Excellence in Performing Arts Research

Volume 1

2014

Student Assessment in the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES): Is It Improving Instructional Practices in the Music Classroom?

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This paper won the Award for Excellence in Graduate Research, 2013-14.

Abstract

This study investigated the impact of student growth measures required by the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) on instructional practices of music teachers. The participants were music teachers employed in public school settings from seven counties in northeast Ohio. The participants specialized in a variety of content areas (instrumental, vocal, and general) with students ranging in age from kindergarten through high school. Participants taught in diverse geographic, ethnic, and economic situations. Data was collected via an online survey. The music teachers answered questions about their demographics, current situations, professional involvement in the development of student learning objectives for their school district, and the impact of the OTES model on their instructional practices. Survey responses were analyzed using SPSS software. Comments were coded into major themes and discussed in the final portion of the study.

Introduction

Rationale

Trends in teacher evaluation have been changing rapidly since 2009. Teacher pay and tenure which were once based on factors such as seniority and educational degrees earned are now being based, at least in part, on student achievement or growth in a particular content area. The *State of the States: Trends and Early Lessons on Teacher Evaluation and Effectiveness Policies* report from the National Council on Teacher Quality (2011) stated that before 2010, only four states used student achievement as a predominant factor in teacher evaluation. By 2011, the number had jumped to 13 states using student achievement as a predominant factor and another 10 states using it as a small percentage of teacher evaluation.

In 2009, Ohio adopted the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) which was a radical shift from previous evaluation models in that half of a teacher's overall evaluation rating is based on student growth measures. While the model mandates an overarching framework, each school district has been given authority to determine individual teacher's criteria for which students are tested, what content is measured, and how much growth should occur.

Determining who will be tested is a challenge to music teachers who are often assigned a large population of students or, in the case of band and choir teachers, have large groups at one time. Additionally, many music educators teach in more than one school building and have multiple grade levels. Selecting a representative student sampling varies widely between districts. Each district must decide how many students a music educator must include in his or her student growth measures and what grade levels will be represented.

Criteria for the amount of student growth to determine a teacher's effectiveness also varies widely between school districts. The model used for student growth in music classes involves giving a pre-test for baseline data and then a post-test at the end of the instructional period. The difference in scores between the two tests measures the growth that a student has made. However, each district can determine how much growth should occur and what the growth target should be.

Finally, the issue arises relating to what should be tested. The Ohio Content Standards for Music, which are state adopted guidelines for curricular planning, address multiple areas of skill and knowledge. For any particular grade level different standards can be measured. For instance,

one district may decide to measure a student's musical growth in the second grade by assessing that student's ability to sing with accurate pitch. Another district may decide that musical growth in second grade should be measured by assessing rhythmic accuracy. A third district could decide that the way to measure musical growth is by assessing a student's ability to aurally discriminate between timbres of different instruments. Still another district could determine that a combination of all three elements, pitch, rhythm, and timbre should be measured. Each district must determine what elements constitute a fair representation of the main objectives for each grade level in the music content area.

Problem

Linking student achievement with teacher evaluation creates a high pressure situation for the stakeholders. With the complex nature of designing and implementing student growth measurements for the music content areas, many school districts have turned to the music staff for input. This is an opportunity for the music teachers to clearly define teaching goals and to collect and analyze data comparable with other subject areas. This is also a challenge to many music teachers who find themselves in the position of being the only music expert in a particular building, or do not have training in assessment techniques that will produce reliable and valid measurements. Music teachers in Ohio have never been required to report assessment results to a centralized place and so at this time there is no prior data to build upon or measure against.

This study investigated the impact that student growth measures have had on music teachers' instructional practices, perceived benefits and drawbacks to the student growth model, and the ways in which this process has affected teachers' professional development in relation to assessment measures and instructional practices.

Questions

There has been much uncertainty about how the OTES model will affect music education. What role music educators will play in the process and what impact the new model will have on an individual music teacher's instructional practices were the central themes to this study. The questions addressed were:

1. In what ways have individual music teachers been affected by the implementation of student growth measures in the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES)?
2. Have instructional practices of music teachers changed with the addition of student learning objectives?
3. What perceived benefits and drawbacks do teachers identify for themselves and for their students as a result of the OTES?
4. Have music teachers participated in opportunities for professional development in the areas of assessment and student growth measures as a result of the OTES?

Scope

This study surveyed music teachers from seven counties in northeast Ohio. The survey was sent to approximately four hundred music educators who were at the time of the survey teaching in a public school setting. One hundred and ten surveys were completed via an online

format. Music teachers from all grade levels (PreK-12) and from all specialty areas (choral, instrumental, and general) voluntarily responded to questions.

The survey included questions about demographics, current teaching situations, and self-reflections on how the OTES model has affected individual teaching practices. The format of the survey enabled participants to choose from selected responses, but space was provided for extra commentary.

Definitions

The following terms and phrases were used throughout this study:

Assessment – a systematic way to collect data to determine the skills or abilities of the subject. For the purpose of this study assessment and testing are used synonymously.

Collective Bargaining Unit – a group of educators who negotiate contract terms with the Board of Education.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) – the governing body of a school district, often comprised of administrators, teachers, community members and other stakeholders and overseen by the local Board of Education.

Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) – the model for evaluating all public school teachers. It is comprised of 50% Student Growth Model and 50% Teacher Performance based on the Standards for Teaching in Ohio.

Ohio Academic Content Standards – standards adopted by the Ohio Department of Education that outline what every child should know and be able to do in various content areas. The standards give benchmarks that should be attained within a given school year for each subject and grade level.

Student Growth Measures – assessments used to measure a student's growth in a particular content area.

Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) – an assessment tool designed by Local Education Agencies that measures the growth of a student over one academic year.

Value-Added Measures (VAM) – a method of teacher evaluation that compares the student's test scores from the previous year to test scores of the current year to predict how much growth should occur. The difference in actual growth compared to predicted growth is attributed to the teacher's influence.

Limitations

At the time of this study, the OTES system was in its first year of operation. Many districts had not fully implemented the model because their individual collective bargaining unit contract preempted adoption until the expiration of the contract. Many of those districts were piloting the OTES requirements, but others had not taken action to implement all its components. As a result, some of the participants were directly affected by the new model, others were only implementing it as a pilot, and some teachers were not yet affected by the reform.

This study was based on the results from one survey. Participants' chose from a list of 3-8 responses per question. However, space was provided within most questions and at the end of the survey for participants to provide additional feedback.

Distribution of the survey was via an online link. Links were emailed to music teachers in seven northeast Ohio counties. Approximately 400 survey were sent and 110 were completed.

The majority (76%) of total respondents were currently affected by the OTES model. There was not a follow up survey to expand on the responses due to time constraints of the study and the anonymity of the participants.

Summary of the Issues

Ohio is in the process of implementing a new model for teacher evaluation. This model uses data collected from student growth measures to calculate half of a teacher's evaluation rating. The model requires all districts to develop measurements of growth for students in music. Music teachers may have the opportunity to develop the design and implementation of these assessment measures.

This study surveyed music teachers in northeast Ohio. The questions were designed to address the teachers' demographics, current situations, involvement in the OTES development process, changes that have been made to their instructional practices, and perceived benefits or drawbacks that have affected them and their students as a result of the OTES.

Literature Review

When linking teacher evaluation to student performance, a predominant concern of stakeholders becomes the question of *how*? Determining the factors that make an effective teacher must be clearly outlined before any attempt is made to measure it. Research by Prince et al. (2008) stated, "Until we can agree on what constitutes effective teacher performance, it will be difficult to measure and reward it" (p. 6). After determining the criteria for effective teaching, measurement efforts become difficult as other influences in a student's life, such as socio-economic factors, parental involvement, and prior experiences, can have an impact on the academic achievement of the child. Braun (2005) concurred stating that it is difficult for the statistical machinery to disentangle intrinsic student differences from true differences in teacher effectiveness (p. 3).

In its first year of implementation (the 2013-2014 academic year), the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) provided three models in determining teaching effectiveness through student growth measures: value-added measures (VAMs), vendor assessments, and student learning objectives (SLOs). Individual districts could choose which type of model a teacher used and what percentage of the overall evaluation that model would provide. There was a hierarchy mandated by the Ohio Department of Education that VAM data be used if applicable, vendor assessments were to be used if VAM was not available. SLOs could only be used if the other two models were not applicable. Because of the required data necessary for VAMs, not all teachers could use that model. Likewise, vendor assessments were primarily produced for common core subjects (math, reading, science, and social studies). The teachers who were not able to use VAM or vendor assessments had to use the SLO model.

Value-Added Measurements (VAMs)

VAMs are a statistically determined formula that use prior testing to predict an expected growth target for a student. If the child exceeds the target, the additional growth is positively attributed to the teacher. However, if a child does not meet the expected growth, the difference from expected and actual growth are negatively attributed to the teacher. Marion & Buckley describe the value added model in this way:

> "Value added scores are generally derived from regression based or ANOVA-based models, and require at least two test scores (although additional years may be included to improve the precision of the estimates), and may include additional covariates such as student demographics or school characteristics. VAM scores are interpreted as the difference between a student's predicted score (based on similar students) and actual scores; a difference that is attributed to the teacher." (Marion & Buckley, 2011, p. 12)

The use of VAMs is controversial. The model is an attempt to quantify the effects that teachers have on student achievement. Past models of teacher evaluation only looked at qualities of effective teaching from an observational point of view. Proponents of the model claim that VAMs are a way to objectify the teaching profession. Glazerman et al. (2010) argued that value-added analyses represent an improvement relative to preexisting approaches to educational accountability.

The controversy occurs because, despite the fact that many states are adopting student growth measures, there is a lack of empirical data on this model (Prince et al., 2008). Briggs (2011) argued that "if a descriptive measure is a significant source of evidence being used to reward or sanction teachers, the implied inference that, for example, higher quality teaching is associated with higher values, the descriptive indicator would need to be defended empirically" (p. 18).

