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# Dispositional and Trait Perceptions and Beliefs: A Snapshot of Three Stakeholders

## ABSTRACT

*The assessment of student dispositions is an important part of teacher preparation programs in the United States. To explore the beliefs and perceptions of in-service educators and teacher education students, we used a researcher-designed survey to examine responses of three groups: a) in-service music educators, b) collegiate music education majors, and c) collegiate education majors (not music) in a Midwestern state in the United States. The survey included questions that asked participants to describe dispositions, rank and rate the importance of the dispositional traits, and to rank their opinion on the importance of dispositions in comparison to content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Members of each group indicated they did not know the term 'disposition' and could not define it. Ratings of dispositions by the three groups in this study all showed a high perceived importance of two dispositional traits: 'respectful' and 'reliable.' The in-service music educators and collegiate music education majors ranked professional dispositions as most important while non-music collegiate education majors ranked pedagogical knowledge as the most important. Results from this study are not generalizable due to the homogeneous sample.*

## Keywords

music teacher education, dispositions, traits, preservice teachers, standards

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The Society for Music Teacher Education's (SMTE) Areas for Strategic Planning and Action (ASPAs) are working groups dedicated to research and action on issues relevant to music teacher education (SMTE, n.d., "What is an ASPA?"). The mission of the Program Admission, Assessment, and Alignment ASPA is "To address program structure and key milestones in music education curricula, including admissions, assessment (including student learning, program assessment), and collaborative efforts between faculty and music education stakeholders." (SMTE, n.d., "Program Admission"). The present study represents the research focus of the ASPA by examining perceptions and beliefs of three stakeholders in regard to professional teacher dispositions during the key milestone of student teaching.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Igniting a love of music in students, developing independent musicianship, and inspiring the pursuit of lifelong music making are the goals of many current and future music educators. In order to achieve these goals, a music teacher must spend years honing musical skills as well as learning about child development and pedagogy. In addition, personal traits, referred to collectively as dispositions, have also been shown to contribute significantly to the effectiveness of teachers (Button, 2010; Hamann, 1998; Parkes, Ritcher, & Doerksen, 2019; Teachout, 1997; Wayman, 2006; Woody, Gilbert, & Laird, 2018).

While dispositions are generally deemed to be key in effective teaching, the definition of the term is less consistent (Parkes, Ritcher, & Doerksen, 2019). Among the definitions is an entry in the Dictionary of Psychology of the American Psychological Association (2002), which described dispositions as the human traits that distinguish each of us from one another. The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), the teacher preparation accreditation organization in the United States, defined dispositions as "professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities..." (NCATE, 2008). Although there are many frameworks and definitions currently used to define dispositions (Parkes, Ritcher, & Doerksen, 2019), we chose the CAEP definition for this study due to its position and influence on university teacher education degree programs.

CAEP (formerly the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education [NCATE]) considers dispositions to be very important and requires the assessment of student dispositions as part of all teacher preparation programs leading to licensure. Because an individual's dispositions influence their behavior and decision making, they are essential to consider in teacher education (Briones, Tabernero, & Arenas, 2010; Mischel & Shoda, 1995; Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser, & Schussler, 2010). All CAEP accredited teacher preparation programs are expected to monitor skills and knowledge as well as work to ensure that candidates demonstrate appropriate professional teaching dispositions at the point of admission and throughout the teacher education program

(CAEP, 2015). Although required for accreditation for many teacher education programs, reliable and consistent assessment of dispositions remains a challenge. Although standardized assessments are available, these instruments do not always align with the philosophy and goals of an institution or degree program and many programs find the need to develop their own instruments that fit within the context of institutionally adopted conceptual frameworks and beliefs (Kinderwater, 2013; Parkes, Ritcher, & Dorksen, 2019). Because dispositions are internal human tendencies, they cannot be easily or consistently observed, measured, or assessed for efficacy in the classroom or over the span of a teaching career. In addition, there is no standardized set of expectations or accountability system in place following these assessments.

The framework for dispositional research relies on the theory and research pioneered by psychologist and educator, Arthur Combs (1976), who spent time investigating the dispositions of effective helping professionals - people who were able to significantly and positively affect others' lives (Richards, 2010). The need to examine professional dispositions from the perspective of the education student is rooted in the psychological theories of Rotter (1954), Seligman (1975) and Bandura (1977, 1986). According to these theorists, when students feel they are primarily at the mercy of the environment and/or others making choices for them, they tend to display low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). Having no ability to personally influence or alter the situation may lead to the display of a sense of learned helplessness (Seligman, 1975). An imposed external locus of control can be detrimental to the perseverance and success of an education student (Rotter, 1954). For these reasons, the examination of student opinions of important professional dispositions is crucial.

In music teacher preparation programs, teacher education and/or music teacher education faculty have created many checklists and inventories (DeMuth, 2012; Usher, Usher, & Usher, 2003) to evaluate students. Music education programs often require prospective teachers to meet certain criteria when applying for admission to the teacher education program (Royston & Springer, 2015, 2017) and then continue to demonstrate these traits throughout their studies until program completion (Gallavan, Peace, & Thomason, 2009; Reising & Helm, 2006). In addition to a prevalence of checklist and inventory assessments, the practicum or field experience can be an opportunity to assess dispositions of teacher candidates as they interact in actual school settings (Abrahams, 2011; Rike & Sharp, 2009).

Opportunities for students to work in tandem with in-service teachers are shown to be the most powerful experiences in a preservice teacher's education (Abrahams, 2009, 2011; Conway, 2002, 2012; Groulx, 2016; Legette, 2013; Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2002). A close relationship between the cooperating teacher and the student allows for continuous development, assessment, and feedback regarding dispositional attributes or concerns. Darling-Hammond (2000), suggested teacher preparation programs rarely create a dramatic conversion of perspectives and dispositions; however, many attitudes of pre-service teachers can be influenced by the preparation they receive.

