Middle School: a school including students in grade levels six, seven, and eight.

Fine Arts: Fine arts subject areas in this study included the teachers who taught music (chorus, orchestra, or band), drama, and the visual arts (painting, drawing).

Instructional supervision: The process of working with teachers “to improve teachers’ instructional practices and, ultimately, to increase student learning” (Brundage, 1996, p. 90).

Significance of the Study

While numerous studies detailed various supervision models and methods, teachers have had, to date, little voice in the process of supervision (Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Of the few research studies conducted from the teacher’s perspective, none could be found that examined the fine arts teachers’ professional needs and wants, and more specifically, those pertinent to middle school fine arts teachers.

Although many supervision models are based on theory, few are based on the perspectives of teachers (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). While gathering the perspectives of educational leaders was critical in gaining understanding of supervision environments, the picture has been incomplete without in-depth perspectives of teachers (Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). It was believed that by examining the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, some gaps in knowledge might be bridged, and that by articulating those perspectives, a broader understanding of the middle school fine arts teacher and their needs might be served by instructional supervision.

It was the intent of this study to provide a more complete picture of the supervisory needs of middle school fine arts teachers, and provide a broader and more comprehensive viewpoint of specialized disciplines of supervision of fine arts teachers in the school setting. This study was an extension of Zepeda and Ponticell's (1998) research but was more narrowly focused on the perspectives of fine arts teachers at the middle school level, grades 6-8. Moreover, the field of educational leadership would be broadened, providing instructional leaders the support and resources needed as they assist teachers grow and improve their craft of teaching.

Overview of Research Procedures

A case study approach was utilized which included in-depth interviews with six middle school fine arts teachers in one large school district in central Georgia. The researcher sought to distill the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision. Following the interviews, the researcher utilized the constant comparative method to identify emergent themes which were reported in the findings.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 presented the basic rationale for the study through an overview of the background, problems, and purpose for an investigation of middle school fine arts teachers and what they needed from supervision. Chapter 2 presented the theory and literature related to the following issues: the marginalization of fine arts and fine arts teachers, fine arts and accountability, artistry in teaching, the purposes and intents of supervision, and the foundation of the middle school environment. Chapter 3 provided the research design of the study. Chapter 4 presented the findings from participants and an analysis of the data. Chapter 5 provided a discussion of the findings, conclusions, recommendations, and implications for further research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts. An investigation of supervisory practices from the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers might uncover their professional needs and wants, in order that a more appropriate method of assisting these teachers may emerge.

The literature selected for this review served to assist the researcher in defining the study, the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision. As a foundation for this understanding, the following bodies of literature were reviewed: the marginalization of fine arts and fine arts teachers, fine arts and accountability, artistry in teaching, the purposes and intents of supervision, and the foundation of the middle school environment.

The place of fine arts in the curriculum of schools has been an ongoing debate for many years (Barone, 1998; Donmoyer, 1993; 1999; Eisner, 1994; 1998). Fine arts educational programs and teachers have been marginalized through a cultural misunderstanding of the role of fine arts in schools, exacerbated by itinerancy issues, and

bordered by accountability measures of the past several decades (Benson, 2001; Donmoyer, 1995; 1999; Geahigan, 1992).

Fine arts teachers at the middle school level deal with developing an uncertain pre-adolescent population. The growth and development of middle school fine arts teachers should become a priority to the districts and administrators who employ them. In all likelihood, supervision of middle school fine arts teachers could be enhanced, from the view of the teachers themselves, as well as from those who supervise them to come to a greater understanding of the supervisory situation within which the teachers and administrators find themselves. It was the purpose of this study to contribute to the knowledge base of the supervisory needs and wants of middle school fine arts teachers by asking them what they need and want from supervisors at this specified level.

The Marginalization of Fine Arts and Fine Arts Teachers

An appreciation for fine arts education has existed since the time of Plato (Kahrs, 1992). History has shown that the arts have not only been used to serve utilitarian purposes (e.g., ceremony, political control, enhancement, enjoyment), but also, the arts have served to enhance the learning processes, add dimension and spatial learning, and “engage and develop human intellectual ability” (Eisner, 1985a, p. 68). However, the status of the fine arts in K-12 schools is viewed as a fringe area (Geahigan, 1992; Kahrs, 1992; Williams, 1987). Marginalization signals being pushed to the side, bordered, and treated as a fringe area (Kahrs, 1992). In schools, the marginalization of fine arts subjects occurs because these courses are viewed as special classes, as electives, as therapy for students with special needs, and as after school activities; moreover, many of these courses and services are mostly taught or delivered by itinerant personnel. Because of

the marginalization of fine arts teachers, little is known about the supervisory needs and wants of these teachers (Benson, 2001). In addition, because of the lack of research from the fine arts teachers' perspectives, marginalization issues are exacerbated. Goodlad (1992) explained the marginalization of fine arts in schools this way, "The arts are to a considerable extent tactile—more of the hand than head—and so, goes the thinking that the arts are not within the core of truly intellectual subjects" (p. 195). Geahigan (1992) explained that the marginalization of the fine arts was due to:

A deep-seated ambivalence about the significance of the arts and their value in American education. American educators have tended to regard the arts as more enjoyable than necessary, as something to be attended to after the serious business of school had been finished. (p. 2)

Zepeda and Langenbach (1999) suggested that the marginalization of fine arts occurred because the arts were seen as an "extra because of their [the arts] emphasis on self-expression and the senses, while the schools were seen as places where reason was to be emphasized" (p. 67). Zepeda and Langenbach also reported that the average minutes students spent in music classes had been reduced by "25 percent between 1962 and 1989" (p. 73), and drama programs had an "uphill battle against the tradition of the public school to occupy itself with cognitive interests" (p. 81).

Itinerant teachers move from building to building, teach simultaneously at several sites in one or more school districts, and often teach across several grade levels, such as elementary, middle, and high school (Benson, 2001). In a recent study of the supervision of itinerant teachers, Benson reported:

Conditions that often got in the way of the itinerant teachers' ability to effectively do their jobs were difficulties with travel, adapting to each site, lack of communication, feelings of alienation, confusion over multiple supervisors, and a lack of administrative understanding of itinerancy. (p. xii)

With regard to the supervision of itinerant teachers, Benson found that although there was “dissatisfaction with the state of itinerant teacher supervision, both [teacher and supervisor] agreed that supervision was important” (p. xiii), and Oddliefson (1994) summarized, “Arts educators are laboring under intolerable conditions, not the least of which is the general attitude that what they teach is irrelevant” (p. 448).

Fine Arts and Accountability

With the advent of *A Nation at Risk* (1983), the accountability for excellence movement has been and continues to be the prime focus for educators and educational leaders (Donmoyer, 1999; Flinders, 1989). Watchwords for the education reform movement became “excellence, substance, and rigor” (Pankratz, 1989), while calls for improving education became the “consuming national interest” (Pajak, 1990). Issues of standardization and measurement continue to fuel an era of accountability (Donmoyer, 1999). Related to the fine arts, accountability issues are often inconsistent with artistic foundations and moreover, inappropriate for measuring student success. This study sought to examine the perspectives of fine arts teachers to discover what they need from the school leaders who supervise them.

The accountability movement of the past two decades has been marked with controversy, and many have argued for a common curriculum in which goals and objectives of education serve as the “sole” means in which the system’s effectiveness could be measured (Barth, 2001; Donmoyer, 1995, 1999; Kohn, 1998). Generally, this common curriculum uses standardized testing results as the benchmark of success.

Many scholars, however, have suggested that the accountability movement has impeded the focus of educational goals (Barth, 2001; Donmoyer, 1995, 1999; Kohn,

1998). For example, the standardized test, in effect, negated individualization by attempting to equalize and shape students and teachers in the same manner (Donmoyer, 1999). Barth (2001) argued that very little has been accomplished through accountability efforts and pressure to test students has had a chilling effect on the teaching profession.

Barth proclaimed:

The current preoccupation with accountability and standards has been widely translated into standardization, tests, and scores. Increasingly, the feeling in schools is that everything must be sacrificed on the altar of the standardized test. Accountability is ratcheted up and up by constant, comparative scrutiny of the scores by teacher, by grade level, by school, by district, by state, and by nation. The public, it seems, will have its pound of flesh, which will come in the form of improved performance by students on standardized tests. (p. 92)

Barth (2001) also argued that the focus of standardization became devalued from its original intent, when he declared:

The discussion [of accountability and standardization] has gone so far off track that the unquestionably valuable concept of standards has been divorced from all that goes into building the kind of school culture that leads naturally to the attainment of those standards. (p. 93)

Kohn (1998) strongly suggested that the current accountability movement encouraged the development of unhealthy levels of extrinsic motivation on students and schools. Business terminology, such as, “world-class, measurable, accountability, standards, and competitiveness” (p. 192) have situated the goals of education into corporate hands, and “many of our elected officials have in effect handed over the keys to our schools to corporate interests” (p. 191), explained Kohn. Moreover, Kohn argued that the standards limited students and teachers when he suggested that the standards were too narrow. When students performed with established and narrow standards, the process, “guarantees that some children will be branded as failures because they do not learn at the same pace as their peers” (p. 195), Kohn emphasized.

Adding further argument, Kohn (1998) stated that accountability and standardization efforts were misplaced. Rather than emphasize grades, test scores, and equality, our schools should be searching for ways in which students can become intrinsically motivated and that:

We need to work with children to tap their natural desire to make sense out of the world and to play with words and numbers and ideas. Educators need to help politicians understand that in the long run, carrots and sticks [extrinsic motivators and rewards] are bound to backfire. (p. 72)

Eisner (1991a) questioned the standards movement when he asked, “What really counts in schools?” (p. 10), and later, Goodlad (1992) explained, “We have only to look at the standardized test used to determine the health of our schools to realize that the arts simply do not count; what is not measured is not important” (p. 195). Standardized tests in the fine arts cannot appropriately measure what occurs in the classroom (Barone, 2000; Donmoyer, 1995; 1999; Eisner, 1977; 1982; 1985b; 1991a; 1994; 1998).

Eisner (1991b) addressed the dilemma faced by fine arts educators and argued against standardization of the curriculum when he explained:

Not everything that we [educators and students] want to say can be said in language. Not everything that we [educators and students] want to convey can be reported in numbers. The moral here for school programs is clear: those that neglect or marginalize the fine arts, for example, embrace an educational policy guaranteed to graduate students who are semi-literate. (p. 15)

Although the accountability movement has produced some positive outcomes for educators (e.g., increased professional status, career advancement opportunities, more focused objectives), a theoretical confusion for fine arts teachers has developed alongside the movement in regard to standardization (Donmoyer, 1999; Flinders, 1989).

Accountability, per se, is not a problem for fine arts teachers; however, standard assessments do pose serious problems (Donmoyer, 1995, 1999).

Theoretical problems for arts educators lie in the fact that the arts allow and embrace the authenticity and uniqueness of each student. This uniqueness is bundled in each student's creative style, ability, natural talent, and diversity. Donmoyer (1999) explained, "Arts education has always, at least in part, been about the cultivation of productive idiosyncrasy rather than simply the production of standardized outcomes" (p. 22). In fact, Donmoyer (1995) described this attempt to wed the efforts of standardization and unique idiosyncrasy as an oxymoron—standardized authenticity—as a clear description of the current state of fine arts education in a standardized world.

The accountability movement, although offering some professional help for fine arts teachers, has overtaken the theoretical and conceptual purpose of fine arts in schools (Donmoyer, 1999). Fine arts teachers struggle to match the overwhelming call for quantitative measurements for assessment, essential to standardization, with a more appropriate method of subjective assessment that demands a viewpoint grounded in the arts. The standardized test, which is basic to the movement, stands in stark contrast to the priorities and underpinnings of artistic endeavors and subjects.

For the arts educator, the dilemma is profound, and since fine arts teachers' voices have been noticeably absent from the discourse regarding accountability issues, an examination from the perspectives of fine arts teachers might uncover how best to meet their complex professional needs. Whereas certain aspects of fine arts are measurable through standardized measurements (e.g., theory, history), measurements of authentic performance and creativity are not easily and clearly measured by the use of the standardized test. In fact, Eisner (1982; 1991b; 1994; 1998) asserted that quantitative measures were inappropriate for assessing artistic modes of teaching and learning.

Bracey (2001), in an impassioned fight against standardization, argued, “Consider a few of the personal qualities that standardized tests do not measure: creativity, critical thinking, motivation, persistence, humor, reliability, enthusiasm, civic-mindedness, self-awareness, self-discipline, empathy, leadership, and compassion” (p. 158). Noteworthy to this discourse is the fact that the majority of issues that Bracey mentioned are the very characteristics that fine arts programs encourage.

The accountability movement and its accompanying standardized test, in essence, negated efforts of fine arts programs (Donmoyer, 1995; 1999; Eisner, 1982; 1998). While the intents of fine arts curriculum seek to strengthen the uniqueness of each student, accountability measures strive to assess students as though they were all alike. Instead of instilling intrinsic motivation within each student, the movement has attempted to hold high-stakes tests as measurements of students’ success. The accountability movement leaves little room for creativity, idiosyncrasy, and uniqueness, qualities difficult to measure through objective and standardized means.

Accountability demands have served to confuse the underpinnings of artistic practices and the fine arts in schools. School leaders have struggled with methods and strategies to provide this group of teachers with appropriate supervision (Goodlad, 1992; Rust et al., 1998; Topping, 1991; Zepeda & Langenbach, 1999). This study sought to provide insight as far as what middle school fine arts teachers need and want from supervision.

Artistry in Teaching

Despite many years of discussion and confusion over viewing teaching as an art-like activity, there is still debate on the wisdom of identifying teaching as an art or as a

science (Barone, 1998). The advantages and disadvantages of viewing teaching as art, however, continue to be argued by practitioners and theorist alike (Barone, 1983; 1998; Eisner, 1983; 1985b; Greene 1971; 1995a; Grumet, 1993; Smith, 1971). The arguments have centered on the amorphous nature of the fine arts and their imperatives with the subjective viewpoints, countered with the contemporary trends of standardization and their emphasis on objectivity. These two points of view stand in stark contrast with each other and forward the inquiry into the artistry of teaching. This section of review examines artistry in teaching and the related characteristics and arguments surrounding the teacher-as-artist metaphor.

The teacher-as-artist metaphor is not an unfamiliar one. Experts have explored this metaphor and its surrounding issues for years (Barone, 1983; 1998; 2000; Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 1983; 1985b; 1991a; Greene 1971; 1995a; Grumet, 1988; 1993; Highet, 1977; Jackson, 1998; Rubin, 1985; Sarason, 1999). Inherent to the teacher-as-artist metaphor is the foundational issue of whether teaching is an art, craft, or something else. Mitchell and Kerchner (1983) suggested that the work of teachers might be conceptualized as labor, craft, art, or profession, depending on how the tasks of teaching are organized. Mitchell and Kerchner clarified these different roles as:

- Teaching as labor: a view of teaching that is preplanned, highly structured and routinized, and closely supervised.
- Teaching as a craft: a view of teaching that connotes greater responsibility for selecting and applying appropriate specialized techniques in order to realize specific objectives.
- Teaching as a profession: a view where teachers are expected to analyze or diagnose situational factors and adapt working strategies to the true needs of their clients.
- Teaching as an art: this view emphasizes personal creativity and adaptability. The act of teaching is artful in that teachers must display creativity and initiative in their work with students. (p. 217)

For instructional supervisors who work with teachers and the improvement of instruction, understanding the teaching as an art metaphor is critical. For example, Pajak's (1993) examination of Eisner's (1982) arts-based model of observing teachers yielded the following when considering teaching as an art:

- The skill and grace of teaching can attain an aesthetic quality.
- Teachers constantly 'read' their students and respond appropriately in order to lead them in certain directions.
- Teachers apply established repertoires or routines to the unpredictable contingencies that arise in their classrooms.
- Like art, the ends of teaching may be created in process rather than as preconceived objectives. (p. 133)

Barone's (1998) concepts of artistry in teaching were grounded in Dewey's (1934) aesthetic understanding of everyday experiences, and Eisner's (1977; 1982) artistic approaches to instruction. Barone (1998) advanced the understanding of Dewey's (1934) experiential viewpoint of artistic enlightenment and Eisner's (1983, 1998) conceptual framework of artistry in teaching. Barone (1998) explained his understanding of the artist-as-teacher metaphor like this:

- Teachers, like other artists, make judgments that are qualitative in nature as events unfold in order to achieve a qualitative end result.
- The activity of teaching is influenced in unpredictable ways by classroom contingencies. It is an adventitious activity. When well done, it is not completely dominated by routines or recipes.
- Teaching can be an art insofar as the teacher seeks ends that are emergent rather than pre-formulated or known precisely in advance of the act of teaching.
- Teaching can be considered art when classroom practices constitute acts of artistic expression that provide heightened awareness and deepened understanding. (p. 1106)

Supporting the parallels between art and teaching, Barone (1998) encouraged artistic experiences for teachers and children. Even though this support is most appropriate for fine arts teachers, not enough is known about the artistic experiences of fine art teachers,

the dilemmas and problems they face in the classroom, and of how their perspectives might support the parallels between art and teaching. Hence, the focus of this study was to uncover the perspectives of fine arts teachers and to discover the most appropriate methods of assisting them become better at what they do.

Dewey's (1934), *Art as Experience*, stood as a classic treatise combining forms of art and the experiences of everyday living. Dewey held that the presupposition that art and experiences were inexorably interconnected. Experiences of everyday life could "render themselves aesthetic, or artistic, and therefore contributed to inner harmony" (p. 17). The aesthetic experience, according to Dewey, was what connected humankind to the environment.

Jackson (1998) furthered Dewey's suggestion that experience was a transformation process. Barone (1983) believed that teachers should foster aesthetic experiences in classroom activities, and that these educational experiences would more than likely provide the connection that was necessary for a more complete life.

An investigation into the needs and wants for fine arts teachers might provide concrete evidence of what they need and want from instructional supervision. As fine arts teachers continually find themselves misunderstood and marginalized, the challenge to improve, in light of accountability concerns, remains a dilemma. For fine arts teachers to become better at what they do—the arts—perhaps a study revealing their perspectives about supervision would allow them to refine their artistic methods and practices.

Arts-based Approaches to Supervision

Eisner (1998) believed that the modes of inquiry offered by the eye of an artist, "to see, not merely to look" (p. 6) could be applied to education (e.g., classrooms,

teaching, perception, and analyses of instructional resources) as well as art. As an artist, Eisner's (1998) viewpoint indicated his interest in "bringing the world of education frames of reference from the arts and humanities" (p. 7).

Eisner's (1975) conceptual framework was founded on an artistic perception of the world, and suggested that this method may be a more appropriate way to observe teaching with a "perceptive eye." Eisner believed that the practices and transactions of classroom life were so complex and different, that scientific methodology alone could not accurately and adequately measure what a teacher did and how successful a classroom was. Eisner (1977) summarized, "Educational practice as it occurs in schools is an inordinately complicated affair filled with contingencies that are extremely difficult to predict, let alone control" (p. 346). Eisner believed that with the use of artistic approaches, classroom life was more easily understood (1975; 1977).

Although Eisner's arts-based ideas are well suited for viewing classroom activity artistically, these ideas are often misunderstood, difficult to implement, and time consuming (Barone, 1998; Eisner & Flinders, 1994). Arts-based approaches contain high levels of subjectivity, and terms such as connoisseurship and criticism have an air of elitism (Flinders, 2000; Johnson, 1975). Donmoyer (1993) explained that Eisner's model of observing from the art critic's standpoint was problematic because many teachers and supervisors may not know what literary and art critics do.

As an artist, Eisner saw the value of viewing teaching with perceptive lenses and seeking to appreciate the subtlety and complexities involved with classroom life, through a qualitative viewpoint. Eisner opposed prescribed behavioral boundaries that limited teachers and narrowed the freedoms they needed to adequately perform in classrooms.

Likewise, Eisner argued, supervisors must view teachers and classrooms with non-prescribed methods (1982; 1998).

Intents and Purposes of Supervision

Although the methods and practices of instructional supervision have varied since the inception of formal supervisory models, the intents and purposes have primarily remained the same—“to help teachers improve instructional performance” (Acheson & Gall, 1992, p. 9). According to Acheson and Gall, the broad goals of supervision were:

- To provide teachers with objective feedback on the current state of their instruction.
- To diagnose and solve instructional problems.
- To help teachers develop skill in using instructional strategies.
- To evaluate teachers for promotion, tenure, or other decisions.
- To help teachers develop a positive attitude about continuous professional development. (pp. 12-13)

Waite (1995a) explained that from supervision’s earliest beginnings, the intents and purposes of supervision have been to assist leaders and teachers in becoming better at what they do.

Cogan (1973), one of the early framers of the clinical supervisory model, believed that clinical supervision was a process that would “develop professionally responsible teachers who had the capacity of analyzing their own work, open to assistance from others, and to be self-directed (Waite, 1995a, p. vii). The main intent and purpose of the original supervisory models centered on the professional development of teachers by assisting them to “improve his or her instructional performance” (Acheson & Gall, 1992, p. 9).

The model of clinical supervision was not without criticism, however. Though the model offered a plan and organized routine, the model’s one-size-fits-all solution did

not meet the needs of everyone (Glatthorn, 1984). Consequently, the clinical model of supervision has not always been appropriate for all teachers and school leaders, and according to Aiken and Tanner (1998), clinical supervision was thought to be too narrow to address all of the needs of every teacher.

Changing Perspectives in Supervision

As the journey of clinical supervision traveled through a period of transition brought on by contemporary societal concerns, educational accountability, and political demands, scholars (e.g., Blase & Blase, 1994; Bolin & Panaritis, 1992; Garman, 1990; Glickman, 1998; Nolan & Frances, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1992) attempted to clarify the shift in supervisory methodology and to make sense of the problems associated with instructional supervision. When Glickman (1992) grappled with the shifting intents and purposes of supervisory practices, he said, “I found myself caught between my ‘old’ viewpoints and the realities of how public schools are actually moving ahead to improve teaching and learning” (p. 2).

Nolan and Frances (1992) argued that supervision needed to become a group process of interdependent cooperation rather than the one-on-one clinical method, and they noted:

Given the research on cooperative learning and teacher collegiality, we hypothesize that if supervision were carried out as a group process in which the supervisors and teachers were interdependent in achieving group and individual goals, the process of supervision would become more effective in helping teachers learn about and improve their teaching. (p. 5)

As a parallel to the notion that the shift from a traditional, teacher-centered base of learning to a more collaborative foundational learning concept, Garman (1990) pointed to the need for self-supervision through reflection and the creation of knowledge.

Garman said, “At some point in a teacher’s career, he/she must become a clinical supervisor of sorts because only the actors themselves can render the hermeneutic knowledge needed to understand teaching” (p. 212).

Furthermore, Calabrese, Short, and Zepeda (1997) held that supervisory practice should take a more holistic approach, a viewpoint that would be ongoing, and one that would continue to situate the teacher as learner. This shift took on a flexible method of improvement when compared to the rigid methods of the original clinical models.

Calabrese et al. (1997) confirmed:

Because supervision is an ongoing process that encompasses much more than mere classroom observations, the principal must work closely with teachers and other staff members in determining the goals and objectives of the instructional program, what programs or strategies should be initiated, and how they should be evaluated. (p. 77)

Supervisory practices have evolved with increased democratic underpinnings in which teachers were released from the negative aspects of supervision (e.g., inspections, checklists, prescribed behaviors) replaced with the more positive characteristics of professionalism (e.g., collegiality, democratic practices, peer-observation) began to appear. This shift of power from administrators to teachers was a noteworthy indication of teacher empowerment. Blase and Blase (1994) explained this exchange:

Educational leaders are being asked to surrender power and to share power *with* rather than holding power *over* teachers in the belief that this power sharing will release the great potential of teachers to effect the improvement of schools and student achievement. (p. 5, emphasis in the original)

In this sense, the intents and purposes of supervision were broadened to include the voices and talents of teachers. This broadening “emphasized new types of governance and teacher empowerment” (Blase & Blase, 1994, p. xvii).

These current arguments by contemporary scholars acknowledged the shift and broadening of the intents and purposes of supervision as the more effective way to manage school interaction and to improve instruction. This shift was marked by the characteristics of democratic environments, teacher empowerment, collegiality, consensus, and peer cooperation in an ongoing process of reform and renewal. Purposes and intents were broadened by the professionalism of teaching and schools viewed as learning communities instead of industrial institutions (e.g., Eisner, 1982; Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1983; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998).

Gordon (1992) came to the conclusion that traditional supervision, for the regular classroom teacher, was becoming less and less effective. Therefore, new perspectives for supervision became necessary. Cook (1998) addressed the need for a type of supervision with enough flexibility to be situation-specific, while Toepfer (1998) encouraged “educational curriculum and program practices continue to create needs for differentiated modes of supervisory support” (p. 604).

Glatthorn’s (1984) differentiated model of supervision offered needed flexibility and suggested that teachers be given a choice and voice into the type of supervision they received. Glatthorn explained, “Teachers should have some choice about the kind of supervision they receive—in contrast to the situation that prevails in most schools. All [teachers] are treated the same, even though they have very different needs” (p. 1). With regard to the unique setting of the middle school and the artistic metaphor utilized to describe fine arts teachers at this level, this study sought to explore supervision from the eyes and voices of middle school fine arts teachers.

As a parallel to Glatthorn's (1984) differentiated approaches to instructional supervision was Glickman's (1985) developmental model of supervision. Glickman's (1985) developmental model suggested that supervisors attempt to match the approach they used with each teacher's particular developmental level. The purposes of the developmental model of supervision were to assess the conceptual level of the teacher, to apply the appropriate approach of supervision, and to utilize one or more tools in a more developmental manner. Once the teacher's conceptual level of understanding is approximated, the teacher and supervisor jointly assess the needs for continuing growth and development. The long-term goal of developmental supervision "is teacher development toward a point at which teachers, facilitated by supervisors, can assume full responsibility for instructional improvement" (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 1998, p. 199). Glickman's developmental model of supervision was intended to serve the needs of teachers as they continued to develop by involving teachers in the choice and level of participation in the supervisory processes.

Supervision has suffered from what Zepeda and Ponticell (1998) described as "cross purposes," where both teachers and supervisors are unsure of what to expect from each other. Newer models of supervision continue to have as their intents and purposes the promotion of growth and development, but how these models are applied to specialist teachers and other special programs in schools (e.g., the fine arts) has not been examined at the middle school level.

Zepeda (1995) recognized that supervision by itself would not successfully meet the needs of the teaching force due to changing contexts, and she stated:

To address these issues, we as a field, are going to have to become more creative in utilizing existing differentiated supervisory practices (for example, video and

portfolio) and in creating new and even more differentiated practices that reflect the culture, climate, and context of school systems. (p. 7)

Supervision and Fine Arts

A wide variety of supervisory models exist to support various instructional practices; however, none specifically have addressed the needs of fine arts teachers as subject specialists. Although middle school fine arts teachers encounter many of the same pertinent issues in the classroom as other teachers (e.g., classroom management), it is doubtful that supervisory practices conducted as a “one-size-fits-all” solution rarely satisfy the artistic needs and wants of the fine arts teacher. According to Glickman (1985), a combination of supervisory approaches would perhaps work best for teachers, while Mills (1991) found little uniformity in the ways that fine arts teachers were supervised, and added that the supervisory position of fine arts educators was “unique” (p. 13).

Barone (1998) reported that most supervisors of fine arts teachers did not know whether or not the teacher was teaching well or not. Barone summarized the situation like this, “It is a fine line that arts education supervisors walk these days, a veritable tightrope strung between opinion poles” (p. 513).

Although the literature on the various styles of supervision makes a compelling case for middle school fine arts teachers to be supervised differently, there is a dearth of research directing the supervisor into the most appropriate approaches to practice with the teacher as artist. The call for specialist to supervise specialists, and artist to supervise artists, is an ongoing effort (Mills, 1991; Porter, 1994; Topping, 1991).

In the case of music teachers, for example, Porter (1994) found that it was essential that music education programs be guided and supported by music educators, and Porter argued the need for specialist by explaining:

Because many educators are not trained musicians or music educators, they would not be as suited to the supervision of a music program as a music supervisor. There were needs of teachers that were best met by someone who understood the subject matter. (p. 111)

Topping (1991) encouraged the use of specialists in fine arts areas by clarifying that while the generalist [supervisor] “tends to be closer to the power structure [of the school] and they can have more influence in helping teachers with budget and scheduling matters” (p. 79), the “fine arts teachers will have more respect for a specialist because of the in-depth knowledge and understanding the specialist can provide” (p. 79). Topping believed, “The specialist’s technical mastery and conceptual awareness far outweigh the comprehensive and political acceptance of the generalist” (p. 82).

Although a wide variety of supervisory models exist to support various instructional practices, none specifically have addressed the needs of fine arts teachers at the middle school level. While middle school fine arts teachers encounter many of the same pertinent issues in the classroom as other teachers, it is doubtful that supervisory practices conducted as a one-size-fits-all solution rarely satisfy the artistic needs and wants of the fine arts teacher.

Moreover, no studies could be located that specifically related to the supervision of the fine arts teachers *from* the perspectives of the teachers. Given the complexity of the work middle school fine arts teachers perform, the amorphous nature of the arts, and the marginalization of fine arts in the schools, perhaps a thorough examination of the needs and wants of middle school fine arts teachers, from the perspectives of the teachers,

will help fill in the gap in the literature and give a more concrete understanding into the world of the fine arts teachers situated at the middle school level.

The Middle School Environment and Supervisory Practices

Requisite to a study of fine arts teachers' perspectives of supervisory experiences at the middle school level is a need to understand the foundations of middle level education and its unique setting. Not only are middle school teachers faced with developing pre-adolescents characterized by significant growth and change, but they are also challenged to continually create new strategies and integrated approaches to facilitate this developmental change (Beane, 1993; Kramer, 1985).

The middle school curriculum and identity began to develop in the 1920s alongside the junior high school (Toepfer, 1998). While the existing junior high concept (i.e., junior edition of high school) offered a shorter elementary tenure and additional opportunity for college preparation courses, the junior high school did not meet the multiple needs of the developing pre-adolescent. Innovations over the next 40 years, however, provided an emphasis for the developmental needs of the pre-adolescent through educational integration, exploration, articulation, and cooperation (Toepfer, 1998).

The primary goal of middle school level education was to attend to the intellectual, physical, emotional/psychological, and social needs of the pre-adolescent student. Identifying these salient needs, The National Middle School Association released their landmark position paper (1982/1992), *This We Believe: Developmentally Responsive Middle Schools* suggesting that the middle school concept should consist of the following essential elements for more effective middle schools:

- Educators knowledgeable about and committed to young adolescents.
- A balanced curriculum based on the needs of young adolescents
- A range of organizational arrangements
- Varied instructional strategies
- Full exploratory program
- Comprehensive advising and counseling
- Continuous progress for students
- Evaluation procedures compatible with nature of young adolescents
- Cooperative planning
- Positive school climate

The middle school movement evolved out of recognition that traditional educational programs were failing to meet the developmental needs of young adolescents and to adequately prepare students for the future. The 1970s and 1980s were marked with a “shift from *what* should be taught to *how* should it be taught” (Toepfer, 1998, p. 604, emphasis in the original), and these changes necessitated inventive and collaborative forms of instructional practices to meet the needs of middle school students.

Due to the uniqueness and developmental nature of the middle school student, and because of the more collaborative and integrated approaches that characterized the contemporary middle school curriculum, the need for a more developmentally appropriate approach to supervisory practice began to emerge (Beane, 1993). According to Beane (1990) and the Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1989), a wide variety of instructional strategies needed to be utilized when matching instructional approaches with the nature of young adolescents, which, by default, called for a supervisory practice better matched with current instructional innovations. The complex task of matching a developmentally appropriate practice with the middle school environment was difficult, and for this reason, Toepfer (1998) declared, “in most cases, *all* elements in existing supervisory programs are ineffective in terms of middle level program needs” (p. 608, emphasis in the original).

However, there is a need to discover what teachers need and want from the supervision in which they are involved. The literature from the viewpoint of teachers is sparse in regard to what teachers need and want from supervision (Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998). Relative to middle school fine arts teachers, there were no studies found addressing their needs from the teachers' perspectives. Thus, the purpose of this study was to uncover the supervisory needs and wants from the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers in order that they may improve their artistic practices.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts.

Fine arts teachers at the middle school level deal with developing an unstable pre-adolescent population. The growth and development of middle school fine arts teachers should become a priority to the districts and administrators who employ them. Because of the marginalization of fine arts teachers, little is known about the supervisory needs and wants of these teachers (Benson, 2001).

The accountability movement, although offering some professional help for fine arts teachers, has overtaken the theoretical and conceptual purpose of fine arts in schools (Donmoyer, 1999). Accountability demands have served to confuse the underpinnings of artistic practices and fine arts in schools. Accountability, per se, is not a problem for fine arts teachers; however, standard assessments do pose dilemmas for the arts educator (Donmoyer, 1999). Standardized tests in the fine arts cannot appropriately measure what

occurs in the classroom (Barone, 2000; Donmoyer, 1995; 1999; Eisner, 1977; 1985a; 1991b; 1994; 1998). The perspectives of fine arts teachers, therefore, are critical in determining the professional growth needs and wants of these teachers.

The teacher-as-artist metaphor continues to be debated. The arguments have centered on the amorphous nature of the fine arts and their imperatives with subjective viewpoints, countered with the contemporary trends of standardization and their emphasis on objectivity. Supporting the parallels between art and teaching, Barone (1998) encouraged artistic experiences for teachers and children. Even though this support is most appropriate for fine arts teachers, not enough is known about the artistic experiences of fine art teachers, the dilemmas and problems they face in the classroom, and of how their perspectives might support the parallels between art and teaching.

The methods and practices of instructional supervision have varied since the inception of formal supervisory models, and the intents and purposes have primarily remained the same—to help teachers improve instructional performance. The seminal models of Cogan (1973) and Goldhammer (1969) outlined specific stages of planning, observation, and feedback, and since the development of the clinical model, a wide range of approaches and adaptations to instructional supervision has emerged to meet the contemporary complexities of societal climates, research on learning, and educational transition.

Although a variety of supervisory models exist to support instructional practices, none specifically have addressed the needs of fine arts teachers as subject specialists. While middle school fine arts teachers encounter many of the same pertinent issues in the classroom as other teachers (e.g., classroom management), it is doubtful that supervisory

practices conducted as a “one-size-fits-all” solution satisfy the artistic needs and wants of the fine arts teacher. Barone (1998) reported that most supervisors of fine arts teachers did not know whether or not the teacher was teaching well or not. With regard to the unique setting of the middle school, this study sought to explore the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers regarding the supervision they believed they needed to further develop their teaching.

No studies could be located that specifically related to the supervision of middle school fine arts teachers from the perspectives of teachers. Given the complexity of the work middle school fine arts teachers perform, the amorphous nature of the arts, and the marginalization of fine arts in the schools, perhaps a thorough examination of the needs and wants of middle school fine arts teachers, from the perspectives of the teachers, will help fill in the gap in the literature and give a more concrete understanding into the world of the fine arts teachers situated at the middle school level.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they teach—the arts.

A qualitative case study approach using the constant comparative method of data analysis was employed. Through a qualitative case study approach, the researcher wanted to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers to discover what types of supervision assisted them.

Chapter three includes (a) a discussion of symbolic interactionism, (b) an overview of the overall research questions, (c) the design of the study, (d) the data sources, (e) data collection procedures, (f) data analysis methods, and (g) the limitations of the study.

Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism is one of the “oldest perspective-seeking traditions” of interpreting (Langenbach, Vaught, & Aagaard, 1994, p. 93). The research method stems from the work of Mead (1934), who believed that human action was largely influenced from within an individual rather than from the outside. Symbolic interactionists believed that personal experiences provide the filter through which all that happens to and around

people is interpreted. Moreover, symbolic interactionists believe that only the participant's perception of the phenomena being examined is what matters most (Langenbach, et al., p. 93).

Blumer (1969), who created the concept, symbolic interactionism, defines it this way:

The term "symbolic interaction" refers to the peculiar and distinctive character of interaction as it takes place between human beings. The peculiarity consists in the fact that human beings interpret or "define" each other's actions instead of merely reacting to each other's actions. Their "response" is not made directly to the actions of one another but instead is based on the meaning which they attach to such actions. Thus, human interaction is mediated by the use of symbols, by interpretation, or by ascertaining the meanings of one another's actions. This mediation is equivalent to inserting a process of interpretation between stimulus and response in the case of human behavior. (p. 78)

Blumer's symbolic interactionism served as the theoretical framework to guide the researcher's analysis and interpretative process during this study. The perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision were examined more fully from the ways in which they defined supervision within their own interpretive framework.

Blumer's (1969) structure of symbolic interactionism rests on three core premises:

1. People act toward things, including each other, on the basis of the meanings they have for them.
 2. These meanings are derived through social interaction with others.
 3. These meanings are managed and transformed through an interpretive process that people use to make sense of the objects that constitute their social worlds.
- (p. 2)

Essentially, Blumer believed that symbolic interactionism was a method of constructing meaning from social interactions. Symbolic interactionism emphasized interactions among people, the use of symbols in communication and interaction, and the reality of self as constructed by others through communication and interaction with one another.

Blumer's (1969) first premise suggests that humans act based on the meaning they attach to things. In other words, meaning determines actions (Taylor & Bogdon, 1998). The second premise proposes that meanings are social products that arise during social interactions, allowing humans to derive meaning from objects that might otherwise be devoid of meaning. To clarify this, "the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing," indicated Blumer, (p. 4). The third premise is an interpretive process of making meaning out of the interactions in which humans find themselves.

Since the purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their supervisory experiences, symbolic interactionism and its interpretative approaches provided a means to better construct meaning while analyzing the data. The data collected informed the researcher of the meanings on which teachers, six middle school fine arts teachers, based their perspectives of supervisory experiences.

In this study, the participants shared their experiences to which they attached value and meaning about supervision. The researcher wanted to understand from the participant's perspectives what instructional supervision meant for them. As the participants expressed these experiences, they were, in essence, "engaging in the process of communication with themselves" (Blumer, p. 5). Moreover, according to Blumer, "by virtue of this process of communicating with themselves, interpretation becomes a matter of handling meanings . . . and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action" (p. 5). Based on the framework of symbolic interactionism, this perspective-seeking study analyzed the perspectives of

middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision, giving focus to the meanings and values attached to these experiences.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?
2. What do middle school fine arts teachers need and want from their instructional supervisors?

Rationale for Qualitative Methods

This study sought to investigate the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, and for this reason, a qualitative method was chosen. A qualitative design provided a detailed, close-up lens into the participant's workplace and point-of-view. According to Kirk and Miller (1986), qualitative inquiry allows the researcher to "watch people in their own territory and interact with them in their own language, on their own terms" (p. 9). Since the goal of this study was to investigate the supervisory needs and wants from the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, a qualitative approach that "seeks to make sense of the personal stories and the ways they intersect" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 1) would, in all likelihood, describe, explain, and allow the researcher to interpret a comprehensive portrait of the data.

Supporting the underlying principles of qualitative design, Rossman and Rallis (1998) believed that the goal of qualitative research was to "transform data into information that can be used" (p. 11), and Kvale (1996) explained, "If you want to know how people understand their world and their life, why not talk to them" (p. 1). The

researcher sought the perspectives of six middle school fine arts teachers from three different middle schools in a single district in central Georgia.

According to Glesne and Peshkin (1992), “qualitative researchers immerse themselves in the setting or lives of others, and they use multiple means to gather data, [and as such], qualitative researchers come to understand and are able to show the complexity, the contradictions, and the sensibility of social interactions” (p. 8). In qualitative research, “the researcher becomes the main instrument as he or she observes, ask questions, and interacts with research participants” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 6). In this study, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews as the primary method of collecting data. The interview approach allowed the researcher to “explore in rich detail” (DeMarrais, in press) the insights and perspectives of the participants.

Design of the Study

Denzin and Lincoln (1994) stated, “the purpose of a case study is not to represent the world, but to represent the case” (p. 245). The researcher sought to examine the perspectives of six middle school fine arts teachers who were interviewed two times over a six-month period. Interviews were conducted at each of the three school sites with each of the six participants to better know the local environment that shaped the perspectives of the participants’ beliefs about instructional supervision. In keeping with the nature of case study methods, the interviews were open-ended, semi-structured, and conversational. Interview questions were written in advance; however, the semi-structured nature of the questions (See Appendix B) provided the opportunity for the researcher to probe the participants further to elaborate more fully on what was shared to better understand the perspectives of the participants.

Data Source

For qualitative studies, Miles and Huberman (1994) suggested that sampling choices needed to be purposeful and “characteristically selected” (p. 27). They suggested the following questions to guide the sampling plan for research:

- Is the sampling relevant to your conceptual frame and research questions?
 - Will the phenomenon you are interested in appear?
 - Does your plan enhance the generalizability of your findings?
 - Can believable descriptions and explanations be produced, ones that are true to real life?
 - Is the sampling plan feasible, in terms of time, money, and access?
 - Is the sampling plan ethical, in terms of consent, and benefits and risks?
- (p. 34)

With this in mind, the primary goal was to identify an appropriate group of participants who could provide “believable descriptions,” and six middle school fine arts teachers were selected through purposeful sampling. Purposeful sampling was used to select the participants to obtain rich descriptions and in-depth information about the supervision of fine arts teachers from the perspectives of six middle school teachers. According to Merriam (1998), purposeful sampling is “one that is selected because it reflects the average person situation, or instance of the phenomenon of interest” (p. 62), while Gall, Borg, and Gall (1996) indicated that the goal of purposeful sampling was “to select cases that are ‘information rich’ with respect to the purposes of the study” (p. 218).

The participants for this study were selected because of their position as middle school fine arts teachers. One teacher, in each of the following subjects, was chosen as representative of the basic fine arts subjects taught in middle school: band, orchestra, general music, theatre (drama), visual art, and vocal music.

The following criteria were used in the specific selection of participants:

1. The participants were teachers who had a minimum of three years of teaching experience in fine arts at the middle school level.
2. The participants were specifically trained in the fine arts subjects that they taught.
3. The participants were actively employed in a middle school as a fine arts teacher during the time research was conducted.

The district chosen from which teacher participants were selected was a large, suburban district in central Georgia. A large metropolitan school district was chosen because it was more likely to provide a comprehensive fine arts program, specifically at the middle level grades. The large district also had a full-time fine arts coordinator who assisted in the selection of participants. Also, a large district was more likely to employ all six areas of middle school fine arts subjects pertinent to this study.

The researcher sought fine arts teachers whose experience included a minimum of three years teaching fine arts at the middle level. The district's 16 middle schools employed 101 fine arts teachers whose teaching areas included: band, orchestra, general music, theatre (drama), visual art, and vocal music.

From the list of 101 teachers, the researcher dropped from the candidate pool teachers who:

1. were itinerant (they traveled to more than 1 school site either daily or weekly);
2. had less than 3 years teaching experience; or
3. were in mandated professional development plans (plans of remediation).

From the list of 101 teachers, the list was reduced to 6 teachers: 2 men and 4 women who were then contacted to determine their willingness to participate in this study of the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and supervision.

Profile of the Participants

The participants for this study included six middle school fine arts teachers, and each of the participants taught fine arts subjects in the Andrew County School District. The educational experience of the fine arts teachers ranged from 3 to 30 years, and each participant was trained in the specific fine arts subjects they taught.

Ian Lankford was the band director at Scott Middle School with 30 years of experience teaching music in schools. Lankford's teaching experience included directing two high school band programs and temporarily assisting with the choral program in a former school. Lankford's musical experience in the military band framed his teaching style, and his part-time administrator served as his instructional supervisor.

Neeta Yost taught at Scott Middle School and has been a vocal arts (chorus) teacher in Andrew County School District for 19 years. Neeta has taught in 3 middle schools for a total of 17 years, and the other 2 years were spent in a local high school. Neeta's instructional supervisor was a part-time administrator.

Tracy has been the art teacher for three years at Scott Middle School, and before coming to Scott Middle School, she taught part-time for two years at a local high school. Tracy has been an art teacher for five years but only full-time at Scott Middle School. Tracy's instructional supervisor was a part-time administrator.

Reba Lucas has been a music teacher for 23 years at Kyle Middle School. For her first 15 years at Kyle Middle School, Lucas was the chorus teacher; however, for the past 8 years, Reba has taught general music. Although the school changed names from Dale Middle School to Kyle Middle School during Lucas's tenure, the school served the same

students and maintained the same faculty. A full-time administrator served as Reba's instructional supervisor.

Nick Lord taught orchestra (strings) at Kyle Middle School and has been a middle school music fine arts teacher in the Andrew County School District for 13 years. During these years, Nick has taught and directed the orchestra program in two separate school districts. In addition to teaching in middle school, Nick's background included teaching at the elementary and high school levels. Nick's full-time administrator served as his instructional supervisor.

Vassar Rand taught theater (drama) at Apple Middle School where she has taught for 14 years. Rand has taught in a variety of school settings including elementary, junior high, and the high school levels in addition to a short stint at an alternative school. Rand has taught in both private and public schools, also. Overall, Rand has taught for 20 year, and her present instructional supervisor is a full-time administrator. Previously, Rand taught Language Arts at Apple Middle School before accepting the position as drama teacher.

Profile of Andrew County School District

The district chosen maintains 14 high schools, 16 middle schools, and 52 elementary schools. The school system enrollment is above 110, 000, and is one of the fastest-growing school systems in the state of Georgia and in the nation. In this school system, student enrollment increased by more than 6,000 students a year, and the student population is projected to reach more than 143,000 by the school year 2007-2008.

The district selected graduated 5,646 students in the year 2000, while 6,102 graduated in the school year 2001-2002. Twenty-one percent of these students received scholarships totaling \$35 million.

The large district was within 50 miles of state and/or private universities, and maintained a mutually beneficial relationship with at least one of the universities. Community support for education was high, and the schools in this district consistently ranked in the top percentiles of nationally standardized tests.

Data Collection

Permission was sought and obtained from the district in which the research was conducted. Appropriate school officials were contacted at the relevant sites(s) and written permission was secured to interview the subjects. The researcher assured the coordinator, local schools, and teachers that the name of the county (district), individual schools, and the participants would remain confidential. Pseudonyms were developed to ensure confidentiality. An informed consent form statement relating the purpose of the study and the use of data collected was communicated to each interviewee (See Appendix A) as well as formal statements regarding confidentiality and risks/benefits. The participants were asked to sign two informed consent forms (See Appendix A). One copy was given to the participant, and the researcher retained the other copy.

Data collection occurred in the spring and summer of 2002. The six participants were interviewed twice over a six-month period. After each interview, the researcher transcribed the audiotapes and coded transcripts. Follow-up and clarifying questions were developed after the first interview with each participant.

Data were collected in two face-to-face interviews at the school sites. Interviews were audiotaped, and a pseudonym was used to label each audiotape. Primary interviews were approximately 45-60 minutes in length. Follow-up interviews were held to clarify and enhance data gathered from the first interviews. Audiotapes were transcribed and stored in a secured file cabinet at the researcher's residence.

Relevant artifacts and fieldnotes were collected (e.g., county-wide supervisory manual, schedule of evaluations, district and local school report card) and were later used to portray the context of the study, to compare interview transcriptions, and as an advanced organizer to contextualize data from each interview.

Data Analysis

The study used the constant comparative method as a specific unit of analysis. The analysis of the data involved the process of “making sense of what you have learned” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 127). The researcher followed well-defined steps, and a pre-determined plan of condensing, coding, and reporting facts. According to Glaser and Strauss (1967), the pre-determined steps of the constant comparative method of analysis consists of four stages:

1. Comparing incidents applicable to each category,
2. Integrating categories and their properties,
3. Delimiting the theory, and
4. Writing the theory. (p. 105)

According to Strauss and Corbin (1994), constant comparison analysis holds that “theory may be *generated* initially from the data, or, if existing (grounded) theories seem appropriate to the area of investigation, then these may be *elaborated* and modified as incoming data are meticulously played against them” (p.273, emphasis in the original). When restated, knowledge evolves during the research process, and develops “through a

continuous interplay between analysis and data collection” (p. 273). Although this study did not seek to develop grounded theory, Merriam (1998) explained, “The constant comparative method of data analysis is widely used in all kinds of qualitative studies, whether or not the researcher is building grounded theory” (p. 18).

The current study used the following sources of data to gain the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision: interviews with the subjects and transcriptions of interviews, artifacts collected from the school sites, and fieldnotes recorded by the researcher.

Comparing experiences and perspectives occurred throughout the interview process, and as ideas were discussed with the participants, these ideas were compared with the literature as well as with data from other participants. As a result, large categories were created to organize the material and to delineate the data for further analysis. As common themes emerged from the interviews, they were examined to see if they could unify deeper meanings through the development of the themes.

Following an exhaustive search of the literature and discovering the need for research from the perspectives of fine arts teachers, it was assumed that this study could provide foundational and appropriate baseline data regarding fine arts teacher’s perspectives of instructional supervision and their artistic needs and wants from their instructional supervisors.

Procedures for Data Analysis

1. Researcher’s transcriptions of the interviews, artifacts of the specific context, and fieldnotes were read for the purpose of thematic and content coding.

The researcher conducted two semi-structured interviews over the course of six months. At the completion of each interview, transcripts were transcribed and analyzed for the purpose of identifying broad categories and common themes. This process also allowed the researcher to make notes regarding prompts to be used during the subsequent interviews with each of the six participants. As the interview process continued, semi-structured questions allowed for further probing into themes established in the primary interview. Artifacts included documents describing the specific context of each school, such as: instructional supervisory procedures and documents, enrollment, percentage of racial diversity, ESOL population, gifted and special education programs, student/teacher ratio, and location within the district.

For this study, an interview protocol of open-ended questions was prepared in advance, and each participant was asked the same series of interview questions. The open-ended questions furnished the participants opportunity to discuss and explain their in-depth perspectives, beliefs, and attitudes with instructional supervision and their artistic needs and wants. Probing questions allowed the researcher to seek a deeper and richer explanation of the each participant's meaning. Figure 3.1 provides an example of the open-ended questions presented to the participants.

Think of the last time you were formally observed by a supervisor and walk me through your feelings and attitudes of the experience. What was your sense of the experience before and after the observation?
Think about a time when the supervisory experience went extremely well and tell me about it.
In our climate of standardization and accountability, how do you see supervision helping you in your artistic work?

Figure 3.1. *Examples of Open-ended Questions*

Although each interview with the participants included questions prepared in advance of the interview, the questions were modified for clarity as the interview process continued.

Responses to questions required modifications so that a clearer, deeper perspective could emerge from the participant's experiences with instructional supervision. Figure 3.2 provides examples of interview questions that were modified to add clarity.

Original Interview Questions	Modified Interview Questions
From your perspective, what is instruction supervision?	What is it you think the instructional supervisors should do? What are the purposes of the supervisors?
What leadership characteristics do you believe administrators need to demonstrate to support middle school fine arts teacher's growth and development?	What are the characteristics that you want your supervisors to have?
What are some other things you could add to help supervisors meet your needs and wants so that you may improve as a middle school fine arts teacher?	If you had all of the instructional supervisors in one room, what would you want to tell them so that they could help you be better at what you do?

Figure 3.2. Examples of Modified Interview Questions

Participant's responses to the prewritten interview questions provided the researcher opportunity to probe into the deeper meaning of each participant's perspective. All of the participants were cooperative and willing to explain their deeper perspectives when probed to provide additional and a more in-depth description. Figure 3.3. provides an example of the dialogue including the original question, participant's response, and subsequent probe.

Original Interview Question	Participant's Response	Probing Question
How does your idea of supervision compare with what you actually receive?	Well, I am in a good situation here.	Tell me what you mean by that?
What do you want from supervision?	I want their honesty and support.	What else do you want?
In what ways could a supervisor who is trained in the arts help you with your professional development as opposed to one who isn't?	By observing and making enriching evaluations, observing me and watching me teach, but I don't want that all of the time.	OK, now tell me why?

Figure 3.3. Example of Original Interview Questions, Participant's Response, and Probing Questions

The interview process allowed the researcher to build rapport and relationships with each participant in this study. Although the interview guide gave a semi-structure to the interview setting, a comfort level developed between researcher and each participant. This rapport supported flexible discussions, and the participants freely explained and argued their perspectives with regard to instructional supervision and their artistic wants and needs from their supervisors.

Artifacts and fieldnotes collected at each school site provided the researcher a detailed snapshot of each individual middle school and a lifelike description of the context in which they taught. While some of the interviews were conducted in the participant's classroom, other interviews were carried out in storage rooms and conference rooms. Figure 3.4 lists the artifacts used to describe the context for Andrew County School District and each middle school included in this study.

Georgia Teacher Evaluation Manual Local School Teacher Job Description Local School Administrator Job Description Evaluation of Personnel Procedures Manual Georgia Public Education 2001-2002 Report Card Andrew County School District 2001-2002 Report Card Scott Middle School 2001-2002 Report Card Kyle Middle School 2001-2002 Report Card Apple Middle School 2001-2002 Report Card Evaluation Plan and Monthly Evaluation Calendar for 2001-2002 School Year Intent and Purpose of Evaluation of Personnel Performance of Personnel Statement Philosophy of Andrew County School District Statement

Figure 3.4. *Artifacts Used to Describe the Context of the Study*

2. In the transcripts, the researcher analyzed text and developed codes that identified specific concepts, which assisted in the identification of categories and common themes within and across interviews for each participant, and

then later these categories and common themes were analyzed across participants.

At the completion of each interview, the researcher added codes to the transcriptions to identify themes and reoccurring ideas. These codes also aided in the development of subsequent probing questions to be used in the second interviews, and as themes emerged, new codes were added or modified to reflect developing trends within the data. Moreover, the codes allowed clear identification of the evolution of themes across other participant interviews and the overall process. This process also allowed the researcher to develop new categories and to modify existing categories as the data warranted.

Figure 3.5 summarizes the codes and their meanings.

Codes	Meanings
ACC	Accountability Issues
CH	Characteristics
CM	Classroom Management
CON	Concerts
DIS	Definition of Instructional Supervision
EM	Evaluation Method
FAC	Fine Arts Classroom
FS	Formal Supervision
IFS	Informal Supervision
IS	Instructional Supervision
KNOW	Knowledge
MARG	Marginalization
MC	Music Classroom
MORE	More Supervision
NEGX	Negative Experience with Supervision
NOS	No Supervision
POSX	Positive Experience with Supervision
PRAC	Practices in Supervision
ROT	Role of Teacher in Supervision
TAAA	Teaching as an Art
WN	Wants and Need of Fine Arts Teachers

Figure 3.5. *Codes and Meanings*

3. The researcher developed categories that organized and further delineated the data allowing for the clarification of specific details observed during the two interviews.

Each category was aligned to coincide with the two primary research question that focused this study. Figure 3.6 portrays the research question and the accompanying categories.

Research Questions	Categories
1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?	<p>Teacher Perspectives of Instructional Supervision</p> <p>Teacher Perspectives about Instructional Supervisor's Leadership Characteristics</p> <p>Teacher Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice</p> <p>Teacher Perspectives of Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision</p> <p>Teacher Choice—More or Less Instructional Supervision.</p>
2. What do middle school fine arts teachers want and need from their instructional supervisors?	<p>The Artistic Teacher's Perspective—What Do They Want and Need from Instructional Supervision?</p> <p>The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision</p> <p>Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision</p>

Figure 3.6. Research Questions and Accompanying Categories

Furthering the detailed work of qualitative analysis, Wolcott (1999) explained, “In analysis, we know what we are doing because we examine the data following agreed-upon procedures for reporting facts, figures, and findings” (p. 50). Glesne and Peshkin (1992) clarified the comprehensive work of data analysis:

Data analysis involves organizing what you have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what you have learned. Working with the data, you create explanations, pose hypotheses, develop theories, and link your story to other stories. To do so, you must categorize, synthesize, search for patterns, and interpret the data you have collected. (p. 127)

During analysis and data collection, the researcher also looked for common themes and explanations of the data. In this case, analysis and the subsequent task of interpretation took place simultaneously, which Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested, “Data analysis done simultaneously with data collection enables you to focus and shape the study as it proceeds” (p. 127).

Kvale (1996) recommended five approaches to the analysis process that included condensation, categorization, narrative structuring, interpretation, and re-interview, whereas Glesne and Peshkin (1992) suggested the consistent reflection on data, organization, memo writing, analytic files, rudimentary coding schemes, and reports to make sense of the data.

Following the analysis process, interpretation of the data, reporting findings, and making judgments became the focus of the study. In other words, the interpretation transformed the data in its “acquired form into a form that communicates the promise of a study’s findings. This interpretation form, then, became the means of identifying patterns and contributing to greater understanding” (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 145). According to Wolcott (1999), “interpretations are what we ourselves make of the data, a sense-making attentive to carefully analyzed facts.” (p. 50), and “*Interpretation* involves attaching meaning and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions,” explained Patton (1980, p. 268, emphasis in the original).

In this study, the researcher constantly compared the participant's responses from both interviews. These responses were constantly compared with the assistance of data collected through interviews, artifacts, and fieldnotes. Perspectives of middle school fine arts teacher's responses were organized into categories and coded for analysis of common themes. It was the intent of this study to collect data related to the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision, and that an examination of these perspectives would enhance and broaden the supervisory approaches used with middle school fine arts teachers.

During this study, data analysis was conducted simultaneously with data collection. The textural and structural descriptions were integrated and synthesized into a final analysis. Conclusions and finding were drawn from the data as the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, their wants and needs from supervision, emerged.

Trustworthiness

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), trustworthiness is established when the researcher "persuades the audience that the findings were worth taking into account" (p. 290), while Merriam (1998) stressed the importance of trustworthiness necessary to any form of inquiry. For Lincoln and Guba, trustworthiness was strengthened when the researcher applied these four imperatives when reporting data: validity, reliability, generalizability, and neutrality.

Validity

Walcott (1990) described validity as "getting it right" or trying not to "get it all wrong" (p. 25), and Kirk and Miller (1986) clarified by stating, "validity is the extent to

which it [measurement] gives the correct answer” (p. 19). Merriam (1998) simply explained that validity described how closely research finding matched reality.

Respondent validation was the type of validation used in this study, which is a process of reporting findings after the interviews and then reporting these preliminary findings back to the participants. This type of validation gave the participants the opportunity to confirm the trustworthiness of any findings throughout the period of data collection. Figure 3.7 illustrates examples of respondent validation through the dialogue that occurred between the researcher and participants.

Interview # 2:

Participant: Reba Lucas

Interviewer: Bold Type

During our first interview, you talked mostly about teaching another subject rather than the fine arts subject you teach now. Is that because there was a fear that this information would get back?

Yes, I was afraid that it would get back to the county level.

Talk about that fear a little bit, so that we can understand it better.

Interview # 2:

Participant: Ian Lankford

Interviewer: Bold Type

I noticed from the first transcript you said that in most of the schools you’ve taught before, nobody [supervisors] ever came to see you.

Right.

How did that make you feel?

It didn’t make me feel good. It was more or less, “if it’s not broke, don’t fix it.” But I think we have made large strides now to getting that corrected.

Here at this school?

Yes.

Figure 3.7. *Example of Respondent Validation*

The participants in this study read and examined each transcription two weeks after their taped interview. Participants were provided opportunity to retract statements, clarify statements, or change statements to ensure the validity of the primary data collected, and constant respondent validation over a prolonged period allowed for a clearer portrayal of the meanings of the data.

Reliability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), reliability is the qualitative equivalent of dependability. Reliability strengthened the “extent to which a measurement procedure yielded the same answer however and whenever it is carried out” (p. 19), according to Kirk and Miller (1986), and Merriam (1988) concurred by explaining reliability as the extent to which one’s findings can be replicated. To satisfy the reliability purposes of this study, triangulation was applied, and the researcher’s assumptions were revisited.

Creswell (1998) provided that triangulation and its use of multiple data sources “shed light on a theme or perspective” (p. 202), and increased the reliability of the data.

About triangulation, Mathison (1988) proposed:

Good research practice obligates the researcher to triangulate, that is, to use multiple methods, data sources, and researchers to enhance the validity of research findings. Regardless of which philosophical, epistemological, or methodological perspectives an evaluator is working from, it is necessary to use multiple methods and sources of data in the execution of a study in order to withstand critique by colleagues. (p. 13)

Triangulation was achieved for this study of teacher perspectives of instructional supervision through collecting and analyzing multiple sources of data, which included:

1. transcripts of interviews: Each participant was interviewed twice and for each interview, a tape recording was made and transcribed.

2. artifacts collected at the school sites (three middle schools). Artifacts included such items as the district teacher evaluations procedures and policies, state, district, and local 2001-2002 report cards and contextual information including: enrollment, percentage of racial diversity, ESOL population, gifted and special education programs, student/teacher ratio, and location within the district.
3. fieldnotes: Fieldnotes included what the researcher saw and recording during interviews with the six middle school teachers who participated in this study.

Not only did triangulation strengthen the reliability and validity of this study through the uses of multiple data sources, but also the reporting of the researcher's assumptions and personal biases (member checks) increased reliability. No researcher enters the field with a clean slate of experiences, and therefore it was necessary to state the researcher's assumptions through a process Moustakas (1994) called "bracketing." Bracketing is a method to get at the assumptions and beliefs the researcher brings to the study (DeMarrais, in press). For example, the researcher enumerated his assumptions about being a fine arts teacher and his beliefs about instructional supervision. In short, the researcher received no artistic help from instructional supervision during his first years of teaching. Aside from a few minor classroom management changes suggested by a supervisor, at no time did the researcher receive any assistance from a supervisor to help him as a music teacher. As a fine arts teacher, the researcher knew the needs were different and sought ways to correct the problems. Appendix C, the Researcher's Perspectives, were "bracketed" and continually revisited in an attempt to check for bias and to help ensure reliability. This process served as a check during the interpretation

phase “to evaluate the extent to which the researcher’s beliefs and assumptions interfered with the interpretation” (DeMarrais, in press).

Generalizability

Generalizability explained to what extent the findings of a study could be applied or transferred to another situation (Merriam, 1998). While Issac and Michael (1984) warned about the one-shot case study and questioned the idea of transferability, other researchers, such as Lincoln and Guba (1985), argued that the case study approach was an effective method for investigating context-specific settings, such as, middle school fine arts teachers perspectives of their supervisory experiences. This study was not intended to make broad, sweeping recommendations to all fine arts environments, and it is limited to the experiences of the six middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision.

Neutrality

In this study, three auditors were used to ensure neutrality: a former middle school fine arts teacher who is now a principal and now supervises fine arts teachers. A district fine arts coordinator from another state also served as an auditor. Additionally, the researcher’s major professor conducted an audit trail of all data (transcripts, artifacts, and fieldnotes).

Patton (1990) acknowledged limitations for neutrality in qualitative research due to the fact that the “researcher is the instrument of both data collection and data interpretation, and because a qualitative study includes having personal contact with and getting close to the people and the situation under study” (p. 54). According to Patton

(1990), neutrality means that the “investigator does not set out to prove a particular perspective or manipulate the data to arrive at predisposed truths” (p. 55).

Limitations of the Study

Not only was this study limited to the knowledge and experiences of the six middle school fine arts teachers, but also it was limited to the participant’s perspectives of instructional supervision and their understanding of their own artistic needs and wants from their supervisors.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. Since this study sought to investigate the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers, a qualitative method was chosen. An investigation of supervisory practices from the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers might uncover their professional needs and wants, so that a more appropriate method of assisting middle school fine arts teachers might surface to help them and others become better at their craft. Given the complexity of the work middle school fine arts teachers do, the amorphous nature of the arts, and the marginalization of fine arts in the school, an investigation into the needs and wants of fine arts teachers might provide concrete evidence of what types of instructional supervision that would be more beneficial to them.

Qualitative methods offer a flexible approach in the analysis and data collecting phases of research (Patton, 1990), and the case study, in-depth interview process was the primary method of collecting data. The interview approach allowed the researcher to “explore in rich detail” (DeMarrais, in press) the insights and perspectives of the

participants, six middle school fine arts teachers who are employed in one county in Georgia.

The participants for this study were selected because of their position as middle school fine arts teachers. One teacher, in each of the following subjects, was chosen as representative of the basic fine arts subjects taught in middle school: visual arts, dramatic arts, general music, band, orchestra, and chorus.

The teacher participants were teachers who had a minimum of three years experience teaching fine arts at the middle school level. The teacher participants were specifically trained in the fine arts subjects that they taught. The teacher participants were actively employed in a middle school as fine arts teachers during the time research was conducted.

The district chosen from which teacher participants were selected was a large, suburban district in central Georgia. The district chosen maintains 14 high schools, 16 middle schools, and 52 elementary schools.

Written permission to collect data from the school system and each participant was secured, and data were collected in two face-to-face interviews at each of the school sites in which the teachers worked. Interviews were approximately 45-60 minutes in length. Follow-up interviews were conducted on a needs basis to clarify, enhance, or to correct the data gathered from the first two interviews.

The establishment of trustworthiness was a difficult task, and there were no set rules and formulas. Riessman (1993) explained the problem, “It is apparent that validation in narrative studies cannot be reduced to a set of formal rules or standardized technical procedures. Validation of interpretive work is an ongoing, difficult issue” (p. 69).

Kvale (1996) concluded, “The understanding of verification starts in the lived world and daily language where issues of reliable observations, or generalization from one case to another, of valid arguments, are part of everyday social interaction” (p. 231). Simply stated:

- To validate is to check
- To validate is to question
- To validate is to theorize. (Kvale, 1996, p. 242)

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of six middle school fine arts teachers and their perspectives of instructional supervision and to discover fine arts teacher’s artistic needs and wants from their supervisors. This study hoped to identify the issues and challenges facing fine arts teachers and their supervisory experiences so that fine arts teachers might improve at their craft of teaching.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school fine arts teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts.

Given the pressure for universal accountability across grade levels, this study provided insights about the needs of middle school fine arts teachers and the types of supervision that instructional leaders could consider as they work with various populations of fine arts teachers. Because the instructional program is the heart in which schools are built (Garman, 1986), the findings of this study can only strengthen, support, and provide resources needed to help teachers to grow and to improve their teaching by hearing from the voices of fine arts teachers directly what they need from the leadership personnel who supervise them.

Using a qualitative case study approach, the researcher hoped to uncover the embedded values, attitudes and needs of middle school fine arts teachers by asking them to share their experiences with instructional supervision. The following general questions guided this study:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?

2. What do middle school fine arts teachers need and want from their instructional supervisors?

Addressing these questions, the researcher collected data using a qualitative, multi-case study approach and the constant comparative method of data analysis. The participants included six middle school teachers from three schools in one suburban school system. Data were derived from multiple sources and included transcriptions of the interviews, the researcher's fieldnotes, and relevant artifacts from each school site, including the procedures and policies that govern the supervision of instruction. From the broader context, artifacts including policies and procedures governing the supervision, evaluation, and staff development from the district-level were collected for comparative analysis with the artifacts from within each school.

Data collection occurred in the spring and summer of 2002. Six participants were interviewed twice over a six-month period. Participants were selected because of their position as middle school fine arts teachers. One teacher, in each of the following subjects, was chosen as representative of the basic fine arts subjects taught in middle school: band, orchestra, general music, theatre (drama), visual art, and vocal music. From the district's list of 101 middle school fine arts teachers and the recommendation of the district fine arts coordinator, the 6 teachers were chosen from 3 separate middle school sites.

The findings detailed in this chapter emerged from an analysis of the data collected from six individual cases and also from a summative examination across the cases. The findings were categorized and coded, patterns were noted, and then overarching propositions were developed to represent the final analysis of data.

The profile of each middle school fine arts teacher and the specific context wherein each teacher works frames the data presented in Chapter Four. The context of the school district sets the larger frame from which each school site is based.

Andrew County School District

Andrew County school district is a large metropolitan school district in central Georgia. A large metropolitan school district was chosen because it was more likely to provide a comprehensive fine arts program, specifically at the middle level grades. Andrew County district also employed a full-time fine arts coordinator who assisted in the selection of participants. The researcher was employed in Andrew County and was familiar with the fine arts program, and this is why the fine arts director assisted with the selection of participants.

Andrew County Schools maintain 14 high schools, 16 middle schools, and 52 elementary schools. The school system enrollment is above 110,075 students who were taught by the 7,299 teachers (1,078 male and 6,221 female), a ratio of 1 male teacher to every 5.8 female teachers. Andrew County is one of the fastest-growing school systems in the nation. The district graduated 6,102 students in 2001, with an 84.8% completion rate from years 1997-2001.

Andrew County school district employs 7,183 certified teachers (89.6% of workforce), 458 support personnel (5.9% of workforce), and 368 administrators (4.6% of the workforce). The average teacher salary is \$43,490.85 per year.

Student population of the district is racially diverse with 17,998 Black students (16.4 %), 68,333 White students (62.3 %), 11,273 Hispanic students (10.3%), 9,581 Asian students (8.7%), 162 American Indian (0.1%), and 2,256 Multi-racial students

(2.1%). Twenty-one percent of all students receive free and reduced-priced lunches, and the dropout rate in grades 9-12 is 1.4%.

Figure 4.1. highlights the demographics of the three middle schools selected for this study:

Name of Middle School	Number of Students	Percentage of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch	Percentage of Students in Gifted Programs	Number of Administrators	Number of Teachers
Scott Middle School	1,500	18.3%	12.1%	6	96
Kyle Middle School	3,139	18.2%	18.2%	8	191
Apple Middle School	1,974	16.8%	11.6%	6	127

Figure 4.1. Demographic Information

Instructional Supervision—The Procedures of Andrew County

Teacher evaluation procedures for all administrators in Andrew County School District are identical, and each administrator is trained at the district office where evaluative procedures are reviewed with administrators each year. In the state of Georgia and in each public school district, supervision falls under the rubric of evaluation, and each public school teacher and administrator is required to follow the design set forth in the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP). Each school represented in this study followed the requirements set forth by the GTEP. GTEP consists of classroom observations by trained supervisors for scoring the Georgia Teacher Observation Instrument (GTOI) and ongoing school-wide observations for scoring the Georgia Teacher Duties and Responsibilities Instrument (GTDRI). The Andrew County School

District trained administrators in the supervisory requirements set forth in the GTEP with the expectation that the supervisor will follow the rules and regulations as they observe and evaluate teachers in the system. Requirement for training in teacher evaluation according to the Andrew County procedures are that:

Evaluation activities must be conducted by trained evaluators. A trained GTEP evaluator is defined as an individual who has attended all state-approved, required GTEP training sessions including conferencing and Professional Development Plan (PDP) training segments, a school-based practice activity, and required update training, and has met state-adopted evaluator proficiency requirements. (GTEP, 1993, p. 3)

Each participant in this study was in a school that followed these guidelines, and all of the supervisors were trained with the same manual and procedures. The processes and procedures of the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program were established by the Georgia Department of Education, July 1993. The evaluation manual detailed the philosophy, purposes, procedures, responsibilities, and observation instruments, including all of the forms necessary to evaluate teachers in Andrew County. Teacher job descriptions are included, as well as standard and formative observation instruments.