Another controversial aspect of the VAM model is that not all teachers have data that qualifies for the VAM equation. In order to use the model, standardized test scores for two (or more) years must be available. Many states use standardized testing for reading and math, but not in other subject areas. Goe (2010) suggested that 65-75% of teachers do not have adequate information to calculate value-added measures. Prince et al. (2008) calculated that 69% of all teachers do not use standardized testing consistent with VAMs.

Another concern about the use of VAMs is its limited reliability due to the lack of randomization of students (Buckley & Marion, 2011; Prince et al., 2008; Braun, 2005; Baker et al., 2010). Parents and families have choices about where their students go to school and in some cases, what teacher their child will have. Buckley and Marion (2011) state that "in the absence of randomly assigning students to teachers, causal inference based on any value-added model is limited (p. 11).

Bias can occur when using purely quantitative data out of the context in which it is created (Briggs, 2011; Kupermintz, 2003). Rotenstein (2009) called into question use of VAMs because other factors within the school and outside of the school can have substantial effects on student achievement. Hanushek and Rivken (2010) considered any failure to account for unobservable characteristics such as those outside of the teachers control would potentially penalize teachers with more difficult classrooms and reward teachers with less difficult

classrooms (p. 270). The result of such bias could potentially impact a schools ability to attract highly effective teachers.

If teachers are to be evaluated based on student achievement, the instrument used to measure the student's progress is critical. Validity and reliability of the tests used for collecting data of the VAMs must be aligned to standards and expectations of what students should know and be able to do from grade to grade (Briggs, 2011; Marion & Buckley, 2011; Prince et al., 2008; Herman et al., 2007).

In addition to the collection of student scores, the interpretation of the scores is a critical area. The complex nature of the value-added model makes interpretation of the data crucial. Briggs (2011) stated that value-added measures are best interpreted as descriptive rather that causal effects (p. 5). He continued that the interpretation of results impact the validity of the model so it is important to account for as many covariates as possible. The difficulty of interpretation, unstable and imprecise nature of the scores, and factors beyond the teacher's control were cited in other research as areas that need to be further studied (Briggs, 2011; Baker et al., 2010; Herman et al., 2011; Braun, 2005, Prince et al., 2008).

While some policy makers and researchers have a favorable view of VAMs as a way to evaluate teachers, the complex nature of the model, along with the limited uses for teachers who are not math and reading based, possibility of bias, and questions of validity and interpretation of the testing instrument make this model controversial. Zoller and McNabb (2012) state that "the use of value-added measures to evaluate teachers raises many technical and ethical issues that will be debated for years to come as assessment experts and educators investigate correlations and causal links between teacher behavior and student growth. In the meantime, principals, school districts, and teachers struggle to meet new mandates set up by new laws that call for a student growth score to constitute up to 50% of a teachers' evaluation rating" (Appendix B).

Vendor Assessments

Since many teachers do not have access to data needed for VAMs, Ohio offered a second option for collecting data to use in the growth model. This option allowed school districts to use vendor assessments. These assessments had to be approved by the Ohio Department of Education. Criteria for the assessments was as follows: Data must 1) Be highly correlated with curricular objectives; 2) Have enough "stretch" to measure the growth of both low- and high-achieving students; 3) Meet appropriate standards of test reliability, and; 4) Have specifics on relating assessment growth measures to the ratings of the teacher evaluation model (Ohio Department of Education, http://education.ohio.gov, 2014).

As stated in the criteria, the assessments that were approved had to show the growth of a student over a period of time and must have sufficient reliability and validity. The vendor assessments were produced by nationally recognized companies that researched and field tested the products. Approval of the use of a vendor assessment required authorization from the state and validation from the company that the user had been trained in implementation, scoring, and interpretation. The use of vendor assessments made the growth model more accessible to a larger number of teachers who were outside of the reading and math subjects. However, a barrier to using these assessments was that it was prohibitive to school districts.

Student Learning Objectives

A final option provided in OTES was the Student Learning Objective (SLO) model. SLOs involved the use of an assessment or group of assessments designed to measure a growth in skills or knowledge in a given area within a specified time frame, usually from the start to the end of a course. For instance, an SLO might be designed to show a growth in math skills by testing a student on multiplication facts at the beginning of the year and then retesting that student at the end of the year to determine if the student had improved. SLOs were written by a team or individual in a school district for use in that district.

The Ohio Department of Education defined SLOs as "a measurable, long-term academic growth target that a teacher sets at the beginning of the year for all students or for subgroups of students. Student learning objectives demonstrate a teacher's impact on student learning" (Ohio Department of Education, http://education.ohio.gov, 2014).

Marion and Buckley (2011) further explained the SLO approach as a system that "allows teachers use of classroom based and/or other information to establish goals for either individual students and/or the class as a whole and then evaluate the degree of success in terms of meeting those goals using similar or other relevant measures" (p. 14). In the same report, they contended that this approach allowed for flexibility of design which gave local districts more control over the implementation and could help "incentivize the positive practices of setting empirically-based goals for each student, monitoring progress toward the goals, and then evaluating the degree to which students met the intended targets" (p. 32).

While the model offered design flexibility and teacher-based input on growth targets, relatively little research had been conducted on teachers' effects on student achievement and other educational outcomes (Prince et al., 2008). As this was the first year that SLOs had been implemented in Ohio, no data was available to support or reject the model.

For teachers of non-tested grades or subjects who did not have standardized tests or national vendor tests, there was an issue of consistency in the assessments in terms of content area, scoring, and growth targets. One reason for the inconsistencies was the resources needed to create assessments. Not all districts had the same resources in terms of staff, leadership and financial means. Often specialized teachers, such as music, were alone on a staff. Prince et al. (2008) stated that creating new tests to assess teacher performance in all noncore subjects is a very complicated, time-consuming, and expensive task (p. 18).

Further discrepancies for inconsistent results in student growth could be attributed to the amount of prior experience in a school system or influences for outside the school. Ballou (2002) found that a student's prior experience may influence their performance in some content areas more than others. Music is a course that is particularly susceptible to outside influences such as private lessons or studio classes.

A final consideration when implementing an SLO approach was the need for accountability in the testing procedures (Marion & Buckley, 2011; Briggs, 2011; Herman et al., 2011). When students' scores are used for teacher evaluation, the pressure is great for teachers to teach to the test (Haertal, 1999; Shepard, 2000). Teachers may focus on ensuring that students are getting the correct answers on the test as opposite to ensuring that students are learning the content at the intended depth (Herman et al., 2011; Marion & Buckley, 2011). Prince (2008) also cautioned that in high stakes situations, the person who is being evaluated should not be charged with the responsibility of administering or scoring the test (p. 20).

For music teachers in Ohio, the only option available for student growth measures in the OTES was the SLO approach. There were inherent benefits as well as drawbacks to the model. Since SLO procedures were set by individual school districts, many music teachers had input as to the standards that would be covered and the types of assessments used to measure a student's growth. According to Buckley & Marion (2011), SLOs are often linked to instructional practices. Because of that link, it is clear to teachers what must be done in order to meet a given performance target, thereby increasing the credibility of the target and potentially creating greater teacher buy-in of the evaluation system (p. 22).

However, a potential drawback to the model rested in the quality of the assessment instrument. Assessments had to be aligned with standards, contain interval scale properties, show vertical links across grade levels, and be a consistent measure (Briggs, 2011; Marion & Buckley, 2011; Prince et al., 2008). Herman (2007) recommended that states and districts establish clarity on learning expectations, ensure selected or developed assessments are well aligned to those expectations, and are free from fatal design flaws (p. 7).

Not only should the assessments be well designed, but the interpretation of the results must be valid and consistent. There are many different methods for attributing student test scores to teachers, but simply having two scores for each student (such as pre- and post-test scores) does not automatically imply a method for evaluating these scores. (Marion & Buckley, 2011, p. 10)

The need for quality assessments and valid interpretation of the results gave rise to the need for professional development for teachers who were involved in the SLO process. School districts must provide opportunities for teachers to develop assessments, to ensure that growth targets are linked to school and district goals, and to provide feedback and encouragement for professional development (Prince et al., 2008; Marion & Buckley, 2011; Zoller & McNabb, 2012).

Methodology

This was a quantitative study which used descriptive statistics to answer the research questions. A survey was developed for distribution to music teachers in seven counties in northeast Ohio. These counties were chosen because of access to teachers through county databases as well as databases established by the state music association. The school districts were representative of districts throughout the state with a variety of situations represented such as geographic area, economic conditions, cultural diversity, and population.

The survey questions were developed by (1) reviewing the literature on the OTES system, best practices in music education, and assessment strategies, (2) examining the guidelines for the implementation of OTES, and (3) professional experiences of the author and her colleagues in the public school setting and the university setting.

The questions were designed to fill a gap that was left by the initial research on the OTES model. The Pilot Study for OTES (Zoller and McNabb, 2012) addressed the concerns, opinions, and implications for general education teachers, but it did not look specifically at the concerns, opinions, and implications for music teachers. The survey questions addressed the following areas: (1) demographics of the music educators in terms of specialty areas, years of experience, level of education, participation in professional organizations, and teaching schedules; (2) current situation in terms of participation in the OTES model, types of assessment given for the SLO and for general classroom use, criteria used for grading, and professional involvement in

the development of SLOs; and (3) reflective questions which described the perceived positive and/or negative effects of using SLOs to measure the students' musical growth and to inform instructional practices.

In order to establish reliability, the survey questions were reviewed by four judges: two judges from the field of music education, one judge who is a fine arts consultant, and one judge from the field of statistics. A pilot survey was sent to seven music educators who took the survey and gave feedback on the format, clarity, and content. The comments from the judges and the pilot participants were considered when revising the survey. Several questions were reworded for better clarity. Responses of "no difference" were added to two questions for consistency of formatting. Two questions were added in order to gain a more in-depth response to the survey.

As the author is currently a teacher being evaluated by the OTES, bias was a concern. In an attempt to avoid bias, the survey was given to two consultants who are employed in agencies under the umbrella of the Ohio Department of Education. Neither found bias in the questions on the survey.