Abrahams (2009) pointed out that, while pre-service teachers often view cooperating teachers as role models, they are not always in agreement with the expectations or do not desire to emulate what they see in the classroom. According to Gallavan, Peace, and Thomason (2009), students may not have a strong understanding of the meaning of “disposition” since those in the profession are likely to simply impose lists rather than give students a voice in deciding what and why certain dispositions are important and how they might be beneficial in their teaching. Powell and Parker (2017) agreed that having preservice teachers create and articulate goals for their own dispositional growth may be more powerful than using standards imposed by music teacher education faculty or accrediting bodies. Because of the importance of the field experience and the influential role of the cooperating teacher in the development of the teacher education student, there is a need to understand the opinions of the cooperating teachers in terms of professional dispositions.

Doerksen and Ritcher (2007, 2009), Parkes, Doerksen, and Ritcher (2016), and Parkes, Ritcher, and Doerksen (2019) examined the role of assessment of professional dispositions by teacher educators for the purpose of better understanding dispositions in music education. To build general agreement as to what constitutes appropriate professional dispositions for music educators, Doerksen & Ritcher (2009) examined lists of dispositions to be assessed, while Parkes, Doerksen, & Ritcher (2014, 2016) and Parkes, Ritcher, & Doerksen (2019) created and validated means of assessing these dispositions.

Due to the long-standing practice of applied faculty primarily determining admission into music degree programs through auditions, Royston & Springer (2015, 2017) examined the dispositions that college and university applied faculty believed were important for initial admission of students into music education degree programs. Woody, Gilbert, and Laird (2018) examined self-appraisals of music education students on the dispositions of reflectivity, empathic caring, musical comprehensiveness, and musical learnability and learned that students valued these dispositions more at the later stages of the degree program than they do early in their studies.

Likely, the act of learning about the art of teaching in itself causes some level of change and development of dispositions (Woody, Gilbert, & Laird, 2018); however, musical skill and best practices in teaching tend to maintain the most prominent roles in music teacher program coursework. Overall, personal skills are less likely to be addressed in the music education curriculum (Teachout, 1997). Rohwer and Henry (2004) examined university teachers’ opinions of music educators’ skills and knowledge and found that teaching skills were rated highest for effective teachers, followed by personality, then musical skill. Teachout (1997) also found that pre-service and in-service teachers rated teaching skills to be more important than musical skills for effective teaching.

Wayman (2006) examined students’ beliefs about what skills are most important for success in teaching, finding personal skills to be considered most important to

success, followed by teaching skills, and, lastly, musical skills. Wayman also suggested pre-service teachers may be struggling to reconcile the difference between models of good teaching and the need to be themselves. According to Murrell, Diez, Feiman-Nemser, & Schussler (2010):

Dispositions are neither invisible aspects of a teacher's psyche nor fixed personality traits. They are commitments and habits of thought and action that grow as the teacher learns, acts, and reflects under the guidance of teachers and mentors in a preparation program and in the first year of practice...Because dispositions are interdependent with knowledge and skills, their cultivation is tied to the conceptual understanding, refinement of skills in guided application, and thoughtful reflection on practice (pp. 14-15).

However, while dispositions may be important to consider in the development of effective teachers, they may not necessarily be inherent in a pre-service teacher candidate (Teachout, 1997).

Button (2010) established a connection between teacher dispositions and student engagement and success. Teacher characteristics that positively affected student improvement included organization of teaching time, conscientiousness, empathy, and commitment. Hamann (1998) found emotional expressivity, emotional sensitivity, and social control (described as the ability to engage others) to be directly related to effective teaching. Since effective teachers possess dispositions that foster student growth and learning, it seems clear that music teacher education programs have an ethical responsibility to prepare and foster candidates to have the dispositions necessary to support learning.

## NEED FOR THE STUDY

Because dispositions have been shown to affect teaching effectiveness and student learning, it is important to include these in the preparation of new teachers as indicated by the CAEP requirements for assessment by teacher preparation programs. While conversations and research centering on the assessment and development of professional teaching dispositions have taken place over the past 15 years, consensus regarding dispositional priorities and best practices regarding teaching dispositions has not yet been established. Many of the lists and assessments have been developed by teacher education faculty without the input of other stakeholders such as in-service teachers or teacher education students. Further, inconsistencies may exist between programs as music education majors receive the bulk of their coursework in music, and non-music education majors receive much of their coursework in the school of education. In addition, teacher education students are often subjected to high-stakes assessments without understanding the concept upon which the assessment is based, or the criteria being utilized. Because they are not included in the process, students may focus on developing different dispositions than the faculty impose or may become frustrated and discouraged that the dispositions they value are not prioritized by the institution.

In a system that relies upon the loop of music teacher educators, teacher education programs, in-service teachers, and teacher education students, there is a need to ensure that all stakeholders are given a voice and that a clear understanding is shared at all levels regarding the understanding, prioritization, assessment, and development of the professional dispositions. In an effort to examine whether there are common beliefs and priorities and that all understand the assessment criteria, we believe there is a need to examine the beliefs and perceptions of professional dispositions and include traits held by three stakeholders - in-service music educators, collegiate music education majors, and non-music collegiate education majors.

The purpose of this study was to examine the dispositional and trait perceptions and beliefs of three educational stakeholders. The following research questions guided the inquiry: (a) Do the stakeholders know what is meant by the term “dispositions” as required for assessment by CAEP? (b) Which identified dispositional traits are deemed most and least important by the participating in-service music educators, collegiate music education majors, and non-music collegiate education majors? (c) What is the rank order of importance of dispositional knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge for the participating in-service music educators, collegiate music education students and non-music collegiate education majors?