The philosophy and purposes of teacher evaluation are enumerated in the Andrew County Administrative manual:

Teacher evaluation is an integral component in the process of improving teaching and learning. An effective evaluation program results when teachers are treated as professionals and evaluators are successful in using evaluations to reinforce effective practices and to improve teaching.

The purposes of the annual performance evaluation are: (1) to identify and reinforce effective teaching practices; (2) to identify areas where development can improve instructional effectiveness; and (3) to identify teachers who do not meet the minimum standards so that appropriate action can be taken. (GTEP, 1993, p. 1)

Basically, teachers with fewer than 3 years of teaching experience are evaluated with the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), which requires a minimum of 3 unannounced classroom observations of at least 20 minutes each. Results of each observation are recorded on the standard observation form and returned to the teacher within five working days. Pre- and post-conferences are held to determine areas of improvement. Although these conferences are not mandated, the post-observation conference is conducted only at a teacher's request.

For teachers with more than 3 years experience, the summative observation tool includes one unannounced classroom observation of at least 20 minutes. The Results Based Evaluation System (RBES) instrument is used for the experienced teacher. An experienced teacher is defined as a teacher with three or more complete years of teaching experience in the district. The RBES includes pre- and post-observation conferences held with the supervisor for the purpose of setting personal and professional goals that directly relate to the academic goals of the school for each specific year. For instance, if one of the major goals of the school is to improve reading scores for the entire school, one of the goals of each teacher must be to implement a plan to improve reading through their curriculum. Goals and implementation plans are written at the beginning of the year, and at the conclusion of the year, teachers are to show how the goal was reached including baseline data as to the effectiveness of the implementation plan.

Observation guidelines include:

It is both impossible and undesirable to write rules for every evaluation situation. In order to be effective, evaluators must use a common sense approach to evaluation. Observations for the evaluation should take place during teaching situation which provide appropriate opportunities for interaction of either a student-focused or teacher –focused nature. In cases where the students are engaged in appropriate non-interactive learning activities, such as silent reading,

independent writing, or listening to a story, evaluators should not score the lesson. Evaluators are encouraged to use professional discretion in the selection of observation times. (GTEP, 1993, p. 8)

Primarily, supervisors are trained to look for effectiveness in three broad areas of teaching tasks when observing a teacher. The teacher (1) provides instruction, (2) assesses and encourages student progress, and (3) manages the learning environment.

Individual Cases

The following section provides the perspectives of each participant as individual cases at each specific school site. An overview of each middle school fine arts teacher is presented in Figure 4.2.

Name of Participant	Name of Middle School	Years in Education	Subjects Taught	Taught at X Number of Schools	Assigned Supervisor Full or Part-time
Ian Lankford	Scott Middle School	30 years	Band and Chorus	3	Part-time
Neeta Yost	Scott Middle School	19 years	Chorus	4	Part-time
Tracy Born	Scott Middle School	5 years	Art	2	Part-time
Reba Lucas	Kyle Middle School	23	General Music and Chorus	1	Full-time
Nick Lord	Kyle Middle School	13	Strings and Band	2	Full-time
Vassar Rand	Apple Middle School	20	Language Arts and Drama	4	Full-time

Figure 4.2. *Profile of Participants*

The interview guide (See Appendix B) was developed to guide each interview with participants. Each participant was asked the same open-ended questions to discover their perspectives about instructional supervision provided to them by their supervisors. The open-ended questioning allowed for the interviewer to probe in-depth into the

underlying needs and wants from instructional supervision and if and how supervision assisted them become better at teaching fine arts subjects. The questions were formulated to support the two research questions by providing data to search for overarching themes and propositions. Figure 4.3 provides an example of the interview questions and the questions related to the two primary research questions.

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?	Think of the last time you were observed by a supervisor, and walk me through your feelings and attitudes of the experience. What was your sense of the experience before and after the observation? How does your idea of supervision compare with what you receive?
2. What do middle school fine arts teachers want and need from their instructional supervisors?	In what ways do you believe a supervisor could help you with your artistic needs and wants? What do you need from your supervisor so that you can improve as a fine arts teacher?

Figure 4.3. *Examples of Interview Questions Related to Research Questions.*

The first three teachers interviewed were from Scott Middle School. Ian Lankford was the band director, Neeta Yost was the chorus teacher, and Tracy Born was the art teacher. All three of these fine arts teachers shared the same supervisor. Each teacher had a different perspective on the supervisor and the tasks that were to be performed by the supervisor. Each case will detail the perspectives of the instructional supervisor directly responsible for these three teachers at Scott Middle School.

Scott Middle School is located in the Southern section of Andrew County School District and has the smallest census of students of the three sites included in this study. Scott Middle School has 1,500 students and 96 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 15.6:1. Of the 1,500 students, 274 (18.3%) were eligible for free and reduced-priced

lunches. More than half of the teaching force is experienced with 9 first year teachers, 30 from 11-20 years, while 30 teachers have 21-30 years of experience. Two teachers have taught more than 30 years. Of the 96 teachers at Scott Middle School, 82 are female and 14 are male. By race, the student body is ethnically diverse with 380 Black students (25.3%), 990 White students (66.0%), 59 Hispanic students (3.9%), 35 Asian students (2.3%), 5 American Indian (0.3%), and 31 Multi-racial (2.1). Scott Middle School enrolled 248 (16.5%) students in gifted programs, 181 (12.1) students in special education programs, and 22 (1.5) students were in ESOL (English to Speakers of Other Languages) programs.

At Scott Middle School there were six administrators involved with supervision: one principal, three assistant principals assigned to grade levels, and two part-time administrators assigned to special education and exploratory classes. Ian's band classes were supervised by one of the part-time administrators. Ian was 7 of 6 fine arts teachers and taught 353 students during the 2001-2002 school year.

Ian Lankford

Ian Lankford has been a middle school band teacher for 11 years at Scott Middle School. Although most of Ian's 30-year career as a band teacher has been in 2 high schools and 1 junior high school, the transition to middle school has been a "healthy one." Acknowledging the hectic schedule of the high school band program (jazz band, marching band, symphonic band, concert band, ROTC band, festivals, and All-State competition), Ian decided to move to the middle school to have more time for his family. Ian explained:

Well, we've talked about it and I think I would like to have some time with the family, and three kids, and the only time they see me is if they are riding on the

school bus with me going to a game, because I was spending all of my time with the band, and they are getting older and they need me to be around more, to be more a part of their lives.

Lankford's history also included directing the high school chorus. Ian admitted that compared to band, teaching chorus was "a very eye opening experience." Ian indicated that he "didn't have a background in chorus" and that he had not "done any singing since singing in church when I was in junior high school because my mom made me go." When Ian took over the chorus program, it "grew from 30 girls that liked to talk and chew gum to 75 the third year that I've was there."

Moving to middle school band was also a challenge for Lankford because of the maturity level of the students. "I miss a lot of the sophistication and the grownup-ness," confessed Ian. "When they took the 9th grade out and made the middle school instead of doing junior high schools, [it] took that one additional year of maturity out, that makes all of the difference in the world," explained Ian. Lankford summarized this idea by stating, "You are the teacher, you are there every day at the middle school, and you can blame no one but yourself if things get screwed up."

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

Ian Lankford responded to questions designed to discover his perspectives, beliefs, and attitudes of instructional supervision. Lankford described formal and informal supervisory experiences, the lack of an appropriate fine arts evaluation tool for supervision, the knowledge, training, and background needed for supervisors to effectively help him in his artistic work, and his personal description of instructional supervision. In addition, Lankford suggested methods where supervisors could perhaps assist fine arts teachers improve.

The instructional supervision that Ian received at Scott Middle School was “rather unstructured,” and Ian reported that his supervisor dropped in “two or three times a year” for visits, and Ian indicated that the visits were “not” formal. “We really don’t have them [formal supervisory sessions], but once, or something like that, but we’ll talk. But, I don’t think it’s because they are being negligent or anything, it’s just that we see each other constantly and especially here [Scott Middle School], said Ian. Ian explained how the process of supervision worked for him at Scott Middle School:

What we do is sit down at the beginning of the year with the calendar, with the school calendar, and then we kind of look at our dates and that becomes the framework of how we are going to get things done, and where we need to be at certain points with things, but we don’t sit down and say, OK, our goals this year are . . .

Lankford acknowledged that he was officially supervised using the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) tool earlier in his career, and that now he is evaluated by the Results Based Evaluation System (RBES). Ian shared that for him, he went through the motions of supervision, “*reluctantly*.” “Yeah, yeah, we do all of that stuff,” claimed Lankford. In addition, he added:

But as you get up into the years, been doing this for years, and you are doing a good job, you have a track record of being communicative with the administrators that should a problem arise that needs their attention, and if you are willing to sit down and work on a solution with them, that they are open.

Ian related that in the middle school, a band teacher teaches classes at the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade levels, but he reported that his supervisory visits did not span across each grade level, but “just one, and the supervisor selected the class to visit—at random.” The lengths of the supervisory visits were “short,” and Lankford stressed, “They don’t usually stay that long, about 20 minutes, or something like that.” Informal supervisory

experiences, according to Ian were “daily and his supervisor used a “whatever’s necessary” approach.

For the band director, concerts could provide an opportunity for supervisors to assess the performance of the teacher. However, according to Ian:

I would worry about their being able just to sit back and enjoy the kid’s work, and what we have been doing together, but that would be fine with me for them to do that, they might even come up with some suggestions of maybe some ways to improve, we are always looking for ways to improve what we are doing and how we are doing it.

The problem, according to Lankford, is that the supervisors of fine arts programs “don’t really have a tool that would be a good evaluation tool. It’s not where they came from.”

Lankford further explained:

I don’t know if it is possible to design one [tool] unless you base it on the lesson plan, because it is a learned skill that the student’s are asked to do, and they move at their own rate of development.

For fine arts classes, Lankford suggested that “the supervisors needed to do a lot more homework before they come in” to observe. Along with being prepared, Lankford explained that if the supervisor “didn’t understand what was really going on,” that the teacher could “present the lesson really well if no one was listening, and while the operation was a success, the patient died.” Hence, “It’s just when they show up and they don’t really have an idea of what to look for, it’s just about classroom management,” Lankford said. However, Lankford offered a brief solution: “I do think that if they would make an effort, that in making the effort that they would learn a lot more about what they need to be looking for.”

When Lankford was a new teacher, the lack of instructional supervision was likened unto, “Here’s the keys, drive the car. You run through a lot of keys like that.”

Another analogy that Lankford used was that of a parent trying to teach his son to swim by tossing him headlong into the pool: “Right, you will figure it out, you will just have to be patient, he’ll come up sooner or later, you know, keep track of your kids with the roll and stuff, and here’s the stick,” explained Lankford.

According to Lankford, the supervisory process for middle school fine arts teachers worked best with classroom management procedures. “Because,” Lankford explained, “they don’t really know how to do that [evaluate band], all they know is organization and then the execution.” What general supervisors of band programs know is “if it works or not, and that’s about all they know. That’s fine because they don’t come from a background where they would have to know something like that.” Background in the fine arts was “vital for the successful supervision of fine arts,” and Lankford asserted, emphatically:

I think if the administrator or the evaluator who is coming into the room is knowledgeable of the course, and what are the procedures for getting the students to understand what you are asking them to do, that they would have a better tool for evaluation.

O’Donnell and Crow (1991) indicated that fine arts teachers would make effective supervisors because they “bring to their work a commitment to the field as well as a deep understanding of the discipline itself” (p. 84). Similarly, Lankford declared:

Because, I think, only the people who are good at being able to organize, if you can do something like this and pull it off [band concert], time after time and for years and years, then the chances are good that you can see a lot of things in a lot of areas, but if you are just a band director or chorus director, and when the day is over, you leave, you will do exactly the same things as an administrator, and you will be just as sorry an administrator as you were sorry as a musician.

Ian became passionate about the large number of band directors in the teaching field that “don’t need to be teaching children about music.” “There’s a lot of our folks that are just

lame and they are just lazy,” declared Ian. The reason this concern was noteworthy to Ian and to this study was Ian’s indictment that the “administration doesn’t know the difference” between “good” or “bad” band practices related to instruction. Reflecting on his military background, Ian suggested:

If you [administration] really do it the right way, then as you come up through the ranks, it’s not just because you have a degree in it or whatever, it’s because you’ve done the course work that takes you to knowing everybody’s job, but I don’t think you should be an administrator if you don’t know everybody’s job.

Lankford’s definition of instructional supervision included the following:

It should be that they [supervisors] are knowledgeable of my subject content, that they have read the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS), and they understand what is there, what is supposed to be happening, and that they are able to evaluate the appropriateness of what I am doing in class to meet the AKS.

Evaluating students in a middle school band classroom is a difficult task, because “they are all developing at different paces, and as they get older they get control of their facilities and things, so that their coordination and muscle development makes them physically able to meet the challenge,” Lankford explained. Extending the parallel of the difficulties inherent in evaluating and supervising middle school teachers, Lankford drew the conclusion that, “In a middle school band setting, the administration needs to understand that this is how it works to make an appropriate evaluation of the teacher.”

Ian Lankford’s comments strongly suggested the supervisor must become knowledgeable about fine arts subjects to effectively assist him improve as a teacher.

Perspectives About the Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

Ian discussed the need for leaders to exhibit characteristics such as “fairness,” “consistency,” and “knowledge of the subject areas,” with all teachers. He asserted that leaders needed:

The same characteristics for fine arts teachers as they do for the rest of the faculty. They need to be knowledgeable of the subject matter. You are only talking about three grades and when you break it down, we pretty much do the same stuff every year.

An additional characteristic for administrators who want to be successful supervisors is “consistency.” For instance, Ian believed that some teachers were treated differently through “special rules, and they were allowed to break the rules, and this causes a breakdown in respect.”

Ian’s military background helped him to clarify his meaning of leadership characteristics like this:

It’s kind of like that morning formation that you have to have with the troops. But when you do the things that they haven’t learned, when you have your formation, military people know that, when you have your formation, make it brief, to the point, tell them what the mission is, give them encouragement. OK, now go get the job done. That’s it.

Ian Lankford concluded this discussion suggesting that supervisors needed to be “fair,” “steady,” and “true to the task,” and he indicated that “the ideal and what is practiced” in supervision are not always identical.

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

As Lankford compared his idea of supervision with what he actually received, he described examples of the chasm between the two. Ian reported that before joining the faculty at Scott Middle School, for him, instructional supervision was “nonexistent,” but that at Scott Middle School, “there is a supervisor who actually comes into my room at specified times.” However, Ian reported that the supervisor’s inability to help with musical needs is “limiting because of a lack of knowledge of the subject content,” but Lankford explained, “If a supervisor comes into your classroom, and they have no background on what you are doing, you are really not changing anything, because they

don't know what you are doing.” Likewise, when the administrators come to “observe you according to that little piece of generic paper that they use to observe everyone on, the outcome is the same—nothing.”

To narrow the gap between what Ian's concept of supervision and what actually occurs, he offered several examples and ideas:

If they [supervisors] are knowledgeable about the subject, they should be able to talk about why I did certain things. For instance, if they know the piece of music, they could say, “I liked the way you did that phrase, and the way that you had this melody against this melody. But from my vantage point, you have an imbalance of melodic content.” Or, “There is a pitch problem inhere, and it sounds like it is coming from between your flutes and the oboes.

In summary, Lankford suggested that the supervision that fine arts teachers received now is “just eyewash,” and he continued:

And I appreciate the fact that they recognize that we have good classroom management with what we are doing, that we were organized, but that really doesn't help me when they come into evaluate me and all they are doing is evaluating my classroom management.

Ian concluded that a knowledgeable supervisor would help narrow the gap between the ideal and practice, but on the other hand, fine arts evaluations without an appropriate evaluative tool will provide no help at all.

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Lankford's experiences with supervisors visiting in his classroom were seen as a “compliment.” “I always felt like, ‘gosh,’ this is important enough for somebody to want to see me teach, and see how I do things, and to give me some input that I need to have,” explained Lankford. On the other hand, before Lankford came to Scott Middle School, he reported:

No one ever came to see me, and it didn't make me feel that good. It doesn't make you feel like what you have, what you are doing down there has any importance to them. It is more or less, "if it's not broke, don't fix it."

Lankford explained the underlying reasons for the lack of supervisory attention in fine arts subjects:

If they [administrators] see what we do is not that important, then they are not going to send anybody down there, but we deal with more people over a longer period of time than anybody else in this school, even the PE coaches. We get to know our kids completely, and their families. They're not going to worry much about the fine arts unless there is a problem with it. There's not much of a worry about the football team unless they are not winning.

Positive experiences with instructional supervision for Lankford centered on situations that allowed the supervisor to see and hear what the students had practiced and learned to do well. When the supervisor came in for a visit, Ian suggested to the supervisor, "I want you to hear this, man," because "we've worked that group really hard." For example:

We were working on scales and I had set down and figured out on the computer for them to play their tunes to, and to do their scales to, and we had them down. Yeah. I mean we had kind of a set routine that we did for warm-up, and the whole band just sat right there and played all of those scales and arpeggios. Yes, and they [the supervisor] were like, holy smokes! It makes me feel good, not because it was something we did, but because it was something the kids were able to do.

Lankford implied that since fine arts teachers worked with more students over a long period of time, that supervisors should take the time to focus more on these programs.

Teacher Choice—More or Less Instructional Supervision

Ian discussed the issues surrounding his interests in having more or less supervision in the classroom. Ian's comments related to the quality rather than quantity of supervision, the timing of the supervisor, and the meaningfulness of the evaluation experience.

Opting for more or less supervision was also a salient debate for Ian. According to Ian, the issue was not so much how many times an instructional supervisor visited or observed a classroom, but how well timed the observations were. For a beginning teacher, three evaluations spread out over the year “is meaningless,” and Ian suggested that during the interim periods, teachers may have “already sunk.” After the initial goal setting and planning, administrators “need to do a follow up, and it needs to be a follow up that is not months later,” explained Ian. “I would opt to have them closer together so that they are actually more meaningful, and then I would say, you need to have more evaluations,” Ian added.

The Artistic Teacher’s Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

This section included Lankford’s discussion of how supervisors could help him improve by considering his needs and wants as a fine arts teacher. The discussion included Lankford’s role in the construction of a new band room, the supervisor’s lack of time spent in the classroom, and the supervisor’s lack of artistic knowledge when supervising in a fine arts classroom.

From supervision, Lankford wanted to know that he was “doing a good job,” and to affirm “his mission in the school.” Drawing from his military background again, he added, “If they can tell me what the mission is, I can do the rest.” Also, Lankford wanted “the physical things that would make the teaching area professional, safe, and secure.” For example, Lankford related the story of a new band room being built in his school. Lankford found out by accident, and he was not consulted in the plans. Lankford recalled:

I could already see the writing on the wall. This is going to be another lie from the administration. Can we have some input? They said, “sure.” As soon as they left, I said, “bullshit.”

According to Lankford, the building was already being built with no input from him, his band assistant, or other fine arts faculty. Lankford wanted to be included on decisions that affected him directly. Moreover, Lankford summarized:

I have never seen so many people that didn’t know anything about what our needs were. Our needs are simple: we need a place that we can rehearse. We need a place where the kids can store their instruments where they feel like they are going to be safe. They didn’t give that to us.

Suggesting methods that instructional supervisors may use to help fine arts teachers with their wants and needs is “complex,” according to Lankford, “because they [supervisors] have a totally different set of priorities than we do.” Lankford explained:

Their [supervisors] set of priorities are given to them from above, and they have to run their school plant so that it is productive, from the students’ standpoint, from the teachers’ standpoint, you don’t lose morale, you maintain the integrity of the plant itself, and you keep the parents happy.

Ian suggested that if supervisors were to help fine arts teachers with their wants and needs, “administrators need time to be in the classroom, and they need to teach one class, and to learn more about what they need to know about the other subject content areas.” Moreover, this process would allow administrators “to start having a dialogue with the person about their subject content more so than just giving them a piece of paper and saying, ‘OK, here’s your evaluation,’ declared Ian. Ian summarized by suggesting for supervisors, “Don’t be a stranger in the classroom.” For this reason, Ian added:

If instructional supervisors were to spend more time in the classroom, I think it would mean a lot more to them, they could do their job a lot easier; they would actually find out we all have different personalities; they would find out a lot of things about that person that they needed to know.

When Ian was supervised throughout the supervisory process, he agreed that he received “no artistic help from his instructional supervisor.” Although Ian was able to find artistic “help from friends,” the local supervisor could not help, because he was not “knowledgeable enough [about music] to show us the finer points of what we needed to know.” Moreover, Ian admitted, for the instructional supervisor to be helpful with artistic needs:

They [instructional supervisors] need to be knowledgeable of the art form, the need to be knowledgeable of how it is put together and how it’s taken apart, to be put back together again, possibly a different way. That’s just a whole lot.

Ian admitted that he often needed and wanted more artistic supervision than the supervisor was able to provide. “Even though I like to see them, I want for them to do more than judge how well I conduct a class, but it’s not going to happen,” explained Ian. “Even if they came up with a tool, if they don’t know what they are listening for or looking for, then they wouldn’t know how to use the tool,” added Ian.

Before Ian taught at Scott Middle School, his artistic needs were “totally overlooked, unless there was a problem, unless there was somebody whining about something.” But now, “We have administrators that cared about the fine arts here, and they encouraged us.” Ian concluded, “So whatever we want to do, as long as it’s ‘OK’ by the county, we go and do it.” Speculating as to the reasons why some fine arts teachers are overlooked and some not, Ian explained:

It all comes down to the administration. It comes down to their understanding of the value of the fine arts, what it can do for the community, how the fine arts can enrich their community, what kind of impressions that you can have, an impact on the community through the fine arts.

Ian believed that if he had a supervisor who understood artistic needs that his teaching would improve. For instance, the 8th grade administrator at Scott Middle School

had a solid background in band but was assigned to supervise other disciplines instead. Ian wondered why more specific assignments could not be made to place supervisors in strategic positions afforded by their backgrounds and strengths. Ian stated, “He could have come down here, while everything was going on in band, and offered something.” Ian explained his idea:

Place the supervisor according to what their background is and their strongest suit, and have them evaluate. Then when they have a dialogue with the teacher about what went on in class, they could have real dialogue, and then they could create a tool that’s specifically for that area.

Ian suggested that a better way to supervise fine arts teachers, especially music teachers, was to “use the form based on the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) adjudication sheet” and “tack some of that stuff on there, and create a different form that would incorporate both classroom management and subject content.” The adjudication form used with music judging is used for listening to performances. These forms include intonation, articulation, clarity of tone, and balance, for example. “They don’t have to have a lesson plan a week in advance. Just say, ‘here, this is what I am going to do today,’” explained Ian.

In spite of the fact that Ian liked the supervisors at Scott Middle School and acknowledged their expertise in the areas of classroom management, Ian firmly stated that the supervisor was “no help in his ability to improve as an artist.”

The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision

This section presents Ian’s perspective about the role of the “teacher of the arts” in supervision, and Ian’s perspectives about what training that instructional supervisors needed to become more knowledgeable in fine arts classrooms. Ian was resolute,

however, that as a fine arts teacher, his “voice in the process” of instructional supervision was “minimal.”

Although Ian reported that he felt free to ask the supervisor to look for certain things during an observation, he “never did.” Ian explained, “I could have, but “if they don’t know the terminology like crescendo and decrescendo and stuff, you’d have to explain all of that to them.” Ian went further and indicated, “perhaps the administrators could be trained to look at fine arts classes each year as a part of an ongoing learning process for them.” Ian suggested that a “good administrator” could “observe anybody’s class and know if they are being a good teacher.” But then Ian qualified this point further by stating:

How did you know if they are being effective if they are not teaching the content correctly? They could just stand up there and pontificate and everything and I could be giving the wrong answers, that’s true, but they [the administrators] just want to see if they are organized.

In short, Lankford believed that for administrators to be effective in a band classroom, they “must be knowledgeable of the content,” and “eliminate the focus on classroom management skills to determine if the class is well organized; it’s all about content knowledge and this is what translates into effectiveness,” according to Lankford.

Lankford believed when an academic class is compared to a fine arts class, in this case, band, “there are some similarities as well as differences.” Lankford provided an analogy to explain the differences: “Yes, it does use a ball to play, but this is soccer. This is basketball. They are about the same size, but they ain’t the same.”

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

In this section, Lankford recalled his perspective about teaching as an art and discussed the importance that methodology played in the process of becoming an artist.

Moreover, Ian discussed his concepts of artistic teaching and how testing should be perceived in the artistic classroom, and how performance is related to testing.

The idea that teaching is an art is one that has been debated by many scholars, (e.g., Barone, 1998; Dewey, 1934; Eisner, 1983, 1998; Greene, 1995; Highet, 1977; Jackson, 1998). Lankford acknowledged that teaching is an art, and “it is also a methodology.” It is important, said Lankford, “that you see the method as just a means to getting to the art form, and not something within itself.” Equally important is the idea that “an art is a proficiency, that you are so proficient that you can make something happen out of a method,” explained Lankford. When it comes to the classroom, Lankford put it in these terms:

And that’s the thing I think that art speaks to a person as a person, individually, and the method kind of puts it as a class activity, and the real artist teacher can turn a class activity, a method, into something that the people that are there in the group, feel like it personally related to them.

Lankford summarized that teaching as an art should be first attended to as a method, and then as one becomes proficient in the method, the art develops, and then so too does the teacher.

The accountability movement affects fine arts only “to a certain point,” according to Ian. The test “needs to be a learning tool to help you see that, ‘OK, right here we really have not met their needs,’ or if you test somebody to find out, not if they pass, but what they need to learn,” Lankford explained. For band classes, “testing in music needs to be by producing music, not merely performance on a test.”

Ian’s concept of standards for music students is developed with the local group of band teachers:

We do talk to each other, and we ask each other about the methods that they are using, how they like it. We use music that is appropriate off the Georgia Music Educators Association (GMEA) list. It is appropriate for where they [the students] are, since we make the choice.

In practical language, Ian summarized his idea of the role that standards should play in the fine arts:

You know, if you use your standards, you can use it two different ways: you can use it as something to beat somebody over the head with, or you can use it, OK, this is what you would really like to achieve.

Case Summary

An examination of Ian Lankford's perspectives revealed his concern that instructional supervisors were not knowledgeable about his subject area to make a good judgment or proper evaluation of his skills as a band director. He suggested that supervision should be approached with a more military intent that keeps the discipline and focus of the school on target with the goals of the school. Although Lankford's experiences were positive since he moved to Scott Middle School, he concluded that these experiences with supervisors were no help to him with his artistic needs and wants as a fine arts teacher.

For Lankford, supervision that would help him improve was "nonexistent," and the current forms of supervision are just "eyewash." He believed that supervisors should do a lot more "homework" before entering his band classroom, and that he should be included in all decisions pertaining to the band program, such as renovation or buying equipment.

Lankford wanted supervisors to be fair, affirming, consistent, more visible, and aware of what he was doing. Timing for supervision was important for Lankford, and the

quality of the evaluation was more important than the quantity of observations.

According to Lankford, teaching was an art as the method preceded the proficiency.

Neeta Yost

Neeta Yost has been a chorus teacher in Andrew County School District for 19 years. Neeta has taught in 3 middle schools for a total of 17 years, and the other 2 years were spent in a local high school. Neeta taught at Scott Middle School and had 201 students involved in the chorus program during the 2001-2002 school year. Neeta's chorus classes were supervised by one of the part-time administrators. Neeta was one of six fine arts teachers. Neeta also taught a general music course each year, and joyfully admitted, she "loved general music."

Neeta's experiences with supervision have been positive with few exceptions. Although her experiences at the high school level were difficult because of the age of the students, Neeta had good experiences with her supervisors, and Scott Middle School has become a comfortable "home" for Neeta.

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

In this section, Neeta discussed her beliefs and attitudes and how her years of experience gave her insights about the formal and informal supervision she had received, evaluations during the concert settings, definition of instructional supervision, and classroom observations.

The instructional supervision that Neeta received at Scott Middle School was based on the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP). Because Neeta was an experienced teacher, defined as a teacher with more than three years experience, the district's Results Based Evaluation System (RBES) outlined her supervisory plan.

RBES required that experienced teachers provide the supervisor with a set of goals for improvement. One of the goals was a personal goal, or a goal that Neeta “was going to do in education for myself,” and the other was to be related directly to a goal that was established by the Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI). According to Neeta, the administration “decides that you do it that way, and because I teach two fine arts subjects, then I had a goal for chorus, and I had a goal for general music,” explained Neeta.

Neeta was formally supervised two times last year. The first supervisory meeting, according to Neeta, was described as “the pre-advisory thing, one to talk about my goals and get approval,” and the second meeting was “toward the end of the year to see if I met my goals.” Moreover, Neeta’s “45 minute long” classroom observation was longer than the other participants in this study.

In addition to the her formal supervisory experiences, Neeta indicated that informal supervision was also practiced at her school. For Neeta, informal supervision meant that her supervisor, “would walk around all of the rooms, and stick his head in and wave, or just stick his head in and then leave,” and Neeta acknowledged that these forms of informal supervision practiced increased her “comfort” level and made the school environment feel like “home.” Because of Neeta’s background and experience, Neeta did not think that this kind of informal supervision was “normal” compared to her former school experience. Neeta added:

I didn’t see anyone, and did not see any administrator walking around. I would see that administrator at the beginning of the year, and maybe at special programs, maybe, in the evenings at concerts, and that would be about it.

Because Neeta’s chorus was a performing art, she was required to prepare the singers for concerts throughout the school year. These concerts were usually held in the

evenings, and the parents and community were invited to attend. Chorus concerts at her school were well attended and preparations for the concerts included numerous logistical details: “moving the piano, setting up risers and chairs, dressing up the stage, and selling tickets” were some of the more important details that Neeta was responsible for. With this setting in mind, Neeta was asked if she felt like the concert setting would be a helpful venue for a supervisor to provide a formal observation of her work. On the contrary, Neeta argued that the concert setting was not an appropriate time for such an observation, and she felt this way for two major reasons. One reason was based on a negative experience that Neeta had with a principal in a previous school. Neeta related the story:

Well, my experience is not a good one. Where right after my concert, I had a principal walk into the chorus room, just about all of the kids were gone, and I was just saying goodbye to a couple of parents that had followed me to the room. They were getting ready to walk out but they weren't all the way out of the room. And so, the principal walked into the chorus room, and I looked at her because I felt good about what the children had done. I was anticipating from her a compliment, and good things, positive things, and the first thing that came out of the mouth was, she said, “Well, we need to make changes before the next performance because, well, you are short, and it is hard for people to see you in the back, and so we need to make some adjustments.” Well, of course, I was destroyed because I didn't see how my height had beans to do with what the children had done because actually, I have never viewed the concerts as being about me. They are about the children, the parents, the community and that school.

The other reason that Neeta was not interested in “being evaluated during a concert” was that she felt “administrators need to come to the concerts to enjoy the programs along with the parents, because a concert is not something that you can rehearse, because the concert is a one-time shot deal,” and Neeta added this to her argument:

You get up there and so what, if they happen to blow the song. Well then, I don't want anybody judging me on that. I want you to see what I do every day with the kids, because this is what you hired me for. The concert is just the spicing.

Neeta insisted that the administrators should attend the concerts “for support,” and explained, “It’s good for the children to see them [administrators] there, because it shows that they are concerned about them [students].” Moreover, Neeta wanted the supervisors to attend the chorus concerts in case “there was a problem with the crowd,” rather than attempting to “evaluate the product, which they probably don’t understand anyway.” Neeta enjoyed a “wonderful” relationship with her supervisor and the fact that her supervisor understood that “the concerts were not the appropriate place for formal supervisory observations.”

Neeta’s definition of instructional supervision indicated that she had a clear understanding of what she thought the supervisor’s job was. For example, Neeta felt the supervisor’s primary role was to provide “support and encouragement, reference materials, and security.” Also, the supervisor should be the “liaison” and “contact person” for concerns and conflicts that occurred between parents and teachers, as well as demonstrating the concept that “We [teachers and administrators] are all on the same team, even though our roles may be different,” added Neeta.

An obstacle that threatened the development of the team concept among teachers and supervisors was often “personal conflicts,” noted Neeta, and these conflicts often “get in the way with supervisors.” Neeta felt that she was “sometimes on the firing line, where I felt someone was out to get me, or to destroy my career, and I was doing my job.” Neeta explained that when there is conflict, supervisors “go personal on you, because maybe there is something about you that they don’t care for.” Neeta explained further:

We all have a job to do, and just because somebody doesn't care for you personally, that doesn't have anything to do with your teaching the children. If you are doing your job, and don't get ignored, and if I'm incompetent, then get rid of me, but if I'm competent and I'm doing my job, then support me and leave me alone.

Although Neeta's past experiences with supervision have been affected by conflict, she felt that for supervision to benefit her, she must be trusted to do a competent job "by being left alone to do it." "Personal issues have no place in a professional workplace," according to Neeta, and "supervision offers little help" to her or to her program.

Perspectives About The Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

The most significant leadership characteristic for administrators to have, according to Neeta, was "professionalism." Neeta traced this characteristic back to an experience where the supervisor asked her to "change a grade after a parent complained." When the supervisor asked her to change the grade, Neeta said, "absolutely not." However, "arrangements were made" for the student to bring in extra work, which brought the grade up to passing. After Neeta spoke with the supervisor about the disregard for her role in the matter, the administrator answered, "You know that stuff [music] is not on the Gateway Test anyway."

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

Neeta stated that she was provided "more than expected." This positive perspective about supervision was not the case in the previous school where the principal had "personal issues" with Neeta. In the previous school, Neeta related that she "lived every day being disappointed. I would get a cramp in my gut dreading walking into the building." Neeta compared her position in the former school to her present school environment, by stating:

In comparison here, it is almost as if I get, like with you, with your interview. I walk in the room, you already have the coffee and donuts ready to go. I didn't ask you for the coffee, and I sure as hell didn't ask you for those donuts.

At Scott Middle School, Neeta reported, "She [the principal] gives us opportunities before I am even aware of it. Everything she offers is for my growth. It's for my exposure—for me. It is great for the kids too," added Neeta, "but it does something for me, and I don't feel used." After concerts and performances, "I always get cards, letters, and flowers. Did I tell you about the flowers delivered to my home," questioned Neeta?

Since Neeta was blessed with a successful and encouraging principal, Neeta felt "at home" in her school. However, her supervisor was of little help with Neeta's practical needs, and therefore, widened the gap between what she needed and what she actually received related to instructional supervision.

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Embedded within Neeta's understanding of supervision, perspectives were shaped by positive and negative experiences. The effects of these experiences provided a common thread throughout Neeta's discussion of instructional supervision.

On one occasion, a principal began a private investigation behind her back, for "personal reasons," Neeta reported, and then the principal began "asking students about me, what I was saying in the classroom, and what I was doing in my classroom." This incident occurred concurrently with Neeta's chorus students as they were preparing to attend the district choral festival. The district choral festival was a special event designed for choral groups to perform before a group of judges, who, by virtue of their musical training, would provide the director and chorus with suggestions for improvement. After returning from the festival, and after receiving outstanding comments from the panel of

festival judges, Neeta went to the principal and reported the good news. The principal merely said, “This is nice.” At this juncture, Neeta confronted the principal about the clandestine investigation, and said:

I just want to remind you that I come from a long line of teachers and administrators in my family, and I know what to do, so what do we need to do to end this? And the principal said, ‘consider it done.’