(Survey questions can be found in Appendix A.)

Results

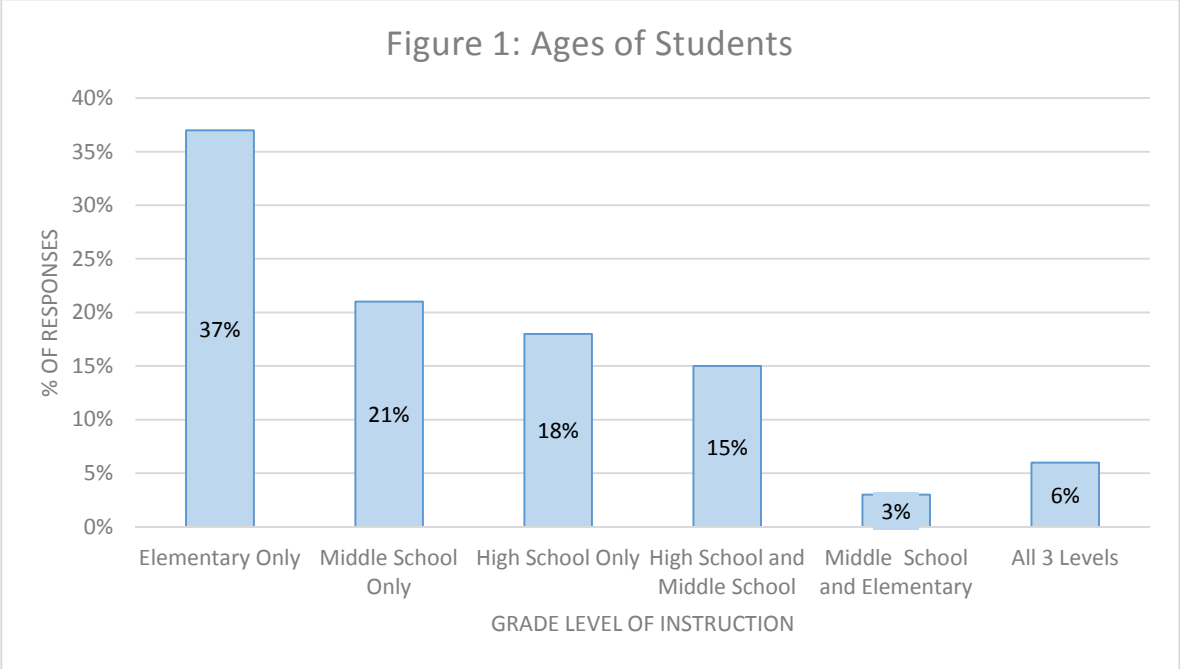
The major themes of this study included demographics, current teaching situations, participation in the OTES model, perceived benefits and drawbacks, professional development and general comments. Results were analyzed using SPSS software. Responses were ranked by percentage. Many questions were descriptive in nature and therefore, participants could choose multiple responses that reflected their circumstance.

There were multiple places on the survey where participants were encouraged to write in comments. These comments were coded by the themes: assessment, implementation of the OTES model, and areas of concern specific to music teachers. (See Appendix B for a listing of unedited comments).

Demographics

One hundred and ten people completed the survey. Those who were not currently teaching in a K-12 school setting were eliminated, resulting in 96 people usable surveys (N=96). Responses showed that 44 participants (46%) taught instrumental music, 14 participants (14%) taught choral music, and 38 participants (44%) taught general music.

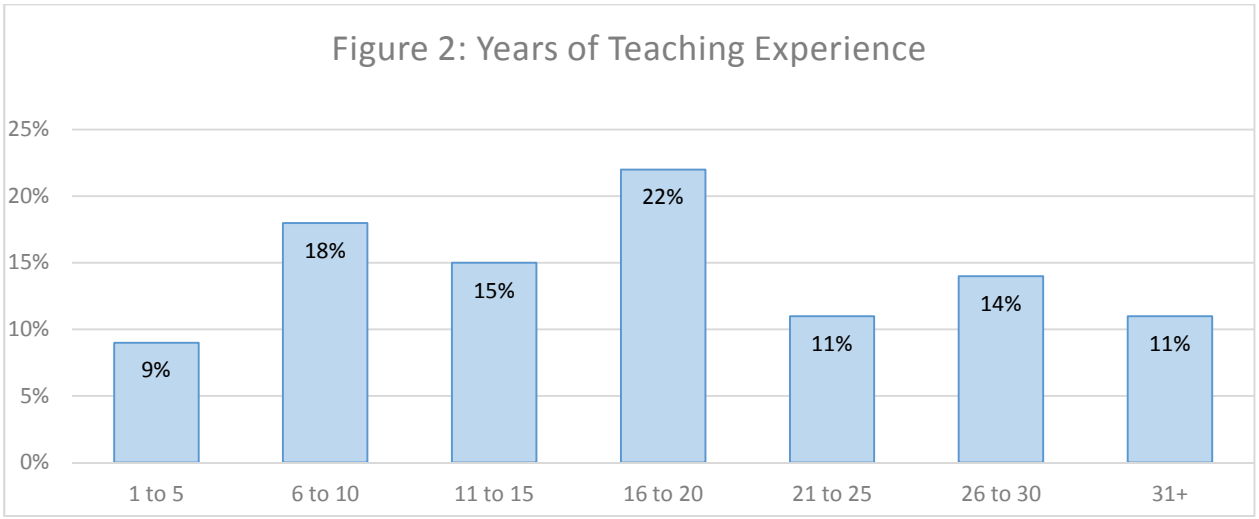
All age levels of students, elementary through high school, were represented. Initial results indicated that 40 % of participants taught high school, 46% taught middle school, and 45% taught elementary school. This was a result of participants being able to select multiple age levels which they taught. Since many music teachers taught a variety of age groups further analysis was necessary. When divided into further categories, the responses indicated that 18% taught high school only, 21% taught middle school only, 37% taught elementary school only, 15% taught both high school and middle school, 3% taught both middle school and elementary school, and 6% taught all three levels age groups. (See Figure 1).



Experience

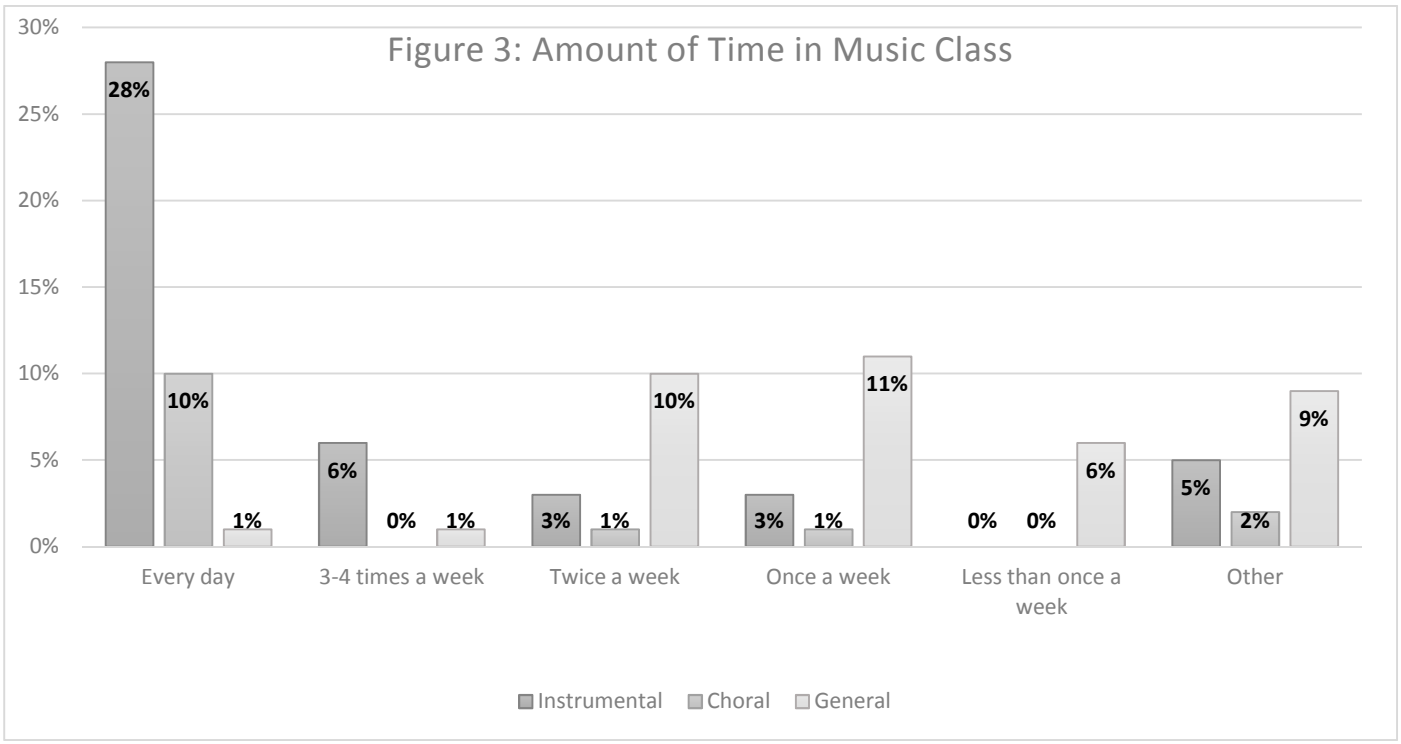
Participants could choose one of three categories for describing the highest level of education obtained. The majority of the participants (73%) had earned a master's degree. Twenty-five percent (25%) of the participants listed a Bachelor's degree as their highest earned degree. Only 2% of the participants held a doctorate degree.

Years of experience teaching ranged from 1 to 44 years and teachers in all stages of their career were represented. The mean for years of experience was 18.26 years. The median was 17 years. For the purpose of this study, teachers were grouped into three broad categories. Beginning teachers (those with 10 years of experience or less) represented 27% of responses. Teachers in mid-career (those with 11 to 25 years of experience) represented 48% of the responses. Teachers nearing the end of their careers (those with 26 or more years of experience) represented 25% of the responses. The years of experience for each participant had a vast span, but each category was well represented. (See Figure 2).