## **METHOD**

### **Instrumentation**

In order to collect data for this study, we developed and utilized a web-based questionnaire. Survey research, a quantitative nonexperimental design, was chosen in order to gather the perceptions of a representative sample of three populations related to teacher education (Creswell, 2014). The instrument contained a total of 12 items in four sections—a demographic section of five items, a section with one open-ended question asking about previous knowledge of the term ‘disposition,’ a 30-item disposition scale measuring respondents’ perceptions of the desirability of various professional teacher dispositions on a sliding scale from 0 (lowest) to 100 (highest), and two rank order items. The first asked respondents to select the five dispositions they felt were most important and rank them from one (most important) to five (least important). The second item asks respondents to rank the three areas of teacher preparation (pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and dispositions) in order of perceived importance with one being most important and three being least important. The instrument was developed based on a review of literature educators’ dispositions (e.g., Doerksen & Ritcher, 2009; Parkes, Doerksen, & Richter, 2014, 2016; Parkes, Ritcher, and Doerksen, 2019; Royston & Springer, 2015, 2017; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000). We developed the list of items on the selection criteria scale based on information gleaned from these sources to make the scale as externally valid as possible.

To establish content validity of the instrument, we solicited two in-service music educators and five collegiate music education majors to evaluate the survey instrument.



Their feedback was used to refine the instrument and to validate that it was an adequate measure of the perceptions and importance of professional dispositions and priorities in teacher preparation. All experts supported the validity of the instrument for its stated purpose. The instrument demonstrated evidence of reliability in the present study, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients on the disposition scale ( $\alpha = 0.93$ ) providing evidence of internal consistency.

### **Sampling Frame and Procedure**

The sample for this study was limited to individuals studying or teaching in one Midwestern state, and thus findings are representative of this population only and are not generalizable. The collegiate music education majors and the non-music collegiate education majors were enrolled undergraduate students at one of two institutions of higher education: one was a large, public university, the other was a small, private college. The in-service music educators were full-time K-12 music teachers in the areas of general music, band, orchestra, and/or choir within the same state. The convenience sample of collegiate music education majors and the non-music collegiate education majors was identified through course enrollment and teacher education admission lists at the two institutions. This resulted in approximately 300 in-service music educators, 300 collegiate music education majors, and 400 non-music collegiate education majors as possible respondents. We contacted each and invited them to participate through a single email message. The in-service music educator participants were also contacted through an email request distributed by the state music education, band director, and choral director associations.

The IRB-approved survey instrument was created and delivered in a web-based format using *Qualtrics*. We sent each potential respondent an email, which outlined the purposes of the study, the data collection closing date, and a statement describing the waiver of documentation of informed consent. It also included a hyperlink, which directed these potential respondents to the online survey.

We used descriptive statistics to describe the perceptions of professional dispositions for in-service music teachers, collegiate music education majors, and non-music collegiate education majors with comparisons of means and rankings in graphic form. We employed a Kruskal-Wallis H test to examine differences of opinion on 32 traits associated with dispositions. This non-parametric test was appropriate as the population data were not normally distributed, observations were independent, and data were ordinal (Field, 2017). To examine the pairwise comparisons for significance, we utilized a Mann-Whitney U post hoc test.

### **Respondents**

Respondents ( $N = 615$ ) represented an estimated 56% response rate. The response rate had to be estimated as we did not have exact numbers of the organizational memberships or student enrollment at the time of the communication. Within the full



responding sample, 25% ( $n = 155$ ) were in-service music educators, 35% ( $n = 214$ ) were collegiate music education majors, and 40% ( $n = 244$ ) were non-music collegiate education majors. The majority of the respondents, 68%, identified as female ( $n = 418$ ). Due to the restricted nature of the sample, results cannot be generalized to a larger population.

The in-service music educators ( $n=155$ ) consisted of 47% who identified as male ( $n=73$ ) and 53% who identified as female ( $n = 82$ ). There were 91 brass and woodwind players, 13 percussionists, 3 string players, 37 vocalists, and 11 pianists. Current teaching areas were band ( $n = 106$ ), orchestra ( $n = 4$ ), choir ( $n = 42$ ), elementary general music ( $n = 23$ ), and ‘other’ including music theory, guitar, and music technology ( $n = 11$ ). Thirty respondents (19.3%) had taught 1-5 years; 38 (24.5%), 6-10 years; 24 (15.5%), 11-15 years; 16 (10.3%), 16-20 years; 17 (11.0%), 21-25 years; 9 (5.8%) 26-30 years; and 21 (13.5%), 31 or more years.

The collegiate music education major sample ( $n = 214$ ) included 38% who identified as male ( $n = 81$ ) and 62% who identified as female ( $n = 133$ ). Eighty-one were brass and woodwind players, 11 were percussionists, 22 were string players, 95 were vocalists, and 5 were pianists. Desired teaching areas were band ( $n = 70$ ), orchestra ( $n = 25$ ), choir ( $n = 77$ ), elementary general music ( $n = 30$ ), and ‘other’ including music theory, guitar, and music technology ( $n = 12$ ). There were 52 first-year students, 40 second-year students, 49 third-year students, 54 fourth-year students, and 19 students in their fifth year of study (or more).

Of the non-music collegiate education majors ( $n = 244$ ) who participated, 17% identified as male ( $n = 41$ ) and 83% identified as female ( $n = 203$ ). There were 18 participants studying early education, 137 elementary education, 25 English, 13 history, 3 agriculture, 13 math, 7 science, 8 world languages, 4 family and consumer sciences, 14 physical education, 4 art, and 6 others. There were 23 first-year students, 42 second-year students, 62 third-year students, 90 fourth-year students, and 27 students in their fifth year or more.

## RESULTS

To answer the first research question, participants were asked what the term ‘*disposition*’ meant to them in an open-ended format. The descriptions varied among the three types of stakeholders. Nine out of 162 (5.56%) of the in-service music educators reported being unfamiliar with the term ‘disposition’ and/or its meaning. Some of those who believed they were familiar with the term defined it in ways inconsistent with the common usage and CAEP definition. Responses included, “the filter between inner emotions and outer appearance,” “the willingness to serve the students -- to be present for their needs over your own,” “working with others to provide the best, strongest experience for your students,” and “how an individual’s personality and training work together.” Three common themes emerged: attitude, demeanor, and personality. For these in-service music educators, the responses were coded and fell into three main

categories listed in decreasing order of prevalence. They are: a) an individual's behavior, values, and ethics, b) how a person conducts themselves and interacts with others (de-meanor), and c) personality traits and characteristics that affect one's teaching.