After this incident, Neeta transferred to another middle school in the district. “Why stay,” Neeta concluded, “in a place that doesn’t feel like home. Once you find a spot that feels like home, you need to hang around for a while.”

On the days that Neeta was formally observed by her supervisor, she was “pretty much herself.” She did not want to “throw the kids off,” stated Neeta. But during the observation, Neeta admitted that her behavior slightly changed as she tried to determine the attitude of the supervisor. “I try to read them [the supervisor] to see what excites them,” said Neeta, “because if I can pick up on what excites them, then I am certainly going to do that in my lesson.” Neeta described the experience:

You can’t let how they [the supervisor] are looking at you, during the course of teaching, affect you. And if you see somebody frowning, you might think, ‘ah, man, I’m doing a bum job,’ and that might not be it, their toe might be hurting. So you have to stay focused on those children. Maybe a facial expression, or the way they are looking, like they are intent, like they are learning too. And then their body gestures.

Neeta confessed that when her supervisor entered the classroom, “my heart is pumping faster, but I really don’t do anything different.”

Neeta’s supervisory experience in the high school setting “did not go well.” The high school where Neeta taught had a large population of international students, and Neeta believed her music class became a “dumping ground” for different nationalities. Neeta reported that she took advantage of the situation by turning the class “into an

international chorus, where each nationality represented was responsible for teaching a song from their country. During one of these class sessions, Neeta's supervisor observed her. Neeta related this about the observation:

Well, the person came in to observe, and we made it through one song, and then I was trying to teach a concept in the middle of all this, and it just did not work. The kids were not focused, I noticed that, and I made a mistake, and I noticed that she [supervisor] was writing a lot, and I noticed that she was not smiling, and she had a smirk on her face like this was horrible, and it was.

After the observation, Neeta "apologized" to her supervisor, but the supervisor said, "No, it was not that bad. There are some things we can talk about, but it was not that bad." Neeta related that she invited the administrator to another chorus class, where she felt more comfortable so that the observation for the year could be re-administered. Neeta summarized that she was "trying to impress the supervisor" with the "international chorus because you don't have that in our country. I mean you just don't have it, and this, I felt, was rare."

Neeta told the story of a supervisory experience that went extremely well also. Neeta's chorus was asked to perform at a summer conference of teachers. All of the administrators from Neeta's school were there as well as all of the other district personnel, including the principals and other administrators from the Andrew Public School District. The chorus performed extremely well, and then presented flowers to the administrators of Scott Middle School as they left the building. Neeta reported that one of the associate administrators from the district:

Stopped me, pulled me back, people were clapping, they were very happy, some of the people were crying, because some of the songs brought out emotions that I don't think they even knew they had, and when I walked out of the room, our leadership team came out and they were in tears, and they [administrators] were so proud of everybody, and I had never experienced that before in my life.

Neeta reported that this supervisory experience allowed her to feel “complete and competent,” and that “Not only did it help those children, but it helped me professionally. It gave me a huge shot in the butt to come back.”

The positive and negative experiences related by Neeta appeared to explain the suspicious behavior that she had held about supervisors. Because of Neeta’s negative experiences, her trust level was weakened, and she wanted to be left alone by her current supervisor. However, her recent successful experiences at Scott Middle School has increased her trust levels and enhanced her desire to continue for excellence in her choral program.

Teacher Choice—More or Less Instructional Supervision

Neeta discussed the issues surrounding her concerns about having more or less supervision in her subject area. At Scott Middle School, Neeta felt comfortable opting for “more supervision” rather than for less. However, at her former school, she definitely wanted “less supervision.” The reason for suggesting “more supervision” was because Neeta did “not feel intimidated at all” in her present situation. During Neeta’s first encounters with the instructional supervisors at Scott Middle School, the supervisor came into the classroom “a lot,” but Neeta learned later:

That he was just visible like that, and he is not making mental notes, you know. He’s not. So I got to the point where I didn’t feel like I was inadequate when I would see him walk into the room, or that I was doing someone wrong.

On the other hand, Neeta spent “seven years where someone was trying to find fault, and I had to come out of that, and it was hard. It is hard for teachers if they have been targeted by an administrator needlessly,” explained Neeta. Neeta concluded that more

supervision would be helpful if the supervisor's visits were for "assistance and not for faultfinding."

The Artistic Teacher's Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

Neeta discussed her artistic needs, and she suggested that a supervisor's attention to concerns such as "honesty," "trust," and "worth," were significant.

From instructional supervision, Neeta admitted that she needed and wanted "honesty, support, and upfront-ness" and she said, "Don't smile in my face and stab me behind my back." I want "administrators to tell, or direct the people responsible for setting up for concerts," added Neeta. Neeta also wanted "dress-down days" and the administrators to "be there" for concerts and chorus outings. "Encouragement" was another practice that Neeta appreciated from the supervisor, and that "honesty and support" made Neeta "feel valued" as a professional educator.

Suggesting methods where instructional supervisors may best help fine arts teachers, Neeta stated the most important thing that a supervisor could do was to "trust" her to "know what I am doing." Neeta explained:

Once the trust factor is there, they [the supervisor] will support you, because they will believe in you, and they know that everything that you decide to do is for the sake of the program, the community, and the school, the students. Ultimately, it is gin to make the supervisor look good.

Neeta explained that administrators needed "to support the fine arts at their school by being visible and by coming to the concerts," Neeta added, "and encouraging teachers to do their very best." Neeta suggested that supervisors needed "to be able to fight for things that are true and fight against things that are false," referring to the negative experiences she has had with supervisors.

Neeta believed that supervisors needed to understand and to talk about the “value of what music does for the children,” too. For instance, Neeta explained:

Until they have a kid involved, or until they come to a concert, when they come to a concert and see what it does for the family. How maybe a dad has never gone to a choral concert before, and how you can have a dad, a step-dad, the mom, the step-mom; you can have all of those variables together at a concert and suddenly, it brings them together.

Neeta reported that she did not receive “artistic support or assistance” from her supervisors. One reason was that Neeta did not look to her supervisors for the artistic direction, was because she “felt they couldn’t give that to me.” According to Neeta, the supervisors who visited in the fine arts classroom, “appreciated what they saw in the teachers that teach our particular area, but as far as them being able to understand, I think it is very difficult.” The administration can support the fine arts through their “emotional support” and “I think they can appreciate it,” explained Neeta, “but they don’t really understand.”

Neeta felt that the only way that her supervisor was able to provide artistic help to middle school fine arts teachers was by allowing her “to go and observe other music teachers.” Neeta added, “A supervisor who is trained in the arts could certainly help by observing and enriching evaluation, through modeling as I watched them teach.” For Neeta, modeling was important, and she elaborated, “I think this is a big one . . . to see somebody stand before your kids and kind of do the things they would like for you to do, and you’d be able to see that.”

The only times that Neeta seriously needed more help from a supervisor than the supervisor was able to provide was during “festival” time. “They could come in and

listen to those things that I don't pick up. You know, be able to read the music and catch the wrong notes that I taught," stated Neeta.

Neeta confessed that there were times when her artistic needs were overlooked by her supervisor. Neeta explained:

What happens with music teachers, we make our jobs look so easy, and when they come to the concert, it is effortless. We make it look so easy, and they don't realize the thought and the timing that went into the preparation.

Referring back to the principal that confronted Neeta about her height following the concert, Neeta related:

Yeah, all of that was overlooked, totally. In fact, in retrospect, I wonder if she [the principal] even listened to a note. She probably walked in there with a personal agenda of finding something wrong. Oh, probably because I had 400 people there, and she was only getting about 30 at a PTA meeting.

Neeta was not so sure that her teaching would improve if she had a supervisor who understood her artistic needs, but Neeta agreed that her teaching might become "more creative." For instance, Neeta related the story of the time that a music supervisor was on campus and visited her room, and:

He just stood over there and he just listened, and I could tell. My antennas went up a little bit, and it made me focus in, which maybe it did kind of improve me, but it made me intense.

But having a supervisor who understood artistic needs could be a problem too, quipped Neeta, "because we [musicians] wear everything right here on our sleeves."

Neeta suggested that her supervisor knew enough about her artistic needs to help Neeta "to a point." But Neeta reported that she was not sure that they [the supervisors] were aware of the "time element that it [artistic supervision] took, certain pedagogy things that we do, or that they could actually [understand] until they have experienced it [the artistic classroom] themselves." Though Neeta felt that the supervisor "appreciated"

what was being accomplished in the chorus classroom, the supervisor could only understand what was actually going on only “to a point.”

Trust, visibility, upfront-ness, presence at concerts, and encouraging words, are what Neeta wants from supervisors. She also wants her supervisor to be a champion for truth and to comprehend the importance music holds for children.

The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Neeta was asked to describe her “say-so” in the process of instructional supervision, and she discussed the types of situations in which she would like to be included.

Neeta had “no” role in her own supervision. Neeta explained that classroom observations were administrator-centered and she had “no say-so in what the administrators were looking for when they came to the classroom to observe.” Although Neeta reported that the “supervisor was open to looking for things that she needed,” she commented, “I probably could say that, but they never asked. They have a pre-set, probably that they are looking for, and so they just measure your teaching from that.”

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

Neeta was quick to say, “Yes” when asked if teaching was an art, but she added, and “I think only successful teachers look at teaching as an art.” Neeta added:

If you go into somebody’s room and it is just dry as dry can be, that is not teaching. There is an art to it, because it is more than teaching that subject area, you’ve got to know how to relate to people, and the children that you teach. You have to understand them first. You’ve got to get them going, some kind of line and them, and then design.

Art in teaching, according to Neeta, is when the artistic teacher “sings it, or makes it into a game to involve the students—they make it move.” On one hand, Neeta believed

that what accountability required of her was “good” because she “needed it” to make her accountable to someone. She also admitted that the standards might help students “actually learn music concepts.” On the other hand, Neeta acknowledged that the music concepts were “not included on the required district’s tests, and in that regard, “It is saying that music is not as important as academics.”

From Neeta’s standpoint, accountability issues and standardized tests for fine arts subjects might help students learn basic music concepts, but since music concepts are not included on the standardized test, music teachers and music programs are not as important as academics.

Case Summary

An examination of Neeta Yost’s perspectives of instructional supervision revealed that former conflicts and experiences with supervisors have made her “suspect” of working with supervisors. Although her principal is “wonderful,” the principal does not serve as Neeta’s primary supervisor, and her current supervisor is of “little assistance” in the artistic classroom.

Neeta concluded that the concert setting is not an appropriate “time or place” for a formal observation, and even though Neeta would opt for more supervision, if offered, she would just as soon “be left alone to teach as she saw best.” Although her supervisor was “no help” in the artistic classroom, Neeta Yost did need “encouragement and support” from her supervisor, and she wanted to feel “valued” as a professional teacher and as a musician.

Neeta had no role in her own supervision and believed that the supervisory plan designed for her was identical to all teachers, which was not a plan that satisfied her

artistic needs or wants. Neeta's concept of teaching as an art was based on how children related personally to art, and that the most successful teachers could "make it move."

Tracy Born

Tracy Born has been a middle school art teacher for three years at Scott Middle School, and before coming to Scott Middle School, she taught part-time for two years at a local high school. Since Tracy did not teach a performing art, students were randomly chosen, and Tracy taught an average of 190 students each quarter of the school year. Tracy's art room was small in comparison to the other sites surveyed by the researcher, and Tracy was resourceful in the appropriate use of space.

At Scott Middle School there were six administrators involved with supervision: one principal, three assistant principals assigned to grade levels, two part-time administrators assigned to special education and exploratory classes. Tracy's art classes were supervised by one of the part-time administrators.

Tracy shared the same supervisor with Ian Lankford and Neeta Yost—the assistant principal assigned to the "exploratory" or "connections" classes at Scott Middle School. Because Tracy was a relatively new teacher, the requirements for instructional supervision required three observations per year. Next year, Tracy will be placed on the RBES supervisory chart where she will be observed only once, and she will be required to set personal goals aligned with the school goals and to provide an implementation plan.

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

Tracy recounted formal and informal supervisory experiences and the pressures involved, the anxiety of the classroom observations, and the importance of supervisors to understand the “unstructured-ness” of the art classroom.

Last year, Tracy received only 2 formal classroom observations, these visits were random, and the observations lasted approximately 30 minutes. However, Tracy received informal supervision as the supervisor “came by every day to check on me. He just passed through and made sure everything was OK.” Tracy had a positive experience with this supervisor as she related, “It was good because if I was having any problems, he was there to remove the student . . . just his presence would help, and if there was anything I needed at all, he would come through.” As a beginning teacher, Tracy was at first “suspect” of the assistant principal who often visited her room; however, she learned:

At first, when I first started working here, I thought he [supervisor] was there to look for things I was doing wrong, and then I realized that he was there in case I needed anything, to touch base, that’s all.

Although Tracy’s teaching did not included student performances, art shows take on the character of a performance, and Tracy would have felt “fine” if the supervisor had chosen that time to evaluate her. The evaluation put “pressure on and it keeps me on my toes, and the pressure pushes me to get things done because I’m, of course, of an artist mentality.”

According to Tracy, instructional supervision was:

I think they want to make sure that I’m doing what I am supposed to be doing, what I am getting paid to do, and following the guidelines set by the county. So what I think they are doing is just making sure that everything runs smoothly.

When Tracy was supervised, she reported, “There was a time when I was extremely nervous because I wanted to do a really good job, and I wanted to make sure that I was being understood by both my students and supervisor.” So, when one of Tracy’s students “popped up with something bizarre” her first reaction was to look at the observer and see if his reaction was, “Oh, do they think I’m completely out of control here?” Tracy quipped. Tracy’s concern was justified because “art was a kind of a controlled chaos, and I don’t know if they [supervisors] understand that all of the time.” Tracy feared being misunderstood in an “unstructured classroom environment” and this could result as being “labeled ‘flaky’ because students were having fun.” According to Tracy, the term “fun” might hurt her “professional reputation with supervisors.”

Being observed was “not enjoyable at all” to Tracy because:

My classroom, it’s so unpredictable. One time I got a bad mark. There was a boy, who just recovered from a beating from a gang, and he was back in school, and he was sharing his story, and I thought, well, he needs to, he needs to explain, but I got a bad mark because he was talking during something I was doing. And I said, he needed to do that, and they didn’t understand, but that was my only time.

When the observer left Tracy’s room, she felt “relieved.” But when Tracy knew that the supervisor was coming in for an observation, she was “more prepared” and would:

Stick to my list of things to accomplish better, and outline better, rather than just jumping around. I am more regimented. When someone is watching me, I try to go down the regular steps, like introduction, and know how you are supposed to repeat things three times.

Tracy eventually grew comfortable with classroom observations in the classroom but wished that supervisors would try to understand the “uniqueness” of the art classroom.

Perspectives About The Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

Tracy’s believed the ideal supervisor would have credibility, consistency, a non-condescending attitude, and sensitivity to the feelings of the teacher.

Tracy argued that supervisors should have characteristics that “give them credibility.” According to Tracy, “Supervisors need to have experience as a teacher” and to be “consistent.” Tracy elaborated, “I need them to smile, not to be grouchy and not to be condescending.” Tracy added, “Supervisors need to be organized and not afraid of being in ‘the trenches . . . I’m up here,’” referring to supervisors who “have the power.” Tracy related that her present supervisor “is perfect,” and continued:

He never makes you feel like he is your boss, or, he will come to our birthday parties, and sit right down, and everyone’s glad to see him. No one changes their conversation just to try to impress him. I feel like if I was doing something wrong, he would find a way to tell me without hurting my feelings, like you know it would. He is sensitive, very complimentary, and he tells me all of the time, ‘if I didn’t work here he would have to quit.’

Tracy needed a supervisor who did not hold power over her and attended to her feelings.

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

According to Tracy, she “didn’t have a lot of it [supervision],” and she added, “I am just fine with that.” Tracy summarized, “They leave it [supervision] up to me because I know what I’m doing, and they trust me.” Tracy admitted that she “didn’t like to be supervised, and added that she would prefer to be left alone. For Tracy, the gap between the ideal and the reality of supervision was that supervisors were more interested in the school than in students.

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Tracy reported having a bad experience where she was observed by her supervisor and related, “I went blank from nervousness. Blank. Complete. Had no idea what I was saying or what I was doing. It was horrible.” But “fortunately,” said Tracy, “There were teachers here who I could talk with . . .and they said, ‘that happens,’ and they were understanding.”

Tracy related one other supervisory experience that did not “go so well” because she “did not know the observer very well. She was a real important person, and I was unable to read her face, but then she did this wonderful thing:

She said, when I come in, if this is not a good day, if you have a toothache, or you just have had a rotten, it’s just not a good day, you tell me, and I will leave and come back. I thought that was very fair.

For Tracy, the supervisor’s ability to sense the routine and practices of the classroom situation and to make alternative observation plans, if necessary, were important to the successful implementation of the lesson. In addition, the supervisor’s flexibility allowed Tracy to relax and judge the supervisor to be fair and sensitive to the uniqueness of the art classroom.

For Tracy, negative situations were noteworthy but did not deter her from learning from them and using them to her advantage. She learned to relax her teaching style, even though the art classroom was different and often difficult to appropriately supervise.

Teacher Choice—More of Less Instructional Supervision

Tracy opted for “less” supervision given the choice. “I don’t want to sound immature, but I just don’t want people bossing me around or telling me what to do especially when they don’t have any background,” explained Tracy. Art “is a mess, and that’s the way it goes,” explaining the misunderstandings that supervisors often have of art teachers. “There is an invitation to them [the supervisors] to pop in,” but when asked if Tracy wanted the supervisors in there all of the time, she responded, “No, does anybody?” Tracy admitted:

I don’t need a lot of supervision from them. I want to be informed all the time if I am in sync with the school. I don’t want to be a renegade or the guy out in the

trailer that they forget is in the school, but I don't want them on my case all of the time.

Tracy's understanding of the role of supervisor was more "procedural," and Tracy reported, "They [supervisors] are just looking for procedure." They have to do so many things, and I always think they bring their personal feelings into it." Most of the time, Tracy involved the observers in the art class and they "feel enlightened," and "it makes me feel great," stated Tracy.

Tracy's reason for wanting "less supervision" concentrated on the fact that she did not want a supervisor "telling her what to do when they had no background" in her subject. She did not want to be seen as a "renegade," she wanted to be in sync with the rest of the school, and she acknowledged that the supervisor's jobs are "procedural only."

The Artistic Teacher's Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

From supervision, Tracy wanted "to feel support, that my supervisor believes in what I am doing, and supports my techniques that are often unconventional, and that my supervisor trusts me and my professional judgment." The art classroom might appear unstructured with students working on different projects "all over the room— on the floor, on desks, and near the windows," and Tracy wanted her supervisor to understand "the art vision." When questioned about the term, "unconventional," Tracy hinted that the supervisors were typically looking for the "conventional," the "norm," and often in her classroom, "art was unconventional." Tracy reported:

The classroom is a place to create "art," and I want them [supervisors] to feel comfortable with me, and if I do something that appears wild, I don't want my supervisor to dismiss my credibility and think, "Oh well, that's how artist are."

Tracy did not want to be “reprimanded by a supervisor” who did not understand the artistic method. Tracy explained that she has two supervisors: “With one I am a favorite, with the other, I am condescended to.” Tracy added, “One incident that happens in your classroom doesn’t make you a bad teacher.” In addition, Tracy needed a supervisor who will be “fair,” and she further related that:

I need to know that they are a straight shooter, and that they are going to go by the rules. If they have a standard, I want to know that they will stay by that standard, even if I may not agree with it, even if I may not like it. I want to know that they are “true blue” to their job.

When Tracy was asked why these “standards and rules” were so important, she explained, “Because I am a rule breaker.” This notion was important to Tracy “because you don’t want to think thou are being treated differently from your coworkers.” In this regard, Tracy admitted that her supervisor needed to be more “honest” and “supportive.”

According to Tracy, for instructional supervisors to be in a position to a middle school fine arts teacher, they need “to expose themselves to my world, because it is awesome.” Moreover, Tracy indicated, “They [supervisors] should be required to go to the museum, take an art class, go to the symphony, and don’t be so enclosed in the structure of administration.” Tracy’s perspective was that “administration only looked at a narrow sliver of what actually takes place in the school setting,” and she suggested that supervisors need “to look into the faces of the kids.” Supervisors need to look in a deeper way “into the richness of what goes on in my classroom.” Tracy added, “As children, the first thing they do is draw. So it is a very deep emotional relationship with art, and everything ‘round’ it . . . and it’s about seeing things in a different light.” Tracy summarized what supervisors should know to help fine art teachers become their best:

It ought to be clear that they understand. It's almost like looking through a kaleidoscope when you come into my classroom. That's what I want them to see. I don't want them to just look at the class, I want them to look into it, and understand it, and appreciate art besides understanding the richness of what I do.

Moreover, Tracy explained, "It was the supervisor's responsibility to understand the purposes of teaching art to students," which is, according to Tracy, "to encourage students . . . They should try to help that teacher do that, support them and give them whatever they need. Don't make them have the kids bring in empty Pringles cans."

The "demeanor" of the supervisor while "entering the classroom" was another issue that Tracy wanted to address. "If they were relaxed and gave you a little smile and said, 'Don't worry, or I've been in your place before, or I'm only here to help,' that is what I want" from my supervisor.

When Tracy was supervised, she reported, "I don't get any artistic help." "It would help if they [supervisors] had an appreciation for the work that went into something," and "if they [supervisors] were artists, they would definitely know how long it took to do a particular thing." Tracy explained:

When they [students] are doing sculpture with plaster, it's a mess, it's a huge mess, and I don't want someone walking in there to observe me going, "yuck, look, oh," and you know, brushing things off, "got to get out of here, got to wash my hands."

Tracy wanted a supervisor who understood the art teacher's needs so that her teaching could improve. Tracy noted that the difference between a regular supervisor and one with a fine art background was related to "left-brain and right-brain people" approaches. She elaborated:

If you get a freethinking person versus someone who's wondering how much of the budget was spent of that paper you are using. Big difference, or, let's say somebody was observing you and they noticed that you were using water colors for a project and they could come up to you later and say, "you know, you really

ought to try these acrylics. Don't buy from the school warehouse when you can get this here." I think they understand how colors of walls, the color theory, is a real important factor. So, I think if you were observing me, they would know these things to look for.

Tracy was quick to answer, "Yes" when asked if she often wanted more artistic supervision than what she was presently provided. Tracy said that most of her artistic help came from "being around other art teachers," and attending "staff developments and sharing ideas."

Tracy also believed that her supervisor was "not much help" in artistic ways, and stated, "I have had several supervisors come up to me and tell me that they have had bad experiences in the past with art teachers." Following one of Tracy's formal evaluations, her supervisor told her:

This is a lot better than I remember my art teacher and my art class. She told me "I couldn't draw," or she hurt my feelings, and I can't draw to this day, and I don't even try.

Tracy stated that she would "definitely" improve as an art teacher if she had a supervisor "who understood her artistic needs." For example, Tracy said, "If the supervisor knew that there were 50 different kinds of paint brushers, and the difference between acrylic paints and watercolors, that would be great."

Although Tracy described a variety of ways that instructional supervision could help her improve, and she acknowledged that she received "no" artistic help in the classroom. She admitted that she would definitely improve if she had a supervisor to help. Despite Tracy's lack of artistic help, she has not been overlooked, and she has been provided with the other things she has needed and wanted, mainly art supplies.

The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Although Tracy has become more comfortable with supervisors entering her classroom, she has “never been involved” with the design of her own supervision. The only time Tracy asked the supervisor to come into her classroom was for “disciplinary reasons.” Tracy did, however, “self-assess” her own teaching when she videotaped herself when she felt that she was “slipping.” Using the videotape as a means to assess her own teaching, Tracy did not have to “worry about the frame of mind or mood” of the supervisor. Tracy explained, “The videotape gives me information about my teaching without having to be victim to the supervisor’s attitude.”

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

Tracy explained her concept of artistic teaching as a “process, and as a calling,” and as one that “notices” things more than others. Tracy also discussed her unique method of “twisting” the standards to make them fit her curriculum.

While Tracy acknowledged that teaching was “an art” in the art classroom, she also recognized that teaching could be “an art in other disciplines.” Tracy explained, “The way you communicate with your kids is an art,” and “when you are teaching somebody how to do something, there are certain steps.” In other words, Tracy qualified the process of the teacher as an artist by suggesting there was a “process to the art of teaching.” Tracy clarified, “So it is an art really to say, this is how you do it, now you put your input and infuse your own style of teaching.”

Tracy also explained that teaching was perhaps “something you were born with.” The idea that teaching was an art was akin to that of “preaching or nursing,” because “It’s a calling.” Tracy admitted that although all teachers could be artists, it is probably easier

for a fine arts person to be an artist-teacher than a regular academic teacher because as a fine arts teacher, “You look at life from a different perspective. You notice things other people don’t notice.” Suggesting that the teacher-artist’s perspective strove for a deeper substance than the academic, Tracy encouraged, “Get the basics, yes, you need your math, but let’s also, you know, our spirit needs to be addressed too.” Tracy’s perspective acknowledged “each person’s individual needs,” and she encouraged “supervisors to understand this perspective.”

When Tracy was asked how supervision could help the fine arts during the climate of the accountability movement with its emphasis on testing and standards, Tracy stated that “it will keep me on track, and assist me to know what the county is looking for,” but she added, “I am not really sure that they know exactly what I do or how the fine arts work in practice.” Tracy believed the move to accountability and the standards by which school systems measure success for both students and teachers are, at best, “absurd in the world of the fine arts teacher.” Tracy indicated, “I imagine them trying to put a round peg in a square hole,” because “I don’t want them trying to tell me how to tell someone to be creative; you can’t, especially in the art room.” Tracy elaborated, “A lot of what we do is abstract. I don’t think you can put it on paper,” and the outcome is still going to “be success” in an art class. Tracy concluded that standards “could possibly help” in the art classroom, “*If* I took it and twisted it into my own standards, I would be fine,” and it would help “*if* the supervisors knew that.”

The standard goal setting process for Scott Middle School was the RBES. Tracy said that the process “doesn’t seem to affect me” as an art teacher. “I would write a goal, and it would be like, ‘no, this isn’t what we are looking for.’” Although Tracy was

willing to “help with reading scores,” Tracy added that she “felt they [supervisors] were making me comply by writing goals related to a focus,” not directly affecting the work “I do” as a teacher. Since the process of goal setting “does not affect me or my discipline of teaching art, I am aggravated by the process.”

Case Summary

An investigation into Tracy’s perspectives of instructional supervision disclosed her concerns about the “supervisor’s credibility,” and their “inability to understand the unstructured setting” of the art classroom. Tracy was also concerned that her “fun and enjoyable class,” might hurt her “professional reputation with supervisors.” Tracy needed a supervisor who did not hold “power over her” and one who considered her feelings.

Tracy’s negative experiences helped her to relax and grow as a teacher, and she preferred less supervision because supervisors “do not understand” the art environment because of a “lack of training.” Tracy received “no” artistic help from her supervisors, but she admitted that she would improve if she did. Tracy wanted supervisors who had a relaxing “demeanor,” and who would expose themselves “to the art world.”

Tracy admitted that she had no role in her own supervision, but when she felt she was “slipping” as a teacher, she videotaped her lessons so that she could improve her methods. Tracy believed that goal setting, standards, and accountability measures “are ‘absurd’ in the world of the fine arts teacher.”

Reba Lucas

Reba Lucas has been a music teacher for 23 years at Kyle Middle School, and during her first 15 years at Kyle Middle School, Lucas was the chorus teacher. For the

past eight years, Reba Lucas has taught general music. General music, as opposed to chorus or band, for instance, focused on music fundamentals, music history, and composition. Although the school changed names from Dale Middle School to Kyle Middle School during Lucas's tenure, the school served the same students and maintained the same faculty.

At Kyle Middle School there were eight administrators involved with instructional supervision: the principal, six assistant principals, and one part-time assistant principal. Kyle Middle School was the district's largest school and was divided into communities for administrative purposes. Lucas' general music class was supervised by one of the full-time assistant principals. Lucas was 1 of 10 fine arts teachers, and she taught about 190 students each quarter of the 2001-2002 school year.

Kyle Middle School is centrally located in the Andrew County school district and has the largest population of students of any middle school in the district. Moreover, the school is one of the largest middle schools in the nation, and is divided into schools within schools for management purposes. Kyle Middle School boasts 3,139 students and 191 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 16.4:1. Of the 3,139 students, 570 (18.2%) are eligible for free and reduced-priced lunches. Kyle Middle School has a well-balanced teaching staff with 74 teachers having 1-10 years of experience, 58 teachers having 11-20 years experience, and 48 teachers with 21-30 years experience. One teacher has taught more than 30 years. Of the 191 teachers, 30 are male and 161 are female. By race, the student body includes 356 Black students (11.3%), 2,288 White students (72.9%), 156 Hispanic students (5.0%), 292 Asian students (9.3%), 4 American Indian (0.1%), and 43 Multi-racial students (1.4%). Kyle Middle School enrolled 570 (18.2%) students in

gifted programs, 295 students (9.4%) in special education programs, and 99 (3.2%) students in ESOL programs.

Despite the fact that Reba Lucas enjoyed teaching choral music, she preferred teaching general music to the performance-centered. Reba confessed, “I love not doing choral music at this stage of my career. It [general music] doesn’t have the big performance thing.” Lucas stressed the performance pressures inherent with the choral program, and the personal pressure she felt from the administration, to always maintain the highest quality. Lucas related these problems and pressures:

All State, Honor chorus, I enjoyed it, but having to constantly be on the kids case to perform, and to perform well, and to be on their best behavior. And then, I had the administration constantly on my back about, “You are representing our school, and these kids can’t do wrong, blah, blah, blah . . . make sure you have this, and this.” And then the parents were always saying, “My child never gets to sing a solo.”

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

In her discussion about instructional supervision, she noted frustration over goal setting, district and state requirements, and she gave examples showing that most of her supervisory experiences were “not good.” In this regard, Lucas suggested that supervisors needed to “try harder to understand the role of the fine arts teacher.”

An instructional supervisor visited Lucas’s general music classroom only one time during the year for a formal evaluation, and the classroom observation lasted less than 20 minutes. Lucas’ supervisory plan was designed under the Results Based Evaluation System (RBES), which required Lucas to set two goals for the school year, and the required goals were “school wide and academic.” Lucas reported, however, “They [school goals] really had no focus on fine arts whatever,” and, “They [school

goals] don't have anything to do with what I teach anyway." Lucas summarized, "most of the time, these goals rarely assisted fine arts teachers with direct curriculum issues."

In Lucas's case, the school-wide focus for the 2001-2002 school year was reading, and her administrator assigned her to work with a "separate group of students and homeroom teachers to help students who were slow readers." This remediation block of time, reported Lucas, was called, "The Barnes's time," named for the current governor of Georgia. Governor Barnes encouraged school districts to increase reading remediation throughout the state of Georgia by requiring all school leaders to set certain goals that would increase test scores in reading. "The fact that the 'Barnes's time' had nothing to do with my fine arts area" irritated me," argued Lucas. She said that she would "fulfill the requirements, but it has nothing to do with the quality of fine arts that I am producing."

Lucas taught at all three grade levels, 6th through 8th grades, but Lucas's formal observation occurred at only one grade level, and "they are random—they never tell me when they are coming." According to Lucas, informal supervision, such as conversations in the hall or telephone calls, "never" took place for her. "The only time they [supervisors] come down to see me is when I have done something I shouldn't have," explained Lucas. For example, Lucas related this story:

I had to be out of the school for the illness of my mother and left detailed lesson plans for a substitute, but the substitute didn't like my lesson plans, so they told the principal, and the principal came down to my room to talk to me about that. That's all. That's the only time she [supervisor] came down to see me.

In addition to the fact that Lucas felt her supervisor only visited her classroom "for negative purposes," Lucas also felt "isolated in her trailer classroom." Although Lucas

invited her supervisor “to visit and observe her new teaching techniques,” such as a creative computer application, “the supervisor never came.” Lucas shared:

Nobody comes out there to see me. The only time people come to see me is if I have to be reprimanded. I even invited them this year to come out and see what I was doing, because I had come up with a whole new set of ideas. I went back to the learning centers ideas, because in a trailer, try teaching guitar in a trailer. Or just try teaching, and I have 31 in a class, and it was just hard. So I decided to make it small groups, and I added my technology. I invited them to come down, and nobody ever did.

When Lucas was a choral director, the instructional supervisor did not consider “using the concert as a time to evaluate;” however, “I wanted some input,” Lucas reported, but the only suggestions she received were “from the county fine arts supervisor,” and “he would come to my performances and offer helpful suggestions.” Although, the fine arts supervisor was not responsible for writing formal observations for Lucas, she indicated, “He was the person that she gravitated to for help.”

Lucas wanted for her supervisor to understand that the “procedures of a music classroom were different from the procedures of a regular academic classroom.” For example, Lucas’s supervisor could “not understand why musical instruments were not already laid out in chairs when students entered the classroom,” and “they don’t understand that if the instruments are already in the chairs, the kids fiddle with them, and they don’t pay any attention to you.” Lucas further related that the supervisor “had the idea that I was wasting time.”

According to Lucas, she had “no” supervision” and supervisors “never” understood what she did as a fine arts teacher. Supervisors considered her “work” as “fluff.”

Perspectives About the Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

Reba believed that “a background in the fine arts” is important for supervisors if they are to work “in any meaningful way” with fine arts teachers. There are too many supervisors “who haven’t got a clue how our classes work,” argued Reba. “The kids have to be noisier, the kids have to have more freedom of movement, and the kids have to have less structure to be creative,” and Reba admonished, “Supervisors need to realize that fine arts teachers ‘work outside the box.’”

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

Reba Lucas compared her idea of supervision to what she was actually provided, and responded, “The way I think about it, supervision is almost non-existent as far as I am concerned.” Reba explained, “Discipline consumes their time, more than anything else,” and then Reba confessed, “To be totally honest with you, there is nobody I can go to. I am stuck way out here in left field somewhere, because I just teach general music, and it doesn’t count.” Most of the other fine arts teachers in Reba’s school are in the building and not in a trailer, and therefore, cannot adequately “relate because of where I am,” noted Reba.

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Reba Lucas discussed her experiences with supervision, and how these experiences affected her needs as a teacher. She explained the changes she made when a supervisor made an observation, and noted limitations placed on her by teaching fine arts in a trailer.

Lucas recalled a negative experience with a supervisor when students were “caught passing drugs in the restroom.” Lucas said, “I sent a student with a pass to the

restroom,” but she did “not know he had prearranged earlier in the day to meet with somebody to exchange drugs.” Lucas said her supervisor assumed, “I was supposed to know that, but nobody told me this was going on.” Moreover, the administration suggested that she “wasn’t supervising correctly,” and Lucas defended herself and said, “I am not going to keep a kid. I have been teaching too long, where a kid will pee in the trashcan when you don’t let them go to the bathroom.”

Lucas’s definition of instructional supervision was specific:

Instructional supervision is somebody like an assistant principal or a county supervisor coming into your classroom watching what you do and giving you positive feedback; a positive critique of ways you can improve how you are teaching, and how you are getting things across to the students. Maybe helping you come up with a plan of improvement with your teaching, or even maybe getting together with you and saying, “well, why don’t you go watch this other teacher. I think this would help.”