Teaching Situations

There was a wide discrepancy between instrumental/choral and general music in terms of how often the students received instruction. The majority of instrumental and choral teachers reported having their students in class every day while the majority of the general music teachers listed seeing their students once or twice a week. (See Figure 3).



Grades and Report Cards

When asked how grades were assigned for the student report card, participants were able to select multiple criteria. The majority (86%) responded that grades were based on demonstration of skills or concepts, while almost as many (79%) indicated that grades were based on participation. Less common were responses which indicated that no grades were given (4%) or that other types of criteria for grades were used (4%).

In regards to Student Learning Objectives, only 31% of participants indicated that the assessments used for the SLO were linked to the grades which appeared on a student's report card. This would indicate that while a majority of music educators give grades on the student's report card, those grades do not reflect the assessments which were used to determine growth on the SLO.

Professional Organizations

When describing participation in professional associations, an overwhelming majority (93%) of participants listed that they were members of at least one professional organization. Only 7% of responses indicated no affiliation with a professional associations. Of those who listed membership in professional organizations (n=86), a majority (86%) listed membership in the Ohio Music Educators Association. A local union or the Ohio Education Association was listed by 62% of the participants. The National Education Association was listed by 37% of the respondents. The American School Band Directors Association was listed by 7% of participants. The American Choral Directors Association and Ohio Choral Directors Association was listed by 6% of the participants. Other organizations listed included American Orff Schulwerk Association (AOSA), International Society of Music Education (ISME), Dalcroze Society of America (DSA), Organization of American Kodaly Educators (OAKE), American School String Teachers Association (ASTA), Percussive Arts Society (PAS), Jazz Education Connection of Ohio (JECO), Delta Kappa Gamma, and Board Certified Music Therapist, but each of these organizations were represented by 3% or less of respondents.

OTES Participation

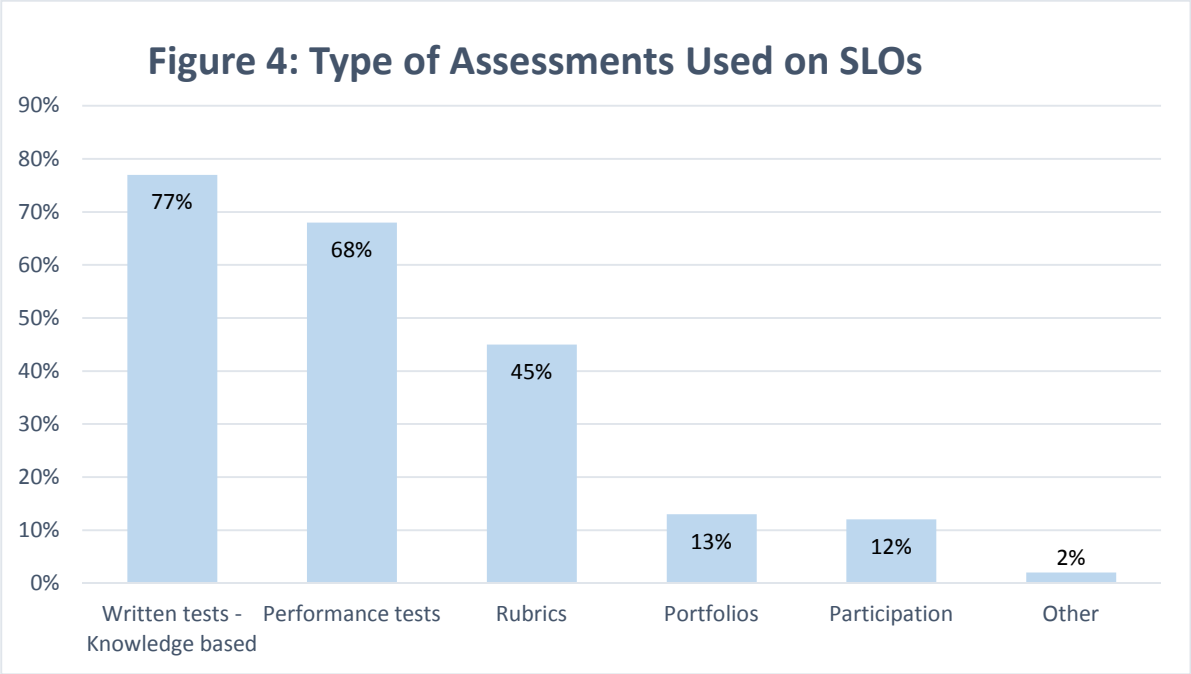
The survey was targeted to teachers whose school districts were implementing OTES or who were piloting the model. Only 84 (n = 84) participants were directly affected by OTES. The other 12 were not currently involved OTES and were not writing or implementing SLOs in the 2013-2014 academic year. This indicated that 88% of the participants were implementing SLOs under the OTES model.

Of the teachers who were implementing or piloting OTES, 70% indicated that between 41%-50% of their teacher evaluation was be based on the growth shown by students on the SLO. A smaller amount of participants (26%) indicated that less than half of their total evaluation would be linked to student growth measures. Only 4% of respondents indicated that shared attribution would account for their student growth measure portion of the evaluation. Shared attribution specifies that student scores from areas other than music, such as reading or math, would be used for all the teachers in the building regardless of specific subject taught.

When describing the process of creating and implementing SLOs, the majority (81%) of the participants indicated that they were involved in writing the assessments which were used for

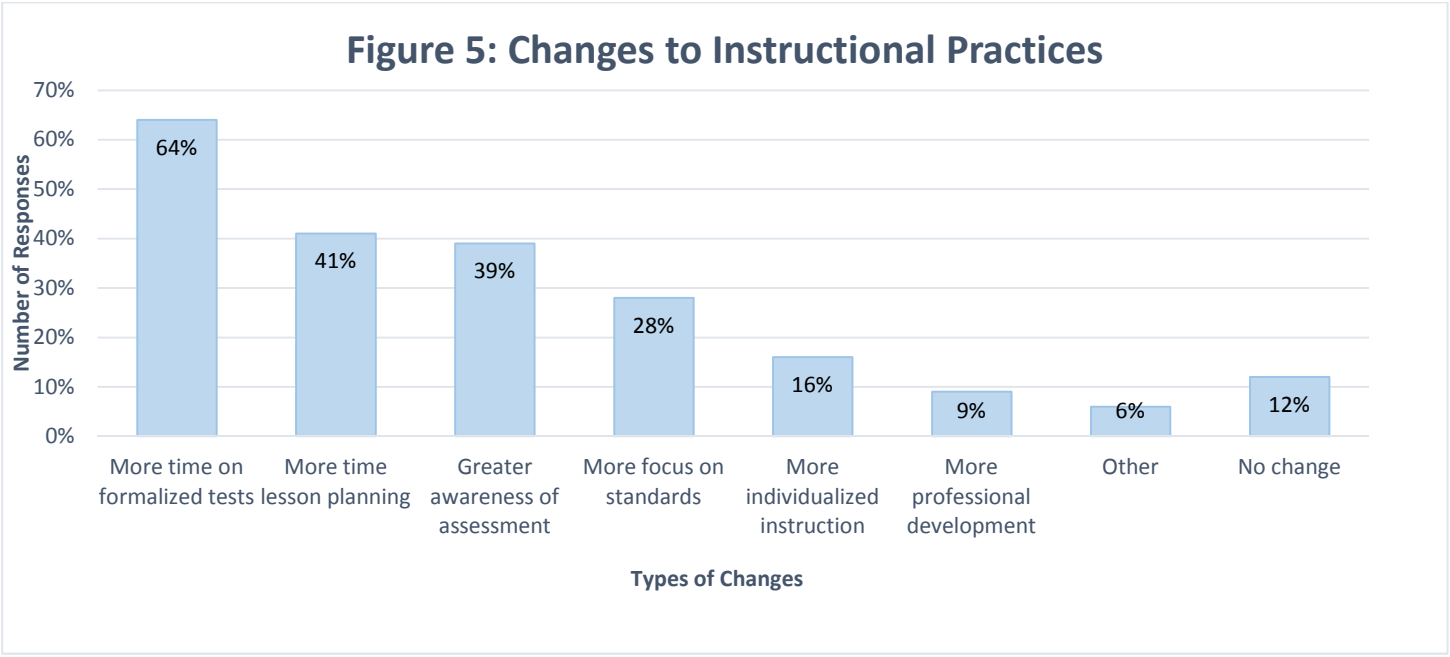
their students. Over half of the participants (55%) indicated that assessments used on the SLOs were written by an individual teacher. The other participants (43%) indicated that the music assessment was written by a district team or a group of music teachers. Only 2% indicated that the assessments used in the SLO came from a vendor (such as a text book company).

In describing the types of assessments which were used for the SLOs, participants were able to choose multiple answers to best describe their situation. The most common types listed were knowledge based (77%), performance based (68%), and use of rubrics (45%). (See Figure 4).