Fourteen of 214 (6.54%) collegiate music education majors indicated they were unfamiliar with the word and/or its meaning. Others also defined it in ways inconsistent with the common usage and CAEP definition. Some responses included, "professional area of study," "areas that I have obtained a degree in," "moving from a professional position to one that is not as high caliber," "base characteristics," a "set of skills," or "a set of guidelines... to meet and exceed." Other definitions included "the natural way you are," "qualities of personality that are possessed by those individuals predisposed to achieving success in a specific position," and "inherent qualities that a person has and their likelihood to perform in a professional manner." When examining all of the responses, four common themes emerged. These include a) the way one presents themselves/acts/appears to other people, b) values/ethics/morals, c) attitude, and d) personality. Attitude comments commonly included an allusion to something that one "should" possess in order to be a good teacher. The values/ethics/morals and the personality comments may suggest an incorrect belief that these may be seen as pre-formed, fixed, and unchangeable.

Nineteen of 243 (7.82%) non-music collegiate education majors indicated they were unfamiliar with the word and/or its meaning. Others also defined it in ways inconsistent with the common usage and CAEP definition much the same as the other two groups. Some of these respondents defined dispositions as "write ups on process in your field," "the idea that all students can succeed," "pedagogical tactics involving personality/mood," "the way you act/the way you conduct yourself" and the "values, commitments and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning." The non-music collegiate education majors also viewed dispositions as traits a teacher must have to be successful. Many described personal characteristics/qualities: "It's what makes you, you. It's your life experience and values to help teach your subject and enrich the learning of the students" and suggested these qualities were innate, or "characteristics that are part of who you are naturally." The responses were coded and fell into five categories listed in decreasing order of prevalence. They are: a) professionalism, b) qualities of teachers, c) values, d) ways of interacting with others, and e) characteristics/personality.

To answer research question two, participants were asked to rate the importance of 30 dispositions commonly found in extant research. To indicate their perception of disposition importance, they were given sliders with a scale from 0-100. The in-service music educators rated the following dispositions as the most important: a) reliable, b) respectful, c) honest, d) professional, e) positive attitude, and f) passionate. The collegiate music education majors rated the following dispositions as the most important: a) respectful, b) reliable, c) passionate, d) listening skills, e) strong communication skills, and f) approachable. The non-music collegiate education majors rated the following

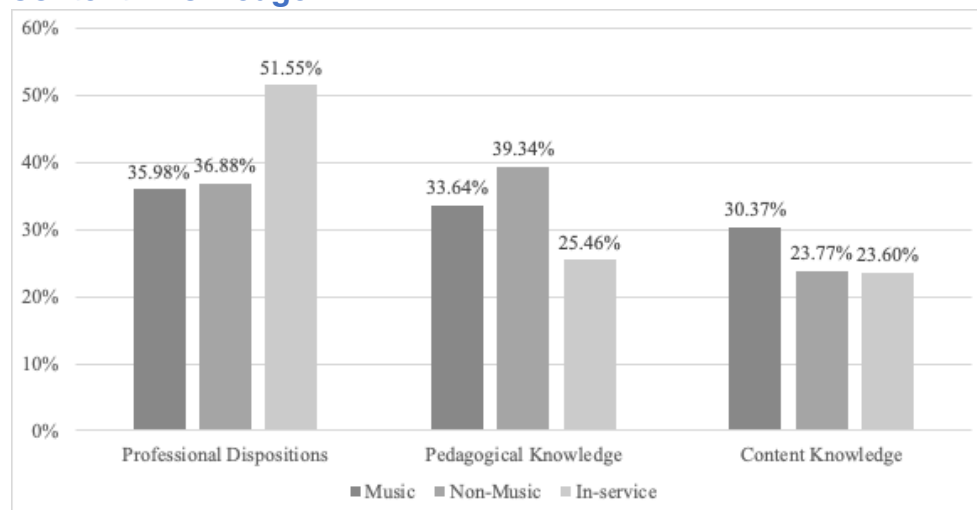
dispositions as the most important: a) respectful, b) positive attitude, c) approachable, d) reliable, e) caring, and f) inclusive (see Table 1).

Since data were ordinal and did not meet normality standards, we employed non-parametric statistics. To begin, a Kruskal-Wallis H test was used to determine if significant differences existed between the three groups. Significant differences were found for 18 of the 30 dispositions (see Table 2). A post hoc Mann-Whitney U test determined that professionalism was the only disposition for which there were statistically significant differences between all groups. The mean rank rating of in-service music educators was significantly higher than non-music collegiate education majors,  $U(N_{\text{in-service}} = 162, N_{\text{non-music}} = 243) = 17074, z = -2.34, p = .02$ , who, in turn, rated professionalism significantly higher than collegiate music education majors,  $U(N_{\text{music}} = 214, N_{\text{non-music}} = 243) = 20410.5, z = -4.01, p < .01$ . For complete results, (see Table 4).

Of the 18 dispositions with significant differences, the Mann-Whitney post hoc determined 16 of the differences were between collegiate music education majors and non-music collegiate education majors (see Table 4). The only two dispositions for which there were significant differences between other groups, but agreement among collegiate music education majors and non-music collegiate education majors, were 'helpful' and 'reliable.' Twelve significant differences existed between ratings of non-music collegiate education majors and in-service music educators. With the exception of two dispositions, displays 'leadership' and 'reliable,' non-music collegiate education majors rated each trait higher than did in-service music educators. Of the five dispositions that were significantly different for in-service music educators and collegiate music education majors, four had a higher mean rank for in-service music educators: 'enthusiastic,' 'flexible,' 'honest,' and 'reflective.' The only disposition ranked higher by collegiate education majors than in-service music educators was 'reliable' (see Table 2).