Lucas reported that she had “never received” this type of instructional supervision.

“Classroom management, that was about it,” continued Lucas. Lucas recalled when she taught chorus, “They [supervisors] didn’t have a clue that I have got keep these kids busy while I am working on a part. If the students don’t have pencils and paper, they don’t look like they are on task,” explained Lucas.

As Lucas recalled her last classroom observation, she exclaimed, “Oh, God, it did not go well, because it was one of those days where I was having to fly by the seat of my pants. Nothing was going well that day.” Lucas explained that the class was “beginning a unit on technology” and the students were to be “working with piano keyboards and computers.” Lucas explained that although the technology personnel had not loaded all of the software on the computers, “the class could begin the unit by experimenting with

the piano keyboards,” and she explained what happened when the supervisor entered the classroom for a formal observation:

When a kid sits down with a keyboard that has all of these buttons, they [students] want to find out what all of the buttons do. Right? So I was taking this limbo time to let the kids get used to these keyboards, and to get used to what the keyboards could do. Well, here she comes. Now I had to make it look like a structured lesson, and it didn't fly so well. I started with one mode to let them experiment, and I had to pull them back in.

Lucas explained further, “The supervisor wouldn't have understood that,” and “when the supervisor came in” Lucas admitted, “I got nervous. I felt like I had to perform at that point. It is not really a good measure of how I teach.” After the observation, Lucas commented, “Twenty minutes out of an entire year of teaching, and I have invited them, and nobody every comes to see me,” but, added Lucas, “they come when they are uninvited.”

When the supervisor came in, not only did Lucas get somewhat “nervous” and attempt to make the music classroom as “structured as possible,” but also, “the kids know when she popped in, and they know the game.” In Lucas' case, the kids “go right with you and when the supervisor leaves, they go, ‘OK, what do we get for being good?’”

Lucas related several positive experiences with instructional supervisors where the observation went extremely well. Lucas acknowledged that comments, such as, “I like the way you handled this and the way you handled that,” and “I didn't know you could do that,” or “‘Boy,’ that sounded good,” and “How long have they been doing that?” were “very pleasing” to her. Moreover, Lucas added that the supervisors seemed to be “surprised by what I am able to accomplish,” in light of the fact that “a supervisor has never come into the my room to participate.” Lucas admitted, “Oh, I would love it if somebody just came in and sat down.”

Most of the supervisory experiences that did not go well for Reba had to do with the fact that she had to teach in a myriad of settings that were not appropriate for her music classes, Reba asserted, “They just don’t understand. I have taught in the cafeteria. I have taught on a cart. I have taught in the regular classroom, and I have taught in the trailer.”

For Reba, supervisory experiences were negative, and she admitted that she “never” received the right type of supervision. Reba reported that the only time that supervisors visited her trailer was when they wanted to “reprimand” her for something. Supervisors would not visit her room even after Reba invited them to come see her new or creative teaching methods, and she confessed that teaching music in a trailer was “impossible” for her given the number of students assigned to her.

Teacher Choice—More or Less Supervision

Reba opted for “more” supervision rather than “less,” because she “would like for them [supervisors] to know more of what I do. I am just out there.” Reba indicated that the reason the band and strings programs “received more visits from the supervisors” was probably because they were “in the building,” whereas she was “outside in a trailer.” Not only “do they not have time to do that [visit her classroom],” Reba explained, but supervision of general music, according to her, was “threatening” because:

They [the supervisors] didn’t understand what I was doing, and that the kids needed to be noisy sometimes to do some things, like not being in their desks, and the room not being arranged perfectly.”

Reba provided this example of her concept of “threatening supervision,” when the supervisor said:

I don’t see any place for the fine arts in the middle school program, and if it were up to me, there wouldn’t be any. Don’t expect me to make any compensation for

you here. As far as I am concerned, I had to hire you. Don't expect to ever have a room while I am in control of this school. You will be on a cart, because I hope that they will get rid of the fine arts.

Reba also related other comments that indicated misunderstandings on the part of supervisors. For example, Reba said, "Ya'll [fine arts teachers] are more trouble than you are worth," and "scheduling kids for ya'll is a headache. It would be much easier if we didn't have to deal with all this."

Reba wanted more supervision primarily so that someone would visit in her classroom. Reba believed supervisors felt "threatened" because they "didn't comprehend" the subject which she taught. Moreover, former administrators made disparaging remarks connotating that her program was "unnecessary" and "should be eliminated" from the curriculum.

The Artistic Teacher's Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

This section included Reba's discussion of how supervision could help her improve by considering her wants and needs as a fine arts teacher. The discussion centered on people skills, good ideas, support, listening skills, and a basic knowledge of music. Also, Reba explained that due to the lack of artistic assistance, she believed that her program was often "overlooked" by supervisors.

Reba wanted supervisors to know that teachers "are people and we are all human." Reba thought that "personal issues, such as a death or a divorce, was a part of supervision" as well. For example, "When the principal lost her father, all of a sudden, her attitude changed," related Reba. Reba suggested that supervisors "needed to have a little empathy or sympathy or people skills, because they needed to understand what these

people [teachers] are going through,” but Reba said, “I know that administrators do not really have time to deal with every teacher’s personal issues.”

From instructional supervision, Reba said, she “wanted honesty,” and honesty that was “not overly critical,” and a supervisor “who could appreciate what I am doing or what I am trying to do.” Reba also wanted a supervisor “to walk with me,” she said, because:

I have had too many instances where people just pointed fingers at me and said, “don’t do this, don’t do that,” and there is no “why don’t you try this,” and “have you thought about that?”

Reba wanted a supervisor that “has some good ideas.” In Reba’s case, the workshops and clinics “no longer help,” and she added, “I look at staff development, and I have already taken all of it. I can’t take any more technology. I have taken the beginning, intermediate, and advanced,” and because Reba is in her 23rd year of teaching, the training she now receives is “just a rehash of stuff” that she has taken for the past 22 years.” She added, “Show me something that I don’t know.”

Reba Lucas recommended that if instructional supervisors were to help fine arts teachers with their wants and needs, “We would like to know that we are supported by the administration.” Reba related that she had “spent most of her career watching “my Ps and Qs whenever they [the supervisors] came by, because, ‘God forbid’ that they should catch me doing something experimental or enjoyable. Fluff, as they call it.” Supervisors also need to know that I “need support,” and “somebody that I can talk to about what I am doing and how I can make this better,” reported Reba. Although Reba was comfortable talking with her current principal, Reba still could not “talk to her about fine

arts stuff.” “She will listen,” explained Reba, but she really “doesn’t know how to help me.”

Reba Lucas wanted her instructional supervisors to “have a basic working knowledge of music,” and to “realize the restrictions that I am under in a trailer.” Additionally, Reba recognized that even if supervisors “didn’t understand what I was doing in the classroom, it would be appreciated if they would say so.” It would be nice “if supervisors would talk about my concerns,” but she concluded, “They don’t talk about my needs and wants because there is nothing they can do about it.”

When Lucas was observed and went through the supervisory process, “there was no artistic help whatsoever,” proclaimed Lucas. “If I get any,” added Lucas, “it is a compliment, or ‘isn’t that neat.’ I didn’t know you could do that.” In effect, Lucas wanted a supervisor to say, “Maybe you ought to try this, or let’s try and do more with it,” instead of “that’s a nice idea.”

“Give me new ideas,” is what Reba wanted from supervision, and she wanted a supervisor who could “Light a fire under me. I would appreciate somebody seeing that I am in a rut and say, ‘why don’t we try a different angle? Why don’t you try this?’”

In addition, Lucas believed that that general supervisor was “no” help with the artistic dimension because they “don’t have the background,” and they offer “management procedures.” Reba believed a supervisor who had an artistic background could “see my strengths and weaknesses, and help me with my professional development.” “I need somebody who can do what I can do and can see where I am lacking.” Lucas summarized. For Lucas, instructional supervision “Is just a hoop that I have to jump through.”

For Reba, her artistic needs have “definitely” been overlooked. According to Reba, the reason that fine arts teachers are overlooked is because, “We are different. They know what to do with the academic teachers.” Moreover, Lucas added, “They don’t know a lot about what we are trying to do and they don’t understand, and it looks like too much fun.” Another factor causing fine arts teachers and their subjects to be overlooked related to the emphasis placed on standardized test scores. “The guillotine is poised over their [administrators] heads if these kids don’t pull these scores up,” clarified Reba, and “This standardization is really putting a minimum on the arts.”

Reba believed that the improvement of teaching in the fine arts would improve only with a supervisor who “understood the artistic dimension” and provide opportunity to “brainstorm,” and with someone “who could figure out how to make it better.” However, when Reba was asked if the current instructional supervisors at Kyle Middle School knew enough about the artistic dimension to help her improve, her answer was “No.”

Reba Lucas received “no” help from supervision, and she was “overlooked” because her subject was not considered important. Her supervisory experiences were negative, and she had difficulties persuading a supervisor to visit her classroom. Reba believed that a good supervisor would be able to provide new ideas and to “light a fire” under her.

The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Reba explained the lack of input she had in her own supervision, and noted that supervisors were looking for “something else” when they came to her classroom to observe.

Reba indicated, “No” when asked if supervisors allowed her to have a role in the design of her own supervision. Accordingly, Reba followed with the comment, “All they are looking at is classroom management. You know, the things that they are used to looking for in an academic classroom,” and Reba further explained, “Some of the things that I would want them [supervisors] to pay attention to, they really couldn’t critique me on. I need a music person.” Reba summarized her needs and said, “I need somebody who has had experience teaching music, and who has dealt with middle school kids, and might have a better way of doing it.” Reba explained:

It would be a lot more helpful if the person who is coming to observe me knew the subject area that I am teaching and had actually taught it themselves; somebody who has actually been there and done that.

Reba also felt as though the entire supervisory setting was “politically oriented.” She clarified:

At some point, I got on the bad side of the principal, and it was like she was looking for something to drive me out of teaching. They were trying to make it hard on me so that I would want to quit. They didn’t know how to handle me. What they didn’t understand was that I went through 13 deaths in three years in my family. I lost my husband, my father, my brother, my uncle, and my godfather. Three aunts. They knew all of that and they didn’t care.

Reba concluded that she needed help from a “music person” to improve at her teaching.

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

Reba talked about the artist-teacher and the accountability measures and how these issues related to the daily activities of the artistic classroom. Lucas offered that teaching was an art, and explained that the art “was a gift, a skill that in some ways can’t be taught,” and she defined her idea more by stating, “It is a talent that you are either born with or you are not, or it is a talent that you can develop. Not everybody is born to be a teacher, but some are naturally born teachers.” These naturally born teachers,

described Lucas, “have an understanding of how to open the mind of somebody so that they can understand. They understand how to come at it from 5 different angles until you hit the one that this kid can see.”

For Lucas, the accountability movement had no impact on her. Lucas said, “I don’t see it helping me with my artist work,” but added, supervisors are concerned “with me including reading, writing, an arithmetic into my art program.” “It is not going to work,” and “here’s just another hoop that we are going to have to jump through,” explained Lucas. Because her subject area was not included in the measurable standards, Lucas claimed, the message sent was, “The general music curriculum is not that important.” Lucas declared that because the general music curriculum was not included:

On any testing program, so who cares what I teach? I am not on the Criterion Reference Test. I am not on the Gateway Test. I am not on any of these tests that these kids have to pass for Governor Barnes, so who cares what I teach?

The accountability movement has translated into “that means you are on task one hundred percent of the time,” explained Lucas. “You can’t play a game, and you can’t have student reward days; no fluff. It is almost like when John Kennedy, and that push for the academics, and the arts were threatened even then,” described Lucas. Lucas added that the “extended learning time” brought about by Governor Barnes’s education reform was used at Kyle Middle School as a time for fine arts teachers to “go through all of the records for the teachers.” “We were secretaries for the first couple of months until they figured out what to do with us,” explained Lucas.

Case Summary

An investigation into Reba Lucas’s perspectives of instructional supervision revealed that supervision and supervisors had “nothing to do with general music,” at her

school, supervisors did not understand that procedures in fine arts classrooms were different than in academic classrooms. Reba believed that supervisors do not “have a clue” as to the manner in which a fine arts classroom “works.”

Reba concluded that supervision was “nonexistent” for her and that her experiences with supervisors were “frustrating.” When she invited supervisors to visit her classroom to observe a new or creative teaching technique, they “did not come.” On the other hand, a supervisor would show up only once a year at an unfortunate time for Reba. Although she wanted the attention of the supervisor, it was because she wanted someone to know what she was doing.

Reba wanted supervisors who cared about her personal issues, she wanted a supervisor who would talk with her, and she wanted some new ideas. Support and basic knowledge of the subject area were also needs important to Reba. Although Reba’s needs have been “overlooked,” she felt that she could improve if she had a supervisor who understood the artistic dimension, but she admitted she has “never” had this type of supervision. Moreover, Reba had “no part” in the design of her supervision and that classroom management was the only focus for supervisors at her school.

Teaching was an art to Reba and suggested that it was something that you were “born with.” Reba described art in teaching as the ability to “open up the mind” of somebody so that they could understand. The accountability movement did not include her subject area on standardized tests, and what she taught was considered “fluff” by her supervisor. For the fine arts teachers, accountability meant “having to do extra jobs” unrelated to what they were hired to do—teach music.

Nick Lord

Nick Lord has been a middle school music fine arts teacher in the Andrew County School District for 13 years, and during these years, he has taught and directed the strings program in 2 middle schools in 2 different school districts. In addition to teaching in middle school, Nick's background included teaching at the elementary and high school levels. Like Reba Lucas, Nick Lord taught at Kyle Middle School and because of the large enrollment, he shared teaching the string program with another teacher.

Nick's string classes were supervised by one of the assistant principals. Nick was one of ten fine arts teachers, and Nick, along with his string partner, taught about 391 students each quarter as part of the exploratory curriculum.

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

Nick Lord's experiences with instructional supervision were rather "normal" in comparison with the other participants in this study. Nick was formally evaluated twice a year and admitted, "it [the supervision] has been very strict" compared to the evaluation process in the previous district. "We sit down and talk with this administrator, and then the administrator comes in and observes me individually. At the end of the year, we have an exit interview," explained Nick. The observations were "about 40 minutes, and they were 'random.'"

In addition, Nick received informal supervision "often" during the year. Informal supervisory experiences included conversations in the halls and in the teacher's lounge, telephone calls, and electronic mail. Nick recalled the informal settings, "I can quickly think of about 10 times during the year that we had informal supervision" experiences,

and Nick reported that he “was satisfied that the supervisor was available and helpful when needed.”

By virtue of the large number of student’s involved with the strings program at Kyle Middle School, Nick’s program provided sizeable concerts during the year for parents and friends of the community. The performing arts, such as band, chorus, and strings, differed from visual arts and general music in that they gathered large groups of people for concerts either at the school site or local concert halls. The presentation of Nick’s concerts involved complex logistical procedures, such as moving all of the instruments, stands, podium, arranging transportation, selling tickets, and making sure the community had directions to the concert hall. Beside equipment issues and transportation concerns, the “round robin” concerts, 6th, 7th, and 8th grades, took time and careful planning. Moreover, making sure that the different grade levels knew the procedures for movement on and off the stage, “without causing too much disruption to the nature of the performance,” was also a major concern.

It was in this performance setting that Nick’s instructional supervisor conducted an observation. In comparison to the other participants in this study, this was the only “formal” observation made during a fine arts performance. The morning following the concert, Nick related, “The principal stopped me in the hallway and said, ‘Nick, look at this, this is your observation. I was there. Read this over and sign it.’” Nick added that he “liked” what the principal did, because “We are on display and this is what we do.” Noting that during this “age of accountability,” concluded Nick, “it is important that parents see what we do.” Nick’s supervisor’s attendance and evaluation at the concert was met with the comment, “I think it’s great.”

Nick Lord believed that the type of instructional supervision he received “was general in nature.” Unlike the other teachers interviewed for this study, Nick’s perspective depicted the supervisor as one who should “give some general direction, be visible, provide materials, know the rules, and know how to deal with parents and arrange field trips.” Along with these tasks, Nick believed that supervisors should have a “gist of what was going on in the strings area,” but added, “They don’t have to have been a fine arts person to know what we are dealing with.” Nick provided an example of a student who had broken his cello instrument and the parent of the student wanted to provide a replacement. In spite of the fact that Nick’s supervisor was not a musical person, the supervisor knew the guidelines for instrumental repair and diplomatically told the parents, “Let’s follow the guidelines and if you have problems, then I will follow up.”

Although Nick Lord was satisfied with the effectiveness of the supervisor at his school, Nick was always a “little apprehensive during the formal teaching observation” by his supervisor. Nick gave this example to explain the specific classroom situation:

I can specifically remember her [the supervisor] walking in and I felt a little uneasy because I didn’t know what she was looking for. But she came in during a tough class and there was a young lady sitting on the front row who tested me, and this young lady knew that the principal was in there and she [the student] was just on her game that day.

Nick handled the behavior of the student by asking the student to “have a seat and not to play.” And as the observation concluded, Nick noted that as the supervisor left the room, she “just gave me this OK sign” and said later, “I like the way you handled it, because you stuck to your plan, and you didn’t let the student rule the class.” Nick has felt supported by his supervisors because they have always provided “effective feedback and encouragement” following difficult classroom situations.

Nick suggested that supervisors should have a “gist” of what was going on in a fine arts classroom, and that supervisors need to know the rules and regulations in case there are problems. Nick was anxious during his observations, but relaxed when the supervisor showed support for what he did. Nick admitted that he did not want anything “negative” written about him during a classroom observation.

Perspectives About the Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

Nick Lord, when asked what leadership characteristics his supervisor should have to help him develop as a fine arts teacher, suggested that supervisors should “be good listeners to figure out how to ward off problems, they should possess the ability to make decisions, and they should have good communication skills, and they should be able to focus on instruction.” However, the most significant supervisory characteristic that Lord listed and discussed was that supervisors must have “a humanistic side to them.” “I think you need to be able to sit down and communicate with people about other things outside of school,” explained Lord. Lord thought that supervisors should have additional concerns for teachers other than those simply taking place in the classroom setting. For example, Lord explained:

I think you need to be the kind of person who, when people come to you with personal needs, I think you need to be able to take care of those needs immediately. I mean, it’s good to talk about work but after all of this is done, what have you done outside of school with your life?

Lord’s emphasis on the “humanistic side” was to provide a point of encouragement “for the mental well being” of the staff, and Lord summarized this idea by stating, “It seems like there has to be another side [humanistic side] for the supervisors when there is opportunity.”

Nick concluded that supervisors must be good listeners, and they must have a humanistic side to them. For Nick, the humanistic side describes a supervisor who will show “interest in and be able to communicate with teachers about things outside of school.” Supervisors need to be alert to the “mental well being” of teachers.

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

Unlike the other participants in this study, Nick Lord’s perspective of instructional supervision and what he actually received from supervision were identical. In comparison, Lord felt like he was provided “outstanding supervisory assistance” and that the supervisors were meeting all of his needs. Lord explained, “I think what I am receiving here at this school is pretty ideal,” and he felt “really supported.” “All of the administrators here,” clarified Lord, “have enough of a humanistic side where they are going to sit and listen, and if there is a problem, it is something that is going to be dealt with.” In other words, Lord felt that his concept of supervision and the actions consistently taken by the supervisors at Kyle Middle School were “the best.”

Nick felt that there was no gap between his idea of effective supervision and the supervision he actually received. He felt supported, and recalled that his administrators exemplified the characteristics that he wanted to display when he “someday became an assistant principal.

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Nick Lord could not think of any negative experiences with instructional supervision; Nick related only positive experiences with his current supervisor. However, for Nick, the positive experiences followed concerts and special presentations, not classroom observations. For example, following a large concert at the local civic

center where the program of music was specifically planned for veterans, Nick's principal came to the stage "with tears in her eyes," grabbed the string directors, and said, "I have never heard kids that talented," and lavished the concert with the highest praise. In Nick's case, this praise "heightened my respect for her and the administrative staff." The words of the principal "really makes you feel like you are appreciated," stated Nick, and concluded with, "Sometimes words carry a lot of weight." For Nick, the positive experience following concerts and performances was his supervision.

Teacher Choice—More or Less Instructional Supervision

Lord discussed how he could improve as a teacher and how having more supervision might help. Despite the fact that Lord exhibited a "heightened awareness" when a supervisor visited his classroom to observe his teaching, given the option, Lord would opt for more supervision rather than less, "because it has a greater possibility of improving my teaching skills, and I think that's good for me." "Some people want to be left alone, but I feel as though if you are a professional educator, and if you are doing what you are supposed to be doing, there is nothing that you have to hide," concluded Lord. Therefore, for Lord, additional supervision would provide for him the tools for improvement "even with the anxiety that supervisory classroom observations often brings."

The Artistic Teacher's Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

From supervision, Nick expressed his needs and wants in a positive yet simple style. Nick wanted, "consistency, support, and the ability [for supervisors] to follow through with the rules." Nick related the story of two boys who got into a fight at the

conclusion of one of his classes. Because of the rules of the school, the supervisor expelled the boys, one black boy and one white boy. From this point, the situation became “a racial issue,” and one of the parents would not “leave it alone.” Finally, at a parent/administrative conference, the supervisor forcefully explained to the parent:

This teacher has not done anything wrong. Here are the facts: This is what your son did, this is what he is going to get, we are not going to go into a racial business here because these are the rules, and it doesn't matter whether your son is white, black, or Asian, these are the rules and they apply to all kids.

In light of this experience, Nick felt that the supervisors at his school were “consistent” with the rules and “supportive” of him when the rules were challenged. In addition, Nick believed it was quite important for there to be “lots of communication from the top.” In addition, Nick needed the supervisor to “come to see what was going on in large classrooms, communicate effectively with parents, provide adequate resources, and to be available.”

Nick Lord believed that the most important work supervisors should do is to help teachers improve, and he suggested that supervisors needed “to make a genuine effort to understand smidgens about what is going on [in the fine arts classroom], and if they don't know, then they need to go and find out.” Lord also addressed those supervisors not “in tune with the everyday life of teachers,” as he warned, “Don't forget those of us in the trenches, and always keep in mind where you were. It's good if you don't get away from the classroom.” Lord's intent was to remind supervisors that the perspective of the teacher was important to be remembered and an important leadership characteristic to develop.

As Nick went through the supervisory process several times per year, he agreed that he received “no artistic help” from his instructional supervisor. “I have not been

offered any artistic help from my immediate supervisors here,” said Nick, and furthermore, he did not “expect to receive this type of specialized assistance.” From Nick’s perspective, the instructional supervisor’s job was to “come in and give me the overall concept of the class,” or, in other words, the observer “primarily looks for classroom management procedures carried out” by the teacher. Still, Nick Lord felt that the job of the supervisor conducting a classroom observation was to provide him with areas of improvement for his artistic work. Nick explained:

They [the supervisors] don’t have to know anything about staccato or slowing, but I think they can help you just in presenting a better package of delivery. If you get bogged down with a big class, or need to get the class started faster, just the flow of things helps.

Even though Nick’s instructional supervisor offered him no specific artistic help, he felt that if supervisors helped large classes run smoother, through the observation of classroom procedures, then that process would allow him and other teachers more time and energy to achieve artistic ends. So from Nick’s perspective, general supervisors did offer artistic help in a “roundabout way.”

Nick Lord believed that if he had a supervisor who was trained in the arts that he would certainly “improve.” For one reason, Nick said, “That person is going to let you know that they are in total support of you, because they know what you are going through.” The trained fine arts supervisor, according to Nick, “would understand what is going on, especially in a yearlong program.” To emphasize the strength of an artistic supervisor, Nick thought that the students “would get the biggest jolt out of an AP jumping on the podium and knowing exactly what he or she was doing.” Nick concluded with an example of a principal in another local school that wanted to learn to play the

viola. The principal asked the strings teacher if she could attend classes during the day and learn. Nick related this story:

Now she is the principal, and I don't know how she found time to do it, but she came in, got out a viola, and sat down and, she actually learned with the kids. The kids got the biggest jolt out of it.

Nick summarized that his teaching and the strings program at his school would be “more enhanced” if he had a supervisor who was trained in the fine arts.

When Nick was asked if he had often needed or wanted more artistic supervision than the building supervisors could provide, Nick again related that he never expected artistic supervision from general supervisors. Nick depended on a network of music teachers in the district for artistic help and never considered the supervisor as “the one to provide artistic assistance.” Nick related his perspective on this idea:

To be honest, I have never really depended on the building administration. Sure, they may not know one thing about music, may not have ever touched an instrument, but I've never depended on the assistant principal or the principal to give me a lot of artistic help.

Of course, Nick recognized that his supervisors have always been “good” about offering the “role of support, helping me with funding, helping me with problems, but the artistic has always gone a little further.” In Nick's case, although the administrators were quick to admit that they “didn't know anything about what he needed,” they were available to help him “find the things” he needed and “followed through” with the task.

Nick admitted that if he had a supervisor who understood his artistic needs that his teaching would “definitely” improve. “It definitely would give you some more advantages,” continued Nick. For one thing, confessed Nick, “the administrators would know what I'm talking about when it comes to recruiting and the motivating kids.”

Another advantage would be “receiving advice” from someone that “knew what I was

going through,” Nick added. Again, Nick’s perspective was more focused on the supervisor offering general supervisory assistance, not artistic help. Yet if there were an artistic supervisor at the school, there would be definite advantages for Nick. When asked if the supervisors knew enough about the artistic dimension in teaching to aid in Nick Lord’s artistic improvement, Nick said, “No, I don’t think so.”

The Role of the Artistic Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Throughout Nick’s entire career as a fine arts teacher, he reported that he had “never had any role” in the design of his own supervision. However, Nick confessed that he had never asked his supervisor to come to his classroom for the purpose of looking at specific problems or for areas of improvement. Although Nick felt comfortable asking the supervisor for advice and help with concerns, the notion that Nick could ask his supervisor to come into his room and observe certain teaching techniques and methods, student behavior, or musical procedures was not considered. Perhaps this was the case because Nick’s perspective of the instructional supervisor was that of a general supervisor who gave direction to the teachers and knew the rules of the school and not for musical concerns related to the improvement of instruction.

Nick never asked his supervisor for input into his own supervisory plan, and he never considered asking because musical issues would have not been understood. He wanted the supervisors to take care of the school rules and give general support to teachers.

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

For Nick, the idea of teaching as an art was bound in the procedures of preparing to be a musician, and he recalled the “determination” that it took to achieve to the point

of “becoming an artist.” Teaching was an art to Nick because it allowed him to have “purpose” by sharing his talents with students. Perhaps the best element Nick provided to describe teaching as an art was found in the “discipline” needed to become a fine arts teacher. In other words, for one to excel as a musician, one had “to make a plan and stick with it.” Nick recalled disciplined students that he had taught, and all of these students demonstrated “drive and determination.” And now, “many of these students are playing professionally, while some enjoy playing avocationally in churches and local community groups.” Nick explained, “You can be the world’s greatest cancer specialist, but those men and women must also have some kind of outlet to come back to, and they can find a lot of enjoyment out of playing and singing.” Rather than giving a complex definition of the teaching as an art notion, Nick’s idea of art and teaching was grounded in the “enjoyment” and “discipline” of the road he had chosen to follow.

For the fine arts, the accountability movement with its emphasis on standardization was “distorted,” from Nick’s perspective. On one hand, Nick felt that the performing arts were constantly being held to a “higher standard because of the concert environment,” while on the other hand, the actual formal standards required by the state of Georgia “did not even include fine arts in the repertory.” Nick argued, “Every eight or nine weeks our strings program is always on the chopping block, because each time you put a group of kids up to perform somewhere, you are being put across the boiler.” Nick conceded, that even though the fine arts are not included in the standardized testing of the school, “We are [still] accountable, but as far as the standardization of the school, it doesn’t really have any impact [on fine arts programs].” Hence, from Nick’s point-of-

view, the accountability movement for fine arts carried no meaning; it was not applicable to him and his program at Kyle Middle School.

Discipline, determination, and hard work are prerequisites to becoming an artist in the classroom for Nick. Enjoyment of playing music was the goal. Because the strings program played concerts every quarter of the school year, the program is constantly being held accountable. However, Nick related that the standardization of the music program has no affect on him because the fine arts are not included in the standards.

Case Summary

Nick Lord's experiences with instructional supervision were rather "normal" when compared to the other participants in this study. Nick did not feel overlooked as a fine arts teacher, but he readily admitted that he received no artistic help from his supervisor. Essentially, Nick never expected supervisors to provide him with any artistic help in the classroom, as his idea of the supervisor's role was to deal with classroom management concerns, the rules and regulations of the school, and to provide general direction to the school.

Nick described his experiences with supervisors as positive, and explained how his supervisor assisted him through a volatile issue with a parent. Nick wanted a supervisor who had a "humanistic" side, who was a good listener, and one that would sometimes talk about things "outside" the school. He felt like his current supervisors provided all of the general help that he expected them to provide. Nick would also opt for more supervision because the extra observations might provide an avenue for him to improve his skills as a teacher. Nick stressed that supervisors needed to get "in tune with the fine arts teachers" at their schools and not forget "those of us in the trenches" when

making important decision. Maintaining the “perspective of the teacher” would be a good characteristic to develop, according to Nick.

Nick had never taken a part of designing his own form of supervision throughout his career. He never considered “asking to be involved” because his concept of the supervisor was “one who dealt with school issues, discipline, and rules, not artistic concerns.” For Nick, the idea of the teacher as an artist was based on the discipline and determinations required to reach the level of an artist. Nick’s opinion of the accountability system was “it is distorted,” and it did not affect his work as a fine arts teacher because musical concerts were not included in the standardized tests. Essentially, Nick felt that accountability in the fine arts should be based on the performance of the students, not on the scores of a standardized test. Since musical concepts were not included on the standardized tests, accountability measures had no affect on Nick’s work as a music teacher.

Vassar Rand

Vassar Rand has been a middle school fine arts teacher for 14 years in the Andrew County School District. Rand has taught in a variety of school settings including elementary, junior high, and the high school levels in addition to a short stint at an alternative school. Rand has taught in both private and public schools, also. Overall, Rand has taught for 20 years, and presently she teaches at the Apple Middle School, where the school census is growing rapidly. Previously, Rand taught Language Arts at Apple Middle School before accepting the position as drama teacher.

Apple Middle School maintains 1,974 students and 127 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 15.5:1. Of the 1,974 students, 332 (16.8%) are eligible for free

and reduced-priced lunches. Racially, the student body includes 146 (7.4%) Black students, 1,584 (80.2%) White Students, 104 (5.3%) Hispanic students, 112 (5.7%), Asian students, 1 (0.1%) American Indian students, and 27 (1.4%) Multi-racial students. Apple Middle School enrolled 332 (16.8%) students in gifted programs, 229 (11.6%) in special education programs, and 40 (2.0%) students in ESOL programs.

Apple Middle School's teaching staff includes 47 teachers who have taught 1-10 years, 38 teachers with 11-20 years of experience, and 30 with 21-30 years of experience. Four teachers have taught more than 30 years. Of the 127 teachers, 21 are male and 106 are female.

Six administrators supervise the 127 teachers at Apple Middle School: the principal, 4 assistant principals, and one administrative assistant. Vassar Rand's drama classes were supervised by one of the assistant principals. Rand was 1 of the 9 fine arts teachers who taught approximately 190 students each quarter of the year as a part of the exploratory curriculum. In addition to these students, Rand directed several plays over the course of the school year, and each play usually involved approximately 50 students in the cast. Rand was a connections teacher, a new term for exploratory teachers in middle schools, and students were randomly placed in her classroom. However, for special plays and drama presentations, students were auditioned if they wanted to be involved.

Perspectives of Instructional Supervision

Vassar Rand was supervised with the standard Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) process where she received one formal classroom observation and one pre- and one post-observation conference per school year. Rand was quick to mention

that she met formally with her supervisor only “one and one-half times,” throughout the year, meaning that the final post-conference was “very quick.” Moreover, Rand was required to set two goals, and these two goals were developed according the Local School Plan for Improvement (LSPI), which meant that one of Rand’s goals was to be a personal goal related to what she taught, and the other goal was to be tied to one of the established school goals.

Tying school goals to fine arts classes was a “stretch,” and Rand argued, “It was frustrating to have to tie things to the school goals because it degraded the importance of the subject that I teach. It was just sort of the principle of the thing.” Rand’s classroom observations were 20 minutes long, and the observations were “random,” meaning that the administrators randomly chose which grade level to observe since Rand taught 6th through 8th grade drama classes.

Informal supervisory experiences were not as frequent for Rand in comparison to other participants in this study. Informal supervisory conversations typically included brief but infrequent conversations in the halls or teacher’s lounge and infrequent electronic mail. Rand noted only two electronic mail messages from the supervisor during the entire year and reported no other informal contact with the supervisor. One of the E-mail messages from Rand’s supervisor dealt with “something that she would have liked to have seen done differently,” explained Rand, and the other message was in regard “to a parent who had called in with a complaint.” By Rand’s own account, she received very little supervision, formal or informal, throughout the last year of school.

Although Vassar Rand’s drama presentations involved large numbers of students, her supervisor did not choose to evaluate Rand during these performances. The

supervisors who came to the drama presentations were “always giving positive feedback;” however, Rand considered the information that could be collected by watching a performance “probably would be the best indicator of the job I do.” Rand indicated that for the supervisor to make the best evaluation of her abilities, “they [the supervisors] should see both,” meaning, the drama presentations and the daily classroom teaching preparing for the dramatic presentation. In spite of the fact that Rand was not evaluated through the medium of her drama productions, she admitted, “I wish they would do that [conduct a formal observation] at the production.”

Vassar Rand believed that instructional supervision should primarily be focused on “weeding out the incompetent teachers,” and secondarily, “developing teachers.” For Rand, the “weeding out of incompetent teachers” was the “biggest thing,” administrators should be doing. Barring this task by administrators, Rand said, “The purpose should be to help to develop the teachers.”

Formally, Rand was required to set two goals for improvement, one personal goal and one related to the school’s goal. With this in mind, Rand suggested:

Goals should be set that are related to what they teach, and that there should be the freedom to say, “I would like to work on this,” and then get support from your administrator, who is in charge of supervising you in reaching those goals.

The goals involved, according to Rand, should not be designed “in terms of what I am doing wrong, but what I am doing right. It [goal setting] should be more aligned with the way I would set my personal goals.” Rand thought that preparing yearlong goals, and 5-10 year goals would be more helpful “if you really wanted to develop teachers.”

However, admitted Vassar, “I don’t think the administrators have the time or the freedom to do that [develop teachers] right now.” “I think they would love to develop teachers,”

continued Rand, but “I think they are overwhelmed with everything they have to do.”

Rand’s perspective centered on developing teachers and getting rid of incompetent teachers, but concluded that school administrators did not have the time to do either due to the time constraints of the administrator’s busy schedules.

Perspectives About the Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

Rand argued that the characteristics necessary for an administrator to help her improve as a fine arts teacher were important ones and valuable for supervisors to cultivate. For Rand, supervisors needed to be “team members,” and “good listeners,” because “most of the administrators are not going to be fine arts people.” “I think an administrator should be familiar with all aspects of the school,” and along these same lines, Rand suggested that as a part of the supervisor’s training, “they [the supervisors] should know something about the fine arts, special education, different academic areas, and the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) required in all areas.” The AKS is the body of knowledge that Andrew County School District has required that all students must learn. Moreover, for the sake of improvement, Rand would like for her supervisor to have “vision” as to the importance of fine arts at her school. Fine arts in our schools, according to Rand, are too “segmented,” and need to “be integrated into everything else that we do.”