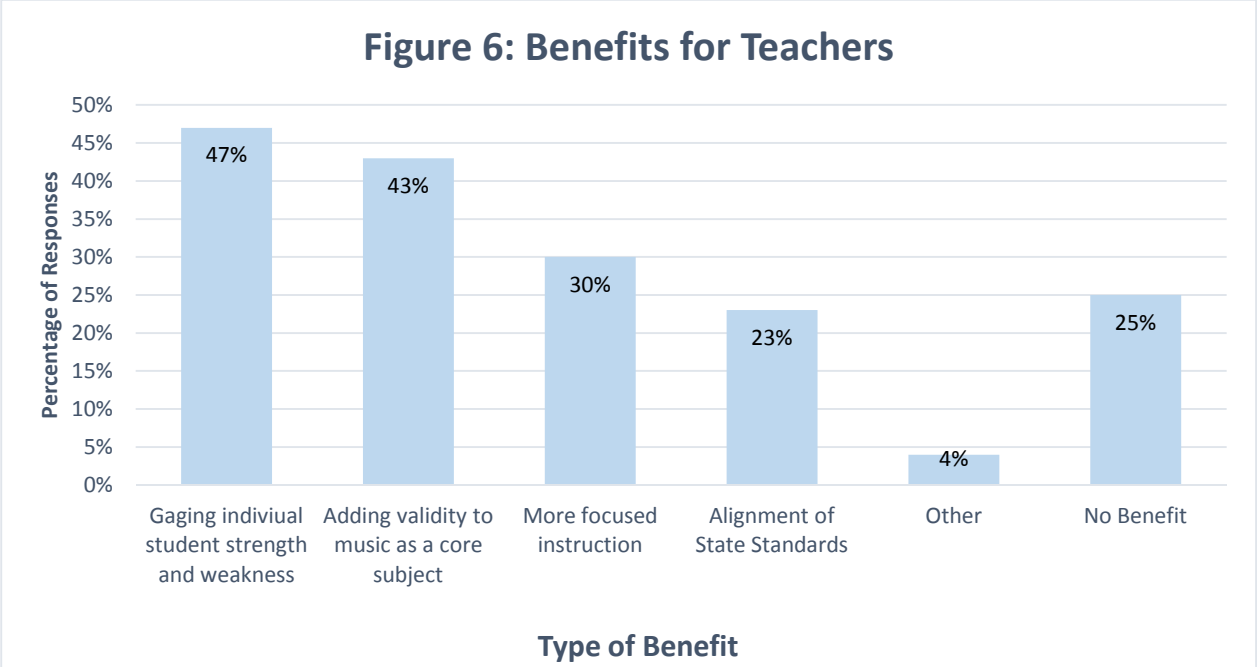
Changes to Instructional Practices

Participants were given a list of possible ways that the implementation of SLOs had changed their teaching methods. Multiple answers could be selected. More time spent giving formalized tests (64%), more time spent lesson planning (41%), increased awareness of assessment techniques (39%), and more focus on content standards (28%) were the most commonly selected areas. Other factors listed were the ability to give more individualized attention to students (16%) and more opportunities for professional development (9%). There were 12% of participants who indicated that the implementation of SLOs had no change on their teaching methods. (See Figure 5).

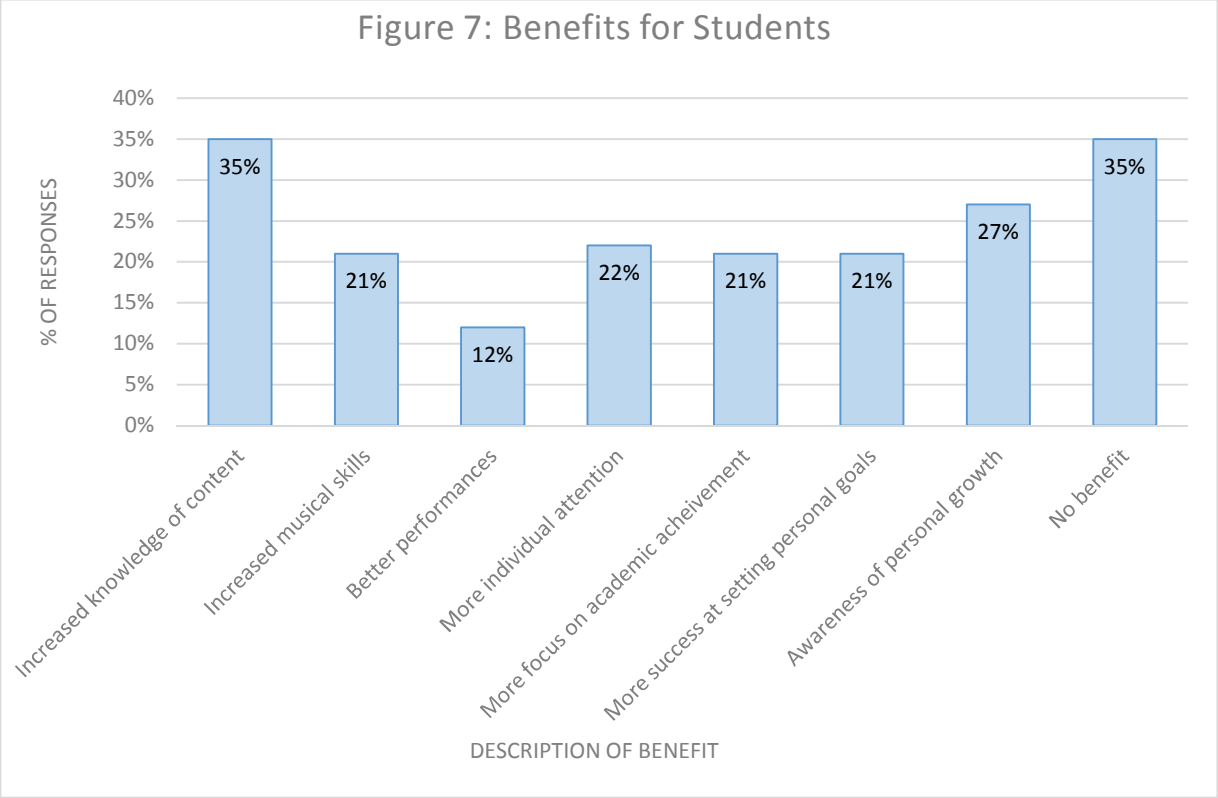


Benefits

Participants were asked to describe the benefits for themselves as teachers. Responses indicated that the ability to better gauge strengths and weaknesses of students (47%) as well as the concept that testing gives validity to music as core subject (43%) were the most beneficial elements of the SLO process. Other factors which were described as beneficial were more focused instruction and alignment of state standards to the curriculum. However, one quarter (25%) of the participants saw no benefit in the SLO process for teachers. (See Figure 6).

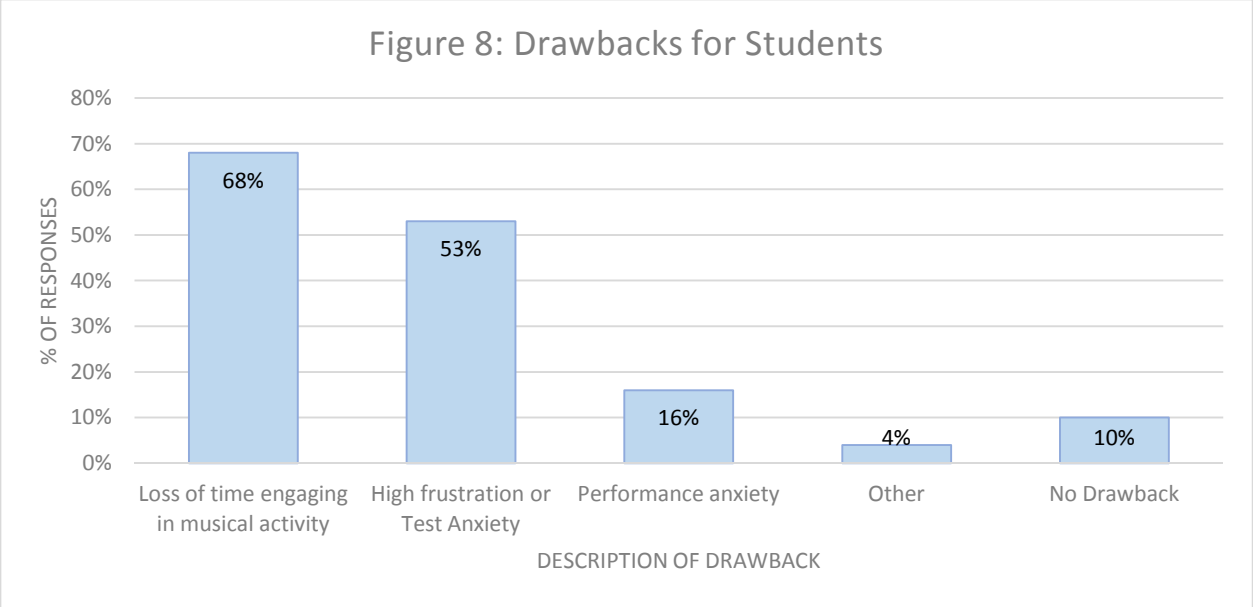


When describing benefits for students, increased knowledge of content represented 35% of the responses and the students having more awareness of personal growth represented 27% of responses. Factors that were similarly weighted included increased musical skills (21%), more individualized attention from the music teacher (22%), more focus on personal academic achievement (21%), and more success at setting personal goals for growth (21%). Better performances were listed as a benefit for 12% of the respondents. Strikingly, 35% of participants described the implementation of SLOs and assessment strategies as having no benefit. (See Figure 7).