To answer research question three, participants ranked professional dispositions, content knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge in their own order of importance. The in-service music educators and collegiate music education majors ranked professional dispositions as most important. The in-service music educators then ranked pedagogical knowledge next and content knowledge last. The collegiate music education majors ranked content knowledge second and pedagogical knowledge third. Finally, non-music collegiate education majors ranked pedagogical knowledge as the most important followed by content knowledge, and then professional dispositions as least important of the three.

**Figure 1: #1 Rankings for Professional Dispositions, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Content Knowledge**



## DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to examine the views and priorities of in-service music educators, collegiate music education majors, and non-music collegiate education majors regarding professional dispositions. The three research questions were: (a) Do the stakeholders know what is meant by the term “dispositions” as required for assessment by CAEP? (b) Which identified dispositional traits are deemed most and least important by the participating in-service music educators, collegiate music education majors, and non-music collegiate education majors? (c) What is the rank order of importance of dispositional knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and content knowledge for the participating in-service music educators, collegiate music education students and non-music collegiate education majors? Due to the limited sample, the findings cannot be generalized.

For research question one, results revealed in-service music educators had a more solid understanding and more consistently articulated their understanding of ‘*disposition*’ than did all of the collegiate education majors. Combined, 27% of student respondents indicated they were not familiar with the term ‘disposition.’ While 73% did indicate they were familiar with the term, many provided descriptions that were inconsistent with common use or the CAEP definition, which is the norm for program completion evaluation. This lack of common understanding could be attributable to personal skills and/or dispositions not being addressed often in the curriculum as indicated in previous research (Teachout, 1997). It may also be representative of a lack of “buy in” by the collegiate education majors due to the imposition of dispositional expectations upon the students rather than their inclusion in the development and assessment process (Gallavan, Peace, & Thomason, 2009; Powell & Parker, 2017; Rotter, 1954).

For research question two, the ratings of dispositions by the groups were examined. The results of this study showed a high perceived importance of ‘respectfulness,’

'reliability,' and 'positive attitude,' which were consistent with Parkes, Doerksen, and Richter (2014, 2016) and Parkes, Ritcher, and Doerksen ((2019) who found both 'respect' and 'reliability' to be rated with high means, low variance, and high agreement. The other dispositions that were rated highly in this study were 'honest,' 'displays a positive attitude,' 'passionate,' 'strong communication skills,' 'approachable,' and 'strong listening skills.' While 'strong listening skills' likely falls under musical comprehensiveness, there were few other commonalities with the Woody, Gilbert, and Laird (2018) which focused more on 'reflectivity' and 'empathic caring.' Royston and Springer (2017) found that personal characteristics such as 'reliability,' 'maturity,' and 'positive demeanor,' were prime determinants of positive admissions decisions by many collegiate applied faculty for potential undergraduate music education majors which is consistent with many of the dispositions that were rated highly by in-service and collegiate music education majors in this study.

For research question three, the rankings of pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and professional dispositions were examined for differences between groups. While these represent percentages of rankings and were not examined for statistical significance, the non-music collegiate education majors' high ranking of pedagogical skills is consistent with the findings of Teachout (1997) and Rohwer and Henry (2004). In contrast with Rohwer and Henry (2004), in-service music educators ranked professional dispositions the highest. They did, however, rank pedagogical knowledge next, followed by musical knowledge, which was consistent with both of the previously mentioned studies. The priority on dispositions indicated by in-service music educators and collegiate music education majors might indicate a difference in the preparation and experiences of music educators and non-music collegiate education majors, particularly in college coursework as well as the motivations for becoming an educator. Many music educators enter the profession because of the positive relationship with their high school music teachers which may indirectly impact their preferences and beliefs regarding professional teaching dispositions.

While this study resulted in some shared and some differing findings from previous research, we believe additional study is needed to examine perceptions of dispositional importance among all stakeholders in the teacher education process. In order to increase student understanding and 'buy in,' there may be a need to give students a greater voice in the process and discussion of dispositions. Currently assessments have been created by teacher educators and education degree programs in compliance with CAEP. These assessment instruments have generally been developed by the collegiate faculty and have not included the other stakeholders in the process. We need to learn what is important to all stakeholders and have conversations in order to create shared definitions and understandings as well as to ensure that there are shared end goals and outcomes. Currently, there is some indication that students are prioritizing different dispositions than those that are being assessed by their programs and the in-service teachers. Allowing students the opportunity to have a greater voice and ownership in

their own development could produce positive outcomes and important developmental implications for pre-service educators. The vital collaboration between music teacher educators, in-service music educators, and collegiate music education majors may especially benefit from an increased shared understanding as well as a focus on and coaching for growth, rather than simple assessment.

Future research may also be useful to explore similarities and differences of opinion regarding content area priorities and preferred dispositions between non-music and music in-service teachers and teacher educators. The examination of dispositions is a significantly growing area of attention and assessment since its inclusion in InTASC standards and CAEP requirements. The coursework students take as part of teacher preparation programs tend to be split between the content area and the requirements of schools of education. Additional research could help us better understand if there are different dispositions and priorities being emphasized in these courses and developed in the students by different programs and whether the admission and/or end-of-program high-stakes dispositional assessments by the schools of education are equitable and appropriate for all students. In addition to the coursework provided by non-music teacher education faculty to students, many of these non-music colleagues also serve as administrators in school districts. Further research could help us understand whether pre-service music educators are receiving different coursework and preparation in regards to dispositions than those in music, as well as whether the in-service music educators may be getting evaluated on dispositions and skills which differ from those that tend to be prioritized within the music education profession. Additional future research may also examine how best to integrate dispositions into the teacher preparation program curriculum overall, as well as into the music education degree that often tends to focus mostly upon musical skill and pedagogy.