Rand stressed that supervisors need to be team members, good listeners, and familiar with all aspects of the school. Moreover, supervisors should know something about the fine arts and to give vision to the fine arts program at her school.

Perspectives of the Reality of Instructional Supervision in Practice

Rand discussed the reasons why her present supervisory experience was different from ideal. Rand's perspective of instructional supervision, and what she actually received from supervision were quite different. Again, Rand's concept of supervision suggested that the twofold purpose of supervision was to "weed out the bad teachers," and to "help develop teachers." But, according to Rand, the supervision actually provided was more of "They [the supervisors and district leadership] are just trying to cover themselves on everything," and continued with the argument of ineffective goal setting, "There is not even a place on the form (observation form) to set goals." Rand observed:

Nobody ever in the real work world has an evaluation where everything is hunky-dory and there is nothing at all that they are going to work on, no goals they are going to set. I don't agree with the whole way that the schoolteachers are evaluated anyway. I never have.

In Rand's case, she felt that although the RBES goal setting process was in place in the district, the process "did not allow goal setting that would enhance improvement." The goals were "tied to school goals and did not provide teachers with the personal impetus" to develop as "autonomous professionals."

Perspectives Regarding Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervision

Rand discussed her experiences with her supervisor and how these experiences have recently affected her trust levels and classroom procedures. Vassar Rand's experiences with supervisors have traditionally been "pleasant" until recent changes in the relationship between Rand and her new supervisor. "Depending on who the supervisor was," said Rand, "made a lot of difference." "If the supervisor was an unknown entity, then I don't know what they are looking for," admitted Rand. Building a

“trust level with the administrator” was a significant factor for Rand, and knowing what the supervisor was “expecting so that there would be no surprises,” was a major part of building that trust. For the past several years, however, Rand has not felt the trust between herself and the supervisor. First, the administrator was new and was, in the opinion of Rand, not “knowledgeable of the way things worked in a drama classroom.” Rand was concerned that the administrator “came from a different background and did not have a familiarity with what I was teaching,” provoking the question, “Is there going to be an understanding of what I am doing and why I am doing it?”

Vassar explained that her last experience with the instructional supervisor “did not go well.” At the time of this observation, Rand’s classes were 40 minutes in length, and therefore, to complete a unit, “it usually took 3 to 4 days.” Each day of the unit, Rand would conduct a focus activity and introduce the material again before proceeding with the lesson, and Rand’s supervisor conducted an “unannounced” formal observation during the middle of the period, missing the introduction and focus activity. After the class, Rand’s supervisor complained that Rand had not conducted a wrap-up at the end of class, and Rand countered, “I am not through yet. Why do I need a wrap-up?” Rand translated this comment by the supervisor as a “surprise,” and suggested to the supervisor “there was not enough time in each class to present a focus, and activity, and then a wrap-up.” A few days later, Rand “got a handout on how to do these intro-reading things even though I have taken 30 hours of staff development, and three different workshops on how to get kids engaged in reading.” Needless to say, the lack of trust between Rand and her supervisor was noteworthy, and the lack of trust continued throughout the year.

When Rand first began teaching, her supervisor would enter the classroom “with a clipboard and a chart and tell me that I needed to make sure that I covered these things.” Rand related this story:

So when she came into the room I'd just stopped whatever I was doing, and did those things, and then when she left, I'd pick back up with where we were in our lesson, because I knew that no matter where I was [in the lesson], I was going to have to cover those things, or I was going to get checked off on something.

In the past, Rand changed her techniques and practices when a supervisor came into the room, especially if she “did not know and trust the supervisor.” Now, however, Rand feels that the administrators are more aware of what is going on in her classroom, and noted that “they were more prone to ‘come back later’” if she was in the middle of a lesson or if she was giving a test. This past year, Rand made the decision, “I decided it wasn’t worth the hassle to try” to change gears when the supervisor came into the room to observe. “I have taught many more years than what my administrator has taught,” and “I won’t do a ‘blooming thing’ differently because I think that what I do is just fine,” argued Rand. Even though conflicts developed between Rand and her administrator last year, Rand does “not anticipate a problem this year.”

As Vassar Rand was asked to relate a time that the experience with an instructional supervisor went well compared to the negative incident mentioned above, Rand quickly asked, “Any other time?” “I really can’t think of another time,” concluded Rand. Rand did not have positive experiences with her current supervisor, and related that her supervisor “didn’t understand” how things “worked in a drama classroom.” Conflict with the supervisor created stressful situations, and Rand hoped that next year would be more successful. Rand changed her techniques of teaching when the supervisors came in to observe her because Rand knew that the supervisor was looking

for predetermined techniques and would not understand the procedures inherent to a drama classroom. Eventually, Rand decided that it was too much of a “hassle” to try and change because she was confident in the way she taught.

Teacher Choice—More or Less Instructional Supervision

Vassar Rand acknowledged that if she were allowed to opt for more or less supervision, her decision would “depend on who is going to be supervising me.” “If they know what they are doing, and they are going to be helpful,” explained Rand, she would “opt for more supervision.” However, if the supervisor was “pressed for time” and always “had too much to do,” or if they were “negligent in getting the evaluation back to her until the end of the school year,” Rand would prefer “less supervision.” It was apparent that Rand had difficulties with her supervisor last year. Not only did the supervisor wait until the end of the year to provide Rand with an evaluation, but also the supervisor did not come to Rand’s drama performances. The only contact that Rand had with her supervisor was in the form of two E-mails earlier in the year. Rand’s comment, therefore, that “it depended on the supervisor” determined, to a great degree, her perspective for more or less supervision, and in this case, Rand preferred “less.”

The Artistic Teacher’s Perspective—What Do They Need and Want from Instructional Supervision?

From supervision, Rand expressed that her wants and needs could be met better if the supervisors were “master teachers.” Rand added that it would be best to use supervisors “who have been identified as being strong teachers, someone in your field, and someone in your school, but that would be difficult for the fine arts.” Rand also related that her needs would be met if she had the “opportunity for there to be something

that I am working on in terms of goals and of growth,” and something that is “pushing me to grow.” Rand identified these goals as “professional goals” that required her to be “up to date” in literature and training in her field. Supervisors could help Rand meet these goals by “providing professional resources” and by allowing her “to attend conferences and workshops” in her subject area.

Vassar believed that for supervisors to help fine arts teachers improve, they needed a “more focused understanding” of the fine arts:

Teaching fine arts is different from teaching in a Language Arts or science classroom, because you are “doing all of the time,” you are on your feet performing because you are having to pull something out of the kids that wouldn’t be there otherwise.

“Not just anybody can teach fine arts,” continued Vassar, and she wanted supervisors “to know this.” According to Vassar, when a student is performing on stage, the student is “taking risks, dealing with self esteem and fear issues,” and “becoming vulnerable to peer pressure.” Supervisors need to understand that the work of the fine arts teacher is not like classes that are usually doing work with “paper and pencil,” Vassar clarified.

Moreover, Vassar wanted supervisors to know “how the [fine arts] program worked at each grade level,” and then figure out a way to “help me.” In other words, the knowledgeable supervisor is going to be more helpful to the fine arts teacher than the supervisor who is only concerned with classroom management issues. Vassar wanted the supervisor to be a “champion” for fine arts programs by “doing a lot of listening,” and being “interested in where this program was going to be a year from now.” To summarize, Vassar wanted supervisors to know that, “The supervisor of fine arts programs makes or breaks the arts in your school.”

In Vassar Rand's drama world, a supervisor that had the artistic ability to help with "picking up on some things that I just can't spot," would help bring improvements into Rand's classroom, although Rand confessed that she "really had no one at school to help her" with these artistic dimensions of teaching. However, if supervisors were artistic, she added, "they could understand what is being done, and they would be more likely to see something that I really should be doing differently."

During the supervisory process, Vassar admitted that she received no "artist help" from her supervisors. Furthermore, Vassar does not think "that the local supervisor should necessarily be expected to be equipped to do that," because, "I think that you would be asking way too much of him to do that." Vassar went on to discuss the diverse job that the general supervisor had at Apple Middle School, dealing with technology, physical education, health, and the fine arts, and suggested that the local supervisor "cannot be expected to do [supervise] all of that." For Vassar, artistic help came from "outside sources, such as workshops, conferences, and the school district's fine arts personnel."

From Vassar's perspective, the current supervisor was not needed because of misunderstandings that had taken place with classroom management concerns. In light of the fact that Vassar's supervisor had little communication with her during the school year, had never asked Vassar to explain the drama program to her, had not attended drama presentations, and had not returned Vassar's evaluation form until the conclusion of the school year, Vassar's perspective of the new supervisor was not very positive. Vassar concluded her argument with this statement:

Well, I'm old enough, and I just don't need the aggravation. I know what I am doing. I do a good job with it, my parents are happy, my administrators have

always been happy, and for me to sit there worrying about whether I am going to get marked down on an evaluation, it is not worth it. I am going to put myself in an area where I know I am not going to get marked down. I just talked to another teacher who is going to get out of it [teaching] because of a supervisor.

Although Vassar Rand had issues with her current supervisor, she never felt her artistic needs have been “overlooked” by the principal of the school. Even though Vassar’s perspective of artistic growth and development fell outside of the local school, the principal always “paid for a substitute when I wanted to go to a staff development,” Vassar explained. “He [the principal] gave me release time to go a Young Audiences Showcase so that I could see the artists that I wanted to bring in to do workshops,” added Vassar. Vassar admitted that her artistic needs were never “overlooked” by the principal, but noted that the “principal was not my primary supervisor.”

Vassar Rand recognized that if she had a supervisor who understood her artistic needs that “It would make a difference,” but she had reconciled that her present “supervisor will not make that difference.” However, Rand did express hope that her supervisor would begin the new school year “supportive, because the instructional supervisor assigned to her “did not know enough about my artistic needs and wants” to help her improve as a middle school fine arts teacher.

Like the other participants in this study, Vassar looked outside of the local school for artistic assistance. Despite the fact that Vassar thought that “It would be nice to have an administrator who understood the arts, and who would actually look at the program,” she was firmly convinced that for that to happen, she “needed a different administrator at her school.”

The Role of the Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Throughout Rand's entire career as a teacher, she has "never" played a significant role in her own supervision. Rand has "never" been given the opportunity from a supervisor to suggest specific points at which to observe, such as discipline. Rand has "never" felt comfortable asking the supervisor for specific help during an observation, and she admitted, "No, I have never had that." Rand excused the supervisors, however, by stating, "In all fairness, with as many kids as we have, they barely have enough time to come, and it's not their [the supervisor's] fault."

Artistic Teaching, Accountability, and Instructional Supervision

To Vassar, the perspective of the teacher as artist develops "from your own style and modalities," and that the artist/teacher was also a "profession that requires a very fine art." Vassar explained that she felt that a teacher could be an artist because of the complex task required to meet the diverse needs of students. For example, Vassar listed these attributes of artistic teaching:

Gearing yourself to the visual and auditory learner, creating ideas to stimulate students, providing materials, presenting yourself, and performing these duties at any number of places and times.

For Vassar Rand and the fine arts, the accountability movement with its measurements and standardization features, had "little or no effect on her teaching." For one thing, noted Rand, "the fine arts aren't even on the thing [the test]," and for the most part, the fine arts are "still mostly assessed on the basis of what you see in a concert, or what you see in a play, or what you see in a kid from the beginning to the end of the class." Moreover, the fine arts classroom and procedures do not "lend themselves to paper and pencil tasks." For example, Rand further related:

Some of those things you could not put down on paper, like the kid who was scared in my class last year to do anything at all, and she hid, to the extent that I told her, “you just stand in the back of the room, and you do whatever you are comfortable, and try to stay up with us. Just gradually move up to where you are joining us,” but she couldn’t do things in the class in front of other kids. But by the end of the year, she was in our big play, and she loved it, and next year, she won’t have a problem with that.

Other than the conflict caused by trying to require the fine arts to fit into standard measurements, was the conflict that standardization limited the fine arts teacher’s ability to “try something new and take risks,” and according to Vassar, “If you try something new and it doesn’t work out, then the test scores do not get better.” Vassar believed that higher test scores are the “priorities” supervisors are stressing right now, “but I am not sure that my conflict would be any different than what it is for a classroom teacher, because they can’t take risks either,” argued Vassar. Vassar acknowledged that for any discipline there is a “body of information that you would want the kids to know,” and “those should be tested, but in the fine arts, there are many ‘intangibles,’ and it is difficult to access everything” with so many students.

In past years, Vassar has felt comfortable taking risks and being creative without the fear of being chastised, in view of the fact that higher test scores have rarely been the primary focus of fine arts programs. Vassar’s former supervisor somewhat understood the freedoms necessary to conduct a drama classroom. In fact, Vassar’s former supervisor’s attitude was, “If you were a good teacher, and you were turning out good products, and the parents were happy, he felt like everything was fine.” However, Vassar does not enjoy that same freedom with her current supervisor. In Vassar’s opinion and in spite of the assigned supervisor, the fine arts department at Apple Middle School “didn’t need much help from the supervisor. Vassar expanded on this perspective:

[We] don't need someone [a supervisor] spending a whole bunch [of time] on us because we are pretty good at running everything. Everything in the fine arts here pretty much runs themselves. We really and truly would be OK without an administrator. That may sound terrible.

Vassar Rand discussed her concepts of teaching as an art by listing attributes that would describe a teacher as an artist. These attributes were centered on the daily practices of a drama teacher preparing a classroom and performances with diverse needs in mind. For Rand, the art developed from the teacher's ability to satisfy the different "modalities" in the classroom, and that the art approach developed from "your own style." The accountability movement had "no affect" on Rand's teaching and that it limited her ability to take "risks," thereby narrowing the creativeness of the drama classroom. According to Rand, her curriculum was not included in the standards, and in her opinion, the fine arts department at her school "didn't need much help from a supervisor."

Case Summary

An examination of Vassar Rand's perspectives of instructional supervision revealed that she was having a difficult year with her supervisor. Communication was lacking between Rand and her supervisor, and in each instance, the relationship was uncomfortable and strained. Her supervisor never came to her drama presentation, provided one observation that offered confusing suggestions for Rand to follow, and this observation was conducted the end of the school year. Rand felt that the primary purpose of supervision was to "weed out the incompetent" teachers and then to develop the existing teacher pool. Earlier in the school year, Rand would change her lesson plans to accommodate the list of the supervisor's expectations, but at this juncture in Rand's

career, she admitted that she would not do a “blooming thing” differently now because she believes that what she does is “just fine.”

Rand wanted a supervisor who was a good listener, a team player, and one that had a background in the fine arts. For Rand, school improvement would occur if the arts were integrated in the entire curriculum. Rand believed that her concept of the ideal and what she actually received from supervision were quite different at her school. Goal setting provided Rand with no help and the goals “required” were tied to school goals and had no affect on her drama program. Moreover, the goals did not provide teachers with any “personal impetus” to develop as “autonomous professionals.”

Rand explained that she would prefer “less” supervision depending on who supervised her, and her needs would be met if supervisors were master teachers and familiar with fine arts. For Rand, the fine arts class is different and it is not like “paper and pencil” classes found the academic disciplines. Rand also admitted that she has “never” been provided with any artistic help in the classroom and that she needed a “new administrator” to help her improve. Moreover, Rand has not had the “opportunity” of participating in her own supervision and explained that the supervisor’s time constraints were the reasons.

For Vassar Rand, the “minutia” involved in preparing a fine arts classroom and successfully meeting the needs of drama students were instances of artistic teaching. Satisfying the diversity of styles and being able to perform at numerous time and places qualified the teacher as an artist. The accountability movement for Vassar had no affect because her fine arts curriculum was not included in the standards. The standards limited Vassar’s creative ability since standardization did not measure the “intangibles” found in

a drama setting. In Vassar's opinion, because of her supervisor's lack of fine arts understanding, the fine arts department ran itself, and the supervisor was not needed.

Common Themes

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school fine arts teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts.

Six case studies were developed from data collected over a period of 6 months with 6 middle school fine arts teachers who taught in the same school district and were supervised under identical guidelines required by the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP). The 6 participants were interviewed 2 times, which yielded 12 transcripts from the participants who were experienced teachers, and whose time in teaching ranged from 3 to 30 years.

Broad categories were designed to organize the data and to provide direction for further analysis. From these broad categories, the data were refined until individual perspectives were delineated and clarified. These refined perspectives provided common themes that were analyzed to answer the primary research questions established as the framework of this study. The research questions were designed to discover the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers in regard to the instructional supervision provided them, and to uncover fine arts teacher's artistic wants and needs from their supervisors. Experts have agreed on the need for research from the teacher's perspectives about their needs and wants from instructional supervision (Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998).

In this study, the researcher examined each case study and the following three common themes emerged from the data: 1) Instructional supervisors must be knowledgeable in fine arts subjects to help fine arts teachers improve, 2) The gap between ideal instructional supervision and the reality of supervision in practice is wide for fine arts teachers, and 3) Fine arts teacher's artistic needs and wants are marginalized by instructional supervisors not having artistic knowledge.

Cross Case Analysis

The purpose of this cross case analysis was to discover meaning from the common themes and to further delineate the perspectives of the fine arts teachers. The researcher compared and contrasted the common themes that emerged from the data and presented them in the discussions presented here.

Theme 1: *Instructional supervisors must be knowledgeable in fine arts subjects to help fine arts teachers improve.*

Discussions with participants provided a medley of experiences with supervisors that framed each participant's perspectives of instructional supervision. These perspectives were based on their supervisor's behaviors and attitudes and the relationship that participants and their respective supervise maintained. Discussions included were centered on the knowledge needed to help fine arts teachers improve, evaluation practices and procedures, definitions of instructional supervision, observations conducted at fine arts performances, leadership characteristics of instructional supervisors, and positive and negative experiences with instructional supervisors. These supervisory experiences allowed the participants to construct their own perspectives of instructional supervision,

while the developing overarching theme of the discussions pointed to the need for a “knowledgeable” supervisor.

The Knowledge Needed to Help Supervisors Improve

All six of the middle school fine arts teachers interviewed maintained that knowledge was the salient ingredient that instructional supervisors must have to adequately supervise fine arts teachers. The participants suggested that the work of the fine arts teacher was considered “out of the box” and “unique,” and supervisors must be in tune to the different viewpoints, approaches, and techniques used by fine arts teachers in their classrooms. Although all of the participants used different terminology to describe their “work” in middle schools, they all supported the belief that if supervisors wanted to understand fine arts teacher’s perspectives and classrooms, they needed to have a knowledge base for that understanding to exist. Underlying each participant’s perspective ran a common thread that insisted supervisors become knowledgeable in the fine arts subject areas in which they were entrusted to supervise.

Lankford explained that it was “difficult” to supervise fine arts teachers because supervisors do not have an “adequate tool” for observing the music classroom. For Lankford, supervisors must be able to understand the terminology used in the music classroom, such as, “crescendo and decrescendo” before they can adequately evaluate what the teachers are doing. Since there is no tool for evaluating the music teacher, Lankford suggested that the supervisors could be trained to use the adjudication forms used for band festivals. These standard forms are used by judges to grade music performances in the area of intonation, tempo, articulation, presentation, and other musical concepts. Without training, however, supervisors would not know how to use a

musical adjudication format. In other words, Lankford suggests that supervisors need to “do their homework” before they come in to formally observe a fine arts teacher.

Neeta agreed with Lankford that supervisor should stay with classroom management observations rather than “evaluate the product, which they probably don’t understand anyway.” Neeta admitted that she is now learning to trust her new supervisor, although he “offers little help” to her and “to her program.” Because instructional supervision offered no assistance to Neeta as a fine arts teacher, she would “like to be left alone.” Neeta’s past experiences with supervisors had caused her to develop a lack of trust in them, and she only wanted supervisors to help her with logistical procedures like setting up equipment for chorus concerts.

Tracy recognized the need for a supervisor who would be knowledgeable enough about what she was doing to make an adequate evaluation of what was occurring in the art classroom. As the art teacher, Tracy described her art classroom as a “kind of controlled chaos,” an unstructured classroom environment, often labeled as a “fun or flaky class.” Tracy stressed she was often “anxious” when the supervisor came to observe, because she knew the supervisor “would not understand” what was going on, and she feared that she was going to get a “bad mark” on her evaluation form. This fear was based on the art classroom’s uniqueness, and Tracy was “relieved” when the supervisor left. When the supervisor entered Tracy’s room for a formal observation, she quickly tried to make the class look regimented and structured so that the supervisor could make sense of it, because she knew that he had no knowledge of “how it worked” in an art classroom.

Reba readily admitted that she had “no” supervision, and supervisors “never understood” what she did as a fine arts teacher. Reba’s supervisor thought that she was just “having fun and playing” and “wasting time,” due to the fact that the supervisor had no idea what was “going on” in her music classroom. Reba taught general music, where recorders, guitars, keyboards, and computers were used for teaching music fundamentals, and because of the lack of understanding and background on the part of Reba’s supervisor, he considered her curriculum “fluff.”

Compared to the other participants in this study, Nick had the most “normal” experiences with his instructional supervisor. Although Nick admitted that he wanted his supervisor to have a “gist” of what was going on in his strings classroom, he only expected them to perform classroom management duties. Nick expected his supervisors to provide general directions and help with parents, and for Nick, he wanted the supervisors to understand only “smidgens” of what was going on in the classroom. Nick admitted, however, that he would “improve” as a teacher if he had a supervisor who was versed in a musical background because they would “understand what you are going through.”

Vassar wanted a supervisor with a “more focused understanding” of fine arts, because teaching fine arts is “different” from teaching other classes. “Not just anybody can teach fine arts,” Vassar said, and it was important for supervisors to “know this.” Vassar’s supervisor only understood classroom management forms of evaluation, and Vassar admitted that because of her supervisor’s lack of understanding in the fine arts, her supervisor “would not make a difference” in the improvement of her program.

Moreover, Vassar suggested that the fine arts program at her school would “run just fine without a supervisor.”

Each of the participants related that supervisors must have an understanding of the fine arts to help fine arts teachers improve. All but one of the participants noted that their supervisors lacked sufficient knowledge of the subject areas to assist them in the classroom, and this participant mentioned that the supervisor needed “at least a smidgen” or a “gist” of musical understanding. Each participant mentioned that the supervisor was helpful with classroom management procedures but lacked understanding in fine arts. Lankford summarized that if instructional supervisors wanted to help fine art teachers improve, they must “do a lot more homework before they come to the classroom” to observe.

Evaluation Practices and Procedures

The evaluation practices and procedures designed for each participant were varied and discussed as formal and informal experiences. Although all of the participants were supervised under identical guidelines required by the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP), each participant’s formal evaluations were conducted differently.

Lankford related that his formal evaluations were “short” and lasted “about 20 minutes,” and that the supervisor randomly selected the grade level that was to be observed. Middle school fine arts teachers instruct at the 6th through the 8th grade levels, as opposed to the academic teachers who teach only one grade level. Informal supervisory experiences for Ian included “daily visits in the halls,” and mentioned that the supervisor used a “whatever’s necessary” approach to the daily process of informal supervision.

Lankford admitted that he went through the motions of supervision “*reluctantly*” because the supervisor did not really “understand what was going on.” According to Lankford, the only reason supervisors “show up” is to observe “classroom management,” and added that administrators should know something about everybody’s job that they supervise. In most cases, according to Lankford, supervisors do not know the difference in “good and bad practices” in the band classroom.

Neeta reported that her formal supervisory visits were “45 minutes long,” and random in regard to grade level observed. Neeta related that a meeting was held at the beginning of the year to “set goals” and then one at the end of the year to see if she “met her goals.” The Results Based Evaluation Plan (RBES) required that each participant set goals for the school year; one goal was to be tied to the local school goals, and the other goal was a personal goal related to her chorus program. The administration “decides that you do it that way,” indicated Neeta. For Neeta, informal evaluation practices included the supervisor “walking around all of the rooms and sticking his head in and waving.” This form of supervision made Neeta feel “comfortable” and “at home” at her school. The “at home” feeling for Neeta was not the case in her former school where she would only see the administrator at the beginning of the year, and “that would be about it.”

Tracy had two formal classroom observations per year that lasted approximately “30 minutes,” and the visits were random in regard to grade levels. However, Tracy reported that she received “many more informal” visits as her supervisor “came by every day to check on me. He wanted to see if I was OK,” said Tracy. At first, Tracy thought that the supervisor was there to look for things she was “doing wrong,” but realized later that he was there only to “touch base.”

Reba's formal classroom visits were approximately "20 minutes long," and her supervisor's visits were also "random" in regard to the grade level visited. Unlike Lankford and Neeta, however, Reba's supervisor required the two goals to be "school wide and academic," rather than a personal goal that related to her subject area. According to Reba, the design of the goal allowed "no focus on the fine arts whatsoever," and "didn't have anything to do" with what she taught. Neeta's formal observations were always a surprise, and said that they "never tell me when they [supervisors] are coming." For Reba, informal supervision "never took place." Casual conversations in the halls and informal visits into the classroom did not occur for Reba. Reba said that the only time supervisors "came down to see me" was when "I have done something I shouldn't have." Although Neeta invited her supervisor to visit her classroom to observe a new teaching technique she had developed, the "supervisor never came."

Nick said evaluation practices were "normal" for him. He was evaluated twice a year, and the observations would last "about 40 minutes." Nick's observations were also "random" across all three grade levels. At the beginning of each year, Nick sat down with his supervisor and designed a plan for the year, and at the end of the year, Nick and his supervisor would have an "exit interview," to discuss the goals set in the first supervisory meeting. Nick's informal evaluations were "quite often during the year" and he reported that he was "satisfied that the supervisor was available and helpful when needed."

Vassar was formally supervised "one and one-half" times throughout the year, indicating that the post-conference was "very quick." Vassar's formal visits were "20 minutes long," and the visits were "random" in regard to grade levels that were visited.

Vassar's formal sessions included setting a goal related to the school goals, and Vassar admitted that trying to tie her personal goal to one of the school goal was a "stretch" for her as a fine arts teacher. Vassar reported, "it was frustrating" trying to tie her personal goals to school goals because the request "degraded the importance" of what she taught. For Vassar, informal supervision during the 2001-2002 school year included two E-mail messages and "no other informal contact" with her supervisor.

Although all of the participants were supervised under the GTEP and RBES formats for formal supervision, each participant reported differences in the procedures and practices. All visits to the participant's classrooms were randomly selected, and the formal observations were under an hour in length. Two of the participants reported that they struggled applying their personal goals to school goals, and two of the participants admitted that they were provided no informal supervision at all.

Role Descriptions of Instructional Supervision

The participant's descriptions of instructional supervisor's roles were quite different and varied considering the original intents and purposes of supervision. Although the methods and practices of instructional supervision have varied since the inception of formal supervisory models, the intents and purposes have primarily remained the same—"to help teachers improve instructional performance" (Acheson & Gall, 1992, p. 9). In these cases, the intents and purposes were diverse.

Lankford description of his instructional supervisor's included the following:

They [supervisors] are knowledgeable of my subject content, that they have read the Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS), and they understand what is there, what is supposed to be happening, and that they are able to evaluate the appropriateness of what I am doing in class to meet the AKS.

The Academic Knowledge and Skills (AKS) is the specific body of knowledge defined by the Andrew County School District that all teachers will teach and all students will learn.

Neeta's description of the supervisor's role included the supervisor as a "liaison" and "contact person" for concerns and conflicts that occurred between parents and teachers. In addition, the supervisor was to provide "support and encouragement, reference materials, and security." To Neeta, supervision was a "team" effort.

Tracy's description of the instructional supervisor's role stressed that her supervisor knew what she "was supposed to be doing, was getting paid to do, and following the guidelines set by the county." Moreover, Tracy felt suggested that the supervisor was to make sure that "everything runs smoothly" at the school.

Reba's description of the supervisor's role was specific:

Instructional supervision is somebody like an assistant principal or a county supervision coming into your classroom watching what you do and giving you positive feedback; a positive critique of ways you can improve how you are teaching, and how you are getting things across to the students. Helping you come up with a plan of improvement with your teaching, or even getting together with you and saying, Well, who don't you go watch this other teacher. I think this will help.

Nick described his instructional supervisor's role as one who "gives some general directions, who is visible, provides materials, knows the rules, and knows how to deal with parents, and knows how to arrange field trips." Also, the supervisor's job should include having a "gist" or "smidgen" of what was "going on" in his subject area.

Vassar believed the supervisor's role was to "weed out the incompetent teaches," and secondarily, to "develop teachers." "Weeding out of the incompetent teachers" was the "biggest thing," according to Vassar.

From the perspectives of the participants, the descriptions of the instructional supervisor's role were diverse, and included intents and purposes ranging from "arranging field trips" to the "weeding out of the incompetent teachers, providing a "liaison" between parents and teachers, and "making sure everything runs smoothly" were supervisor roles included.

Observations Conducted at Fine Arts Performances

All of the participants discussed their perspectives of using special performances as venues for their instructional supervisors to conduct formal observations. The findings were mixed, and all of the participants had perspectives to present, even though general music and art are not considered as performance arts.

Ian concluded that a formal observation during a band concert might provide "some suggestions and ways to improve," but stressed that he would worry that the supervisor who came to the performance might not be able to "sit back and enjoy the student's work and what we have been doing together."

Neeta was not interested in being formally observed at concert performances because she felt "administrators need to come to the concerts to enjoy the programs along with the parents." Neeta insisted that the supervisors should be at the concerts for "support," and because "it is good for the children to see them there." Moreover, Neeta felt it was good for the supervisor to attend the concert in case "there was a problem with the crowd." Neeta concluded the supervisor should conduct the formal observation in the classroom because that is what she "does every day," and that is why she was "hired." For Neeta, the concert was "just the spicing."

Although Tracy's art classroom was not considered a performance subject, Tracy elaborated that she would feel "fine" about being officially observed during an art show. Tracy added that the performance aspect would put "pressure on" and keep her "on her toes."

Although Reba teaches general music, she used to be a chorus teacher. In this case, Reba would have "loved" for someone to come to her concerts and formally observe her. When Reba taught chorus, the county fine arts coordinator would come to her concerts and give her feedback afterwards. However, the coordinator was not responsible for formally observing her as a teacher.

Nick was the only participant who was formally observed at a concert performance with his strings students, and he admitted that he "liked" what his principal did after the concert. Not only did the principal applaud Nick's accomplishments to the audience immediately following the performance, but the next morning the principal stopped Nick in the hallway, and said, "Nick, look at this, this is your observation. I was there, read this over and sign it." Nick added, "I think it's great" to be supervised at a performance.

For Vassar, drama performances included large numbers of students, and her supervisor did not choose to formally observe her during the performance. However, Vassar admitted that a formal observation at a drama performance might "be the best indicator of the job I do." Vassar added for the supervisor to make the best evaluation of her abilities, supervisors should see "both," meaning the performances and classroom teaching before the performance.

Nick was the only participant to be officially observed at a fine arts performance. Although the perspectives were mixed, most felt that being observed in a concert setting was appropriate for the fine arts subjects they taught.

Leadership Characteristics of Instructional Supervisors

All of the participants discussed the leadership characteristics they believed instructional supervisors must have to help them improve as fine arts teachers. Lankford believed that supervisors should treat all teachers “alike,” and not allow some teachers to “break the rules.” For Lankford, “consistency” was important. He also included characteristics, such as “steady,” and “fair,” and “true to the task.” Lankford’s military background provided insight to clarify his meaning of leadership:

It’s kind of like that morning formation that you have to have with the troops. Make it brief, to the point, tell them what the mission is, give them encouragement, and tell them, “OK, now go get the job done.” That’s it.

Neeta wanted her supervisor to exhibit “professionalism” in the school. Neeta based her comment on a negative experience where a principal ask Neeta to change a grade after a parent complained. Neeta was disturbed that the supervisor did not treat her as a professional, and she concluded that “professionalism” was the most important characteristic to have as a supervisor.

Tracy’s perspectives of leadership characteristics for her supervisor included “credibility, consistency, a non-condescending attitude, and sensitivity to the feelings of the teachers.” Tracy needed the supervisors to “smile and not be grouchy.” She added that supervisors needed to be “organized and not afraid of being in the ‘trenches . . . and I’m up here,” referring to supervisors who “have the power.” Tracy admitted that she

liked her supervisor coming to “birthday parties,” and believed that her supervisor would find a way to give her direction without “hurting” her feelings.

Reba needed a supervisor that possessed “flexibility” and “understanding” characteristics since she taught in a fine arts classroom that encouraged “freedom of movement, noisier students, and less structure. Nick stressed that the leadership characteristics necessary for his instructional supervisor should include a “good listener to figure out how to ward off problems,” the ability to “make decisions,” and possess “good communication skills.” For Nick, the supervisor with a “humanistic side” was also the mark of a good leader. The “humanistic side” allowed the supervisors and teachers to talk about “things outside of the school” environment, and enhanced the “mental well being” of the staff.

Vassar insisted that her supervisor’s leadership be characterized with “good listening skills,” and by being a “team member.” Also, the supervisor should exhibit the characteristic of “vision” for the “sake of the school,” and become familiar with “all aspects of the school.”

Positive and Negative Experiences with Instructional Supervisors

The positive and negative experiences outlined in this section impacted each participant’s perspective of the instructional supervisor. Not all of the participants had negative experiences with their supervisors, but several of them did experience anxiety when formally observed.

Lankford explained his positive experiences in the classroom centered on situations that showed the supervisor “what the students had practiced and learned to do well.” For example, Lankford described an experience where the supervisor observed an

exciting rehearsal, and the supervisor announced, “Holy smokes,” at the accomplishments of the band. Lankford admitted that I made him “feel good” not because of something that he did, but because “it was something that the students were able to do.” Lankford’s related one negative experience where the supervisors left him out of the planning process to build the school a new band room. Although Lankford taught for many years at his school, he was overlooked when the design of the new band room was developed. After Lankford confronted the administrators over being ignored in the process, he exclaimed:

I could already see the writing on the wall. This is going to be another lie from the administration. Can we have some input? They said, “sure.” As soon as they left, I said, “bullshit.”

In regard to Lankford’s negative experience, he said, “I have never seen so many people that didn’t know anything about what our [fine arts teachers] were.”

Neeta’s positive experience with instructional supervisors after her select group of “chorus students” sang for all of the administrators from her school as well as all of the other district personnel, including the principals and other administrators from the Andrew County School District. Neeta reported gracious applause, compliments, and “tears in the eyes of her principal.” This positive experience allowed Neeta to feel “complete and competent,” and it gave Neeta a “huge shot in the butt to come back” the next year. Neeta related a negative experience when a principal began an investigation of Neeta for “personal reasons.” Neeta reported that the principal was asking students “about me, and what I was saying and doing in the classroom.” Neeta concluded the “personal reason” was “racially” motivated and confronted the principal with, “I want to remind you that I come from a long line of teachers and administrators, and I know what

to do, so what do we need to do to end this?" Neeta did not feel "at home" at this school and soon afterward transferred to another school.

Tracy's reported experiences were mostly positive due to the fact that her supervisor informed her of his formal observation times, and Tracy had adequate time to prepare. Even with this information, Tracy went "blank from nervousness" on one occasion, and admitted that it was "horrible." However, following this experience, Tracy's supervisor encouraged her and was "understanding" and did not "give her a bad mark." Another experience that Tracy described as "negative," occurred as a "real important person was observing her" and Tracy was "unable to read her face." However, the visiting supervisor took the time later to let Tracy know, "If this is not a good day, I will be happy to come back." For Tracy, negative situations were noteworthy because she used them to her advantage. She has now learned to relax, although she recognized that the art classroom is difficult for a supervisor to understand.