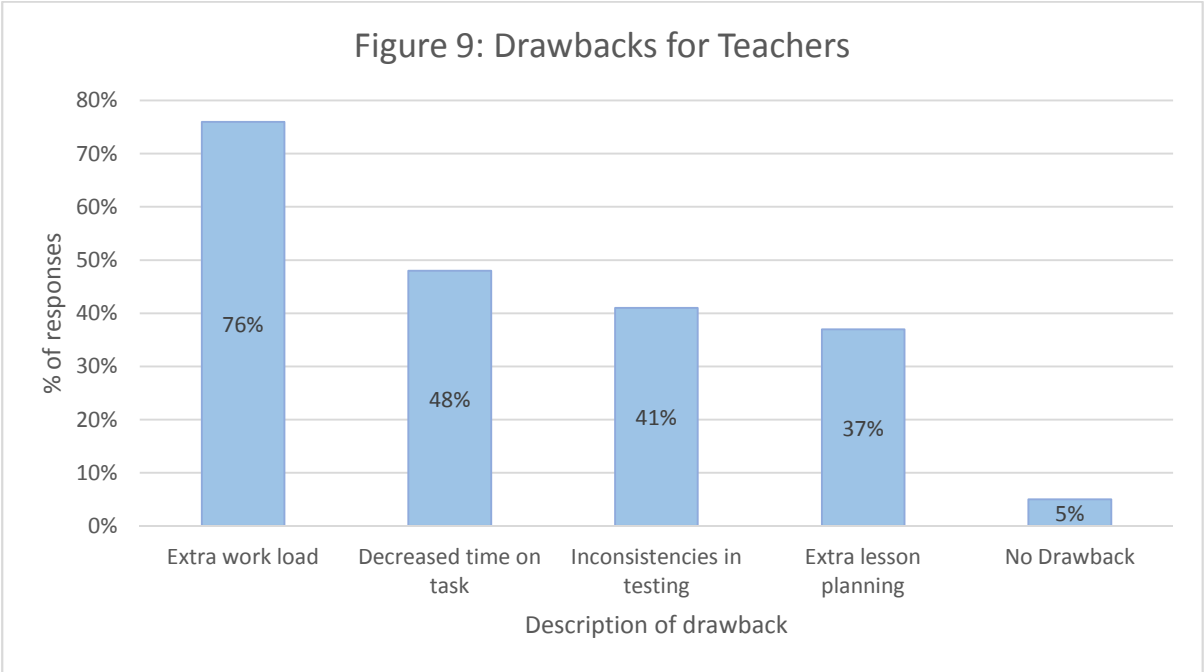


Drawbacks

The most frequently cited drawback for students, loss of time on task engaging in musical activities, was reported by 68% of the participants. Higher frustration or test anxiety was also listed as a drawback for students by 53% of respondents. Performance anxiety was listed by 15% of respondents. Only 10% of participants indicated that the implementation of SLOs had no drawbacks for students. (See Figure 8).



A large majority of responses (76%) indicated that a drawback for teachers was the extra work load with administering and grading tests. Nearly half of the participants (48%) also listed decreased time on task with students as a drawback. Inconsistency in the test such as the tests not being reliable or valid measure of the student's abilities were listed by 41% of the participants. Extra lesson planning was listed by 37% of participants as another drawback of the SLO implementation. Only 5% of the participants indicated that there were no drawbacks as a result of the implementation of SLOs. (See Figure 9).



Professional Development

Issues relating to assessment were the most frequently listed when describing how OTES has affected professional development. An increased awareness of assessment was listed by 34% of participants, learning about assessment design, administration, types of tests and scoring was cited by 23% of participants, and using higher quality assessments was reported by 13% of the participants. Over one quarter (26%) of the participants indicated that OTES had no change on their professional development. This may in part have been because 93% of participants were members of a professional organization and the two most frequently listed were the Ohio Music Education Association and the Ohio Education Association/local unions. Both organizations actively provided professional development to members prior to the implementation of OTES and continued to offer professional development opportunities throughout the first year.

Concerns

Information about the concerns faced by teachers implementing SLOs was collected in two formats. Because the survey was a selected response format, the participants were able to select choices that best fit their situation. Frequently selected answers were inadequate time with students (62%), impact on teacher evaluation (53%), and relevance (52%). Other concerns were adequate testing materials (37%) and adequate training for assessment procedures (35%). Only 7% of the participants indicated no concern about the implementation of SLOs.

The use of selected response questions gave broad categories, but in order to gain a more detailed representation of the participants' concerns, text boxes were provided throughout the survey. Some concerns listed about specific topics were addressed in the survey in the boxes embedded in each question. At the end of the survey, an open-ended response question was provided for participants to describe concerns that were not addressed on the survey. More than half of the participants (52%) provided comments. Several themes emerged. The comments were coded into categories of assessment, the implementation of OTES, and issues specific to music teachers and their teaching situations.

Comments about Assessment

When commenting on the value of assessment, positive comments about the benefits of using assessment in the music were common, but concerns were raised about the types of assessment, its validity and the inconsistencies of implementation. Responses indicated that the arts are prime examples of formative and summative assessment. Many participants commented that the data collected from the assessments had the benefit of validating their curriculum to administrators and parents.

Many participants felt that by using assessment measures associated with the SLO process, they were able to better gauge students' strengths and weaknesses and provide lessons to address individual students and provide differentiation. There were also comments indicating that the students benefit from seeing their own growth.

In terms of impact on instructional practices such as lesson planning and assessment administration, many participants had positive comments. Comments indicated that knowledge and expertise with the use of rubrics as an assessment and organizational tool had increased. Increased teacher control and input in the writing of assessments were perceived as beneficial.

Participants appreciated that they could create assessments that were aligned with their curriculum and useful for their students.

Lesson plans that were more focused on curricular goals and standards was a common theme. Comments about assessment called attention to areas of improvement needed in instruction. For example, one participant noticed that when tested on vocabulary terms, the students showed a gap in understanding between the language used in the classroom and what students could articulate on a test. She believed that seeing this gap would make the entire music staff more aware that they must explain terms and phrases that the students are asked to produce (crescendo, decrescendo, fermata, staccato, etc.). She felt that addressing this issue would raise the performance level of the entire program.

While there were many positive comments that addressed the benefits of assessment, these comments seemed reticent when student assessment was used for the purpose of teacher evaluation. One participant's comment summarized the feeling by saying, "Results can be (but are not always) an accurate indicator of teacher performance/ability."

Of the reservations that participants had, the type and method of assessment were called into question quite frequently. Common concerns alluding to ethical issues such as teaching to the test, testing being too subjective, and teachers 'crunching numbers' on pre- and post-tests to show student growth were evident.

Teaching to the test was a theme that was repeated many times. Several participants felt that SLOs were creating too much of an emphasis on too narrow of a curricular focus. Assessment that measures performance aspects of music classes were a concern in that the criteria used could be subjective. If the teacher being evaluated is the same teacher administering the assessment, pressure to score low on pre-tests and high on post-tests exists. Concerns were also raised as to the validity of the pre-test and post-test model. One participant raised the question, "Why do we need to test them on information that we know that they don't know?"

Inadequate training in writing and administering assessment was a concern of many participants. Comments reflected that some participants felt that music teachers were not always given proper training and adequate materials to give authentic assessments. As one participant stated, "Assessments are only as good as the teacher who writes them."

Many participants commented that assessment had become cumbersome when trying to individually assess students in large group situations. One participant commented that it took several class periods to hear every student individually which resulted in a huge loss of instructional time. Some commented that video or audio taping would be appropriate, but did not have the equipment or the facility to record each student, and hesitated to use this method because of the large time commitment in listening and assessing each one.

Comments about the OTES Model

This survey was intentionally designed to elicit responses about the effects of the OTES model on music teachers. When reviewing the comments made by participants, this author feels that two factors must be kept in mind. The first being that OTES is a radical change from past evaluation models. The second is that this is the first year of implementation. The comments reflected a wide range of thoughts and emotions concerning the model and its implementation.

Many participants commented on the benefit or the potential benefit of the model. Respondents often commented on the model being good in theory, but not in practice. Positive

comments were often given with qualifiers, such as “OTES is a good thing and well intentioned, but the system is flawed” or “this might improve in subsequent years.”

The idea that teachers should be held accountable was presented in several comments, but usually followed by comments about the inadequacy of this system as a measurement tool for that purpose. Several felt that if teachers are doing what they are “supposed to do” that nothing should change with the implementation of the new model. Others indicated that all teachers should be doing this (assessing and measuring growth). One participant commented that after the initial shock, the inconvenience of the new system was minimal.

Some participants felt that a potential benefit to the OTES model is that it could put the arts in the spotlight. Requiring students to show growth in the arts could raise awareness of what happens in music class. Some comments indicated that OTES helped to focus on the academic side of music teaching, provided scaffold for teachers, and could be useful for differentiation.

The drawbacks and frustrations of the OTES system were also evident in the comments. Major concerns included the amount of time, paperwork, “busy” work and stress on teachers and students.

Lack of consistency in many areas was voiced as a concern in a variety of ways and in a majority of the comments. Areas where participants commented on inconsistency included in assessments used from school to school, implementation procedures from district to district, amount of time spent with students (class schedules) and administrative support.

Frustrations were voiced by many participants in the implementation of the OTES procedures. Many felt that the procedures were not clearly outlined, were changed many times during the process, were not clearly articulated, and were not well thought out. Some participants alluded to the emphasis in this model as being the “product, not the process.” This was frustrating for many participants who believe there is a value in the process of learning music.

There was apathy voiced by a few participants who felt that the system will change or will be replaced. One comment referred to the system as “just another fad.”

Comments and Concerns Specific to Music Teachers

As all participants in the survey were music teachers, concerns surfaced that were specific to the nature of music instruction and aspects unique to music programs. Lack of instructional time was apparent in a large portion of the comments. Participants on this survey who taught at the elementary level saw students once or twice a week (some even less). For these teachers, instructional time was limited and compounded by a high number of school cancellations (calamity days) due to weather.

Comments indicated that administering the assessments consumed a large portion of their scare time with students. High school and middle school music teachers tended to have more instructional time with students, but also had a more demanding schedule of performances which require large group rehearsals. A sense of resentment was implied when making comments such as “this takes away from the real teaching” and “this interrupts instructional time.” One participant simply commented that “I don’t see students enough to teach more than what is on the test.”

Comments also showed that the OTES model was time consuming for teachers and students. Concerns were voiced such as: “assessing large groups takes many days to hear individually; I don’t have time to train students in paper pencil tests; (this model) takes away

planning and prep time; and, concentrating on only a few concepts is too repetitive and becomes monotonous."

The final theme that emerged from the comments was in assessing learners with special needs. Many participants commented that they have large groups and had to make accommodations often without assistance (either in classroom instruction or in testing). This left many participants feeling that the system was unfair not only to teachers who have to account for academic growth with all learners, but perhaps, more importantly, to students with special needs. Several comments were made that assistance should be given to accommodate learners with special needs in music whether in the form of additional assistance in the classroom or in the type of instruction (small groups, more opportunity for one on one instruction, or better instructional materials).