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## Appendix A: Quantitative Data

**Table 1**

*Ratings of Importance of Dispositions on a Scale of 1 (Not Important) to 10 (Very Important)*

In-Service			Music			Non-Music		
Disposition	M	SD	Disposition	M	SD	Disposition	M	SD
Reliable	94.59	7.75	Respectful	92.72	12.40	Respectful	94.61	8.81
Respectful	94.21	9.14	Reliable	91.07	11.42	Pos. Attitude	92.48	10.43
Honest	93.05	9.86	Passionate	90.87	11.40	Approachable	92.16	10.76
Professional	91.82	10.54	Good Listener	89.92	10.29	Reliable	92.14	11.02
Pos. Attitude	90.61	11.31	Communicator	89.68	11.76	Caring	92.00	10.21
Patient	90.48	10.39	Approachable	89.61	11.73	Inclusive	91.74	11.44
Passionate	89.86	11.18	Pos. Attitude	89.23	12.70	Compassionate	91.63	10.85
Caring	89.69	12.22	Honest	89.16	12.56	Passionate	91.13	11.02
Enthusiastic	89.66	11.60	Helpful	88.40	13.93	Patient	91.08	11.56
Approachable	89.60	11.75	Patient	88.21	13.66	Honest	90.96	12.41
Communicator	89.58	10.98	Caring	87.82	13.16	Good Listener	90.82	11.50
Good Listener	89.38	11.40	Leadership Skill	87.77	12.96	Communicator	90.68	11.05
Flexible	87.90	12.71	Enthusiastic	86.72	13.70	Kind	90.19	10.90
Inclusive	87.70	15.04	Inclusive	86.26	17.30	Helpful	89.79	12.17
Helpful	87.53	12.87	Resourceful	86.05	13.26	Collaborative	89.59	13.26
Leadership Skill	87.30	13.87	Compassionate	86.00	13.31	Flexible	89.30	13.12
Goal-Oriented	86.99	14.33	Flexible	85.93	12.33	Enthusiastic	88.84	13.56
Resourceful	86.58	14.17	Organized	85.65	15.31	Professional	87.61	15.69
Organized	86.56	14.58	Goal-Oriented	84.26	15.71	Resourceful	87.16	13.29
Compassionate	86.02	12.77	Collaborative	84.06	14.20	Fair	86.53	14.74
Reflective	85.70	14.85	Fair	83.90	16.23	Reflective	86.25	14.86
Kind	85.60	13.25	Kind	83.80	15.22	Goal-Oriented	85.95	14.47
Fair	84.90	15.33	Self-Confident	83.78	14.70	Organized	85.59	15.25
Tactful	82.66	14.35	Professional	82.32	18.17	Leadership Skill	83.83	14.97
Collaborative	82.49	14.91	Decisive	80.65	15.56	Creative	82.62	15.03
Self-Confident	82.31	14.53	Reflective	80.64	16.72	Self-Confident	82.39	15.75
Decisive	81.24	16.33	Tactful	80.07	14.99	Available	81.92	15.27
Sense of Humor	79.20	16.08	Creative	79.81	15.82	Sensitive	80.70	17.88
Creative	78.71	15.56	Available	77.79	15.88	Tactful	80.56	16.14
Dresses Approp.	77.89	19.26	Sense of Humor	76.40	19.36	Dresses Approp.	80.07	20.11
Available	77.86	16.62	Dresses Approp.	75.59	20.56	Decisive	79.33	17.73
Sensitive	75.47	19.36	Sensitive	75.15	18.58	Sense of Humor	76.77	19.00

**Table 2***Kruskal-Wallis: Significant Differences between Three Groups on Beliefs Regarding Given Dispositions*

		<i>n</i>	Mean Rank	<i>df</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Approachable</b>	Music	214	294.67	2	9.16	0.01
	Non-Music	243	336.02	2		
	In-Service	162	291.23	2		
<b>Available</b>	Music	214	287.92	2	10.96	0.00
	Non-Music	243	339.31	2		
	In-Service	162	295.21	2		
<b>Caring</b>	Music	214	279.17	2	13.75	0.00
	Non-Music	243	339.06	2		
	In-Service	162	307.14	2		
<b>Compassionate</b>	Music	214	279.76	2	31.86	0.00
	Non-Music	243	359.44	2		
	In-Service	162	275.78	2		
<b>Creative</b>	Music	214	298.25	2	7.47	0.02
	Non-Music	243	334.00	2		
	In-Service	162	289.51	2		
<b>Displays Leadership</b>	Music	214	327.82	2	10.12	0.01
	Non-Music	243	281.84	2		
	In-Service	162	328.70	2		
<b>Dresses Appropriately</b>	Music	214	283.39	2	9.56	0.01
	Non-Music	243	334.86	2		
	In-Service	162	307.86	2		
<b>Enthusiastic</b>	Music	214	284.81	2	6.85	0.03
	Non-Music	243	321.20	2		
	In-Service	162	326.32	2		
<b>Flexible</b>	Music	214	272.78	2	16.04	0.00
	Non-Music	243	338.60	2		
	In-Service	162	316.27	2		
<b>Honest</b>	Music	214	280.66	2	13.01	0.00
	Non-Music	243	312.68	2		
	In-Service	162	344.74	2		
<b>Inclusive</b>	Music	214	282.36	2	15.67	0.00
	Non-Music	243	343.67	2		
	In-Service	162	296.00	2		

**Table 2** (cont.)

<b>Kind</b>	Music	214	281.23	2	19.65	0.00
	Non-Music	243	348.65	2		
	In-Service	162	290.03	2		
<b>Positive Attitude</b>	Music	214	288.06	2	8.95	0.01
	Non-Music	243	335.16	2		
	In-Service	162	301.23	2		
<b>Professional</b>	Music	214	255.19	2	37.45	0.00
	Non-Music	243	322.27	2		
	In-Service	162	364.00	2		
<b>Reflective</b>	Music	214	267.86	2	18.85	0.00
	Non-Music	243	336.25	2		
	In-Service	162	326.29	2		
<b>Reliable</b>	Music	214	382.76	2	13.27	0.00
	Non-Music	243	310.94	2		
	In-Service	162	345.90	2		
<b>Sensitive</b>	Music	214	284.26	2	14.85	0.00
	Non-Music	243	344.13	2		
	In-Service	162	292.80	2		
<b>Willing to Collaborate</b>	Music	214	282.31	2	40.57	0.00
	Non-Music	243	365.61	2		
	In-Service	162	263.17	2		