Reba recalled a positive experience when her supervisor made comments, such as, "I didn't know you could do that," and "I liked the way you handled that." However, for Reba, supervisors rarely "came to her classroom" even when she "invited them." Reba's experiences were mostly negative, also. She admitted that there were so many of them [negative experiences] that she said, "we may not have enough tape" for the researcher's interview. Reba's negative experiences were marked with limitations place on her because she taught "in a trailer," and she reported that her supervisor never came to visit her unless they wanted to "reprimand" her about something.

Nick's positive experience surrounded a successful string performance concert where the principal lavished praise on him and his program. The words of the principal

made Nick feel like he was “appreciated.” Nick reported one negative experience with a former principal who, Nick said, “went up me one side and down the other” for allowing a student to ride in the car with him traveling to an off-campus audition. Nick said that the negative experience taught him a lesson that has benefited him and his career.

Vassar’s positive experiences were reported as “pleasant” but admitted that positive experiences with instructional supervisors “depended on who the supervisor was.” If the supervisor was “familiar with her subject area” and did not “surprise” her in the classroom, then a “trust level” could be built for positive experiences. On the other had, Vassar recent experiences were negative because the new supervisor could not understand Vassar’s classroom procedures, and instead of talking with Vassar about it, the supervisor sent an E-mail to her and place a “handout” in her box giving instruction on how to present a focus activity. Reba responded that the next time a supervisor came to observe that she would not do a “blooming thing differently because I think that what I do is just fine.”

The positive and negative experiences that the participants related had a definite impact on their perspectives of their instructional supervisors. Although several of the participants were continually working on their “trust levels” in regard to their supervisors, most have used the experiences to their advantage.

Theme 2: The gap between ideal instructional supervision and the reality of supervision in practice is wide for fine arts teachers.

Participants in this study discussed their perspectives of ideal instructional supervision and how the reality of instruction supervision actually played out in practice.

The gap described by the participants ranged from “outstanding supervisory assistance” to “non-existent,” and “little help” to “I feel really supported.”

Lankford described his perspective of ideal supervision and the reality of supervisory practice for fine arts teachers as “nonexistent.” Lankford reported that when instructional supervisors come to observe you “according to that little piece of generic paper that they use to observe everyone on, the outcome is the same—nothing.”

Additionally, Lankford called supervision for fine arts teachers “eyewash,” because the supervisors were not “knowledgeable about the subject.” Although Lankford appreciated the fact that supervisors recognized good “classroom management” techniques in his band classroom, he concluded that there was a gap between the ideal and practice, and fine arts evaluations without an “appropriate evaluative tool” will provide “no help.”

In Neeta’s comparison of ideal supervision and practice, she related that her present experience with her principal was “more than expected.” Neeta indicated that her principal gives her “opportunities” before she is even aware of it. She does not feel “used” and she reported the “at home” feeling that was missing in her former school. In Neeta’s former school, she “lived every day to be disappointed.” Although Neeta felt that her principal was very supportive, her primary supervisor was “little help” with her “practical needs,” and therefore widened the gap between what she expected and what she actually received.

Tracy reported that her supervisors were more interested in the “school community than in the future of the students.” But since Tracy did not “have a lot of it [supervision],” she felt like they trusted her, and she admitted that she would “prefer to be left alone.” For Tracy, there was a small gap between the ideal and practice because

she thought more attention should be place on the “future of the students” rather than the “school community.”

Reba explained that there was a gap between the ideal supervision and practice by stating that supervision was “non-existent” at her school. Reba used the same terminology that Lankford used to describe his perspective of reality in supervisory practice. For Reba, there was nobody she could “go to,” and she felt “stuck out in left field” for the most part. Reba indicated that since her subject area “does not count,” that supervisors cannot relate to “where I am.”

For Nick, there was no gap between the ideal supervision and the practice of it. He was provided “outstanding supervisory assistance” and he felt “really supported. Nick received “ideal” supervision, and felt that the supervisors maintained a “humanistic side,” and that if there was a problem, it is something that is going to be “dealt with.”

Rand indicated that her perspective of the ideal and actual practice in supervision were “quite different.” Since Rand’s concept of supervision was centered on “weeding out the incompetent” teachers, supervisors were spending their time trying to “cover themselves” instead of spending the time to “help develop teachers.”

All of the supervisors except Nick reported that there was a gap between ideal supervision and the reality of supervision practiced in their schools.

Theme 3: Fine arts teachers’ artistic needs and wants are marginalized.

According to Zepeda and Langenbach (1999), the marginalization of fine arts occurred because the arts were seen as an “extra because of their [the arts] emphasis on self-expression and the senses, while the schools were seen as places where reason was to be emphasized” (p. 67), and Khars (1992) suggested marginalization signaled being

pushed to the side, bordered, and treated as a fringe area. The participants in this study related experiences with instructional supervision that suggested that their personal and professional needs and wants were marginalized by supervision. This section presents fine arts teacher's artistic wants and needs from instructional supervisors, the role of the fine arts teacher in instructional supervision, teacher choice for more or less instructional supervision, and the limitations placed instructional supervision of fine arts teachers by accountability.

Artistic Needs and Wants from Instructional Supervisors

Participants discussed their needs and wants from their supervisors and provided suggestions to inform supervisors how they could help fine arts teachers improve at what they do best—the arts. Participants also discussed how their needs have often been overlooked and how supervisors could support the fine arts positions at their schools.

Lankford confessed that he wanted to know that “he was doing a good job,” which would affirm his mission in the school. He also wanted to feel “safe and secure” in his work environment. Moreover, Lankford wanted to be included on decisions that directly impacted his program, such as the building of a new band room. Lankford sympathized with the supervisor of the fine arts programs because of the “complex” task demanded of the supervisors and because of the different set of “priorities” required of supervisors. Moreover, supervisors needed to be provided with “more time to be in the classroom, teach a class, and learn the subject content” which they supervise. Lankford warned supervisors “not to be strangers in the classroom,” and indicated that he “received no artistic help” from his supervisors.

Ian admitted that he often wanted more artistic supervision than the supervisor was “able to provide,” but he also realized that supervisors have “no evaluation tool” for those purposes. Although Lankford’s artistic needs and wants were “totally overlooked” at his former school, he admitted that his current supervisors “cared about the fine arts,” and the supervisors provided “encouragement and support.” Lankford concluded, “It all comes down to the administration and their understanding of the value of the fine arts, and how they can enrich the community.”

From her instructional supervisor, Neeta wanted “honesty, support, and upfront-ness.” She wanted her supervisor to “be there” at concerts and to make her “feel valued” as a professional educator. Neeta added that she wanted the supervisor to “be visible” and to “fight for things that are true,” referring a false accusation brought against her. Neeta added to her list of wants the need to understand and talk about the “value of what music does for children,” and reported that she does not receive “any artistic assistance” from her supervisors. She admitted that the administrators appear to “appreciate” the fine arts at her school but acknowledges they cannot “really understand.” Neeta stated that the only time she really “needed more artistic help” was at festival time, so that a supervisor could “come in and listen to those things” she doesn’t “pick up.” Neeta confessed that there were times when her artistic needs were “overlooked,” and she was not sure that her teaching would improve if she had a supervisor who understood her artistic needs, but she agreed her teaching might become “more creative.”

Tracy’s description of her wants and needs focused on the “demeanor” of the supervisor. Because her techniques in the art room were “unconventional,” she wanted a supervisor whose demeanor would “support and trust her professional judgment.” Tracy

did not want to be “reprimanded” by a supervisor who did not “understand the artistic method.” Although Tracy did not want to be treated differently by her coworkers, she wanted her supervisor to understand that the nature of her subject required her to “break the rules” in classroom structure and design. Tracy provided an example of how she wanted her supervisor to visualize and observe her art classroom:

It’s almost like looking through a kaleidoscope when you come into the art classroom. I don’t want them [supervisors] to just look at the class, I want them to look into it and understand it and appreciate art and the richness of what I do.

Tracy admitted that she did not receive “any artistic help,” and described the perspective of the teacher and supervisor’s role as a “left-brain and right-brain” issue. Tracy wanted “more” artistic supervision than she was provided, but that she was not “overlooked as a teacher,” and supervisors have given her “everything” that she needs, except for “artistic help” in the classroom.

Reba discussed her artistic needs and wants from instructional supervision and reported she wanted a supervisor who provided “good people skills” and “honesty.” She also wanted a supervisor who “appreciated her work” and who took the time to “talk and walk” with her. Reba needed a supervisor who was not “overly critical” and furnished “some good ideas.” Reba acknowledged that since she had spent most of her career watching her “Ps and Qs,” she wanted a supervisor “to support” her and “listen” to her. However, Reba was insistent that her supervisors “don’t know how to help” her. Reba explained that since “we [art teachers] are different,” that she needs a supervisor who can see where she is “lacking.” Reba’s artistic needs have “definitely been overlooked,” and reported that she had no success at persuading her supervisor to “visit her classroom.” Reba concluded that supervisors do not know “a lot about what we are trying to do, and it

looks like too much fun.” If Reba had a supervisor to “brainstorm” with her, she would figure out how “to make it [music classroom] better.

Nick wanted “consistency and support,” and a supervisor who would follow through “with the rules.” In Nick’s case, he “never depended” on the building supervisor at his school to provide “artistic help.” Nick felt that his artist needs were met through the “network of music teachers in the district.” However, Nick admitted that if he had a supervisor who was trained in the arts that he certainly would “improve.”

Vassar wanted and needed a supervisor who had been identified as a “strong teacher” and someone in her “field.” She acknowledged she wanted someone who would push her “to grow.” In addition, Vassar indicated she wanted a supervisor who understood fine arts because teaching fine arts was “different” and “not just anybody could teach fine arts.” Vassar needed her supervisor to understand how the fine arts program worked “at each grade level” and to figure out a way to “help” her. She suggested it would help if her supervisor could be a “champion” for the fine arts and “do a lot of listening,” since Reba believed that the “supervisor of the fine arts programs makes or breaks the arts” in her school. Vassar received “no artistic help” from her supervisors, but rather, artistic help came from “outside sources,” such a “workshops and conferences.” Vassar concluded that her present supervisor was unable to provide her with any “artistic help” in her classroom.

Despite the fact the participants argued supervisors were unable to provide them with artistic assistance, not all of the participants felt overlooked by their instructional supervisors. One participant felt that his supervisor met all of his needs because he never expected his supervisor to provide any artistic support to him. Teachers needed and

wanted a diverse body of assistance, both artist and non-artistic, and concluded that supervisors did not know enough about their artist needs and wants to adequately supply them with the assistance to help them to “grow and develop.”

The Role of The Fine Arts Teacher in Instructional Supervision

Participants discussed their roles in the design of supervision appropriate for their subjects. Although the discussion was limited, the role of teachers in their own supervision is salient to bridging the gap in understanding between fine arts teacher and their supervisors.

Lankford's reported that his “voice in the process” of supervision was “minimal,” and although he could have asked to be involved with supervision, he “never asked.” Likewise, Neeta described her lack of “say-so” in her supervision and what they observed when they came to her classroom. Neeta admitted she was allowed to “direct her program” the way she “saw it best for kids,” and admitted she “probably” could have been involved “but never asked.” According to Neeta, supervisors had a “pre-set” list of things they are “looking for,” and they just “measure your teaching from that.”

Tracy related that she “had no role in her own supervision,” but when she felt she was “slipping” as a teacher, she videotaped herself so that she could “improve her methods of instruction.” Reba also explained she had “no role” in her own supervision. She said, “All they [supervisors] are looking for are classroom management.” Reba added the things that she would want supervisors to observe and “pay attention to” were “music” things, and concluded that she needed help from a “music person” to improve her teaching.

Nick reported he had “never had any role” in his own supervision. Although Nick felt comfortable asking the supervisor for “advice” and help with “concerns,” asking to be a part of the supervisory process was “not considered.”

Rand “never” played a significant role in her own supervision, and she was “never given the opportunity” from a supervisor to suggest specific points at which to observe. Rand did not feel “comfortable” asking her supervisor for a “role in her own supervision.”

All of the participants reported that they had “no” role in the design of their own instructional supervision. Although two of the participants felt comfortable asking for involvement, none did.

Teacher Choice for More or Less Instructional Supervision

Participants discussed the amount of instructional supervision and how it related to their artistic needs and wants. It is noted that 3 of the 6 wanted “more” supervision and 3 wanted “less” supervision. However, those wanting “more” supervision set conditions for more supervision, such as, “If they were more timely,” “Depends on who the supervisor is,” and “If they know more about my subject.”

Lankford opted for “less” instructional supervision because his concern was for better “quality rather than quantity.” Lankford suggested if observations were “more timely,” they would probably be “more meaningful.” Lankford would opt for supervision experiences to be closer together for them to be more “meaningful.”

Neeta felt comfortable asking for “more supervision.” Neeta admitted that she was comfortable making the request because she did not “feel intimidated,” like she did at her former school, and she explained that it was difficult adjusting to a comfortable

supervisory situation after spending “seven years where someone [supervisor] was trying to find fault.”

Tracy insisted she would opt for “less supervision,” and admitted she did not want to sound “immature,” but she didn’t want people “bossing” her around or telling her “what to do,” especially if they [supervisors] had “no background.” Because art is “messy,” Tracy did not wish to deal with the misunderstanding that might arise with a supervisor.

Reba admitted that she wanted “more” supervision so that “someone would visit her room.” Despite the fact that Reba felt overlooked and misunderstood, she wanted her someone to visit her classroom so they could see what she “was doing out there in the trailer.”

Nick explained in spite of his “heightened awareness” when the supervisor observed him, he would opt for “more” supervision because it offered “a greater possibility of improving his teaching skills,” and he concluded, “I think that is good for me.”

Vassar’s choice of opting for more or less instructional supervision was based on “who the supervisor was.” If the supervisor knew “what they were doing,” and were going to be “helpful,” then Vassar would opt for “more” supervision. On the other hand, if the supervisor had no knowledge of her subject area, she would opt for “less” supervision.

Participants provided different perspectives to the discussion of “more or less” instructional supervision, and each participant related various reasons for their options.

Limitations Placed on Instructional Supervision of Fine Arts Teachers by Accountability

According to Donmoyer (1999), the accountability movement, although offering some professional help for fine arts teachers, has overtaken the theoretical and conceptual purpose of fine arts in schools. Fine arts teachers struggle to match the overwhelming call for quantitative measurements for assessment, essential to standardization, with a more appropriate method of subjective assessment that demands a viewpoint grounded in the arts. The standardized test, which is basic to the movement, stands in stark contrast to the underpinnings of artistic endeavors, and the standardized test poses major problems and limitations for instructional supervisors and for fine arts teachers.

The participants discussed the accountability movement and the effects it had on them in relationship to the supervision they were provided. All of the participants were negatively affected by the limitations placed on them by the accountability procedures. For fine arts teachers, the “nature” of standardization was in direct opposition to the foundations of what their subjects offered. While standardization efforts attempt to “make us all look alike,” fine arts efforts attempt to bring out the “individuality” of each student and teacher. Standardization for the fine arts does “not fit,” and “trying to put a round peg into a square hole.” All of the participants indicated that their supervisors 1) supervised with a “preset” list of things to observe, 2) were aware that fine arts teacher’s subjects were “not on the tests” and did not “count,” and 3) made these teachers abandon personal goals for professional goals that had to be linked to larger, district goals, such as “reading, writing, and arithmetic.” The accountability movement further marginalized and limited these six fine arts teachers and the roles they have in the school.

According to Lankford, the accountability procedures affected fine arts only to a “certain point,” and testing in the band room, subjective as it is, might pose problems for the supervisor who is focused on objective measurements. Lankford added the appropriate test for a musical performance or musical rehearsal needs to be based on “producing music, not merely performing on a test.” In this case, the limitations placed on the supervisor would be significant, but meaningful for the fine arts teacher.

For Neeta, accountability issues and standardized tests for fine arts students might “help students learn basic musical concepts,” but since musical concepts are not on the standardized tests,” accountability measurements for fine arts suggest fine arts are not as important as academics. If supervisors are trained to look at all teachers identically, limitations will be placed on the supervisors and teacher as supervisors attempt to examine the progress and performances in standardized measures.

Tracy also reported accountability measures might “keep her on track” as a fine arts teacher. According to Tracy, the relationship of accountability processes and fine arts is like trying to “put a round peg in a square hole,” and she believed that the standards by which school systems are encouraged to measure success for both students and teachers is “absurd in the world of the fine arts.” For Tracy, the limitations for teachers, students, and supervisors would be too “complex,” because there is no way to measure “creativity” in the fine arts classroom.

For Reba, the accountability movement does not affect the “fine arts at all,” because supervisors are only interested with her including “reading writing, and arithmetic” into her “art program.” According to Reba, the accountability movement means that her general music curriculum is “not important,” because it is not on the

standardized test. For the supervisor, the limitation is significant attempting to maintain equality across the disciplines by understanding how the fine arts mesh into the standardized methods of supervision.

Nick concluded that the accountability movement with measurements was “distorted” for the fine arts. From Nick’s perspective, the fine arts programs are being “held accountable” by the community each time the students perform. Since supervisors are limited in their abilities to appropriately assess the abilities of fine arts performances, the accountability measures only confuse the teachers and supervisors with the best methods to help teachers improve.

Because fine arts programs and classrooms do not lend themselves well to “paper and pencil” tests, according to Vassar, supervisors are limited as the methods whereby they can measure a teacher or student’s progress. From Vassar’s perspective, the features of the accountability movement limit the fine arts teacher’s ability to take “risks” in the classroom, because if the “risks do not work out,” and “test scores do not get better,” then the supervisor’s priorities change to insist on higher test scores. This change in the supervisor’s priority impacts the fine arts teacher and their focus on the “intangibles” of the fine arts programs.

Participants in this study discussed the conflicts caused for supervisors and fine arts teachers in providing the appropriate measures to assess the work of the teachers and students involved with fine arts subjects. Accountability measurements limit fine arts teacher’s abilities to be “out of the box,” and to be “creative.” Fine arts teachers are less likely to take “risks” because the efforts do not “increase test scores” for the school.

Summary

This chapter presented in detail the perspectives of six middle school fine arts teachers as they described their beliefs and attitudes of instructional supervision, and as they explained their artist wants and needs from instructional supervision so that they might improve their teaching.

A cross case analysis of the data was conducted to further delineate the findings. Broad categories that emerged in the data were used to organize the data and to provide direction for further analysis. From these broad categories, the data were refined until individual perspectives were delineated and clarified. These refined perspectives provided common themes that were analyzed to answer the primary research questions established as the framework of this study. The themes included: 1) Instructional supervisors must be knowledgeable in fine arts subjects to help fine arts teachers improve, 2) The gap between ideal instructional supervision and the reality of supervision in practice is wide for fine arts teachers, and 3) Fine arts teachers' artistic needs and wants are marginalized.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school fine arts teachers believed they needed from supervision to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts. Given the pressure for universal accountability across grade levels, the results of this study provided insights about the needs of fine arts teachers and types of supervision that instructional leaders need to consider as they work with various populations of fine arts teachers. The following research questions provided the framework for this study:

1. What are the beliefs and attitudes of middle school fine arts teachers as they describe their experiences with instructional supervision?
2. What do middle school fine arts teachers need and want from their instructional supervisors?

This chapter presents an overview of the research design, a summary of the study, a comparison to previous studies, and the major findings. This chapter concludes by presenting the implications and recommendations for further research.

Research Design

A qualitative case study approach was used which included in-depth interviews with six middle school fine arts teachers in one large school district in central Georgia.

From the interview process, the researcher sought to distill the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision. Following the interviews, the researcher used the constant comparative method to identify emergent and common themes that were reported in the findings.

Through a qualitative case study approach, the researcher wanted to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers to discover what types of supervision they needed, and to gain a detailed, close-up lens in to the participant's workplace and point-of-view. Since the purposes of a qualitative design indented to "make sense of the personal stories and the ways they intersect" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 1), a qualitative design, in all likelihood, would provide the close-up look at the data collected.

Permission to conduct this research was secured from the district, and interviews were conducted at three school sites with six participants. Each participant signed an informed consent form, and two face-to-face interviews were conducted with each participant. The participants were chosen through the process of purposeful sampling, and the interviews were semi-structured, open-ended, and conversational.

Following the in-depth interviews, audiotapes were transcribed and used as the primary data source for this study. In addition, artifacts were collected at each school site and provided a larger lens into the context of the district and of each local school. To assist with validating data, participants were allowed to examine each transcription for the purpose of changing, restating, and clarifying details of each interview. An analysis of the data allowed the researcher to uncover major findings and common themes as they related to middle school fine arts teachers and their perspectives of instructional supervision—what did they want and need from instructional supervision?

Trustworthiness was established through the multiple procedures used to report and analyze the data. Attention to procedures, such as, triangulation of data sources, respondent validation, constant alertness to and clarification of the researcher's biases and assumptions, and an audit trail, ensured multiple levels of confirmability and trustworthiness. The unit of analysis in this study was the constant comparative method. This method permitted the researcher to analyze and to organize data into broad categories, compare data across case analysis, reduce the data respective to common themes, and to report findings that emerged from the analysis.

Not only was this study structured by a research design that provided the methods and procedures for conducting qualitative research, but also the perspectives of symbolic interactionism guided the interpretive framework of the inquiry. Symbolic interactionism is one of the "oldest perspective-seeking traditions" of interpreting (Langenbach, Vaught, & Aagaard, 1994, p. 93). The research method stems from the work of Mead (1934), who believed that human action was largely influenced from within an individual rather than from the outside. Symbolic interactionists believed that personal experiences provide the filter through which all that happens to and around people is interpreted. Moreover, symbolic interactionists believe that only the participant's perception of the phenomena being examined is what matters most (Langenbach, et al., p. 93).

Blumer's symbolic interactionism served as the theoretical framework to guide the researcher's analysis and interpretative process during this study. The perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision were examined more fully from the ways in which they defined supervision within their own interpretive

framework. Blumer's (1969) structure of symbolic interactionism rests on these three core premises:

1. People act toward things, including each other, on the basis of the meanings they have for them.
2. These meanings are derived through social interaction with others.
3. These meanings are managed and transformed through an interpretive process that people use to make sense of the objects that constitute their social worlds. (p. 2)

Essentially, Blumer believed that symbolic interactionism was a method of constructing meaning from social interactions. The emphasis of the symbolic interactionism perspective is on the interactions among people, the use of symbols in communication and interaction, and the reality of self as constructed by others through communication and interaction with one another.

Blumer's first premise suggests that humans act based on the meaning that they attach to things. In other words, meaning determines actions (Taylor & Bogdon, 1998). The second premise proposes that meanings are social products that arise during social interactions, allowing humans to derive meaning from objects that might otherwise be devoid of meaning. To clarify this, "the meaning of a thing for a person grows out of the ways in which other persons act toward the person with regard to the thing," indicated Blumer, (p. 4). The third premise is an interpretive process of making meaning out of the interactions in which humans find themselves.

Since the purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their supervisory experiences, symbolic interactionism and its interpretative approaches provided a means to better construct meaning while analyzing the data. The data collected informed the researcher of the meanings on which teachers based their perspectives of supervisory experiences.

In this study, the participants shared their experiences that they attached value and meaning about supervision. As the participants expressed these experiences, they were, in essence, “engaging in the process of communication with themselves” (Blumer, p. 5). Moreover, according to Blumer, “by virtue of this process of communicating with themselves, interpretation becomes a matter of handling meanings . . . and transforms the meanings in the light of the situation in which he is placed and the direction of his action” (p. 5). Based on the framework of symbolic interactionism, this perspective-seeking study analyzed the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with supervision, giving focus to the meanings and values attached to these experiences.

Previous Studies

Although research studies about instructional supervision abound, none was found that specifically dealt with supervision from the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their needs and wants from their supervisors. Eisner, perhaps, conducted the most significant work regarding instructional supervision as it related to fine arts teachers.

Eisner’s (1975) conceptual framework was founded on an artistic perception of the world, and suggested that this method may be a more appropriate way to observe teaching with a “perceptive eye.” Eisner believed that the practices and transactions of classroom life were so complex, that scientific methodology alone could not accurately and adequately measure what a teacher did and how successful a classroom was. Eisner (1977) summarized, “Educational practice as it occurs in schools is an inordinately complicated affair filled with contingencies that are extremely difficult to predict, let

alone control” (p. 346). Eisner believed that with the use of artistic approaches, classroom life was more easily understood (Eisner, 1975; 1977).

Eisner (1998) believed that the modes of inquiry offered by the eye of an artist, “to see, not merely to look” (p. 6) could be applied to education (e.g., classrooms, teaching, perception, and analyses of instructional resources) as well as art. As an artist, Eisner’s (1998) viewpoint indicated his interest in “bringing the world of education frames of reference from the arts and humanities” (p. 7).

While Glickman (1985) suggested a combination of supervisory practices might help fine arts teachers, and Mills (1991) found little uniformity in the way that fine arts teachers were supervised, neither study was from the perspectives of the teachers. Barone (1998), a disciple of Eisner’s artistic viewpoint, recognized that supervisors “walked a veritable tightrope” in their attempt to supervise fine arts teachers but offered no perspectives of fine arts teachers in his studies.

Porter (1994) and Topping (1991) offered specific attention to the fine arts and supervision, called for specialists to supervise music teachers, and expanded on the “knowledge base and understanding” needed to supervise music teachers, but none specifically based findings on the perspectives of fine arts teachers. Although a wide variety of supervisory models exist to support various practices, none specifically have addressed artistic wants and needs *from* the perspectives of fine arts teachers at the middle school level.

Despite the fact that the recent *Handbook of Research on School Supervision* (Firth & Pajak, 1998) discussed, in great detail, supervision in middle school levels, supervision in the fine and performing arts, and the aesthetic dimensions of supervision,

these studies were not seen from the standpoint of teacher's needs, although these studies defended the place of fine arts in the curriculum. Studies provided in the *Handbook of Research on School Supervision* were based on models and theories about supervision while few emerged from the perspectives of teachers, and more specifically, middle school fine arts teachers. While numerous studies detailed various supervision models and methods, teachers have had, to date, little voice in the process of instructional supervision (Sergiovanni, 1985; Zepeda & Ponticell, 1998).

Although the present study was an extension of Zepeda and Ponticell's (1998) study that included perspectives of 114 elementary and secondary teachers, this study was more finely tuned and content specific. One major weakness of the Zepeda and Ponticell study was the study did not consider specific content areas, and no cross analysis that spanned individual cases was performed, although the study's intent was to seek what teachers wanted, needed, and what they got from instructional supervision.

The perspectives of this study, although grounded in and founded on the literature of previous studies conducted about instructional supervision, emerged from an inquiry of middle school fine arts teacher's beliefs and attitudes of instructional supervision and their artistic needs and wants from supervisors.

Summary of the Findings

Following the individual and cross case analysis of the data in Chapter 4, the common themes that emerged for higher-level analysis were:

- Theme 1: Instructional supervisors must be knowledgeable in fine arts subjects to help fine arts teachers improve.

- Theme 2: The gap between ideal instructional supervision and the reality of supervision in practice is wide for fine arts teachers.
- Theme 3: Fine arts teachers' artistic needs and wants are marginalized.

A discussion of these themes provided the analysis and implications for further study.

Discussion

The purpose of this section is to discuss the major finding of this study in the larger context of the literature reported in Chapter Two. The reader is reminded that this was a case study, and the findings are situated in the contexts of the schools in which these six fine arts teachers worked. To this end, generalizability is not appropriate, and to wit, the reader is urged not to make broad assumptions to be applied across populations other than those studied—six fine arts teachers in three middle schools in one county in central Georgia. Each section includes a common theme, discussion, and its distinctive relationship to the literature.

Theme 1: *Instructional supervisors must be knowledgeable in fine arts subjects to help fine arts teachers improve.*

All six of the participants in this study reported that for instructional supervisors to assist middle school fine arts teachers improve at their craft of teaching, a fundamental “knowledge of fine arts” and the “workings” of fine arts classrooms were prerequisites. The data reported by all participants insisted if the supervisor lacked a basic understanding of fine arts, formal evaluations and classroom observations were a “waste of time” and offered “no help” to them. Although participants noted that their present supervisors exhibited an “appreciation” for the arts, the supervisors offered no artistic help in the classroom. However, one participant related the following comment about a

former principal who exhibited no appreciation for the arts: “I don’t see any place for the fine arts in the middle school program, and if it were up to me, there wouldn’t be any fine arts in our school.” On another occasion, the same principal announced, “Ya’ll [fine arts teachers] are more trouble than you are worth,” and “scheduling kids for ya’ll is a headache.” The most common fallacy presented by these participant’s supervisors was summarized, “I don’t know much about the fine arts, but I know if it’s good or not.”

The participants related a diverse array of phrases to describe their supervisor’s lack of knowledge in the artistic classroom. Because fine arts classrooms are often considered to operate “out of the box” and march to the “tune of a different drummer,” all of the participants reported that their instructional supervisors “didn’t have a clue” as to the knowledge needed to help them improve at their artistic craft. Participants acknowledged that supervision for fine arts teachers was “difficult,” but supervisors needed to “do their homework” before entering the “world” of the fine arts classroom. Supervisors do not possess the adequate “tools” to supervise fine arts teachers, and fine arts teachers “reluctantly” enter into the evaluative process because of the lack of appropriate “tools.”

Classroom visits for all participants were random, with formal classroom observations occurring only at random grade levels. The random nature of classroom observations was problematic for these fine arts teachers because they teach at all 3 grade levels, and the evaluation process does not consider the different characteristics of students intrinsic to each grade level. Moreover, the participants used terminology, such as, “quick,” “degrading,” “insulting,” and “frustrating” to portray their experiences with supervision although the intent was to help them improve as fine arts teachers. As the

intents and purposes of instructional supervision are to help teachers improve at their craft of teaching, the participants of this study reported that the knowledge base needed by supervisors to assist fine arts teachers improve was “non-existent.”

All but two of the participants acknowledged that their instructional supervisors definitely offered them assistance with classroom management procedures and control of classroom behaviors, and the other two related that their supervisors were “no help at all.” In fact, these two participants were treated with suspect and hostility, and in both cases, the supervisors only visited their classrooms for a one-time, 20 minute, formal evaluation, and the teachers reported no informal or casual types supervision. These teachers reasoned that their lack of positive experiences with their supervisors were due to the supervisor’s “busy schedule,” “lack of knowledge in the fine arts arena,” and because the fine arts “did not count” at their schools.

For these reasons, Eisner (1984) argued that instructional supervision, as it was conceived, operates from a limited perspective because it is practiced from a scientific, industrial model of production. Supporting his argument, Eisner concluded, “The model that works so well in producing refrigerators is not an adequate model for educational practice” (p. 59). Eisner based his concepts on the observation that life “as it unfolds in the classroom” is so complex and different, that scientific methodology alone could not accurately and adequately measure what a teacher does and how successful teachers were in the classroom.

Therefore, Eisner argued for supervisors to become knowledgeable of the “workings” of the fine arts classroom by developing a larger lens, an artistic lens, to enhance and enlarge the supervisor’s perspective of the “fine arts world.” Eisner (1998)

called this notion, connoisseurship, and encouraged supervisors to develop an “enlightened eye” approach to instructional supervision. According to the participants, “They [supervisors] don’t have it [the enlightened eye].” Additional scholars (Barone, 1998; Donmoyer, 1993; Flinders, 1989) agreed with Eisner and suggested that supervision look through a “larger lens” when looking into the world of school classrooms. Moreover, Calabrese, Short, and Zepeda (1997) suggested for supervisors to adopt a more holistic viewpoint, a viewpoint that would be ongoing, and one that would continue to situate the teacher as learner. Moreover, they asserted that his process would allow the supervisor a fertile opportunity to develop a “background” in the “knowledge base” of the specific subject areas they supervise.

All six participants were resolute in their position that their supervisors “could not” understand the abstract groundings and underpinnings of the fine arts. In all cases, the six participants in all three schools reported that their instructional supervisors lacked the subject knowledge necessary to help them improve their artistic craft of teaching as middle school fine arts teachers.

Theme 2: *The gap between ideal instructional supervision and the reality of supervision in practice is wide for fine arts teachers.*

For all of the participants, there was a wide “gulf” between the ideal in supervision and the reality of supervision in practice, and this gap was reported in relationship to artistic help from supervision. One participant reported that his comparison of ideal supervision and reality in practice were identical to the classroom management expectations that his supervisor expected—orderly, scientific, with

“students sitting in straight rows,” and this participant said that he “never expected his supervisor to help him with his artistic practices anyway.”

Not only were artistic approaches to supervision “non-existent” for the participants, but the instructional supervision they were provided did not attempt to address artistic wants and needs for the improvement of instruction. The intents and purposes and of instructional supervision have primarily remained the same—to help teachers improve instructional performance (Acheson & Gall, 1992) and to assist leaders and teachers in becoming better at what they do (Waite, 1995a). However, all of the participants in these three schools stated that instructional supervision was “nonexistent” in assisting them improve, in the present analysis, it appears that instructional supervision and fine arts are incompatible.

Fine arts and instructional supervision are incompatible for various reasons. On the one hand, the data revealed middle school fine arts teachers simply wanted “honesty, support,” and “trust,” and they wanted to be “included” in decisions that directly related to their fine arts programs. They also wanted to know that they were doing “a good job” and not being “overlooked.” Fine arts teachers needed to be “cared for” and not “judged differently” from anybody else. Additionally, fine arts teachers wanted their supervisors to be characterized by “credibility,” consistency,” and a “non-condescending attitude,” and by being “good listeners,” “decision makers,” and understanding their “flaky” classrooms. Moreover, the participants wanted their supervisors to possess a “humane” side that would allow conversations to include “personal concerns” and activities “outside the school” setting.

But on the other hand, all of the participants reported that the bottom line of formal supervisory intents and practices at their schools were “solely” based on test scores and accountability measurements, and because their fine arts subjects were not included on the tests, what they taught did not count. When Ian Lankford summarized this dichotomous comparison between the ideal and practice, he simply called it, “bullshit.” The data did reveal, however, that fine arts teachers felt as though their supervisors did a good job of meeting their classroom management needs.

Ironically, the reality of instructional supervision practiced at the three middle school sites appeared to be fed by control rather than gestures of assistance, both through classroom management requirements and goal setting procedures outlined by the district. In spite of the fact that fine arts teachers needed a “different” type of supervision, administrators insisted that teachers enslave themselves to the district controls placed on them through a strict adherence to classroom management schemes and impersonal goal setting, instead of a more flexible approach more suitable in the fine arts classroom. Moreover, fine arts teachers were formally supervised by the same “list” of procedures as academic teachers even though “it made no difference” in light of the activities occurring in the fine arts classroom.

The evaluative methods required for all six of these fine arts teachers centered on creating goals that strictly related to larger goals established by the local school and district. The participants were not allowed to set personal or professional goals that would allow and encourage them to improve in their own subject areas. According to the six participants in this study, the substance and sustenance of instructional supervision practiced in the Andrew County School District was based on strict district controls, in

terms of both purposes and rigid requirements, rather than a strategic plan of improvement. Therefore, the gap between the original intents and purposes of instructional supervision is wide for these six fine arts teachers. Moreover, this portrayal of the gap between the ideal and what is actually practiced by instructional supervision underscores and contributes to the artificiality of understanding fine arts in schools.