Conclusions

Summary of Results

The results of this survey indicated that the OTES model and implementation of SLOs affected the instructional practices of music teachers in various ways. The responses indicated that many teachers are reflecting on their instructional practices and in particular their methods of assessment. While many participants saw the benefits of the OTES model, the positive aspects were tainted with drawbacks of the system.

The new evaluation model presented many challenges, but embedded in these challenges were opportunities for growth individually and collectively. One participant commented that while there were lots of drawbacks to the new model, "the drawbacks are not always bad." This attitude indicated a willingness to be self-reflective and critical of instructional practices and assessment.

The responses to the questions and the comments indicated that for the music teachers involved in this survey, a dynamic and passionate conversation is happening about music instruction and assessment.

Whether or not OTES is an accurate indication of music teacher effectiveness was an issue of concern, but was not the sole basis of the comments. Frustration about inconsistencies in terms of amount of time with students and structure of programs indicated a genuine desire on the part of the participants to see the students succeed in music and to have fair and equal access to quality music programs. Some comments included statements such as, "I cannot believe how unfair this is for the students", and "the students lose in this scenario." These teachers were placing the effects the OTES model has on students over the effects that it has on themselves.

Of the 110 people who were willing to participate in this study, 87% were teachers in a K-12 setting. Of those participants, 88% were directly affected by the implementation of OTES on their evaluations. This could indicate some bias in the responses. The OTES model is a radical shift and as evidenced in the comments, represents a change in the focus, content, instructional practices, and assessment techniques for those involved.

Recommendations

Because OTES was in its first year and was not being implemented by every school district, another study in 1-2 years when all districts are in compliance with OTES may yield

different results for two reasons. First, more teachers will be involved in the process. Second, the Ohio Department of Education and local school districts will have data to use as a guide for further implementation.

Results from this study indicated that another study to determine what supports are needed by teachers would be beneficial. A study that could describe what practices worked well in conjunction with the new OTES model might be beneficial to a broad audience. Of particular interest would be a study of SLO models used in different districts to determine what skills and concepts are being assessed as well as what assessments were effective. In other words, which assessments were authentically gauging student skills and knowledge and could be generalized to a wider audience.

The responses to this survey revealed that many music teachers are dedicated to giving high quality instruction and willing to examine their own practices in order to achieve success for their students. As the first year of implementation neared an end, this study indicated that the major effects of OTES and student assessment on instructional practices of music teachers were the conversations that it had sparked among colleagues and the need for self-evaluation on the part of each music educator. These two factors may help to shape the way music is taught and assessed in music classrooms across Ohio.

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Legal References

Ohio Revised Code 3319.111 Amended by the 129th General Assembly. File No. 184, HB 555, §1 (2013).

Ohio Revised Code 3319.112 Amended by 130th General Assembly. File No. 25, HB 59, §101.01, (2013).

Legislative Reference

The State of Ohio. 129th General Assembly. Amended Substitute HB 153 (September 29, 2011).

The State of Ohio. 129th General Assembly. Amended Substitute HB 555 (March 22, 2013).

The State of Ohio. 130th General Assembly. Amended Substitute HB 59 (September 29, 2013).

The State of Ohio. 130th General Assembly. Amended Substitute SB 316 (January 1, 2014).

Appendix A: OTES and SLO Survey

Consent Form

Before taking part in this study, please read the consent form below and click on the "I Agree" button at the bottom of the page if you understand the statements and freely consent to participate in the study. This study involves an on-line survey designed to understand how the student assessment portion of the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System is affecting classroom practices for music teachers. The study is being conducted by Rachael Fleischaker in consultation with Dr. Patricia Grutzmacher of Kent State University and it has been approved by the Kent State University Institutional Review Board. No deception is involved, and the study involves no more than minimal risk to participants. Participation in the survey typically takes 10 minutes and is strictly anonymous. All responses are treated as confidential, and in no case will responses from individual participants be identified. Participation is voluntary. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

If you are 18 years of age or older, understand the statements above, and freely consent to participate in the study, click on the "I Agree" button to begin the experiment.

- ❍ I Agree
- ❍ I Do Not Agree

If I Agree Is Selected, Then Skip To Are you currently teaching music for ...If I Do Not Agree Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

1 Are you currently teaching music for a school district (public or private) in the state of Ohio?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

If Yes Is Selected, Then Skip To What do you teach? If No Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey

2 What do you teach? (Select the most representative category)
- ❍ Instrumental
- ❍ Choral
- ❍ General

3 What ages are your students? (Select the most representative group)
- ❑ High School (grades 9-12)
- ❑ Middle School (grades 6-8)
- ❑ Elementary (grades PreK - 5)

4 Including the current school year, how many years of experience do you have teaching?

5 What is your highest level of education?
- ❍ Bachelor's degree
- ❍ Master's degree
- ❍ Doctoral Degree

6 How often do you see your students?
- ❍ Less than once a week
- ❍ Once a week
- ❍ Twice a week
- ❍ Three to four times a week
- ❍ Every day
- ❍ Other, please explain _____

7 Are you a member of any professional organizations such as OMEA, a local professional association (union), NEA? If so, please explain.
- ❍ No, I do not belong to any professional organizations.
- ❍ Yes, I belong to the following: _____

8 What is the criteria that is used for grading students for the report card? (Select all that apply)
- ❑ Grades based on demonstration of skills or concepts
- ❑ Grades based on participation
- ❑ No grades are given for music
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

9 Has your school district implemented the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) this school year?
- ❍ Yes and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs) will be added to my teacher evaluation.
- ❍ No, but my district is piloting Student Learning Objectives.
- ❍ No, I am currently not required to give Student Learning Objectives for my teacher evaluation.

If No, but my district is piloting... Is Selected, Then Skip To Who writes the assessments that you...If No, I am currently not... Is Selected, Then Skip To End of Survey. If Yes and Student Learning Ob... Is Selected, Then Skip To How much of your evaluation will the ...

10 How much of your evaluation will the SLOs represent?
- ❍ 41-50%
- ❍ 21-40%
- ❍ 1- 20%
- ❍ My school district will use shared attribution so that my evaluation will be tied to the overall school performance on standardized tests in math and reading.

11 Who writes the assessments that you use for your SLOs?
- ❍ Individual teacher
- ❍ District team
- ❍ Vendors (i.e. from a textbook series or curriculum)
- ❍ Other, please explain _____

12 Are you active in the development and writing of SLOs for your district?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

13 What type of assessments do you incorporate into your SLOs? (Select all that apply)
- ❑ Written tests that gauge content knowledge (terms, vocabulary, notation, history)
- ❑ Performance tests that gauge skill level (expression, accuracy, technical aspects)
- ❑ Portfolio-based assessments that track student progress over an extended period
- ❑ Use of rubrics
- ❑ Participation
- ❑ Other, please explain: _____

14 Is the progress made on the Student Learning Objectives linked to the grades given on the report card?
- ❍ Yes
- ❍ No

15 What changes in your teaching methods are a result of implementing SLOs and the assessment measures? (Select all that apply)
- ❑ More time spent lesson planning
- ❑ More time spent giving formalized tests
- ❑ Ability to give more individualized instruction or differentiate
- ❑ More focus on content standards and their application in my teaching
- ❑ More opportunities for professional development
- ❑ Increased awareness of assessment techniques
- ❑ No changes to my methods
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

16 Do you have concerns about implementing SLOs and the required assessment piece? How would you describe those concerns? (Select all that apply)
- ❑ Inadequate time with students/schedule
- ❑ Impact on teacher evaluation
- ❑ Relevance (takes away from other program goals such as performances)
- ❑ Adequate materials for testing
- ❑ Adequate training for assessment procedures
- ❑ No concerns about implementation
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

17 What benefits do you believe your students experience as a result of the implementation of SLOs and assessment strategies? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Increased knowledge of content
- ❑ Increased musical skills
- ❑ Better performances
- ❑ More individual attention
- ❑ More focus on academic achievement
- ❑ More success at setting personal goals for growth
- ❑ Awareness of personal growth
- ❑ No benefit
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

18 What drawbacks do you believe your students experience as a result of the implementation of SLOs and assessment strategies? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Loss of time on task engaging in musical activities
- ❑ Higher frustration or test anxiety
- ❑ Performance anxiety
- ❑ No drawbacks
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

19 What benefits do you believe that you as a teacher experience as a result of the implementation of SLOs and assessment strategies? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ More focused instruction
- ❑ Alignment of lessons to state or national standards
- ❑ Ability to better gage the strength and weaknesses of individual students
- ❑ Testing gives validity to music as a core subject
- ❑ No benefits
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

20 What drawbacks do you believe you as a teacher experience as a result of the implementation of SLOs and assessment strategies? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ Decreased time on task with students
- ❑ Extra work load with administering and grading tests
- ❑ Extra lesson planning
- ❑ Inconsistencies in the test (not a reliable or valid measure)
- ❑ No drawbacks
- ❑ Other, please explain _____

21 How has the OTES process affected your professional development? (Select all that apply)

- ❑ I am learning about assessment design, administration, and types of tests and scoring.
- ❑ I am using higher quality assessments.
- ❑ I have an increased awareness of assessment.
- ❑ I am more focused on (fill in your response) _____
- ❑ I have grown in (fill in your response) _____
- ❑ OTES has not affected my professional development.

22 Comments about the implementation of student assessments, SLOs, the OTES model, or other facets of this process that were not addressed in this survey:

Appendix B: Comments from Survey
(Comments are unedited)

15_10_TEXT = Changes in teaching method:

more time doing busywork data analysis and trying to somehow turn progress into meaningless numbers just more paperwork in explaining what I do to administrators
Less time for all the other areas that we are not testing.
less time to actually teach, too much time testing more time spent on an area of assessment less time performing.

16_7_TEXT = concerns about implementing SLOs and the required assessment piece

inclement weather made lesson implementation difficult, possibly effecting post test results

The lessons I am observed on are forced and don't work well my for my students.
Using 3 to 4 days of class time to assess students individually and get this done between concerts, solo and ensemble, and OAAs.

it's hard to base so much of our evaluation on a one time worksheet for the students.
They could have just been having a bad day, but that one time is used as a reflection on us.