**Table 3**

*Kruskal-Wallis: No Significant Differences between Three Groups on Beliefs Regarding Given Dispositions*

		<i>n</i>	Mean Rank	<i>df</i>	<i>H</i>	<i>p</i>
<b>Decisive</b>	Music	214	306.20	2	1.39	0.50
	Non-Music	243	303.94	2		
	In-Service	162	324.10	2		
<b>Fair</b>	Music	214	295.32	2	3.27	0.19
	Non-Music	243	325.15	2		
	In-Service	162	306.65	2		
<b>Goal-Oriented</b>	Music	214	290.33	2	4.57	0.10
	Non-Music	243	315.05	2		
	In-Service	162	328.42	2		
<b>Good Listener</b>	Music	214	298.85	2	4.13	0.13
	Non-Music	243	327.72	2		
	In-Service	162	298.14	2		
<b>Helpful</b>	Music	214	309.64	2	4.23	0.12
	Non-Music	243	324.78	2		
	In-Service	162	288.30	2		
<b>Organized</b>	Music	214	307.72	2	0.58	0.75
	Non-Music	243	306.06	2		
	In-Service	162	318.93	2		
<b>Passionate</b>	Music	214	312.10	2	1.85	0.40
	Non-Music	243	318.25	2		
	In-Service	162	294.85	2		
<b>Patient</b>	Music	214	289.96	2	5.22	0.07
	Non-Music	243	327.03	2		
	In-Service	162	310.92	2		
<b>Resourceful</b>	Music	214	299.01	2	1.35	0.51
	Non-Music	243	317.93	2		
	In-Service	162	312.62	2		
<b>Respectful</b>	Music	214	295.20	2	2.85	0.24
	Non-Music	243	320.35	2		
	In-Service	162	314.02	2		
<b>Self-Confident</b>	Music	214	319.23	2	0.98	0.61
	Non-Music	243	307.36	2		
	In-Service	162	301.77	2		

**Table 3** (cont.)

<b>Kind</b>	Music	214	281.23	2	19.65	0.00
	Non-Music	243	348.65	2		
	In-Service	162	290.03	2		
<b>Positive Attitude</b>	Music	214	288.06	2	8.95	0.01
	Non-Music	243	335.16	2		
	In-Service	162	301.23	2		
<b>Professional</b>	Music	214	255.19	2	37.45	0.00
	Non-Music	243	322.27	2		
	In-Service	162	364.00	2		
<b>Reflective</b>	Music	214	267.86	2	18.85	0.00
	Non-Music	243	336.25	2		
	In-Service	162	326.29	2		
<b>Reliable</b>	Music	214	382.76	2	13.27	0.00
	Non-Music	243	310.94	2		
	In-Service	162	345.90	2		
<b>Sensitive</b>	Music	214	284.26	2	14.85	0.00
	Non-Music	243	344.13	2		
	In-Service	162	292.80	2		
<b>Willing to Collaborate</b>	Music	214	282.31	2	40.57	0.00
	Non-Music	243	365.61	2		
	In-Service	162	263.17	2		



**Table 4**

*Mann-Whitney U Test: Significant Differences Between Music Ed Students (n = 214), Other Ed Students (n = 243), and Music Teachers (n = 162) for Importance of Dispositions*

			U	Z	p	$\eta^2$
Approachable	Music Ed	Other Ed	22589.5	-2.53	0.01	0.01
	Other Ed	Teachers	16772	-2.63	0.01	0.02
Available	Music Ed	Other Ed	21690	-3.07	0.00	0.02
	Other Ed	Teachers	16871.5	-2.45	0.01	0.01
Caring	Music Ed	Other Ed	21016.5	-3.67	0.00	0.03
Compassionate	Music Ed	Other Ed	19299.5	-4.88	0.00	0.05
	Other Ed	Teachers	14369.5	-4.74	0.00	0.06*
Creative	Music Ed	Other Ed	23048	-2.1	0.04	0.01
	Other Ed	Teachers	16803.5	-2.5	0.01	0.02
Enthusiastic	Music Ed	Teachers	15023	-2.25	0.02	0.01
	Music Ed	Other Ed	22921.5	-2.23	0.03	0.01
Flexible	Music Ed	Teachers	14896.5	-2.35	0.02	0.01
	Music Ed	Other Ed	20472.5	-3.96	0.00	0.03
Helpful	Other Ed	Teachers	17338	-2.08	0.04	0.01
Honest	Music Ed	Teachers	13760	-3.56	0.00	0.03
	Music Ed	Other Ed	23297	-1.98	0.05	0.01
Inclusive	Music Ed	Other Ed	20916	-3.74	0.00	0.03
	Other Ed	Teachers	16586	-2.79	0.01	0.02
Kind	Music Ed	Other Ed	20416	-4.06	0.00	0.04
	Other Ed	Teachers	15875	-3.38	0.00	0.03
Displays leadership	Music Ed	Other Ed	22030.5	-2.84	0.00	0.02
	Other Ed	Teachers	16809.5	-2.51	0.01	0.02
Positive attitude	Music Ed	Other Ed	22064	-2.89	0.00	0.02
	Other Ed	Teachers	17505	-1.96	0.05	0.01
Professional	Music Ed	Other Ed	20410.5	-4.02	0.00	0.04
	Other Ed	Teachers	17074	-2.34	0.02	0.01
	Teachers	Music Ed	11194	-5.98	0.00	0.1*
Relfective	Music Ed	Other Ed	20350	-4.05	0.00	0.04
	Music Ed	Teachers	13968	-3.26	0.00	0.03
Reliable	Music Ed	Teachers	13738	-3.64	0.00	0.04
	Other Ed	Teachers	17464	-2.07	0.04	0.01
Sensitive	Music Ed	Other Ed	21013.5	-3.549	0.00	0.03
	Other Ed	Teachers	16377	-2.87	0.00	0.02
Strong collaborator	Music Ed	Other Ed	18943	-5.09	0.00	0.06*
	Other Ed	Teachers	13228.5	-5.68	0.00	0.07*

small (.01-.05), \*medium effect size (.06-.13), large (.14+)