Nick Lord emerged as the outlier in this study. Nick felt it was not important that his supervisors understood his artistic procedures and activities in the classroom, and Nick also felt that his ideal and practical perceptions of supervision were identical. Nick did not feel overlooked or misunderstood. In fact, Nick felt that his supervisor's role as instructional supervisor was to help him with "classroom management" procedures and to know the "rules and regulations" of the school, and the term "improve as a teacher" was not included in Nick's understanding of the role. Nick found his artistic assistance, support, and advice from an outside network of musicians and teachers.

Nick tended to romanticize the role of the supervisor as one who should do everything but help him improve as a music teacher. For example, Nick excused the supervisor in his school by suggesting that the control, provided him through classroom management help, allowed him to improve as a fine arts teacher. Another reason that Nick romanticized the role was because Nick was planning on returning to graduate school and becoming an assistant principal with supervisory duties. His ideas were lofty, naturally, but his perspective was misplaced as to the type of supervision that he was actually provided. Not only did Nick misunderstand the role of the supervisor, but also he excused the supervisor's practices by romanticizing them.

For all six participants, the gap between ideal supervision for the improvement of instruction and reality of practice was wide even for Nick who admitted that his supervisor provided no artistic help for the sake of improvement.

Theme 3: Fine arts teachers' artistic needs and wants are marginalized.

History has shown that the arts have not only been used to serve utilitarian and entertainment purposes, but also, the arts have served to enhance the learning process, add dimension and spatial learning, and “engage and develop human intellectual ability” (Eisner, 1985a, p. 68). However, the status of fine arts in school curricula is still considered “fluff.” In addition, because of the lack of research from the fine arts teachers' perspectives, marginalization issues are exacerbated. Zepeda and Langenbach (1999) suggested that the marginalization of fine arts occurred because the arts were seen as an “extra because of their [the arts] emphasis on self-expression and the senses, while the schools were seen as places where reason was to be emphasized” (p. 67). One participant in the study suggested she was marginalized because the misunderstandings that occurred were “right-brained and left-brained” issues. Marginalization signals being pushed to the side, bordered, and treated as a fringe area (Kahrs, 1992).

Although the participants explained that the schools in which they now serve are described as “comfortable” or “at home,” their stories reveal a disparaging marginalization. On a larger level, accountability measures have overtaken the bottom-line intents and purposes of supervision by demanding supervisors solely focus on the minutia of activity that has nothing to do with the improvement of teaching. Supporting this argument, Waite (1995b) said, “Supervision has been adopted as an arm of administration, namely as a euphemism for administrative monitoring, evaluation, and

remediation” (p. 7). At the Andrew County School District level, the accountability requirements placed on teachers require that all teachers in the district set goals for each school year. The local school establishes one goal, while the district sets a second goal related to the test score improvement in a specific academic subject area. In no cases were the teachers in this study allowed to set goals that could be used for the purposes improving their fine arts craft of teaching. The six fine arts teachers in this study are not allowed to set goals that have anything to do with the subjects they teach. Essentially, from the perspectives of the six fine arts teachers who participated in this study, these administrators were more concerned with a “controlled and managed” classroom setting, and a goal setting processes that had nothing to do with the fine arts.

On a local level, the marginalization of fine arts teacher’s wants and needs becomes more intense. First, all of the participants reported that since their subject areas were not included on the standardized tests, their subjects “don’t count,” and all of the participants insisted that their subjects were “not as important as academics.” Reba said that the only thing administrators are interested in is “integrating reading, writing, and arithmetic” into her arts’ program and that “my art program is just not important.” Furthermore, fine arts teachers are limited in their classrooms because teachers feel that their fine arts programs will be on the “chopping block” if academic “test scores do not improve” in their schools.

This misaligned emphasis on academic test scores severely impacts the fine arts teacher’s ability to focus on the “intangibles” inherent in the fine arts classroom. Tracy said that trying to mesh accountability processes and fine arts is like trying to “put a round peg in a square hole,” and she believed that the standards required of fine arts

teachers to measure success was “absurd in the world of fine arts.” This example underscored the argument that standardization is eroding the underpinnings of fine arts and affirms supervision and the fine arts are incompatible (Donmoyer, 1999; Flinders, 1989).

The standard forms of supervision for fine arts teachers, when compared to paper and pencil measurements for academic subjects, is “absurd” and does “not fit,” indicated Ian Lankford who furthered, “It is like asking the musicians to come into the classroom and asking them to write about singing, playing an instrument, or drawing a picture.” Ian Lankford encouraged supervision in the fine arts classroom be centered on the student’s performance ability, not paper and pencil tests. However, Ian indicated that since his subject was not included on the testing, that supervisors did not really care about performance. Standardization does not take into consideration the personal qualities fine arts subjects emphasize, further marginalizing the fine arts subjects. Whereas standardization attempts to make us all alike, the fine arts in schools attempt to bring out the individuality of each student. Bracey (2001) underlined this viewpoint by a resounding statement, “Consider the personal qualities that standardized tests do not measure: creativity, critical thinking, motivation, persistence, humor, reliability, enthusiasm, civic-mindedness, self-awareness, self-discipline, empathy, leadership, and compassion” (p. 158). Fine arts programs in schools provide this focus on affective needs and personal qualities.

Proof of this type accountability marginalization is realized in the recently published, *Accountability Report*, designed by the district and sent to each school for dispersal and recruitment in the community. Although the report is current, well-

designed with purposes and intents, graphs, scaled score explanations of test scores and school accomplishments, no mention is made regarding the fine arts in the successes of the school. Awards and accomplishments of academic achievements are published and reported, sports victories are noted, but fine arts are not included. For fine arts teachers, this lack of acknowledgement compounds the marginalization issues in these three schools.

Another painful, dichotomous theme that emerged from the data steadfastly affirmed that these fine arts teachers felt “used” by virtue of the concerts they performed. These “showcases” made the schools look good to the community and district personnel. They provided a “liaison” between the school and parents. Fine arts teachers provided the community a wide array of presentations such as band, string, and chorus concerts, musicals, dramatic plays, and art shows. These presentations received media coverage and individual students received community awards for their successes. However, in the final analysis, none of this “counts,” because it was not included on the standardized tests. Neeta Yost suggested the concerts were just “spicing on the cake.” Nick’s supervisor took advantage of the situation and provided an evaluation the next day, but more importantly, the supervisor wanted Nick to know that “he was there,” and “used” the community gathering as opportunity to evaluate.

Although four of the six participants reported that they would not mind being evaluated at their concerts, Vassar Rand reported that for an evaluation to be valid, observations should include both “performance *and* classroom teaching,” and supervisors were “not capable of adequately providing both.” Neeta reported that she would prefer to be evaluated in the classroom because that is “what I do,” and if the students “blow a

song,” she did not want to be evaluated on that mistake. Moreover, while fine arts teacher’s programs enhance the school’s relationship with the community, and make the schools “look good,” administrators “use” the concert time to “smile and encourage,” but the administration does not include concert efforts in the final analysis of success. This dichotomy underscored the economy of the school rather than the welfare and improvement of fine arts teachers. In other words, instructional supervision for these fine arts teachers was “distorted.” It was “distorted” because the job of fine arts teachers did “not count.”

Another point of distortion and marginalization centered on the participants’s lack of involvement in their own supervision. All of the participants reported that they had “no” involvement in the design of their own supervisory practices, and the participants affirmed if they had been involved, they would have asked their supervisors to look or listen for certain “musical” things, or they could have helped in the appropriate design of the new band room and the purchase of more suitable chairs.

Additionally and noteworthy was the fact that part-time administrators supervised three of the six participants in one of the middle schools. When compared to the full-time administrators assigned to academic areas, the marginalization was “insulting” to the three participants. The part-time administrator had no understanding of the fine arts, and it is significant to report that one of the full-time supervisors assigned to an academic area in the school had a background in the fine arts, but was not assigned to work with the fine arts teachers. This action suggests marginalization occurred because the administrators felt fine arts teachers required only part-time supervisors, their roles were unimportant, and their subjects did not “count.”

Supporting the proposition that supervision and fine arts are at odds with one another, Vassar Rand reported that supervisors made no attempt to “enter the world of fine arts.” Participants concluded that the reasons stemmed from the an understanding that because fine arts subjects were “not included” on the tests, it made “no difference.”

Implications

Implications for School Leaders

From the perspectives of the participants, fine arts teachers require a supervisor who possesses or develops an “enlightened eye,” or a “larger lens” (Eisner, 1975; 1998), because the activity of fine arts teachers and classrooms remain “complex” and “difficult.” Therefore, school leaders need to make an attempt to understand the “world of the fine arts teacher” even though the subject area is not included on the test.

Although the process of instructional supervision for fine arts teachers is “complex,” “difficult,” and “misunderstood,” accountability measures limit the supervisor’s time and concern for subjects that do not matter on the test. With this in mind, school leaders must attempt to equalize time spent with fine arts teachers and academic teachers to ensure that fine arts teachers do not feel left out, overlooked, and minimized in improvement efforts.

Data from this study indicates that school leaders must also address the gap between the ideal and reality of practice of instructional supervision. The teachers wanted school leaders who would include fine arts teachers in the design and implementation of supervision and who would make an attempt to assist the fine arts teachers “look” and “listen” for certain aspects of the “art world.” The teachers wanted school leaders who could approach, with honesty, the authentic place of the concert in

school settings while refraining from making fine arts teachers and their art products feel “used.” Otherwise, the participants in this study believed that fine arts teachers and their programs existed to only make the schools “look good,” while maintaining that fine arts did not “count” in the curriculum.

The teachers in this study believed they and the arts were marginalized by their administrators and school systems. What caused this marginalization? For these participants, marginalization in the fine arts classroom occurred because of a “bordered” role in the curriculum. The participants felt that their administrators tended to make the teachers and their subjects “insignificant.”

Implications for Leadership Training

School leaders, according to the participants in this study, needed leadership training to learn supervisory procedures to enhance the development of fine arts teachers. Not only would it be helpful for practicing fine arts teachers to help train supervisors in the “unique” settings and “viewpoints” of the fine arts, but also leaders could develop a pool of fine arts teachers, retired and practicing, to assist and provide instructional supervisors equipped with the “larger lens” necessary for looking into the “complex” and often “abstract” world of the fine arts classroom. Furthermore, this pool of teachers could provide initiative for narrowing the gap between the “ideal” and the reality of supervision in practice by detailing how marginalization concerns could be diminished and eliminated.

Perhaps a portion of the training that instructional supervisors are provided would involve the perspectives of fine arts teachers, such as the ones in this study, to learn from a knowledgeable discussion about the needs and wants of fine arts teachers.

Implications for Fine Arts Teachers

Fine arts teachers need to be reminded that change in schools is a slow process. Although the original intents and purposes of supervision centered on the “improvement of instruction,” the current trend in supervision is distinctively elsewhere. The accountability movement has forced the supervisor’s eye to be focused on issues pertinent to the improvement of instruction in the areas “on the test” while fine arts teachers and programs are slighted, caught in the middle because the test does not include fine arts. Fine arts teachers must continue the journey for extending the learning capacity of their students by extending their own learning, by reaching out to fellow fine arts teachers for fresh ideas about teaching, and by being willing to use innovative approaches such as “autosupervision” (Zepeda, Wood, & O’Hair, 1996). Fine arts teachers must be patient and continually strive for change and position in an ever-present, “more of the head than hand” (Goodlad, 1992, p. 195) way of thinking.

Implications for Further Research

By design, this study was limited to six fine arts teachers in three middle schools. Given the paucity of research from teacher perspectives, perhaps this study can provide baseline data for further research from the perspectives of a larger number of teachers. From Sergiovanni’s (1985) scholarly call for the “voices of teachers” through Zepeda and Ponticell’s (1998) landmark study of 114 teachers’ perspectives, few, if any, research-based studies have been conducted in regard to instructional supervision. Perhaps a quantitative study would give additional credibility to the findings of this study, and further research from the perspectives of fine arts teachers might uncover a wider

grouping of teacher perspectives of instructional supervision, and fine arts teachers' artist wants and needs from their supervisors.

Concluding Thoughts

The purpose of this study was to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and to discover their beliefs and attitudes of instructional supervision. Moreover, the study investigated the artistic wants and needs fine arts teachers desired from their supervisors. Through a case study design, the researcher presented the perspectives of the fine arts teachers and explained the complex settings in which teachers of fine arts and supervisors of fine arts find themselves. From middle school fine arts teacher's perspectives, data were collected and reported. Since teacher-perspective studies are limited, it is hoped that this study will bridge a gap in knowledge essential to educational research.

However, much more research needs to be conducted in the field of instructional supervision to reconstitute the original intents and purposes of supervision, and to reverse the trend in supervisory practices that marginalize and diminish middle school fine arts teachers. From the findings in this study, baseline data suggested that because fine arts subjects and instructional supervision are incompatible, more work in this area needs to be done. The field of supervision must enlarge its understanding to include fine arts teachers and involve them in dialogue for improvement purposes. Basic to this dialogue is changing the instructional supervisor's perceptiveness—"learning to see and hear teachers in ways that take us beyond stereotypical images" (Flinders, 1989, p. 20).

REFERENCES

- A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform.* (1983). National Commission on Excellence in Education. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Author.
- Acheson, K., & Gall, M. (1992). *Techniques in the clinical supervision of teachers.* White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Aiken, J. A., & Tanner, D. (1998). Supervision in secondary schools. In G. Firth & E. Pajak (Eds.), *Handbook of research on school supervision* (pp. 621-666). New York, NY: Simon and Schuster Macmillan.
- Barone, T. (1983). Things of use and things of beauty: The Swain County High School Arts Program. *Daedalus*, 112(3), 1-28.
- Barone, T. (1998). Aesthetic dimensions of supervision. In G. Firth, & Pajak (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on School Supervision* (pp. 1104-1122). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Barone, T. (2000). *Aesthetics, politics, and educational inquiry: Essays and examples.* New York, NY: Peter Lang.
- Barth, R. (2001). *Learning by heart.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Beane, J. (1990). Rethinking the middle school curriculum. *Middle School Journal*, 21(5), 1-5.
- Beane, J. (1993). *A middle school curriculum: From rhetoric to reality* (2nd ed.). Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association.
- Benson, B. (2001). Supervision of itinerant teachers: Perspectives from itinerant teachers and those who supervise them (Doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma, 2001). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 62(02), 397.
- Blase, J., & Blase, J. R. (1994). *Empowering teachers: What successful principals do.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Blumberg, A. (1989). *School administration as a craft: Foundations of practice.* Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

- Blumer, H. (1969). *Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (1992). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theory and methods*. (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Bolin, F., & Panaritis, P. (1992). Searching for a common purpose: A perspective on the history of supervision. In C. Glickman (Ed.), *Supervision in Transition*, 1992 ASCD Yearbook, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Bracey, G. (2001). The 11th Bracey report on the condition of public education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 82(2), 157-169.
- Brundage, S. (1996). What kind of supervision do veteran teachers need? An invitation to expand collegial dialogue and research. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 12(1), 90-94.
- Calabrese, R., & Zepeda, S. J. (1997). *The reflective supervisor: A practical guide for educators*. Larchmont, NY: Eye on Education.
- Calabrese, R., Short, G., & Zepeda, S. (1996). *Hands-on leadership tools principals*. Princeton, NJ: Eye on Education.
- Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development. (1989). *Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century*. New York, NY: Carnegie Corporation. Author.
- Cogan, M. L. (1973). *Clinical Supervision*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Coleman, J. C. (1980). *The nature of adolescence*. London: Meuthuen.
- Cook, G. E. (1998). Supervision in academic disciplines. In G. Firth, & E. Pajak (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on School Supervision* (pp. 493-505). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- DeMarrais, K. (in press). *Qualitative research: Learning through experience*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (1994). *Handbook of qualitative research* (Eds.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Dewey, J. (1934). *Art as experience*. New York, NY: Capricorn.
- Donmoyer, R. (1993). Art criticism as a guide to student evaluation. *Theory into Practice*, 32(4), 252-259.
- Donmoyer, R. (1995). The rhetoric and reality of systemic reform: A critique of the proposed national science education standards. *Theory Into Practice*, 34(1), 30-34.
- Donmoyer, R. (1999). Rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's: A critique of the recent national assessment of educational progress in theater. *Arts Education Policy Review*, 100(6), 21-26.
- Eichhorn, D. (1966). *The middle school*. New York: Center for Applied Research in Education (Jointly reprinted in 1986 by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, Reston, VA, and the National Middle School Association, Columbus, OH).
- Eisner, E. (1975). *The perceptive eye: Toward the reformation of educational evaluation*. Address to the American Educational Research Association, Division B, Washington, DC.
- Eisner, E. (1977). On the uses of educational connoisseurship and criticism for evaluating classroom life. *Teachers College Record*, 78(3), 345-358.
- Eisner, E. (1982). An artistic approach to supervision. In T. Sergiovanni (Ed.), *Supervision of Teaching*, 1982 ASCD Yearbook. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Eisner, E. (1983). The art and craft of teaching. *Educational Leadership*, 40(4), 4-13.
- Eisner, E. (1985a). Why art in education and why art education. *Beyond creating: The place for art in America's schools*. Los Angeles, CA: J. Paul Getty Trust.
- Eisner, E. (1985b). *The educational imagination* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Eisner, E. (1991a). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Eisner, E. (1991b). What really counts in schools. *Educational Leadership*, 48(5), 10-14.

- Eisner, E. (1994). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programs*. New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Eisner, E. (1998). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Eisner, E., & Flinders, D. (1994). Responses to our critics. *Research in the Teaching of English*, 28(4), 383-390.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Floden, R. (1986). The cultures of teaching. In M. C. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (3rd ed.), (pp. 505-526). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Firth, G. R., & Pajak, E. F. (1998). *Handbook of research on school supervision*. New York, NY: Macmillan Library Reference USA.
- Flinders, D. (1989). Does the art of teaching have a future? *Educational Leadership*, 46(8), 16-20.
- Flinders, D. (2000, November). Commentary on Eisner's connoisseurship terminology. [Online], Available E-mail: dflinder@indiana.edu.
- Fowler, C. (1988). *Can we rescue the arts for America's children? Coming to our senses—10 years later*. New York, NY: American Council for the Arts Books.
- Gall, M. D., Borg, W. R., & Gall, J. P. (1996). *Educational research: An introduction* (6th ed.). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Garman, N. B. (1986). Reflection, the heart of clinical supervision: A modern rationale for professional practice. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 2(1), 1-24.
- Garman, N. B. (1990). Theories embedded in the events of clinical supervision: A hermeneutical approach. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 5(3), 201-213.
- Geahigan, G. (1992). The arts in education: A historical perspective. In B. Reimer, & R. A. Smith (Eds.), *The Arts, education, and aesthetic knowing. Ninety-first yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II*, (pp. 1-19). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program. (1993). *Evaluation manual*. Georgia Department of Education. Author.
- Gitlin, A. (1990). Understanding teaching dialogically. *Teachers College Record*, 9(1), 537-563.

- Glanz, J. (1995). Exploring supervision history: An invitation and agenda. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 10(2), 95-113.
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Chicago, IL: Aldine.
- Glatthorn, A. A. (1984). *Differentiated supervision*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Glesne, C., & Peshkin, A. (1992). *Becoming qualitative researchers: An introduction*. White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Glickman, C. (1985). *Supervision of instruction: A developmental approach*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Glickman, C. (1992). Introduction: Postmodernism and supervision. In C. Glickman (Ed.), *Supervision in Transition*, 1992 ASCD Yearbook, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Glickman, C. (1998). *Revolutionizing America's schools*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Glickman, C., Gordon, S., & Ross-Gordon, J. (1998). *Supervision of instruction: A developmental model* (4th Ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Goldhammer, R. (1969). *Clinical supervision: Special methods for the supervision of teachers*. News York, NY: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc.
- Goodlad, J. (1984). *A place called school: Prospects for the future*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Goodlad, J. (1992). Toward a place in the curriculum for the arts. In B. Reimer, & R. Smith, (Eds.), *The arts, education, and aesthetic knowing. Ninety-first yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II*, (pp. 192-212). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Gordon, S. P. (1992). Paradigms, transition, and the new supervision. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 8(1), 62-76.
- Greene, M. (1971). Art, technique, and the indifferent gods. In R. Smith (Ed.), *Aesthetics and Problems of Education*, (pp. 555-563). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Greene, M. (1995). *Active learning and aesthetic encounters: Talks at the Lincoln Center Institute*. New York, NY: National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teachers.

- Grumet, M. (1988). *Bitter milk: Women and teaching*. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Grumet, M. (1993). The play of meanings in the art of teaching. *Theory into Practice*, 32(4), 204-209.
- Highet, G. (1977). *The art of teaching*. New York, NY: Random House.
- Issac, S., & Michael, W. B. (1984). *Handbook in research and evaluation*. San Diego, CA: EDITS.
- Jackson, P. (1998). *John Dewey and the lessons of art*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Johnson, M. (1975). *A response to the perceptive Eisner* (Report No. SO008320). (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED107556)
- Kahrs, S. (1992). The aesthetic dimension in the preparation of music education majors at the undergraduate level (Doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, 1992). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 53(07), 2226.
- Keene, J. (1982). *A history of music education in the United States*. London: University Press of New England.
- Kirk, J., & Miller, M. (1986). *Reliability and validity in qualitative research*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Kohn, A. (1998). *What to look for in a classroom*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Kramer, R. (1985). Adolescence: Is it really necessary? *Transescence: The Journal on Emerging Adolescent Education*, 18(2), 44-50.
- Kvale, S. (1996). *Interviews: An introduction to qualitative research interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Langenbach, M., Vaughn, C., & Aagaard, L. (1994). *An introduction to educational research*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Lincoln, Y., & Guba, E. (1985). *Naturalistic inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Mahlmann, J. (1993). Calling a halt to the marginalization of the arts. *Momentum*, 24(3), 25-29.
- Mark, M. (1986). *Contemporary music education* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Schirmer.

- Mathison, S. (1988). Why triangulate? *Educational Researcher*, 17(2), p. 13-17.
- McGreal, T. (1983). Successful teacher evaluation. Alexandria, VA: *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*.
- McLaughlin, J. (1987). *A guide to national and state arts education services*. New York, NY: American Council on the Arts.
- Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, self, and society*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago.
- Merriam, S. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study application in education* (2nd ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Mills, E. A., (Ed.). (1991) *Supervision and administration: Programs, positions, perspectives*. Reston, VA: National Arts Education Association.
- Mills, R., Kile, R., Pollak, J., Strudler., & Usnick, V. (1997). Teachers' voices shaping transformation: A multiple case study of personal practical knowledge among middle level teachers. *Research in Middle Level Education Quarterly*, 20(3), 57-84.
- Mitchell, D., & Kerchner, C. (1983). Labor relations and teacher policy. In L. Shulman, & G. Sykes (Eds.), *Handbook of teaching and policy* (pp. 214-238). New York, NY: Longman.
- Moustakas, C. E. (1994). *Phenomenological research methods*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- National Coalition for Arts Education. (1992). Reston, VA: Music Educators National Conference. Author.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Author.
- National Endowment for the Arts. (1991). *Guide to programs*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Author.
- National Middle School Association. (1982/1992). *This we believe; Developmentally responsive middle schools*. Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association. Author.

- Nolan, J., & Francis, P. (1992). Changing perspectives in curriculum and instruction. In C. Glickman (Ed.), *Supervision in transition*, 1992 ASCD Yearbook, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Oddliefson, E. (1994). What do we want our schools to do? *Phi Delta Kappan*, 75(6), 446-451.
- O'Donnell, K. & Crow, G. M. (1991). From art teacher to art supervisor: Views of teacher collegiality. In E. A. Mills (Ed.), *Supervision and administration: Programs, positions, perspectives* (pp. 83-97). Reston, VA: National Arts Education Association.
- Pajak, E. (1990). Dimensions of supervision. *Educational Leadership*, 48(1), 78-80.
- Pajak, E. (1993). *Alternatives to clinical supervision: Alternatives for improving instruction*. Norwood, MA: Christopher-Gordon Publishers.
- Pankratz, D. (1989). Arts education research: Issues, constraints, and opportunities. In D. B. Pankratz, & K. V. Mulcahy (Eds.), *The challenge to reform arts education* (pp. 1-28). New York, NY: American Council for the Arts.
- Patton, M. (1980). *Qualitative evaluation methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Porter, B. E. (1994). The role of the music supervisor in Georgia: Perceptions of practicing music supervisors/coordinators. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Georgia, Athens, GA.
- Riessman, C. (1993). *Narrative analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Rossmann, G., & Rallis, S. (1998). *Learning in the field: An introduction to qualitative research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Rubin, L. (1985). *Artistry in teaching*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Rust, F., Astuto, T., Driscoll, M., Blakeney, M., & Ross, J. (1998). Supervision in the fine and performing arts. In G. Firth, & E. Pajak (Eds.), *Handbook of research on school supervision* (pp. 506-517). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Sarason, S. (1999). *Teaching as a performing art*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Sergiovanni, T. (1985). Landscapes, mindscapes, and reflective practice in supervision. *Journal of curriculum and Supervision*, 1(1), 5-17.

- Sergiovanni, T. (1992). Moral authority and the regeneration of supervision. In C. Glickman (Ed.), *Supervision in transition*, 1992 ASCD Yearbook, Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
- Sergiovanni, T., & Starratt, R. J. (1983). *Supervision: Human perspectives* (3rd Ed.). New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.
- Sizer, T. (1984). *Horace's compromise: The dilemma of the American high school*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Smith, R. (1971). Is teaching an art? In R. Smith (Ed.), *Aesthetics and problems of education* (pp. 564-569). Urbana, IL: University of Illinois Press.
- Steinberg, J. (1985). *Adolescence*. New York, NY: Knopf.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, NJ: Sage.
- Sullivan, S., & Glanz, J. (2000). Alternative approaches to supervision: Cases from the field. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 15(3), 212-235.
- Taylor, S. J., & Bogdon, R. (1998). *Introduction to qualitative research methods: A guidebook and resource* (3rd Ed.). New York, NY: John Wiley and Sons.
- This we believe; Developmentally responsive middle schools*. (1982/1992). Columbus, OH: National Middle School Association. Author.
- Toepfer, C. (1998). Supervision in middle school levels. In G. Firth, & E. Pajak (Eds.), *Handbook of research on school supervision* (pp. 601-620). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Topping, R. J. (1991). Art specialist vs. art generalist: Timely considerations. In E. A. Mills (Ed.), *Supervision and administration: Programs, positions, perspectives* (pp. 77-82). Reston, VA: National Arts Education Association.
- Turning points: Preparing American youth for the 21st century*. (1989). New York, NY: The Carnegie Corporation of New York. Author.
- Waite, D. (1995a). *Rethinking instructional supervision; Notes on its language and culture*. Bristol, PA: Falmer Press.
- Waite, D. (1995b, April). Critical issues in supervision. *Instructional Supervision AERA/SIG*, 23(1), 6-7.
- Wolcott, H. (1990). *Writing up qualitative research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Wolcott, H. (1999). *Ethnography: A way of seeing*. Walnut Creek, CA: Sage.
- West, P. (1991, October 16). National endowment for the arts panel seeks spot for arts in school-reform debate. *Education Week* [Online], Available: www.edweek.org/ew/ewstory.cfm?slug=07arts.h11&keywords=national%20endowment.
- Williams, H. (1987). Philanthropy and art education: The role of the private foundation. *Design for Arts in Education*, 88(4), 12-13.
- Wolf, D. P. (1992). Becoming knowledge: The evolution of art education curriculum. In P. W. Jackson (Ed.), *Handbook of research on curriculum* (p. 945-963). New York, NY: Macmillan.
- Zepeda, S. J. (1995, April). Critical issues in supervision. *Instructional Supervision AERA/SIG*, 23(1), 6-7.
- Zepeda, S. J., & Langenbach, M. (1999). *Special programs in regular schools: Historical foundations, standards, and contemporary issues*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Zepeda, S. J., & Ponticell, J. A. (1998). At cross-purposes: What do teachers need, want, and get from supervision? *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 14(1), 68-87.

APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I, _____, agree to participate in the research titled, A Case Study of Supervision in the Middle School Fine Arts: Perspectives of Teachers, which is being conducted by Marcus Beaver, a doctoral student at the University of Georgia. Mr. Beaver's study is under the direction of Dr. Sally J. Zepeda, Associate Professor in the Program of Educational Leadership and Lifelong Learning at the University of Georgia. Mr. Beaver's address is 1313 Mockingbird Lane, Snellville, GA 30078; phone # 770-123-4567. Dr. Zepeda's address is 300 Rivers Crossing, Athens, GA 30602; phone # 706-542-4056. This document serves as my consent to participate in this study. I understand that this participation is entirely voluntary. I can withdraw my consent at any time without penalty and have the results of the participation, to the extent that it can be identified as mine, returned to me, removed from the research records, or destroyed.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perspectives of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. More specifically, this study sought to examine what middle school fine arts teachers believed they needed from supervision in order to refine their artistic methods of the subject matter they taught—the arts.

This study is designed to answer the following questions: 1) How do middle school fine arts teachers describe their experiences with supervision? 2) What role do middle school fine arts teachers assume in the supervisory process? 3) How would middle school fine arts teachers describe supervision that is artistic? 4) What do middle school fine arts teachers need from their supervisors?

Two interviews will be conducted, audiotaped, and the data will be transcribed. The interview will last approximately 45-60 minutes at the school site. Subsequent contact may be required for clarification, if necessary.

No foreseeable risks beyond those present in normal everyday life are anticipated in this study. My participation in this study will consist of an interview and there should be no risk to my reputation or my general well being. The possible benefits to me could be a clearer understanding of the professional needs and wants of fine arts teachers with respect to the improvement of the supervisory process. The benefits to society could include enhancing the knowledge base for both middle school fine arts teachers and the supervision of these teachers, encouraging further research, and improving conditions in the overall supervisory environment. The researcher will benefit from my participation

through analyzing and reflecting upon my answers. I understand that the resulting dissertation may be submitted for publication at a later date.

Any information the researcher obtains about me, as a participant in this study, including my identity, will be held confidential, unless otherwise required by laws. My identity will be coded, and all data will be kept in a secured, limited access location. My identity will not be revealed in any publication of the results of this research. Audiotaping will be used only during the interview portion of the study.

Mr. Beaver will answer any further questions about the research, now or during the course of the project and can be reached by telephone, # 770-123-4567, or by E-mail, mbeaver@spacemountain.com.

Please sign both copies of this form. Keep one and return the other to the Mr. Beaver.

_____ Signature of Mr. Beaver	_____ Date
_____ Signature of Participant	_____ Date

Research at the University of Georgia that involves human participants is overseen by the Institutional Review Board. Questions or problems regarding your rights as a participant should be addressed to Christine Joseph, Institutional Review Board, Office of the Vice President for Research, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone 706-542-6514; E-mail address IRB@uga.edu

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR PARTICIPANTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of middle school fine arts teachers and their experiences with instructional supervision. The following questions were generated to uncover their needs and wants from supervision in order that a more appropriate method of assisting middle school fine arts teachers become better at what they do may emerge.

Preliminary questions:

1. How long have you been a middle school fine arts teacher?
2. In how many middle schools have you taught fine arts? Same district? Where?
3. How many times throughout the year are you evaluated?
4. How many formal supervisory sessions do you normally have with your supervisor?
5. Were you supervised at all grade levels you teach?
6. How long were the observations during evaluation(s)?
7. How many times per year did you receive informal supervision? This could be short visits, meetings, telephone conversations, etc.
8. Have you ever been evaluated at concerts, performances, or at other types of presentation? What do think about this type of format for evaluating fine arts teachers?

Questions for Interview # 1:

1. From your perspective, what is “instructional supervision?”
2. Think of the last time you were observed by a supervisor, and walk me through your feelings and attitudes of the experience. Both before and after the observation, what was your sense of the experience?
3. Tell me what you do, maybe differently, when you are observed. How things are different, and why.
4. Think about a time when your experience, or observation, with the supervisor didn’t go as well as you thought it might.
5. Think about a time when the supervisory experience went extremely well, and tell me about it.
6. What role do you have in your own supervision?
7. These next two questions deal with different wants and needs you may have from supervision. Think about the differences in wants and needs before you answer.
What do you want from supervision?
8. What do you need from supervision?
9. What leadership characteristics do you believe administrators need to demonstrate to support middle school fine arts teacher’s growth and development?
10. Is teaching an art to you? In what ways?
11. When you are observed and go through the supervisory process, what artistic help do you get? Explain what you mean.
12. In what ways do you believe a supervisor could help you with the artistic dimension you bring to the classroom?

13. Are general supervisors able to provide you with artistic growth and development at all? Is so, in what ways?
14. In what ways could a supervisor, who is trained in the arts, help you with your professional development as opposed to a general supervisor?

Questions for Interview # 2:

15. In our climate of standardization and accountability, how do you see supervision helping you in your artistic work?
16. How does your idea of supervision compare with what you receive?
17. Have you often needed and/or wanted more artistic supervision than the supervisor was able to provide?
18. As a result of being a middle school fine arts teacher, do you feel that you and your artistic needs have been overlooked with regard to supervision? Explain.
19. Do you really believe that your teaching would improve as a middle school fine arts teacher if you had a supervisor who understood your artistic needs? Tell me how.
20. Given the choice, would you opt for more or less supervision as a middle school fine arts teacher?
21. Do you feel your supervisor knows enough about the “artistic” to help you improve at what you do best? Explain.
22. Is there anything that you could add to help supervisors meet your needs and wants so that you may improve as a middle school fine arts teacher?

APPENDIX C

THE RESEARCHER'S PERSPECTIVE

My interest in supervisory practices and teacher's perspectives of those practices grew out of my own personal experience as a middle school fine arts teacher. During my first three years of teaching, two separate principals supervised me. Both used the Georgia Teacher Evaluation Program (GTEP) as the evaluation instrument. Aside from a few minor classroom management changes that were suggested, at no time did I receive any assistance to help me as a music teacher. Comments on the GTEP were certainly supportive, encouraging, and indicated a "highly successful teacher." Naturally, these comments made me feel good about myself and as a teacher.

However, I knew that I was struggling and growing discontent in the classroom. Music selection, voicing of the middle school voice, motivation of adolescent singers, for example, were issues where I needed the help of a specialist. I visited other musicians in other schools and found a few tricks to use. I spoke with other fine arts teachers in my own school who offered little help. I spent time with the former music teacher at my school, and she was most helpful. However, I found that I was in the need of a sustained and ongoing supervisor at the local and/or district who could help me find answers to my fine arts needs.

At this point, I decided to return to graduate school. Experiences with other students in the graduate program alerted me to the fact that many of them shared the same discontent and lack of administrative help as they. It became my impression during these

days that supervision in many of our local schools was no more than a gesture, a process of weeding out of bad teachers. Instead of supervision becoming an assistant, it became a watchdog.

After my classes in supervision, it became apparent that in most educational settings, supervision for the improvement of instruction had taken a back seat to most everything else happening in schools. Staff development did not provide an ongoing help for me. Our instructional lead teacher was given another role. Now, I am observed once a year, and goals that I am mandated to set for the year have little to do with actual experiences in a middle school fine arts classroom.

With this in mind, I decided to become an educational leader and change the situation. As fine arts teacher, I know the needs are different. I understand that the dynamics in a middle school fine arts classroom are unusual and filled with subtlety and complexity. Moreover, this understanding, in my opinion, will assist me in seeing all teachers with larger lenses.

Perhaps supervision as a profession is in crisis (Sullivan & Glanz, 2000) and in serious trouble (Waite, 1995b), but it is my hope that those of us who see the daylight in the struggling teacher will step up, find, and invent ways to ease their discontent.