We have no time to help or work with the students that we are not understanding or unabel to perform.
They are the same students that even with out the SLO we knew that, but not only do we not have time in are schedules t pull them aside and help them but we are not alowed to take them out of the classroom.
When they have lunch or play time I have classes.

Paperwork
The fact that all schools are doing something different across the state
Lack of administrator support and understanding of the discipline
Not really sure if we are following the proper forms...

21_5_TEXT = I have Grown in

educational research that supports Kodaly

differentiated instruction
Lesson planning
My knowledge and expertise with the use of rubrics as an assessment and organizational tool
slowing down and making sure all students are on task

21_4_TEXT = I am more focused in

"teaching to the test"
student growth
jumping through hoops
individual needs of students
individuals' growth
Teaching the standards
teaching concepts on test and looking for student comprehension.
GATHERING DATA
individual students showing growth
differentiation
writing the target for the day

Comments about the implementation of student assessments, SLOs, the / OTES model, or other facets of this process that were not addressed / in this survey:

It was wonderful to see the strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of the year and see them grow and reach goals this spring! It was actually rewarding for the students to realize that they grew and learned as well.
Assessing students is a good thing. I teach in a district where we have been assessing in music all along. However, OTES seems to have rolled out this model before it was ready – we're "building the plane as we fly it."

Too much focus on data. Data is not an end. There are many variables in teaching that cannot be expressed in data. I am not a stock broker or a shareholder trying to show returns every quarter.
I am more like a farmer, helping students to grow. SLOs are like forcing a farmer to make their plants grow x number of inches by a certain date.
Sometimes growth happens at the end of the season, sometimes there are droughts. SLO progress can only lead to teachers en masses fudging numbers to meet 'data targets". Read "Reign of Error" by Diane Ravitch.

Problem with testing individually due to no one else watching student while testing, therefore I test in small groups.
#21 will not allow more than 1 response...I am more focused on short assessments given more often to check progress. I have grown in my to smoothly administer the assessments and to create rubrics.
Providing accommodations to students with IEPs/504s is proving to be more difficult than originally thought. And just the typical negatives of high stakes testing - students lose points by not following directions or skipping entire sections of the assessment through either carelessness or anxiety.

I feel the SLO's and assessments are a waste of time. We only see the students 40 minutes a

week (if we are lucky) It takes so much time away from real teaching. We are teaching to the test.
Not allowing for individual , creative abilities and
The hardest part for me has been the amount of class time it takes to assess each student. I have large numbers of students in a single class period and it takes 3-4 days to hear each student indivdually.

The process of SLOs is understandable, making sure everyone is learning as they should. However, it is not the same for everyone, students from various levels are all shoved in one class most times, and now, my job is half based on the learning retention of students, one day out of an entire year's worth of instruction.
Tell Dan, Brett says hi!

It seems that SLOS and OTES are being implemented before the state has finalized the procedures leading to unnecessary changes.

A pencil and paper test does not show me the true musician. Videos, portfolios, would be more effective.
Interval of instruction makes it virtually impossible to train students for a pencil and paper test.
Although the idea of standardized tests in all subject areas is a noble one, the reality of its implementation is challenging to those of us who teach "specials." Like many other lofty ideas from the ODE and other such places, I feel like these will be either changing or non-existent in another year or two, then we'll do something new/different.

I do appreciate that the specials teachers are able to make our SLOs, so we used useful objectives we were already teaching anway.
But it is a lot of pressure for one concept to be half of our evaluation.
I understand the reasoning behind it, but there has to be a better way of evaluating us.
As with so much of NCLB, it is focused on producing a product when we are supposed to be teaching a process.
We should already be doing all of this. Maybe under a different label.

If a general music teacher has a curriculum plan such as Kodaly or Orff, SLOs and OTES are easy to implement and the pre-assessment questions are answered easily. Such questions how does this lesson fit into prior and future knowledge are very easy to answer because the plan is already in place.

I can not begin to say how wrong I think the SLOs are. I think it is the kids that are really lossing out.
I can not even begin to explain.
I do not think it is a fare evaluation for all teacher but that doesn't realy bother me. It's more that the kids are way to stressed and it is taking away from the little teaching time that we have.
I think that it can be a good system but I also feel that you can do well and not be an affective teacher if you learn to play the game.
If you know the answers the state or administration are looking for you can do well on the

evaluations and not really be impacting the students in an affective manor.

I am retireing..and none too soon!

The quality of the OTES assessment is only as good as the teacher creating the SLOs. It is not practically applicable in the classroom.
I think this is another aducation fad that will disappear over time.

It would be nice if there were a consistent assessment if this is to continue. However, I do not think it fair that we are essentially being tested and not the students. There are no consistencies to how SLOs are being taken into account in the state. Also, the rubric overall does not demonstrate teachers based on their content well enough. We are in a position to teach several hundred students in a smaller capacity of time, not focus on 25-50 daily. The system is greatly flawed.

After the initial shock of implementation, the inconvenience I anticipated has been minimal. The SLOs have not changed my high school evaluation methods, but I've found that I'm much more methodical with my 5th grade beginners.

If you are doing what you are supposed to be doing, nothing much should change!

Much of what's required for OTES are things that I have been doing for years. The only difference is that now we have the addition of having to explain +it in detail and in writing to administrators (often unsupportive of music education). This requires extra time and extra paperwork.
Then it gets to go to a committee of people largely unfamiliar with musical arts who get to sit and judge your assessments. Unfortunately since much of what we do in the classroom is active learning, and not pushing a pencil around paper like a math or reading class, things are called into question in an effort to make a dynamic, performance based class more "educationally friendly".
This unfortunately is the result of politicians designing school policy, and will ultimately lead to the downfall of music in EVERY public or private educational setting.

They are a good thing for all classes and they are meant for a good purpose, but the SLOs and assessments in other classes has led to more students being pulled out of band for intervention in other classes.
I don't think I even see and of my middle school ensembles as full ensembles for rehearsals any more.
i always have at least on band member pulled out every day. It's the impact on the other classes that effects me the most, I don't see my band kids consistently anymore because of their intervention for other classes.

I like the data that this has provided for me to track student growth, however the time that it has taken has been a major burden.

If we as teachers presented our assessment of the students as the ohio dept of education has presented us with OTES and slos we would not be in the profession for very long.
They did not have the end in sight when they designed these elements, and seem to go through a continuos Modification that leaves us frustrated and confused.

When we as teachers plan for assessments of student, we must first know what outcomes we are looking for and then design engaging lessons to present to the students so that they are able to learn the content.
Then, we assess what they know. The state didn't do that with us. In addition, I don't understand the reasoning behind giving a students a test at the beginning of the year to confirm that they don't know this stuff, only to test them on the same material in March to see that they have learned.

Generally I feel that to properly assess all performance and knowledge-based concepts for a high school course is quite cumbersome, and to create a valid assessment tool requires a level of training that my District has not provided me with (I would love to see how other fine arts or other core classes are carrying out their own assessments). Creating a portfolio to demonstrate student growth was already a practice that I had implemented, so I do not feel that this is much of a cumberance on my time. Generally I do feel that teachers should be held accountable for individual student growth using some measurable tool, but I am not sure that the current system is that tool.

I believe that OTES is doing this year is stressing out the teachers, which affects our students.
I believe good teachers have always done what OTES is asking us to do, but taking so much of our time.
It is frustrating to be teaching to the test. Now we know how the classroom teachers feel!

I see my elementary students once a week - just under 24 hours a year! Losing time to testing is discouraging and makes me resent the tests. I think classroom teachers wouldn't like to give a test and then 24 hours of school time later give another test.

I just feel that there will not be enough time. And, when teaching a large volume of students, it is very difficult to be consistent.

I understand that we need to prove (through data) that we are covering expected material in outclasses and that students are proficient in that material. One SLO and one test is not going to prove this.
You can't take the human out of the equation. If schools want assurance that teachers are thoroughly covering content and adequately assessing student mastery, then we need multiple classroom teaching evaluations administered by principals.
The state has given us this mandate in pieces, and continues to change the pieces after they are given.
The state expected us to implement this process before it had even completed writing down what the mandates were. if I taught this way, I would lose my job!

I did not create my own SLO's, I simply used the ones provided by OMEA
SLO actually helped to focus on the academic side of my teaching in my program. We focused on vocabulary as well as performance and discivered some major gaps in training/understanding that—once fixed--will help with teaching in rehearsals. It does take a lot of time away from performanc prep, but is worthy.

I am OTES trained and the Co-chair of our district SLO committee. I also serve on our negitiations committee....
That said, while there are deficiencies in the OTES and SLO process, I believe that it has not only improved instruction in performance based classes, but it has also put our classes in the spotlight for types of assessment. The Arts are primeexamples of formative assessments – and summative as well.
Both of my building administrators has shown a greater interest in what goes on in our classrooms.
I wish that there was a more clear cut approach with regards to the SLO's, although, I like the freedom of creating my own performance assessment.
I would like to see some type of written evaluation too, that is age/grade specific and in line with the standards.
I believe the OTES model was to be a "cookie cutter" method of evaluating every teacher, in every district, the same way without any regard for subject taught. And yet, a.) no two districts evaluate the same way, b.) it is meant as a way to thin the herd without regard for seniority, and c.) it does not benefit the students as much as the state would like us to believe.

I feel as though the SLO process provides teachers with an opportunity to better scaffold and focus their instruction, and could be useful tools for differentiation, understanding individual students strengths and weaknesses. I also think tracking student growth using SLOs could become very beneficial for general music teachers when looking at curriculum planning as these teachers see the same students as they progress through different grade levels, and having a picture of their understanding of certain musical concepts could be incredibly useful. However, I am weary of how the fundamental differences between general education and music education will affect music educators' experiences with these types of assessments and evaluations and how their programs will be perceived as a result.
Need more assistance on the language that should be used when presenting information to the class.