## Appendix B: Questionnaires Collegiate Music and Non-Music Educator Survey

1. What is your major content area?
  - Early Elementary Education
  - Elementary Education
  - English Education
  - History Education
  - Agriculture Education
  - Math Education
  - Science Education
  - World Language Education
  - Family/Consumer Sciences Education
  - Physical Education
  - Music Education
  - Other

2. What is your identified gender?
  - Male
  - Female

Music Only:

- What is your primary collegiate performance area?
- What is your desired teaching area?

3. What year are you in school?
  - First-year
  - sophomore
  - junior
  - senior
  - super senior
  - other (please explain)
4. What is your age?
  - 18
  - 19
  - 20
  - 21
  - 22
5. What is your home state?
6. What is your desired teaching area and level? (ex: High School Spanish, Middle School Language Arts, Elementary Classroom, etc.)
7. Please define what the term “professional dispositions” means to you.

8. Using the sliders (on a scale of 1-100), please indicate your opinion of the importance of each of the dispositions below.

Self-Confident	Organized	Strong Communicator
Approachable	Dresses Appropriately	Fair
Kind	Passionate	Willing Collaborator
Patient	Displays Leadership	Reliable
Caring	Creative	Inclusive
Tactful	Professional	Sensitive
Reflective	Enthusiastic	Decisive
Available	Sense of Humor	Flexible
Good Listener	Positive Attitude	Resourceful
Helpful	Respectful	Goal-Oriented
Compassionate	Honest	

9. Please choose the five dispositions you feel are most important and place them, in order of importance into the boxes on the right. Please place only one item in each box.

Approachable	Flexible	Patient
Available	Goal-Oriented	Reflective
Caring	Good Listener	Reliable
Compassionate	Helpful	Resourceful
Creative	Honest	Respectful
Decisive	Inclusive	Self-Confident
Displays Leadership	Kind	Sense of Humor
Dresses Appropriately	Organized	Sensitive
Enthusiastic	Passionate	Strong Communicator
Fair	Positive Attitude	Tactful
	Professional	Willing Collaborator

10. Please rank the necessity of the following items:

Musical Knowledge  
 Pedagogical Knowledge  
 Professional Dispositions

11. Are there any additional dispositions that you feel are important and we should add to our list?

## In-Service Music Educator Survey

1. What was your primary collegiate performance area?
  - Winds (woodwind & brass)
  - Percussion
  - Strings
  - Voice
  - Other (please explain)
2. What is your identified gender?
  - Male
  - Female
3. How long have you been teaching (including this year)?
  - 1 year
  - 2 years
  - 3 years
  - 4 years
  - 5-10 years
  - 11-15 years
  - 16-20 years
  - 21-25 years
  - 26-30 years
  - More than 30 years
4. In which state do you teach?
5. What is your current teaching area(s)? (please mark all that apply)
  - Band
  - Orchestra
  - Choir
  - Elementary General Music
  - Other (please explain)
6. Please define what the term “professional dispositions” means to you.
7. Using the sliders, please indicate your opinion of the importance of each of the dispositions for a teacher below.

Self-Confident  
Approachable  
Kind  
Patient  
Caring  
Tactful  
Reflective  
Available  
Good Listener

Helpful  
Compassionate  
Organized  
Dresses Appropriately  
Passionate  
Displays Leadership  
Creative  
Professional  
Enthusiastic

Sense of Humor  
Positive Attitude  
Respectful  
Honest  
Strong Communicator  
Fair  
Willing Collaborator  
Reliable  
Inclusive

Sensitive  
Decisive

Flexible  
Resourceful

Goal-Oriented

8. Please choose the five dispositions you feel are most important and place them, in order of importance into the boxes on the right. Please place only one item in each box.

Approachable

Available

Caring

Compassionate

Creative

Decisive

Displays Leadership

Dresses Appropriately

Enthusiastic

Fair

Flexible

Goal-Oriented

Good Listener

Helpful

Honest

Inclusive

Kind

Organized

Passionate

Positive Attitude

Professional

Patient

Reflective

Reliable

Resourceful

Respectful

Self-Confident

Sense of Humor

Sensitive

Strong Communicator

Tactful

Willing Collaborator

9. Please rank the necessity of the following items:

Musical Knowledge

Pedagogical Knowledge

Professional Dispositions

10. Are there any additional dispositions that you feel are important and we should add to our list?

**Natalie Steele Royston** is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Music Education at Iowa State University. She earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree and Master of Music degrees in Trombone Performance and Wind Conducting from Ohio University and a PhD in Music Education from the University of North Texas. Dr. Royston has presented at conferences and research symposiums across the country and is published in the *Journal of Research in Music Education*, the *Journal of Music Teacher Education*, *Update: Applications of Research in Music Education*, *Research and Issues in Music Education*, *Contributions to Music Education*, the *Music Educators Journal*, and the *Instrumentalist*.

**Jill Wilson** is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Music Education at Luther College. She earned a Bachelor of Music Education degree from St. Olaf College, Master of Music Education from the University of Northern Iowa, and Doctor of Musical Arts in Music Education from Boston University. Dr. Wilson has presented at state, regional, national, and international conferences. Scholarly publications include articles in *Research Issues in Music Education*, *Gender Research in Music Education*, *Visions of Research in Music Education*, *Arts Education Policy Review*, *Choral Journal*, and the *Journal of Music Teacher Education* as well as a chapter in *Contemporary Research in Music Learning Across the Lifespan* published by Routledge.